

## Oliver Timeline\*

- 1825 Aug. 28 James Oliver born in Copshawhole in southern Scotland.
- 1835 Mar. 30 James and his family leave for America.
- 1835 May 26 Oliver family arrives in New York harbor.
- 1835 June James starts his first job in America working for a farmer.
- 1836 James and part of his family move to Mishawaka.
- 1839 James begins working in a small foundry in Mishawaka scratching moldings at first.
- 1844 May 30 James Oliver and Susan Catherine Doty marry.
- 1846 Apr. 6 Josephine Oliver born in Mishawaka.
- 1850 Aug. 2 Joseph Doty Oliver born in Mishawaka.
- 1855 May 5 James buys one-fourth interest in a small foundry on the West Race of the St. Joseph River.
- 1856 May 23 E.H. Lamb and Co. renamed Oliver and Little.
- 1857 Jun. 30 James was granted his first U.S. patent, entitled "Improvement in Chilling Plow Shares."
- 1860 Dec. 24 Fire destroyed the Oliver and Little factory on the West Race.
- 1861 Mar. 7 A new factory was built on the East Race.
- 1861 Operations in the Oliver foundry were resumed in the spring of 1861.
- 1863 Apr. 21 Oliver and Little became Oliver and Bissell Company.
- 1865 Jul. Joseph D. Oliver quit his temporary job in the factory to attend college.
- 1867 Jul. 1 J.D. Oliver becomes a permanent employee of the Oliver Company, starting as bookkeeper.
- 1868 Apr. 14 James was granted another patent on "Mold Board for Plows," which protected him in the invention he had working on and dreaming about for years—a process for chilling the mould board of a plow.

- 1868 Jul. The Singer Sewing Machine Company located in South Bend contracted with the Oliver Company to make their iron castings.
- 1868 Jul. 22 The Oliver company was incorporated as the South Bend Iron Works for a period of 50 years.
- 1869 Feb. 2 James was granted a patent for "Chilling Casting Mould Boards." This was the second step in perfecting his chilling process.
- 1871 Jul. 18 J.D. Oliver becomes a member on the Board of Directors of the South Bend Iron Works.
- 1872 Jan 25 The South Bend Iron Works made a shipment of agricultural implements to Japan, probably their first foreign business which developed rapidly later.
- 1873 May 20 James was granted registration of his first Trade Mark entitled "Oliver's Patent Chilled Plow."
- 1874 Apr 16 The Olivers purchased 30 acres of the Perkins Farm for \$30,000 where they intended to "erect new works for occupancy in the summer of 1875" at the corner of Sample and Chapin Street.
- 1877 Jul. 13 The Oliver Plow Works office was moved permanently to the new brick office building on Chapin Street from the East and West Race.
- 1878 Mar. 30 The telephone arrived in South Bend. The first one installed connected the Telegraph Office with the office of the South Bend Iron Works. Frank C. Nippold of the Oliver office was the first man in South Bend to use the telephone.
- 1878 Oct. 25 James Oliver becomes president of the South Bend Iron Works.
- 1881 May 4 James buys the John Chess residence on West Washington Street (where the Central High School was located). He rebuilt the home and lived in it until his death.
- 1881 Aug. 31 The first electric lights were installed in the Oliver factory.
- 1882 Jun. 25 The company filled an order for the Philippine Islands.
- 1883 Dec. 5 Ground broken for the block of row houses known as the "Oliver Row" on the northwest corner of Main and Colfax Streets.
- 1884 Mar. 29 Excavation for the Oliver Theater started on Main Street.

- 1885 Jan. 12 The great Strike and Riot started this morning or afternoon at one o'clock, when rioters entered the plant and forced men to quit working.
- 1885 Jan. 13 At 7:00 a.m. nearly 200 men armed with clubs and bars of iron assembled about the front of the works and refused admittance to everybody. Captain Nicar, an old Civil War soldier, forced his way into the office after receiving wounds about the head, hands, and arms. He drew a revolver and held the crowd at bay. A policeman who came to his assistance was badly beaten. The rioters then entered the factory gates, and about 100 men went through the buildings breaking windows and plow bases. Nicar called out the Veteran Guards. They arrived some 50 strong at 10:30 a.m. with fixed bayonets. Quiet was soon restored and the crowds dispersed without bloodshed. A detail of 12 Deputy Sheriffs were sworn in to guard the Plow Works with guns, and many of the Veteran Guards remained on duty. All firearms were removed from the local gun shops and locked up in the Court House. By night all was peaceful at the Works. Ten men were arrested on charges of rioting, assault, and battery.
- 1885 Jan. 31 Oliver Plow Works is still closed on account of strike. Moving to another city being seriously considered.
- 1885 Feb. 9 LaPorte, Indiana makes a bid for the Oliver Works.
- 1885 Feb. 17 Local committee called on the Olivers to protest against their possible leaving of South Bend. James Oliver told them he had decided to move and they departed much dejected. Indianapolis, Logansport, LaPorte, Louisville, and Chattanooga, Tennessee were all making serious bids trying to entice the Oliver Plow Works to move.
- 1885 Feb. 21 Mass meeting of South Bend citizens held at the Court House, called by the Mayor, to try and induce the Olivers to remain in South Bend. Resolutions were adopted and presented to the Olivers, who said the pledges made would be considered.
- 1885 Mar. 3 James Oliver wrote in his journal: "Have determined to start the factory tomorrow." Promised protection in the future the Olivers had reluctantly decided to remain in South Bend, if there were no further troubles. Several of the rioters were fined \$100 and given 3 to 60 days in jail, which had an effect on future troublemakers.
- 1885 Oct. 24 The Oliver Opera House was opened to the public for the first time.
- 1885 Nov. 3 James Oliver II born at No. 1 Oliver Row, where Mr. and Mrs. J.D. Oliver made their home for several years before building Copshaholm.

- 1885 Nov. 25 George Ford and Phenie Oliver marry in the home of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. James Oliver.
- 1886 Sep. 22 This was the day of the great hail storm. 6,386 panes of glass were broken at the Oliver factory. A hailstone 7 ½ inches in circumference was picked up in the yard.
- 1887 Feb. 17 James Oliver agrees to pay one-third of the cost of the proposed new Presbyterian Church building.
- 1888 Aug. 22 James, on a second trip to Scotland and England, in Glasgow attended a reception to Her Most August Majesty, Queen Victoria.
- 1888 Oct. 11 Gertrude Wells Oliver; second child of Mr. and Mrs. J.D. Oliver was born at No. 1 Oliver Row.
- 1890 May 8 Olivers bought the lot where the present City Hall is located. A skating rink was located on the site.
- 1890 Oct. 25 Olivers bought Good's Opera House. This was later razed when the new Oliver Hotel was being built.
- 1892 Jan. 14 Joseph Doty Oliver Jr., the third child of Mr. and Mrs. J.D. Oliver, was born at No. 1 Oliver Row.
- 1894 Feb. 3 J.D. Oliver purchased 76 feet of land on the south side of Washington Street, which gave him a frontage of 250 feet on Washington and about 300 feet on Chapin Street.
- 1896 Mar. 6 Susan Catherine Oliver, the fourth, and last, child of Mr. and Mrs. J.D. Oliver was born at No. 1 Oliver Row.
- 1896 Mar. 31 The interior woodwork for J.D. Oliver's new home arrived. The exterior stonework was finished in 1895. [Copshahom]
- 1896 Jul. 18 Stone fence being built around the new residence of J.D. at the corner of Washington and Chapin Streets.
- 1896 Dec. 30 J.D. Oliver and family move into their new home, or rather he commenced moving.
- 1897 Jan. 1 J.D. Oliver completed moving into his new residence. He lived there for 56 years.

- 1899 Dec. 20 The new Oliver Hotel was formally opened with a grand reception to which some 2,000 guests were invited.
- 1900 May 30 James Oliver was presented with a large solid gold loving cup by the citizens of South Bend, in his recognition of the building the Oliver Hotel. The cup was made by Tiffany and Company.
- 1901 May 20 Cornerstone laid to City Hall built by James Oliver on the old roller skating rink on North Main Street.
- 1902 Sep. 13 Mrs. James Oliver died at 7:10 p.m.
- 1903 Mar. 31 Sittings commenced for a bust of James Oliver in Chicago by the famous sculptor, Lorado Taft.
- 1903 May 14 Work started on the construction of the Oliver mausoleum in Riverview Cemetery, South Bend.
- 1905 May 5 James Oliver celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his entry into the plow manufacturing business on the West Race, where he started in 1855.
- 1905 Jun. 6 The Oliver electric plant started for the first time to furnish electricity for the Plow Works, Oliver Hotel, and Oliver Opera House.
- 1906 Jan. 29 James drove to Riverview Cemetery and visited the Oliver mausoleum. In his diary he wrote, "once more I walked up those steps without being carried."
- 1906 Jun. 12 James was granted the last patent of his life. By this time he had amassed 45 patents in 49 years!
- 1907 Throughout most of 1907, James was experiencing health problems that he seemed to rally from.
- 1908 Jan. 17 James Oliver visited his office at the Oliver Chilled Plow Works for the last time. He was again confined.
- 1908 Mar. 2 James Oliver passed away at his residence at 6:40 a.m., in his 86<sup>th</sup> year.
- 1908 Mar. 15 Public memorial services were held in the Oliver Opera House for James.
- 1908 Mar. 19 James Oliver II was elected Director of the Oliver Chilled Plow Works to fill the vacancy caused by his grandfather's death. J.D. was elected President, succeeding his father in that office.

- 1910 Mar. 19 J.D. Oliver and son Joseph sailed for New York on the Lusitania after a visit to France, Germany, and England. This ship was sunk by a German submarine in World War One.
- 1911 Jan. 12 The James Oliver residence at 325 W. Washington was sold to the city of South Bend for the Central High School site.
- 1916 Sep. 30 Gertrude Wells Oliver and Charles F. Cunningham were married at the First Presbyterian Church, South Bend.
- 1917 Apr. 30 Joseph D. Oliver Jr. and Ellinor Foster McMillan were married at Sherry's in New York City.
- 1917 Aug. 30 George Ford died (J.D. brother-in-law) at 9:30 p.m. He was secretary of the Oliver Chilled Plow Works.
- 1918 Oct. 23 Joseph Oliver Cunningham, son of C.F. Cunningham and Gertrude Oliver born (first child).
- 1918 Dec. 2 C.F. Cunningham elected Secretary and Works Manager of the Oliver Chilled Plow Works.
- 1919 Sep. 16 Mrs. Joseph D. Oliver Jr. (Ellinor McMillan) died at the University of Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia, as a result of a fall from her horse December 5, 1918.
- 1920 Aug. 17 James Oliver II and Louise Yarrington married at the Cunningham summer home at Harbor Point, Michigan.
- 1923 Jan. 22 Anna Gertrude Cunningham, second child of C.F. Cunningham and Gertrude Oliver was born.
- 1927 Nov. 2 Frederica Jane Cunningham, the third child (and last) of Mr. and Mrs. C.F. Cunningham was born.
- 1929 Feb. 21 J.D. Oliver was permitted to enter into contracts with several other farm implement companies to expand the offerings of the Oliver Company.
- 1929 Mar. 30 The merger went into effect. Basically the Oliver Chilled Plow Works ceased to function on this date when this merger was ratified. Though the Oliver name went onto several models of tractors and other farm equipment until 1985 when White Farm Equipment quit manufacturing farm equipment here in South Bend.

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\* Taken from an index compiled by H. Gail Davis entitled, Index to Oliver Historical Data 1770-1929. Completed October 1, 1955.