

Gittings, John Sterett, 1798-1879.

Mr. John Sterett Gittings, president of the Chesapeake Bank, and one of Baltimore's most prominent citizens, died yesterday morning at 7:30 A. M. at his late residence, corner of St. Paul and Monument Streets, after three days illness, in the 82nd year of his age. Mr. Gittings was taken sick on Friday with a severe attack of pneumonia, and was compelled to leave the bank and go home. He took to his bed and never arose. Drs. R. B. Morrison and Riggin Buckler were summoned, but Mr. Gittings grew rapidly worse. His sufferings were great; but he bore up to the very last and seemed contented to go when told his death was inevitable, and passed away peacefully.

His ancestry and early life.

Among the early settlers of that beautiful valley known as Long Green, in Baltimore County, was Thomas Gittings, the great-grandfather of John S. Gittings. He came to Maryland about the year 1684 and in 1720 obtained patents for a large tract of land in the valley, under the name of Gittings' Choice, now known as the Long Green Farm. Here he lived and died, devising his estate to his son James. The mother of James was one of the Webster family, of Harford County. James Gittings married the daughter of Dr. George Buchanan, one of the founders of Baltimore, whose wife was Miss Eleanor Rogers. Dr. Buchanan was the proprietor of Druid Hill, now Druid Hill Park. He was the father of Gen. Andrew Buchanan, the lieutenant of the county during the Revolution, and afterward the chief judge of the court; also of William Buchanan, one of the first Registers of Wills of Baltimore county and city; Grandfather of James M. Buchanan, late U. S. minister to Denmark, and great-grandfather of Admiral Franklin Buchanan. James Gittings jr., the father of Mr. John S. Gittings, married Miss Harriet Sterett, daughter of John Sterett, whose wife was Deborah Ridgely, daughter of John Ridgely, which latter gentleman was the eldest son of the original proprietor of "Hampton", in Baltimore County. John Ridgely married a daughter of Col. Edward Dorsey, of Elkridge. James Gittings Sr., and John Sterett were zealous and active during the Revolution. They were members of the General Assembly of Maryland at a time when the principal citizens were selected for the public service. John Sterett Gittings, who died yesterday, the prominent living representative of the family of his name in Maryland, was born at Long Green, in the house where his grandfather and father were born, May 27, 1798. There he passed his childhood and was early taught by his mother. At sixteen he graduated from Dickinson College, Pennsylvania.

He entered the banking house of James a Buchanan. At seventeen he was made discount clerk in the City Bank. His father dying in 1820, he returned to Long Green to take care of his family seat. One year after he married Eleanor Addison Smith, daughter of William Rogers Smith and granddaughter of Cumberland Dugan by his first wife, who was a Miss May, of Roxbury, Mass. It was in this same year (1821) that Mr. Gittings commenced business in Baltimore as a stock broker. In 1835 he was elected president of the Chesapeake Bank, and in 1836 he was appointed commissioner of loans for the state of Maryland, and held this position until removed by a change in the state's administration. He was again reinstated under democratic rule, but was again removed under a republican administration. He was for many years

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member of the City Council, and while there the chairman of the Ways and Means and Finance Committees. He was also elected by the city and likewise appointed by the state a director of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Company during the presidency of Mr. William G. Harrison and was chairman of the Finance Committee. Mr. Gittings for two years was president of the Northern Central railway. Again, when the state was divided into four judicial districts, Mr. Gittings was elected commissioner of public works. In the democratic state convention, which nominated E. Louis Lowe for governor, Mr. Gittings name was presented as the choice of Baltimore County. In 1848 Mr. Gittings lost his wife, who left two children, Eleanor Addison, who married George H. Williams, a prominent member of the Maryland bar, and William S. Gittings, who died several years ago leaving two children, John S. Gittings jr., and Miss Eleanor Addison Gittings. Five years later Mr. Gittings married Miss Charlotte Carter Ritchie, daughter of the venerable and distinguished Thomas Ritchie, and granddaughter of Dr. Foushee, of Richmond. Mr. Gittings for over forty years has held the position of president of the Chesapeake bank, which he has filled most successfully, with the entire confidence of the public. As a business man he was a model. Discipline, fixed, severe, was the basis of the business career and the cause of his success. Prompt and methodical himself, he required an unremitting exercise of the like qualities in those about him. In the family circle, where he threw aside all business, he was a devoted husband and father seeking only the happiness of all around him. Mr. Gittings was one of the prominent vestrymen of Old Christ Church, now the Church of the Messiah, corner of Gay and Fayette Streets, and when the congregation moved, for the most part uptown, he with the late George R. Gaither, Andrew Aldridge, and a number of others, founded Grace P. E. Church, corner of Monument and Park Streets. During the war, Mr. Gittings' feelings being with the South, and the larger majority of the members of this church being of opposing sentiment he withdrew. His family are members of St. Pauls P. E. Church. Mr. Gittings wealth has been variously estimated, but he was undoubtedly one of the richest men in this city, the city tax books showing him the largest individual tax payer in Baltimore. It is estimated that his property will aggregate millions in value much of it being real estate, including the St. James's Hotel and other valuable buildings in almost every part of the city. It is said he has erected over twelve hundred dwelling houses in Baltimore. He names as his executors his widow Mrs. Charlotte Carter Gittings, and his son-in-law, George H. Williams. He leaves besides his widow, his daughter, Mrs. George H. Williams, nine grandchildren, and one great-grandchild, son of John S. Gittings jr., besides his brother, Lambert Gittings, and two sisters Mrs. Louis Littig and Mrs. Palmer, wife of Surgeon-General Palmer, U. S. N. His funeral will take place tomorrow afternoon at 3:30 o'clock from his late residence, 149 St. Paul Street, Dr. Hodges officiating. The interment will be in Greenmount.

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