

## The Secret of the Skill of Madarasz

Warner C Brownfield of Cleveland Heights, Ohio was the very last student of Louis Madarasz in June 1909. Madarasz had declined WCB request two times before WCB convinced the man to let him come to Bowling Green KY for personal, one-on-one lessons, across the table style. Brownfield said the man smoked when they took a break outside, M's very modest home.

Madarasz wrote very fast WCB noticed first. There was no time for slowness as those boys had to get out a lot of stuff every day. Besides teaching penmanship class, the penmen often addressed envelopes and wrote personal letters inviting students to attend the school. They would go to the post office with arm loads of envelopes each day. Most penmen who did a lot of work, wrote fast but not so fast that they lost control of the pen and its ink. Additionally, writing with speed kept the wiggles out of the lines.

Madarasz retained control of his writing with his little finger. Brownfield noticed that Madarasz would use a wonderful, fluid arm motion to make the capitals. In the small letters he would often extend his fingers up or down for the swelling loop letters. In order to get accurate, uniform letters Madarasz used his little finger for the support of his hand. At times the little finger would merely slide over the top of the paper, making every letter the pen nib made. Other times, as in small 'l' the little finger rested as if 'a nail were thru it to the paper'. This little finger rest was his secret. It gave his hand a steadiness that helped him make such wonderful small letters and especially his small 's' which is a true font designer's delight.