



Horse & Plow

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Clerk's Corner

We live in a land of freedom which has been defended and preserved by the many persons who have served our country in the military branches. Those veterans are well represented through various National Veterans

Organizations which exist in Salem County and throughout the nation. It is fitting and appropriate that we honor those organizations and their veteran members.

The Salem County Clerk will conduct a special event to give recognition to the Salem County Veterans Organizations on Flag Day, June 14, 2009. Letters of invitation are being sent to the various organizations and their officers to be awarded the tribute and honor which they so truly deserve. More details will be forthcoming in public announcements.

The Salem County Clerk's office provided a Mother's Day Tribute in 2008. This year, we will honor the Fathers of Salem County with a pictorial Father's Day Tribute on our website and at the County Courthouse. We will accept pictures of fathers with their names and the name and address of the person submitting the photo. The Tribute will continue through the month of June.

All information should be provided no later than May 20th. For further information on these projects, contact County Clerk Gilda Gill.

Thank you for your support in our endeavors.

Gilda T. Gill
Salem County Clerk

Salem Lights Up - 1889

In Salem County all lights before electricity relied on a flame. The most common means of lighting a home was candlelight, oil lamp, or a gas light. Candles were originally made of animal fat and were foul-smelling, produced a lot of smoke, and not much light. Oil lamps were an improvement but still had an odor and were very dangerous.

In September 1878, a group of New York City reporters traveled to Menlo Park, New Jersey to the laboratory of the world famous inventor Thomas Edison. Edison announced he had solved the problem of a practical electric light bulb. "In just six weeks, illumination by gas-light would be obsolete." He declared.

He would create a vast new industry to provide electric power that would light up America and revolutionize the world. Gas stocks plum-

meted overnight.

In 1879, Thomas Edison invented the carbon-filament lamp and a direct current generator for incandescent electric lighting. On New Year's Eve, a crowd of 3,000 people gathered in awe to see the first electric lights cast their glow over Menlo Park.

Ten years later printed in the *Salem South Jerseyman*, February 26, 1889:

...at exactly 5:30pm on Saturday evening last, the incandescent system of electric lighting went into operation in Salem. It was not generally known that the lights were to be turned on, and when the little lamps began to throw out light, many of those who had introduced the wires into their businesses and residences were surprised.

Everything at the engine and dynamo houses worked smoothly, and the light furnished was a steady and brilliant one.

Some expected their windows

to bulge out with the light, were of course disappointed, a number of whom were compelled to resort to gas or lamps to get the usual amount of light, but on the whole the takers of light were generally satisfied.

Those who use the light say: RS Bunting, clothier – "Heretofore I have been using 14 gas jets to light my store. I now have 9 electric lights of 16 candle power and two of 32 candle power. I am highly pleased with the light."

HC Bailey, tobacconist – "My three electric lights do not give as much light as my three gas jets. I am not satisfied."

Some amusing incidents were reported. A rural visitor undertook to light a cigar from one of the electric lamps in one of our stores, while another citizen declared that one of the elec-

continued on back page

Thomas Edison, at a Glance

Thomas Edison's inventions changed the world. He was a prolific inventor whose brilliant ideas included the light bulb, phonograph, and the motion picture camera.

He was issued a total of 1,093 US patents—the largest number held by any individual. Not everything he created was a success however. One concept that never took off was Edison's idea of using

cement to build things. He



Unfortunately, concrete was too expensive and the idea was never accepted. Cement wasn't a

formed the Edison Portland Cement Co. in 1899, and made everything from cabinets (for phonographs) to pianos and houses. Unfor-

total failure, though. His company was hired to build Yankee Stadium in the Bronx.

Although Edison was a clever man with several ideas, many of his patents were actually made by his employees. Edison then patented their work and did not share the credit of the innovation.

continued... Salem Lights Up 1889

tric lights "leaked".

In about a month the lights were updated. From the *South Jerseyman* March 26, 1889:

On Saturday, the arc system was operated for a short time to test the machinery and lamps. The trial was a success. On Monday evening, the contract with the gas company expired and the new system was put into regular operation. The light furnished was of great power and brilliancy. Only 20 lights were lighted on the principal streets. The lamps are 2000 candle power double arc lights. The lights will burn all night from dusk to daylight. The Electric Light Company is to be congratulated on the success. -

Not everyone was pleased with the new electric lights as seen in the *South Jerseyman* June 25, 1889 Letter to the Editor:

There is considerable complaint about the electric lights; a large number of them are out half the time. They do not give as good satisfaction as our old system of gas lamps. An example is the light on Union Street. Some nights it burns for a few hours; other times it would flicker and die out, last Saturday night it did not light at all. It was dark as Erebus on that street.

If this keeps on the city will have a lawsuit on its hands for damages for a broken limb or neck. In our opinion, the arc light system is not a success. Does the city pay for lights that don't burn? Yours, "Union Street" -

It seems "Union Street" may have had a point. From Wikipedia.com

Open Arc lamps were used in the late 19th & early 20th century by many large cities for street lighting. Arc lamps use high current between two electrodes (typically carbon rods) and require substantial maintenance. Their bright light required that the early arc lamps be placed on rather high (60 to 150-foot) towers. —

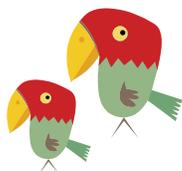


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The Wizard: "Have Faith and Go Forward!"

Some of Edison's Insights



"Be courageous. I have seen many depressions in business. America has emerged from these stronger and more prosperous. Be brave as your fathers before you. Have faith and go forward!"

"Your worth consists in what you are and not what you have. What you are will show in what you do."

"The chief function of the body is to carry the brain around."

"The three great essentials to achieve anything worth while are: Hard work, Stick-to-itiveness, and Common sense."

Early Paparazzi ...

In the year 1916, Edison, Henry Ford, and Harvey Firestone began a tradition of vacationing together. They were followed by the press everywhere they went.

Salem Standard & Jerseyman 10/22/1931

The death of Thomas A Edison, on Sunday, at the advanced age of eighty-four years marks the passing of the greatest genius this country has produced. No man of this or any other time has left behind him, in the electrical world particularly, such a magnificent record of achievement. The whole country mourns the loss of this great inventor.

The nation dimmed its light bulbs for one minute on the day of his funeral.

Did you know?

Edison's last breath is reportedly contained in a test tube at the Henry Ford Museum. Ford reportedly convinced Charles Edison, his son, to seal a test tube of air in the inventor's room shortly after his death, as a memento.

Local Events of 1889

John Rudolph, of Salem, a survivor of the Mexican war, received notice last week that he had been granted a pension of \$8 per month.

The Steamer leaves Salem for Philadelphia everyday (except Sundays) at 7 am. Stops in Delaware City, Newport and Penns Grove. Returns from Philadelphia at 3pm.

South Jerseyman is published every Tuesday, cost is \$1.50 per year. The building was located at: 161 West Broadway, Salem.

National Events of 1889

January —The Coca-Cola Company is incorporated

March 4 - President Grover Cleveland is succeeded by Benjamin Harrison

November —N Dakota, S Dakota, Montana and Washington are admitted as states.

Mark Twain's book "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthurs Court" is published.