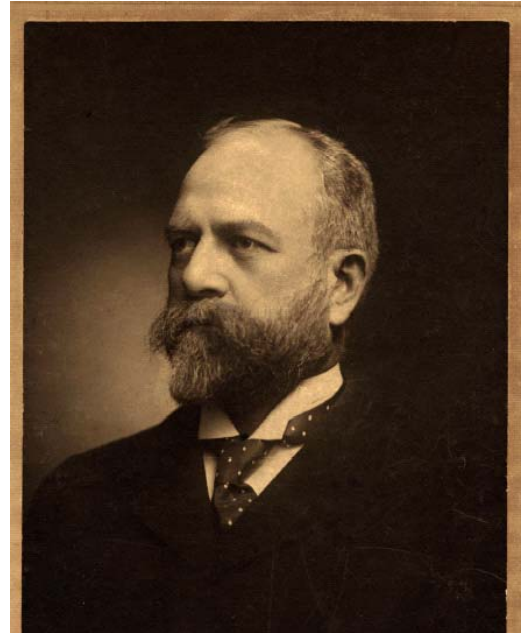


Unlike today's venture capitalists, Allen-Bradley's Legendary co-founder was a hands-on investor.

By Robert A. Smith

Dr. Stanton Allen played a larger role in the birth of Allen-Bradley than many realize. Known primarily for giving \$1,000 in seed money to inventor Lynde Bradley, Allen was more than a financial angel, he was a hands-on investor. Lynde Bradley's 1921 history of Allen-Bradley hinted at this. But his unpublished diaries and the newly discovered memoirs of his brother Harry Bradley reveal even more. The latter's manuscript was lost for 40 years before being discovered in an Allen-Bradley vault in 2003. Taken together, these accounts paint a vivid picture of a vibrant, engaged, hands-on investor, who rolled up his sleeves and worked side-by-side with his younger partners.

- "Dr. Allen and I built the controller," reported Lynde Bradley in the October 1921 *Gossip*. "I laid out the work and Dr. Allen did a good deal of the drilling and cutting [in the] evenings, whenever he could get away from his practice." In those days, Lynde added, "I did not possess any power driven machinery, so this work was all done by hand."
- Lynde's pocket diaries reveal that in addition to the physical construction of the device, Dr. Allen also took part in Lynde's product demonstrations, making sure to be on hand to witness tests in local machine shops and factories.
- The doctor also joined Lynde in business meetings to talk up the device with potential customers and distributors. This included meetings in Milwaukee and Chicago with investor Frank Jones of American Electric Fuse Company.
- Both brothers credited Dr. Allen with drafting the company's first contract, a 1903 agreement with a third party to manufacture and distribute their product. "The various specifications and limitations which were set forth in this contract were the result of a lot of hard work on the part of Dr. Allen", Lynde recalled. "He collected all the royalty contracts he could get from his friends and acquaintances and then from the suggestions which these conveyed, he set about to write a contract himself which would be broad enough to cover all the contingencies which might arise and insure a square deal to both parties . . . Dr. Allen did very well," remembered Lynde. "In fact the contract was first class."



1904 formal portrait of Dr. Stanton Allen, the "Allen" in the Allen-Bradley name



The young physician and his wife Maria. From an Allen family photo probably taken in the 1890s

- Dr. Allen also invented the now famous trade name “Allen-Bradley.” Lynde Bradley confirmed this in the December 1921 issue of the *Gossip*: “One of the terms of the contract required that the devices be advertised as Allen-Bradley apparatus, made by the American Electric Fuse Company. Dr. Allen reasoned, and quite correctly too, that if our business relationship with the Fuse Company ever did come to an end, whatever the reason, our devices would have the benefits of the past advertising and whatever good will had been established ... This explains why the devices were known as Allen-Bradley apparatus, made by the American Electric Fuse Company.”

secured from responsible parties, to properly advertise under the designation of the "Allen-Bradley" devices, and sale of such devices in an energetic and business like

First appearance of the legendary Allen-Bradley name, from a January 6, 1904 contract written by Dr. Stanton Allen.

Lynde continued: “There was one vital defect for which he (Dr. Allen) was in no way to blame. For his legal counsel, who was to put the Doctor’s writings into legal verbiage, omitted through intention or oversight, the insertion of a clause setting forth any penalty for violation of the various clauses Dr. Allen had worked over so hard. So, that with one or two exceptions, the contract was practically toothless and nothing but a mere memorandum. Dr. Allen and I did not realize this until 1909, when we tried to enforce it, having believed for nearly five years that we were all sewed up tight and must carefully live up to the various covenants or the contract would be come invalid. The only one who probably knew that the contract was a mere scrap of paper was Frank Jones, for Jones was a law graduate of the University of Michigan and was admitted to the bar and practiced for a while in Chicago . . . The fact that he signed this contract just as Dr. Allen submitted it with but a few perfunctory changes leads me to believe that he knew full well its uselessness.”

The Allens can trace their line back to Walter Allen, (born in 1601) who emigrated to Massachusetts from England around 1638. In fact, a Shrewsbury, Massachusetts farm known as “The Homestead,” established in 1725, was still inhabited by an Allen descendant in 2004. Ironically, Dr. Allen’s great grandfather, Wilkes Allen, born on the Homestead in 1775, was a pastor for 20 years in nearby Chelmsford — where Allen-Bradley sensors are designed and marketed today.

“Are you satisfied that the idea you have is workable?”

“Yes.”

“Well, why don’t you get to doing it? You’re out of a job, so I’ll make you a proposition. I’ll put up a thousand dollars. You go ahead and build a model of the controller you have in mind, and we’ll go halves on what you make.”

- Dr. Stanton Allen to Lynde Bradley 1901, quoted in Harry Bradley’s memoirs



Above, the founder as a boy. Stanton (left) and little brother John, ten years his junior, sons of James M and Eliza Stanton Allen.



Dr. Stanton Allen (left), son Wyeth (foreground), wife Maria (back) and the doctor’s maternal grandmother, Olivia White Stanton (right). 1890s.

The Allens were a well-educated family, with members attending Harvard as early as 1797. The doctor's early American ancestors included teachers, ministers, civil servants, civil engineers, merchants, physicians and members of the Massachusetts Legislature. One uncle even ran for United States Congress.

Dr. Allen's father, James Morril Allen, (b.1831) was also a physician. He graduated from Harvard and the New York College of Physicians and Surgeons and during the Civil war he was a Navy surgeon aboard the U.S.S. Albatross. Later, James served as Medical Inspector for the Brooklyn Metropolitan Board of Health. He resigned that position in 1869 to become surgeon at the Port of Milwaukee's U.S. Marine Hospital, a post he held until 1896.

Like his father, Stanton Allen graduated from the NY College of Physicians and Surgeons. He served at New York's St. Vincent Hospital, was associated with a Brooklyn physician for five years, then moved to Europe in 1890 where he studied orthopedic surgery and was an officer of the International Medical Congress in Berlin. He returned to Milwaukee in 1891 to set up private practice – something he maintained while serving as Allen-Bradley's first president. Grandchildren, Jean and Richard Allen say they were told that Dr. Allen, like their father Wyeth, had scientific interests embracing all types of technology, so it wasn't surprising that Stanton invested in Lynde Bradley's high-tech invention.

Likewise the decision of Stanton's son Wyeth to come back East and seek employment at A-B was a logical one. Wyeth knew the Bradley brothers (8 to 10 years his senior), and after graduation from the University of Michigan, possessed engineering skills they needed to grow their business. One of Allen-Bradley's first college-educated employees, Wyeth became A-B's first plant manager in 1917. But he left after several years when he realized that the equally ambitious Fred Loock had an inside track on promotion to upper management. Wyeth became an independent industrial consultant for several years before running Globe Union Inc. in Milwaukee (eventually acquired by Johnson Controls). He ended his career at his alma mater, founding the University of Michigan's Industrial Engineering program. Described by his son Richard as "always progressive," Wyeth Allen is credited with introducing the first computers to the university's engineering curriculum.



Hood River, Oregon home and orchard where Dr. Allen moved his family after his health began to fail. Stanton returned east at least one time, in 1909, to help partners Lynde and Harry Bradley re-establish themselves in Milwaukee. Allen was still officially Allen-Bradley's president when he died in Hood River in 1916.



Stanton's son Wyeth (left) returned to Milwaukee with an engineering degree and became Allen-Bradley's first plant manager. Here he talks with Harry Bradley (right) as sales manager Chet Baird (center) looks on.