



DAVID E. HADDEN
Weather Observer, Astronomer, Druggist
Alta, Iowa

At His Instrument Shelter About the Time He
Completed Fifty Years of Service

A HALF CENTURY OF SERVICE

Climatology suffered a great loss when David E. Hadden, cooperative weather observer at Alta, Iowa, died on September 20, 1943. He began weather observations at Alta on January 1, 1890, and took his last observation on August 6, 1943. For fifty-three years, seven months and five days, he maintained daily observations without a break, though for short absences the observations were taken by a member of the family, usually his daughter, Mrs. Lola Pepper. No one else in Iowa has ever observed the weather continuously for so long; and few, if any, in the United States have equaled this record.

His work was so carefully done that month after month passed without errors or inconsistencies being found in the rigid examinations given his reports at Des Moines and Washington, D. C. He was alert to detect and report defects that occasionally developed in his instruments, which made prompt replacements possible.

Upon the completion of fifty years of service Mr. Hadden received a cordial letter of commendation from the chief of the weather bureau in Washington, in which he said, "Your service, fidelity and devotion are of the kind that cannot be purchased with money. Your record stands as a monument to your memory that will be revered and appreciated by unborn generations beside which words of commendation from us who at the moment are administering the affairs of the weather bureau, are but weak, fleeting and transitory."

He received a small grant in aid from the Carnegie Foundation to conduct some research in statistically analyzing his long and valuable meteorological records. Many interesting things were discovered that cannot be mentioned in this brief notice, such as a decrease in the annual precipitation at Alta of 3.96 inches in fifty-one years. The fact that the observations were taken in the same ideal spot with the instruments exposed and ob-

served in the same way, makes the record especially valuable.

Mr. Hadden also achieved distinction as an astronomer, and especially in the field of sunspots and other solar phenomena. He had an excellent six-inch telescope, well mounted, in a standard astronomical observatory tower. His standing in this line was recognized by his being a fellow of the Royal Astronomical society.

He made his living as a druggist and served for some years as a member of the state pharmacy board, part of the time as chairman. He gave the public many free lectures on scientific subjects.

The above is a tribute to Mr. Hadden and his professional success as a weather observer at Alta, Iowa, by Director Chas. D. Reed, senior meteorologist, U. S. weather bureau, at Des Moines.

PETER MELENDY A TOWERING FIGURE

Any list of the men who greatly helped in the making of Iowa would be incomplete without the name of Peter Melendy. The present generation does not recognize the name; but he was a towering figure in the last half of the nineteenth century. Between running to fires as a member of a volunteer fire company in Cincinnati and the development of a model farm near that city he had become of the right stature for an Iowa pioneer. Most of his life was at Cedar Falls—farm owner, colonizer, fruit man, organizer of fairs, exhibitor at fairs, promoter of the Iowa college of agriculture, and railroad planner. He is the man who selected the land grant areas for the college. He helped choose the college's first president. He wrote and spoke and worked for the greater Iowa that was to be because of agriculture.

A very readable and complete story of his life has been prepared by Luella M. Wright and published by the State Historical Society at Iowa City. In the days to come when Iowa history will be better appreciated than now this book will be read with deep interest. Many there are who recall the tall and stately figure of this man in his later days and are glad that his life story has been told.

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