Fred McIntyre, Charles DeLong and the McIntyre Watch Company

“The first fine watch ever made in America”
The Players

• Fred McIntyre
  – Born 1871 in Williamsport PA
  – Father James McIntyre b. 1847
  – Mother Laura Julia b. 1854
  – Died 1954 in Newton MA

• Charles DeLong
  – Born 1871 in Wilton NY
  – Father Peter DeLong b. 1839
  – Mother unknown
  – Died 1942 in Pasadena CA

• The McIntyre Watch Co.
  – Born 1908 in Kankakee IL
  – Father Fred McIntyre
  – Mother Charles DeLong
  – Midwives R. T. Bell and J. Cothrell
Charles DeLong Career

• 1886: Odd Jobs Glenn Falls, NY
• 1887: Jones & Padmore, Troy, NY
• 1888 – 1889: M. Eliasoff & Co. Albany, NY
  – Self Taught Engraver
  – Began novel modifications and production of hand made watches
• 1894 – 1897: Instructor Bradley Polytechnic Institute, Peoria, IL
• 1898 – 1901: Watchmaker, Hot Springs, AK
• 1901 – 1905: McIntyre, So. McAlester, I.T.
• 1905 – 1906: Founded Southern Horological Institute, Dallas TX
• 1907: Watchmaker, Shreveport, LA
• 1908 – 1911: Master Watchmaker, McIntyre Watch Co. Kankakee, IL
• 1912 – 1922: Master Watchmaker, Illinois Watch Co.
  – 1915: DeLong Escapement Co.
  – Total of 3 patents relating to escapement.
• 1923 – 1933: Semi-Retired, San Diego, CA
  – Difficult watch repairs for area jewelers
  – Fitted watches with DeLong escapement.
• 1934 – 1942: Semi-Retired, Pasadena, CA
  – Developed clockwork survey instrument for Hughes Tool
Fred McIntyre Career

- 1886: Work unknown, Holland, MI
- Ca 1890 – 1906: Jeweler, So. McAlester, I.T.
- 1895: Bradley for watchmaker training.
- 1907 – 1913: McIntyre Watch Co. Kankakee, IL
  - 1907 – 1909: Lining up investors and hands for watch factory.
  - 1909 – 1911: General Manager then President of McIntyre Watch Co.
  - 1911 – 1913: Free lance jewelry sales and settling affairs of McIntyre Watch Co.
  - Wholesaling diamonds, watches and traveling clocks.
- McIntyre and Knapp each retained separate private businesses while working in the partnership.
- 1915: Investor with Knapp in the Delong Escapement Company
- 1919 – 1925: Lincoln Products Corp., Springfield, MA
  - Automobile Accessories
  - Patented improved radiator temperature gauge
  - Patented improved tire pressure gauge
- 1925 – 1954: Zenith Products, West Newton, MA
  - Designed and developed precision pumps for the synthetic fiber industry.
  - Sold over 500,000 pumps to major customers such as DuPont and Celanese.
  - Was still working on improved pump designs at the time of his death in 1954.
Young Fred

Young Fred at age 12 in Charlotte, Michigan.
The Early Days

• Fred McIntyre and Charles DeLong both were born in the East and found their way to the Midwest as relatively young men. Fred was 19 when he came to South McAlester in 1890 and Charles was 27 when he moved to Hot Springs in 1898 after being an instructor at the Bradley Institute.

• Charles was a watchmaker in Hot Springs, Arkansas and eventually found his way to South McAlester, Indian Territory where he joined forces with Fred in Fred's jewelry business and began developing designs for the McIntyre Watch.

• How Fred came to own his fine store in South McAlester is not known. His family was well off, but not wealthy. However, Fred was a great promoter and likely was able to gather local resources to start up the business.

• The following pages show some of the environment and artifacts from this early period
Fred McIntyre’s Store in South McAlester
Fred ordered watches through jobbers from Hamilton with his name on the dial and movement.

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Examples of I.T. Watches

Swiss 0 size

Hamilton 940

Swiss 16 size
Robin escapement watch signed Grosclaude worked on by DeLong in 1891
The Watch Factory

Around 1901, Fred had lost his first wife, Lida Wood and was left alone with their daughter Kathleen. He then married Lola Booth. Lola was from a relatively well to do Texas family. There is no record of what prompted Fred and Charles to begin development of the McIntyre Watch. It may have been that Lola had ambitions for the family beyond what could be met in McAlester.

Lida was from a family of modest means in Fort Smith, Arkansas. Then as now, the road to Hot Springs from McAlester went through Fort Smith. The total distance is about 250 miles, so Fort Smith would have been a likely stop on the way. I wonder if Fred met Lida on one of his trips to visit DeLong.

Charles and Fred worked together for 4 years in South McAlester developing patents and watch models. The two examples above were both completed in 1904. By the end of this period Charles had patented a number of watch improvements and so had Fred.

They agreed that Charles would go to Dallas (170 miles to the south) to set up a watchmaking school there, probably with the help of Lola's relatives in Texas.

Fred in turn went on his quest for a suitable location for a new watch factory. This eventually led him after two years to Kankakee, Illinois and the investors who would form the McIntyre Watch Company.
Fred sold the store to Ray DeLaMater and Charles headed for Dallas to set up the Southern Horological Institute.

The advertisement in American Horologist and Jeweler has more on the rooming house than the school.

The watches in the ad include Fred’s School Watch and the patent model for DeLong’s winding indicator.

The escapement models shown above were recently seen on Antiques Road Show. From the identification tag they were intended as teaching aids for the new school.
The Factory

- **Initial Filing August 14th, 1908**
  - Fred McIntyre, H. S. Dixon & Wm. Fraser Commissioners.
  - Subscriptions completed May 19th, 1909

- **Initial Charter**
  - Signed by James A. Rose May 19th, 1909
  - "To manufacture watches, clocks and chrono-meters and scientific instruments for measuring time or distance; with power to purchase, sell or lease, patents, patent rights, caveats or trademarks, ..."
  - Capital Stock $200,000 consisting of 2,000 shares at $100 each
  - Location of principal office in Kankakee, Illinois; Duration of Corporation 99 years; Certified and notarized by Wm. J. Brock

- **Initial Subscriptions**
  - 52 subscribers with Capital stock actually "paid in" $181,000
  - Fred McIntyre gave a note for the remaining $19,000
  - Fred's intellectual property was valued at $125,000 consisting of: 4 patents now secured; 5 patent applications now pending in the US Patent Office; 3 models of watches made by him
  - Net Cash to Corporation $56,000 - Fred owned 72% of stock for no cash

- **Stockholder meeting to elect Directors and Officers**
  - 3 years - Len Small, W. J. Brock, Lawrence Babst and Fred McIntyre
  - 2 years - Charles Foley, William Fraser and W. E. Rich
  - 1 year - J. J. Schubert, W. H. Radeke and F. C. Hamilton
  - Notarized by Brock and Filed for Record December 28th, 1909
"I W. J. Brock President of the McIntyre Watch Co; do hereby certify that at a special Meeting of the Board of Directors of said company, held on the 26th day of May, A.D. 1909, a special meeting of the stockholders of said corporation was called to be held at the principal office of the Company in West Kankakee on the 26th, day of June, A.D. 1909 at 2 o'clock P.M., for the purpose of considering and acting upon the proposition to increase the capital stock of said company from $200,000.00 to $500,000.00 and for the transaction of such other business in connection therewith as may properly come before the meeting."

Wm. Fraser
W. E. Rich
Lawrence Babst
Wm. H. Radeke
W. J. Brock
Fred C. Hamilton
A Majority of the Directors*

"Whereas in the judgment of the Stockholders of the McIntyre Watch Co, the present capital stock is insufficient for constructing and operating its factory and the capital stock should be increased to Five Hundred Thousand Dollars, ($500,000.00); and
WHEREAS, More than two thirds of the Stockholders of this Company are now present or duly represented at this meeting; Therefore be it
RESOLVED: That the Capital Stock of this Company be, and the same is hereby increased from Two Hundred Thousand Dollars, ($200,000.00) to Five Hundred Thousand dollars ($500,000.00); and that the proper officers of said Company take all necessary steps required by law to carry out this resolution."
I further certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the affirmative vote of every share of the Capital Stock present and in attendance at this meeting; and that this constituted more than two-thirds of the Capital Stock of said Company as required by law
W. J. Brock, President
ATTEST:
H. S. Dixon, Secretary

*Small, Foley, Schubert and McIntyre did not sign the call for Stockholders meeting.
It is clear from the documents on file that Fred originally hoped to build the factory and machinery for net cash of $75,000. Which, with his patents and other intellectual property would give him just under the two-thirds interest needed to control the operation. If he had had 10 Charles De Longs he might have been able to do it, but it was clearly impossible with a normal human work force.

There are no records of the consideration that Charles received for his patents that he signed over to Fred to start the factory. There probably never was any record. Fred and Charlie were very close friends throughout their lives and the failure of the McIntyre Watch Co. was just a bump on the journey. It had a much more profound effect on Lola, who, in later years, would never allow it to be discussed in her presence.

Fred must have consented to the dilution of his interest in the company from 72% to 28.8% but he may have trusted his proxy to someone who was not up to representing his interest. It is interesting that he did not sign the director's action to call the special meeting.

With the authorized Capital Stock increased to $500,000, I have no further records of how much of this amount was actually subscribed. It must have been at least partially successful since they were able to get machinery and begin production of watches.

The 16 size samples that Fred took on the road with him were produced before March 14th, 1910 when he went on the road to sign up agencies. It is possible, but unlikely that he only had the Master Watch at that time. So, between June 1909 and March 1910 the factory was partially assembled and tooled and produced six to ten watches.
The watch patents obtained by Fred McIntyre and Charles DeLong were the cornerstone of their plans to build the McIntyre Watch Co. With little in the way of cash to invest, they needed tangible goods to obtain their share of the enterprise. By assigning all his patents to Fred, Charles gave Fred the power to negotiate with the investors with substantial value on his side.
The factory material includes all of the detail drawings, Master Assembly Drawings, specialized cutters and a large number of watch parts. There is also a group of ebauches and dials. The drawings are all India ink on linen with blue prints made from them for use on the shop floor.
None of the McIntyre Watch Company internal corporate documents have survived. However, these notes from Fred's notebook give some indication of what he intended for the business. I don't know the significance of the "/12" in these notes but assume that the numerator is the jewel count. One possible explanation is that 12 is the total numbers of jeweled holes, which would include the escape wheel and the balance holes. Another anomaly is that the price of the 17 ligne 16/12 movement is greater than the 20/12 movement.

The idea to do the escapements abroad was apparently abandoned, since there are cutters and escape wheels among the factory materials. However, it may have been the intent to complete the trains up to the balance and ship the assembled movements to Switzerland for addition of the balance and the springing and adjusting. The bulk of the dials are Swiss and there are no springs among the material.
This engraving of the McIntyre Watch seems to have been made from a large image for use on the corporate letterhead and advertising material. No watches with the markings shown have been reported and they probably do not exist. The only watch that has been seen with any markings is the Master Watch with the MWCo logo.

The serial number of 10265 on the drawing is clearly fanciful as events turned out. This image was scanned from one of a number of 2" cards with the image. There is also a 2' square framed image of the same design.
Mch. 14.1910 Called on Alsted-Kaston Co. Met Mr. Alstead. Middle age sandy hair and mustache, fairly heavy, about 5’8”. Pleasant and intelligent talks that it is not worth the effort to push any high grade watch or carry in stock. Sells only Swiss goods. Said ours was the first fine watch he ever saw of American manufacture. Says he could not sell our 16s, but could do business with 14s. Introduced to watch-makers and told them to look at the first fine American watch ever made. Said its only fault was that it was too good.

Watchmakers both spoke in terms of highest praise. Their names Joseph Wibbert, old, white hair and beard, Gustaf Ljungstrom Swede and evidently good man.

Called on Beuide, Upmeyer Co. Met buyer, Chas. L. Carlson. Practical man. Evidently much pleased with watch. Desirous of Agency but wanted to wait for 14s watch. Said had not sold fine 16s in two years. Have Patek Agency, Carry good fair stock of watches. Said our prices were not too high and that they would sell, but greater part of sale would be to R.R. men. Mr. Carlson, man about my size, smooth shaven, dark complexion. About my age.

Mch. 15. Closed Agency with C Preusser Jewelry Co., 438 E. Water. Buyer Zedler. About 5’11” dark, smooth shaven, good looking. Had sold the Mailon (Meylan) for best watch. Told me all best trade was for 12 size but that felt satisfied that 16s would give better results. Five watch repairers and good run of work. Apparently progressive house.

... (continued for 8 more days)
This formal portrait of Fred dates from the time he was making the sales trip described in his diary. The photograph is nearly identical to the small picture Charles DeLong used in making the engraving of Fred's portrait dated 1906.
Fred and Charles sincerely believed they could make a watch equal in quality to a Patek Phillippe Observatory Watch at an affordable price. This watch produced around the time they were making their plans and sold by Bailey, Banks & Biddle is a good example of what they were up against. It is a Patek "Extra Special" stamped with the serial number on the dial plate as well as the back plate. These are the characteristic markings of an Observatory Watch.
This McIntyre Master Watch is the prototype watch that was hand made by Charles DeLong. Several of the other model watches were also hand assembled by DeLong using parts from the factory production, but with balances and springing supplied by DeLong.

Although Fred had made plans for a range of watches, the first watch produced was the top of the line 25 jewel 16 size watch. The quality of the finish is simply superb and the innovative features are wonderful. It is a sensual experience to observe the operation of the patent wind indicator as the barrel gear carries the intermediate gear over to engage the up/down mechanism.
The requests for the 14 size watch were answered by this prototype created by DeLong.

Unfortunately, the business was packed up before it could go into even model production.
Mcintyre funded general developments in addition to the McIntyre Watch itself.

Helge Borresen was a talented inventor who developed an improved motor barrel in addition to this interesting center second watch design.

Borresen persuaded DeLong to actually create the prototypes of his “Safety Watch.”

Given the design of the dial this example may have been used to try to sell the design to Webb C. Ball
This watch picture is a mirror image of any of the watches actually seen. Fred’s comments on the back are particularly interesting.

The watch is likely the same one that sold at Sotheby’s from the Time Museum.

Fred’s Thoughts on the Watch

One of the first models of the McIntyre watch. Designed and built by Charles E. Fedon. One of the greatest if not the greatest watchmakers ever produced by America.

Frederic McIntyre
Factory Fever

Monday, June 13, 1910

THE KANKAKEE DAILY REPUBLICAN

McINTYRE WATCH COMPANY
TO BUILD GREAT FACTORY

Skilled Mechanics Assembled Here From the World's Greatest Watch Factories—Output Sold a Year Ahead.

HALF MILLION DOLLARS OF CAPITAL

First Watch Factory in the World—Modern Equipment in Every Department—Demand of Big Names Assured From Every State.

CHAS. E. DeLONG,
Master Watch Maker.

FRED McINTYRE,
President.

H. E. VOLKMAN & SON
JEWELERS.
Kankakee, Illinois.
The Watch Factory was never built, but the Watch Company commenced operations in the Foley & Williams plant in Kankakee. It is possible that these pictures were posed to attract investors, but since at least 200 ebauches were produced, it is likely that the company actually operated for a period of time in the 1908 to 1910 period.
The true story, as always, is told by the balance sheet. This is the June 30, 1910 statement of the company’s financial condition. Although the liabilities side shows the authorization for $500,000 in capital the treasury stock shows that $254,500 was not issued.

Since the company only raised $56,000 in the first round of financing from a $200,000 float, the actual paid in capital in the second round was $45,500 and the total cash for operations was $101,500.

There were pledges in hand for $200,000 from a Chicago investor group, but they were withholding further payment until they saw actual production watches.

Since they had purchased $102,248.36 in machinery and tooling and $652 in furniture, it is clear that money must have been coming from somewhere else to pay employees and the utility bills. The most likely explanation is that the creditors were financing the company as is the normal case in high risk start ups. The Real Estate was donated by Len Small in order to persuade the community to build utilities out to his property. It is also likely that the recorded value of the watches in manufacturing process and finished was inflated over the actual labor cost to produce them. All in all this statement would not have stood an audit and the company was clearly in trouble.
The company was in dire financial straits, but no worse than many under funded start ups.

The Chicago Investors had the money to fund the factory and initial operations, but wanted to see the real product.

Unfortunately Foley & Williams had a more ready tenant for their property with a new, and likely more stable, sewing machine company.

The McIntyre Watch Co. was evicted and the equipment and material packed away in freight cars on the nearby siding.

As the talent began to drift away the company went into receivership.

The receivers sold the assets to Hills Clock Co., a new company in Chicago making clock escapements.

The receivers also initiated a lawsuit with the Hamilton Watch Co. alleging infringement on the Borresen Motor Barrel and another Motor Barrel patent that the company had acquired.
Fred Moves On

- Fred was occupied for several years with the dissolution of the factory but ended with nothing to show for his efforts.
- In 1913 he formed a partnership with W. G. Knapp to sell wholesale jewelry, watches and travel clocks.
- The Knapp – McIntyre partnership was always called W. G. Knapp, which rankled Fred.
- The partnership invested in the DeLong Escapement Company, most likely at Fred’s urging, and the failure of that venture probably rankled Knapp.
- Eventually, in 1919, Knapp bought out Fred’s interest in the partnership for $19,000 and Fred used those funds to set up his automotive company in Springfield, MA.
McIntyre and Knapp were investors in the DeLong Escapement Company and may have been the primary business force behind it. DeLong fitted the escapement to watches from Ball, Hamilton and Illinois. The Illinois watch provided the live photo of the escapement.

DeLong returned to Dallas for a period and was there when the patents for the escapement were filed. He later moved to California when his health began to fail and he died of Tuberculosis in 1942.
Fred never lost his interest in watches and clocks and continued to work on small jobs for the rest of his life.

However, he found success in the precision pump business.

Here he is in the happy days with his son and my late friend Donald McIntyre.

The drawing above is an improved precision pump Fred was working on when he died.

Donald died in 2003 at the age of 95.
• The Hills Clock Co. failed before ever getting going and the company got nothing except lost time from its patent litigation with Hamilton.

• Eventually the material found its way to the hands of Samelius at the Elgin School of Horology.

• Samelius was a close friend of Paul Chamberlain (Its About Time) who was also a close friend of Fred McIntyre and Henry Wing.

• Henry purchased the factory remnants of material and drawings in the late 1930’s but never did much with them.

• A few ebauches and some dials were traded with various collectors over the years.

• I was able to purchase the remaining material from Henry’s grandson in 2000
• The numbers on the ebauches indicate that perhaps 200 were made in total.
• There are several varieties of dials, which may be seen here.
Anybody Want to Buy a Watch?

What's Next?

Fantasy McIntyre Wristwatch
Early McIntyre/DeLong Prototype

- This artifact was found as loose material in some of Fred’s memorabilia.
- It represents the abandoned layout of the McIntyre Watch on an Open Face plan with the winding and center in line with the 4th wheel.
- The watch has been restored to working condition and the winding train completed from the factory drawings.
- The winding gears had been lost over the years. The watch was finished at some time all except the setting mechanism.
Kankakee town hall, August 2007
Current structure that appears to be the Foley Williams plant that once housed the McIntyre Watch Co.