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BALTIMORE

ITS HISTORY AND ITS PEOPLE

BY VARIOUS CONTRIBUTORS



VOLUME III—BIOGRAPHY

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J. E. Greiner

Pickett, was at the head of the division which made the historic charge at Gettysburg. In the Helm line there have been many prominent men, notably as statesmen, in the Southern States, among them being Ben Hardin Helm. The Chilton line has also furnished a number of statesmen in Virginia, Kentucky and Texas.

Mr. Davis has the happy faculty of attaching men to him by the warm ties of friendship, as well as by the excellence of his other virtues of character.

JOHN EDWIN GREINER

Nothing has contributed more to the increase of commerce and general prosperity than the improvement in transportation facilities, and these are based chiefly upon the foundation of civil engineering, a profession the value of which cannot be overestimated. It is of a widely known member of this honorable profession that this sketch treats. John Edwin Greiner, while a comparatively young man, having scarcely passed the fifty mark, has achieved a reputation which has made his name known in all quarters of the civilized world. At present he is a consulting engineer in Baltimore, with offices also in New York and Chicago, and more intricate problems are submitted to him than are placed before the average civil engineer of many more years.

The Greiner family immigrated to America in the early part of the nineteenth century from Württemberg, in the southern part of Germany, and their home for a number of years was in Ohio. John Greiner, father of John Edwin Greiner, was a manufacturer and a merchant. He married Annie Steck, also of German descent, to whose influence and early teachings the Mr. Greiner of this sketch ascribes much of the moral worth and endurance which have contributed so greatly to the success which he has attained.

John Edwin Greiner, son of John and Annie (Steck) Greiner, was born in Wilmington, Delaware, February 24, 1859. His early years were spent alternately in the city and country, and he was the recipient of an excellent education, and the healthful outdoor sports, in which he was encouraged to indulge himself, assisted him in maintaining the robust constitution with which he is endowed. He was graduated from the Wilmington high school in 1877, became a student at Delaware College the same year, and was graduated from that institution in 1880 with the degree of Bachelor of Sciences. At the same time he applied himself to the study of civil engineering and the degree of Civil Engineer was conferred upon him. He fully realized that theoretical knowledge was but the preparatory stage of what he had determined to make his lifework, and was perfectly satisfied to commence at the very bottom of the ladder as a draughtsman in the Edgemoor Bridge Works, in Wilmington, Delaware, the year of his graduation, in order to gain the necessary practical experience. Four years later he had been offered and accepted the position of assistant engineer in the Keystone Bridge Works, and from this time his career was merely a series of upward steps.

The following year he had charge of the erection of the Seventh street bridge across the Allegheny river at Pittsburgh. In 1886 he formed a connection with the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Company, which continued with but a slight interruption until 1908, when he resigned. His first work for this company was as draughtsman; the following year he was advanced

to the office of inspector; in 1889 he was chief draughtsman; in 1891 assistant engineer; 1892-3 he was designing engineer of the Philadelphia Bridge Works; in 1894 engineer of bridges for the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Company; 1900 engineer of bridges and buildings for the same company; 1905 assistant chief engineer, retaining the last office until he resigned in order to become a general consulting engineer in Baltimore. According to the records kept by *The Railway Age*, Mr. Greiner personally designed or had charge of the designing and erection of every bridge constructed for the Baltimore & Ohio road from 1885 until 1908. Among these were the Ohio river bridge at Parkersburg; the bridge across the same river at Benwood, which is noted for the fact that it has a three hundred and forty-five foot span which was erected without false work, a very unusual method of procedure; and the double-track bridge at Havre de Grace, Maryland, which was erected at a cost of two millions of dollars. The esteem in which Mr. Greiner was held by his associates and co-workers during all these years was amply testified to at the time of his resignation, when they presented him with a handsome testimonial.

The time of Mr. Greiner is so thoroughly occupied with active duties connected with his profession that he has found very few hours to devote to the writing of books, although he is well fitted to do so. He has, however, contributed scientific and engineering papers, which have been highly appreciated in the circles to which they were addressed, and for the writing of one of which he was awarded a gold medal by the American Society of Civil Engineers. Lectures which he has delivered at Delaware College and Cornell University have been of great benefit to the students of engineering subjects. He has patented a number of minor inventions, and in 1895 he designed and patented a new type of bridge. Since 1908 Mr. Greiner has been consulting engineer for the following corporations: Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Company; Erie railroad; Norfolk & Southern railroad, in connection with a bridge five miles long across the Albemarle Sound; Peoria & Pekin Union railroad, in connection with a large double-track bridge across the Illinois river; and the Carolina, Clinchfield & Ohio railroad for a large number of bridges. He was one of the four expert engineers appointed to report upon the strength of the Queensborough bridge, which crosses the East river at New York, passing over Blackwell's Island. After the disastrous fire of February, 1904, Mr. Greiner was appointed by Mayor McLane as a member of the commission entrusted with the examination of the large buildings which had been injured, but not destroyed, by the fire. This immense piece of work was accomplished with such expedition that the commission handed in its report within a month. Later Mr. Greiner was appointed by the same mayor as a member of the commission which had in charge the revision of the building laws.

He is a member of many organizations of various kinds, among them being the following: Free and Accepted Masons; American Society of Civil Engineers; American Railway Engineering and Maintenance of Way Association; American Institute of Consulting Engineers; University Club; Engineers' Club; Baltimore Country Club; Engineers' Club of New York, and the Maryland Club. In a number of these he has been on important committees. He is also a member of the City Wide Congress and on the committee of city planning. He was appointed (1912) the engineer member of the State Board of Health by Governor Goldsborough.

Mr. Greiner married, December 16, 1886, Lily F., daughter of John Foster and Martha Ann (Sowers) Burchell, and their two children are: Lillian Burchell and Gladys Houston. The Burchells are of an ancient

English family, there being a coat-of-arms in the family granted at the time when the name was spelled Birchfield. In 1684 they came to Maryland; migrated to Virginia in the early part of the eighteenth century, where they were engaged as planters and farmers, and owned their estates from the time of the first settler. They number among their ancestors many distinguished names, among whom are: Judge William Allnut; Richard Talbot, who settled in Maryland in 1651, was a member of the House of Burgesses, and descended from the Talbot family which came into England with William the Conqueror; Major Richard Ewen, who was one of the commission appointed by Cromwell to govern Maryland from 1654 to 1657; Thomas Meeres, justice of Anne Arundel county, and also a member of the Cromwell commission; Lieutenant-Colonel Philip Thomas, also a member of the above-named commission. Catherine Houston, great-grandmother to Mrs. Greiner, was related to the famous Sam Houston.

In spite of the devotion of Mr. Greiner to the profession he has made his lifework, he does not believe in ignoring social intercourse, and is a welcome guest wherever and whenever he makes his appearance in society. His chief indoor recreation is music, of which he has been exceedingly fond since his earliest years, and his outdoor amusement consists in horseback riding and a study of the natural beauties to be met with in his lengthy rides. His tastes are quiet ones, and his entire life is one of simplicity and devoid of affectation.

VICTOR GUSTAV BLOEDE

Of all the varied influences that have gone to make this country the most prosperous and progressive on the face of the earth, perhaps none is so pronounced as the strong German element which has been infused into the nation. It is felt as a tremendous force for good wherever men from the fatherland have taken up their abode, and especially may we note how strongly the influence is discernible in the rapid advancement of Maryland and her chief city, Baltimore. There is an earnestness and purposefulness about the German people that can be claimed by no other nation on earth; distinguished at once by lofty ideals and a most intense practicality, it is their mission to definitely conceive of progress and to carry it into the fullest and highest realization.

Among these men of progress, deep thinkers and hard workers, who have come to this country to its betterment, may be mentioned Victor Gustav Bloede, the eminent chemist and manufacturer of chemicals, president of the Victor G. Bloede Company, which for so many years has taken the lead in this city in its special line of industry. As with most persons who have attained success, Mr. Bloede has made his way in the world with no other capital than his energy and determination, coupled with business foresight and ability, and his genuine worth and strict integrity have won the confidence and high esteem of all with whom he has come in contact. His history is that of a strong man who has set himself to succeed in spite of all obstacles; and he has studied and fought and wrought until he stands to-day one of the foremost men of the great city of his adoption.

He was born sixty-three years ago, in the year 1849, in the city of Dresden, Germany, the son of Gustav Bloede, a physician and member of the city council of Dresden during the revolution of that year. His mother, Marie Franziska Bloede, shared with her husband the lofty patriotism and