

The Metcalf family in Orange

Manson B Metcalfe, memorialized by a building at 439 Main Street, Orange, died in 1923. His obituary and that of his wife are pasted in below. Manson and his family are also covered, with an excellent photograph, in Volume IV of Pierson, David Lawrence, *History of the Oranges to 1921, reviewing the rise, development and progress of an influential community*, New York, 1922, pp. 4-7: <<https://archive.org/details/historyoforanges04pier>>, downloaded 1/30/2016. The photo is pasted in below. At the time this book was written, the Manton family lived at 389 Center Street, which is at the corner of Elmwynd Drive, and, according to the Patch article, was sold to the Colgate family in 1929, when Susan M. Manton, Manton's wife, left Orange. The house still stands.

Rhode Island School of Design

RISD definitely agrees that their school was "founded and nurtured by women" in 1877, and specifically by "the 34 members of the Women's Historical Commission," a group in Providence. According to Wikipedia, in an article on [Helen Adelia Rowe Metcalfe](#) that relies heavily on a 1993 piece in the *Providence Journal*, a publication with which the Metcalf family was involved, the RISD founder was the wife of a Jesse Metcalf who never lived in Orange. A source called the [South Orange Patch](#) explains that a Jesse founded the school in memory of his wife, and goes on to explain that the Manton Bradley whose name is on the Main Street building, was the fifth child of that Jesse's second marriage, and that Manton was the one who moved to Orange.

In 1925, according to the same Patch source, Manton's wife dedicated the Main Street building to the memory of her husband, who had died suddenly in 1923. That is substantiated by the NYT obits pasted in below; the plaque on the building (reading "Manton Bradley Metcalf Memorial") confirms the dedication. The building itself seems to have been constructed in 1921, and the Guide on the Karen Wells tape points to Manton's upstairs office, stating that there is a plaque there also. The building may always have been intended to house charities, or at least the Welfare Federation to whom Susan Metcalf donated it, but it does not seem likely that the construction was purely the result of this woman's boredom, or that she had money left over to fund another major effort like RISD.

Below are NYT obits for Manton, run on Sunday, October 14, 1923, and his wife, run on May 20, 1945, along with a photo of Manton from Pierson, *op. cit.* inserted opposite p. 4. (Susan M. is almost surely an ancestor, perhaps the great-great-grandmother, of the Orange Playground Commissioner charged in a hit and run in 2013.)

A 12/15/1927 NYT article about Manton's will reveals that he left \$50,000 (of a nearly twelve million estate) to RISD, and an equal amount to Orange Memorial Hospital. It also states that he gave his wife \$40,000 in bonds during the year preceding his death, and \$400,000 cash in his will, with his sons listed as residual heirs. Construction of an office building in the early 1920s would have cost several hundreds of thousands,

and would probably have been beyond the means of Susan Metcalf, based on the size of the recorded gift and the legacy.

METCALF—Suddenly at Orange, N. J., Friday morning, Oct. 12, 1923, Manton Bradley, husband of Maude Browning Metcalf and son of the late Jesse Metcalf and Helen Adelia Rowe Metcalf of Providence, R. I. Funeral service at his late home, 523 South Centre St., Orange, N. J., on Monday, Oct. 15 at 2 o'clock. Train leaves Hoboken via D. L. & W. R. R., 1:03 P. M., for Brick Church Station.

Widow of Manufacturer Gave Building to Welfare Group

Mrs. Susan Maude Browning Metcalf died here Friday night at her apartment, 1060 Fifth Avenue, after a long illness. She was 83 years old. She also maintained a home in Llewellyn Park, West Orange, N. J.

Mrs. Metcalf presented the Manton Bradley Metcalf Memorial Building in Orange, N. J., to the Welfare Federation of the Oranges and Maplewood in 1925 in memory of her late husband, former president of the federation and of Metcalf Brothers & Co., woolen manufacturers. She was a member of the board of the Bureau of Family Service of the Oranges, a member agency of the federation.

Mrs. Metcalf was the daughter of the late Theodore and Susan Browning of New York and was long active in social circles in the Oranges. She was a member of the Woman's Club of Orange, of the Colony Club of New York and an honorary member of Essex County Country Club.

Surviving are three sons, Major Jesse, who returned recently from the Burma-India war theatre; Lieut. Comdr. Rowe Browning, with the Navy in the Pacific, and Manton B., Jr., of Rumson; eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild.



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