

= Walter W. Law =

Walter William Law (November 13 , 1837 ? January 17 , 1924) was a businessman and the founder of the 8 @, @ 000 @-@ person village of Briarcliff Manor , New York . He was a vice president of furniture and carpet retailer W. & J. Sloane , and later founded the Briarcliff Lodge , the Briarcliff Table Water Company , Briarcliff Farms , and the Briarcliff Greenhouses . He founded or assisted in establishing several schools , churches , and parks in the village , and rebuilt its train station in 1906 . In the early 1900s , Walter Law was the largest individual landholder in Westchester County .

Walter Law was born in Kidderminster , England , and was one of ten children of a carpet dealer . He relocated to the United States in 1859 , where he lived until his death . Throughout his life , he was employed at various places , including at W. & J. Sloane , where he worked for 24 years . After retiring to a house on Scarborough Road in the small community of Whitson 's Corners , New York , he developed the surrounding farmland into a suburban village . Law died in 1924 in Summerville , South Carolina , during rest cure treatment .

= = Early life = =

Walter Law was born on November 13 , 1837 in the English town of Kidderminster . He was one of ten children born to John and Elizabeth Bird Law , who were strict Nonconformists . His father sold carpets and dry goods ; at the time , Kidderminster was a center of carpet manufacturing in Britain . Law was educated in private schools in Kidderminster ; however , he left school and began working as a draper at the age of fourteen . In 1859 , he moved to the United States , having gained an interest in the US after reading about it . He left England with letters of introduction written by his father , which were addressed to friends in the American carpet business ; he also had enough money to last for about two weeks . He arrived in New York City on January 22 , 1860 .

= = Career = =

Law originally found a job as a traveling carpet salesman . He continued until he discovered that his employer was misrepresenting domestic rugs as being imported and was also charging premium prices . His next employer , an outfitter of steamships and hotels , went out of business in the 1860s , when the American Civil War affected the business . Law struggled through unemployment , and even while working , pay was low . At one point , Law was employed at a store and was making eight dollars a week .

Later on , Law contacted William Sloane , head of W. & J. Sloane . Sloane hired him more out of kindness than need for employees . In 1866 , at the age of 29 , Law began work under Sloane . After four years of employment , Walter Law became a partner in the company . Walter Law increased the business of Sloane 's wholesale department by securing the account of the Alexander Smith & Sons Carpet Company in Yonkers for the manufacture of moquette carpets . Law and his wife moved to 354 Palisade Avenue in Yonkers , making it easier for him to service the Smith account . He later became a vice president of W. & J. Sloane , and also joined its Board of Directors .

= = = Briarcliff Manor developments = = =

In 1890 , Walter Law began purchasing property in the present @-@ day village of Briarcliff Manor . That year , Law paid James Stillman \$ 35 @, @ 000 (\$ 921 @, @ 800 in 2015) for 236 acres (0 @. @ 4 sq mi) of land in the area ; he named the land Briarcliff Farm . In 1898 , Law retired from W. & J. Sloane and began devoting his time to his farming . He built an estate , the Manor House , on Scarborough Road in Briarcliff Manor . He later purchased more land , acquiring 5 @, @ 000 acres by 1900 , including land in Yorktown , Millwood , Pound Ridge , and Glenville , Connecticut . Law 's farm began with rough farmland , a few cattle , and little knowledge of farming , but it eventually

grew . At the farm 's peak , Law had 500 workers caring for more than 1 @, @ 000 cattle , 500 pigs , 4 @, @ 000 chickens , Thoroughbred horses , pheasants , peacocks and sheep . Law believed that farming can pay off if it utilized scientific principles , and that the farm should find the best markets and hold them by producing the best products .

Around the same time , he established the Briarcliff Table Water Company and the Briarcliff Greenhouses . The water company sold its products in five cities , and owned 250 @-@ foot (76 m) wells . Briarcliff Farms was one of the first producers of certified milk in the U.S. , and the farm produced about 4 @, @ 500 US quarts (4 @, @ 300 litres) of milk daily . Every night , his milk , cream , butter and kumyss was sent to New York City on the New York and Putnam Railroad . Law 's greenhouse space grew to 75 @, @ 000 square feet (7 @, @ 000 m²) , and his roses earned up to \$ 100 @, @ 000 each year . As many as 8 @, @ 000 roses were shipped from Briarcliff Greenhouses daily , most of them to New York City . In 1902 , Law built the Briarcliff Lodge on the highest point of his estate ; it was the first hotel in Westchester County .

Law also developed the village , establishing schools , churches , and parks . He donated land for the Briarcliff Congregational Church (built in 1896) and for Liberty Park (later dedicated as the Walter W. Law Memorial Park) ; in 1900 , he established the School of Practical Agriculture on Pleasantville Road on 66 acres (27 ha) of land . He also built Dysart House as a guest house in 1897 , named after Dysart House in Scotland . By 1902 , Law had invested \$ 2 @. @ 5 million (\$ 68 @. @ 4 million in 2015) in the village . In 1906 , he replaced Briarcliff Manor 's railroad station with the present @-@ day public library . His employees at Briarcliff Farms moved into the village in its early years , and Law held some of their mortgages . At the time , New York State required a population density of at least 300 per square mile for incorporation as a village . A proposition was presented to the supervisors of Mount Pleasant and Ossining on October 8 , 1902 ; it requested that the area , which had 640 acres with a population of 381 , be incorporated as the Village of Briarcliff Manor . The village was incorporated on November 21 , 1902 . At the time , Law owned all but two small parcels of the village , and he employed 100 of its residents . Law largely developed his Briarcliff Manor property as a business corporation until 1907 , when he purchased 3 @, @ 249 acres (1 @, @ 315 ha) for Briarcliff Farms in Pine Plains , New York ; he then began developing his properties for houses , churches , and schools instead . In 1909 , Law formed the Briarcliff Lodge Association to run the hotel , and the Briarcliff Realty Company to sell the original Briarcliff Farms property . His son , Henry , presided over the realty company until 1936 . In 1908 , during the Briarcliff Manor @-@ sponsored First American International Road Race , Law donated and presented the Briarcliff Trophy , valued at over \$ 10 @, @ 000 (\$ 263 @, @ 400 in 2015) . In 1918 , Walter Law sold his Briarcliff Farms land in Pine Plains .

= = Later life and death = =

Walter Law died in Summerville , South Carolina , on January 17 , 1924 . He had gone alone to Summerville for rest cure treatment . After the news of his death spread , Law 's son , Henry , left for Summerville . Law 's funeral was held at the Briarcliff Congregational Church three days later . He was buried with his wife and two of his children in Woodlawn Cemetery in New York City .

On February 1 , 1924 , Law 's will was filed with county surrogate George A. Slater in White Plains . His estate was approximately \$ 5 million , the majority of which was divided equally between his children . They also each received 25 shares of the Alexander Smith and Sons Carpet company 's stock and scrip and 250 shares of the Nairn Linoleum Company . Law 's friends , servants , and employees received from \$ 500 to \$ 5 @, @ 000 . He also bequeathed \$ 13 @, @ 500 to his longtime nurse and secretary Ida Z. Thompson . Law 's son Henry inherited the family 's Briarcliff Manor house , and Law 's daughter Georgia inherited the family 's summer house , formerly the C.H. Burnham house , in Jefferson , New Hampshire .

= = Family and personal life = =

Law had three sons and four daughters with his wife , Georgianna Hitt (née Ransom) Law , whom

he married on January 4 , 1866 , at 152 Second Avenue in New York City . She lived from 1839 to September 18 , 1910 . Their children were Georgia " Georgie " R. Penman (born November 10 , 1866) , Carrie Law @-@ Fotterall (b . September 10 , 1869) , Walter W. Law , Jr . (b . July 15 , 1871) , Edith Bird Brockelman (b . April 10 , 1874) , Arthur Law (January 11 , 1876 @-@ January 23 , 1877) , Henry Herbert Law (February 28 , 1878 @-@ November 18 , 1936) , and Martha Janet Macey (b . March 10 , 1880) .

During their life at Briarcliff Manor , Law owned the Manor House on Scarborough Road . Law later built houses for Henry , Walter Jr . , and Edith on the Briarcliff Lodge property on Scarborough Road . The three houses were named Hillcrest , Six Gables , and Mt . Vernon , and all three still stand .

Walter Law was a friend of Andrew Carnegie , who described Law as always having an interest in reading and writing . When he found a phrase to be clever or intriguing , Law would document it for further use . Carnegie wrote that Law often made new friends , and had an attractive personality . Law 's personal interest was largely in his personal library of 7 @, @ 000 volumes , which he collected for more than forty years . His library was said to contain many works of classic literature and history ; on a vacation to Europe , Law mostly spent time in Greece visiting historic sites . He was also a member of New York 's Century Association , the Alpine Club , the Players , the American Fine Arts Society , Ardsley Casino (now Ardsley Country Club) , the Metropolitan Museum of Art , the Astronomical Society of the Pacific , and Sleepy Hollow Country Club . Law and his wife were on the Aqueduct Guard Citizens ' Committee , a committee tasked with providing for the needs of the New York Guard troops who were protecting the Old Croton Aqueduct during World War I. In 1892 , Law also received an honorary Master of Arts degree from Yale University .