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# THE SUCCESSFUL AMERICAN.

(ILLUSTRATED.)

A MAGAZINE

DEVOTED TO THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF, AND CONTAINING BIOGRAPHICAL AND  
CHARACTER SKETCHES, TOGETHER WITH PORTRAITS  
OF REPRESENTATIVE

“SUCCESSFUL AMERICANS.”

ALSO DESCRIPTIVE ILLUSTRATED ARTICLES OF THE SUCCESSFUL MANUFACTURING  
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## FRANK CONGER.

RETIRING VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN BRIDGE COMPANY.—FOR MANY YEARS PROMINENTLY IDENTIFIED WITH BRIDGE BUILDING.

**F**RANK CONGER, who has been well and favorably known in the bridge building industry for several years, was born in a log cabin in the quaint old town of Groton, N. Y., May 21, 1849, the son of Coryden W. and Mary J. Brown Conger. He received his early education in his native town, and after leaving school his first occupation was as a driver of a wagon for his father, who had met with unfortunate reverses in business, owing to errors of a partner, and young Frank assisted his father greatly to recoup his fortune and to pay off indebtedness incurred by him while a member of the produce commission firm of Conger & Eldridge, which was done in the course of a few years, and to-day Coryden W. Conger is respected as a prominent and progressive citizen of Groton.

It was ever Frank's ambition while young to become one of Groton's foremost citizens and manufacturers, and he repeatedly predicted that such would come to pass, and it did. In 1868 Frank's father secured the contract for grading the Southern Central Railway through Groton, but as young Conger evinced a desire for a more active life, he accepted a position as Clerk in the drygoods store of Reynolds & Clark, and started to learn the mercantile business. While with this concern his love of outdoor sports asserted itself and he organized the champion baseball team of three surrounding counties. As teamster, drygoods clerk, and baseball player he was a success; so in 1870, at the age of twenty, he embarked in business on his own account, having bought the drygoods store of L. Thomas & Co. and going into debt for \$6,000. His total cash capital was \$450, \$390 of which was at once paid out for advertising, with the result that his business increased to such an extent that he was soon clear of debt. A few years later he founded the C. W. Conger & Co. mercantile company of Groton, which is to-day one of the largest mercantile houses in Central New York.

In 1885 he organized the Groton Bridge & Manufacturing Company, of Groton, and conceived the idea of building nothing but high-grade highway bridges, and with this object in view built a large plant especially fitted for that work; and the bridges built by the Groton Com-

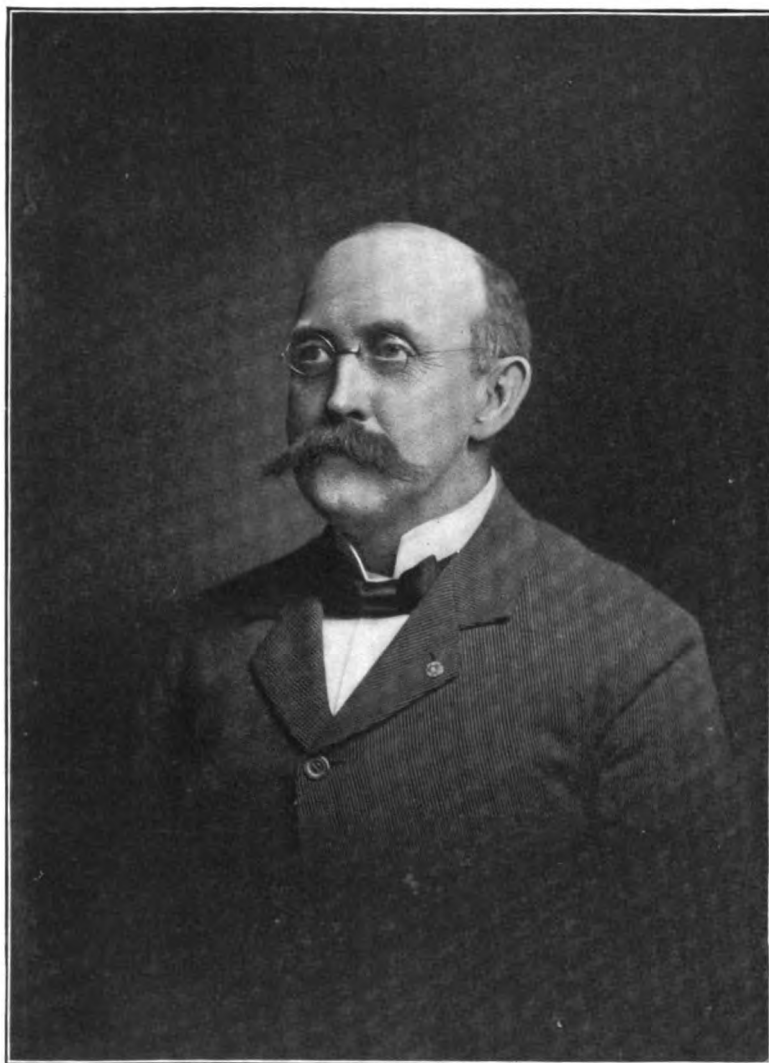
pany are acknowledged to be of a superior construction.

Mr. Conger made it a practice, upon going into the bridge-building business, to engage the best engineers and assistants to be procured, the result being successful work and plenty of contracts, and a fame for substantial structures. In 1885, when the firm was organized under his management, the Company turned out \$75,000 worth of work a year. In 1900, when the Company was absorbed by The American Bridge Company, they were turning out \$2,000,000 worth of work annually, truly a remarkable increase of business in so short a time.

At a meeting of the first Board of Directors, at which time Percival Roberts, Jr., was elected President, Mr. Conger, in a very brief but appropriate speech, predicted that in less than one year all the principal iron and steel industries in the United States would be controlled by one corporation. It is not quite a year since he spoke, but his predictions have been realized, and to-day the Company, of which he may be said to be the father, is one of the many large corporations which compose the organization known as the United States Steel Corporation.

In addition to Mr. Conger's many important connections in various business enterprises, he holds the office of President of the First National Bank of Groton; President of the Universal Safety-tread Company of New Jersey; President of the American Visible Typewriter Company, of Delaware; Vice-President Groton Carriage Works, Groton; Director Conger Manufacturing Company, of Groton, and a partner in the C. W. Conger Company, and the Conger Produce Company, all of Groton, N. Y. He is also a prominent and active member of the Engineers' and Lawyers' Club, of New York City, and the Duquesne Club, of Pittsburgh, Pa. He is a high degree Mason and Odd Fellow.

In 1870 he married Miss Jennie E. Conant, the charming and accomplished daughter of Daniel Conant, of Groton. He claims Groton as his residence, yet most of his time is spent in this city. He has recently purchased a handsome residence in Brooklyn, and will undoubtedly divide his time between his old home in Groton and his new home in the East.



**FRANK M. CONGER,**  
**Retiring Vice-President of American Bridge Company, New York.**  
Photo. by McFarlin, Elmira.