

## **New York City Directory records concerning the Metropolitan Washing Machine Company**

by Conrad W. Terrill, August 2008

The Metropolitan Washing Machine Company (MWMC) existed from 1860 to 1892. The Library of Congress (LoC) New York City (NYC) directory collection, on microfilm, spans the years 1861-1925 and 1931-1934, which completely covers the period in which the MWMC had offices in NYC. Two NYC directories are also available on-line, through Ancestry.com: 1869 and 1890. These transcribed versions offer advanced searching capabilities, although they don't include the ads (or any image information at all). Many LoC NYC directory microfilm rolls have lost a lot of header from extensive (and abusive) use, resulting in the loss of the directory title page in many cases, making it difficult to determine the directory year. The rolls are not necessarily in the correct boxes, and the boxes are often labelled "1865" or the like, while the directories generally cover periods extending from 1 May of one year to 1 May of the next year; and this leads to confusion. Some boxes are labelled "1865/1866" or the like, and this would eliminate the confusion if you could count on the microfilm roll being in the correct box. The NYC directories over the period 1861 to 1893 were all compiled by H. Wilson and published by John F. Trow (or his successors), and they are called, to cite an example, the Trow's New York City Directory, Vol. XCVII, for the year ending 1 May 1884. They each consist of leading ads, a title page, an introduction, an index of advertizing categories, a directory of residents (what we would call "the white pages"), a commercial register (what we would call "the yellow pages"), a city government directory called "The New York City Register," and trailing ads; all of which was always compiled by H. Wilson, whose forces presumably began collecting information at about the beginning of the year, preparing it for the publication date of 1 May. In some cases there were ads within the main directory pages, on or near the page where a business entry was listed.

What's the upshot from all these records? Sorry, but this is a "record" document, so all you will find here are records. And I've tried to make this as complete a document as possible, concerning the records of the MWMC to be found in the NYC directories.

### **Notes:**

1. The MWMC did not go with large ads, but they had very little (if any) competition in their business line most years. After 1872-1873 they discontinued advertizing in the NYC directories, possibly deciding that newspaper advertizing worked better. I photocopied the ad for one year, but did not photocopy any more because this took extra time, and because the ads did not seem much different, in format, from year to year.
2. I think capitalization, and an asterisk in front of a line, were extra-cost options, to attract attention to the line. The asterisk did not seem to correlate with the presence or absence of an ad somewhere in the directory.
3. The number in curly brackets in the title line for a directory year indicates the order in which I examined (or searched for) a microfilm reel (the first few rolls were not examined in chronological order). I've noted on the title line what appeared on the title page (if the microfilm roll contained one); I've sometimes noted what was written on the box; and I've noted in some cases what year was given on The New York City Register (the city government section) title page, since I noticed after a

while that that year corresponded to the first partial year for the directory as a whole. The directories for some years seem to be missing—I don't know why. I admit that there's uncertainty in the directory year some cases; however, none are off by more than one year. This research was all conducted in one afternoon. Given what I've learned, I think I could return to the LoC and do a little better job, but I do not currently plan to do this. The results are good enough to suit my purpose for right now.

4. I searched only for certain names in the “white pages,” not knowing any other names for which to search. These names, in alphabetical order, were: Browning, Ross C.; Lyman, David; Metropolitan Washing Machine Co.; Metropolitan Manufacturing Co.; Mills, Lyman A.; Stetson, Thomas D. (a patent attorney whose name showed up on a number of MWMC patents) and Terrill, Moses W. I was on the lookout for other familiar Lymans and Terrills, but saw none.

5. The Ancestry.com NYC directory information is in brown. These two databases (1869 and 1890) have advanced searching capability, allowing us to search for all the people who lived or worked at “32 Cortlandt,” for example.

~~~~~  
**1860-61:** (Title page: “for the year ending May 1, 1861,” Box: “Reel 1,” {4})

Browning Ross C. publisher, 133 Nassau, h Va.

STETSON THOMAS D. solicitor of patents, 5 Tryon row, h. Myrtle av. c Yates, B'klyn

“Washing Machine” ads: French's Conical Washing Machine, Cataract Washing Machine.

**1861-62:** (Missing? Civil War year?)

**1862-63:** (Title page: “Vol. LXXVI, ending May 1, 1863,” Box: “Reel 2,” {3})

BROWNING ROSS C., UNIVERSAL CLOTHES WRINGER, 345 B'way, h N. Orange, N.J.

\* METROPOLITAN WASHING MACHINE CO. 345 B'way

Stetson, Thomas D., patents, 5 Tryon row, h 118 W. 24th

No ads for “Clothes Wringers,” “Washing Machines,” “Wringers,” or anything of the sort.

**1863-64:** (Missing?)

**1864-65:** (NYC Reg.: 1864, Box: “Reel 3,” {2})

BROWNING ROSS C. clothes wringers, 347 B'way, h'N.J.

Lyman David, treas. 347 B'way, h Ct.

\*METROPOLITAN WASHING MACHINE CO., 32 Cortlandt

Stetson Thomas D. patents, 5 Tryon row, h 118 W. 24th

Terrill, Moses W. pres. 347 B'way, h Ct.

There was an ad in the Commercial Register, p. 19, under CLOTHES WRINGERS:

PUTNAM CLOTHES WRINGER. {The only reliable self-adjusting wringer. Putnam Mfg. Co.,

No. 18 Platt St., N.Y. and Cleveland, Ohio. S.C. Northrop, Agent.} This was the only one under

“Clothes Wringers.” There was not even a heading for “Washing Machines,” or “Wringers,” or

anything else related to these things.

**1865-66:** (Missing? “Reel 4”?)

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>RALPH &amp; THOMAS OGLE,</b><br/> <b>VETERINARY SURGEONS,</b><br/>                 328 &amp; 330 WEST 25th STREETS,<br/>                 Bet. Eighth &amp; Ninth Aves.,<br/>                 NEW YORK.<br/>                 Infirmary for Sick and Lame Horses</p> | <p><b>R. SOMERVILLE,</b><br/> <b>VETERINARY SURGEON</b><br/>                 145 Varick Street, near Spring.<br/>                 Infirmary for Sick and Lame Horses. Genuine<br/>                 Medicines for all Diseases, constantly on hand.</p> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**VINEGAR MANUFACTURERS.**

**AUGUST GOTTSCHALK & CO.,**  
 Importers and Manufacturers of

**VINEGAR,**

Have always on hand a large stock of Cider, and White Wine Vinegar, for Pickling, Shipping, Chemical and Family use,  
 523, 520, 532 WATER STREET, NEW YORK.

**WASHING MACHINES.**

**METROPOLITAN WASHING MACHINE CO.**  
**R. C. BROWNING, Gen'l Ag't,**  
 82 Cortlandt Street, New York.  
 THE UNIVERSAL CLOTHES WRINGER with Cog Wheels, took the only First Premium ever given on Wringers at the Great Fair of the American Institute. Also, the Great GOLD MEDAL at the New England Fair of 1867.

**WATCH SPRINGS.**

**P. A. ROSSELOT,**  
 Manufacturer of Watch, Clock Chronometer, And all kinds of Musical Instrument Springs, warranted to be made in the best manner.  
 203 WILLIAM STREET (rear,) NEW YORK.  
*House, Woodhaven, Long Island.*  
 All kinds of Springs for Machinery made to order. The Oldest and only Genuine Stock Spring Establishment.

**WATCHES, IMPORTERS OF.**

**DURFEY & BARNES,**  
 Importers of

**WATCHES,**

9 JOHN STREET, (up stairs,) NEW YORK. J. P. DURFEY. E. L. BARNES.

**SAMUEL HAMMOND & CO.,**  
 Importers of

**FINE WATCHES,**

Removed to Atlantic Insurance Buildings, 41 William Street,  
 From 44 Merchants' Exchange, New York.

We are desirous of drawing attention to our  
**POCKET CHRONOMETERS, AND FINE LEVER WATCHES,**  
 With Chronometer adjustments, (manufactured expressly for us in London,) which, as Timekeepers for general use or scientific purposes, cannot be excelled.  
 N. B.—Rating by our own transit observations.

**R. KIDDLE,**

**CHRONOMETER AND WATCH MAKER,**

DEALER IN  
**Fine Watches and French Clocks,**  
 No. 3 JOHN STREET, near Broadway (up stairs), NEW YORK.  
 Fine Watches accurately adjusted to heat and cold, isochronism and positions.

**MOSES SOUR,**  
 Importer of

**WATCHES, GOLD JEWELRY,**  
 And Chains of all descriptions,  
 No. 21 JOHN STREET,  
 Bet. Broadway & Nassau St., NEW YORK.

**WATCHMAKERS' TOOLS.**

**GINNEL & BROTHER,**  
 Importers of  
 Watches, Watch Materials and Tools,  
 71 NASSAU STREET, (up stairs, Room 6)  
 Cor. John Street, NEW YORK.  
 Every description of Watches carefully repaired for the trade.



**1866-67:** (Missing? "Reel 4"?)

**1867-68:** (Title page: Vol. LXXXI, ending May 1, 1868, Box: "Reel 5," {5})

Browning Ross C. agent, 32 Cortlandt, h N.J.

\* Metropolitan Washing Machine Co. 32 Cortlandt

(I'm dropping Thomas D. Stetson from here on.)

Ad in Commercial Register, p. 32, under "CLOTHES WRINGERS":

METROPOLITAN WASHING MACHINE CO.

*R. C. Browning Gen'l Ag't*

32 Cortlandt Street, New York

The UNIVERSAL CLOTHES WRINGER with COG

WHEELS, took the First Premium at the last

great Fair of the American Institute. Also

at the great New England Fair of 1866.

Ad in Commercial Register, p. 151, under "WASHING MACHINES":

Metropolitan Washing Machine Co.

*R. C. Browning GEN'L AGENT*

32 Cortlandt Street, New York

DOTY'S CLOTHES WASHER

Took the First Premium at the last Great Fair of

the American Institute, 1865. Also at the Great

New England Fair of 1866.

**1868-69:** (Missing? "Reel 6"?)

**1869-70?:** (Box: "Reel 7," {1})

Browning Ross C., wringers, 32 Cortlandt, h N.J.

Lyman David, treas., 32 Cortlandt, h Ct.

\***METROPOLITAN WASHING MACHINE CO.**, 32 Cortlandt

Stetson Thomas D., patents, 5 Tryon row, h 153 E. 71st

Terrill, Moses W. pres. 32 Cortlandt, h Ct.

Ad in Commercial Register, p. 179, under "WASHING MACHINES" (xeroxed)

METROPOLITAN WASHING MACHINE CO.

*R. C. BROWNING, Gen'l Ag't*

32 Cortlandt Street, New York

The UNIVERSAL CLOTHES WRINGER

with Cog Wheels. took the only First Premium

ever given on Wringers at the Great Fair of the

American Institute. Also, the Great GOLD ME-

DAL at the New England England Fair of 1867.

**1869:** (From Ancestry.com. It appears to correspond to 1869-70, above.)

Browning Ross C. wringers, 32 Cortlandt, h N. J.

Lyman David, treas. 32 Cortlandt, h Ct.

Terrill Moses W. pres. 32 Cortlandt, h Ct.

\*Metropolitan Washing Machine Co. 32 Cortlandt

*The remaining entries are all those containing “32 Cortlandt”*

Dennison Henry E. V. clerk, 32 Cortlandt, h Quincy n Nostrand av. B’klyn

Leonard George W. clerk, 32 Cortlandt, h N. J.

McRae Kenrith, sec. 32 Cortlandt

Nichols Etlingham H. lawyer, 9 Pine, & pres. 32 Cortlandt, h 339 Fifth av.

Robinson Francis W. lamps, 32 Cortlandt, h Dekalb av. c Franklin av. B’klyn

Silver Skirt & Wire Manuf. Co. 32 Cortlandt

Sperry Timothy S. treas. 32, Cortlandt, h 119 Vanderbilt av. B’klyn

Stetson Thomas D. patents, 5 Tryon row, h 153 E. 71st

*(No D. W., no R. W., no Kimball W.)*

*The following entries are all those containing “5 Tryon row”*

Brady Andrew J. printer, 5 Tryon row, h 150 Franklin

Dusenberry Elias, lawyer, 5 Tryon row, h N. Y.

McMaster Jas. A. editor, 5 Tryon row, h 343 W. 50th

N. Freemans Journal, 5 Tryon row

Sandford Charles, W. lawyer, 5 Tryon row, h 462 W. 22d

**1870-71:** (Title page: Vol. LXXXIV, year ending May 1, 1871, Box: “Reel 8, 1871,” {6})

Browning Ross C., wringers, 32 Cortlandt, & pres. 40 Cortlandt, h N.J.

Lyman David, treas., 32 Cortlandt, h Ct.

\* Metropolitan Washing Machine Co. 32 Cortlandt

(And there was nothing “Metropolitan” at 40 Cortlandt.)

Terrill, Moses W. pres. 32 Cortlandt, h Ct.

Ad in Commercial Register, p. 44, under “CLOTHES WRINGERS”

Metropolitan Washing Machine Co.

*R. C. BROWNING, GEN’L AGENT*

32 Cortlandt Street, New York

DOTY’S CLOTHES WASHER

Took the First Premium at the Great Fair of the American Institute, 1865. Also, at the Great New England Fair, 1866—1867.

Ad in Commercial Register, p. 204, under “WASHING MACHINES”

Metropolitan Washing Machine Co.

*R. C. BROWNING, Gen’l Ag’t*

32 Cortlandt Street, New York

The UNIVERSAL CLOTHES WRINGER

with COG WHEELS, took the only First Premium ever given on Wringers at the Great Fair of the American Institute. Also, the Great GOLD MEDAL at the New England Fair of 1867.

{Note 1: Note that Trow’s city directory accidentally had the two ads in each other’s category this year.}

{Note 2: In early 1870 did Browning have a second business at 40 Cortlandt, of which he was president? This directory was compiled in early 1870, a year too early to be referring to his presidency of the MWMC.}

**1871-72:** (NYC Reg.: 1871, Box: "Reel 9, 1872," {7})

Browning Ross C., wringers, 32 Cortlandt, h N.J.

Metropolitan Manuf. Co., 544 B'way

{Note: David Lyman, Moses W. Terrill, and Metropolitan Washing Machine Co. were not listed, and I think this "Metropolitan Manuf. Co." is unrelated to the MWMC and to Browning.}

{Note: No ads at all under "CLOTHES WRINGERS."}

Ad in Commercial Register, p. 166, under "WASHING MACHINES"

Metropolitan Washing Machine Co.

*R. C. BROWNING, PRESIDENT*

32 Cortlandt Street, New York

DOTY'S CLOTHES WASHER

Took the First Premium at the Great Fair of the

American Institute, 1865. Also, at the Great

New England Fair, 1866—1867.

**1872-73:** (NYC Reg.: 1872, Box: "Reel 10, 1873," {8})

BROWNING ROSS C. wringers, 32 Cortlandt, h N.J.

\* METROPOLITAN WASHING MACHINE CO. 32 Cortlandt

{Notes: Moses W. Terrill was not listed; no ads at all under "CLOTHES WRINGERS."}

Ad in Commercial Register, p. 142, under "WASHING MACHINES," identical to the above for 1871-72.

**1873-74:** (Title page: Vol. LXXXVII, ending May 1, 1874, Box: "Reel 11, 1873-1874," {9})

Browning Rose *{sic}* C., pres. 32 Cortlandt

METROPOLITAN WASHING MACHINE CO. 32 Cortlandt

Terrill, Moses W. treas. 32 Cortlandt, h Ct.

{Note: No ads at all, for any companies, in washing product categories.}

**1874-75:** (Title page: Vol. LXXXVIII, ending May 1, 1875, Box: "NYC 1874-1875," {10})

Browning Ross C., pres. 32 Cortlandt

\* Metropolitan Washing Machine Co. 32 Cortlandt

{Notes: Moses W. Terrill was not listed; no ads at all, for any companies, in washing product categories.}

**1875-76:** (Title page: Vol. LXXXIX, ending May 1, 1876, Box: "NYC 1875-1876," {11})

Browning Ross C., pres. 32 Cortlandt, h N.J.

Metropolitan Washing Machine Co. 32 Cortlandt

{Notes: Moses W. Terrill was not listed; no ads at all, for any companies, in washing product categories.}

**1876-77:** (Title page: Vol. XC, ending May 1, 1877, Box: "NYC 1877, Reel 14," {13})

( {12} was wasted on a duplicate roll)

Browning Ross C., pres. 32 Cortlandt, h N.J.

Metropolitan Washing Machine Co. 32 Cortlandt

{Notes: Moses W. Terrill was not listed; no ads at all, for any companies, in washing product categories.}

**1877-78?:** (Box: "NYC 1878, Reel 15," {14})

Browning Ross C., pres. 32 Cortlandt, h N.J.

Metropolitan Washing Machine Co. 32 Cortlandt

Metropolitan Manuf. & Trading Co., skirts, 348 B'way

Terrill, Moses W. treas. 32 Cortlandt, h Ct.

{Note: No ads at all, for any companies, in washing product categories.}

**1878-79:** (Vol. XCII, ending May 1, 1879) {I could not find this reel. There were duplicate rolls of microfilm, labeled differently, and none seemed to be for this year.}

**1879-80:** (Title page: Vol. XCIII, ending May 1, 1880, {15})

Browning Ross C., pres. 32 Cortlandt, h N.J.

Metropolitan Washing Machine Co. 32 Cortlandt

Mills Lyman A. sec. 32 Cortlandt

Terrill, Moses W. treas. 32 Cortlandt, h Ct.

{Note: No ads at all, for any companies, in washing product categories.}

**1880-81:** (Title page: Vol. XCIV, ending May 1, 1881, {16})

Browning Ross C., pres. 32 Cortlandt, h N.J.

METROPOLITAN MFG. CO. wringers, 32 Cortlandt

Mills Lyman A. sec. 32 Cortlandt, h Ct.

Terrill, Moses W. treas. 32 Cortlandt, h Ct.

{Note: No ads at all, for any companies, in washing product categories.}

**1881-82:** (Missing? Could not find. {17})

**1882-83:** (Title page: Vol. XCVI, ending May 1, 1883, {18})

Browning Ross C., pres. 32 Cortlandt, h N.J.

\* Metropolitan Mfg. Co. wringers, 32 Cortlandt

Mills Lyman A. sec. 32 Cortlandt, h Ct.

Terrill, Moses W. treas. 32 Cortlandt, h Ct.

{Note: No ads at all, for any companies, in washing product categories.}

**1883-84:** (Title page: Vol. XCVII, ending May 1, 1884, {19})

Browning Ross C., pres. 32 Cortlandt & 30 E. 14th, h Orange, N.J.

Metropolitan Mfg. Co. wringers, 32 Cortlandt & 30 E. 14th

Mills Lyman A. sec. 32 Cortlandt & 30 E. 14th, h Middlefield, Ct.

Terrill, Moses W. treas. 32 Cortlandt, h Middlefield, Ct.

{Note: No ads at all, for any companies, in washing product categories.}

**1884-85:** (Title page: Vol. XCVIII, ending May 1, 1885, {20})

Browning Ross C., pres. 32 Cortlandt, h Orange, N.J.

\* Metropolitan Mfg. Co. 32 Cortlandt

Mills Lyman A. sec. 32 Cortlandt, h Middlefield, Ct.

Terrill, Moses W. treas. 32 Cortlandt, h Middlefield, Ct.

{Note: No ads at all, for any companies, in washing product categories.}

**1885-86:** (Title page: Vol. XCIX, ending May 1, 1886)

{21}

Browning Ross C., wringers, 32 Cortlandt, h Orange, N.J.

Metropolitan Mfg. Co. 32 Cortlandt

Mills Lyman A. sec. 32 Cortlandt, h Middlefield, Ct.

Terrill, Moses W. treas. 32 Cortlandt, h Middlefield, Ct.

{Note: No ads at all, for any companies, in washing product categories.}

**1886-87:** (Title page: Vol. C, ending May 1, 1887)

{22}

Browning Ross C., pres., 32 Cortlandt, h Orange, N.J.

Metropolitan Mfg. Co. 32 Cortlandt, 212 E. 34th & 2314 Second av.

Mills Lyman A. sec. 32 Cortlandt, h Middlefield, Ct.

Terrill, Moses W. treas. 32 Cortlandt, h Middlefield, Ct.

{Note: I've stopped looking for ads, to save time. I've noticed that there's an index of advertizing categories soon after the title page, and I've been checking it for relevant categories, and there haven't been any.}

**1887-88:** (Title page: Vol. CI, ending May 1, 1888, {23})

Browning Ross C., pres., 32 Cortlandt & 532 Hudson, h Orange, N.J.

Metropolitan Mfg. Co. wringers, 32 Cortlandt, 212 E. 34th & 2314 Second av.

Mills Lyman A. sec. 32 Cortlandt & 532 Hudson, h Middlefield, Ct.

Terrill, Moses W. treas. 32 Cortlandt, h Middlefield, N.J. *[sic]*

**1888-89:** (Title page: Vol. CII, ending May 1, 1889, {24})

Browning Ross C., pres., 32 Cortlandt, h Orange, N.J.

Metropolitan Mfg. Co. wringers, 32 Cortlandt & 223 E. 59th

Mills Lyman A. sec. 32 Cortlandt, h Middleton *[sic]*, Ct.

Terrill, Moses W. treas. 32 Cortlandt, h Middlefield, Ct.

**1889-90:** (Title page: Vol. CIII, ending May 1, 1890, {25})

Browning Ross C., pres., 32 Cortlandt, h Orange, N.J.

Metropolitan Mfg. Co. wringers, 32 Cortlandt, 223 E. 59th & 1582 First av.

Mills Lyman A. sec. 32 Cortlandt & 223 E. 59th, h Middlefield, Ct.

Terrill, Moses W. treas. 32 Cortlandt & 223 E. 59th, h Middlefield, Ct.

**1890:** (From Ancestry.com. It corresponds to 1889-90, above.)

Browning Ross C. pres. 32 Cortlandt, h Orange, N. J.

Metropolitan Mfa. Co. wringers, 32 Cortlandt, 223 E. 59th & 1582 First av.

Mills Lyman A. sec. 32 Cortlandt & 223 E. 59th, h Middlefield, Ct.

Terrill Moses W. treas. 32 Cortlandt & 223 E. 59th, h Middlefield, Ct.

There are 20 entries containing "32 Cortlandt." The others do not seem relevant.

**1890-91:** (Title page: Vol. CIV, ending May 1, 1891, {26})

Browning Ross C., pres., 32 Cortlandt, h Orange, N.J.

Metropolitan Mfg. Co. wringers, 32 Cortlandt, 162 av. A, 222 E. 59th, 1582, 1st av. & 2314 2d av.

Mills Lyman A. sec. 32 Cortlandt, h Middlefield, Ct.



Terrill, Moses W. treas. 32 Cortlandt, h Middlefield, Ct.

**1891-92:** (Title page: Vol. CV, ending May 1, 1892, {27})

Browning Ross C., pres., 32 Cortlandt, h Orange, N.J.

Metropolitan Mfg. Co. h. furng, 32 Cortlandt, 1582, 1st av. 2314, 2d av. & 162 Av A.

Mills Lyman A. sec. 32 Cortlandt, h Middlefield, Ct.

Terrill, Moses W. treas. 32 Cortlandt, h Middlefield, Ct.

{Note: From the list of abbreviations in the front of the directory, “h. furng.” is an abbrev. for “house furnishing.”}

**1892-93:** (Title page: Vol. CVI, ending May 1, 1893, {28})

AM. WRINGER CO. 99 Chambers (formerly 32 Cortlandt st.)

{Note: Ross C. Browning, Metropolitan Mfg. Co, Lyman A. Mills and Moses W. Terrill were not listed, and there were no ads, according to the index of advertizers in the front, for the American Wringer Co.}

~~~~~