

**WILLIAM**

**VON**



**MEISTER**

**PARKER ROSE**

# WILLIAM VON MEISTER

## PARKER ROSE

William von Meister was an entrepreneur who would jump from company to company with brilliant idea after idea. William von Meister was a very inventive and curious kid. He would love to create things. When he was a kid, he built his father a device. His father would press a button in his car when he was about 3 miles away from the house that would make a light turn on on the kitchen counter to alert the maids that they needed to make tea.

He printed out business cards that pronounced him as business consultant, and he got hired to lead the computerization of cancer research records. Then he got hired at Western Union, and bought their unwanted cathode ray tubes for \$750, salvaged the solid gold contacts, and made \$250,000. He was also known for very wild living.

Von Meister started a large number of firms, including Western Union's telegram service, AOL(through a bunch of renamings and reorganizations), The Source, an online service, and helped build the cable infrastructure. He died mostly unnoticed, because he only stayed at companies for 1-2 years each, and kept making company after company. He died broke and obscure in 1995 due to his wild living and cancer.

Sources:

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<http://www.internethistorypodcast.com/2014/04/chapter-3-supplemental-1-the-forgotten-online-pioneer-bill-von-meister/>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William\\_von\\_Meister](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_von_Meister)