

William Jarboe Grove

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WILLIAM JARBOE GROVE, President and Treasurer of "M.J. Grove Lime Company," one of the leading business men of Frederick, County, Md., son of M. J. and Susan (Jarboe) Grove, both deceased, was born in Burkettsville, Frederick County, Md., May 24, 1854.

The Grove family has been identified with the history of Maryland since 1772, when the great-great-grandparents of William J. Grove came with a party of Pennsylvania Germans to Middletown, Md., and settled on the Mancha farm near that place. Their son, Jacob Grove, great-grandfather of William J. Grove, lived for many years on the Ahalt farm in Middletown Valley. A prominent man in his community, he served the Americans as a Major during the Revolution, and, it is said, was in command of the old barracks at Frederick while the Hessians were imprisoned there. After the close of the war, he returned to his farm and in time became quite wealthy, owning a number of slaves and large tracts of land. Besides his farms, he owned about 300 acres adjoining Middletown on the east, including the Reformed Cemetery, Groves addition to Middletown, and the terminus, at Middletown, of the Frederick and Middletown Electric Railroad. Jacob Grove married and in his family were eight sons and one daughter. In accordance with his excellent ideas of education, every son was taught a trade, although the father's wealth might have furnished an excuse for idleness on their part.

George W. Grove, grandfather of William J. Grove, was born on the old homestead, near Middletown, and learned carpentry. His life work, however, was farming, and he cultivated a farm at Broad Run, which is now the property of a Grandson. On March 22, 1823, George W. Grove was married to Elisabeth, daughter of Jacob Biser, the descendant of German ancestors who came to America and bought land at Broad Run. One of Mrs. Grove's brothers, the Hon. Daniel Biser, was thirteen times elected to the State legislature, and for years served as a director of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company. Mrs. Grove died in 1880. Her husband died in March, 1888, the month of his birth and of his marriage. George and Elisabeth(Biser) Grove were the parents of two sons and five daughters. The younger son, Martine Franklin Grove, went to California in 1849. He published the first newspaper in Sacramento, and was the editor and proprietor of one of the first newspapers established in San Francisco. He also published the laws of California, for which he received \$30,000. He died of consumption in 1886. The five daughters are: 1, Mary (Mrs. G. J. R. House), resides on the old homestead at Broad Run; 2, Frances \*Mrs. John A. Horine), of Burkettsville, deceased; 3, Elizabeth J. (Mrs. A. M. Inskeep), of Moorefield, W.

Va.; 4, Emma (Mrs. Jacob V. Cunningham), or Petersburg, Va.; 5, Laura, unmarried, resides in Washington, D.C.

The Hon. Manasses Jacob Grove, father of William Jarboe Grove, and eldest son of George W. Grove, was born in Middletown, Md., February 17, 1824. He attended the Middletown Academy and at fourteen desired to enter college. As he was deficient in Latin and Greek, he was advised to take a special course in these branches, which he did under a competent instructor in Middletown. He longed for a college course, but the home school board offered special inducements and he accepted their offer, and taught the home school for four years. During this time he saved a sum of money which he loaned to his brother who was going to California. This investment proved most profitable. When the Mexican War broke out in 1844, Mr. Grove, then twenty-two years of age, joined a company of cavalry raised by Captain George Cost Biser, with Joseph M. Buckey as lieutenant. The company fully expected to see service, but so many volunteer companies were offered that only one hundred were apportioned to Frederick County. As there were fifty thousand applicants ahead of Captain Cost's company, its members were compelled to give up all hope of fighting under the stars and stripes. The company was in existence for seven years, and was in Frederick when General Scott was court martialed, and with other companies, marched in review before that great soldier.

Mr. Grove, a thorough scholar, was an expert mathematician and taught in various places – Arnoldstown, Broad Run, The Union school near Jefferson, later at the Fink school, near Middletown – all in the Middletown Valley. In 1851, he opened a general store in Broad Run, and soon afterward another at Burkettsville. During this time he was frequently engaged in surveying in Middletown Valley. He also acted as postmaster of Burkettsville from 1852 to 1859.

In all his occupations he displayed the same energy and good judgment that afterward brought him financial success. Mr. Grove's attention was attracted to the rapidly increasing use of lime as a fertilizer, and believing that the business would prove profitable, he closed his mercantile business, and purchased, from J. D. Eichberger, a tract of limestone land at Lime Kiln, on the main line of the Baltimore and Ohio R.R., five miles south of Frederick. In the spring of 1860, he removed to Lime Kiln, then an insignificant village from which only fifty-two passengers had taken the train during the year previous, now a town of three hundred inhabitants from which the railroad carries an average of over ten thousand passengers per annum. Immediately on his removal, Mr. Grove began manufacturing lime, and associated with himself his son, William J. Grove, under the firm name of M. J. Grove & Son. This firm was merged in the M. J. Grove Lime Company, organized in 1889, with M. J. Grove as president; William J. Grove, vice president; B. L. Grove, secretary, and E. D. Grove,

manager. At the same time the large kilns on the Baltimore & Ohio R.R., in Frederick, were purchased. In Frederick County lime is king, as the supply of high grade limestone appears to be inexhaustible. The company is among the largest real estate owners in Frederick County, and the success of this mammoth industry was due to the intelligent oversight of Mr. Grove, ably assisted by his five sons. Nevertheless he gave his personal attention to the entire plant. He possessed a large amount of valuable property besides his attractive home on the Frederick and Buckeystown pike.

Mr. Grove was a Democrat, and was elected by that party to the State legislature in 1887, and re-elected in 1892. While in the House he was a member of the committee on inspection, labor and temperance. For years he was register of voters. He spent much time in travel covering a large portion of the United States and Canada. In 1897, he visited California, and called on G. K. Fitch, proprietor of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and the former partner of his brother, Martin Franklin Grove. In Mr. Fitch's home he found many memorials of his brother, and learned much concerning the early history of the two pioneers, their struggles and hardships, in the mine and in the newspaper office.

In 1852, M. J. Grove was married to Susan daughter of William Jarbo, and a sister of John and Thomas Jarboe. Her ancestors came to America with the first Lord Baltimore, and settled in Sr. Mary's County, Md. The children of Manassas J. and Susan (Jarboe) Grove are: 1, William J.; 2, Carrie E., married to John C. White, formerly of Kansas City, Mo., now in charge of the Grove coal and wood business at Washington, D. C.; 3, Edward D., manager for the M. J. Grove Lime Company at Stephens City, Va.; 4, Bernard L., general manager of the Grove Lime and Coal Company at Washington, D. C.; 5, James H, manager for the M. J. Grove Lime Company at Frederick, Md.; 6. Eugene Sshby, assistant secretary of the M. J. Grove Lime Company; 7, Laura (Mrs. George C. Biser, of Bedford, Pa.). In 1889, death deprived Mr. Grove of his faithful helpmate and assistant during all the years of his struggle for financial success. In 1891, Mr. Grove was married to Mrs. Josepha (Wilson) Durr, a member of a prominent family of Virginia, and closely related to some of the most influential people of the State. M. J. Grove was a member of the Reformed Church. He died at his home in Frederick County on February 2, a few days before his eighty-third birthday. Until the close of his busy early career he was almost as active and keen as ever, watching closely every detail of the extensive business which his energy and ability had created.

William Jarboe Grove received his education in the schools of Frederick County, and remained at home until he was twenty-one. When he obtained his majority, Mr. Grove was made a member of the firm of M. J. Grove & Sons, and when the M. J. Grove Lime Company was incorporated, in 1889, he was elected vice-president of the company, a position he held until the death of his father. In 1896 the firm included M. J. Grove and his five sons, the

Grove Lime and Coal Company, of Washington, D. C. of which William J. Grove was vice-president until the death of his father. At the death of his father, Mr. Grove succeeded him as head of the firm. The present firm is: William J. Gove, President and Treasurer of the M. J. Grove Lime Company, and President of the Grove Lime and Coal Company, of Washington, D. C.; Edward D., of Stephens City, Va., Vice-President; Bernard L., in charge of the office in Washington, D. C.; J. Harry, manager of the plant in Frederick, Md., and Eugene A., secretary at the main office at Lime Kiln, Md. While the loss of the head of the firm was deeply felt, the business and steadily increased.

The company is one of the largest of its kind in the United States. In its early days, the output of the plant was only 3,000 bushels per annum; today it is well over 1,000,000. In 1895 the plant at Washington, D. C., was opened, and in 1899, the one at Stephens City, Va. At Grove, Md., the company has six iron-clad kilns for burning lime with wood, the only kilns of the kind in Western Maryland, and sixteen kilns for burning agricultural lime, and the capacity is 7,000 bushels per day. The plant at Grove is splendidly equipped in every way. The lime is considered the finest in the market for white coating and the firm has never been able to supply the demand. The company has the latest improved machinery for crushing stone, and can send out twenty car loads a day. It furnished the stone for the speedway of the White House grounds, and the crushed stone for the new filtration plant constructed by the government at Washington, D. C. The Company is also actively engaged in building macadam roads, and built the first Shoemaker road in the State. Here, too, is excellent stone for building, suitable for pillars, posts, and ornamental work, The works at Stephens City are managed by Edward D. Grove, a man of great ability as a machinist and constructor. Here, too, the quality is excellent, and all the equipment up-to-date. The management of the Washington branch is in the hands of B. L. Grove, an able manager and financier. The company also deals largely in cement, building supplies, etc.

All the members of this firm are men of the highest standing in the community and zealously guard the splendid reputation of their vast enterprise. William Jarboe Grove, the present head of the firm, understands every detail of the business, and is noted for fair dealing. He is one of the leading Democrats of Frederick County, a member of the County Central Committee, and of the State Central Committee.

William J. Grove was married to May, daughter of the late Dr. Hardey, a prominent physician of Frederick County. They have no children. Mr. Grove and his wife are members of the St. Joseph's Catholic Church of the Manor, near Buckeystown, and he is one of the most active workers in the church. He is also a member of the Knights of Columbus.

(Note: Since KofC St. John's Council 1622 was established in 1912, and William J. Grove was a Knight in or before 1910, he like joined a general Council, possibly in Baltimore.)