



Addie P. Duncan (later Monroe), National Bank President

By Karl Sanford Kabelac

Above: A view of the Main Street in Silver Springs a century ago. The bank is the second building from the left. It was completed in the fall of 1902, about half a year after the bank opened. The building continues as a bank today.

Silver Springs is a community in rural Wyoming County, NY. It is about 50 miles southwest of Rochester and 50 miles southeast of Buffalo. Its population in 1900 was 667, today it is about 800.

Addie and Joseph M. Duncan settled in Silver Springs (then called East Gainesville) in 1885. Both were natives of Syracuse, where Addie Pharis was born in June 1860. She graduated from Syracuse University in 1881 and later that year, on

October 20, 1881, had married Joseph, who was about 15 years her senior.

Joseph had been involved with the salt industry since he was a young man, and it was that business which brought them to Silver Springs. He was involved with several successive salt companies in the community. The final one was taken over by Morton Salt Company in 1943, and today it is said to be the oldest functioning evaporating salt plant in the



Bird's Eye View, Silver Springs, N. Y.

Bird's eye view of Silver Springs, with the salt factory in the foreground.



A close-up of the salt factory a century ago. The company became a part of Morton Salt in 1943. Today the operation is said to be the oldest salt evaporating plant in the United States.

United States. He also invented and held patents for several salt-related manufacturing procedures.

They built a beautiful home in the village and in its yard built a small schoolhouse, where their adopted twin daughters were schooled with several other children.

Active also in civic affairs, Joseph was the first mayor of the community when it was took its current name and was incorporated in 1895. In 1902, he was the founding president of the Silver Springs National Bank (charter #6148). Addie was one of the founding directors.

Two years later, while visiting in Syracuse, he died suddenly on February 28, 1904. Addie succeeded him as president of the bank. Three years later, on March 7, 1907, she married Dr. George T. Monroe of nearby Warsaw, NY. He became a director and vice president of the bank.

In 1917, she relinquished the presidency and was succeeded by J. G. Kershaw, who had served as cashier of the bank since its founding. Several years later, she moved to Flint, Michigan, where she died on February 16, 1923. An obituary noted “her cheerful presence, kind words and sympathetic nature” and that “her first and best thought seemed always to be given to every good cause and her sympathy and help were unailing in hours of need and sorrow.”

The bank itself remained independent until 1955. Since then it has undergone several take-overs, and today is a branch of the M&T Bank out of Buffalo. It is still housed in the 1902 building on Main Street in Silver Springs.



Addie (Pharis) Duncan, 1907.

Sources and Acknowledgements

The well-illustrated booklet, *Remembering Silver Springs, 100 Years, 1895-1995*, published in 1995 contains useful information about the Duncan family. A sixth

At right: Joseph M. Duncan, whom Addie Pharis had married in 1881.



Far right: Dr. George T. Monroe, her second husband. He served as vice president of the bank.



A Series 1902 Red Seal number 1 note on the bank, signed by Joseph M. Duncan, the founding president.



Notice of bank officer change in *The Bankers' Magazine*, April 1904.



Stone, Vice-Pres., deceased.—Rochester Savings Bank; James Brackett, Pres., deceased.
SALAMANCA—First National Bank; E. F. Hoy, Pres. in place of Henry O. Wait, deceased; H. O. Ostrander, Vice-Pres. in place of W. H. Crandall; Geo. O. Rhodes, Cas.
SILVER SPRINGS—Silver Springs National Bank; Mrs. Joseph M. Duncan, Pres. in place of Joseph M. Duncan, deceased.
WATERTOWN—National Union Bank; no Cashier in place of A. L. Upham, deceased.
OHIO.
AKRON—Second National Bank and Citizens' National Bank; consplidated under former

anniversary history of the bank with a picture and list of officers appeared in the *Silver Springs Signal* for May 7, 1908. An obituary of Joseph M. Duncan appeared the *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle* on March 1, 1904. An obituary for Addie P. Duncan Monroe appeared in the February 22, 1923 issue of *The Western New Yorker*, Warsaw, NY while a longer one appeared in the *Wyoming County Times*, Warsaw, NY, undated clipping, but probably about February 22, 1923. The March 2011 study, available online, *Genesee-Finger*

Lakes Regional Inventory of Culturally Significant Areas, p. 58-59 discusses the “Morton Salt Company, Silver Springs Facility.” The assistance of Sharon S. Muth, the great granddaughter of the Duncans, was of immeasurable help both for information and illustrations and is gratefully acknowledged.



A Series 1902 note on the bank signed by George T. Monroe, her second husband, as vice president of the bank. (Courtesy Lyn Knight Currency Auctions)



A series 1902 Red Seal note signed by Addie P. Duncan as president. Inked on the note in very small numbers is the date, 3/29/1904. This was a month after Joseph Duncan’s death, so presumably this was the first note she signed as president.



A Series 1902 note signed as Addie Duncan Monroe. (Courtesy Heritage Auctions)

