WILLIAM M. SINGERLY DEAD
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Taken Off Suddenly by Heart Disease While Smoking a Cigar in His Bedroom.

HAD HAD A COLD TEN DAYS

Physicians Say He Had Weakened His Heart by Excessive Smoking—A Successful Business Man Until His Failure in December.

PHILADELPHIA, Feb. 27.—William M. Singerly died suddenly at his residence, 1701 Locust Street, this afternoon. Heart disease was the immediate cause of death.

Mr. Singerly had been suffering for about ten days from a cold, and had remained at home since last Wednesday, although his indisposition appeared in no way serious. While sitting in his bedroom smoking a cigar he was seized with a violent fit of coughing and immediately died. In the room at the time were Mr. Singerly's granddaughter, Miss Mabel Singerly Meredith, and two servants. His son-in-law, James S. McCartney, had left the room only a few minutes before.

The physicians say they frequently had cautioned Mr. Singerly that his heart was weak as a result of excessive smoking, and that of late his habit had been to take "dry smokes." To-day his cigar was lighted, and it is thought that the smoke brought on the coughing spell, the severity of which ruptured a vessel of the heart.

Mr. Singerly was married twice. He leaves one child, Mrs. Elizabeth Singerly Balch, and two grandchildren, Miss Mabel Singerly Meredith and William Singerly McCartney, both children of a daughter now dead, Mrs. Katharine Singerly McCartney. Mrs. Balch is in Europe.

Mr. Singerly was proprietor of The Record Publishing Company, President of the Chestnut Street National Bank, and the Chestnut Savings Fund and Trust Company, which recently collapsed, and President of the Singerly Pulp and Paper Mill. He was a member of the Fairmount Park Commission, and until lately its Treasurer. He also was a Trustee of the Philadelphia Commercial Museum.

MR. SINGERLY'S CAREER.

Man of Large Enterprises Whose Failure in December Astonished Philadelphia.

William Miskey Singerly was born in Philadelphia Dec. 27, 1832. He was a son of Joseph Singerly, who was a pioneer in the building and operation of the street railways of Philadelphia. His education was obtained in the public and high schools of Philadelphia, from which he was graduated in 1850. He went immediately into mercantile work, entering the employ of J. Palmer & Co., commission merchants. He remained with that firm as a clerk for ten years, when, at twenty-eight, he was called to the management of the Germantown Passenger Railway, in which his father was a large stockholder.

His ten years of business training had been thorough and were valuable to him. He realized that the railroad of which he was manager was soon to grow, and he anticipated its enhancement by improving the property. In several years he had acquired absolute control of the road. Upon the death of his father he inherited stock worth $750,000, which he subsequently sold to a syndicate for double that amount.

Enters Journalism.

Mr. Singerly became identified with journalism by purchasing in 1877 The Philadelphia Record, which at that time had a circulation of not over 5,000 copies daily. He perceived the possibilities for a well-managed, bold one-cent morning paper and carried his ideas into successful execution. His radical changes met with popular approval, and the circulation of the paper increased at a phenomenal rate. Despite the fact that its politics opposed that of the dominant party in Philadelphia and Pennsylvania, its popularity grew unchecked. He erected for The Record a building which is remarkable for its completeness of detail.

He also operated large paper and pulp mills, from which all the paper for The Record was furnished, as well as a large amount for other publishers. He also furnished paper for the publication of Government documents by the Public Printer.

Toward the end of the seventies Mr. Singerly conceived the idea of extending Philadelphia's area toward the Northwest. He purchased large tracts of real estate in that direction and erected hundreds of houses. He improved, in all, almost 100 acres, practically creating a new residence portion of the city. He also interested himself in industrial enterprises in that section.

Theatre Owner and Stockman.

Not content with these outlets for his energy, he became a theatre owner, and was successful in that direction. He made the Temple Theatre one of the most attractive places of amusement in the United States. Its interior decorations were a matter of pride to the city. When, however, in 1886, it was burned down at a loss of over $200,000, he relinquished his interest in the stage. At that time he was planning a European trip to obtain ideas from the amusement places of the Continental cities. Two men were killed in the Temple Theatre fire, one of whom was married. Illustrative of his generosity, he at once granted the widow an annuity of $260, payable $5 weekly. The principal, $5,200, will be paid to the children at the death of their mother.

Mr. Singerly was also a successful stock raiser, and his work in the encouragement of raising fine stock will never be forgotten by Pennsylvanians. In 1873 he bought a tract which he called The Record Farm, now famous among all stock raisers. This farm expanded under his personal management until it comprised more than 600 acres. It is valued at over $250,000. He spared neither pains nor expense, and The Record Farm is accounted one of the best stock farms in the entire country. The buildings are numerous, capacious, and built with a view to make them best serve the purposes of their construction. Everything is conducted on economic and scientific principles.

The Sunday concerts in Fairmount Park were inaugurated by Mr. Singerly, and were maintained by the subscriptions of seven citizens, headed by The Record publisher. He also gave to the city a toboggan slide larger than any other in the country, measuring 2,200 feet from start to finish, and having a fall of 132 feet.

His Work as a Banker.

In 1887, upon the retirement of Gov. Pattison from office, Mr. Singerly took an active part in establishing the Chestnut Street National Bank, of which the ex-Governor became the first President. Upon Mr. Pattison being called for a second time to the Governorship, Mr. Singerly succeeded him as President of the bank, and also became President of the Chestnut Street Savings Fund Company.

The Singerly financial institutions failed for over $3,000,000 last December. Mr. Singerly's connection with this failure, explained in the issue of The Record of Dec. 25, 1897, is as follows:

The Record is compelled to make a painful personal announcement this morning. Owing to the financial embarrassment of Mr. William M. Singerly, President of The Record Publishing Company, the Chestnut Street National Bank and the Chestnut Street Trust and Savings Fund Company were obliged to suspend business yesterday. The weight which proved too heavy for Mr. Singerly to carry was his large investment in the Singerly Pulp and Paper Mills at Elkton, Md. The extreme shrinkage in the price of paper and the resulting depreciation in the value of that property were the primary causes of his embarrassment and of the suspension of the bank and trust company with which he had been so closely identified.

An extraordinary effort was made before the announcement of suspension yesterday to tide over the difficulty and Mr. Singerly's friends rallied to his assistance with rare generosity and fidelity; but it was found impracticable to turn the assets at his disposal into a shape to meet immediate requirements.

A complete statement of the condition of the Chestnut Street National Bank will soon be available. It is probable that such arrangements will be perfected as will enable the bank to liquidate its obligations without the necessity or delay of a receivership. In The Record property Mr. Singerly has a valuable asset. The earnings of this journal during the year 1896, in excess of all expenditures, were $310,000. With such a moneymaker to fall back on and with a grim determination to pay every dollar he owes, he hopes to redeem his credit and satisfy his creditors.

Turned Over His Assets.

A few days later Mr. Singerly turned over to the assignees of the bank and trust company all his personal assets, including his interest in The Record, and the assignees entered on a plan for rehabilitating the institutions. They are still engaged in this work.

Mr. Singerly was always an active Democrat. In 1894 he was unanimously made the Democratic candidate for Governor of Pennsylvania and entered with great energy into the canvass, speaking in nearly every county in the State. In all he made over seventy speeches in upholding the cause of Democracy. The natural Republican majority of Pennsylvania was too great to be overcome, however, and his competitor, Gen. Hastings, carried off the prize.

During the last National campaign he supported the Palmer and Buckner ticket, making a number of speeches in its behalf in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland, and organizing associations in aid of the movement.

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