

Another Stonebridge Gem

CONTRIBUTED BY MIKE FARRELLY,
MONTCLAIR TOWNSHIP HISTORIAN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW WANDER

THIS MINIATURE Flemish castle on Stonebridge was started in 1929 and finished in 1930. The Montclair Times said it was one of the biggest houses built in Montclair during those years. The builder was a stockbroker at the time; although he had other professions before and afterward. He never seemed to make a big deal out of his business life. Articles in the Montclair Times and other papers, even his obituary, never mention his occupation. His name was James W. Sanders. He was born in Missouri to Charles and Mary Sanders. His father's claim to fame was that he had traveled from Missouri to Oregon in a covered wagon as a child. Charles and Mary came east when Charles became the manager of the Union Camp Paper Co. James, their son, grew up in Montclair. James married a Montclair girl in 1909.

She was Kathleen Crawford, the granddaughter of Mayor Henry Crawford. At the time James was a salesman for his own company. Kathleen became sick and passed away only a few



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months after giving birth to their son, James W. Jr. In 1919 James W. Sr. was involved with steel manufacturing. He married Helen Louise Griswold, who later dropped the name Helen. James W. Sr. and Jr. and Louise lived on Sutherland Rd., not far from where they built this house. The Sanders had other children: Charles and Sally.

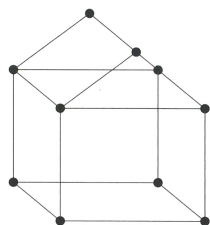
James' true passion was for the development of young men. He was chair of the NJ Advisory Board of the Boy Rangers and on the National Board. He was involved in all of their activities and raised money for them. That is what he was known for in the Montclair Times. The Boy Scouts of America had developed a program for younger boys called Cub Scouts. Since there was some overlap of ages, the Boy Scouts never implemented it. A Montclairian by the name of Emerson Brooks took the plans and founded the Boy Rangers along the proposed lines. James W. Sanders was totally involved with the Rangers. In the late 1930s, the Boy Scouts of America absorbed the Boy Rangers. It serves as their Cub Scout program now. James' other passion was golf. He played all the time and was credited with two holes-in-one within three months in 1929. He became a salesman for various companies. Louise was involved in all kinds of social activities. She served as president of the Junior League in 1928. In 1948 James W. and Louise Sanders sold this house to Lyster Reighley. The Sanders moved to Erwin Park and then to South Mountain. They summered in Martha's Vineyard and

spent winters in Naples, Florida.

Lyster Reighley was also a stockbroker, but, for him, it was a career. He rose to become a senior partner in the New York firm of DeCoppet and Doremus. The move to this house was not necessarily an advance for Lyster and his wife, Elizabeth. They had lived in quite a large and elegant house on Highland Ave. Lyster died in 1956, only a few years after buying this house. Elizabeth lived here until her death in 1967. Her maiden name was Ford. Her father was Austin Ward Ford and her mother was Ada Ford. Her sister was Florence Ford Schumann, who married John J. Schumann. The Schumanns also lived in Montclair, actually not far from Elizabeth and Lyster, and are noted for their charitable foundation, The Florence and John Schumann Foundation. John Schumann made his money as the president of the GMAC Corporation, the financing arm of General Motors, however Florence and Elizabeth had sizable fortunes of their own. Their father, Austin Ward Ford, started a time clock company in Binghamton, NY, the Bundy Time Recording Co. The Bundy Co. became part of CTR: the Computing, Tabulating, and Recording Co. Austin retired from active management but became a director of CTR. One of his most memorable activities as director was supporting a newcomer by the name of Thomas Watson to become chair of CTR. Thomas Watson later developed CTR into a little company known as IBM, with Austin riding the wave of success.

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Stonebridge Road and the neighboring streets make up a kind of secluded area: not really private, but out of the way. The houses in this neighborhood are often quite large and quite elegant. They don't have the commanding view of New York that Highland Ave., Lloyd Road, Upper Mountain and South Mountain Avenues offer,

but the houses themselves are imposing. This house is certainly one of the most beautiful. ■

If you'd like to see more images of Montclair homes, they are featured in the book, Stately Homes of Montclair, which can be found at Montclair Booksellers, several local libraries and the Stately Homes of Montclair Facebook page.

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