

'Cereal Tycoon' by Joe Musser *A biography of Henry Parsons Crowell*

Henry Parsons Crowell, the son of a God-fearing shoe salesman, was born in 1855. Denied a college education due to suffering chronic TB (which killed his father and brothers early in their lives), Crowell turned to entrepreneurial ventures during a 7 year period of recovery from his debilitating illness.

He lived in an era which saw dramatic technological advances that made old jobs obsolete and saw business and industry in turmoil. His ability to listen, persevere in the face of adversity, and adapt to the challenges of a rapidly changing society marked him as a progressive and successful pioneer at a time when most were suffering the effects of the Depression.

His father's prudent stewardship of God's financial provision proved to be a foundational factor in Henry's subsequent success. Another was DL Moody's challenge '*do you ever think big things for God?*' Moody went on to declare '*the world has yet to see what God can do with and for and through and in a man who is fully and wholly consecrated to Him.*' In response, Crowell prayed '*Lord, by Your grace and with the help of the Holy Spirit, I'll be that man!*' Aware that he could never preach like Moody, he realised he could use his gift of business administration to generate finances that would advance God's Kingdom and assist those like Moody.

He became the successful developer of the Wyoming Hereford Breeding Ranch, a Percheron horse breeding farm. Later, as the founder of The Quaker Oats Company, he helped change the breakfast habits of Americans, in the process pioneering entirely new methods of marketing and merchandising that are still revolutionary, even by today's standards. He also set up the Perfection Stove Company which marketed kerosene stoves.

Although he became enormously wealthy, it was his stewardship of money, time and social action that particularly set him apart. His legacy continues even today, over 50 years after his death in 1954. While Chairman of the Moody Bible Institute's Board of Directors, God gave him a vision to set up a wisely administered trust as a vehicle to be used to faithfully serve God's work in perpetuity, as it still does today.

The world has indeed seen what God can do through a man who is fully and wholly consecrated to Him as was Henry Parsons Crowell.

Book review by Duncan Barson