

CHESTER TIMES – June 28, 1910

SAMUEL A. CROZER DIED AT UPLAND HOME THIS MORNING – Well-Known Philanthropist and Millionaire Manufacturer Passes Away Unexpectedly, Although He Had Been Ailing for Some Time – A Sketch of His Active Career

Samuel A. Crozer, philanthropist and manufacturer of Upland, and one of the best-known men of the county and State, died this morning at 6:40 o'clock, and his demise comes as a shock to the residents of Upland, this city and many other places where he was known and esteemed. Death came suddenly and unexpectedly, and while a physician was hastily summoned as soon as it became known that his condition was serious, life had fled before the doctor arrived. With him at the time of his death were his wife, the nurse and several servants.

For several months past Mr. Crozer had been ill, having taken sick while in California, where he spent the winter. For a time after his return death was feared, but he recovered sufficiently to take daily rides in his automobile. For years he has been a sufferer with heart trouble and recently an elevator was installed in his home to obviate the necessity of using the stairs.

Mr. Crozer was in his eighty-fifth year and had been prominently identified with manufacturing in this county since he was seventeen years of age. While but a boy he superintended the erection of the first mill in Upland and subsequently designed and erected the other two in Upland and the one on Edgmont Avenue, this city. He has travelled extensively having made about fifty trips to Europe and touched at every civilized port in the world.

The mills in Upland and this city, owned by the firm of which Mr. Crozer had long been the head, are closed and will not resume until after Mr. Crozer's funeral.

The funeral will take place on Friday afternoon in the Upland Baptist Church.

SKETCH OF HIS LIFE – Samuel Aldrich Crozer, elder son of John Price and Sallie I. (Knowles) Crozer, was born at "West Branch," Aston Township, Delaware County, December 25, 1825. There, the year before, his father had purchased the old Mattson Paper Mill, then disused, which he had changed into a cotton mill, giving to the locality the name "West Branch" from its situation on the west branch of Chester Creek, and there he laid the foundation of the enormous fortune he subsequently acquired.

The son received his primary education in the country school in the neighborhood, but in his home life he was peculiarly fortunate, for his mother was a cultured, refined gentlewoman, the influence of whose teachings and example has exerted an influence that has continued throughout all his well-rounded, useful career as a businessman and exemplary citizen. His father, although denied the advantages of a liberal education in youth, devoted much of his spare time in manhood to reading and study of carefully selected instructive books. The diary which John P. Crozer kept during a large part of his life indicates the thoroughness with which he pursued these volumes, which gave him precision in expression, and forceful, easy style in writing. Hence the atmosphere of Samuel A. Crozer's early life was conducive to the building and development of a well-rounded, strong character, who was reared amid such environments.

BEGINS HIS CAREER – When of an age to leave home, he was placed at a boarding school in Wilmington, Delaware, and later was sent to a similar institution in Philadelphia. In February, 1842, when Samuel A. Crozer was but a few weeks over

seventeen, his father was thrown from a sleigh, resulting in a fracture of the thigh. In the emergency occasioned by that accident, the lad was summoned home and given charge of the financial and office department of the manufacturing business conducted by his father, which, by that time, had grown to enormous proportions. With such ability had the son discharged the duties so unexpectedly cast upon him, that his father, after his recovery from his injuries continued Samuel in absolute control of that branch of the business.

In August of that year, the great flood that will ever be remembered in this section occurred. The elder Crozer dispatched his son to the West Branch mill to direct operations there designed to save that establishment from total destruction, and while, that was only partially accomplished Samuel continued at his post, even when more than half the factory had been undermined by water and had fallen into the angry flood.

THE UPLAND MILLS – In 1845 John P. Crozer purchased the Chester Mills, now Upland, and began the erection there of a cotton factory, afterwards known as Mill No. 1. When the building was completed, his son Samuel was entrusted with the entire supervision of placing the machinery. In 1846, when the mill at Upland was started, Samuel had control and direction of this factory.

Throughout the diary of John P. Crozer constant mention is made of his son, upon whose advice and assistance he frequently found he was unconsciously leaving. On the first day of January, 1847, when Samuel A. Crozer had attained his majority his father admitted him into partnership in the business and the firm remained John P. Crozer & Son, until March 11, 1866, when by the death of John P. Crozer, the partnership terminated. In the meantime, two other factories were erected in Upland.

WAS TWICE MARRIED – In 1854, Samuel A. Crozer married Miss Abigail Cheney, at Lowell, Mass. Mrs. Crozer was a native of Manchester, N.H. and descendant from the sturdy Mayflower stock of the Bay State. Not only was she widely known for her proficiency in music, but she was an accomplished linguist. A number of her translations from German authors have been printed among which can be mentioned Paul Hayte's "La Babbaiata" in her minor works, while in 1881, she published a translation of Otto Rosuette's novel, "Conrad Hogen's Mistakes," which was widely read.

The profits from the sale of this book, which amounted to considerable sum, was donated by Mrs. Crozer to the "Home for Destitute Children." For many years Mrs. Crozer conducted a singing school at Upland, which while open to all the people of the village, was for a long period a feature of the social life of the borough. Mrs. Crozer, during the war of the Rebellion, was president of "The Soldiers' Relief Association of Delaware County," and that organization of good women not only ministered to the needs of the wounded Union troops, but contributed to the relief of the Confederate soldiers in numbers amounting into the thousands, who were brought to the Crozer Military Hospital, now the Crozer Theological Seminary, at Upland, during the sanguinary struggle. Mrs. Crozer died in 1891.

On July 3, 1906, Mr. Crozer married Mrs. Josephine S. Grier, of Philadelphia, the ceremony being performed in the Brandywine Manor Presbyterian Church, near Downingtown.

THE FATHER'S DEATH – After the death of John P. Crozer, the three factories at Upland were divided among his sons. Samuel A. Crozer, at that time, began business on his own account, which he conducted until 1881, when his son, John Price Crozer, was

admitted into the firm, which became Samuel A. Crozer & Son, and still continues under that title.

While Mr. Crozer was identified with the history of Delaware County as a successful cotton manufacturer, he had large interests elsewhere, for instance, The Crozer Steel and Iron Company of Roanoke, Va.; the Upland Coal Company of the same place, and the Roanoke and Southern Railway Company, in all of which enterprises Samuel A. Crozer owned controlling interests. His real estate holdings were large and exceedingly valuable and are scattered in many States, noticeably in Roanoke City, Virginia, in the business heart in Chicago, the Crozer Building on Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, and in Delaware County, particularly in the Borough of Upland and the city of Chester.

IN RELIGIOUS WORK – In the philanthropic and religious field of activity, Mr. Crozer was exceedingly prominent. In 1863 he became the President of the National Baptist Convention for Missionary Purposes; for more than forty years he has been one of the managers of the Training School for Feeble Minded Children at Ewyn, and for some years was president of the board, a position that his father held at the time of his death. He is president of the Baptist Publication Society, located in Philadelphia, and for more than forty years one of the managers of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum in Philadelphia.

Since the Crozer family endowed the Crozer Theological Seminary in 1868, as a school for training clergymen for the Baptist ministry, Mr. Crozer had been the president of the Board of Trustees. He is a manager in a number of various Baptist Missionary and other organizations.

At his personal cost, Mr. Crozer erected the South Chester Baptist Church, the Leiperville Baptist Church and some years ago built the Emmanuel Baptist Church at Fifteenth and Potter Streets, Chester as a memorial to his wife. He has been a liberal contributor to the Chester Hospital, the Chester Free Library and Pennsylvania Hospital and similar organizations.

IN OTHER FIELDS – While Mr. Crozer did not claim to be a public speaker, on several occasions he delivered addresses that are contributions to the local history of Delaware County, particularly his address before the Delaware County Historical Society at Upland, June 22, 1898 (fully reported in the proceedings of the organization), on “The Early Manufacturers and Manufacturers of Delaware County,” and his historical address at the semi-centennial of Upland Baptist Church. Mr. Crozer was also an extensive traveler, having visited almost every section of the globe, with the exception of China, Japan and India, and in so doing, crossed the Atlantic nearly seventy times.

THE FAMILY – To the marriage of Samuel A. and Abigail Crozer were born six children, John P. Crozer, Samuel A. Crozer, Jr., who died at Seine Fort, France; Edward Crozer, Fannie K. Crozer, who married Prof. Herman V. Hilprecht, Mrs. Caleb Fox and Mrs. Louis R. Page.