

Excerpt from: *Personal Memoirs Related to the Families of the State of Massachusetts*, William Richard Cutter, William Frederick Adams, Editors,, Vol. II, New York, LEWIS HISTORICAL PUBLISHING COMPANY 1910

George Merriam, oldest son of Dan Merriam. was born in Worcester, Massachusetts. January 19. 1803 ; married (first) May 6, 1828. Abigail W illis, daughter of Benjamin and Hannah (Allen) Little. By this marriage he had five children, four of whom died in early childhood. He married (second) March 31, 1842, Mrs. Abby Fisk Spring, daughter of Rev. John and Elizabeth (Mellen) Fiske. By this marriage he had six children, four of whom are still living. At the age of fifteen he entered the printing and publishing office of his father and uncle in West Brookfield, Massachusetts, and there received the training which prepared him to assume the responsibilities which naturally devolved upon him, as the eldest of a large family, at the death of his father, five years later. In 1831 he moved to Springfield, and with his brother Charles engaged in book-selling and publishing. Shortly after 1843 the firm acquired the publishing rights of Noah Webster's large Dictionary. Later they bought his Spelling and Dictionary Abridgements. A third brother, Homer, joined the firm in 1856. George Merriam was a man of active, wiry and somewhat delicate physique. Mentally he was alert, rapid and direct, unspeculative, but going straight to the heart of practical matters. In business, energetic, shrewd, with a high standard of honor, and a great faculty of "getting there." He had an active conscience, quick sensibility and warm affection; a simple unquestioning religious faith, and an instinct for helpfulness in every direction. At the time of his death, June 22. 1880, the Springfield *Republican* spoke of him as "a citizen universally known and beloved, and our chief apostle of benevolence."