

= Seymour H. Knox I =

Seymour Horace Knox I (April 1861 ? May 17 , 1915) , was a Buffalo , New York businessman who made his fortune in five @-@ and @-@ dime stores . He merged his more than 100 stores with those of his first cousins , Frank Winfield Woolworth and Charles Woolworth , to form the F. W. Woolworth Company . He went on to hold prominent positions in the merged company as well as Marine Trust Co . He was the father of Seymour H. Knox II and grandfather of Seymour H. Knox III and Northrup Knox , the co @-@ founders of the Buffalo Sabres in the National Hockey League .

= = Biography = =

He was born in April 1861 in Russell , Saint Lawrence County , New York . His father was James Horace Knox , a farmer married to Jane E. McBrier . James ' grandfather had fought in the American Revolution . William Knox , was the first of this line of Knoxes to come to Massachusetts from Belfast , Ireland , in 1737 .

Seymour attended the Russell district school and at fifteen , though he had never gone to high school , began to teach in school himself .

= = Career = =

At seventeen he moved to Hart , Michigan , where for a few years he worked as a salesclerk . Then he left for Reading , Pennsylvania , where he entered into a partnership with his first cousins . He later donated the Knox Memorial Central School Building (dedicated on July 30 , 1913) that served the town until the Knox Memorial School and Edwards Central School merged . He initially became a partner with the Woolworths by jointly opening a Reading , Pennsylvania , Woolworth & Knox store with them on September 20 , 1884 , using his entire life savings . The Reading store 's first several hours had no sales . However , after the partners took a lunchtime walk , they returned at 1 : 30 to find the local factory workers had been let out at 1 : 00 ? with their paychecks . Sales were brisk , and the partners never looked back . His second store , in Newark , New Jersey , was short lived , but his partnership thrived nonetheless . The third venture , in Erie , Pennsylvania , enabled them to buy out the Newark lease . He partnered with Frank to open the first Buffalo store , at 409 Main Street , on October 13 , 1888 .

By 1889 , he was able to buy out his cousins . He maintained a collegial business relationship with his cousins after the buyout . In fact , he bought Woolworth merchandise at wholesale and sometimes traded in competition . He formed another brief partnership with another friendly rival , Earle Perry Charlton , from 1889 ? 1895 , opening his Buffalo " S.H. Knox Co . " 5 and 10 Cent Store in 1890 . In 1890 , he made established headquarters in the Buffalo store . Sources disagree on the chronology of later stores . One source says that the second Buffalo store was opened at 549 William Street on June 20 , 1891 . Another says Knox opened his second store on December 18 , 1893 , at 519 Main Street four days after the first store at 409 Main Street was destroyed in the Wonderland Building Fire . The 519 Main Street store replaced the 409 Main Street after the December 14 , 1893 fire and moved to 395 Main Street in 1895 . He continued to build his S.H. Knox Co . 5 and 10 Cent Store empire . By the time of the 1911 incorporation of F. W. Woolworth Company , Knox was the second largest of six store operators with 98 U.S. and 13 Canadian locations . In 1912 , he received \$ 12 million of the \$ 65 million merger proceeds and was appointed Director and Senior Vice @-@ Principal of the Corporation . Knox is remembered as the pioneering city center store operator . His Detroit , Michigan store was the first outside of the agricultural and small @-@ market towns . Many of the Woolworth friendly rivals emulated his plan .

In 1913 , he purchased Stephen Clement 's interests in Marine National . At his death , Seymour was Vice President of the Woolworth Co. and Chairman of the Board of the Marine Trust Co . He was the first of three generations of the family to serve as Chairman .

= = Personal life = =

Seymour married Grace Millard Knox (1862 ? 1936) , in 1890 , and they raised three children :
Seymour H. Knox II (Seymour , Jr .)

Marjorie Knox

Dorothy Knox

Among his grandchildren were Seymour H. Knox III and Northrup R. Knox , the original principal owners of the Buffalo Sabres . Grace established The University at Buffalo 's first endowment fund in 1916 when she donated \$ 250 @ , @ 000 . Knox bred champion trotters and pacers and was a polo enthusiast .

Knox died on May 17 , 1915 in Buffalo , New York .