Spring 3-12-2018

Power and Prestige: Progressive Membership in Morristown, New Jersey

Erich Morgan Huhn
Seton Hall University, erichmhuhn@gmail.com

Power and Prestige:
Progressive Membership in Morristown, New Jersey

By

Erich Morgan Huhn

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts

Department of History

Seton Hall University

Spring 2018

Seton Hall University
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

APPROVAL FOR SUCCESSFUL DEFENSE

Masters Candidate, **Erich Morgan Huhn**, has successfully defended and made the required modifications to the text of the masters thesis for the **M.A.** during this **Spring Semester 2018**.

THESIS COMMITTEE
(please sign and date beside your name)

1st Advisor:
Dr. Thomas Rzeznik Thomas Rzeznik 3/12/18

2nd Advisor:
Dr. Maxine Lurie Maxine N. Lurie 3/12/18

Committee Member:
Dr. Vanessa May 3/12/18

The advisors and committee member who wish to review revisions will sign and date this document only when revisions have been completed. Please return this form to the Office of Graduate Studies, where it will be placed in the candidate's file and submit a copy with your final thesis to be bound as page number two.

ABSTRACT

At the turn of the nineteenth century the social, political, and economic foundations of American society began to shift. Old families lost influence to the wealthy new "Robber Barons" while professionals lost prestige as their work increasingly became subsumed within a growing corporate structure. As a result, Progressive politics sought to shake up the system in an attempt to both help modernize archaic systems and reinforce old power structures.

In the case of the Civic Association of Morristown the members from old families and newcomers with professional backgrounds joined forces to secure power and prestige on what they saw as a shifting political and social scene. This paper explores how the Civic Association of Morristown, made from an odd coalition of old money and the new rich, was able to position itself as the "Good Government" group in Morristown, New Jersey. Although the Civic Association of Morristown was only active for just over ten years, the group was able to promote itself, and most importantly its members, and claim responsibility for several large scale town improvement projects. By looking at the membership and surviving records of the Civic Association of Morristown this paper provides a view into the fears and attempts to save face at a time when America was rapidly modernizing.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the faculty and staff of the Department of History at Seton Hall University for their support and encouragement throughout my time studying there. Special thanks to Drs William Connell, Larry Greene, Dermot Quinn, Mark Molesky for dealing with me as a student. Thank you to Drs Maxine Lurie, Vanessa May, and Thomas Rzeznik for serving on my Defense Committee and as readers. I am particularly indebted to Dr Lurie who has opened the world of New Jersey history for me both in the classroom and through her many works.

I would also like to thank the staff of the North Jersey History and Genealogy Center at the Joint Free Public Library of Morristown and Morris Township, particularly Carolyn Dorsey Chad Leinweaver, James Lewis, Jeff Moy. Their collections were vital to the research of this paper and provide an invaluable resource for historians and genealogists.

Personally, I would like to thank my friends for dealing with me as I worked on this project. Shane Paules deserves thanks for being a true friend for never reminding me how much procrastinating I had done. Alan and Louise Johnson, Peter Mancuso, and all my friends in the Morristown and Morris Township government who were extremely encouraging and serve as models of what good government really is. At Historic Speedwell I want to thank all my coworkers but especially Maressa McFarlane, Mark Sutherland, and Joen Ferrari from the Friend of Historic Speedwell for their support, encouragement, and dedication to preserving local history.

Finally, I would like to thank my family for all the support they have given throughout this project. To my parents, Karen and Arthur, I am especially grateful. They deserve recognition for instilling the love of history within me from an early age. I would also like to thank, and dedicate this work to, my grandparents, Joan and Roger Morgan, in acknowledgement of all the love and support they have given over the years. And to both my parents and grandparents, thank you for putting up with the often aloof academic in the attic as I toiled away on one project or another.

Erich Morgan Huhn
Morristown, NJ
February, 2018

To my grandparents, Joan and Roger Morgan.

TABLE OF CONTENT

Introduction 1

Morristown: A Brief History 5

New England Expansion into the Mid-Atlantic 6

A Rebellion's Headquarters 7

Early Republic and Antebellum Development 9

A Gilded Retreat in the Mountains 11

The Progressives: Preserving Social Positions 16

National Progressives 18

New Jersey and the Progressive Movement 22

Progressives and New Jersey Local Politics 25

The Civic Association of Morristown 31

A Demographic Analysis 33

Projects and Goals 39

Power through Position 49

Conclusion: Progressive Realities 52

Introduction: Unusual Bedfellows

On the 12th of December, 1905, Charles D. M. Cole had organized a meeting open to the residents of Morristown.[1] At 47, Cole has seen considerable success as a prominent lawyer; holding a mortgage on his home at 14 Franklin Street in Morristown's growing First Ward and employing three servants to manage the household, Cole was in a similar situation with most Progressive Era reformers.[2] Not raised in the town (born in New York state) Cole was an outsider in a town where pedigree and tradition had held considerable sway. But the boom of the Gilded Age and the development of the professional class, Cole's success in business opened new doors.

The meeting Cole had organized was open to all and members of Morristown's politically connected professional circles met to discuss and form the Civic Association of Morristown. Town fathers like Alexander Bennell, Colonel Edward L. Dobbins, and former mayor Edward Arthur Quayle led the meeting, providing a bridge between town elite and the increasingly powerful (and ever growing) professional class. Although the open meeting format would became be a rare occurrence for the nascent organization the first meeting was abuzz with activity. Old and respected members of the town's Old Guard made sure that their ally Colonel Dobbins was nominated and elected as "Permanent Chairman." At the same time, the young and successful 37 year old lawyer Frederic R. Kellogg was to be enlisted as secretary. After voting

[1] MCA Minutes, 12 December, 1905; Civic Association of Morristown Records, 1905-1945, Box 1, Folder 1, HM51 MSS Civi, North Jersey History and Genealogy Center, Joint Free Public Library of Morristown and Morris Township.
[2] 1910 United States Census (Free Schedule), Morristown, Morris County, New Jersey; p. 876, family 85, line 10; 21 April, 1910; National Archives and Records Administration publication T624, 1,178 rolls.

on a Board of Directors, the meeting continued to discuss such problems in Morristown as "the trolley question" and other plans for reinforcing the town's position in the region.[3]

While at first the pairing of the 67 year old insurance executive, Colonel Dobbin, with a 37 year old lawyer from Vermont, Kellogg, may have appeared odd the reality was that both parties, the Old Guard and the new professionals, were able to gain power and authority through cooperation within the Civic Association of Morristown. From organizing increased trolley service, planning the installation of a sewer system, expanding gas street lighting, and sparking the City Beautiful movement in the growing county seat, the Civic Association of Morristown did much the same work as other civic associations in the area. At this key moment during the Progressive Era, where women's role in society and government were increasing alongside that of state and federal government programs, the professional call formed a coalition with the Old Guard under the guise of town boosting. Yet even with the support of the Old Guard, the upper-middle and professional classes took the reins of the Civic Association of Morristown and created for themselves extralegal powers to maintain control over a growing town and appropriate for themselves both political and social powers.

From the very beginning of American History, extralegal power has played an important role. During the American Revolution Committees of Correspondence and Public Safety ruled locales in the absence of a stable "Patriot" government, often running towns through mob rule and with powers that often mirrored those that American rebels were fighting against. Throughout the Antebellum period both sides of the slave question used interpretations of vague fugitive slave laws and states' rights arguments to support or deny the rights to slaves in federal

[3] MCA Minutes, 12 December, 1905, Civic Association of Morristown Records.

territories. During the Civil War the Lincoln administration took on an expanded role through the suspension of *habeas corpus*, under the guise of protecting the Union. After the Civil War, in the great expansion of business and industry that culminated in the Gilded Age, business and government became increasingly entangled, leading to huge trusts and favorable contracts to corporations and railroads. But perhaps the most noteworthy period of expansion for extralegal power occurred in the Progressive Era. As calls for social, moral, and political reforms culminated in the expansion of government at the federal and state levels women, blacks, and immigrants increasingly saw their interests championed by well intending experts. These experts expanded the bureaucracy and increased state and federal powers, but what happened in municipalities on the local level?

This paper intends to look at the Civic Association of Morristown as not just a local movement of concerned citizens but rather as an extension of Progressive reforms. At the same time, by looking at the composition of the officers and leaders that held positions within the Civic Association of Morristown, the socioeconomics of Progressive Era reformers emerges reinforcing scholars like Richard Hofstadter and giving better understanding to the interpretations set forth by Michael McGerr.[4] The short history of the Civic Association of Morristown, forming in 1905 and effectively shutting down by World War I (but only dissolving officially by the end of World War II) shows not just how Progressive reformers thought municipal government should function but also how extralegal power was appropriated by an emerging upper-middle class of technocratic professionals. The development in Morristown from regional center and county seat to a suburb of New York City was reflected in changes in

[4] Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform* (New York: Vintage Books, 1955); Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

power as lawyers and businessmen who moved to sleepy Morristown sought to carve out for themselves power from the established town elites.

Section One will look at the broader history of Morristown, tracking the development of the town from first European settlement in the early 18th century through to the end of the First World War. By providing a short history of the town, the dramatic changes in leadership become apparent as the professional class pushed the town to incorporation separate from Morris Township and then lead efforts to create a modern town with utilities and conveniences of a city. Section Two will see what tools were used by Progressives at the municipal level to ensure both smoother control of the government but also create a more powerful expert-led government. Section Three will deal with the history of the Civic Association of Morristown, the impact of the group on the development of the town, and the socioeconomics of key members to show how the CAM developed out of a two-pronged attempt to 1) boost Morristown as a developed regional center and suburb of New York City and 2) appropriate extralegal authority for a membership that was denied access to political and social power. While Morristown today may appear to be just another developed suburb of New York City with a booming population of yuppies, the history of Morristown during the Progressive Era shows the extent to which Progressive reforms would permeate American politics.

Notably, cartoonist Thomas Nast, whose cartoons in *Harper's Weekly* helped bring Boss Tweed not just to national attention but also land the machine boss in jail, lived in Morristown at the beginning of the 20th century. Although the famous muckraker never appeared on any of the officer rolls for the Civic Association of Morristown the dichotomy between city and suburban focus is clear; historians have focused on the history of the Progressive Era through the stories told in the city. Nast, whose cartoons of Tweed were ubiquitous with machine politics, lived in

the suburbs, commuting into the city. As suburbs grew around American cities they allowed more than just the expansion of city power and influence. In an age of municipal reforms, the burgeoning suburb became a place where the upper-middle and professional class could arrive and build networks of expertise and power. This is what the Civic Association of Morristown and other groups throughout New Jersey and the nation did.

Morristown: A Brief History

While New Jersey history as a whole has been generally overlooked by historians, with the marked exception of several wonderful works of both history and biography that have received attention within the state and region, the study of locales in general has been delegated to the work of antiquarians and local historians.[5] Yet even though local history is often ignored or denigrated by the academic historian, the stories of individuals hometowns and points of personal interest are largely the most popular. Works made for public history and by local authors provide a way for untrained history enthusiasts to participate in the world of the historian and learn about the local experiences that have added to larger historical events. In the case of Morristown, this dichotomy between trained academic history and popular history/antiquarianism is plainly evident. Known and billed as "The Military Capital of the American Revolution" the town has a long and impressive history even without including the colonial and revolutionary period. It was this long and impressive history, intimately linked to

[5] In the field of New Jersey History of note is the work done by Maxine Lurie in her numerous volumes that have become standard texts for the field. Richard P McCormick, *New Jersey from Colony to State, 1609-1789* (Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1964); Maxine Lurie and Marc Mappen, *Encyclopedia of New Jersey* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004); Maxine Lurie, *A New Jersey Anthology* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010); Maxine Lurie and Richard Veit, *New Jersey: A History of the Garden State* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2012); S Scott Rohrer, *Jacob Green's Revolution: Radical Religion and Reform in a Revolutionary Age* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State Press, 2014).

the development of American history, which makes Morristown an important case study for understanding the greater historical narrative. Under thirty miles from New York City, Morristown grew with the Big Apple and yet became an important suburb and regional center. By understanding the development of Morristown's history, better comprehension can be achieved of the grander narrative of American history and, in particular to this study, the history of the Progressive Era.

New England Expansion into the Mid-Atlantic

The first European activity in the area around Morristown occurred in 1715 when a group of settlers arrived from Newark and Long Island.[6] These settlers established a small, Presbyterian, community originally referred to as West or New Hanover, a reference to the settlement age and geographic location to the west of the community established in 1685 as Hanover (now Hanover Township), and located the first homes and church in New Hanover in what has become known as the "Hollow."[7] By the late 1730s the colonial government of New Jersey attempted to reorganize the complexities carried over from the merger of the proprietary colonies of East and West Jersey *and* create a separate governorship from the colony of New York.[8] As a result of this first attempt to make sense of New Jersey's dizzying local political patchwork the state started the trend of incorporating the many as-of-yet unorganized towns and settlements. In 1739 Morris County was created, named after the provincial governor Lewis Morris.[9] Created from parts of Hunterdon County, in 1740 Morris County was divided three

---

[6] Morris County Historical Society, *Tours in Historic Morris County* (Morristown, NJ: Morris County Historical Society, 1977), pg 11.
[7] *Encyclopedia of New Jersey*, 1st ed., s.v. "Hanover Township;" Federal Writers' Project, *New Jersey: The American Guide Series* (New York: Hastings House, 1946) pg 284.
[8] Maxine Lurie, "Colonial Period: The Complex and Contradictory Beginnings of a Mid-Atlantic Province," in *New Jersey: A History of the Garden State*, pg 40-46.
[9] *History of Morris County* (New York: Munsell & Co., 1882; reprint, Morristown, Morris County Historical Society, 2000), pg 20.

townships, Hanover, Morris, and Pequannock.[10] The 1740 remapping resulted in "New Hanover" being renamed Morris Township on March 25th of that year, covering one third of the southern and western section of the county.[11] Over the next fifty years the township, although growing in population, would cast off sections of land off to form both Roxbury and Mendham Townships.[12]

Even as Morris Township was being established as a recognized community (1740) changes in the settlement pattern were emerging. Around the original settlement from 1715 a town began to take shape while the vast outlying lands became increasingly dominated by patches of rural farms and homesteads. Formerly settled around the Hollow, a geological depression to the northeast of the town center, the town moved to the current site of the Morristown Green, approximately 1,000 feet. This expanding settlement around what would become known as "The Green" was dominated by the Presbyterian Church on the east side, with local lore persisting that the church owned all lands to the west. At the same time the place name of Morristown first took hold, referring, interchangeably, to both the township in general and the more commercial settlement situated within the township around the Green.

All the while Morristown grew as the social, cultural, and political center *within* Morris Township, which developed at a surprising rate. With Morris Township designated as the county seat with its creation in 1740 the many regional government responsibilities helped promote expansion.

---

[10] John E Snyder, *The Story of New Jersey's Civil Boundaries: 1606-1968* (Trenton: Bureau of Geology and Topography, 1969; reprint, Trenton: New Jersey Geological Survey, 2004) pg 191.
[11] Ibid, 194.
[12] Ibid.

A Rebellion's Headquarters

By the time of the American Revolution, Morristown had grown within Morris Township to become a recognized commercial center. Morristown's political and economic presence was dominated by the vast North Jersey iron industry, providing an important resource for both sides in the Revolutionary War. With the large Presbyterian population, the community was ardently pro-independence, even hiring the Reverend Jacob Green from neighboring Hanover Township for a short period prior to the war.[13] Green was an ardent political theorist and author, writing the first pro-independence work published in New Jersey. By the time independence had become a serious topic, New Jersey had decided to hold a Provincial Congress, to which all five from the Morris County delegation were ardent supporters of independence and rebellion.[14] At the same time, Morristown's business community gathered in support of the Revolution on the grounds of British tyranny over business interests. With the iron industry dominating the young town, the mercantilist system enforced by the Navigation Acts meant that iron ore could only be processed into pig iron, which then had to be sent to Britain to be made into finished goods, adding unnecessary cost and limiting the development of the industry. With war looming, no one in Morristown could have imagined the important role the small but growing town would play.

Over the winter of 1777 and 79-80 George Washington and the Continental Army made Morristown a camp, giving the town the nickname "Military Headquarters of the American Revolution."[15] After the important victories at Trenton and Princeton, Washington took his troops up to Morristown to spend the winter, secure behind the Watchung Mountains and with a

---

[13] Rohrer, *Jacob Green's Revolution*, pg 66.
[14] Ibid, pg 145
[15] National Park Service, *Morristown: A Military Capital of the American Revolution* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1961); John W. Rae, *Morristown: A Military Headquarters of the American Revolution* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Press, 2002); John T. Cunningham, *The Uncertain Revolution: Washington & the Continental Army at Morristown* (West Creek, NJ: Cormorant Publishing, 2007).

population that largely supported the cause. With the army spread throughout Morris County and North Jersey, Morristown was a convenient location for headquarters, making base in Arnold's Tavern on the Green. Along important supply routes, Morristown was chosen as a strategic location for the army, between Philadelphia and West Point, key positions coveted by the British. While many believe Valley Forge was where the Revolution was saved, the first winter had been largely overlooked in Morristown. By the winter of 1779-80, Washington returned with the Continental Army for what was the coldest winter on record. It was over this winter that the accounts of mutiny arose through the stories of Joseph Plumb Martin.[16] While Washington stayed in luxury at Ford's Mansion (now the centerpiece of Morristown National Historic Park) the troops were set to work building what a visiting Connecticut schoolmaster described as a "Log-house city," to house the 10-12,000 soldiers.[17] Although Morristown was never the site of any large battles or skirmishes, the army's encampment in the small town meant that the army would survive to fight on, a strategy that Washington had used throughout the war.

Early Republic and Antebellum Development

Through the post-war and Early Republic Morristown continued to grow in both size and importance. As one of the major political centers connected with the North Jersey iron industry, Morristown developed as the headquarters of a sprawling industrial sector. Wealthy businessmen like Stephen Vail and George Macculloch stepped forward to lead industry through the first steps of the industrial revolution.

[16] Joseph Plumb Martin, *Ordinary Courage: The Revolutionary War Adventures of Joseph Plumb Martin*, ed. James Kirby Martin (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013).pg 118-122.
[17] National Park Service, *M:AMCotAR*, pg 15.

Vail, a trained ironmaster, developed the Speedwell Iron Works through the early 1800s to his death in 1864.[18] Under Stephen's guidance, the Speedwell Iron Works took on such notable projects as building the machinery for the *SS Savannah*, the first steam-powered ship to cross the Atlantic, and innovating the firm's most popular designs for sugar and paper mill machinery.[19] Aside from his work as the proprietor of the Speedwell Iron Works, Stephen Vail invested heavily in early railroads, with Stephen's younger son George becoming a brief partner with Matthias Baldwin of locomotive fame, and helped bring into fruition the Morris & Essex Railroad (the railroads second locomotive was named "Speedwell" after the Vail family's homestead and company). Stephen, supporting his eldest son Alfred, even invested in the development of the telegraph, which was completed by Alfred Vail, William Baxter, and Samuel F. B. Morse at the factory building at Speedwell in 1838 resulting in the family having a 20% stake in the patent revenue of the telegraph (a nephew of Stephen's, Theodore Vail, would become the first president of AT&T, building a large mansion along South Street in Morristown).[20] George Macculloch, a little known and still understudied figure, was a wealthy member of Morristown society. In the early 1820s Macculloch became interested in the expansion of canal technology throughout the nation and while on vacation in nearby Lake Hopatcong he devised the plan to connect the Delaware River with the growing ports around New York City.[21] Macculloch used his influence and connections to organize the initial investment group that formed the Morris Canal and by 1829 the canal was opened for business. Climbing 760 feet in elevation meant that the canal needed more than just locks to move the

[18] Cam Cavanaugh, Barbara Hoskins, Frances D. Pingeon, *At Speedwell in the Nineteenth Century* (Morristown, NJ: Historic Speedwell, 2001).
[19] Cavanaugh & al., pg 10.
[20] Cavanaugh & al., pg 37-46.
[21] John W. Rae, *Morristown: A Military Capital of the American Revolution*, 49.

valuable coal and iron ore, and with the innovation of inclined planes the canal stretched the 102 miles between Phillipsburg and the terminus at Jersey City.[22] Although the innovation of railroads quickly competed with the canal for business, the peak year of operation was 1866 with just shy of 750,000 tons of coal and iron transported. Although the canal did not go through Morristown, the financial impact helped ensure that Morris County and the wealthy businessmen in the area would be able to maintain some say in national industry well after the New Jersey iron industry had begun its decline.

As innovators and businessmen were toiling away in Morristown and financing projects throughout the region, Morristown itself began to see an important development. With the construction of the Morris & Essex Railroad, Morristown had a direct line to Newark, and thus New York, cutting a trip that was otherwise a daylong affair down to only two hours.[23] This service quickly expanded and Morristown gained important and enduring ties to New York City from, which the Watchung Mountains had previously isolated it. As a result, Morristown, as a regional social and political center, emerged as a popular destination for wealthier families from New York. When rail lines eventually directly linked Morristown to New York City (thanks in part to Stephen Vail and his heavy investment and leadership in the Morris & Essex Railroad) the social scenes became interconnected, with prominent New York families socializing with the Old Guard of Morristown.

A Gilded Retreat in the Mountains

By the late antebellum period, Morristown had emerged as a popular place for the wealthy to summer. As the popularity of country houses grew, Morristown's long history and

[22] *Encyclopedia of New Jersey*, 1st ed., s.v. "Morris Canal."
[23] Cavanaugh & al., pg 62

attachment to the Revolution along with the already established commercial and social ties with New York families helped strengthen the draw.

During the Civil War and Reconstruction, New York City would gain national status as the center of the country's finance and business.[24] As the established set of New York movers and shakers grew, Morristown took on a new role. By the 1870s, members of New York society had begun moving out along the rail lines to less populated towns in Connecticut, New Jersey, and New York. For the area around Morristown this meant that the otherwise rural surroundings would become increasingly dominated by large estates. Along Madison Avenue, stretching between Morristown and Madison, New Jersey, the road became known as "the street of the 100 millionaires" because of the number of estates that ultimately popped up along the route.[25] While many of these estates have been demolished over the last fifty years, a few remain, notably Florham. Built by Hamilton Mckeon Twombly and his wife Florence Vanderbilt in 1877, the home was a 110-room replica of Hampton Court Palace with an estate of 840 acres.[26] The Vanderbilt and neighboring Ward estates were large enough that in 1899 the two wealthy men were able to break their estates away from Chatham Township to gain more control over taxes.[27] While not all the estates in the greater Morristown area were large enough to become self-governing, the opulence was reflected in society pages and magazines that helped reaffirm Morristown alongside places like Newport and Saratoga Springs.

---

[24] Sven Beckert, *Monied Metropolis: New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie, 1850-1896* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).
[25] Marjorie Kascheqski, *The Quiet Millionaires (The Morris County That Was)* (Morristown, NJ: Morris County's Daily Record, 1970), pg 4.
[26] John W. Rae, *Mansions of Morris County*, pg 11.
[27] Alan J Karcher, *New Jersey's Multiple Municipal Madness* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1998), pg 109.

While the nation's wealthy business and finance leaders came to places like Morristown to escape the conditions in the cities so did an increasingly mobile middle class. Morristown had already attracted the reputation as a popular destination for the wealthy and middle-class professionals would increasingly move to the towns along the rail routes. As with Montclair, South Orange, and Summit, Morristown was able to build itself not just into "the Millionaire City of the nation," but also an increasingly popular place for upper-middle class professionals seeking to move outside of the crowded cities.[28] Between 1880 and 1900 the population of the town more than doubled from 5,418 to 11, 267 (215% growth).[29] This growth included both the wealthy estate owners, upper-middle class professionals, and the lower class laborers who worked on the estates and as servants in the homes. In the physical layout of the town, for the most part, laborers and working-class communities emerged in areas known as Little Dublin and the Hollow, while builders and investors (notably the Keasbey family of both the Keasbey Real Estate Association and the Miller Estate Association and the Cutlers of the Cutler Land Company) developed sections of the town as a commuter suburb.[30]

This growth did not go unnoticed. Even before the flood of new residents in the gilded and progressive eras Morristown was developing a strong identity in contrast to Morris Township. With Morristown growing into a true small commuter city, the differences with Morris Township became stark reminders of the past. Completely surrounded by farms and undeveloped fields, Morristown had developed around the town's fire limits with stores, businesses, industry, county courts, churches, and schools. Towards the end of the Civil War

---

[28] Kaschewski, *The Quiet Millionaires*, pg 3.
[29] New Jersey Department of State, *Compendium of Censuses 1726-1905: Together with the Tabulated Returns of 1905* (Trenton: New Jersey Department of State, 1906), pg 68.
[30] Miller-Keasbey Family Real Estate Papers. North Jersey History Center, The Morristown and Morris Township Library; The Cutler Family Paper and the Cutler Land Company Records, 1763-1974. North Jersey History and Genealogy Center, Morristown and Morris Township Library.

differences between Morristown and Morris Township finally saw action legitimizing what had been a *de facto* situation largely from the beginning. In April of 1865 the New Jersey State Legislature incorporated Morristown as a separate entity, encircled by Morris Township.[31] While some claimed the incorporation was a "monstrous scheme" by the Republicans, two attempts to repeal the move failed in 1868 and 1869.[32] By the end of the 1860s, Morristown was securely separated from Morris Township which had been reduced in size over the decade by setting off land to both Morristown and Passaic (now Harding) Township.[33] Although the legal separation meant that Morristown was to have a separate town council and be recognized as an independent municipality, the relationship between Morristown and Morris Township remained in flux. Morristown organized the fire protection for the Township which encircled it, while Morris Township assessed taxes for the roads, poor, and schools in both the town and Township. It would take another 30 years before the total separation between town and Township were finalized. In February of 1895 Morristown was fully incorporated as a separate municipality, still geographically surrounded by the Township but with full legal independence.

By this time, Morristown had secured an identity as a modern upper-middle class suburban town through perhaps overselling the influence and impact of the many nationally known millionaires living in the area. Over the first 30 years of independence within the Township, Morristown saw growth that mirrored the growing importance of New York City. As New York developed into the nation's financial and social capital, Morristown grew into the same within the region but also gained attention through the increase in commuter traffic. The impact of the larger population became apparent as calls for modernization rang out. Millionaire

[31] "Correspondents of *The Jerseyman*," *The Jerseyman* (Morristown, NJ), 8 April, 1865.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Snyder, *TSoNJCB*, pg 194-195.

Mile became the local name for Madison Avenue, which became lined with the homes of wealthy New Yorkers looking to build large homes in Morristown's bucolic setting.

For the increasing upper-middle class community in Morristown, the growing town enabled the professionals to appropriate more power to themselves as the town reacted to demands for greater services and improvements. From the 1890s to the beginning of World War I, Morristown would grow and develop into a regional urban center, with modern utility service, sewage upgrades, calls for city beautification, and other town improvements meant to both continue growth and solidify the importance of the town as a leader within the region. For the upper-middle class professionals that called Morristown home, this call for city improvement opened the possibility of self-improvement as well. In a nation where civic engagement had long been tied to ideas of good citizenship, the professional classes of Morristown were able to link their business and social contacts to annex responsibilities that would today be considered part of a municipal government.

In Morristown this fad for municipal government had gained traction long before the Progressive Era, which saw the large-scale professionalization of city management and municipal services. As early as the 1870s wealthy members of Morristown's well connected professional class organized themselves and founded the Washington Association after four members had purchased Ford's Mansion, which had served as the headquarters for Washington during the winter of 1779-80.[34] The organization would go on to create a large museum and tourist destination around the mansion with a collection of Washingtoniana, which would in the 1930s become the nation's first National Historic Park.[35] Meanwhile, Morristown would begin

[34] National Park Service, *M:AMCotAR*, pg 42.
[35] Ibid, 43.

paving roads and providing basic public utilities. Unhappy with the slow progress done by town officials and looking to gain some prestige themselves ultimately prompted many local professionals to form the Civic Association of Morristown. Formed in 1905, the group was officially dissolved in the 40s, but by the start of World War I the group had cut back and stopped any public projects. The Civic Association of Morristown used their business and social ties to appropriate for themselves local powers that would later be taken over by the larger municipal governments that the Progressive Era helped create. From advocating for better gas lighting of the streets to forming a women's auxiliary group (the Women's Town Improvement Committee) that took the mantel of the city beautiful movement, the impact of the CAM is apparent walking through the town today. While the organization had long since been forgotten the infrastructure of sewers, expanded postal and rail service, parks, and a larger school system are just some of the legacy that the CAM left behind. Civic associations played an important role in the development of city governments and the files of the CAM show the interesting and surprising influence that upper-middle class professionals played in the expansion of city government. Although the group is all but forgotten, they laid the groundwork in Morristown for the city today.

While looking at Morristown and other local histories, it is important to remember the impact that local history has had on the national narrative. By examining the history of Morristown and the course of the Civic Association of Morristown, the way America's suburban centers expanded during the Progressive Era becomes a story of more than just large city muckraking and cases against machine bosses. The history of Morristown and the Civic Association of Morristown provide a view into the role of local reform groups. The story of Morristown shows how individuals at the local levels help influence the nation's growth.

The Progressive: Preserving Social Positions

As Richard Hofstadter outlines, the period between 1890 to the Second World War can be characterized as both a period of industrial and continental expansion that was also dominated by reform.[36] His 1955 work *Age of Reform: From Bryan to FDR* breaks the period into three smaller periods based on the mode of reform and the people behind the movements. Starting even before the 1890s the Populist movement garnered support and peaked with William J. Bryan's failed 1896 presidential bid, supported largely by farmers from the Midwest hoping for economic reforms. Through the turn of the century to 1916 the Progressive Movement takes the mantle of reform by absorbing some populist ideas and taking on a more professional and middle-class stance on reform, often characterized not as reform but assimilation. Hofstadter's final period of reform stretches from the 1930s through to the Second World War under the guidance of FDR and the New Deal programs, dominated by direct Federal government expansion and intervention in the economy. While the Morristown area was too developed to harbor significant support of the populist movement and New Deal programs were dictated from Federal offices in Washington it was the period of the Progressive movement that saw the largest changes in the Morristown Area. Between the last two decades of the nineteenth century and the start of the First World War Morristown developed into a small city, sporting a new sewage system, building and expanding both trolley and railroad service, greater access to utilities, and attempting to play a leading role in the development of Northern New Jersey as a suburban community.

[36] Hofstadter, *AoR*, pg 3

But who were the Progressives? What were their backgrounds and motivations? At the same time New Jersey grew rapidly as immigrants came to America and working families spread out of the large cities, all providing an impetus for the growth of the "Good Government" movement in the state. While the Good Government movement has been remembered for pushing state and national reforms the movement provided the groundwork for the development of local civic associations that helped ensure Good Government reforms would have supporters at the local levels. In Morristown this meant the founding of the Civic Association of Morristown, populated exclusively from the middle and upper classes of professionals that Hofstadter and others have characterized as the quintessential Progressives. Ultimately, Good Government actors in federal and state positions, but also by the Civic Association members on the local level, ensured that the class of progressives would appropriate powers and positions for themselves through reforms, be they as members of the club, reformed city councils, school superintendents, city/town bureaucrats, or any of the other positions created by the overreaching progressive reforms. Looking back at the Progressive Era inspires a sense of nostalgia- good willed citizens looking out for the well being of the poor and underprivileged, but the reality is that the actors in the Progressive movement acted just as much to serve themselves and ensure local home rule, a theme that has dominated New Jersey politics and history.

National Progressives

Looking back at the entire "age of reform" the question "who were the progressives" or who the reformers were is initially muddied by the wide variety of causes the group took up. From economic reforms led by farmers of the Populist movement to social reforms like that of universal suffrage, the demographic and ideological gambit is wide. Hofstadter devotes a large section of his work on this question. To Hofstadter, the Progressive Era was an attempt to bring

back the "civic purity" of an early time.[37] Participation in the community was meant to demonstrate not only the individual's financial capital (through the ability of devoting large amounts of time away from business) but also a demonstration of social and political capital through the ability to mobilize support for political campaigns and reform projects. Hofstadter characterizes the political actions taken at the time as either "Progressive" or "Immigrant," the later focused on the exploitation of new immigrants arriving en masse to America at the turn of the century.[38] "Progressive" political action on the other hand was in reaction to the realization that "government was beginning to pass. . . toward one. . . engendering a managerial & bureaucratic outlook."[39] Flocking behind the "Progressive" political actions, Hofstadter's Progressives were against the "Protestant-Yankee" styled new rich industrialists and businessmen in a fledgling attempt to maintain the old channels of power. As Sven Beckert outlined in *Monied Metropolis*, the Gilded Age development of a centralized elite with national scale interests corresponded with the huge financial and industrial expansion that occurred in the Reconstruction years at the expense of the old elites.[40] As the nation moved away from the regional and focus shifted to national concerns and interests local elites that had held sway over political, social, and financial interests saw their grasp give way. According to Hofstadter, the corporate rich and new rich dwarfed the previous elites.[41] Beyond the national scaled interests the new rich could outspend the old with outrageous acts of conspicuous consumption like the Bradley-Martin Ball.[42] While such outrageous spending helped differentiate between old and new money the press and public did not take kindly to the new class that seemed aloof to the

[37] Ibid, pg 6.
[38] Ibid, pg 9.
[39] Ibid, pg 10.
[40] Beckert, *TMM*, pg 13-14.
[41] Hofstadter, *AoR*, pg 135.
[42] McGerr, *AFD*, pg 4-6.

daily realities of life. In Morristown, which had become a popular summer escape for some of the nation's rich and powerful, this meant the long established families who had maintained power over the area were increasingly marginalized on the wider stage. Resentment between the old and new money helped mobilize the older establishment, which targeted the new money as having "irresponsible wealth" opposed to the "responsible wealth" that older families had accumulated in the building of local and regional businesses interests.[43]

The key to Progressives, across the different subsets, was an ultimate attempt to regain some sense of a lost power or influence. While old families sought to reestablish themselves as important players within the new national scope other subsets emerged. As studies like those conducted by Alfred D Chandler and George Mowry show, those who flocked to the progressive cause were mostly men of means, dominated by urban middle-class Protestants with college educations.[44] As shown later in this paper, this archetypal Progressive will fit perfectly within the membership ranks of the Civic Association of Morristown. At the same time, the Progressives were largely a group new to politics, looking to get in by highlighting issues with the then current administration.[45] In terms of political party affiliations, George Mowry's sample of California Progressives shows that the ranks were comprised largely from members of the Republican Party and Freemasons. While Morristown, New Jersey and the samples used in studies like that by Mowry could not be more geographically separated the two samples are eerily similar, as discussed further on in this paper.

---

[43] Hofstadter, *AoR*, pg 145.
[44] Alfred D Chandler, Jr., "The Origins of Progressive Leadership," in Elting Morison, ed., *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*, Vol. VIII (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954), pg 1462-5; George Mowry, *The California Progressives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951) pg 88-9.
[45] Chandler, ibid.

Besides similarities in the backgrounds and beliefs, the middle and upper classes who flocked to the Progressive movement the overarching theme of professionalism dominated the group. Be they lawyers, doctors, architects, or engineers professionals latched onto the Progressive movement motivated by the same logic that brought the old guard- the idea that Progressive reform would help shore up the eroding powers and public respect for educated professionals who were becoming increasingly marginalized in a world dominated by the ever ubiquitous faceless corporation.

But just as the Progressive movement took strength from a patchwork of backgrounds the nationwide movement saw statewide efforts to clean up government. Throughout the country, Progressive groups formed to promote these reforms, though often with self-interested motives. In Mobile, Alabama, David Alsobrook notes that the progressives who emerged had "fewer ties to the city's antiquated cotton-based economy" and "assumed key leadership roles."[46] The same trend emerges in Morristown and throughout the country as the nation moved from the agricultural and locally based economy to a national system. This pro-business class of progressives were more interested in the development of the economy and boosting the region than supporting truly progressive social reforms a la Jane Addams.[47] These boosters or infrastructure progressives sought to promote the regional economy within which they held major financial stakes. Using the guise of civic improvement, lobbying for a larger port or greater rail service was just as much about enlarging one's market share or customer pool as it was portrayed as a selfless attempt to help the city at large. It was through this reality that the professionals and old guard elites attempted to reframe social prestige and their place within an

[46] David E Alsobrook, "Boosters, Moralists, and Reformers: Mobile's Leadership during the Progressive Era, 1895-1920." *The Alabama Review* April 2002, pg 135.
[47] Ibid, 136.

evolving social hierarchy. In New Jersey the "Good Government" movement quickly gained traction, fueled by rapid population growth, fear of political machines, and the grossly outdated state constitution. The Good Government movement in New Jersey sought to establish "clean" politicians in power and, in line with the national movement, run government efficiently through expert rule.

One of the major efforts that Progressive municipal reformers undertook in the period was the establishment of uniform municipal budgeting. As a means to cut down on corruption and machine politics while improving efficiency, budgets were seen as an important part of the good government movement. At the head of this branch of good government reform was the National Municipal League, founded in 1894 to assume a leadership role in the research and development of reforms.[48] In New Jersey, Richard Fleischman and R. Penny Marquette note, municipal budgeting developed and took hold between 1902 and 1912 through the standardized format the NML had developed.[49] Based out of New York City, the New York Bureau of Municipal Research (NYB) called for the training of municipal workers to create a techno-bureaucracy.[50] Ultimately the budgeting movement, through the work of the NML and NYB gained traction. Hoping to prevent graft, budgets reigned in municipal and city governments and forced cities to save for projects. Where prior towns had spent (and misspent) money as they needed it through grants and appropriations, the budgeting movement locked in money each year and used a scientific approach to ensure that cities would have the funds to function.[51] Much to the disappointment, however, of the progressives, the budgeting movement failed to garner the

[48] Richard K Fleischman and R Penny Marquette, "The Origins of Public Budgeting: Municipal Reformers During the Progressive Era." *Public Budgeting & Finance* Spring 1986, pg 72.
[49] Ibid, 72.
[50] Ibid, 73.
[51] Ibid, 75.

broad based support of the larger Progressive movement as even with clear and meticulous budgeting spendthrift citizens found fault in line item reviews.[52]

New Jersey and the Progressive Movement

Wedged between New York City and Philadelphia, New Jersey has been the lucky (or some would say unlucky) recipient of the overflow populations. As a result, New Jersey developed early on as a center of truck farming for the two cities. The Gilded Age innovations in transportation allowed for New Jersey to develop as a suburban escape for growing populations. In the south, development centered around Camden to support Philadelphia. To the north, with New York City becoming the nation's premier city and the more northern industrial cities of Newark, Paterson, and Jersey City, suburban communities spread outward through Bergen, Essex, Hudson, and Morris counties. Throughout the state's history the growth rate had continued to rise, with the population growth percentage change never dropping below 13% (until 1940) and with an average growth rate of just under 30% between 1870 and 1920.[53] Just as in big cities, immigration would have a considerable impact on New Jersey. In Newark, Paterson, Elizabeth, and Jersey City immigrants flocked to the factory jobs and tenements that sprung up while in the countryside developing towns employed immigrants to help build up infrastructure. In Morristown, immigrant development was largely segregated into the two ethnic neighborhoods in town. In Little Dublin, centered on James Street, and in the Hollow, to the east of the Green, immigrants attempted to form ethnic communities. Much to the relief of Morristown's WASP ruling class the Italian population between 1910 and 1940 maintained an average growth rate of just under 6% while the towns as a whole maintained an average growth

[52] Ibid, 76.
[53] Sen-Yuan Wu, "New Jersey Population: 1790 to 2010," (Trenton: Division of Labor Market & Demographic Research, 2010), http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/dmograph/est/nj1790_2010.pdf.

rate of just over 8%.[54] But fears were not unfounded, in Morris County the Italian immigrant population had an average growth rate of 132% between 1900 and 1940 while in the county as a whole it grew at an average of 18% in the same period.

At the same time, New Jersey saw the development of intricate political machines established throughout the state, most notably that formed by Frank Hague out of Jersey City. The Hague machine would come to dominate the state's Democratic Party and by the Great Depression hold huge sway over New Deal funding in exchange of mobilizing unprecedented (and legally impossible) number of votes in favor of FDR.[55] At the same time as the Tammany machine politicians like George Washington Plunkitt were filling their pockets with "honest graft," New Jersey machines were building networks that took advantage of the state's largely outdated constitution.[56]

In New Jersey, men like Frank Sommers and Arthur Vanderbilt championed the cause of statewide Progressive reform. In 1903 Sommers, a lawyer from Essex county, joined and formed the "New Idea" movement within the Essex county Republican party.[57] Initially working to reform building and safety codes, the New Idea Republicans worked for the implementation of professional standards within county and state government. By 1911 Frank Sommers had a proven record defending the public interest against corrupt corporations and was tapped by the apex of Progressives, Woodrow Wilson, to help draft legislation during Wilson's short term as

---

[54] Erich Morgan Huhn, "Italian-Americans In Our Backyard: A Local History of Italian-American Settlement," (term paper, Seton Hall University, 2015), pg 10.
[55] Nelson Johnson, *Battleground New Jersey: Vanderbilt, Hague, and Their Fight for Justice* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2014), pg 97.
[56] William L Riordon, *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall: A Series of Very Plain Talks On Very Practical Politics* (New York: Penguin, 1995), pg 3-6.
[57] Johnson, *BNJ*, pg 27-8.

governor.[58] To fight political machines, Arthur Vanderbilt had emerged as an outspoken advocate on constitutional reform. A lawyer, Vanderbilt was a champion of constitutional reform and saw the cause to completion with the 1947 State Constitution, in no small part the work of his constant political lobbying. In the late 1910s however, Vanderbilt had joined in and formed the Essex County Republican League which used the motto, "Republican League: Clean County Government."[59] Much like the counterparts at the local level in the Civic Association of Morristown, Vanderbilt did not seek elected public office himself, rather preferring to stay behind the scenes to maintain personal connections with officials in high places. The Republican League proved to be a powerful tool for reform and one of the most successful of the Good Government organizations in the state. Ironically, Vanderbilt used his influence over the organization much like his nemesis Frank Hague controlled the machine in Jersey City, with the prestige from the organization propelling Vanderbilt to national prominence and providing the young lawyer with contacts to attain the position of county legal advisor.[60] Well into Vanderbilt's tenure as head of the League, the publication of Thomas H Reed's *Twenty Years of Government in Essex County* provided a recap of the improvement that was seen under Vanderbilts watchful eye, noting that "Arthur T Vanderbilt's entrance into politics as a reformer, however, was significant because it was the beginning of nearly twenty years of consistent and successful effort."[61] In the 1920s the Good Government movement would be active in New Jersey, lobbying for support for a revised and modern state constitution, investigating and attempting to undermine Hague and other machines, and promoting progressive legislation.

---

[58] Arthur T Vanderbilt II, *Order in the Courts: A Biography of Arthur T Vanderbilt* (New Brunswick: New Jersey Institute for Continuing Legal Education, 1997), pg 12.
[59] Johnson, *BNJ*, pg 40.
[60] Johnson, *BNJ*, pg 44.
[61] T H Reed, *Twenty Years of Government in Essex County, NJ* (New York: D Appleton-Century, 1944), pg 56.

Progressives and New Jersey Local Politics

As men like Sommers and Vanderbilt worked to develop of sound Progressive government at the state and county levels local organizations emerged to advance Progressive ideals. In Morristown these local progressives formed into the Civic Association of Morristown in 1905. In surrounding towns, like minded individuals organized themselves into similar organizations. Montclair and Short Hills, two towns that the organizers in Morristown were particularly keen to draw comparisons to, formed The Montclair Civic Association in 1894 and Short Hills Association in 1911.[62] These local organizations worked as booster clubs for the towns but also as entrepots for citizens interested in local politics. As seen further on the Civic Association of Morristown could attract not only newcomers to the political game but also several of the old guard and many who had prior experience serving in elected office. To Hofstadter, this mix of professionals and old guard establishment were the quintessential demographics of Progressive organizations. Much like a chamber of commerce today, these civic organizations lobbied for the development of towns into regional centers. By advocating for improved electric, gas, sewage, and utility services prominent members of civic associations could participate in civil society while, coincidentally, also improving both their own quality of life and financial positions.

In a time before wide reaching municipal powers and oversight the role of the civic association was to act as quasi-lobbyists on behalf of the towns and citizens to promote expansion of services. In Morristown, as we will see below, the Civic Association of Morristown membership was able to leverage their social and professional standings to advocate for improvements to the utilities and services for the town. As non-government organizations, these

[62] Civic Association of Morristown Records.

civic associations were not able to act directly on behalf of the municipalities but rather acted under the guise of organized concerned citizens. In 1910, when advocating for the removal of railroad grade crossings through Morristown, prominent local lawyers and CAM members Edward Day (chair of the Law Committee and future director) and John Coriell (chair of the Railroad Committee and another future director) wrote several letters back and forth outlining the legal basis for their position.[63] In a letter from the early 1910s the CAM started dabbling into actual municipal reform by suggesting some changes to town ordinances using Summit, East Orange, and Montclair as examples.[64] This personal appeal characterized the role the Civic Association of Morristown would play in boosting the town, tapping the personal and professional contacts of members in order to promote the town.

As will be shown later in this paper, the membership of the Civic Association of Morristown was perhaps the group's greatest strength. By having a board and committees with deep knowledge of the issues *and* a strong network of contacts the group could hold more clout than a normal neighborhood organization. As Hofstadter outlined, progressive organizations were largely dominated by the middle and upper classes, men who came from backgrounds of some means, and professionals. While old guards and white-collar professionals may appear to be diametrically opposed, one attempting to maintain the system while the other working to maintain the power of business, Hofstadter's analysis shows that in fact the two groups worked together. Although the Progressive Era is perhaps best remembered for the social reforms that the movement inspired, refocusing using Hofstadter's, for lack of a better word, cynicism shows

[63] Letters between Edward A. Day and John H. B. Coriell, August 1910, Civic Association of Morristown Records.
[64] Meeting notes, 10 April, 1914, Civic Association of Morristown Records.

that the group was more interested in establishing and maintaining power. The Civic Association of Morristown, as a case study, shows this perfectly.

From the very founding, the organization was controlled by the same group that Hofstadter described. On the Executive Board and filling every committee, members were all from either established families, former political figures, or professionals seeking to eke out a name for themselves in the community. Although there was a wealth gap between some of the older members and the younger, both groups used the CAM in an attempt to reaffirm their place at the tables of local power. The middle-class professionals who joined were seeking to regain for themselves power, respect, and influence that they saw withering away with the growing influence of the corporation.[65] Lawyers, a profession which was well represented in the CAM, initially appear as a strong and powerful group within American society, but as Hofstadter explains with the regimentation that came with corporate business came the downfall of the successful independent lawyer. Corporations demanded large legal departments to advise on the countless aspects of business and with the increased costs the development of law partnerships grew from a system of apprenticeship and business into a practical necessity as a single partner was no longer able to keep up with the sheer amount of work. Lawyers remaining in private practice were constantly under the squeeze or faced with the reality of joining a firm where they became a cog in the new corporate format of the legal industry.[66] These types of lawyers, we will see, flocked to Progressive groups like the CAM in hopes of regaining the respect that the corporate advance had denied.

[65] Hofstadter, *AoR*, pg 135.
[66] Ibid, pg 148, 157.

Ultimately the Civic Association of Morristown was comprised of the typical mix. Hoping to preserve the lost power and prestige, the old guard joined the CAM while the professionals from both the middle and upper class hoped to regain the power that had been taken with the advance of faceless business.

Yet these attempts were more than just the creation of volunteer boards and committees. Progressive reforms helped usher in the era of the professional, allowing the creation of paid bureaucratic positions that the progressive middle and upper classes would come to occupy to reinforce reforms and power. Throughout the country, towns and cities expanded social services to keep up with both expectations and increasing population. As a result, new "officials" were created and bureaucratic oversight of services increased. This increase was under the guise of improving both service and quality.

For the Civic Association of Morristown, the idea of improving professional services was key for helping establish the member's power and authority. Projects like the improvement of the town sewage system helped solidify professional technocratic power over the utility system. The improvement of utilities meant an increased reliance on technocrat ran utility firms. At the same time the extension of the trolley system, calls for improved rail service, and increased pressure on expanding the mail service meant the Civic Association of Morristown lobbied for the expansion of white-collar professional and technocratic jobs throughout Morristown. The best example lies with the appeal to replace the aging high school, which the CAM outlined a 1912, "High School Committee Report" presented in collaboration with the Women's Town Improvement Committee, the unofficial women's auxiliary for the CAM.[67] This report, bound

[67] "High School Commission Report," Civic Association of Morristown Records.

including charts and photographs, included an analysis of current school accommodations and comparisons to other local municipalities. The report made it clear that a simple renovation of the Maple Avenue School would not be enough, Morristown deserved the best.

Just as Progressives had called for the expansion of professional and technocratic power in Morristown the same was happening across the country. As teacher education was formalized new positions were created to supervise and regulate who and what was being taught. In juvenile courts positions were created to help ensure children did not fall into the revolving door of the criminal underworld. In towns, health regulations were increased that provided new jobs for medical professionals and administrators, all under the guise of public health. Beyond public health reforms, utility corporations increased and consolidated power, replacing localized control and centralizing utility services while increasing administrative demands. Ultimately the Progressive movement was more about creating a place for the movement's members than creating a safer place for all citizens.

Throughout the nation, Progressive reforms defined the decade leading up to and after the turn of the century. Demographically, the Progressive movement garnered support from a patchwork of backgrounds. As faceless corporations gained power and influence this meant professionals who had previously enjoyed an important and visible position within society were increasingly removed from power. The middle class, which had used the increased availability of education to gain status as professionals, thus faced the fact that former doors to power were now closed. Upper class elites, who had previously been at the social, economic, and political center of an extremely localized American lifestyle, found that with the emergence of a national elite class the powers of local elites were consolidated in the hands of the new megarich. Together these groups sought to use Progressive reforms to reappropriate powers for themselves. Through

the Good Government movement, Progressives aimed to retake the reins of government from political machines and the immigrant population. In New Jersey this movement gained power through the first half of the 20th century, helping empower Progressive leaders to challenge standing authority. Through the Good Government movement, the localized factions emerged forming Civic Associations to reappropriate powers back into the hands of the local elites and middle-class professionals. In Morristown this was done through the Civic Association of Morristown, which we will see below took on powers that today would have fallen to municipal governments to reaffirm the status of the Progressive founders of the group. But like all Progressive reforms, throughout the country and in Morristown, the reforms not only provided the social prestige of civic involvement. Reformers pushed to expand services that increased the role of technocratic professionals within the municipal governments. As populations increased Progressives insisted on professional regulation of city services and utilities that would reinforce the power and authority of those same groups. Ultimately, the Progressive movement was just as much about the reaffirmation of the (perceivably lost) powers of middle-class professionals and local upper-class elites as the movement was about providing improved services to the people.

The Civic Association of Morristown: Progressive, Prestige, and Power

With the national level organized by various Progressive organizations the advocates in Morristown were soon to follow suit. By the winter of 1905 the urge for local elites and professionals to organize themselves became so great that a meeting was called. These men, organizing themselves under the guise of a civic association that would work to improve the standard of living for the residents and workers in the town, gathered together an amalgamation

of an "old boys club" and young professional organization that would both promote the social prestige of the two constituent groups while appropriating what today would be considered municipal powers for themselves.

Like any organization, membership in the Civic Association of Morristown did not mean participation. Membership rolls note that while members of the national and state upper crust may have been dues paying members no evidence suggests that they took part in any of the activities of the organization. Drawing from a 1910 membership roster, names like Frelinghuysen, Kahn CAMlpin, McCurdy, and others stick out as notable residents living on some of the largest estates in the Morristown area.[68] Frederic R Kellogg, one of the major figures at the CAM, was a Morristown transplant, summering in the bucolic setting and eventually moving here full time and commuting into the city to his job as a corporate lawyer. As discussed below, his role in the CAM would be important for him in building and maintaining local social capital. At a time when the meaning of position in society was changing from traditional ideas of membership and civic participation to one where material wealth dominated the articulation of status, men like Kellogg aimed to grasp onto the more traditional modes of status. The Civic Association of Morristown was full of these types of progressives, aiming to mix self-interested social ladder-climbing with the lofty and selfless ideals of progressive reform. But at the same time, the old guard was just as eager to join in. Men like W. W. Cutler needed no entry into Morristown (or even Morris County) society. Having been born into the prominent Cutler family, the "Honourable W. W. Cutler" would have had every opportunity present had it not been for the changing tides of American social life. With the rise of the national elites the Cutler family would be pressed by the sheer volume of power men like Kahn were able to sway and

[68] 1910 Membership Roster, MCA Records

display. Joining the Civic Association of Morristown became as much a means for new members of society to get an in as it was for the old guard to stay relevant.

First examining who was joining the organization, the pattern becomes clear - wealthy or well connected middle aged white men. These men would fall into the groups Hofstadter had outlined earlier who were victims to the increasingly impersonal corporate landscape of turn-of-the-century America. Second, by looking at the projects that the Civic Association of Morristown took on, the reach of the organization becomes apparent. Not looking to provide social welfare or pursue traditional forms of charitable town improvement, the organization focused energy on promoting civic projects like an improved sewage system, expanded street lighting, greater rail and mail service, and the construction of a new school building. These projects, which today doubtlessly fall to municipal governments and government agencies, were taken up by private advocates seeking to increase *their* towns prestige. Finally, by understanding the close ties members of the Civic Association of Morristown had with past and future town officials, the interplay between private organization and municipal government becomes apparent. The members of the Civic Association of Morristown used the organizations success and the connections of prominent members and officers as a pool to supply candidates that would enhance the town's reputation both locally and nationally while gaining for the individual members insider's access to town hall and municipal officials. Looking at the Civic Association of Morristown, the dirty reality of both politics and the Progressives becomes evident.

A Demographic Analysis

When the organization officially dissolved in 1942 the records were donated, along with the remaining funds, to the Joint Free Public Library of Morristown and Morris Township.[69] Spread over five archives boxes, these surviving papers represent the record of the Civic Association of Morristown's accomplishments and aspirations. Included in the collection are scrapbooks done by the Women's Town Improvement Committee, addresses and reports that were issued by officers of the group, constitutions, by-laws, minutes, and correspondence. Although membership records have survived for select years, of more importance are the officer and directors listings. By looking at who was serving in officer and board positions, we are better able to get an idea of who was *actively* involved in the organization. While these records have survived, there are considerable gaps. Taking this into account, by analyzing the officers and board members from the year the group was founded, 1905, the next available year is 1909, and 1911 to 1915, omitting 1913 we can reconstruct a fairly solid roster of CAM leadership. There are no surviving records, with the exception of those of the Women's Town Improvement Committee, between 1916 and the 1940s when the remaining officers start recording the motions to dissolve the organization.

Looking at the actual minutes and meeting records, over the six years analyzed, 88 individuals served in positions as officers, board members, or committee members. These 88 members were then compared with the 1910 Federal Census with 62 names identified. By comparing the names with the information provided in the census, the socioeconomic background of the Civic Association of Morristown's members becomes apparent, providing information on employment, household size, and address. Taking this information, it is possible

[69] Civic Association of Morristown Records

to compare the members of the Civic Association of Morristown to the archetypical progressive that Hofstadter and others have created.

The records show, comparing the Civic Association's records with the Census records, that the membership was in line with that of the consensus. The officers and board of the Civic Association of Morristown were wealthy, well-connected, white men from a mix of old, established, families and new professional backgrounds.

Geographically, the members that have been identified lived predominantly in the First Ward of Morristown (26 out of the 62, or 41%). The first ward at the time (and even today) consisted of large freestanding homes within a planned community, largely infill around the large late 19th century estates that dotted Madison Avenue, or “Millionaires Mile” as it was locally known. The Fourth Ward makes up the second most densely populated neighborhood of Civic Association members (18 of the 62, or just under 30%). This neighborhood includes one of the most exclusive areas of Morristown, consisting of Maple and Macculloch Avenue, and Miller Road, with large estates during the Gilded Age at the center of Morristown society. Of note in relation to the Civic Association, however, is that the development around Miller Road was organized by the Miller Estate Association.[70] This family business, organized to maintain the family's considerable local land holdings, built the area up over the 1890s as they divided the family holdings around the Macculloch Hall estate. The same year as the founding of the Civic Association of Morristown, Edward Q Keasbey was named president, being married into the family. Keasbey, a prominent lawyer, would be but one example of well connected individuals within town who would eventually serve in the Civic Association of Morristown. Of the

[70] Miller-Keasbey Family Real Estate Papers.

remaining members identified seven (or 11%) lived in the Third Ward, which includes Cutler Park, developed by the prominent Cutler family whose patriarch at the time was prominent lawyer (and future New Jersey Circuit Court Judge) Willard Walker Cutler who served on the board of the Civic Association of Morristown from its inception.[71] The Second Ward, consisting mostly of blue collar neighborhoods, only had three representatives (5%) in leadership roles, while eight members (13%) lived outside of town in either Morris Township or Passaic (today known as Harding). Though it may at first appear odd that outsiders were allowed in leadership roles at an organization devoted to improving Morristown, it would not have been uncommon considering that Morristown had only gotten full independence from Morris Township just 10 years prior and at the municipal level, membership on appointed committees often does not require residency even today. So, while technically the membership in the Civic Association of Morristown was open to anyone who could afford the $2 annual dues the geographic dispersion shows that the leadership of the organization was drawn from upper-middle class professionals and established families.

The analysis of the 63 members whose census schedules were found provides evidence supporting the thesis that members of the Civic Association of Morristown were from the upper-middle and professional class. The 1910 census provides both the occupation and the industry of that occupation. By looking at Chart 1: CAM Officer and Board Member Occupational Field it becomes apparent that most of the members were involved in the legal field, 26.98% at 17 individuals total. These 17 lawyers were comprised of everything from practicing attorneys and court officials to a corporate lawyer and even a lawyer from the prominent Pitney family (John

[71] The Cutler Family Paper and the Cutler Land Company Records, 1763-1974.

Oliver Halsted Pitney, relative to Mahlon Pitney, Supreme Court Justice). With 22.22% or 14 of the officers and board members, businessmen emerge as the second largest "occupational field." Ranging from proprietors of stores of various sizes to a successful local photographer, this grouping has by far the largest in terms of range of socio-economic power. Bankers control 11.11% of those analyzed with 7 members including stock brokers and a treasurer of a bank. Doctors and Real Estate Agents and Investors control just under 10% of those analyzed with 6 members in each of those fields, noting however that the doctors tended to be wealthier than those listed with "real estate" as their occupational field. Insurance and Clergy members were tied with 6.35% or 4 members respectively, although not surprisingly those in the insurance field ended up at the higher end of the socio-economic spectrum with a "Vice President" listed among the number. Teachers, one a professor and another a teacher at the prestigious Morristown School (now Morristown-Beard) made up 2 of the 63 or 3.17% of the officers while "Engineers" made the same contribution, including noted landscape architect John Rowettell Brinley. Only one member was listed as "Retired" and without any profiles found in mug books from the period.

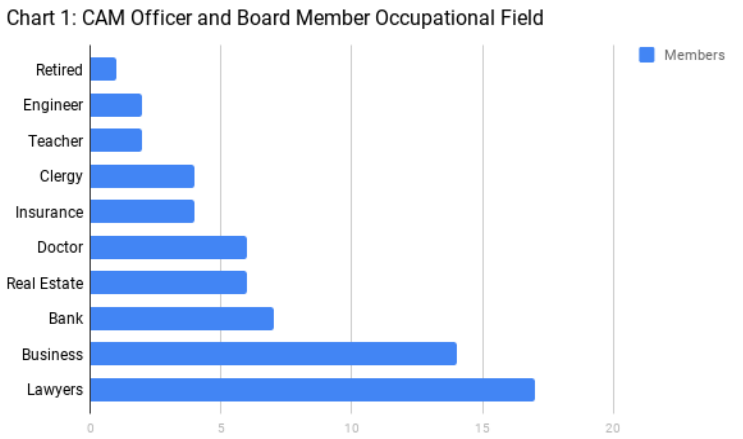

Chart 1 Graph by Erich Morgan Huhn; data adapted from Civic Association of Morristown Records.

Further examination of the employment status helps delineate those who worked either for a wage, were employers, or working on their own account. Chart 2: CAM Employment Status clearly shows that most officers and board members were working on their own account,

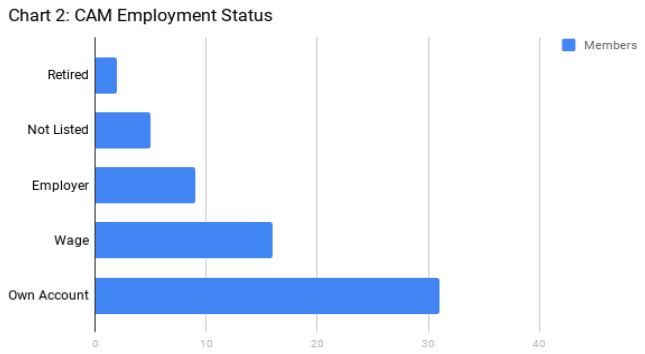

Chart 2 Graph by Erich Morgan Huhn; data adapted from Civic Association of Morristown Records.

31 out of the 63 or 49.29%. Yet no trends immediately emerge of those working on their own account with several lawyer, doctors, and businessmen listing this as their employment status. This dominance of self-employed professionals is not surprising however as it coincides with the idea of American small business owners and individualism. At the same time, 16 or 25.4% of those analyzed are listed as wage earners, something that while it may invoke images of lower-middle classes includes several of the clergy, bankers, and maybe not surprisingly both teachers. Employers make up only 9, or 14.29% of the members and come from many of the fields, largely representing those listed as large business owners running their own law practices, contracting firms, or insurance agencies. The remainder were either listed as retired or had no employment status listed on the census schedule, (7 or 11.11%). Yet demonstrating that the officers and board members were working on their own account or in relatively prestigious jobs merely shows what they *told* a census enumerator.

Enumerated in the 1910 census was also the number of servants or help that a household had living with them. By tracking the relation to the head of household, the 1910 Census shows the number of live in servants, cooks, chauffeurs, and help that a family employed. Looking at the returns of the Civic Association of Morristown's officers and board members shows that vast majority, 50 out of the 63 identified or 79%, of those analyzed had at least 1 servant within their household. Of those households with servants, 27% had one servant. In a time when household labor was cheap and easy to come by, especially with the large and growing Irish and Italian

population in Morristown, it is not surprising that a household of any means would have at least one servant. Although most households had two to three servants (24 or 38%) there were nine houses (15%) that had four to six servants. These households with larger live in staffs indicate higher class and greater wealth. Although 13, or 20% of the households did not have a live-in servant that does not mean that help was not hired for a term or day labor was not common. With Morristown's large immigrant populations by the 1900s it is highly likely that help was hired and domestic workers would have lived outside of the household as well.

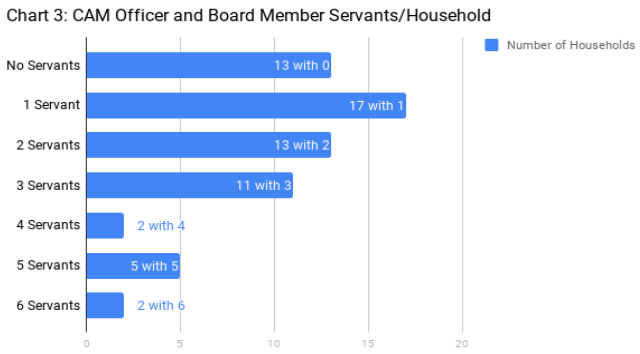

Chart 3 Graph by Erich Morgan Huhn; data adapted from Civic Association of Morristown Records.

With this analysis in hand, it is apparent that the officers and board members of the Civic Association of Morristown were not your everyman. The leadership of the organization clearly came from upper-middle classes, living in large homes with staffs. The professions of the leadership show that these men fall in line with earlier analysis done by historians like Hofstadter. The Civic Association of Morristown, though promoting the nationally recognized causes of good-government, can also be seen as a grassroots campaign to maintain power and prestige by local elites and professionals.

Projects and Goals

While the men of the Civic Association of Morristown may have been from a high social status that did not stop them from campaigning for town improvements that helped people across class lines. In a time before large municipal governments that control every aspect of civic life, the Civic Association of Morristown filled in the role. Staffed by volunteer officers and

committees with professional contacts and experience, the Civic Association of Morristown would go on to lobby and complete public projects like improved lighting of town streets, installation of a sewage system, expansion of a paved road network, increased rail, trolley, and mail service, and the construction of a new school. These improvements, which today would have been organized by the municipal government, became the *cause celebre* of the CAM and were touted as their major accomplishments speeches and reports.

An early success of the organization, the installation of electric street lighting, was spearheaded by members of the Civic Association of Morristown. In his 1910 speech at the annual meeting, CAM President Frederic R Kellogg praised the work. Proudly announcing how the installation of electric lighting has been completed with the help of the Civic Association of Morristown, through the investment of $27,000 by three of the members, who remained unnamed.[72] At the same meeting Kellogg also went on to laud the work the CAM had done in improving gas services in the town, noting cheaper rates but providing no examples of how the city betterment organization was able to do this. By taking credit for both the installation of lighting and the improved gas service, the CAM was appropriating for itself the powers that today would have rested in municipal government, while at the same time providing an avenue for members, like the three who put up the investment for the lighting, to receive public acknowledgement.

In the same speech, Kellogg lamented the death of Thomas Cauldwell, his predecessor and former mayor of Morristown. Cauldwell, who was instrumental in the organization and founding of the Civic Association of Morristown, had served as the leading force behind the

[72] President's Address, 1910 Annual Meeting, Civic Association of Morristown Records.

installation of the modern sewage system in town. Between 1906 and 1910, the installation was undertaken at the expense of the town. To offset the costs, a letter explains, a cheaper rate could be had if the entire street were completed at once, with, according to the minutes of a January 1913 meeting, the town being urged to, "induce the householders of Morristown to take steps, . . . , to construct the laterals connecting. . . with the new sewage system."[73] Although the system had been completed by 1910, the work had been long in the making, with Cauldwell being a long outspoken proponent for the improvement of sewage services in the town. Beyond the service towards this mission within the CAM, Cauldwell had served in prior years on the state sanitary commission and as early as 1906 was noted for his acumen on "sewage problems."[74] Cauldwell, as discussed below, would go on to become the mayor of Morristown, where he was able to use his position to coordinate with the Sewerage Association of Morristown to complete the project, only to die before finishing both his term and the sewage project.[75] In terms of sewage and waste management, Morristown was keeping pace with the much larger Newark. Twenty-two miles to the east of Morristown, Newark had been an important population center and industrial hub of North Jersey business activity (as mentioned earlier, the first settlers to Morristown arrived from Newark in the 1700s). Newark had long been plagued by sewage problems, and while Morristown had not yet developed the sizable population that would result in floods of sewage that had become a common issue in Newark, by the turn of the century Morristown had developed enough problems to warrant discussing the matter. Throughout the 1850s to the turn of the century, Newark had built sporadic improvements to the septic systems and water

[73] Letter to F. R. Kellogg, undated, believed 1910, Civic Association of Morristown Records; Minutes of Meeting, 13 January, 1913, Civic Association of Morristown Records.
[74] Minutes of First Regular Meeting, 17 February, 1906, Civic Association of Morristown Records.
[75] Obituary of Thomas W. Cauldwell, *The New York Times*, 11 April, 1909.

management plans, but always in short spurs and without long-range planning.[76] Nationally, decentralized and patchwork solutions to sewage maintenance were the realities before advancements made in the 1890s paved the way for standardized and city-wide systems. Between 1890 and 1909 close to seventeen thousand miles of sewage pipes were laid throughout the United States in the building boom that would follow.[77] In Newark this would mean the patchwork system would be slowly modernized (though comparable towns and cities had done the same improvements earlier) but for Morristown the scientific and professional approach would be embraced as a means of bringing the county seat into the twentieth-century.

Morristown may not have been on the national stage as a major population center, but town leaders were not shy to proclaim how important modernizing the sewage system was to the future of the town. By the 1910s town planners and engineers were all in agreement as to the importance of sewerage to both public health and a municipalities future. The national leaders in sewerage development, Leonard Metcalf and Harrison P. Eddy published the three volume *American Sewerage Practice* in 1914 and proclaimed that "the strong feeling that good public health is a valuable municipal asset and depends to a large extent upon good sewerage has been a leading cause of the willingness of taxpayers recently to embark on expensive sewerage undertakings."[78] Yet in both Newark and Morristown the costs would not be entirely absorbed by the municipalities. While both towns attempted to improve from what were essentially private or neighborhood systems, the towns developed similar means of dealing with spendthrift property owners and the realities of limited budgets. In Newark, public sewage projects were only

[76] Stuart Galishoff, *Newark: The Nation's Unhealthiest City 1832-1895* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988), pg 38, 124-130.
[77] Ibid, pg 122.
[78] Leonard Metcalf and Harrison P Eddy, *American Sewerage Practices*, 3 vols. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1914), I:1.

undertaken on streets when 50% of the property owners had petitioned for the improvements, a system that Morristown would utilize when approaching the issue.[79] In terms of the costs, Newark had agreed to build the sewer mains and would charge the property owner only for the costs of the laterals connecting to the property.[80] Morristown would mirror this approach of charging only for laterals. While the members of the Civic Association of Morristown may not have been directly involved in the implementation of the new sewerage system some of the officers were keen to talk about the matter. Letters and minutes from a meeting in 1910 show that the officers were taking time to talk about the project. Officers, although without any actual power, attempted to come up with ways to "induce the householders of Morristown to take steps, . . . , to construct the laterals connecting . . . with the new sewerage system . . . ."[81] An informal note to CAM President Kellogg recalls that the construction company doing the work would provide a cheaper rate should all the houses on a street build laterals at the same time and given the close relationship that the CAM officers and leadership had with municipal, county, and state officials (and within the community as a whole for that matter) it would be easy to imagine these ideas and concerns being shared behind the closed doors at private parties and dinners.

As mentioned above, the acts of legislature that created Morristown free from the Township in 1865 and 1895 respectively created a weak town without a large municipal government. In the original 1865 "charter" of the town, tax assessment (and thereby funds for the maintenance of roads) was run through the more rural Township which preferred to spend money on routes that would benefit the farmers of the area rather than spending on interior roads around the more commercial town. With the 1905 legislation, Morristown had become fully

[79] Galishoff, *Newark*, pg 124.
[80] Ibid, pg 129.
[81] Meeting Minutes, 13 January, 1910, Civic Association of Morristown Records.

independence and was able to organize and fund the paving of roads independent of Morris Township's interests. Throughout the 19th century, growing towns struggled to organize and fund the paving of the dirt roads that dominated both urban and rural life. Within New Jersey, Newark had developed as one of the principal towns in the North of the state. As early as 1836, the Town Charter for Newark gave the growing town powers to pave streets as seen fit.[82] Yet it would take time for the idea of street paving as a municipal responsibility to catch on. Municipal powers may have been in place, through the mid-1870s the funding of street paving projects was assumed by property owners.[83] Although property owners may have hoped that passing the bill would make the long process of street improvements faster, municipalities were slow to follow through on plans to pave and level even busy roads and thoroughfares. In the case of Newark, in 1870 only 27.1 miles of road were paved, with only 23 miles more added over the next two decades of the towns 186 total mileage.[84]

For Morristown, even with enabling legislation, the interests of the private non-government Civic Association of Morristown would be present. As part of the committee structure, the CAM included a "Committee of Streets and Roads" which advocated for the paving of local roads. In 1909 F E Struts, a local successful produce merchant, was named the committee chair. The middle-aged merchant may not have attained much fame himself, but his committee included the famed landscape architect John Rowettell Brinley.[85] Brinley, calling Morristown home at the turn of the century, gained notoriety with his collaborations with the larger Olmsted firm, working on the New York Botanical Gardens and helping with the commission for Otto Kahn, a wealth banker and former Morristown residence, after his house

[82] Galishoff, *Newark*, pg 37.
[83] Ibid, pg 67.
[84] Ibid.
[85] 1909 Annual Meeting Report, Civic Association of Morristown Records.

burnt down and he decided to move to Long Island and build Oheka Castle. Although Struts could not claim an important celebrity like his underling Brinley, Struts and many of the other officers in the CAM were keen to take advantage of their newfound authority. Writing to CAM President Kellogg, Struts used a "Road Committee" letterhead, printed on quality paper with large capital letter printing out his chairmanship. Attempts like this were not uncommon within the leadership of the CAM as other committees printed respective letterheads for themselves. Ultimately this helps reinforce the idea that the Civic Association of Morristown was just as much about helping establish and promote good government and the improvement of the town as it was about promoting the good work and powers of the members.

Another committee keen to use letterhead to imply authority, the "Railroad Committee." Organized to help promote the increased service of the Lackawanna Railroad line that connected Morristown to New York, the committee would go on to lobby for a new rail station and the removal of the grade crossing at Morris Avenue. Chaired by John H B Coriell, the 19 year old treasurer of the Morristown Trust Company, the members exchanged letters regarding the issues on printed letterhead and signed listing their office. The content of these letters take the form more of official legal counsel than that of town boosters. In an August 1910 letter to Coriell, the 23 year old lawyer Edward A Day explained that the town could "compel" the Lackawanna Railroad to remove and improve the grade crossing at Elm Street and Morris Avenue, referring to the traffic caused by embarking and disembarking trains that blocked the intersections as "a public nuisance."[86] In explaining the position that *the town* should make, Day detailed that the town could not tell the railroad company to fix this intersection but rather that there were legal means to fix the problem. In a letter later that afternoon in reply to Coriell's response, Day

[86] Letter to John H B Coriell, 15 August, 1910, Civic Association of Morristown Records.

explained that to fund the project, the Lackawanna Railroad might ask the town to contribute a percent of the cost of the project, in accordance with state laws.[87] In terms of the construction of a new train station in town, the CAM may not have been as instrumental as they claimed. By 1912 the existing station in Morristown had both outgrown capacity and become outdated. With record profits and a desire to rebrand, the Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western Railroad started construction on the new station with an elevated track at the crossings at Elm and Morris.[88] For the members of the Railroad Committee, this long term solution had been expected but no record have survived proving any influence by the CAM on the DL&W decisions. While the new station was celebrated as the jewel in the crown of the new DL&W, having contracted Frank J Niles to design a new theme for the stations along the Morris & Essex Line, the Civic Association of Morristown reveled in a victory they had nothing to do with.

Just as with the lobbying for an expanded railroad, the members of the CAM made the expansion of trolley and mail service important points in their agendas that were to be largely decided beyond their reach. In the case of the trolley, the Morris County Traction Company had been founded in 1899 and planned to build a line connecting Lake Hopatcong with Newark.[89] Though headquartered in Morristown the line did not extend there until ten years after the company's founding, and even then only providing a local service between Morristown and the unincorporated Morris Plains less than two miles down Speedwell Avenue.[90] The CAM had brought up the "trolley question" as early as 1905 at the founding meeting, predating the

[87] Ibid.
[88] National Register of Historic Places, Delaware Lackawanna & Western Railroad Station, Morristown, Morris, New Jersey, 80002514, pg 8.
[89] Linda Ross, "A Romantic Trolley Ride Through Morris County," (Morristown, NJ: North Jersey History and Genealogy Center, 2016).
[90] Ibid.

existence of any track in town by four years, and continued to advocate for expanded service.[91] All the while, the Morris County Traction Company had encountered various problems of their own that resulted in a reorganization in 1910. Reorganized, the newly flush with cash MCTC could connect the western section of tracts with Dover that same year, but other causes the CAM had been pushing stifled the eastbound expansion the CAM members had been calling for.[92] The eastbound section would connect the Morristown Green down Morris Avenue through to Madison and Newark. The short connection between The Green and the train station, only about a third of a mile, was halted due to plans for the expanded DL&W station and rail crossing, mentioned above. By 1914 the expansion had been completed, linking Morristown with equally prominent but more suburban Madison and the commercial centers at Newark.[93] This project, without any surviving evidence in the records at the Joint Free Public Library of Morristown and Morris Township, appears to have been the result of work done not by the CAM but rather by the interested investors of the Morris County Traction Company. But the "trolley question" victory was only one of many victories that the CAM heralded as their own. In 1915, the last truly active year for the CAM, the cornerstone was laid for the new Post Office building on Morris Avenue at the corner of The Green. While the CAM had included the expansion of postal service on its platform as early as 1910 and had created a committee by the 1912 annual report, it is foolish to think this local organization would be able to hold sway over the United States Postal Service.[94] Morristown by the 1910s, as mentioned above, was a growing regional and suburban center and would have required enlarged postal service regardless of the wants and pride of the civic

[91] Meeting Minutes, 12 December, 1905, Civic Association of Morristown Records.
[92] Ross, "A Romantic Ride Through Morris County."
[93] Ibid.
[94] Meeting Minutes, 1910, Civic Association of Morristown Records; 1912 Annual Report, Morristown Civic Association, 1912, Civic Association of Morristown Records.

boosters at the Civic Association of Morristown. Ultimately, it is questionable the impact that the Civic Association of Morristown had on calls for new a new train station, expanded trolley service, and the new post office but the organization was keen to promote these ideas and capitalize on their success.

One project that the Civic Association of Morristown did have an impact on was the expansion of the High School. In the early 1910s, the CAM began grumbling for improving the local high school building. These grumbles would eventually result in the construction of a new high school at a larger campus. While in 1910 the Maple Street School had been enlarged, the poor conditions sparked controversy at the CAM. By 1912, the CAM had formed a special committee for researching this problem. The Women's Town Improvement Committee, an organization founded by the wives of CAM members, would lead the cause, and the two groups submitted the "High School Committee Report" in 1912 which compared the school facilities in Morristown with that of other local schools and judged the feasibility of yet another addition to the Maple Street School compared with the costs of building a new high school. The Mary Cutler, wife of CAM Board of Directors member Willard Walker Cutler whose father had been one of the original School Board trustees when the Maple Avenue School opened in 1869, would go on to lobby for support, with the joint report submitted by the CAM and WTIC noting that building a new school would be the best plan.[95] Included in the annual report for 1912 and a constant topic at meetings, the CAM left the issue in the hands of the WTIC with the occasional help in the form of open letters or public announcements. In *The Jerseyman*, an CAM meeting about the issue was mentioned, saying,

[95] Linda Ross, "The Early Struggles for Public Schools in Morristown," (Morristown, NJ: North Jersey History and Genealogy Center, 2015).

> "Members of the Civic Association, Women's Town Improvement committee and private citizens attended a conference with the Board of Education Wednesday night over school matters. The fifty people present passed resolutions that it was the sense of the meeting that a new high school building should be erected at a cost of not less than $150,000 nor more than $250,000. . . ."[96]

Between the publication of the High School Committee Report and the eventual groundbreaking of the new Morristown High School in 1916 the town had become divided, leading to attempts by the School Board to simply add on to the existing Maple Avenue School. Voters who overwhelmingly favored a new school soundly defeated this attempt at compromise.[97] When the ground had been broken for the new Morristown High School, the new building was state of the art and include a gymnasium, auditorium, and four floors of classrooms. Yet even this victory would come too late for the CAM. Although the CAM had been active in the promotion of the new school, no records or public notices exist for the organization between 1916 and the early 1940s. The group had gone dormant without any trace of reasoning. Yet its own auxiliary had eclipsed the CAM as the Women's Town Improvement Committee continued through the 1910s and eventually merge to form the Morristown Women's Club.

Power through Position

But while the records of the CAM may not prove the role of the organization in key victories the group claimed, the membership of this private organization shows the blurred lines between municipal and private powers. Claiming membership that was open to the public, it has been established above that in reality the membership drew itself from the established and well

[96] *The Jerseyman* (Morristown, NJ), June 7, 1912, page 3.
[97] Ross, "The Early Struggles for Public Schools in Morristown."

to do, yet these men were more than just economically advantaged and many claimed ties to various forms of government. With members on town council, throughout city hall, serving at the county level, and even in Trenton, it is no wonder that the CAM could push around its causes and arguably provide a backdoor into municipal government.

Starting before the organization had been founded, future members of the CAM would play important roles in local government. Theodore Ayers, who would serve for several years on the Board of Directors for the CAM, had a long established history in Morristown starting with his service as inspector of elections when Morristown was first separated from the Township.[98] Ayers went on to serve as mayor of Morristown from 1876 to 1879 and in the interim after Thomas Cauldwell's sudden death in 1908. Alfred Mills, who served as mayor before Ayers, would serve on the Board of Directors and Law Committee during his old age. Ayres and Mills were not the only member at Town Hall, however, with CAM member Edward A Quayle serving three, two-year terms starting in 1894 before his time on the Law Committee of the CAM while working as an attorney. Alexander Bennell, a successful grocer turned investor, held the office of mayor between 1906 and 1907 while serving on the Board of Directors for the CAM. Less conspicuously, members served on various other committees and boards, like John R Burr who served seven years as fire warden along with his time on the Board for the CAM.[99] Eugene S. Burke is another example, having served as the secretary for the Morristown Sewage Commission before serving on the executive board for the CAM.[100]

---

[98] *The Jerseyman* (Morristown, NJ), 8 April, 1865, Page 2.
[99] *Biographical and Genealogical History of Morris County, New Jersey*..., Volume 2, 447-448
[100] New Jersey State Sewerage Commission, *Report of the State Sewerage Commission to the Legislature, Session of 1901* (Trenton: John L. Murphy Publishing Co., 1901) pg. 220.

Politically, the most prestigious member was Frank D Abell, who served a five year term as State Senator from 1926 to 1931 after 12 years as County Freeholder.[101] Abell had served as the Director and on the Executive and Membership Committees of the CAM. Government connections would have played well for potential members, and helped new and young Good Government advocates in this old boys club. Politically, the group was predominately Republican, of the 62 identified 16 had political affiliations listed in contemporary mug books or obituaries. Of those whose politics were identified, 62.5% were Republican, with 2 more (12.5%) believed to be and another 2 listed as "Progressives" while only one was a confirmed Democrat and another a possible Democrat. Of the Progressives, CAM Director Stephen S Day was listed as the chair of the Morris County Progressive Party. Politics ran deep in the organization, with importance placed on those who had or were able to make connections. While no evidence exists of backroom deals, the informal nature of the municipal government at the time in Morristown would have meant that, especially during the periods of CAM member administrations, the lines between Town Hall and CAM meetings could very easily have been blurred.

Ultimately, the Civic Association of Morristown was a cross between Progressive organization and platform for self-aggrandizement and promotion. Membership was open to anyone willing to pay the $2 annual dues.[102] While not an extreme cost to the ordinary citizen in Morristown, with state overall statistics showing only 4% of men earning less than $5 a week, the amount inflates to about $50 in today's value, a small cost but still higher than most dues payments for non-profits in the area.[103] *De facto*, membership was limited to a targeted audience.

[101] "Frank D. Abell Sr., Morristown Leader" *New York Times*, 23 November 1964.
[102] Minutes, 1910, JFPLMMT
[103] Wages in the United States, 1908-1910: a study of state and federal wage, 61.

This mean that the people who could join would have been limited to middle class families interested in investing in the town and their own future, and the upper-middle class old guard and new professionals who were keen to take advantage of this market to advertise their own importance. Looking at the names of those who filled the officer and committee positions within the CAM, it is apparent that the CAM was not a place for the everyman. With leadership filled by the wealthy, upper-middle class from both old guard and young professional backgrounds, the ability for the group to work behind closed doors was apparent. Nevertheless, this lack of transparency was glossed over. In November of 1910, a concerned member wrote to CAM President Kellogg complaining how business was done behind closed doors at private committee meetings, although Kellogg's reply has been lost, the concerned member wrote a second letter noting Kellogg's response as inadequate. While the concerned members letters fell on deaf ears, the leadership of the CAM was busy working on their projects, even if the majority of the victories were more happenstance than the result of the members hard work. The improvement of lighting, sewage, and paved road conditions all may have been helped along by CAM members, but the work to improve rail, trolley, and mail service was no doubt above the reach of CAM members. That said, the availability of politically connected individuals within the CAM, and no doubt to some similar extent the professional connections, helped to get things done. Surprisingly, the only true success that the CAM could claim was guided by the work of the groups auxiliary organization after the CAM. By looking at the CAM leadership, the projects that they advocated for, and the connections that the group had, it is apparent that Morristown's experiment into progressive good government was as honest as the intentions of Progressives at the national level. Members were not as much interested in the advancement of Morristown as

they were interested in saving or carving out a position for themselves within a changing social landscape.

Conclusion: Progressive Realities

Although the story of the Civic Association of Morristown may not have national implications and the organization was only active for, about, ten years, the information gained by looking at the local level of progressive activism sheds light on long established beliefs. Like the mugwumps of the late 1800s, the progressives of the first decade of the twentieth century saw themselves in terms of the shifting landscape. Old guard elites and up-and-coming professionals looked in awe as corporate leadership stole their place as the bastions of political, social, and economic capital. With larger coffers, the corporations that dominated American political, social, and economic life were able to out pay and outplay locally prominent individuals. As Hofstadter and others have noted, a socioeconomic analysis of progressive organizations show that the members were not simply middle-class Americans working an altruistic attempt to preserve American ideals but rather that progressive groups were led by upper-middle class professionals and local elites who were threatened, just as earlier mugwumps, by the increase in power of corporations at their own expense.

This paper, by looking at the local experience of progressive reformers at the Civic Association of Morristown, proved that this was not just the case in large cities. Over the long history of Morristown, the small county seat has grown from rural outpost for expansionist protestant colonists to the large and thriving regional center that the town is today. Throughout that period, Morristown has seen many changes, serving as the headquarters for a rebellious

army, building up as an important industrial center based around the Speedwell Iron Works, playing a key role as finance center for Northern New Jersey developments like the railroad and canal, and, perhaps most noted by local historians, hosting countless of the rich and mighty during the Gilded Age as a popular summer retreat with both close ties to American history and the future as New York gained prominence on the national, and international, stage. The old guard of Morristown played an important role in those changes, but perhaps none more flagrantly apparent as during the Progressive Era. Flocking to Morristown to connect themselves with old families and even older money, the town grew and became a popular destination for both the old and new well-to-do.

With the connections to New York City, only one hour away by rail and with several subscription club cars available for commuters willing to pay the extra fees, the Good Government movement initiated by progressives found fertile ground. Upper-middle class professionals, who across the nation used Good Government to edge into local politics and gain prestige that would support their newfound "place" within society, mingled with the local elites. The local elites, who had been in essence crowded out by the influx of new elites with national reach and seemingly limitless coffers, would take in these pretenders to the thrones of democratic power. By having the old guard like Colonel Edward L Dobbins, former mayors Alexander Bennell and Edward Arthur Quayle, and the powerful Pitney and Cutler families giving the nod, progressive professionals were given permission to act as agents against the influence of the common corporate enemy. At the Civic Association of Morristown, from the very founding, local elites played an important role in ordaining new professionals in the fight to maintain power.

Without expanded municipal governments like we have today, local elites and upper-middle class professionals were able to exploit personal and professional connects to take into their own hands the causes that today would have belonged to the municipal government. Organizing sewage development, installing electric lighting, paving roads, improving rail, trolley, and mail service all may seem like things the town would do, but with membership in leadership positions held by town officials and well connected individuals the need for a bureaucracy was irrelevant. Improvements were done through with a behind-closed-doors mentality which the CAM eagerly exploited by taking credit for the accomplishments, even when their role was questionable at best.

Yet for reasons unknown by 1916, the organization had gone dormant. Although the group would not officially be dissolved until 1942, no meetings were recorded and no activity had been saved. The only surviving part of the Civic Association of Morristown, apart from four boxes at the local library archives, was the Women's Town Improvement Committee that amalgamated with other organizations to create the Morristown Women's Club. By 1916 all the major projects that the organization had spent their short life rattling their saber over had been completed, or were in final stages. The town had a modern sewage system. The town was brought to light with modern electric lighting. Roads were being paved. The trolley had been extended. A new train station and post officer were opening. And the WTIC had organized a grassroots campaign for the building of a new school.

As brick and mortar projects had succeeded, I conclude that the social aspect of the Civic Association of Morristown had played its role by 1916 as well. Members from the elite had successfully demonstrated their important role in guiding in a new generation of leaders, albeit from new professional backgrounds. The upper-middle class professionals, in turn, had shown to

the elites the important role the control over professional connections within the feared corporate world could have. While membership had never been large, the control of the organization, and just as likely the knowledge about what the group was actually up to, had always been done in committee. It is likely that the organization realized there was no real need. Elites and professionals had come together and met on common grounds, attempting to maintain the prestige that both had envisioned that they deserved, the elites deserving by birthright and the professionals deserving through their hard work. The social bridges had been built, so there was no longer a need to revitalize and focus on new projects. The leadership, mixed between old guard and new professionals, had weathered the storm and maintained power, literally controlling town hall in the process.

The history of the Civic Association of Morristown may not have national ramifications, but the analysis shows the human side of the Progressive Era. Men attempting to control the change grouped together and used what resources they had to protect themselves and their interests. The fact that these men were rich and (locally) powerful and exploited sympathetic ears by pandering to the interests of local vanity may have been overlooked, but their story is repeated throughout the nation and throughout time.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

1910 United States Census (Free Schedule), Morristown, Morris County, New Jersey. 21 April, 1910; National Archives and Records Administration publication T624, 1,178 rolls.

Biographical and Genealogical History of Morris County, New Jersey. New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1899.

Civic Association of Morristown Records, 1905-1945, Box 1, Folder 1, HM51 MSS Civi, North Jersey History and Genealogy Center, Joint Free Public Library of Morristown and Morris Township.

----. *High School Commission Report*. Morristown, NJ: Civic Association of Morristown, 1915.

The Cutler Family Paper and the Cutler Land Company Records, 1763-1974. North Jersey History and Genealogy Center, Morristown and Morris Township Library.

History of Morris County. New York: Munsell & Co., 1882; reprint, Morristown, Morris County Historical Society, 2000.

The Jerseyman. Morristown, NJ, 1865-1915.

Metcalf, Leonard and Eddy, Harrison P. *American Sewerage Practices*, 3 vols. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1914.

Miller-Keasbey Family Real Estate Papers. North Jersey History Center, The Morristown and Morris Township Library; The Cutler Family Paper and the Cutler Land Company Records, 1763-1974. North Jersey History and Genealogy Center, Morristown and Morris Township Library.

New Jersey Department of State. *Compendium of Censuses 1726-1905: Together with the Tabulated Returns of 1905*. Trenton: New Jersey Department of State, 1906.

New Jersey State Sewerage Commission. Report of the State Sewerage Commission to the Legislature, Session of 1901. Trenton, John L. Murphy Publishing Co., 1901.

Reed, T. H. *Twenty Years of Government in Essex County, NJ*. New York: D Appleton-Century, 1944.

Riordon, William L. *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall: A Series of Very Plain Talks On Very Practical Politics*. New York: Penguin, 1995.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Alsobrook, David E. "Boosters, Moralists, and Reformers: Mobile's Leadership during the Progressive Era, 1895-1920." *The Alabama Review* (April 2002).

Beckert, Sven. *Monied Metropolis: New York City and the Consolidation of the American Bourgeoisie, 1850-1896*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Cavanaugh, Cam, Hoskins, Barbara, and Pingeon, Frances D. *At Speedwell in the Nineteenth Century*. Morristown, NJ: Historic Speedwell, 2001.

Chandler, Alfred D. Jr. "The Origins of Progressive Leadership." *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt*, Vol. VIII Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954.

Cunningham, John T. *The Uncertain Revolution: Washington & the Continental Army at Morristown*. West Creek, NJ: Cormorant Publishing, 2007.

Department of the Interior. National Register of Historic Places, Delaware Lackawanna & Western Railroad Station, Morristown, Morris, New Jersey, 80002514.

Federal Writers' Project. *New Jersey: The American Guide Series*. New York: Hastings House, 1946.

Fleischman, Richard K. and Marquette, R. Penny. "The Origins of Public Budgeting: Municipal Reformers During the Progressive Era." *Public Budgeting & Finance* (Spring 1986).

Galishoff, Stuart. *Newark: The Nation's Unhealthiest City 1832-1895*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1988.

Hofstadter, Richard. *The Age of Reform*. New York: Vintage Books, 1955

Huhn, Erich Morgan. "Italian-Americans In Our Backyard: A Local History of Italian-American Settlement," Term Paper, Seton Hall University, 2015.

Johnson, Nelson. *Battleground New Jersey: Vanderbilt, Hague, and Their Fight for Justice*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2014.

Karcher, Alan J. *New Jersey's Multiple Municipal Madness*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1998.

Kascheqski, Marjorie. *The Quiet Millionaires (The Morris County That Was)*. Morristown, NJ: Morris County's Daily Record, 1970.

Lurie, Maxine. *A New Jersey Anthology*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010.

---- and Mappen, Marc. *Encyclopedia of New Jersey*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004.

---- and Veit, Richard. *New Jersey: A History of the Garden State*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2012.

McCormick, Richard P. *New Jersey from Colony to State, 1609-1789*. Princeton: Van Nostrand, 1964.

McGerr, Michael. *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Morris County Historical Society. *Tours in Historic Morris County*. Morristown, NJ: Morris County Historical Society, 1977.

Mowry, George. *The California Progressives*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951.

National Park Service. *Morristown: A Military Capital of the American Revolution*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1961.

Nearing, Scott, *Wages in the United States, 1908-1910: A Study of State and Federal Statistics* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1914), pg 61.

Rae, John W. *Morristown: A Military Headquarters of the American Revolution*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Press, 2002.

Rohrer, S. Scott. *Jacob Green's Revolution: Radical Religion and Reform in a Revolutionary Age*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State Press, 2014.

Ross, Linda. "A Romantic Trolley Ride Through Morris County." Morristown, NJ: North Jersey History and Genealogy Center, 2016.

----, Linda. "The Early Struggles for Public Schools in Morristown." Morristown, NJ: North Jersey History and Genealogy Center, 2015.

Snyder, John E. *The Story of New Jersey's Civil Boundaries: 1606-1968*. Trenton: Bureau of Geology and Topography, 1969; reprint, Trenton: New Jersey Geological Survey, 2004.

Vanderbilt, Arthur T. II. *Order in the Courts: A Biography of Arthur T Vanderbilt*. New Brunswick: New Jersey Institute for Continuing Legal Education, 1997.

Wu, Sen-Yuan. "New Jersey Population: 1790 to 2010." Trenton: Division of Labor Market & Demographic Research, 2010. http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/dmograph/est/nj1790_2010.pdf.