

It takes more than a good resume to get a government contract.

Josiah Walker Preston (1832-1885)

From: “Semi-Centennial History of the Alpha Zeta Society of Shurtleff College”¹, 1898.

JOSIAH WALKER PRESTON-.Chicago, IL.

Was born at Warsaw, N. Y. on the 31st of August, 1832, and came West With his parents when six years of age. They settled in Aurora, Ill, where he lived until he came to Shurtleff College. At the close of his college days he went to Oregon, where he resided several years, being employed in the office of his brother, John B. Preston, who was at that time Surveyor



General of the Territory. Returning to Alton, he married Miss Emma Clawson, oldest daughter of L. J. Clawson.

In 1861 he removed to Chicago, where he became very prominent in the commercial circles, being President of the Board of Trade during the most eventful period of its history. “Out of the ashes of the great conflagration, of 1871, Chicago’s mart of traffic rose Phoenix-like, a beautiful monument of his devoted energy.” During the excitement following the fire of that year, Mr. Preston never lost faith in the future of Chicago, and before ruins of the Chamber of Commerce were sufficiently cool for workmen to attempt the recovery of the grain receipts and other valuables

buried beneath the crumbling walls, he provided quarters for the Board on Canal street, and commenced business before many of its members had recovered from the Shock.

He was a man of magnificent presence, full of kindly impulses, generous, to a fault, and beloved by all who knew him. His well-rounded character was above reproach. He was a man of genial and sunny temperament, who made and regained friends everywhere. Mr. Preston’s useful and eventful career was brought to a sudden close in the 53rd year of his age by a

stroke of apoplexy May 10, 1885. Mrs. Preston afterward removed to California.

ⁱ Greene, William W. **Semi-Centennial History of the Alpha Zeta Society of Shurtleff College,** Together with Complete Rosters of Active and Honorary Members. Melling and Gaskins, Alton, Ill., 1898.