

New Riverside Drive Residence

Judge Thomas Brown and Family to Move to Their Fine New Brick House in Middletown Township Soon.

Judge Thomas Brown and family, who have been spending the summer at Sea Bright, expect to move in about ten days to their new home on the north side of Riverside drive in Middletown township. The house, a large brick structure, has been in course of construction since last fall and it is almost completed. It is on one of the highest promontories in Monmouth county, commanding a wonderful view of the surrounding country. Buildings in New York are visible on clear days without the aid of glasses and broad vistas of both North and South Shrewsbury rivers and of the Atlantic ocean are plainly discernible even in stormy weather.

The property comprises thirty acres and it adjoins the estate of United States Senator W. Warren Barbour. At one time it was owned by the LaMarche estate. It was sold by the estate to various parties. Mr. Brown, who is a circuit court judge and a former state senator representing Middlesex county, accumulated the estate by making purchases over a period of years. His new residence is on property which he bought from Martin Kennedy.

Judge Brown completed his purchases about six years ago, but instead of building his residence at that time he made driveways and bridle paths over the land. He is of the opinion that this work should be done before a residence is built. The property is about one mile in depth and over it a circuitous path was made through a forest for horseback riding. Adjoining the Brown estate are bridle paths through wooded sections owned by Senator Barbour and other residents of the neighborhood. They are more or less shared in common by the people of the neighborhood. Judge Brown is a devotee of horseback riding and among his mounts is a six-year-old which has won fame as a junker and punter.

Thousands of holly and cedar trees are on Judge Brown's place. They are indigenous products of the soil, but many of them were threatened with extinction because of poison ivy vines and other creeping growths which had twined around them. A large force of men was employed in removing this objectionable vegetation. Dynamite was also used for this purpose and for making roadways on the hillside around the house. Judge Brown is an admirer of birds and in arranging his estate

he has endeavored to make it a bird sanctuary. Cedar and holly trees are numerous in the vicinity of the house. Near the residence is a chapparal with many fine specimens of evergreen trees. Oaks, maples, dogwood and various other varieties are abundant in the woods through which the bridle paths wind. The dogwood trees are so grouped as to comprise what might be called an orchard. This was not done artificially but by natural selection. In the spring these trees are gorgeous with bloom and at this time of the year they are distinctive because of their red leaves and berries.

The house is one of the largest and finest in this section. Except for a few special features no contracts were awarded for its construction. The work was done almost entirely by unemployed men of Red Bank and vicinity, under the supervision of Judge Brown. The plans were drawn by New York architect in accordance with the ideas of the owner.

The entire foundation of the residence is of peanut stone gathered on the place. The house is of the Georgian type and it is enclosed with King's blend brick hand made in Virginia. This same kind of brick was used in building many colonial dwellings in Monmouth county. Fireplaces are numerous and they are adorned with mantles of various shades of marble. The mason work was done by John Moore of Red Bank. One of its most unusual features is what Judge Brown describes as an "Aladdin's Lamp staircase" between the sun roof and the second floor. The roof was made by Bearmore & company of Asbury Park and this concern also did the flashing. Part of the roof consists of a dome covered with Brittany antique tile held in place by wire. Because of its corrugations and other aspects this part of the house has the appearance of being very ancient.

Most of the lumber used in the house was purchased from the Monmouth lumber company and F. F. Daisdell of Red Bank. Cedar cut from trees on the place were used to build cedar closets and for other purposes. One of the features is a wide and very handsome staircase of African walnut made at the factory of E. Osborn & company of Red Bank. Most of the flooring is of walnut plank which is held in place by screws. The iron and grill work was done by Chamberlain & Olson of Red Bank.

Nearly all of the work on the house was done by residents of this section and the material was provided almost entirely by dealers of this neighborhood. Judge Brown endeavored so far as possible to have the work done by men who were unemployed, and in talking with a Register reporter he was enthusiastic in praising their workmanship. He said he knew from experience that their state of being jobless was not due to any fault on their score but to economic conditions over which they had no control.

The kitchen and the bathrooms have tile floors and sidewalls. Various combinations of colors are used. The cabinets in the kitchen and pantry are of stainless steel made by Jones & Kirckland of New York. The electrical system is of the indirect type and a few fixtures are used. A General Electric heating and air conditioning system has been installed. The furnace occupies such a small space that anyone unacquainted with its propensities would wonder how it could heat such a large house. The

air is washed in the conditioning system, about thirty gallons of water being used daily for this purpose. The house is provided with every other modern convenience and improvement, including brass pipes for plumbing and the latest sanitary devices.

A great deal of grading and other landscape work has been done. All of this, as well as the construction of the house, has been under the supervision of Judge Brown. He has occasionally consulted experts for advice, but for the most part his new home embodies his own ideas. He finds a peculiar satisfaction in overseeing the work. It has been his lifelong aim to have a home exactly as he wants it to be and his Riverside drive residence fulfills this ambition. He has virtually been his own contractor in constructing the house. The men who have worked under his supervision say they have never had a more practical nor generous boss.