

George Scarborough (1806-1890) Prominent Teacher & Scholar

By Jerry Long



George Scarborough (1806-1890)

George Scarborough was born 28 July 1806 Brooklyn, Windham County, Connecticut. In the book, The Genealogy of the Cleveland and Cleaveland Families (Volume I, by Edmund Janes Cleveland, Hartford, Conn., 1899, pages 387 & 896) it is recorded that George was the son of Samuel Scarborough (1773-1838) & Molly Cleveland. The following entry appeared on page 896:

George^s Scarborough (Molly^s, Joseph^s, Joseph^s, Josiah^s) m. 1st, Owensborough, Daviess co., Ky., Dec. 4, 1838, Emily Thompson, b. Ow., Dec. 7, 1817, d. Ow., Mar. 10, 1846. He m. 2d, Oct. 13, 1870, Lizzie Finn of Lockport, N. Y., she d. June 22, 1875. Lived at Owensborough 1838 to 1859; near Atchison, Atchison co., Kan., 1860 to 1869; since at Vineland, N. J., where has, 1877, fruit farm of 80 acres; farmer and scientific student. Ch. by 1st m.: Da.^r, b. Sept. 3, 1842, d. soon. By 2d m.: Da.^r b. and d. Feb. 27, 1872.

George Scarborough was the most noted early educator of the city of Owensboro, Daviess County, KY. He resided in Owensboro from about 1836 until 1859. He is first found in the Daviess County annual tax lists in 1836 and is listed in the 1850 federal census of Owensboro. He married Emily Thompson, 4 December 1838 Daviess County, KY (Daviess County, KY Marriage Book A, page 90). Emily Thompson was the daughter of Philip Burton Thompson (1789-1836) & Sally Clay Moseley. Her father was a prominent lawyer, who represented Daviess County in the US Congress. The first court of Daviess County, KY upon its establishment in 1815 was held at the residence of Emily's grandfather, Thomas Moseley, a Revolutionary War soldier.

George Scarborough's wife, Emily Thompson, was born 7 December 1817 Owensboro, Daviess County, KY and died in Owensboro on 10 March 1846. She was initially buried in the Rural Hill Cemetery near Fifth & Triplett Streets in Owensboro. In the "Register of Interments –

Elmwood Cemetery, 1877-1885 & 1900-1902” it is recorded that on 12 December 1879 she, her infant child, and parents were reinterred in Elmwood Cemetery in section A. It appears that she and her infant child were later moved again and buried with her husband in Brooklyn, Connecticut. On the same gravestone with her husband it is engraved that “Emily Thompson, wife of Geo. Scarborough, died in Owensboro, Ky. March 10, 1846 aged 28 years. Also an infant daughter born & died Sept. 30, 1842.”

1850 Daviess County, KY census, District 1, city of Owensboro:

#119	Comstock, Elijah	42	m	Cabinet Maker, R.E. \$900	Ky.
	Susan	30	f	(married within year)	Ky.
	Spickernagle, John	16	m	Cabinet Maker	Tn.
	Scarborough, George	43	m	Teacher, R.E. \$11,400	Conn.
	Thompson, Sarah C.	20	f	R.E. \$7600	Ky.
	Catherine	14	f	R.E. \$7000	Ky.



George Scarborough was the administrator of his father-in-law, Philip Thompson's extensive estate. His estate included numerous slaves that were divided among his children. By virtue of being the executor of Philip Thompson's estate Scarborough became a slave owner. In the 1850 federal slave schedule for Daviess County, KY George Scarborough is listed as the owner of three slaves. Scarborough's sister, Olive Gilbert, was a prominent abolitionist.

Daviess County, KY 1850 Slave Schedule:

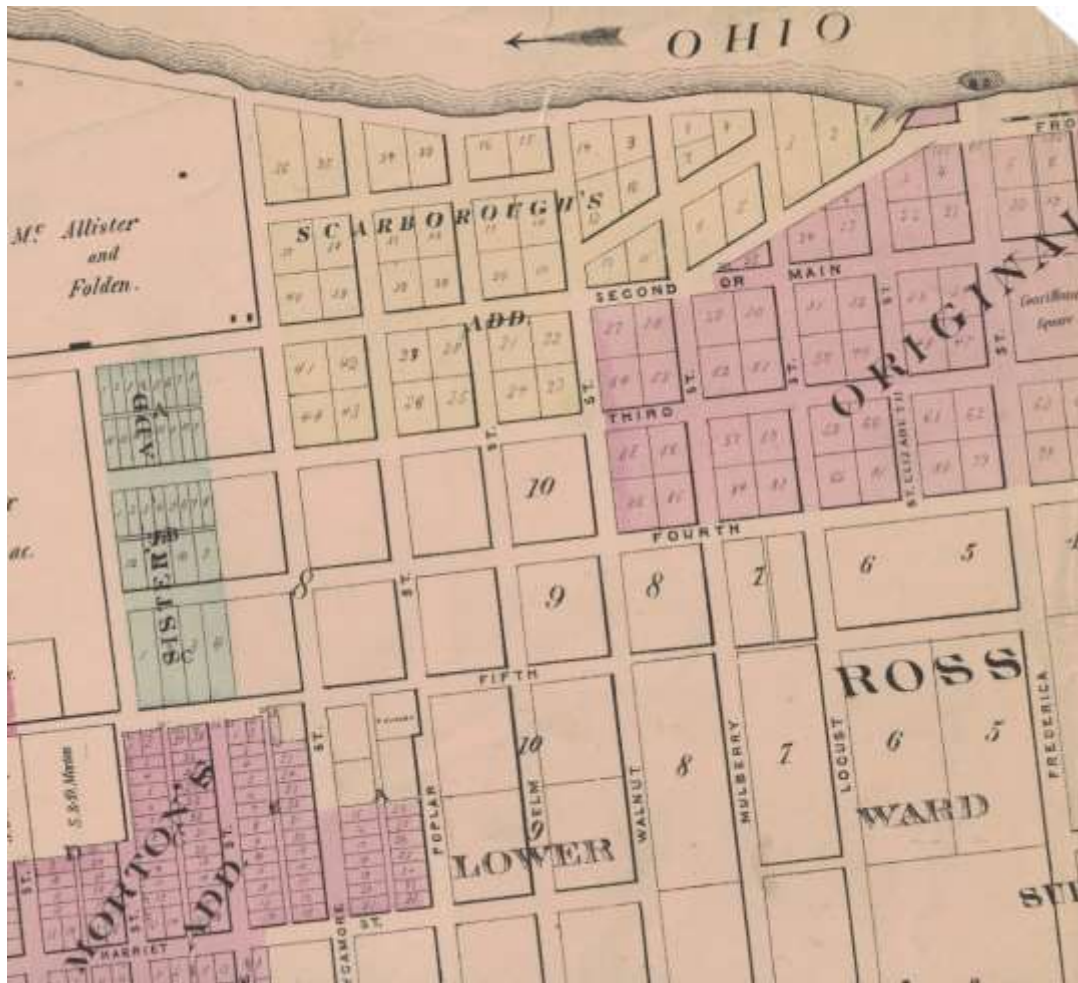
in the County of *Daviess*
of *July*, 1850. *Ob Sebastian*

NAMES OF SLAVE OWNERS.	Number of Slaves.	DESCRIPTION.			Fugitives from the State.
		Age	Sex	Color.	
1	2	3	4	5	6
1 <i>Geo W Triplett</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>Mc</i>	<i>B</i>	
2	<i>3</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>e</i>	
3	<i>4</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>u</i>	
4	<i>5</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>Mc</i>	<i>e</i>	
5	<i>6</i>	<i>43</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>u</i>	
6	<i>7</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>Mc</i>	<i>e</i>	
7 <i>Wm G Harris</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>u</i>	
8	<i>2</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>Mc</i>	<i>e</i>	
9	<i>3</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Mc</i>	
10	<i>4</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>B</i>	
11 <i>George Scarborough</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>Mc</i>	<i>e</i>	
12	<i>2</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>Mc</i>	
13	<i>3</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>e</i>	



An addition to the city of Owensboro, named Scarborough's Addition was incorporated into the city of Owensboro on 28 October 1841 (plat & dedication recorded in Daviess County Deed Book F page 546. The land consisted of property that had been part of the estate of Phillip Thompson. The addition bordered on the Ohio River and Second Street and extended from Frederica Street to Sycamore Street. In the subsequent decade George Scarborough recorded many deeds whereby he sold lots in the addition.

An Illustrated Atlas Map of Daviess County, KY., Leo McDonough & Co., 1876, page 80:



Scarborough's Addition to Owensboro



Owensboro Examiner, Owensboro, KY, 6 May 1876, page 5:

Geological Specimens.

The trustees of the public schools of this city have purchased a rare collection of geological specimens, chemical apparatus, etc., for the use of the schools. The geological specimens are the

accumulation of years, having been begun more than thirty years ago by Mr. George Scarborough, and embrace many of the finest specimens known to the science. The collection, together with the apparatus, are estimated to be worth at least \$1,000, but the trustees effected a purchase of the whole for \$300, \$50 of the amount being donated by private subscriptions. The investment was a good one.



History of Daviess County, Kentucky, Inter-State Publishing Co., Chicago, 1883:

Page 127: Sketches of Public Men: James L. Johnson, father of Philip T., was born in Livingston County, Ky., Oct. 30, 1818. He secured a good education in the common schools of that county, and in 1826 came to Owensboro. He at first studied under the instruction of George Scarborough, an excellent teacher, now living at Vineland, N.J., whose school was then the best in this part of the State.

Page 146: Sketches of Public Men: Joseph Thomas, Teller of the First National Bank, of Owensboro, was born May 1, 1822, in New Orleans, La., the son of Joseph and Eliza (Weissenfels) Thomas... In 1837 he came to Owensboro, where he was still further educated under the direction of Mr. Scarborough, a most excellent teacher.

Page: 359: Owensboro Educational: Daviess County Seminary. — The oldest school building in Owensboro is the southernmost brick structure of what is now the Upper Ward School. It was erected by Philip Thompson, in consideration of which a number of town lots were deeded to him by the trustees. The ground on which this house was built was originally donated to the town for school purposes. The institution was chartered about 1820. The most eminent teacher here in early day was probably George Scarborough, a relative of P. T. Watkins and a native of Massachusetts. He taught school in this place about 1830 to 1840. On leaving here he sold a large collection of geological specimens to parties in this place, for use in the public schools. He went to Kansas, and from there to New Jersey, where he at a recent date was still residing.

Page 382: Owensboro Churches: The Cumberland Presbyterian Church was organized the fall of 1839... In 1850 a Sunday-school was organized, with George Scarborough as Superintendent.

Page 397: Owensboro Benevolent Societies: Sons of Temperance. — A lodge of this order was organized in Owensboro in the fall of 1846. A. G. Munn, Grand Worthy Patriarch, of Louisville, was the instituting officer. There were but ten or twelve charter members, of which the following is a partial list: Geo. Scarborough, S. M. Moorman, Geo. N. McKay, Richard McKay, Frank L. Hall, Wm. B. Wall, Finley W. Wall, Joseph Mills, Ridgley Griffith... As near as we can learn, the first Worthy Patriarch was Geo. Scarborough, followed by S. M. Moorman. The first Conductor was Ridgley Moorman, who was succeeded by Frank L. Hall.

Page 399: Owensboro Benevolent Societies: Owensboro Fountain, No. 13, Younger Brothers of Temperance, was organized in 1847. The order was a State institution, conducted

under the auspices of the Sons of Temperance. It admitted to membership boys and youths from twelve to eighteen years of age. The society in this city lived but a few years, but during its existence did much good in molding the habits of the youth of this community. The first officers were: George Scarborough, Elder Brother; George Sebastian, Presiding Brother; John J. McFarland, Secretary.

Page 405: Owensboro Cemeteries: Elmwood Cemetery. — In the year 1856, seeing the necessity for a cemetery, a company of the citizens of Owensboro was formed, composed of William Bell, James Weir, R. M. Hathaway, George Scarborough, D. M. Griffith, F. M. Pearl, J. B. Anderson, Robert Craig, John H. McHenry, Sr., S. M. Wing and E. A. Hathaway, who purchased of R. M. Hathaway and F. M. Pearl nine acres and a fraction of ground in what is known as Hathaway's addition to Owensboro, and named same "Rural Cemetery."

Page 719: Murray Precinct Churches: Cumberland Presbyterian Church. — In 1848 Nicholas G. Bosley and Joseph Carlin and their families met George Scarborough, of Owensboro, in a little log school-house of the Pleasant Ridge neighborhood, for the purpose of organizing a Sunday-school.



Sixty Years of Owensboro, 1883-1943, William Foster Hayes, Messenger Job Printing Co., Owensboro, KY, 1946, pp238-239:

SNOWDON CASTLE

In the History the name of George Scarborough is briefly but prominently mentioned. It appears that in 1841 when Mr. Scarborough was teaching in the pioneer school building north of Third Street between Lewis and Crittenden, then known as the Daviess County Seminary, the roof of the building was damaged by fire and it was some time before it was repaired. That seems to have ended Mr. Scarborough's connection with the Seminary.

Subsequently, in 1843, Mr. Scarborough built what is said to have been at that time the most stately residence in this part of the country. It was about one block west of Walnut Street and near the river and was called Snowdon Castle. There was a regular ceremony at the laying of the corner stone for this building, perhaps the first function of the kind held in Western Kentucky. The castle was designed for a school building as well as a residence and in 1845 Mr. Scarborough opened a new school there, being assisted by a young man named Philip H. Sears. The school prospered and was maintained for several years. This building was later known as the McAllister place, and probably many still living will remember it by that name.

It is interesting to note that the river road at that time ran between this building and the river, leaving a wide strip of grass and trees on the river bank, which was used as a playground, and it is said that in 1846, during the Mexican war, the students at this school cheered from the playground the boats passing down the river carrying soldiers to join General Zachary Taylor's Army. The playground and the River Road have long since fallen prey to the encroaching and voracious river.

It may be noted too, that Mr. Scarborough left other footprints on our sands. He owned some land in the lower part of the city which he platted and established as Scarborough's Addition to the city and it is still so known on our records.



A History of Owensboro and Daviess County, Kentucky, Hugh O. Potter, Daviess County Historical Society, Herff Jones-Paragon Publishing, Louisville, KY, 1974, pp88-89:

Early Culture and Education — Prof. Scarborough, who headed the Owensboro Academy from 1837 to 1841, started his own school in 1845 in a large new residence on the old River road, one block west of Walnut street. It was known as Snowden Castle. The Ohio river bank then extended much farther into the present water area. There was room for the river road and a tree-lined school playground between the Castle and the river. Snowden’s Castle prospered for several years but Prof. Scarborough ultimately moved to Kansas and on to New Jersey.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 23 March 1890, page 4:

The late George Scarborough, who died last week at his home in Brooklyn, Connecticut, at the ripe age of eighty years, was a very interesting character. He came to Owensboro more than fifty years ago and built the fine piece of property on the river below the city now owned by Wm. McCallister. He lived here a number of years and taught school. Such old citizens as S. D. Kennady and Dan Griffith were his pupils. Mr. Scarborough was a wonderfully well preserved man physically and mentally. About the 1st of last January the Messenger printed a letter from him written to his nephew, P. T. Watkins, of this city, describing the symptoms of la grippe, then raging in the east, which had to yet reached this locality. Mr. Scarborough was himself then recovering, he said, from the disease. There are yet a number of people in Owensboro who remember him well, and learned of his death with sorrow.



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 15 January 1899, page 5:

**TWO EARLY SCIENTISTS
OF YELLOW BANKS**

George Scarborough, the subject of my last sketch, the young man from Massachusetts, was one of the most noble, refined, Christian gentleman living in this city at that time. As administrator of his father-in-law's estate he managed the business and divided out the property to each heir to the satisfaction of all concerned. He was geologist, a chemist, psychologist, conchologist, as well as versed in the science of birds, insects and fish. He gathered and maintained a large cabinet of these specimens. In 1844. or 1845 he built the large two-story "brick building now owned and occupied by Wm. Shelby and his son-in-law, Mr. McCallister, and called it Snode [sic] Villa and for years he maintained and taught school in that building. After spending the greater part of his beautiful life in this place, his adopted home, he returned to his native land, married his second wife, lived to a very ripe age, died and was laid to rest at his early home. He was a Unitarian in religion, but never intruded his opinion on any one. I went to his Sunday-school, the first I attended in this city. Mr. Scarborough was very fond of the company of scientific men, but one in particular is "worthy of mention here. Fielding B. Meek was his kindred spirit. They

took a great many strolls together, investigating the geological formations of the earth, gathering insects and flowers...

By Frank L. Hall



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 8 October 1905, page 1B:
“Dropped Stitches in Owensboro History”:

Fielden B. Meek in the early eighteen forties came to Owensboro... In those days Meek was closely associated with George Scarborough, the New England pedagogue, who kept a school at “Snowden Villa”, now known as the “Old McCallister Place.” Scarborough was one of finest scholars that ever lived in Owensboro and from association with him Meek developed a love of scientific investigation...



Owensboro Messenger, Owensboro, KY, 19 November 1905, page 1B:



Sixty years ago or more there came to Owensboro from the bleak and barren cliffs of the Massachusetts coast a young man bearing the name of George Scarborough. He was a profound scholar, an original thinker and a careful investigator. Reared in one of the original colonies in which the idea of education for the masses had taken firm root, even in the days of its early settlement he had inherited a powerful love of knowledge and had drunk deep at the fountain of classic learning. He had in his make-up all of the characteristics of the "Down East Yankee," subdued and softened by the instincts and habits of the scholar.

His Personal Appearance.

In personal appearance he had few superiors. Six feet, two inches tall, of fine physique, with mildly solemn countenance and an impressive voice, he possessed in an extraordinary degree the power of commanding universal respect. But friendship with him never became familiarity. Admiration kept its distance.

George Scarborough had come to the shores of the Ohio as a school teacher and for forty years he remained, conducting all the while a school of the highest class. "Seat Mark Hopkins on a log and place a pupil beside him and you have a university," said a president of the United States. The same might have been as truly said of George Scarborough. Although he was himself president and professor of every branch of the curriculum, he did provide university education for the youth of the Kentucky backwoods. At that day common schools were few and inferior in the South. The little humble school house did not appear at every cross roads; the frequent meeting house did not point its taper finger to the sky; villages did not adorn the margin of mountain, stream and plain; shops did not ring with industry.

In Strange Community.

The young pedagogue had come into a community as unlike his own as could well be conceived. Reared among abolitionists, he had cast his lot among slave owners. Brought up in the frugality of the New England home and the equality of the New England town meeting, he had fallen in with a civilization which, in its almost feudal magnificence, will never again be equalled on this earth. But he so adapted himself as to win the entire confidence and esteem of all who had to do with him.

Scarborough's school became famous throughout Western Kentucky and many students came to him from other states. Almost from the beginning he had all the students he could care for and many were refused admission. He would never employ an assistant, preferring to have his students his own intellectual children in very truth.

Snowden Villa.

A short time after coming to Owensboro Scarborough built a large brick house, a combination of residence and school house, on the river bank below the then western limits of the city. He called his establishment Snowden Villa, and for a quarter of a century it had a reputation as a school second to none in all the Western country. The schoolmaster married Miss Emily ' Thompson, a daughter of Philip Thompson, one of the pioneer merchants of the town, and took her home to his schoolhouse mansion.

A man of quiet, contemplative habits, Scarborough spent his time "far from the maddening crowd's ignoble strife" sometimes in the companionship with his wife, his students, and a few chosen spirits of his own manner or life, sometimes in deeper communion with the great minds of the world preserved in their printed books, sometimes in deeper communion still with nature, strolling through the woods and fields or along the river. Now and then he mingled with the public, and when he did no man received more marked consideration. The collection of scientific specimens was a passion with the schoolmaster. Rarely did he return from a stroll without having found something of scientific interest, and in a few years he had gotten together a cabinet of great value.

Was a Unitarian.

In all of his life George Scarborough never tried to make a convert to his belief, religious, political or any other. A Unitarian in religion, he lived among Baptists and Methodists and Catholics and the rest without ever obtruding his own views upon them. Believing that the negro ought to be free, he constantly saw him in slavery and held his peace.

Scarborough's father-in-law was killed in a street duel and he was appointed to administer upon the estate. To him such a duty was a peculiarly heavy burden. The estate consisted largely of slaves and he was obliged to assert himself as their master. He encountered some difficulties in their management, but he managed them after a fashion before unknown in Owensboro. It was necessary to hire out many of them to work in the tobacco field or factory. The contract drawn up between George Scarborough and the man who hired his negroes was, indeed, a curious legal document. Every such contract made by him contained a clause binding the second party to provide the negro with "one summer coat, one winter coat, two pairs of summer pantaloons, one pair of winter pantaloons, two pairs of socks, and to treat him humanely."

Returned to New England.

Finally, in his old age, the famous pedagogue decided to return to New England and spend his last days among the scenes of his boyhood. After disposing of a large part of his scientific

collection, he bade his friends good-bye and took final leave of the place of his life work. In all the years since then few school teachers in Owensboro have measured up to the standard of George Scarborough and not one has surpassed it.

Not a citizen of Owensboro whose mind runs back so far but has a vivid recollection of the strong-countenanced old schoolmaster of Snowden Villa. And each of them remembers some peculiar trait or incident. While gathering the facts for this sketch the author chanced to meet an old family servant of Philip Triplett, one of the pioneer lawyers of the Green river country and representative in congress in the early days.



US Passport Applications:

of George Scarborough who subscribed the annexed affidavit. And I certify the annexed description of his person to be correct.

In Testimony whereof, I have subscribed my name, and caused my Notarial Seal of Office to be hereunto affixed the *Twenty second* day of *January* in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and *seventy* and of Independence the *94th*

Herdon Ritter NOTARY PUBLIC,
29 Broadway

STATE OF NEW-YORK, | ss.
County of

I, *George Scarborough* do swear that I was born in

Brooklyn Connecticut

on or about the *sixth* day of *July* *1806* that I am a *native* and loyal citizen of the United States, and am about to travel abroad.

Sworn to before me, this *22nd* day } *George Scarborough*
of *January* *1870* }
Herdon Ritter Notary Public.

STATE OF NEW-YORK, | ss.
County of

I, *Billopp Seaman* do swear that I am acquainted with the above named *George Scarborough* and with the facts above stated by him, and that the same are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Sworn to before me, this *22nd* day } *Billopp Seaman*
of *January* *1870* }
Herdon Ritter Notary Public.

Description of *George Scarborough*

Age	<i>63</i>	Years	Stature	<i>6</i>	feet	—	inches, English.
Forehead	<i>High</i>		Eyes	<i>Blue</i>			
Nose	<i>Straight</i>		Mouth	<i>Small</i>			
Chin	<i>Smooth long</i>		Hair	<i>Brown tinged Gray</i>			
Complexion	<i>florid</i>		Face	<i>oval</i>			



In 1859 George Scarborough left Owensboro. He went to Sumner, Atchison County, Kansas, where he is listed in the 1860 federal census. He served as the vice-president of the First National Bank of Atchison, KS from its incorporation on 6 June 1867 until 1870. He sold his residence in Atchison County, Riverside (400 acres), for \$12,000 (Missouri Valley Farmer, Atchison, KS, 12 July 1897, p4). In 1869 he left Kansas and moved to Landis Township, Cumberland County, New Jersey, where he was listed in the 1870 and 1880 federal censuses. The 1870 & 1880 censuses give his occupation as farmer. In 1870 his estate was valued at \$30,000, \$15,000 of which was in real estate. In 1881 he moved to Brooklyn, NY and in 1887 returned to the town of his nativity, in Brooklyn, Windham County, Connecticut.



History of Atchison County, Kansas, Sheffield Ingalls, Lawrence, Kansas, Standard Publishing Company, 1916, page 196:

George Scarborough was one of the most romantic characters that ever lived in Atchison county. Influenced by his niece's description of Kansas, he came to Sumner in 1858 and purchased a tract of land now owned by E. W. Howe and known as Potato Hill. The location is probably the finest on the Missouri river. The farm lies on top of the bluff, and Scarborough's house was built near the river. He was well fitted to enjoy the life of elegant leisure and seclusion, which he did. Early in life he went to Kentucky from Connecticut and taught school. While there he married the daughter of a congressman named Triplett. The wife died a year later, and Scarborough came into possession of considerable money. After that he adopted a scientific life and spent much of his time abroad, where he collected many pictures and other art treasures. These were displayed in his home below Sumner. Scarborough was a botanist, and made a complete collection of the flora of this section, which he sent to the Smithsonian Institution, at Washington. One of his discoveries was that Atchison county had eleven varieties of the oak. Scarborough was one of the original founders of the First National Bank of this city, furnishing most of the original capital.

In 1869 he went to Vineland, N.J., where he married a girl of twenty-three, although he was nearly seventy. His wife died within a year, in childbirth, under precisely the same circumstances as his first wife. Scarborough died in 1883, in his old home in Connecticut, in absolute poverty, at the age of eighty-four. He is spoken of as one of the most elegant gentlemen who distinguished the early days.

[Note – the preceding article contains several errors: Scarborough's first wife's maiden name was Thompson not Triplett; she died seven years after their marriage not one year later; George Scarborough died in 1890 not in 1883; and the probate of his estate recorded in Windham County, CT suggests that at his death he was far from a state of poverty.]



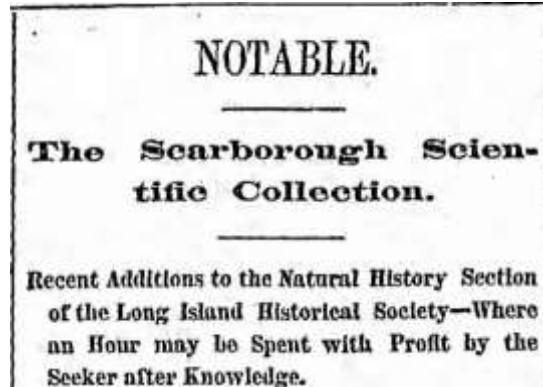
The Evening Journal, Vineland, New Jersey, 8 April 1882, page 5:

Mr. George Scarborough offers his elegant country residence, known as Snowden Villa, for sale at one-half its original cost. This property is one of the finest in this part of the State, and the location and surroundings are second to none. The large handsome house is beautifully finished

with hard wood inside, and the arrangements of the apartments for taste and convenience could hardly be bettered. The walks are bordered with well kept evergreen hedges and the farm lands connected with the place are well fruited and under a state of high cultivation.



Brooklyn Daily Eagle, Brooklyn, New York, 18 November 1883, page 9:



The Natural History Section or the Museum of the Long Island Historical Society has been recently enriched by the presentation of a very valuable series of collections formerly belonging to Mr. George Scarborough, late of Vineland, N. J., but now a resident of this city. These collections are of especial interest to all students of science, and are likely to form a nucleus for the addition of other contributions from men of culture and wealth. The Scarborough collections, which are the result of many years' labor and investigation in both the Eastern and Western continents, comprise excellent specimens in botany, geology, conchology and mineralogy, and are destined to attract the attention of all visitors to the rooms of the Museum Department of the Historical Society. The botanical part of the collections was gathered in New Jersey, Kentucky, New England, the Mountains of Switzerland, the Owyhee or Sandwich Islands. These specimens are now being labeled and placed in one side of a large case containing 164 shelves, which will illustrate in the method of arrangement the flora of various sections of America and Europe, and give at the same time an almost complete representation of the botanical features of Long Island. The system of labeling is an admirable one, and well calculated to facilitate easy reference to any and all parts of the collection. Each specimen is inclosed in a single sheet of paper, and contains on the outside a brief description of the species, genera and order to which the plant belongs. The scientific name, the common or popular name, and also that of the order and the locality from which it was taken, are embraced in this plan, and thus give at a glance a pretty good history of the specimen in question. Over 100 shelves are devoted to the botanical collection of Mr. Scarborough, who, in a life of nearly four score years, has devoted almost half a century to researches in botany alone. The collection of North American ferns is a very comprehensive and beautiful one, and portrays in language better than words the magnitude and variety of vegetation on this continent. To the unscientific mind there is a belief that it is necessary to go to South America for richness of verdure, delicacy of texture and symmetry of form in the construction of plants; but this illusion is speedily dispelled on making a careful examination of the Scarborough collections. In the botanical part of these contributions are several very choice specimens of the Nelumbium, or sacred bean, the largest plant in this country, the flower of which is frequently over eight inches in diameter, while some of the leaves are two and a half times that size. Beside this plant, the cabinet

portfolios contain a very careful analysis of the graceful and luxuriant pitcher plant, specimens of nearly all the ferns of North America, many of which are exceedingly beautiful, together with 100 specimens of ferns from the Sandwich Islands. Mr. Scarborough, who has been at work in this department of natural science since 1835, had a still finer botanical collection than that which he has presented to the Natural History section of the Long Island Historical Society, but, unhappily, before going to Europe he stored it in a building the roof of which sprang a leak, and thus, letting the rain in, ruined the labor of years of earnest and conscientious study. But, undeterred and undismayed by this stroke of misfortune, Mr. Scarborough, with all of the enthusiasm of the true scientist and worker in the realms of nature, began to cover lost ground, and in the course of years has admirably succeeded in making what will readily be pronounced by those best fitted to judge as an excellent botanical representation of different parts of the world.

THE GEOLOGICAL COLLECTION.

The geological collection made by Mr. Scarborough is mainly in boxes, for the reason that at present there is no way of placing it according to the method which it deserves. A great number of cases are needed for the display of these specimens, but, like many other worthy institutions by which the world at large has benefited, the treasury of the Natural History Section has a very limited pocketbook, and one which suffers from the principles of contraction rather than from those of expansion. The geological collection consists mostly of specimens illustrative of the Silurian, Devonian, Carboniferous and Tertiary periods, and these will be arranged and exhibited as soon as the funds will permit. The Tertiary and Devonian specimens are very fine, the former having been taken from the Alabama River, and the latter having been found in the West. There is also a mineralogical collection, which is well worthy the attention of students. But probably the most interesting and fascinating of all the collections is that devoted to Conchology, which embraces specimens of marine shells from the Atlantic States, fresh water shells from the Ohio, Mississippi, Wabash and Western rivers, together with terrestrial or land shells. The corals comprise specimens illustrating the Madrapores, the Gargouias and the brain or large stone corals. Most of these specimens were collected by Mr. Scarborough personally and many of them are rich and exquisite pieces of workmanship of a little insect which has laid the foundation of nearly all the little islands or reefs off the coast of Florida and the West Indies. It may also be added with equal truth, resting on trustworthy authority, that nearly the whole Peninsula of Florida is the result of the indefatigable labor of those little creatures, who bear a reputation for systematic industry as inhabitants of the water comparable with the thriftiness of the honey bee on land. It was the late Professor Agassiz who wrote that the Peninsula of Florida, at the rate at which the coral are now at work there, took 5,000,000 of years to form. The island of Cuba is also largely of coral construction, as in digging cellars down to the depth of water a corals formation has frequently been found. For a long time coral were supposed to partake of a plant or vegetable nature, but science has given them a higher place in the dignity of life and now they are properly recognized as world builders as well as architects of the waters. The smaller specimens flourish in water from twenty to fifty feet in depth, while the larger corals live at still greater depths, but none will thrive much below 120 feet, They dislike cold water, and do not flourish as a rule in a temperature below sixty-eight degrees Fahrenheit, A remarkable evidence of the work of the coral is shown in the fact that along the Eastern coast of Australia is a group of coral islands extending for nearly a thousand miles, while the strait between Australia and New Guinea, which is about 150 miles in width, is actually being closed by these "little red fellows of the sea," who are apparently showing the denizens of the waters around and about the earth the necessity of organizing anti-monopoly

associations for the sake of preventing any undue encroachment upon the privileges of navigation. But this is only a trifling thought conjured up by the inspection of the collections of Mr. Scarborough, which require not a superficial examination, but that study which the average observer refuses to give, but which the seeker after light is only too willing to grant, in order to know the mysteries of purpose that are wound up in the lives of the smallest objects of the created universe.



History of Windham County, Connecticut, Richard M. Bayles, editor, New York, W.W. Preston & Co., 1889, pages 602-603:

George Scarborough was born in Brooklyn, Conn., July 28th, 1806. His parents were Samuel and Molly Cleaveland Scarborough, worthy representatives of respected ancestors. For twenty-three years George Scarborough lived the farmer's life, early entering on its arduous labors and working from April to December fifteen hours a day. His educational privileges were such as four winter months each year in a country school could afford. This school he attended until he was sixteen years of age, when he became an instructor instead of pupil, working hard through spring, summer and autumn, and teaching during the winter. In his twenty-fourth year, while still teaching and doing his farm work, he began his study of Latin and Greek. In 1832 he went to the distinguished scientific school in Troy, N.Y.-the "Rensselaer Institute"-in which- he passed nearly two years. In 1834 he entered the Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass., to prepare for the Christian ministry, but at the end of a year of diligent study in the Hebrew and other departments, impaired health compelled him to leave New England and seek a milder climate.

In November of 1835 he started for New Orleans, but when the steamboat, on which he had taken passage at Pittsburgh, Penn., reached the mouth of the Ohio, the Mississippi was so blocked with ice from its more northern tributaries that the captain felt obliged to retrace his way as far as Cincinnati. On this return trip Mr. Scarborough left the boat at Owensboro, Ky. On conversing with some of the most intelligent citizens he found that the town offered an opportunity for an earnest and persistent teacher. He immediately opened a school for girls and boys, in which he gave instruction in English literature, the classics, mathematics and in natural science and natural history. The school was of high order, the instruction very thorough, the discipline firm and kind, entirely without corporal punishment, and the whole mental and moral influence such as to win the gratitude and command the respect not only of the pupils but of the whole community. For twenty years Mr. Scarborough continued this admirable school. In 1857 and 1858 he made a long tour abroad, traveling through most of the central and southern countries of Europe, visiting Egypt, Palestine and Syria, and returning through Greece. After reaching home Mr. Scarborough was chosen "Professor of Chemistry" in the "Eclectic Medical School" at Memphis, Tenn., but on account of the troubled state of our country at the time he did not accept the position. In 1860 he removed from Owensboro, Ky., to Atchison, Kansas, where he lived eight years, and then went to Vineland, N.J., where he resided from 1868 to 1881, when he went to Brooklyn, N.Y., whence he removed in 1887 to his native town, which he had never ceased to regard with affection, and which is no less dear to him now, 1889, in his eighty-third year, than it was in early days.

All through his life Mr. Scarborough has been a close observer and loving student of nature, and gradually had formed a fine herbarium and valuable mineralogical and geological cabinet, which, during his residence in Brooklyn, N.Y., he gave to the Long Island Historical Society, of

which he was a member, and by which his most generous gift – the “Scarborough Collection” – is highly appreciated.

Wherever he has lived, Mr. Scarborough has taken a deep interest in all that pertained to the mental, moral and spiritual welfare of society. A thorough going temperance man – “Total Abstinence” man – from early manhood, always a firm, unshrinking friend and advocate of freedom, to no good cause has he been indifferent. During his many years in Owensboro and Vineland he superintended a Sunday school, and never was away from his post, except because of sickness or absence from the country. Few “public” lives have been richer in deep and abiding influence – and influence of the best kind, most helpful to noble manhood and womanhood, to true citizenship – than the modest, unostentatious life of this faithful, accomplished educator, this loyal son of Windham.



George Scarborough died on 8 March 1890 at Brooklyn, Windham County, Connecticut, where he was buried in the South Cemetery. His grandfather, Samuel Scarborough (1741-1812), a sergeant in the Revolution, and other family members as far back as 1771 are buried in the same cemetery.



South Cemetery, Brooklyn, Windham County, Connecticut



Messenger-Inquirer, Owensboro, KY, 13 October 2011, page 3B:

Sojourner Truth had a connection to Daviness County

By Keith Lawrence, Messenger-Inquirer

Sojourner Truth was one of the most famous abolitionists and women's rights activists of the 19th century.

And she apparently had a connection to Daviness County.

In her 2009 biography "Sojourner Truth's America," Margaret Washington writes that Olive Gilbert, the feminist-abolitionist who helped Truth write her autobiography "Narrative of Sojourner Truth, a Northern Slave, Emancipated from Bodily Servitude by the State of New York, in 1828," claimed to "more knowledge of slavery than most Northern abolitionists and had witnessed it first-hand" in Daviness County.

Her brother, George Scarborough, was an early Owensboro educator, who gave his name to a section of the city between the old Executive Inn property and English Park.

William Lloyd Garrison one of America's best known abolitionists, had Truth's book privately published in 1850. He wrote that he believed it would "stimulate renewed efforts to liberate all those still in slavery in America".

Washington's book says that in Owensboro, Scarborough was headmaster of an elite school owned by a wealthy slave owner."

That would be Phillip Thompson, a lawyer and Congressman from Owensboro from 1823 to 1825. Local histories say Scarborough first taught at Thompson's Daviness County Seminary, on the downtown site now occupied by Wax WorksVideo Works.

Local histories say Scarborough built a large home Snowden Castle in 1847 at the foot of Elm Street, which he also used as a school.

Washington's book says that "more than one-third" of Daviness County's population was enslaved.

The 1850 "slave schedule" for Daviness County shows 585 slave owners, 2,359 black slaves, 524 mulatto (mixed-race) slaves, 17 free blacks and nine free mulattoes in Daviness County.

The 1860 report shows 669 slave owners, 2,856 black slaves, 611 mulatto slaves, 22 "colored" slaves, 75 free blacks and 16 free mulattoes.

"Slavery was harsh in Owensboro," the book says. "Blacks could not buy, sell or own so much as a chicken or a dog. Fear of the underground railroad was rampant. Black mobility was heavily restricted and slave patrols were constantly active."

Washington describes Scarborough as an abolitionist who "held his peace."

But she says his sister was more outspoken when she came to visit him and friends in the North feared for her safety.

Washington writes that Scarborough married his employer's daughter and that Thompson's death made Scarborough a slave owner.

He hired out his slaves, "ordering proper treatment, accommodations and clothing," she writes.

When Scarborough's wife died, Washington writes, he left Kentucky.

"Whether he freed his slaves is unknown," she writes.

But there's a problem with that story.

Philip Thompson died on Nov. 25, 1836, at age 47.

A genealogical website says that Emily Thompson and George Scarborough were married on Dec. 4, 1838 more than two years after her father's death.

An 1889 biography of Scarborough says that in November 1835, "he started for New Orleans, but when the steamboat, on which he had taken passage at Pittsburgh, Pa., reached the mouth of the Ohio, the Mississippi was so blocked with ice from its more northern tributaries that the captain felt obliged to retrace his way as far as Cincinnati.

"On this return trip, Mr. Scarborough left the boat at Owensboro, Ky. On conversing with some of the most intelligent citizens, he found that the town offered an opportunity for an earnest and persistent teacher. He immediately opened a school for girls and boys, in which he gave instruction in English literature, the classics, mathematics and in natural science and natural history.

"The school was of high order, the instruction very thorough, the discipline firm and kind, entirely without corporal punishment, and the whole mental and moral influence such as to win the gratitude and command the respect not only of the pupils but of the whole community. For twenty years Mr. Scarborough continued this admirable school.

"Emily Thompson Scarborough died on March 10, 1846, at age 28.

Scarborough's biography says he didn't leave Owensboro for another decade.

In 1857 and 1858, it says, "he made a long tour abroad, traveling through most of the central and southern countries of Europe, visiting Egypt, Palestine and Syria, and returning through Greece."

When he returned to the United States, the biography says, Scarborough was chosen as professor of chemistry at the Eclectic Medical School in Memphis.

But, it says, "on account of the troubled state of our country at the time, he did not accept the position."

Scarborough, instead, returned to Owensboro where he lived until 1860, when he moved to Atchison, Kansas. When the 1889 biography was written, he was living in his native Connecticut.

