

Name: John Augustine McCall
Years: March 2, 1849- February 18, 1906
Residence: Albany, NY

Brief Biography

John Augustine McCall was born on March 2, 1849 in Albany, New York. After graduating from college, his father, a politician heavily involved with the Democratic Party, was able to get John a job at the Albany assorting house for state currency. McCall then moved on to the Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Company.

A few years later, McCall took Mary Horan as his wife and also started working as an actuarial department clerk for the New York State Department of Insurance. After working as a clerk, McCall started gaining experience with statistical information and became the examiner of companies for the department.

By 1876, he had become the New York State Deputy Superintendent of Insurance. While working at this position, he focused on certain insurance companies especially those that dealt with life and fire insurance. Many companies were affected and some officers of insurance companies were actually indicted and convicted under McCall's reign. This commitment to his job resulted in his appointment as Superintendent of Insurance. After a couple of years at this position, McCall moved on to the Equitable Life Assurance Society where he worked as comptroller.

In 1892, he was elected by New York Life as the new president of the company after the resignation of its previous president. As president, McCall made lots of changes including how the company operated. His leadership was well received and also led to great success.

The growth of the life insurance industry led to an investigation by New York State where McCall was questioned. This investigation led to the revelation that payments to support certain politicians had been mishandled and were not clearly stated on the financial statements. In addition, McCall had provided a life insurance lobbyist with a little over a million dollars and most of it was not accounted for. Of that amount, more than \$200,000 was New York Life money. McCall eventually had to pay this money back to the company.

McCall resigned from New York Life in 1905 and later died of liver cancer.

Major Achievements

McCall was able to rise through the rank within the industry to become a leader in the insurance business. He helped transform New York Life into a highly successful company.

For More Information

The Story of NYLIC: A History of the Origin and Development of the New York Life Insurance Company from 1845 to 1929 by Lawrence F. Abbott, *The Metropolitan Life: A Study in Business Growth* by Marquis James, and *The American Life Convention, 1906-1952* by R. Carlyle Buley.

Resources

American National Biography Online

By Jenn Delisle