

C. W. Seamans

Alumni Hall of Fame Nominee



Clarence Walker Seamans
June 5, 1854 - May 30, 1915
Ilion, NY

Mr. Clarence Walker Seamans

**A Founder of the Ilion Firm
Wyckoff, Seamans and Benedict**

**Chairman of the Board of Directors
of the Remington Typewriter Company**

By Aileen Carney Sweeney
March 2016

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Educated in Ilion

Clarence Walker Seamans was born in Ilion, NY, on June 5, 1854, the eldest child of Abner Clark and Caroline Matilda (Williams) Seamans. His paternal grandparents were Isaac and Polly (Walker) Seamans.

He received his education in the Ilion public schools. He graduated from high school in 1870 when he was sixteen years old. A Regents charter was not obtained by the district until 1872 when a class of six girls graduated in 1873. The Morgan Street School was erected in 1865 and it is certain that he attended school in that building.



Clarence Walker Seamans - Educated in Ilion, NY

Clarence Seamans was only fifteen years old when he began working with his father for E. Remington & Company in 1868. In 1875, he left Ilion to become the superintendent of a silver mine in Utah that was owned by a group of wealthy Ilion men. Seamans remained in Utah for the next three years. In 1878, he returned to Ilion and it was during an exciting time that he did return.

The Birth of the Typewriter

Christopher Latham Sholes, Carlos Glidden and Samuel W. Soule of Milwaukee invented the first typewriter and Sholes was the principal inventor. James Densmore, an interested businessman, brought the machine to the Remingtons to see if they would be interested in manufacturing it. The treasurer of the Sewing Machine Division, Henry Harper Benedict, urged Mr. Philo Remington to look at the machine. Late in February of 1873, Mr. James Densmore, accompanied by Mr. George Washington Newton Yost, arrived in Ilion. Mr. Yost was a born salesman and talker and convinced the Remingtons to begin manufacturing the machine.



The real manufacture of the machine began in September of 1873. The first catalogue was published in 1874. Articles in newspapers and magazines began appearing in 1875 describing the writing instrument.

The first selling agents of the typewriter met with little success in finding a market. However, Mark Twain wrote in his "Autobiography" about the first typewriter, which he purchased in Boston in 1874. Twain's "Life on the Mississippi" was the first manuscript written on a typewriter and submitted to a publisher.

One firm after another tried to find a market for the machine. In 1878, the selling was entrusted to Fairbanks & Company, a well-known scale manufacturer. At this same time, the Model 2 Remington typewriter machine was introduced. It was the first typewriter, which wrote both capitals and small letters. The shift-key machine proved to be very popular with potential users.

Fairbanks & Company needed someone to serve as manager of typewriter sales. George Yost recommended Clarence Seamans for the position for the selling agency. Philo Remington thought Seamans too young and did not favor his selection for the position. Henry Harper Benedict was a strong supporter of young Seamans, who was only 24 years old, and advised that he be appointed. Seamans entry into the story of the typewriter began the chain of events that finally led to the commercial triumph of the invention.



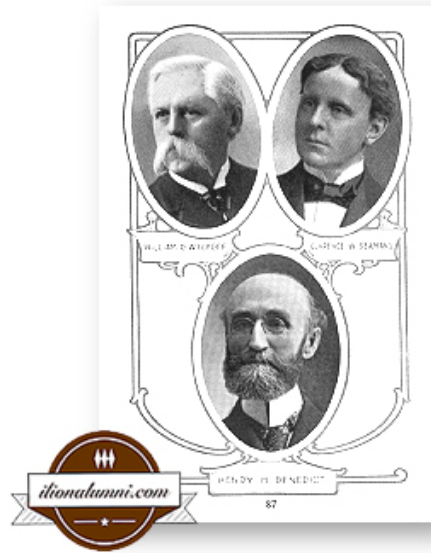
While the typewriter business was growing, Mr. Seamans started his own family. On February 1879, he married Ida Gertrude Watson, the daughter of Adrian L. and Lucia (Roby) Watson, of Washington, D. C. Together they had four children, Mabel Gertrude (1880), Ralph Walker (1884-1892), Harold Frances (1885-1891) and Dorothy Seamans (1892).

Clarence Seamans remained in the position of Sales Manager until 1881 when E. Remington & Sons decided to take over the selling. The Remingtons retained him as sales head because he had performed his work so well. That year 1,200 machines were sold. In 1882, an article in The Ilion Citizen stated, "The typewriter department of the Armory is one of the busiest places in the whole establishment. The number of men employed there and the amount of business done reminds one of old times. We understand that the typewriter is meeting with large sales, especially in the West."

Wyckoff, Seamans and Benedict

Portions of the following are taken from "Ilion 1852-1952"

[The Ilion Centennial Booklet](#)



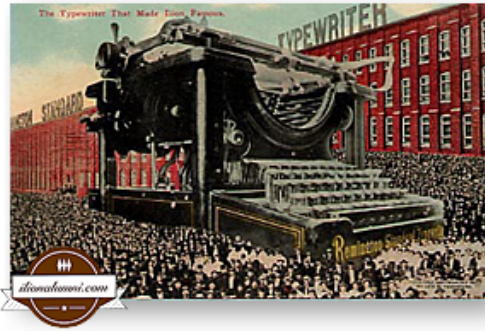
Wyckoff, Seamans and Benedict

"Seamans was not satisfied with the number being sold and to better results, negotiated with Henry H. Benedict, and W. O. Wyckoff of Ithaca. Mr. Wyckoff was a court reporter who, upon seeing one of the machines, could see its future. He immediately secured the sales agency for Central New York and placed typewriters in his own office. The story is told that every member of his staff refused to use them, but the edict was "Use it or quit," so they used it. This new firm Wyckoff, Seamans and Benedict, were to be sole selling agents and were to take all machines the factory produced and the factory was producing all they could sell. The report of the number made per day when they became selling agents varies from 5 to 11, but by present day standards either number is insignificant."

"Under their promotion the business progressed rapidly. The New York Tribune said, "Among all the mechanical inventions for which the age is noted, none has more rapidly come into general use and popularity than the typewriter." But a disturbing rumor reached the office in New York that the Remingtons were going to sell that part of their business. Mr. Benedict came at once to Ilion and asked Mr. Remington if this were true. When told it was, Mr. Benedict advised him to keep it, but when Mr. Remington said that they were determined to sell, Mr. Benedict said, 'I have given my advice. Now I want to buy the plant.'"

"Wyckoff, Seamans and Benedict paid \$200,000 for the franchise, machinery and tools used exclusively for typewriter manufacture. Forgings, castings, wood work, all operations which had been done with Armory equipment were to continue to be done by E. Remington & Sons or new machinery must be purchased. The sale was made in March 1886 about a month before the assignment of the Remingtons. The same force was retained and received their first week's pay and all subsequent pay in cash. (No more orders for them). 'It required poles as long as a church steeple to touch the typewriter boys Wednesday night after they 'bagged' their week's earnings in cash.'"

"The new company needed greater facilities and the next spring there was a danger of the business being moved from Ilion as various places were offering attractive inducements to the young industry. But the Armory turned over to them more space and another story was built on the building for the "lining room."



Postcard courtesy of Terry Sweeney

"When the new owners took over the Armory, Wyckoff, Seamans and Benedict again needed more room for expansion, but this was not granted. Again the Typewriter Company looked for a different location. The flattering offers were renewed, even to cost of moving, exemption from taxes, etc. The village was recovering from the jitters caused by the uncertainty of what would happen to the Armory and now the Typewriter was the chief topic of conversation. A citizen's meeting was called, an employees' (300 of them) meeting was held, negotiations were entered into and August 17, the Citizen was able to announce 'Our good luck' --the Company had leased the Agricultural Works."

"The Agricultural Works were refloored, thoroughly refitted and more space made available so as to be able to turn out more machines. Manufacture never stopped when the moving began. 'The several departments will be moved separately. The machinery is so arranged that there will be no delay and work will be done in both buildings until all machinery is moved.' Four years later the plant was purchased."

Clarence Walker Seamans

Captain of the Typewriter Industry

The Remington sales organization was known as the finest selling force in the world and it was all achieved under the leadership of Mr. Seamans. There were offices in every major city in the world. The Remington typewriter business was the largest typewriter business in the world.

In 1878, Fairbanks & Company had been designated the selling agency for the Remington typewriter. They needed someone to serve as manager of typewriter sales and Yost recommended Seamans for the position for the selling agency. Philo Remington thought Seamans too young and did not favor his selection for the position. Henry Harper Benedict was a strong supporter of young Seamans, who was only 24 years old, and advised that he be appointed. Seamans entry into the story of the typewriter began the chain of events which finally led to the commercial triumph of the invention."

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Ilion became known as the 'Typewriter Town'. Additions and new buildings were added to the factory and a seven-story or 'skyscraper' building was erected in 1895.

Henry Harper Benedict developed the European market and traveled to Europe in 1886 to open an office in London. In 1892, the Remington Typewriter Company was organized. Seamans was the treasurer and general manager of the company. Seamans became the president of the Union Typewriter Company in 1893. It was created through the consolidation of the Remington, Monarch, Yost, American, and Smith-Premier companies.



Postcard courtesy of Terry Sweeney

They also purchased the Wahl Adding Machine Company, making Union the world's largest typewriter company. Office after office was opened circling the globe. The corporate name was changed from Remington Standard Typewriter Company to Remington Typewriter Company in 1903. Mr. Seamans was the de facto active head of the worldwide typewriter business. He later became Chairman of the Board of

Directors of the Remington Typewriter Company, which was the successor to the Union Typewriter Company. Wyckoff died in 1895, and Benedict died in 1935.

Remington Offices

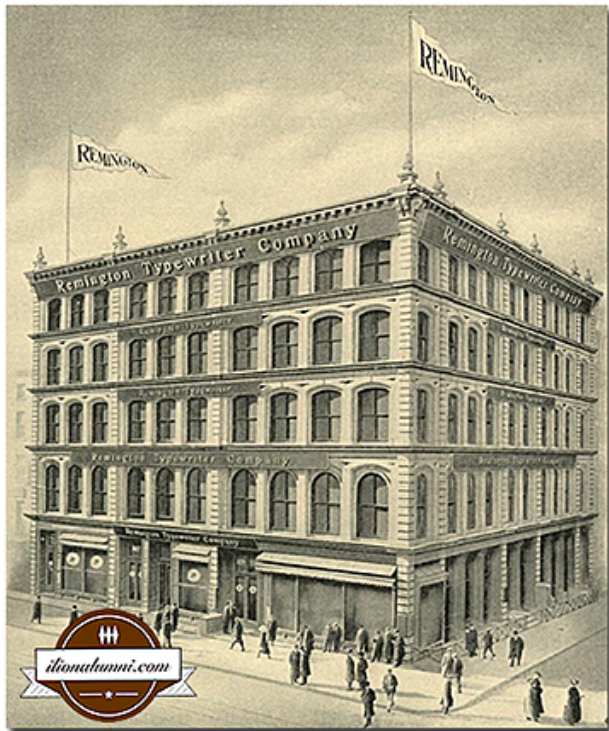
325-333 Broadway - New York City

The main office for Clarence Seamans was at No. 253 Broadway, New York. The building was the international headquarter, from 1888-1917, of Wyckoff, Seamans & Benedict and later the Remington Typewriter Company.

This "plain and unpretentious, though substantial marble structure" at 327 Broadway served as the company's "executive offices and main selling headquarters," from which supervision was "exercised over more than a score of branch-offices located in the leading cities of the United States and Europe."

The NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission held public hearings in 1971 about the building. The 325-333 Broadway Building was designated a Landmark and is still in commercial use. In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designated 325-333 Broadway Building, in Manhattan, as a Landmark.

The conclusion stated "... the building is important in the history of technology as the international headquarters (1888-1917) of Wyckoff, Seamans & Benedict, makers and distributors of the Remington typewriter, the first practicable typewriter, and the parent company of the Remington Rand Corporation."



327 Broadway New York City



By [Beyond My Ken \(Own work\)](#)
Photograph courtesy CC via [Wikimedia Commons](#)

Both, Seamans and Benedict took an active interest in the progress of their hometown. As the new company prospered, the village prospered with it. Benedict's philanthropy helped establish the Ilion Hospital. Clarence Seamans' legacy to the village was the establishment of the Ilion Public Library.

The Ilion Public Library

Took Pride in His Native Town



Photograph of Ilion Public Library courtesy of Herkimer County Historical Society

Before there was a public library, the Ilion Alumni Association of the Ilion High School maintained a small library of several hundred volumes. The books were housed on the top floor of the fire engine house that was the home of the Carpenter Hose Company. Notices to all graduates of the Ilion School were sent out asking for a small contribution toward the library. Being an alumnus, Mr. Seamans received one of these and as a result came to Ilion to tell the members of the association that if they would procure a site he would erect for them a suitable building.

Michael Giblin's land located on the corner of Second Street and West Street was purchased for the site of the new library. The deed was written in trust for the village and made to Misses Carrie L. Richardson, Cornelia M. Seamans (sister of C.W. Seamans) and J. H. Rudd, members Ilion Alumni committee. Transfer of the deed had the additional condition that the citizens of the village needed to raise \$5,000, to be used for the purchase of books. A legal provision was included to address the perpetual care of the building to be erected, and its contents, and stipulated the use of a Free Public Library.



George Chappell - Architect Ilion Public Library

Clarence Seamans visited many of the village and city libraries in the Eastern States and made a study of both the architecture of the buildings and the methods of operating and managing the libraries. He had plans for a Romanesque building, for the new library, prepared in New York City. The plans were his own but were executed by Architect George P. Chappell of 24 State Street, New York.

The entire woodwork of the interior including mantels, bookcases, etc. was produced in Ilion from the factory of A. N. Russell & Sons.

Seamans gave the contract for the erection of the building to Ilion businessman Albert N. Russell, with instructions to send the bills from time to time to Seamans. Ida Seamans, wife of Clarence Seamans, made a donation toward books for the library and others in the town and county made liberal donations.

Library Dedication Ceremony October 27, 1893

The New York Tribune reported on October 26, 1893 the following: "On Friday of this week the town of Ilion, in this State, will observe a holiday in celebration of the presentation to it of a beautiful library building, the gift of C W Seamans, of the firm of Wyckoff, Seamans & Benedict, typewriter manufacturers. The cost of the building was \$30,000, a most commendable benefaction to a working community, and well worth a holiday. Mr. Amos Parker Wilder, of this city, will deliver an address on the occasion."

Seward Hakes, local florist, President of the Ilion Academy Alumni Association, began the ceremony by calling on the Rev. W.M. Cook of St. Augustine's Episcopal Church, to open with a prayer. Then Clarence W. Seamans spoke for 20 minutes giving thanks to all who made the building and books possible. Seamans gave credit to his father, Abner Clark Seamans (a superintendent of Remington Armory), for presenting the idea of the Ilion Academy Alumni Association Library Committee for a village library to him.

The next and last person to speak was 8-year-old Marion Hakes, daughter of Seward, who was chosen to thank Seamans' wife, Gertrude Watson Seamans, for her gift of juvenile books, which were given in memory of their sons, Ralph Walker and Harold Frances who had died in 1892 and 1891.

"The citizens of Ilion are to be congratulated that, through the munificence of Mr. Seamans their village is ornamented by such a gem of architectural, devoted to their enjoyment and intellectual culture, and will never cease as they enter its portals, to admire his taste, and render grateful tributes of honor to his patriotism and liberality."
- The Ilion Citizen October 27, 1893



Clarence Walker Seamans Framed Photograph at the Ilion Public Library

For several years, the Ilion library had a record numbering 80 per cent of the population of the village among its readers. This was the record for the United States for years. In 1904, the Ilion Alumni Association, under the direction of acting president, Edwin Pelton of Herkimer, awarded a contract for an artistic piece of oil work. An oil painting of C. W. Seamans was to be created and hung in the Ilion Public Library. A framed photograph of C. W. Seamans hangs in the Historical Room of the Library. There is no oil painting of him there. The Ilion Public Library is now on the National Register of Historic Places.

An article in "The Ilion Citizen" on July 13, 1916, also recognized the efforts of his sister, Cornelia Seamans, in the development of the library.

"Miss Seamans had been associated with the Board since its organization. Her broad culture especially fitted her for this work. When her brother presented the Library to Ilion she entered with great pleasure into the study of library management, and gave much time to the selection of suitable literature, ever striving to promote the wish of her brother, that the Ilion Library should stand for an educational center. She devoted much time to the selection of books for the Juvenile department, which is the gift of Mrs. Seamans."

Seamans Estates

Mansion in Brooklyn, NY



Clarence Seamans Home - St. Marks Avenue - Brooklyn NY

In 1900, Seamans purchased a large plot of land on St. Marks Avenue in the posh neighborhood of Brooklyn, NY. Architect Montrose W. Morris was hired by Mr. Seamans to design his family's mansion in Brooklyn, NY. Morris designed a large Italian Renaissance Revival mansion that was faced in limestone and situated on a rough-cut granite base.

There were twelve rooms on the first floor. It had a bowling alley, a swimming pool, a billiards room, and an underground passageway that led from the house to the carriage house. The carriage house had an apartment for the chauffeur above the garage. The attic had rooms for servants and there were a housekeeper and cook's rooms in the back of the house near the large kitchen.

All of the mahogany and exotic woodwork in the house was imported from South America. The third floor housed a grand ballroom. A sweeping, curved central staircase, made of solid mahogany, had a balcony that overlooked the grand reception hall. This staircase alone cost over \$40,000. There was a music room and a \$50,000 "Byzantine Room." The "Goldenwood Room" was said to have cost \$100,000.

Seamans travelled to Europe to find the furnishings for the home. He came back with entire rooms from old manor houses and with antiques, paintings, decorative objects and fine fabrics and furnishings. The house ended up costing Seamans about \$200,000,000 with a million dollars more just for the furnishings. The Seamans family moved into the mansion in 1904. One of the first social events to take place there was an engagement luncheon for of his daughter, Mabel Gertrude Seamans to Robert Payson Loomis, followed by the wedding itself on November 18, 1903.

The family also bought the estate next door to the Pratt family compound in Glen Cove, Long Island for a summer retreat; however, they ended up spending most of their summers at another summer home in Pigeon Cove, Massachusetts.

Summer Home - "The Elms" - Pigeon Cove, Mass.



Clarence Seamans - Summer Home at Pigeon Cove, Mass.

Seamans was a regular summer visitor, for fifteen years, to Pigeon Cove and stayed each summer at an original Pigeon Cove House. The Pigeon Cove House was located between Phillips Avenue and Granite Street. A fire destroyed the original Pigeon Cove House, in January 1903, where Seamans had spent his summers. He then bought the property where it had stood and built a new house. He named his new house "The Elms." The house was described as "...one of the finest summer homes on the North Shore and a showplace of the town."

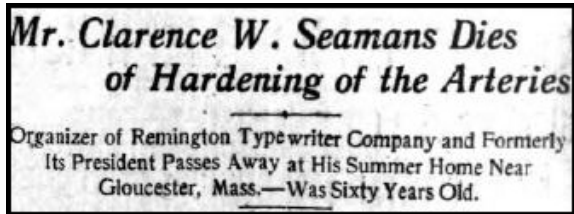
Seamans was generous to the town of Rockport, Massachusetts. He paid to have a mile of the main road through town paved using crushed stone. He also donated an automobile to the town, which the town used as a vehicle used in firefighting.

Seamans died in this home, just eight days after arriving in Pigeon Cove for the summer, on May 30, 1915.

After Mr. Seamans died, the property eventually became known as the Pigeon Cove Inn. It was later converted to an apartment complex and now houses condominiums.

Mr. Clarence W. Seamans Dies

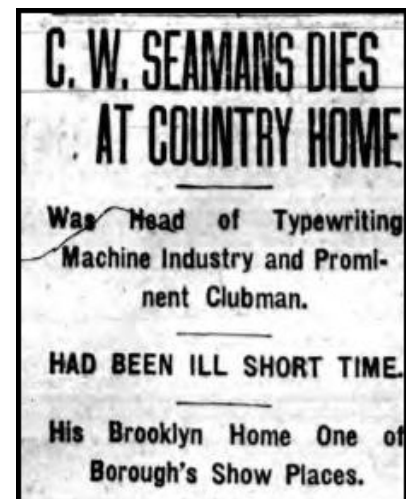
May 30, 1915



Clarence Walker Seamans Obituary

Mr. Clarence Walker Seamans, one of the pioneers in the manufacture and sale of the typewriter machine, died on May 30, 1915 at his summer home, "The Elms", in Pigeon Cove, Massachusetts. He had been ill for several weeks, suffering from hardening of the arteries, and came to Pidgeon Cove in late May, 2015 with the hope that the change would prove beneficial to his health. For several years, prior to his death, he had suffered from heart trouble. . He went to Nauheim, Germany to consult specialists there about his heart problems. He spent his last winter at Ormonde Beach, Florida. He was 61 years old at the time of his death. He was predeceased by his two young sons, Ralph Walker and Harold Francis. He was survived by his wife, Ida Gertrude (Watson) Seamans and two daughters, Mabel Gertrude Seamans (later Mrs. Robert Payson Loomis) and Dorothy Seamans (later Mrs. Edgar A. Self). Mr. Seamans was also survived by his sister Cornelia Seamans, of Ilion, NY and two brothers, Francis M. Seamans, of Pasadena, California, and Isaac Clark Seamans, of Ilion, NY.

Mr. Seamans was director of the Washington Trust Company, the Columbia Trust Company and the People's Trust Company, of Brooklyn and New York, and the Merchants' Fire Assurance Corporation. He was from 1895 until 1911 a trustee of Syracuse University and a trustee for the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences. He was also a director of the Brooklyn Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. He was a member of the Chamber of Commerce, the Old Union League Club of Brooklyn. Other clubs of which he was a member include the Rockport Country Club, Bass Rock Golf Club, Riding and Driving Club, Parkway Driving Club, Dyker Meadow Golf Club, Long Island Country Club, Nassau



Country Club, Crescent Athletic Club, Rembrandt Club and the Essex County (Mass.) Country Club. His office was at No. 253 Broadway, New York.

The first man to register at the Mount Washington Hotel in 1902, the year of its completion, was Clarence W. Seamans. Until his death, his was the first name on the register every year since it was opened. In 1910, the hotel was found by other Ilionites who wished to spend their vacation in a "pretty sylvan spot." The hotel is on the National Historic Landmark Registry. "A grand masterpiece of Spanish Renaissance architecture, [Omni Mount Washington Resort](#), in New Hampshire's White Mountains, was a two-year labor of love for 250 master craftsmen. Conceived by industrialist Joseph Stickney, this National Historic Landmark opened in 1902 and has been attracting generations of families ever since."

"He was one of the great army of country boys who have become captains of industry. He was conspicuous among the city men who came from the farm to the broader world of commerce and who have in the past and will in the future furnish the backbone of the city activity." - [The Cyclopaedia of American Biography/Seamans, Clarence Walker](#).

As a mark of respect to the memory of Clarence Walker Seamans, president of the Remington Typewriter Company, the company's Smith Premier and Monarch plants in Syracuse closed at noon, on the day of the funeral, for the rest of the day. The other three factories of the corporation, one at Ilion and two at Bridgeport, Conn, also were shut down during the afternoon, and all the Remington offices throughout the country were closed. This was first time that there has been a general half-holiday suspension of activities, as a tribute of appreciation, during the funeral hours.

Remington Typewriter Company published a brochure upon his death. The brochure contained the following resolutions to which were appended the signatures of each director:

"The Directors of the Remington Typewriter Company desire to place on record an expression of the profound sorrow with which they learned of the death of Clarence Walker Seamans at his summer home at Pigeon Cove, Massachusetts, on May thirtieth, nineteen hundred and fifteen. ...He displayed great ability in developing the possibilities of the typewriter business and in shaping the policy which proved so successful. To those who know Mr. Seamans well the sense of loss is so great that it is hard to say all we think and feel. He was a very human man and possessed a most lovable character. He was a personal friend of the worker and interested in his individual progress. He had that rare quality which created in the minds and hearts of those who served under him a love of service.

Therefore, be it RESOLVED that in the death of Clarence Walker Seamans this company has suffered an irreparable loss and the members of this Board have been deprived of one of their most cherished associates; that his loss brings peculiar sorrow to his fellow directors and the officers of this company, for he was at all times a tried and loyal friend and a wise leader, ever ready to co-operate with his associates for the well-being of this company. And be it further RESOLVED that we tender to the family of our deceased friend and associate our sincere sympathy

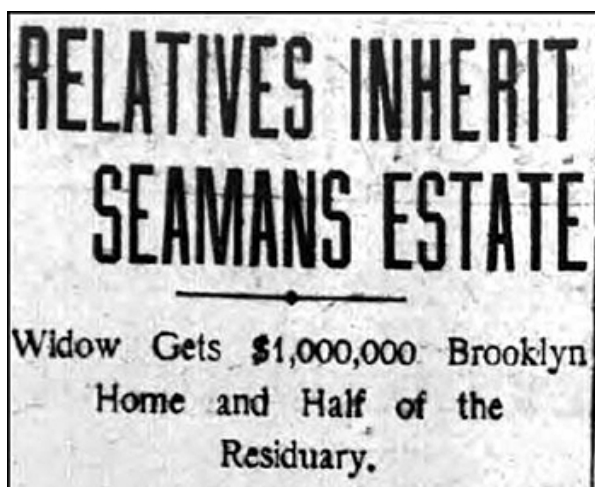
in their great bereavement. And be it further RESOLVED that a copy of this expression, properly engrossed, signed by each member of the Board be sent to the family of Mr. Seamans."

Funeral Services

His funeral services were held at his Brooklyn home at 789 St. Marks Avenue. From 300 to 400 persons, social and business friends took part in the service, including many prominent citizens of Ilion, NY. There were thirty-six honorary pallbearers at his funeral. The head pallbearer was Henry Harper Benedict, for many years a business partner of Mr. Seaman. The others were: John Suggett J. Walker, Earle Chester Lord, Frederick Webster, Horace Morse, Julian D. Fairchild, John Peters, William Allan Dyer, Harrison B. Starr, Charles Hobbs, James M. Gifford, Edward N. Loomis, H. D. Donnelly, Samuel T. Russell, Alexander T. Brown, I. S. Dettmer, ex-Governor P. C. Lounsberry, A. A. Forrest, George K. Gilluly, F. E. Van Buskirk, George W. Dickerman, Frank Koudolf, W. R. Morse, George Garfield, Lorenzo Benedict, Charles Searle, Warren Barber, James F. Whitney, Morris W. Ely, Roger S. Baldwin, Andrew H. Kellogg, Frank L. Babbott, John Giblin, Victor K. Mills and O. B. Rudd. The funeral procession moved to the Greenwood Cemetery, where the body was temporarily placed in a private vault to await the permanent interment at convenience of the family. On November 23, 1916, the remains of Mr. Clarence Walker Seamans were moved to the [new family vault at Greenwood Cemetery](#) in Brooklyn, New York. The remains of his young sons, Ralph Walker Seamans (1884-1892) and Harold Francis Seamans (1886-1891), were moved to the family vault, on the same day. The vault is located in the historic cemetery at Section 130, Lot 34425.

Seamans Estate

Will Recorded - June 24, 1915



The will of Clarence W. Seamans, executed on December 23, 1910, was filed for probate on June 23, 1915 with Surrogate Ketcham in Brooklyn. Although Mr. Seamans was reputed to be worth millions of dollars, his will set forth simply that the estate be valued at "more than \$10,000 in realty and more than \$10,000 in personalty," despite the fact that specific bequests totaling \$186,000 are made in the

document. No specific money bequest was made to Mrs. Seamans, the will stated, as Mr. Seamans obtained life-insurance which was made payable to her at his death.

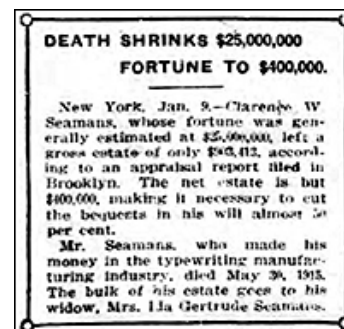
"In addition to the mansion and insurance, Mrs. Seamans received the income from one-half the residuary estate, which was left in trust for her benefit. She was also given testamentary capacity over this trust fund and the will provided that the trustees of this fund, Isaac Clark Seamans and Henry Harper Benedict, were to consult Mrs. Seamans when possible about the control of this trust fund. The residuary bequests to the daughters were also in trust, but they had power to dispose of the principal of the bequests by will. "In making this will I have thought of my brother, Isaac Clark Seamans," Mr. Seamans states, "It appears to me that he has been abundantly provided for in a financial way. I trust and hope that under all the circumstances he may not feel aggrieved because he is not made a legatee in this will."

Mrs. Ida Gertrude Seamans, his widow, inherited the Seamans residence at No. 189 St. Mark's Avenue, Brooklyn, which was erected at a cost of more than \$1,000,000. Mrs. Seamans also inherited one-half of her husband's residuary estate. Mrs. Mabel G. (Seamans) Loomis and Miss Dorothy Seamans, daughters of the testator, inherited each one-quarter of the residuary estate and in addition, received outright bequests of \$50,000 each. Miss Cornelia Seamans, sister of Mr. Seamans, received a bequest of \$35,000, and a brother, Francis W. Seamans, a bequest of \$50,000.

DEATH SHRINKS \$25,000,000 FORTUNE TO \$400,000

January 10, 1917

Clarence W Seamans, whose fortune was generally estimated at \$25,000,000, left a gross estate of only \$903,413, according to an appraisal report filed in Brooklyn. The net estate is but \$400,000, making it necessary to cut the bequests in his will almost 50 per cent.



One can only speculate on why his estate was determined to be so much smaller than first reported. His great-granddaughter, Andrea 'Sabrina' Loomis' web site provides a

hint.

"...one of her ancestors relocated from upstate New York to a big city where he built a palace of Indiana limestone boasting an elevator, a ballroom and bowling alley. He stabled sixteen Arabians on property that spanned an entire city block and shipped his favorites to wherever he vacationed. Not forgetting his roots, he gave to his hometown a library that once ranked highest in the country for membership and regular use.

"On his wife and daughters the ancestor lavished fine jewelry. But his mansion was torn down soon after it went up, because a problem arose in the business that was so severe disclosure would have doomed it. He poured back most of his fortune saving it, and stoically watched as other trophies disappeared."

Perhaps the strain of saving the business, from the mysterious severe problem, contributed to his declining health and early death at the age of sixty-one.

Seamans Brooklyn Mansion Sold

1918



Mrs. Ida Seamans continued to live in the Brooklyn mansion until 1918 when she thought it was too much house and sold it. An auction was held for all of the household furnishings. There were two days reserved for advanced viewing of the contents. "The house was packed with the curious, all eager to see the 'finest house' in Brooklyn. They were not disappointed." Dealers purchased most of the expensive and antique furnishings.

In 1928, The Brooklyn Standard Union newspaper reported that the home, once the finest mansion in Brooklyn, aka 'Seamans Folly,' would be torn down and replaced with the new Excelsior Hall, consisting of two joined six story buildings with 250 apartments.

OREGON FOLKS INHERIT SLICE OF BIG ESTATE

WHITE PLAINS, NY. Feb 8 (AP)

Mrs. Ida Gertrude Seamans, the widow of Clarence Walker Seamans, died January 18, 1937 at her home in Bronxville at the age of 79 years. Mrs. Seamans was born in Greene, NY, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Adrian Lott Watson. After he husband's

death in 1915 and after she sold the Brooklyn mansion in 1918, she moved to New York, and then to Bronxville.

She was survived by her two daughters, Mabel Gertrude (Mrs. Robert Payson Loomis of Hood River, Oregon), and Dorothy (Mrs. Edgar Alfred Self of Bronxville, New York). She was survived by her grandchildren; Jean Self (later Mrs. Forest M. Toates), and grandsons, Robert Payson Loomis and Harold Ely Loomis of Hood River, Oregon and Payson Walker Loomis. She was also survived by her sister, Miss Sarah Elizabeth Watson of Washington. Mrs. Seamans was buried in the Seamans family vault in Greenwood Cemetery in Brooklyn.

The bulk of the Seamans' estate, reputedly exceeding \$500,000, was left to her daughters, Mabel Seamans Loomis of Hood River, Ore., and Dorothy Seamans Self of New York, under terms of the will filed by probate on February 8, 1937. Bequests of \$15,000 each were left to grandsons, Robert Payson Loomis and Harold Ely Loomis of Hood River, Oregon. Mrs. Dorothy Seamans Self's husband, Edgar A. Self, was bequeathed \$15,000, and similar bequests were made to the grandchildren, Dorothy Jean Self, Robert Payson Loomis, Harold Ely Loomis and Payson Walker Loomis. A brother-in-law, I. Clark Seamans, of Ilion, NY, was left \$5,000 and was named executor and trustee with the Bankers Trust Company of New York. A trust fund of \$10,000 was created by Travelina Watson of Astoria, Oregon. A trust of \$15,000 was established for the "Clarence Walker Seaman's Endowment Fund," the Ilion Free Library, and a \$10,000 trust was set up for a children's book department in the library, in memory of her sons, Ralph Walker Seamans and Harold Francis Seamans.

Ilion Library - Mrs. Seamans Sorrowful Memorial

The Ilion Sentinel - February 11, 1937

To Mrs. Seamans the building was enshrined in her heart as a lasting and beautiful memorial. At the time of her death, one of her friends of many years accounted to some extent for Mrs. Seamans devoted interest in the library and its function."

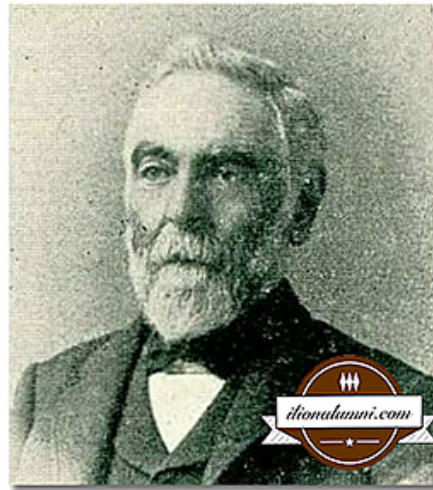
"When the building was in the course of construction," he said, "the young son of Mr. and Mrs. Seaman's died. Exactly a year from that date, their other boy passed away. Both were under eight years of age. To Mrs. Seamans, the library has always been a symbol in memory of her departed children."

To show their heartfelt appreciation to Mrs. Seamans, grade school children in Ilion wrote her individual letters. The letters were bounded by high school students and presented to Mrs. Seamans in one volume. She cherished this gift throughout her life.

The Seamans Family

Clarence Walker Seamans was born in Ilion, NY, on June 5, 1854, the eldest child of Abner Clark and Caroline Matilda (Williams) Seamans. His paternal grandparents were Isaac and Polly (Walker) Seamans.

Clarence's father, Abner Clark Seamans was born on February 8, 1822 in Winfield in Herkimer County. His mother was born on June 29, 1827 in Richfield, NY. Abner Clark Seamans moved to Ilion in 1849. He married Caroline Williams on May 25, 1852. Together, A. C. Seamans and his wife, Caroline, raised four children in Ilion, NY.



Abner Clark (aka A. C. Seamans)

Abner C. Seamans started working as a clerk in the general store of Remington & Morgan and he stayed there for two years. He then worked for Carey & Remington, a warehouse on the canal. He diligently and successfully worked collecting signatures, on a citizens' petition, to have a railroad depot established in Ilion. In 1852, he was hired by E. Remington, Sr., as Clerk and held this position for nearly 35 years.



Seamans Home West Street, Ilion NY

He invested in his son's firm, Wyckoff, Seamans and Benedict, and his investment paid rich returns. He built his family home at 102 West Street in Ilion. After his retirement from Remington, he spent his winters in Pasadena, California, where his son Francis resided. He travels included a trip to Europe, when he was seventy-five years old where he witnessed the Queen's jubilee celebration in London.



Seamans Family - Four Generations

Front left to right: Caroline Seamans (mother of C. W. Seamans),
Mabel Seamans Loomis (daughter) baby Payson Loomis (grandson),
Ida Seamans (wife), Abner Clark Seamans (father of C. W. Seamans)
Back Row: Clarence Walker Seamans, Robert Loomis (son-in-law).

The Ilion Citizen published the death of Mr. Seamans on December 16, 1904. "By the death of Abner C. Seamans which occurred at the residence of his son, Clarence W., in Brooklyn, N. Y., on the 8th of December, 1904, Ilion loses one of the few remaining men whose lives were connected with the early history of our village...The remains of Mr. Seamans arrived from Brooklyn Sunday afternoon, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Clarence W. Seamans, Isaac Clark Seamans and Miss Cornelia Seamans, sons and daughter of the deceased. They were met by a large delegation of representative citizens, who came in carriages as well as many who walked to the depot to pay their last tribute of respect to the deceased and to manifest their sympathy with the afflicted family."

The remains were laid away beside his wife who died over fifteen years since, in the beautiful and substantial mausoleum erected by the Seamans family several years ago.

The active bearers were S. T. Russell, A. D. Morgan, J. V. Downs, A. D. Richardson, Thomas Ringwood, Seward Hakes, J. R. Pelton, and William Hartford. The honorary bearers, former friends and active co-workers were A. N. Russell, E. Remington, W. K. Jenne, J. V. Schmidt, O. B. Rudd, A. H. Sumner, D. H. Dygert, G. Tucker, J. Heldt, W. C. Green, D. H. McLean and A. Brill.



Seamans Vault - Oak Hill Cemetery Herkimer, NY

Miss Polly C. Seamans, sister of Abner Clark Seamans, died at the residence of her nephew, C. W. Seamans of Brooklyn, on October 16, 1896, aged 83 years. Miss Seamans was for many years a resident of Ilion, where she had a large circle of friends and where she was highly esteemed and respected by all who knew her. The remains were brought to Herkimer, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Seamans and Mr. and Mrs. I. C. Seamans, for interment in the family vault at Oak Hill cemetery. Impressive services were held in the cemetery chapel. A large number of prominent citizens and friends of the family from this place attended the obsequies. - The Ilion Citizen October 16, 1896

Mary Cornelia Seamans, sister of C.W. Seamans, was born on December 12, 1855. She graduated as the first salutatorian of Ilion High School in 1873. She later became a teacher in Ilion schools and she was influential in the founding of the Ilion Free Public Library. She was a daredevil member of Ilion's '[Red Cloud](#)' bobsled team. Cornelia Seamans never married and died on December 27, 1915.

Francis Marion Seamans, a brother, was born on July 3, 1858 and later lived in Pasadena, California. He had a son and named him Clarence Walker Seamans and two granddaughters, Sally and Frances Seamans. A 1962 Pasadena newspaper article in the "Independent Star-News" chronicled the Seamans family, on The Society Page, with this headline - "Three Generations Involved in News of Romantic Interest"

"Names that have been prominent in Pasadena society for three generations provide interesting Sunday morning reading with the engagements of Sally Halsted Seamans and Joe Phillip Green Jr., of Cecily Claire Wilde. A Valentine's dinner party last evening at the home of Sally Seamans' parents, Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Walker Seamans, in State Street, revealed her engagement to a few of her close friends. A large heart of pink camellias and wedding bells upon the front door gave a clue to the purpose of the occasion. During the evening, Sally and Phill were toasted by their parents, by Sally's grandmother, Mrs. Francis Marion Seamans, and the other guests, who included her sister, Frances, and Phill's brother, William.

Phil is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Phillip Green of Backus Street. He and Sally will be married in the late summer. She attended Westridge School, Pasadena High School, and will be graduated from PCC in June. At PCC, she is a humanities major and a member of the A Capella Choir. Phil was graduated from PUS in 1936 and served with the Army in Korea. He spent 2 years in the California National Guard and is now in business in this city, and is also attending PCC. Sally's grandparents, Mrs. F. M. Seamans and the late Mr. Seamans, and also the late Mr. and Mrs. S. Hazard Halsted, came to Pasadena at the turn of the century."

Son of Francis Seamans, Clarence Walker Seamans, died by 1967 and was not at the marriage of his daughter, Frances. A 1967 Pasadena newspaper article in the "Independent Star-News" contained this headline - "Collie Rite Celebrated".

"Frances Marian Seamans, daughter of Mrs. Clarence Walker Seamans of South Pasadena and the late Mr. Seamans, was given in marriage by her mother when she exchanged vows with Adron Eugene Collie II in a 1 p.m. ceremony Saturday in the chapel of North Long Beach Brethren Church. The bridegroom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Adron Eugene Collie of Lakewood. Mrs. J. Phillip Green Jr. of Pasadena was matron of honor for her sister, Mr. Green Jr. served as an usher and their son, Gregory Phillip, was the ring bearer. Roger Bosch of Long Beach, the best man, also ushered guests before the ceremony which was performed by the Rev. Dr. Paul O. Peak. Frances' wedding dress was a short gown of white silk linen and her bouquet an arrangement of Eucharis lilies. Her sister was in a summer print and their mother in yellow linen with matching accessories. The senior Mrs. Collie chose an aqua suit with blending accessories for the wedding and reception at the church. The newlyweds will reside in Bellflower, delaying their wedding trip until the bride, completes graduate work in sociology at Cal State, Long Beach. She is a graduate of Westridge School and the granddaughter of Mrs. Francis Marion Seamans, long-time resident of Pasadena, and the late Mr. Seamans and of the late Mr. and Mrs. S. Hazard Halsted, also Pasadenans."

Youngest brother, Isaac Clark Seamans was born June 12, 1862 and was Salutatorian of the Ilion Class of 1880. Isaac's wife, Helen 'Nellie' Angell, was the Valedictorian of the same class. They married in June of 1895. At the time, I. Clark Seamans was treasurer of the Remington Typewriter Works and working in the Remington Office at 327 Broadway. They also lived in the family home in Ilion, which is now the Applegate Funeral Home on West Street. Helen Angell Seamans died on November 21, 1902 while visiting the Seamans family in Pasadena, California. I. Clark Seamans died on June 17, 1937.

Gifts Total \$185,000 Listed in Ilion Will

Personal and Public Bequests Made by Late Clark Seamans

Friends, public institutions and church organizations in Ilion and Mohawk shared in the estate of I. Clark Seamans, former official of the Remington Typewriter Company, Ilion, according to his will filed in Surrogate Court on July 1, 1937. The Ilion Public Library was

bequeathed \$10,000 and the proceeds from the sale of the Seamans home at 102 West Street, Ilion. Mr. Seamans suggested the amount to be used towards erection of a building adjoining the library, for a juvenile department and a meeting place for women's clubs and civic organizations. It is to be known as the Cornellus Seamans Memorial.

Other public bequests include, income of \$15,000 for the Old Ladies' Home in Mohawk, to be known as Helen Angell Seamans Fund, Ilion Hospital, \$15,000, Ilion Presbyterian Church, \$2,500; Pasadena, Calif., Presbyterian Church, \$2,000, St. Augustine's Church Ilion \$2,500 for building fund; Ilion Methodist Church, \$2,500, Ilion Baptist Ladies' Aid Society, \$2,500, to be used on pledge for erection of parsonage; Syracuse University, \$5,000 for Seamans Scholarship to be awarded boys and girls recommended by trustees of Ilion Library and Ilion high School principal, Gamma Phi Beta Chapter, and Syracuse University, \$1,000.

Mabel Gertrude (Seamans) Loomis

National Historic Registry - House in Hood River, Oregon



Mabel Gertrude (Seamans) Loomis

Mabel Gertrude (Seamans) Loomis, daughter of Clarence Walker and Ida Gertrude Seamans, died in 1939 of cancer. Her husband, Robert Payson Loomis died in 1951. They are also interred in the Seamans family vault in Greenwood Cemetery in Brooklyn.

"The Loomis Residence is significant architecturally as the only example of a Mediterranean Style residence in Hood River, Oregon. The finely crafted home is located at 1100 State Street and was designed for the wealthy New York family Robert and Mabel Loomis by architect Percy D. Bentley in 1937." The house was on sold August 25, 1947 to the First National Bank of Hood River. Robert Loomis died in 1951 in New York while residing at the Yale Club. The Loomis home, in Hood River, Oregon, was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1990.

Robert Payson Loomis was an accomplished musician and owned a music store in Hood River the late 1930s and early 1940s. His nickname was "Daddy Bud". The home was known as the "Winter Residence", in Hood River, because Mabel Loomis, or "Mummsie" as she was referred to by relatives, did not want to spend the winter near Parkdale because of the harshness of the winters. Robert Loomis was a graduate of Yale University and dealt in investments, and buying and selling fruit in the futures market. Along with a partner, Mr. Woodward, Loomis formed the orchard company named the Lava Bed Company.



Photo Courtesy - By Sanfranman59 (Own work)
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[via Wikimedia Commons](#)

In 1924, Loomis renamed the business the Lava Bed Orchards and leased the orchards land until around 1929. Harold Loomis, son of Robert and Mabel, moved to the Hood River Valley from New York, in 1929, to take over as foreman of the orchards.

Harold Loomis graduated from Pace business college in New York and later became a stockbroker. Harold lost everything in the stock market crash of 1929 and decided to take over management of his parents' land in the Hood River Valley. Harold Loomis, and his wife Mary Steinhauer, a local resident from the Parkdale area, moved to Hood River in 1936. They built a new house, north of town, on Westcliff Drive, in 1948 and lived there until 1972. Harold Loomis died in 1974 and Mary Loomis continued to live in the Seattle area. Harold and Mary Loomis had two children; Robert and Barbara Loomis. [Dr. Robert Loomis](#) is a retired physician in Eugene, Oregon.

Robert and Mabel (Seamans) Loomis had another son, Payson Loomis, who was a graduate of Yale University. He majored in foreign studies and remained in the New York area until his death in 1974. In 1930, Payson Loomis married Chiyo Frances Hirose at the home of the bride in Greenwich Connecticut. Loomis. They had a daughter, Andrea 'Sabrina' Loomis, who is a jewelry designer and goldsmith. Her works have been carried in Macy's and can be seen on her web site www.gemscope.com. Sabrina Loomis visited Ilion in 2007 to see the Ilion Public Library building, which was gifted to Ilion by her great-grandfather, Clarence Walker Seamans.

50th Year Celebration of Typewriter

The Story of the Typewriter

1873-1923



In 1923, the Herkimer County Historical Society published "The Story of the Typewriter 1873-1923 " in commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the invention of the writing machine. The full text from this article is available on the [Internet Archive](#).



Unveiled at Ilion in 1923, to commemorate the bi-centennial of the construction of the first practical commercial typewriter and its inventor, Christopher Latham Sholes. Left to right the group is: Mr. Henry Harper Benedict, Charles E. Weller of La Porte, Ind., the original man typist: Mrs. Charles L. Fortier of Milwaukee, daughter of Sholes, Mrs. C. G. Sholes of Chicago, daughter-in-law of Sholes and the original woman typist. Photo by Thompson, Ilion.

The significance of the impact of Clarence Walker Seamans and his lifework can best be illustrated by republishing statements from the aforementioned article. No other alumnus can come close to his accomplishments. All Ilion alumni can all be proud that it began here in Ilion, NY. Clarence Walker Seamans was the equivalent of our modern day visionary, Steve Jobs.

"Ilion will go down in history as the center from which, in the main, has flowed this great contribution to civilization's progress."

"I feel that I have done something for the women who have always had to work so hard. This will enable them more easily to earn a living." - Statement of Christopher Latham Sholes, inventor of the typewriter.

"The typewriter has made itself such an essential factor in modern life, it has become so necessary to all human activities, that the present-day world could hardly be conceived without it. It is hard to name any other article of commerce which has played a more commanding role in the shaping of human destiny. It has freed the world from pen slavery and, in doing so, it has saved a volume of time and labor which is simply incalculable. Its time-saving service has facilitated and rendered possible the enormous growth of modern business. The idea which it embodied has directly inspired many subsequent inventions in the same field, all of which have helped to lighten the burden of the world's numberless tasks. In its broad influence on human society, the typewriter has been equally revolutionary, for it was the writing machine which first opened to women the doors of business life. It has radically changed our modern system of education in many of its most important phases. It has helped to knit the whole world closer together. Its influence has been felt in the shaping of language and even of human thought."

Gold Found In Ilion - A Paying Vein of Ore

The Remington Typewriter Co. Pays 240 Workmen



Remington Typewriter Field Days and Service Pin Award Ceremony - July 3, 1903.

Twenty-five Year Badge - C. W. Seamans

Fifteen Year Badge - I. C. Seamans

The Ilion Citizen July 3, 1903 - "Two hundred and forty workmen in Ilion are chinking ten dollar gold pieces in their pockets which came to them just as easily as if they had picked them up in the street. Each of these 240 have been at least ten years in the

employ of Wyckoff, Seamans & Benedict and therefore qualify under the recently adopted "bonus plan" of the company as employees entitled to \$100 per year payable in June and December, in addition to and above their regular salaries. The first payment of \$50 per man was made Tuesday, June 30. To meet the draft thus made on the company twelve hundred ten dollar gold pieces were expressed to Manager Roe from New York, and five of the shining pieces were passed to each of 240 happy men Tuesday. As we understand it, ten successive years in the employ of the company is necessary to qualify for the \$100 per year bonus. Handsome service badges also accompany this first payment and the recipients are a lucky lot of men indeed....Everything is booming in the big plant. A new building is in process of erection behind the recent 330 foot addition and all goes merry as a marriage bell."

My great-grandfather, [Patrick Joseph Carney Jr.](#), was an employee of the Remington Typewriter Company. He wrote in his memoirs, "Someone convinced W-S & B, it would put an end to strikes if they gave a bonus of \$100 each year to every man who had worked there 10 years or more. The plan was put into effect and together with a hundred others, I received \$50 in gold on the 4th of July, and \$50 at Christmas - and a beautiful pin."

This article is dedicated in memory of Ilion High School Local History teacher, Mr. Francis Cunningham. I had the great privilege of being a student in his Local History course the very first year that it was offered at the high school. Mr. Cunningham brought our local history alive and gave me a life-long interest in all Ilion history. - Aileen Carney Sweeney

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