

L. C. McCANN

This photograph was taken of Mr.
McCann some years ago.

For my penmanship historian friends: The story of Louis C. McCann (1867-1930) from a 1930 Business Educator written by his son Charles McCann.

Regards,

Joe Vitolo

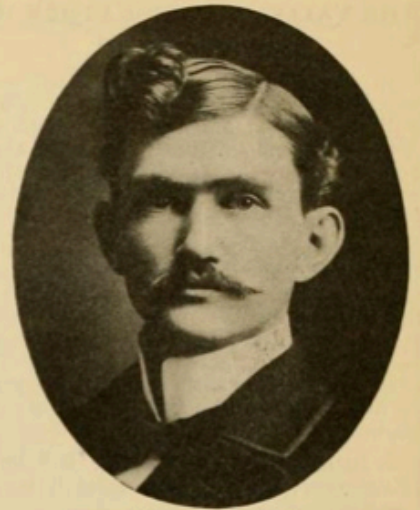
LOUIS CHARLES McCANN

By CHARLES McCANN
McCann School of Business, Hazelton, Pa.

Louis C. McCann was born in Mount Vernon, Posey County, Indiana, September 22, 1867. His father, Robert, died when he was quite young and his mother, Missouri Floyd, died when he was five years of age. He was left in care of friends but finally drifted to his uncle Thomas McCann at Dresden, Ohio. The uncle, having a large family himself, was unable to care for him and he was placed with a country doctor, Dr. David McElwee, East Union, Coshocton County, Ohio.

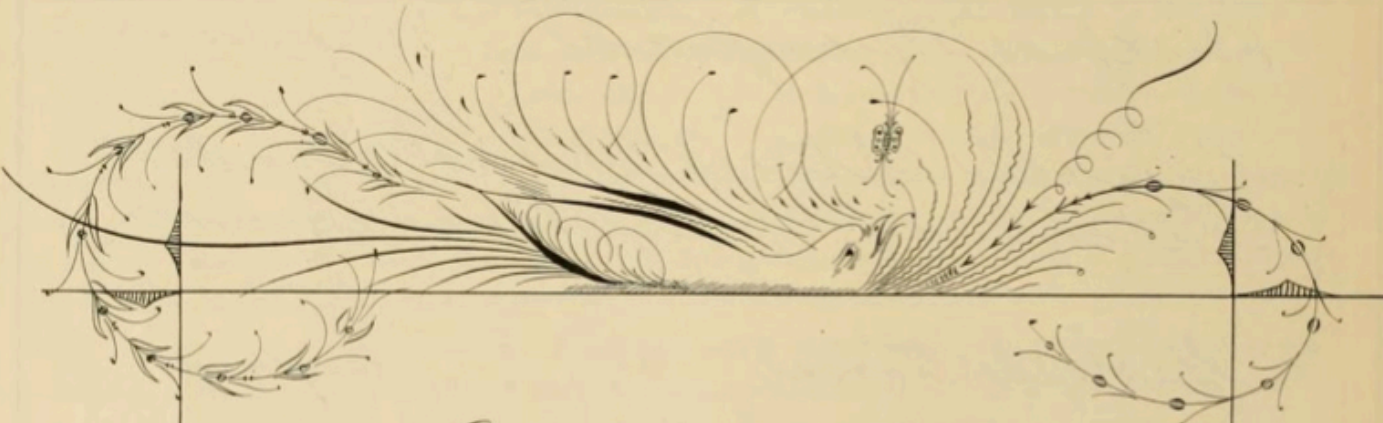
The doctor and his estimable wife were without children and were glad to make a very good home for him. However, the first weeks and months were very sad for him. He often told

me that he went to bed early and cried about all night, he was so lonesome for his cousins. It isn't the most pleasant thing in the world to be an orphan and among strangers. But a boy without playmates is doubly sorrowful. The McElwee family were very kind to him and as the weeks wore on, he forgot his lonesomeness. This same good and kind lady reared me when my mother died. If there ever was a mother in this big world of ours to anyone, none could have been kinder to me than Orpha Jane McElwee. I shall always remember and cherish her name and memory. There are thousands of mothers who do not take the interest in their own children that Mrs. McElwee took in my father and in me.



L. C. McCANN

This photograph was taken of Mr. McCann some years ago.



*Count that day lost,
Whose low descending sun,
I view at thy hand,
Do worthy action done.*

During the winter months when there was school in the country my father attended regularly. One of his jobs was to drive the doctor's horse, making sick calls. It did not matter whether it was midnight or midday—he had to drive the horse. Money was not so plentiful in those days and sometimes the doctor would drive a cow or some sheep home in payment of the doctor bill. As father grew older, the stock grew in numbers.

I think it was about 1881 that he became interested in Penmanship. There were several boys who had the desire and the competition ran rather high. Some of his specimens are of that date. He organized several classes of Penmanship throughout Coshocton and Knox Counties. About the same time he taught Public Schools.

He married my mother, Margery Belle Barrett. Two children were born, Charles R. and Dwight G. Mother died in 1890 and we were scattered among friends.

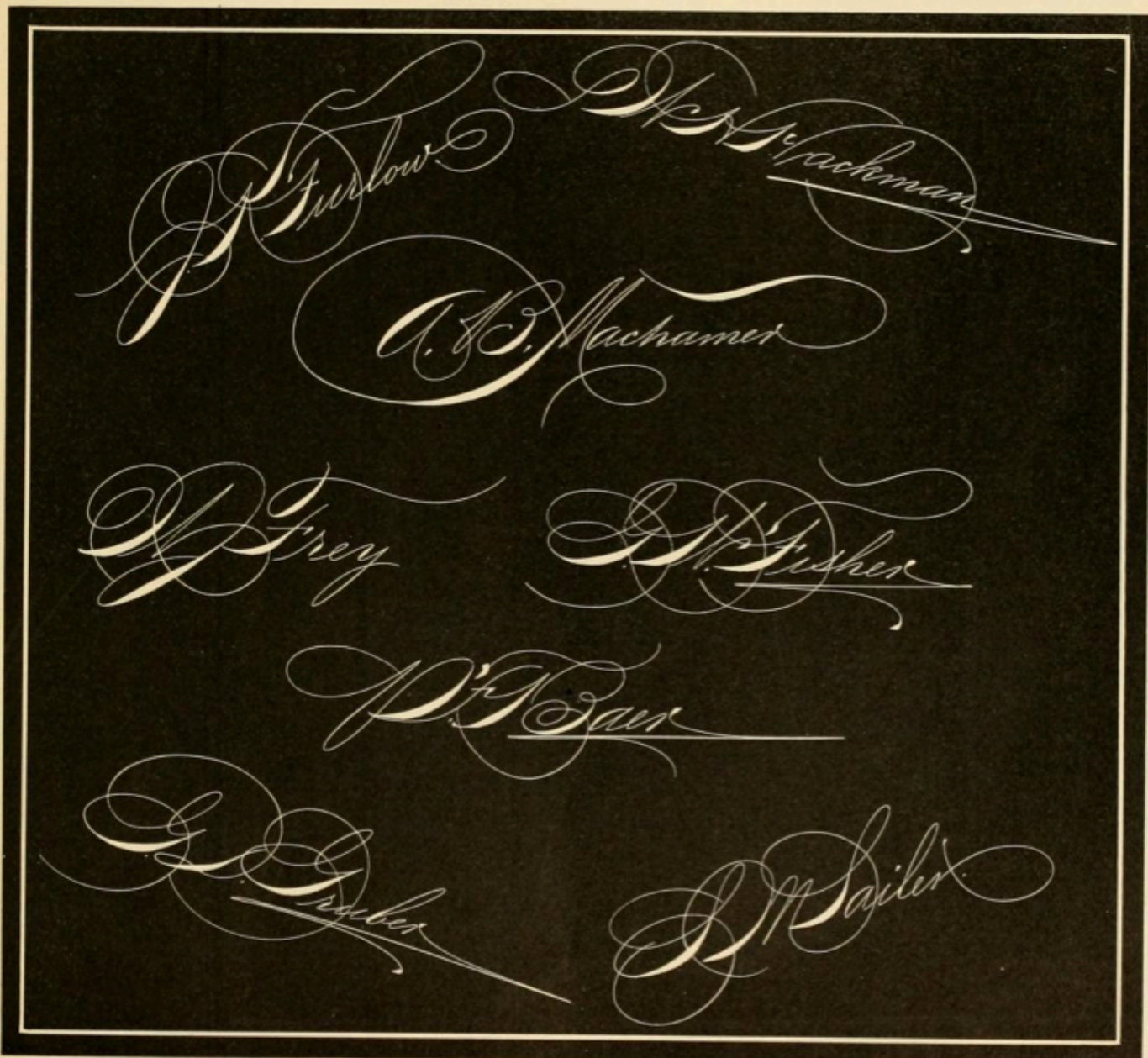
Father was fired with the ambition to get more education. He resigned his Public School position and entered Meredith Business College, Zanesville, Ohio, shortly before mother's death. Later he finished his Business Course and took a position with Johnson's Rolled Oats Company, Zanesville, Ohio. Here he learned telegraphy and became quite an expert with the key. One of his delights was to listen in and get the news off the wire when he was around a railroad station.

Becoming tired of the mercantile field, the call for Penmanship stressed itself so much that he resigned and

entered Zanerian Art College where he was graduated. He secured several positions as teacher in Business Colleges. He left Evansville, Ind., for Mahanoy City, Pa., where he was to settle down and establish a Business College of his own.

One morning the owner of the School absconded—as they had a habit of doing sometimes in those days. The students had all paid for a scholarship and these boys and girls implored my father to stay and teach them. He did and that was the beginning of the McCann Business College. The first class was graduated in 1897. The Kaier Opera House was the scene of the first commencement. The owner, Mr. Kaier, saw to it that several students entered the school and was most lenient in the

(Turn to page 23)



This professional penmanship is the work of L. C. McCann, that genial commercial educator and skillful penman, of Reading, Pa., who recently joined the ranks of the old guard which has passed on. Mr. McCann was one of our best friends and did much for the penmanship profession.

LOUIS CHARLES McCANN

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matter of rent. He encouraged my father very much. The parents of these first students encouraged him, too, and assisted in getting new students to attend the Business School. Many boys from those early classes have fine positions in the Business World.

In 1908, feeling that things were going rather smoothly with him, he bought the Reading School of Commerce, Reading, Pa. He traveled back and forth between the two schools and before long the Reading School as well as the Mahanoy City School prospered. He lived to see the Reading School housed in a magnificent building with a happy and contented student body.

My father was always an ardent convention man. He loved to visit with his old friends. He belonged to the Old Guard of Penmen. Whenever he went to a meeting of this kind he nearly always took my brother and me. This is the reason why we are so well acquainted with all the older members of the profession. He was more like a brother to us than a father. Where he went, we went along. Of late years he did not care so much for the conventions. When questioned, he replied

that his old friends were gone and perhaps the younger members would not understand. Yes, these old Penmen lived in a little world all to themselves.

In his younger days he was an ardent hunter. Well do I remember the days when I was the baggagemaster of the rabbits and quail. Those of my readers who have experienced the days know whereof I speak. When there was plenty of game, it was hard on the little boys.

He might just as well have been remembered as an expert marksman as he was a Penman. He delighted to visit the shooting galleries and shoot the glass balls off the water spouts. One time in Atlantic City, we went into one of these galleries and a capper asked him if he would shoot, the loser to pay. My father obliged, country like, and broke 24 out of 25 balls. This amazed the trickster and he wanted to know who this great shot was and my father replied that he had just come in off the farm. He knew the haunts of all the animals and if there was one in the county, my father would find it.

He had a keen sense of humor and nothing delighted him more than to tell a story that he had heard. He would sit up half the night at the conventions telling stories.

In 1919 he married Miss Marion Guss of Reading and to them was born a son Louis C., Jr.

About October 9, he complained that he did not feel well. He went to bed and the doctor thought he had a slight cold. However, it was worse than they had thought and pneumonia developed. On Sunday evening, October 19, 1930 he breathed his last while the nurse was taking his pulse. His heart gave out—a most noble one—and he was called to his Maker.

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