

NOTABLE DEATHS

JAMES E. BLYTHE, lawyer, died in Mason City September 24, 1938. He was the son of Rev. and Mrs. J. W. Blythe, and was born in Cranberry, New Jersey, January 20, 1856. As a small boy he accompanied his parents in their move to Indiana, where he received all his education, finishing his A. M. work in Hanover College, Hanover, Indiana, in 1877. Shortly after completing his college work he moved to Mason City, Iowa, where after reading law just three months he was admitted to the bar in June, 1878. His long service made him the oldest practicing member of Cerro Gordo County bar in point of service at the time of his death.

Entering politics in 1888, he was elected to the 22nd General Assembly, and re-elected in 1890, during which term he was the floor leader for the republican party. During the following decade he was a dominant factor in his party's leadership, serving many of those years on the state central committee, and three years as chairman of that committee, in 1892, 1893, 1894 he managed the state campaigns which were so successful in the congressional races.

Among his other interests aside from the law it may be noted he helped to organize the first baseball team in Mason City, and for many years was the catcher on the team.

ORVILLE K. MABEN, insurance executive and former state representative, died in a La Crosse, Wisconsin, hospital due to complications resulting from an operation. He was the son of Grover Maben, who settled in Hancock County in 1856, Orville Maben being born on a farm in the northern part of that county on March 12, 1868. After attending the rural schools of the vicinity and spending a few terms in the Breckenridge Normal Academy in Decorah, Iowa, he completed his education in the Northern Business College, located in Garner, Iowa, being graduated in 1900. First a farmer, he entered the insurance field in 1900, associating as secretary in the company his father helped to establish. At the time of his death he was again serving as secretary in the same company, and in addition was a director in two other insurance firms.

A lifelong republican, he served Hancock County in the 30th, 31st, 32nd, and 32nd Extra General Assemblies. In 1932 he made an unsuccessful campaign for state treasurer on the republican ticket. As a ready and fluent speaker he was much in demand to address various business and vocational groups on historical and business subjects. He was a member of the Methodist Church.

EDWIN G. MOON, United States District Attorney and former state senator, died in Ottumwa, January 22, 1939. Born in Melrose, Iowa, November 12, 1870, he was the son of Charles P. and Mira G. Moon, who

came to Lee County from New York state in about 1850. After receiving his elementary education in the Lee County schools, he attended S. C. Howe's Academy in Mt. Pleasant; following his graduation he remained for a time as an instructor in the school. His higher education was received in the State University of Iowa, from which he was graduated in 1897. His professional training was obtained in the Kent College of Law, Chicago, which he completed in 1899. Settling immediately afterwards in Ottumwa, Iowa, to practice law, he was soon elected to two terms as police judge, 1901-05. A lifelong democrat, in 1906 he was a successful candidate for the state senate from the seventeenth district. Most prominent among his measures sponsored during his four years in the Iowa senate was the "Moon Law," which restricted the number of saloons in any town or community to not more than one for every one thousand inhabitants. In 1910 he made an unsuccessful contest to secure the democratic nomination for Governor of Iowa, losing to Claude R. Porter. By the quirks of fate and politics, he later served as an assistant United States Attorney under Mr. Porter from 1914-18. In the last year he was appointed to the position of United States Attorney, from which he resigned in 1922. For a brief month he served a second time in that capacity upon the death of his successor, in 1924. In June, 1934, he served as United States District Attorney when he was appointed to that position by the President. He was serving in that capacity when he died.

A member of the Wapello County, the Iowa State, and the American Bar Associations, he was a member of the Episcopalian Church, serving as Chancellor of the Iowa Diocese of that church.

ORTO S. MUNTZ, automobile dealer and Advisory Chairman of the Greater Iowa Commission, died February 2, 1939, as the result of an automobile accident which had previously taken the life of his wife. The son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward L. Muntz, he was born on a Dubuque County farm on July 23, 1896. Educated in the Dubuque city schools, his business career, begun at eighteen years, had been exclusively devoted to the automotive industry and its allied lines, Mr. Muntz having served at various times the International Harvester Company, the Mack International Truck Co., and the Autocar Company.

Based upon his observations and experiences as a salesman, Mr. Muntz became convinced of the value to the state of a "Sell Iowa" program. From this idea grew the Greater Iowa Commission created by the 47th General Assembly and of which Mr. Muntz was the first Chairman. The Greater Iowa Commission's brief career, its functions and performances have frequently been the subject of debate. He believed that Iowa needed first to be sold to its own people, and secondly the advantages of the state sold to the nation. At the time of his death Mr. Muntz was serving the commission as advisory chairman.

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