

JOHN GARY ANDERSON AND J. M. CHERRY¹

John Gary Anderson (1861-1936) of Rock Hill organized the Rock Hill Buggy Company in 1892. It was highly successful. At the end of World War I he organized the Anderson Motor Company with \$4 million capital. He turned out a superb car but couldn't compete with Henry Ford's cars for the masses or overcome some financial problems. The auto company folded in 1925.

Anderson retired to Florida and in the last year of his life published his *Autobiography*. In a remarkably candid fashion, Anderson included his feelings about his relationships with his business associates. One of those associates was James Milton Cherry (for whom Cherry Road is named).

The two men became associates when Anderson was trying to raise enough money to build a buggy company. David Hutchison, Capt. W. J. Roddey and the Whites altogether subscribed about \$7,500 of the needed \$25,000 but the remainder had to come from outside Rock Hill.. Anderson wrote, "J. M. Cherry, who later profited by my initiative more than I did myself, was cold and hostile and unfriendly...."

Cherry was the cashier and active manager of Savings Bank of Rock Hill. David Hutchison was the bank president. Anderson admired Hutchison and turned to him when he needed assistance. Once, Anderson needed \$140 desperately and Hutchison loaned it to him without security and "recorded" the transaction by dropping the charge ticket into the cash drawer. Anderson said that Cherry "raised the old scratch" about the bootleg loan and added the comment, "That was Cherry 'up and down.' He was a good banker, as such, would help you if you didn't need it, but if you did, 'good night!'"

The Rock Hill Buggy Company was originally capitalized with 50 shares. A. E. Holler, Anderson's brother-in-law, subscribed 25 of the shares, David Hutchison, 10 shares, W. L. Roddey, 4 and others subscribed the remainder. J. M. Cherry bought one share.

The buggy company began under the name Holler & Anderson with David Hutchison president, A. E. Holler, secretary and John Gary Anderson, general manager and treasurer. Eventually, the return on the original investment mounted to 8,000 per cent. By that time, Cherry had gotten Holler's share for 60 cents on the dollar and had bought Hutchison's 10 shares.

Reminiscing about his partnership with Cherry nearly 40 years later, Anderson wrote, "He and I got along fine--so long as I held on to the short end of the singletree, and that was practically all the time...He was a born diplomat--if he wanted to be, but if you got your share you had to ask for it, or go without...." Anderson said that his mistake was in letting Cherry become president of the company. They made and sold 60,000 buggies at a net profit of over a half million dollars, "....the most of which found its way into Cherry's pockets, not dishonestly, but because he had the vision and

¹Moubrary Beatty called and strenuously objected to this story as unfair to his grandfather, J. M. Cherry.

courage to back his judgment, and to cleverly and shrewdly plan, with an eye to his own personal interests."

Anderson admitted that he didn't pay attention to the financial end of the business. He was far more interested in what went on in the shop. "The music of the anvil, and the singing of the planers were a joy forever..." But when Cherry, who paid close attention to the financial, ended up with two-thirds of the capital stock and Anderson with one-third which cost him more than Cherry's two-thirds, it did rankle considerably.

Anderson decided to confront Cherry with the unfairness of Anderson's doing all the work for only one-quarter of the profits. Cherry was gracious in meeting Anderson's request to allow him to purchase enough of Cherry's stock to make one-half ownership each and for Cherry to transfer his salary to Anderson. This was done beginning July 1, 1901. Four years later Anderson bought out Cherry for \$119,000.

The Anderson-Cherry partnership was summed up by Anderson in this way: "Cherry was a good business man, and owing to his banking experience, knew the routine of finance. But he knew nothing about the manufacturing business, and hence was of no more service to me than any good office man who could then be employed at a hundred a month." Cherry was, said Anderson, "A Partner Who Was an Expensive Luxury."