



Chicago

1837
1922

85th Anniversary

100 3
10 333
10

207
40

2
190
999

247 (365)

700 81
235 365

70
247 255.5

2
494



The House of Peacock in 1837

July, 1922

C. D. PEACOCK

**Jewelers and Silversmiths
Established 1837**

State and Adams Streets
CHICAGO

Foremost Authorities on Pearls and Diamonds



Elijah Peacock
Founder of the House of Peacock, February, 1837

Eighty-five Years of Confidence

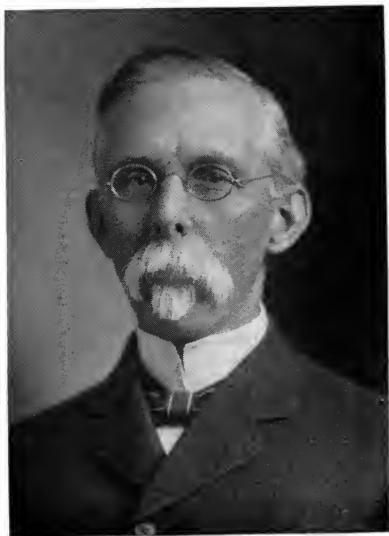
It is particularly fitting that Peacock's should be known as "The Jewelry Store for All Chicago," as well as for all the people of the Great Middle West, for the House of Peacock's started with Chicago, suffered with Chicago through its great fire and panics, and with Chicago it grew from a very modest start to a great enterprise.

In the year 1837, Chicago—a village of some 4,000 people—was granted a Charter and became a City. Its history as a City, dates from 1837. And it was in 1837 that Elijah Peacock founded the House of Peacock.

Since that day Peacock's has marched forward with Chicago.

Looking backward over Peacock's records, many of which are ragged and yellow with age, one finds the names of those wonderful pioneers who dared and defeated the wilderness, and the names of those men and women who played the important parts in the development of Chicago's industrial and political life.

Among them will be found Stephen W. Rawson, "Long John" and Moses Wentworth, A. G. Burley, Stephen F. Gale, Abram Gale, John H. Kinzie, Philo Carpenter, Matthew Laffin, H. H. Kohlsaas, Judge Kohlsaas, Leroy T. Payne,



C. D. Peacock

Allan Pinkerton, Orson Smith, Arthur Dixon, Silas B. Cobb, the Seipps, the Rehms, the Schoenhofens, Mahlon D. Ogden, Rev. R. W. Patterson, H. O. Stone, Norman B. Ream, John Mohr, Frank Parmelee, Philip D. Armour, Monroe Heath, Nelson Morris, Michael and John Cudahy, Joseph Medill, N. K. Fairbank, George M. Pullman, Marshall Field, Potter Palmer, Gustavus Swift, Charles T. Yerkes, Harlow N. Higinbotham, Gen. John A. Logan, Gen. Phil Sheridan, Lyman J. Gage, D. B. Fiske, Franklin MacVeagh, Amos J. Snell, R. T. Crane, John B. Drake, Luther Laffin Mills, Mayor Washburn, Cyrus McCormick, Fire Chief Denis Swenie, Ferdinand W. Peck, Wilbur F. Storey, Peter Schuettler, Philetus W. Gates, Edson Keith, Mayor Harrison, Sr., Columbus R. Cummings, Peter Van Schaack, Levi Z. Leiter, Father Flanagan, H. H. Honore, and countless others of like character and standing.

And tracing on down the years one finds the names of their descendants, many of them still customers of the House.

And so, year after year, as Chicago has grown big and prosperous, the House of Peacock has also grown. Fittingly, and properly it is often called "The Store for All Chicago," for the history of no other Chicago Store is more completely mingled with the history of Chicago, than is Peacock's.



Peacock's in 1837



Peacock's in 1843

CHICAGO

—its beginning

Let us hark back and briefly review the old, yet ever new and inspiring history of Chicago.

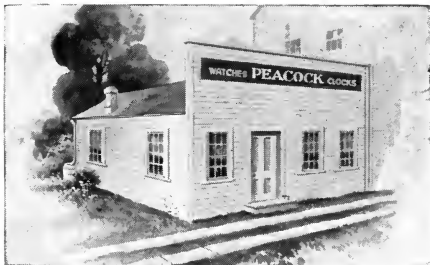
The early French explorers found the Indians here in 1673, and how many centuries they had lived here is yet problematical.

Marquette spent the winter of 1674-5 in a cabin on the south branch of the river. James Logan mentions in his report to the Government in 1718 that the French had a Fort, or Stockade here.

A San Dominican trader built a log cabin here in 1777, which is considered the beginning of the village that was to eventually become Chicago. In 1796 he sold his log cabin to a French trader, who in turn sold it to John Kinzie, the first American Chicago settler in 1803, and where he lived until his death in 1828.

In the treaty between the U. S. Government and twelve tribes of Indians in 1795, the Government was to have several pieces of land for trading Posts and one of them is thus described:

“One piece of land six miles square, at the mouth of the Chicago River, emptying into Lake Michigan, where a fort formerly stood.”



Peacock's in 1849



Peacock's in 1857

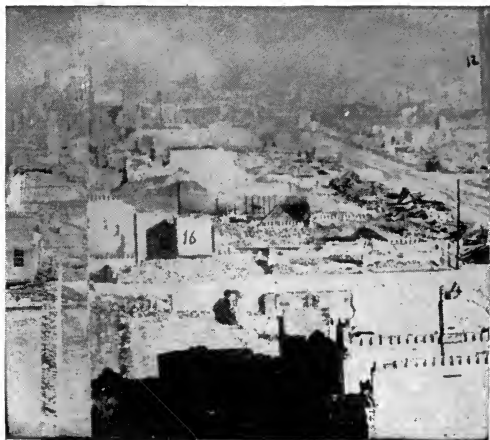
Eight years later, 1803, Fort Dearborn was built, and under its protecting wing slowly gathered a few intrepid souls.

Shortly it became a small settlement, and in 1820—seventeen years later, boasted of a dozen or more families.

After the Black Hawk War in 1833, the village began to grow more rapidly and the first census, that of 1835, gives the village, including many transients, 3,225 souls. In the Fall of 1837, the population had increased to 4,170. The city's area in 1837 was but 2.55 square miles. Today it is more than 200 square miles.

Period of Growing Pains

Chicago's period of greatest early prosperity was from 1833 to 1837. The revulsions and reverses due to the effects of the panic of 1837 then retarded its growth, yet, late in 1837, it again began to jump ahead in both population and material wealth. Thus, from an isolated Colony in 1833 of some five or six families, clinging to a lone, solitary military Post for protection, dependent for subsistence upon the uncertain arrival of some chance vessel from Mackinac, between 1838 and 1847, Chicago had become quite a mighty city, comparatively



**The Vault (No. 16), all that remained
of Peacock's store after the
Chicago fire in 1871**

speaking, and was teeming with a busy and enterprising population, and the centre of a widely extended and flourishing commerce.

Chicago's history from this point assumes the virtue of a romance. It becomes difficult to reconcile to the mind that the spot now covered with sky-scraping blocks of commercial and financial institutions, hostelries, stately mansions and some four hundred thousand homes—the second city of America, and third in the World, was so recently—a short 85 years ago—a low and marshy plain, over which roamed Indians and wild beasts.

It would indeed have required a Jules Verne imagination for any one of the pioneers of 1837 to have foreseen the Chicago of today, although John Wentworth in his newspaper, "The Democrat" around 1840, wrote a number of most laudatory editorials on the "bustling city" of Chicago, teeming with business, etc.!

Americans, and especially Chicagoans should never forget the terrible sacrifices of the brave, stout-hearted vision-gifted, empire-building early settlers, who laid the foundation stone of this present magnificent structure—the City of Chicago—nor should we fail to appreciate the efforts of those enterprising men who are today still making history and adding to its greatness.



Corner, Manufacturing Room

The Vision of La Salle

How inspirationally prophetic are the words of the great explorer, La Salle, in speaking of the spot at the confluence of the Chicago River and the Great Lake, the site of the present miraculous city of Chicago, when he said:

“This will be the gate of Empire; this the seat of Commerce. Everything invites to action. The typical man who will grow up here must be an enterprising man. Each day, as he arises, he will exclaim, ‘I act, I move, I push,’ and there will be spread before him a boundless horizon, an illimitable field of activity. I would name it, from the very nature of this place—ago, I act, and circum, all around: Circago.”

As the natural gateway and shipping port of “The World’s Bread Basket,” the broad expanse of the Mississippi Valley, it cannot fail but become one of the greatest, if not the greatest Port of the world. In fact, there are quite a few men of vision today who consider Chicago still in its infancy, and who claim that in the not distant future she will double her present population, her present boundaries, and take rank as the World’s largest city.



Section of Polishing Room

The Year 1837 Epochal

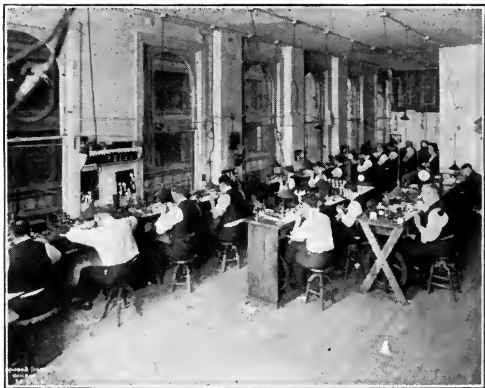
The year 1837 was epochal in Chicago—not because of Elijah Peacock's arrival in February, but because America, and Chicago particularly, was in the throes of its first panic—(its worst)—and also because in March 1837, Chicago was granted a charter; arose to the dignity of a city, and began that "push" (right in the face of the panic), for which it has been so signally and justly noted for the past 85 years.

In his "Reminiscences of Early Chicago," published in 1902, E. O. Gale, says:

"Elijah Peacock came here in 1837 and engaged in his trade of Jeweler and Watch Repairer, a calling that had already descended through three generations, following the English custom, and which his son, Charles (C. D.), who was born in 1838, and who has been one of our leading men in that line, tells me, will be continued indefinitely, as the mantle is slipping from his shoulders onto his sons."

The Chicago Fire

Seared in the memory of many of our present inhabitants is the calamitous holocaust of 1871, which raged over more than 2,000 acres—nearly



Corner, Watch Repair Room

three and one-third square miles, claiming, it is estimated, more than 300 souls and close to two hundred millions of dollars worth of property.

Upon its smoking ruins Chicagoans' indomitable "I will" spirit quickly began the building of another and greater Chicago.

In the panic of 1873, Chicago banks alone among those of the larger cities continued steadily to pay out current funds.

The Chicago World's Fair

The Columbian Exposition, better known as the World's Fair in 1892-3 will ever remain in history as one of the greatest commercial feats of any nation. It covered an area of 666 acres, at an estimated total cost of forty-three millions. Its wonderful achievements along all lines astonished the world. One building alone—the Manufacturers' Hall covered 31 acres, had 44 acres of floor and gallery space and could seat 300,000 people. America's Regular Army could have been comfortably drilled under its roof. The Fair's total admissions were 27,529,401.

The House of Peacock

As Chicago's oldest business establishment the "House of Peacock" considers it an honor to be so closely identified with its wonderful growth



Section, Engraving Room

in its 85 short years as a municipality, and will always esteem it a privilege, rather than a duty, to help push!

In tracing the history and early business moves of the "Peacock" store, it is significant that it has invariably "followed the crowd" in being located in the heart of the city's business district—even as it is today, at State and Adams, which is acknowledged to be the busiest retail center in the world.

Chicago's business district in 1837 was on the South side of the River, so Elijah Peacock opened a palatial (?) frame store at 155½ Lake Street, moving in 1843 with the business district, a little farther West to 195 Lake Street; then to 199 Randolph in 1849, which had become the leading retail thoroughfare. In '54 to '57 he was at 205 Randolph. The great conflagration of 1871 found the "House of Peacock" at 221 Randolph Street, and the fire destroyed everything, except the jewelry vault. After the fire, Peacock's temporary quarters were at 96 West Madison; in 1873 the store was at State and Washington Streets, and in 1894 it moved to the present building at State and Adams, which it has occupied for the past 28 years.

In 1903 the business was incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois. The present officers are Robt. E. Peacock, President; W. J. Buffington, Vice-President; Walter C. Peacock, Treasurer.

The first "Peacock" advertisement of record appeared in the Democrat, April 5, 1841, and the firm has advertised ever since, being probably the oldest continuous jewelry advertiser in America.

The Peacock Business Principles

If we were searching for a slogan to go over our door, we would choose "The Buyer is Safe;" for the high-minded, conscientious old-fashioned business honesty that has always characterized the commercial history of the name of "Peacock," for many generations in England, and for three generations in Chicago—in the one unbroken line of business, has always been considered by the present generation in the light of a sacred trust. Absolute fidelity to this trust has, more than any other one thing, enabled it to achieve that enviable position it now enjoys.

Appreciating its responsibility to the public, it is the constant aim of the "House of Peacock" to surpass even the expectations of its most discriminating patrons.

Historical Briefs

Chicago was chartered March 4, 1837.

First Municipal Election was held in Fall of 1837. 709 votes were cast.

In 1830 there was a sale of Canal lots (Chicago's first lot sale), the choicest bringing \$50 to \$100.

In 1832 Chicago is reported to have had about 100 inhabitants and about 5 or 6 log houses, exclusive of the Fort.

In 1837 the Trustees applied for a loan of \$60 (the first loan of its history), to drain a slough on Clark Street, south of Washington. The broker refused the loan, unless the notes bore the personal indorsement of Mr. E. B. Williams. Mr. Williams promptly endorsed.

The first railroad train to reach Chicago arrived in 1852.

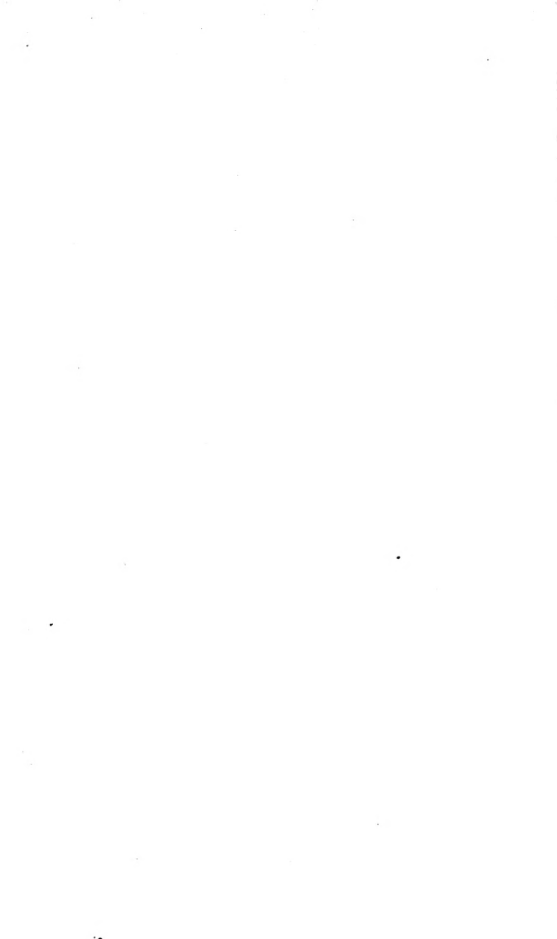
The first boat to arrive at Chicago was a Government Schooner with men and supplies for building Fort Dearborn, reached Chicago in 1803.

The first Steamboat reached Chicago with Government troops, supplies (and cholera) for the Fort in July, 1832, to quell the Black Hawk War.

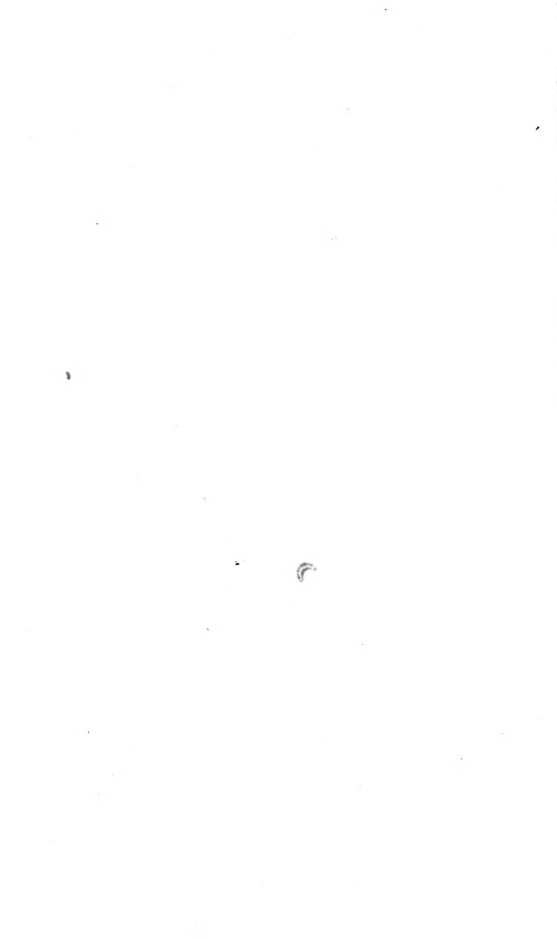
The first newspaper of Chicago was the Weekly American which started in 1836.

Of more than passing interest, considering the present H. C. of L. are the prices that prevailed in Chicago in 1837; and some writers state that the high taxes and living expenses were even then very generally discussed and cussed:

Butter	6c a lb.	Venison	\$1.50 a carcass
Beef	6c a lb.	Flour	\$3.00 a barrel
Ham	5c a lb.	Wood	\$2.00
Grouse	\$1.00 a dozen	Good Board	\$2.00 a week
Quail	3c each		







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2525 21

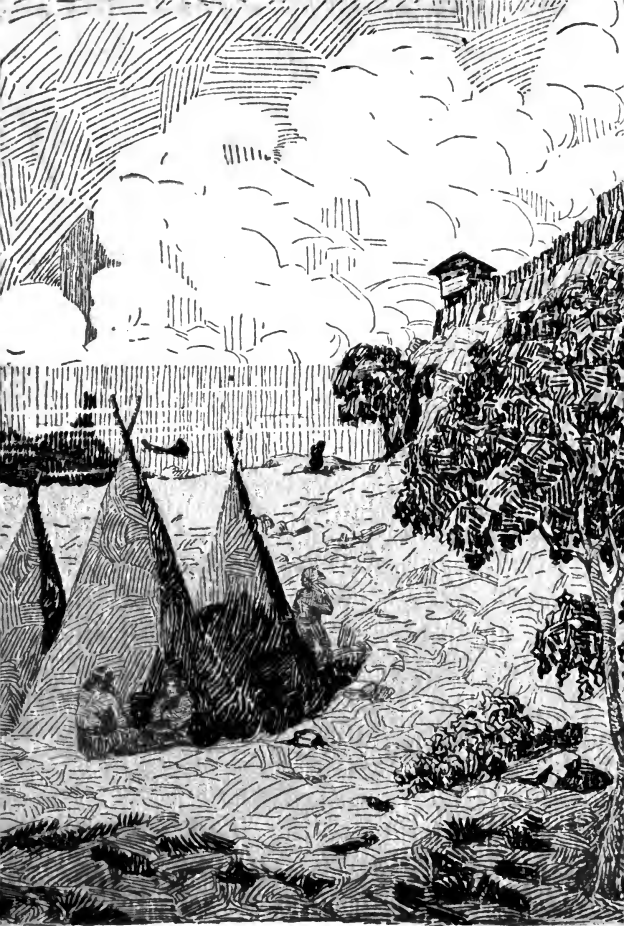
0775
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10

20775
21475
240.00

2525

182.5
3650
180

F
548
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C45
1922
RARE
B.P.



Chicago's—also Peacock's