

JOSIAH SEYMOUR CURREY
JUERGEN BECK



CHICAGO

ITS HISTORY AND
ITS BUILDERS
VOLUME 5

Chicago

Its History and its Builders

Volume 5

JOSIAH SEYMOUR CURREY

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SAMUEL WATERS ALLERTON.

Eighty-three years of age, and Samuel Waters Allerton is still a vigorous, active man, although retired from the control of extensive business operations which formerly engaged his attention. In matters of public concern as well as in the conduct of private enterprises, he has played a leading role on the stage of action in Chicago and yet it is not to cities with their commercial, industrial and professional activities that he would direct the attention of young men starting in life, but to the farm — "the almost certain source of revenue." George Washington declared agriculture is the most useful as well as the most honorable occupation of man, and in this occupation and its kindred interests — stock raising — Mr. Allerton laid the basis of his success. His history through several generations has been distinctly American in both direct and collateral lines. The progenitor of the family in this country was Isaac Allerton, who was born in England between the-years 1583 and 1585, the exact date being unknown. He resided in London for some time prior to his removal to Holland in 1609 and came to the new world as one of the Mayflower passengers in 1620. It is generally admitted that he was the wealthiest of all of the Pilgrims and was one of the few among them to whom Bradford, and contemporaneous writers always gave the prefix "Mr.," which at that time was used as an index of superior family or respectability. He was also one of the three upon whom the privilege of citizenship was conferred by the city of Leyden, his associates in this honor being William Bradford, afterward governor of the Plymouth colony, and Degory Priest, his brother-in-law. He was married in Leyden, September 4, 1611, to Mary Norris, of Newbury, England, and they had four children when they embarked on the Mayflower. His wife died February 25, 1621, and in 1626 he married Fear Brewster, daughter of

Elder William Brewster. Her death occurred in 1631, while Isaac Allerton died in 1659.

Samuel W. Allerton of the ninth generation of the family in America was born in Amenia, New York, May 26, 1828, a son of Samuel W. Allerton, whose birth occurred at Amenia, December 5, 1775. He was married March 26, 1808, to Hannah Hurd, who was born in South Dover, Dutchess county, New York, the eldest daughter of Ebenezer and Rebecca (Phillips) Hurd, the former an extensive farmer and stockraiser of Amenia. Samuel W. Allerton, Sr., studied for the medical profession but abandoning his plan for the practice of medicine, learned the tailor's trade and became a merchant tailor, at the same time conducting a general store. In 1828 he joined with others in building and operating a woolen mill but the litigation of the sheriff in 1833 caused the loss of nearly all his fortune. In 1837 he removed westward to Iowa with the hope of retrieving his lost possessions but becoming ill, returned to the east. In 1848 he rented a farm in Yates county, New York, and six years later purchased land in Wayne county, upon which he spent his remaining days. His religious faith was that of the Universalist church and he was one of the respected men of his community, although he did not seek to figure in public life. He lived to the venerable age of ninety-nine years and eight months.

The youngest of the nine children in his father's family, Samuel W. Allerton of this review was but seven years of age when his father failed in business and was a lad of twelve when he began providing for his own support. He remained in Amenia until fourteen years of age and in 1842 went to Yates county with his parents, giving them the benefit of his services until they were able to buy the Wayne county farm. He then joined his brother Henry in renting a farm on which they made fifteen hundred dollars, which they gave in partial payment for the farm in Wayne county, assuming an indebtedness of three thousand dollars. In the cultivation of a rented farm Mr. Allerton

saved thirty-two hundred dollars and then went to Newark, where he worked with his brothers on their farm and also traded in livestock to some extent. On his return from Albany, New York, where he had sold cattle, it was found that he and his brother were the possessors of three thousand dollars in cash and a farm clear of all indebtedness. They divided their interests, Mr. Allerton taking the cash and starting out for himself, his brother advising him: "Make a name and character for yourself and you are sure to win." This advice he has ever followed and it has been the substance of his admonition to young men since that time. At the end of his first independent venture — the sale of cattle in New York — his sales amounted to seven hundred dollars. With characteristic energy and determination, however, he continued in business and later when he made a shipment of livestock to New York there was such a shortage of cattle on the market there that his sales netted him three thousand dollars.

It was about that time that Mr. Allerton heard and heeded the call of the west and for a year thereafter engaged in raising and feeding cattle in Fulton county, Illinois, but like hundreds of others, he was the victim of the financial panic which swept over the country at that time. This and ill health occasioned his return to the east and with his brother he engaged in merchandising for a short time in Newark, New York, but felt that the limits and possibilities in such an undertaking were too narrow. Disposing of his interest in the store and borrowing five thousand dollars he returned to Fulton county, and in March, 1860, removed to Chicago, from which point he has since conducted his operations. At the same time he made further preparations for having a home in the city by his marriage at Peoria, to Miss Paduella M. Thompson, a daughter of Astor C. Thompson, of Fulton county. They became the parents of a daughter and son: Kate Bennett, who was born June 10, 1863, and on the 14th of October, 1885, became the wife of Dr. Francis Sidney Tapin. Following his death she married

Hugo R. Johnson. The son, Robert Henry, born March 20, 1873, is supervising extensive property interests. Following the death of his first wife Mr. Allerton wedded her sister, Agnes C. Thompson, on the 15th of March, 1882, and their home on Prairie avenue has ever been the center of a cultured society circle.

Mr. Allerton has always pinned his faith to farming and live-stock dealing as the surest source of success although he has operated extensively in other fields. He bought his first cattle shipment in the old Merrick yards on Cottage Grove avenue and as the city had no bank he had to depend upon express shipments of money from New York. It is well remembered by old time traders that in May, 1860, upon sharp decline in prices he cornered the market by buying every hog in Chicago. He was at that time alone in the city and it was difficult for him to obtain money. Three telegrams, one from his own bank and two from New York, however, were regarded as sufficient security on the part of Aiken & Morgan, bankers, to secure him a loan at one per cent interest and the profits which accrued from that deal constituted the foundation of his fortune. Moreover, the experience brought to him a recognition of the need and value of union stock yards and better banking facilities in Chicago and he set to work to accomplish both. In the '60s there were three stock yards in Chicago. In 1865 he joined with John B. Sherman in the agitation of a proposition to combine the interests and that their labors were resultant is indicated in the fact that the Union Stock Yards were organized in 1866. The wisdom of his judgment being attested in this enterprise and success resulting therefrom, he also became interested in the stock yards at Pittsburg, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Jersey City (New York yards), St. Joseph and Omaha. For many years he was president of the Allerton Packing Company. His early experience with the banks led to his efforts for the establishment of the first Chicago bank under the national banking law and he became one of the original directors of the First National

Bank, in which he still holds large interests. There are two things which he says he never offers for sale — stock in this bank and his Illinois farm lands. His experience bears out the statement of one who has long given close study to the economic conditions of the natural resources of the country and declares that "Illinois farm lands are the safest investment in all America." The holdings of Mr. Allerton comprise eleven thousand acres in the Mississippi valley, including farm property in this state, Ohio, Iowa, Nebraska and Wyoming. He formerly owned nine thousand acres near Monticello, Illinois, known as "The Farms," which is one of the model live-stock farms of the world, now the property of his son. The home thereon is modeled after the typical residence of the English country gentleman and although every acre is tilled to perfection, fine horses, cattle and hogs are the chief sources of revenue. Another Allerton property which is ever a source of delight to the owner is his summer home at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, standing in the center of two beautiful farms of eighty acres each. In California he maintains his winter residence, an old Spanish mission building having been converted into a quaint yet elegant home. The business relations of Mr. Allerton in Chicago have been of vast benefit to the city. After watching the workings of the cable street car company in San Francisco in 1880 he used his influence as a stockholder in the South Side Traction System, inducing Superintendent Holmes to investigate the cable with the result that it was adopted by the street railway companies of the city. He is still a director of the Chicago City Railway Company. In addition to acting as a director of the First National Bank through all these years since its inception in 1863, he is a director in the First Trust & Savings Bank, National Safe Deposit Company, the Weaver Coal & Coke Company and the North Waukegan Harbor & Dock Company, and vice president of the Art Marble Company. He has at times made generous division of his wealth for the benefit of mankind, one of his chief benevolences being

the establishment in conjunction with the late Henry E. Weaver of the St. Charles Home for Boys. He was at one time nominated by his friends for the mayoralty on the republican ticket but the entire ticket suffered defeat in that year. He is a strong protectionist and an advocate of all which advances the condition of American labor. He gave efficient aid to the World's Columbian Exposition as one of its directors, and has been a cooperant factor in much that has worked for the upbuilding and benefit of the city along various progressive lines. His name is on the membership rolls of the Calumet, Union League, Washington Park, Chicago Golf and Marquette Clubs, and he is, moreover, a member of the Illinois Society of the Sons of the American Revolution and the Society of Mayflower Descendants. He is of unemotional nature, yet of well-balanced character who early learned to correctly judge of life and its contacts, of his own capacities and powers and of those things which make up life's contacts and experiences. He has ever held to the principle which he has again and again enunciated in this fashion "no boy can succeed unless he build up a character." He has never theorized much concerning life but has been a central actor on the stage. Never an extremist, he belongs to that class who maintain an even balance, never carried away by the chimerical illusions of the optimist nor moved from a stable center by the dark and depressing views of the pessimist. He recognizes the advancement of the world and the obligation of the individual to put forth intelligent effort if he would keep pace with universal progress. Among his strongly marked characteristics is a democratic manner, a manner that always commands respect, preserves dignity and yet never forces onto one the knowledge of his success or prominence. Notwithstanding his prosperity he is a most approachable gentleman and nothing in his manner or speech would ever suggest his wealth. He is today the only Chicago business man who was contemporaneous with the founders of Chicago's great industries, the Armours,

Morris', Pullmans, Swifts, Palmers and Fields, with all of whom he had close personal acquaintance. No living citizen of Illinois today has done more toward the advancement of her agricultural, financial, industrial and general business interests than Samuel Waters Allerton. Inheriting a naturally robust constitution, observing the laws of nature throughout a most busy, active life, his reward, in addition to magnificent success, is a remarkable preservation of the physical man and mental faculties whose keenness is unimpaired.

FRANK WALDO SMITH.

There is perhaps no man in all Chicago who has done more to keep alive civic pride than Frank Waldo Smith, in business circles occupying the position of cashier of the Com Exchange National Bank since 1885 and enjoying throughout all the intervening years the high regard of his colleagues. He is more widely known in the city at large because of the active part which he has taken in preserving records relative to Chicago's history and in disseminating among the younger generation a knowledge of past glories and events which have constituted the foundation upon which Chicago's present greatness and permanent prosperity rests.

Although Mr. Smith has not yet passed the prime of life, he is one of Chicago's pioneers and his memory forms a connecting link between the primitive past and the progressive present. He was born in this city, May 19, 1849, only twelve years after its incorporation. In fact, it was at that time only a town — a growing town to be sure — upon a western prairie and had comparatively little commercial or industrial importance. His parents were Mr. and Mrs. Waldo Wait Smith, who at the time of his birth resided at the northeast corner of Franklin and Madison streets. His mother in her maidenhood was Jane Elizabeth

Fogg, a daughter of Ebenezer Fogg and was born at Cambridgeport, Massachusetts and came to Chicago in 1847. Mr. Waldo W. Smith came to Chicago from Pawlett, Vermont in 1836, settling here at the time when the city probably boasted of two brick buildings. The father's eldest brother, who had arrived in 1835, established the Union Ridge Hotel at the corner of Higgins street and Sixty-fourth avenue, and in all the years which have since been added to the cycle of the centuries the members of this family, have taken active and helpful part in the work of general progress and municipal improvement.

In the acquirement of his education Frank Waldo Smith attended successively the Mosely school, in 1857, the Haven school in 1862, and the old Chicago high school. Monroe and Halsted streets in 1863. Four years later he entered the employ of his father, who was a wholesale grocer at 43 South Water street as a partner of the firm of Smith Brothers, successors of Smith, Pollard & Company. In the great fire of October, 1871, their business was destroyed with a total loss, and Mr. Smith, therefore, turned his attention to other lines. Paralyzed for a brief moment by the awful calamity with which it had been visited, the city began its rebuilding with renewed activity, accepting its losses as an impetus for increased development and progress. Mr. Smith, on the 11th of April, 1872, secured a position as clearing house clerk in the employ of the Third National Bank, where he remained until the failure of that institution in 1875. For ten years thereafter he was chief clerk with the Merchants Loan & Trust Company and on October, 31, 1885, was elected to the position of cashier of the Corn Exchange National Bank, with which he has thus been connected to the present time, covering a period of a quarter of a century. He is one of the oldest bank cashiers in years of continued service in Chicago and his long incumbency in the position stands in incontrovertible evidence of his ability and the high place

which he occupies in the regard of his colleagues in banking circles.

On the 9th of April, 1873, Mr. Smith was married to Miss Dora A. Hadden and unto them have been born three children: Fannie B., Osborn F. and Ethel H., who reside with their parents at No. 5539 Cornell avenue with the exception of Osborn F. Smith, who is now married and has established a home of his own. Mr. Smith is a prominent and popular member of the Press Club and for two years was its treasurer. Those who know him have been better for his friendship. Loyalty is one of his marked characteristics and it is manifest in all of his relations with his fellowmen.

During the past ten years Mr. Smith has given much time to research concerning the early history of Chicago and has lectured to and entertained many audiences with his illustrated scenes and stories of the early days. His devotion to local interests has been like the loyalty of a dutiful son to a father. He stands today among the honored band of pioneer settlers, but, unlike many of them, he has not only been associated with the city during its formative period but has continued an active factor in its later day progress and improvement. While an honored representative of the past, he is doing for the present generation that which keeps fresh and causes to be cherished the memory of the old Chicago which was built upon a strong and broad foundation of lofty purpose. No citizen possesses more valuable records concerning the early' days nor has a mind more greatly enriched by reminiscences of men and events of an earlier generation. His lectures have at times constituted the force that has called to life the memories of the earlier settlers, while the younger Chicago has listened spellbound to his stories of the early days. His efforts in this direction have been put forth all because of his devotion to the city which he loves so well, and both the older and younger generation owe to him a debt of gratitude that can never be paid for what he has accomplished in perpetuating not only for the present

but for all future time the history of the Queen city by the lake.

ANDREW HULL PARKER.

Dr. Andrew Hull Parker, of Chicago, designer, inventor, manufacturer and for many years past a leading specialist of the United States in the treatment of hernia, comes of one of the early Revolutionary families of New England and New York state. He was born at Springfield, Ohio, May 3, 1834, a son of Emory and Delopha (Bailey) Parker. The father was born in Grafton county, New Hampshire, but the family subsequently located near Binghamton, New York, and he removed to Ohio about 1830, taking up his residence at Springfield. He served most of his time in public office while in that city but in 1848 located on a farm near Geneseo, Illinois, where he spent the remainder of his life. He was twice married, his first wife dying in New York state. By that union there was one son, Albert B., who is now deceased. At Springfield Mr. Parker was married to Miss Delopha Bailey and to this union seven children were born, four boys and three girls, the subject of this review being the eldest. Those surviving are: David K., of Long Beach, California; James Douglas, of Colby, Kansas; and Orpheus B. of Oregon.

Mr. Parker of this review received his preliminary education in the public schools and in an academy at Geneseo. He continued upon his father's farm until he was nineteen years of age and then, possessing the laudable desire to become independent, he secured employment in the grading of the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railway. While at work he figured out the cost of grading and excavating and attracted the attention of his employer who induced him to take a contract on his own account. He was thus engaged until fall and then entered school for the winter at Geneseo, working in a dry-goods store for his

board. He again engaged in railroad contracting during the next summer and fall and spent the winter of 1854-55 teaching in a country school near Geneseo. In the spring of 1855 he associated with Captain John Baxter, of Geneseo, in the dry-goods business, but one year later disposed of his interest to his partner and entered the academy at Geneseo. In the spring of 1857 he took another contract on the Rock Island Railway to grade nine miles of track beginning the work one station east of Washington, Iowa. The panic in the autumn of 1857, however, put a stop to the work and he went to Ste. Genevieve, Missouri, where he taught school for three years. After the battle of Bull Run the rebel governor of the state took possession of the school funds, thus temporarily closing most of the schools in the state. Mr. Parker was offered an appointment as quartermaster for a Union regiment, a part of which was being organized at Ste. Genevieve and he visited his old home in Illinois with the expectation of accepting this appointment. His wife and parents induced him to remain in private life and he took up his residence at Oquawka, Illinois, where he made a thorough study of trusses and appliances, beginning late in 1861 as a traveling specialist, selling trusses and appliances which were manufactured by eastern firms. In the fall of 1866, at the solicitation of Bartlett & Butman, of Boston, he established a house at No. 133 Clark street, Chicago, where business was carried on until after the fire, when he removed to 58 State street, remaining there for thirty years. Although the name of the firm was Bartlett, Butman & Parker, he was sole proprietor but conducted the business under that name until June, 1882, when he incorporated as the Common Sense Truss Company. In the beginning he carried principally a line of trusses made by Bartlett & Butman, which he named the Common Sense Truss, taking out a trade-mark under that title. In 1882 he established a department for the manufacture of trusses with numerous improvements which he had invented from time to time, also

manufacturing a large variety of other articles, principally of his own invention. Probably the most noteworthy of these is the Parker Retentive Truss, recognized the world over as the greatest invention in this line.

In 1888 Dr. Parker was sued in the United States court by an eastern firm for alleged infringement of patent in the manufacture of elastic stockings. He excited much comment by acting as his own attorney and defeating some of the best legal talent of the country employed by his opponent. Since 1865 he has made a study of hernia and in 1883 was given a state certificate as a physician and has since made a specialty of the treatment of that disease. For over forty years he has been known as the leading expert in America in the treatment of rupture and has received the highest recognition as an authority in his specialty. In 1872, by an act of congress, the United States government through a medical board appointed for that purpose adopted Dr. Parker's truss as excelling all others in use and since that time has furnished these trusses free to its pensioners. His Common Sense Truss was awarded a medal and diploma at the International Exhibition at Philadelphia, in 1876, and he received from the Columbian Exposition at Chicago, in 1893, a medal of "Award for the great extent and, variety of trusses and bandages, ingenuity of design and great adaptability," and a diploma of honorable mention "For his skill as a designer and inventor." In addition to his business as a manufacturer he has invested successfully in real estate and lands and is the owner of a valuable ranch of over one thousand acres under irrigation, which is located four miles from Torrington, the county seat of Goshen county, Wyoming.

On the 5th of May, 1858, Dr. Parker was married at Oquawka, Illinois, to Miss Mary Mickey, of that place, and six children have been born to this union, Emory H., Charles W., Maud D., Louis Frederick, Lily M. and Andrew H., Jr.

Dr. Parker has taken the interest of a public-spirited citizen in politics and at various times has been prominent in securing the election of competent men to local and state officers. His office is at Nos. 300-306 Madison street, Chicago, and he resides at the Parker apartments, corner of Hinman avenue and Church street, Evanston. These apartments he erected in 1910 and they are pronounced the finest and most complete in the state outside of Chicago. He has made it a principle of his life to do to the very best of his ability whatever he undertakes, and it is to the observance of this principle that he largely owes his success. He has the satisfaction of looking back upon a long and useful career, in the course of which he has contributed his share toward the alleviation of the ills of humanity, and the respect in which he is held by his friends and by those who have benefited by his services is evidence that he has not lived in vain. By virtue of his ancestry he holds membership in the Sons of the American Revolution.

HENRY DIBBLEE.

Henry Dibblee to the time of his death was numbered among those resourceful men whose activity has constituted the substantial and enduring qualities that have given Chicago her commercial greatness. He figured prominently in real estate circles for many years as the senior partner of the firm of Dibblee & Manierre and also had voice in the management and control of important corporate interests of the city. Here he resided from 1872 until his demise on the 19th of December, 1907. He was born in New York city, August 20, 1840, a son of E. R. and Frances M. (Hayes) Dibblee. His father was recognized as one of the leading importers of dry goods in the metropolis until his later years, when he retired from business.

Henry Dibblee was a pupil in private and boarding schools of the eastern metropolis until eighteen years of age, when he entered his father's establishment as a clerk and bent his energy toward the mastery of the various phases of the business until his knowledge, experience and ability had qualified him to take up the responsibilities of a partnership and he was admitted to the firm, so continuing until 1872. Thinking that the growing western city of Chicago offered still broader opportunities, Mr. Dibblee came to Illinois and in January, 1873, joined William R. and John S. Gould in the foundry and iron business, which was conducted under the firm style of Gould & Dibblee until 1878. After the dissolution of the partnership Mr. Dibblee continued in the field as a dealer in ornamental iron work and afterward extended the scope of his trade by handling mantels and tiles, becoming an importer of many of the finest English encaustic tiles and also western agent for the leading American manufacturers. For eight years he conducted an extensive and growing business in those lines and then retired from the commercial field in 1886 to enter real-estate circles as a partner of George Manierre, operating under the firm style of Dibblee & Manierre up to the time of his demise. They soon became recognized as one of the leading real-estate firms in the city, negotiating many important transfers and managing deals which have left their impress upon the real-estate history of the city. Embracing favorable opportunity for the extension of his interests in other lines, Mr. Dibblee became president of the Chicago Auditorium Association and an influential director of the Calumet and Chicago Canal & Dock Company. The leading business men of the city regarded his judgment as sound, his enterprise unfaltering and his business Integrity unassailable.

On the 26th of November, 1873, Mr. Dibblee was married to Miss Laura Field, a daughter of John Field, of Conway, Massachusetts, a sister of Marshall Field and a representative of a family whose ancestral connection with

the old Bay state dates back to 1650. Mr. and Mrs. Dibblee became the parents of two daughters. Bertha and Frances F. The former is the wife of John O. King and the latter is the wife of A. A. Sprague, 2d. The children of this marriage are A. A. Sprague, 3d, and Laura Sprague.

The death of Mr. Dibblee occurred December 19, 1907, and took from Chicago one of her prominent men and citizens. He attended the Episcopal church and gave his political support to the democracy, He held membership in the Saddle and Cycle and Mid-Day Clubs and was honored with the presidency of the latter. He greatly enjoyed social life and outdoor sports, anything in the line of athletics making strong appeal to him. He was also a lover of art, music and travel but more than all his interest centered in his home, where his friends found him a social, genial host whose cordiality was unfeigned, while his family knew him as a devoted, considerate and loving husband and father. It is these personal traits of character, even more than business success, that serve to keep alive the memory of a man among his fellowmen, and such were Mr. Dibblee's excellencies of character that many years will pass ere his memory will cease to be a cherished possession to those - who knew him.

GEORGE RANDOLPH DYER.

If one could turn back the hour-glass until seventy-six years had been marked off the calendar and could visit Chicago as it was more than three-quarters of a century ago, a little village would be found bordering the river near its mouth and within its boundaries there would be found few thoroughfares. However, the little town was peopled by an enterprising, progressive population — men who had realized the opportunities of the west and had come hither to take part in the upbuilding of the wonderful inland empire which was springing up in the Mississippi valley.

Among the number of Chicago's residents at that day was George Randolph Dyer, prominent as a citizen and as a man of business ability. In later years his efforts became a factor in the development of other sections of the state and in whatever community he lived, his service was of worth as a factor in progress and improvement. He was born in Clarendon, Rutland county, Vermont, June 3, 1813. His ancestry can be traced back directly to Roger Williams, who was banished from Massachusetts to Rhode Island, and authentic history establishes the fact that a maternal ancestor was Mary Dyer, the Quaker, who was hanged on Boston Commons by order of the general court of Massachusetts at that period of unexplainable illusion, which cost the lives of so many of the colony's worthy citizens. The Dyers came from England early in the seventeenth century, settling in Vermont, where some members of the family still reside. His father, Daniel Dyer, had a state reputation as a sheep raiser and substantial farmer, and was a soldier of the Revolutionary war. After the establishment of American independence he was commissioned major in the Massachusetts State Militia and his commission bearing the signature of Governor Hancock came into the possession of his son George R. His mother was a Miss Susanah Olin, of the popular Vermont family of that name. A brother of George R. Dyer was the venerable and well-known Dr. Charles V. Dyer, long a distinguished citizen of Chicago.

Captain George R. Dyer acquired an academic education in the West Rutland Academy and at the age of twenty-one years started for the west, driving across the country alone from Clarendon, Vermont, to Chicago. He remained a resident of Chicago and of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, until 1841, and during that period aided in the organization of the territory of Wisconsin in 1838. He also assisted in making the survey of the Fox river with a view to using that stream as a feeder for the Illinois canal. In 1841 he removed to Will county where he engaged in farming and