

Necrology of Notable Iowans...

RUTH SUCKOW, nationally-known novelist and short story writer, died at her home in Claremont, California, January 22, 1960; born at Hawarden, Iowa, August 6, 1892, the daughter of a Congregational minister, the Reverend William John and Anna Kluckhohn Suckow; attended grade school at Algona when her father was pastor there from January 1, 1896 to May 25, 1902, and lived in Earlville, Manchester, and a number of other Iowa towns as her father moved from parish to parish; planned and wrote endless stories even as a child; attended Grinnell College from 1910 to 1913, studied drama at the Curry School of Expression in Boston, Massachusetts, graduated from the University of Denver in 1917, and was appointed instructor in English literature while working toward a masters degree, received the following year; taught for another year but wanted to devote more time to writing, learned the apiary business from a friend in Colorado one summer, returned to Earlville, Iowa to establish a bee farm with the help of her father, and operated it for six years, writing during the winters; John T. Frederick used some of her verse in the *Midland* magazine at Iowa City and her first published story, "Uprooted," appeared in it in February, 1921; became an associate editor that winter; H. L. Mencken and G. J. Nathan bought and published several of her short stories in *Smart Set* magazine at the suggestion of Mr. Frederick, and after Mencken announced his discovery to the literary world, recognition came rapidly, a number of magazines accepting her stories; the old *Century* magazine printed "Renters" in 1923, and serially ran her first novel, *Country People*, in 1924; began to spend some winters in New York writing her second book, *The Odyssey of a Nice Girl* (1925), and bringing together a collection of her short stories, *Iowa Interiors* (1926); sold the apiary December 1, 1926 and removed to New York to write *The Bonney Family* (1928), *Cora* (1929) and her first big financial success, *The Kramer Girls* (1930), originally printed serially in 1929 in *Good Housekeeping*; married at San Diego, California to Ferner Nuhn of Cedar Falls, Iowa, March 11, 1929; wrote *Children and Older People* in 1931 and continued to produce short stories, many of which appeared in the *American Mercury*; lived in Vermont, New Hampshire, Iowa, New York and California during the next few years while concentrating on the writing of a long book, *The Folks*, which appeared in 1934 and is regarded as her best work; one of the first Iowa writers to attract national attention,

and together with Sinclair Lewis and Sherwood Anderson, accurately and realistically portrayed the mid-western scene of the early 1900's to a nation-wide literary audience; removed to Cedar Falls, Iowa in 1936, brought out *Carry-Over*, a collection of short stories, finished *New Hope* in 1942, and during World War II gave talks to service men for the educational program of the Friends of Brethren Service committees and the Fellowship of Reconciliation; divided her time between Arizona, Santa Fe, New Mexico and New York for reasons of health, contributed to the *Friends Journal*, and published *Some Others and Myself* in 1952; had made her home in Claremont, California since 1958, though continuing to regard Iowa as her home, describing it as having its own kind of beauty and a genuineness of life which has a solid foundation, the kind that people realize more gradually; her last book, *The John Wood Case* (1959) also had an Iowa setting and was well received; still claimed membership in the Congregational Church and also was a member of the Society of Friends; survived by her husband.

FRANK SPENCER BARTLETT (Felix) ADLER, famed circus clown, died in New York City, February 1, 1960; born about 1895 at Clinton, Iowa, the son of Joseph and Nettie Adler; sold candy in a Clinton theater, and was fascinated by show business even as a child putting on his own shows in a vacant grocery store; showed considerable artistic talent and seemed to have a way with animals as an impish youngster attending Jefferson elementary school, starring in plays at Clinton high school and working part time in a drug store; quit school to study pharmacy in Chicago for eighteen months before becoming a solo impersonator in vaudeville with an act called the "Gloom Dispeller," but quickly left burlesque to join the Ringling Brothers Circus around 1909 training dogs, monkeys and bears for Edna Curtis; watched and studied the clowns and about 1918 got the opportunity to perform as the clown "Funny Felix and His Pig," beginning a career of over fifty years with the famous five-ring Ringling Brothers Circus that had its beginnings at McGregor, Iowa and later combined with Barnum & Bailey to become the world's greatest show; trained piglets for his act for thirty years and audiences throughout the country came to anticipate his waddling around the rings in a droopy grotesquely padded clown's suit with a red light glowing in his nose, all topped by a tiny umbrella; did not miss a performance from 1919 to 1928, and with Emmet Kelley became one of the two best-known clowns in the world; designed the shoes and clothes of all the clowns in the show; became known as the "King of Clowns" and the "White House" clown for his many presidential performances; actually was a serious

student of human nature, and observed, "the more people complain, the fewer are the reasons why they should complain; that they are spending too much time thinking about themselves and not enough time thinking about what they can do to help others who need help"; was married in 1948, his wife, Amelia, joining his act; usually returned to Iowa while the circus was in winter quarters in Florida during the winter, sometimes playing indoor circuses for fraternities and other organizations in the middle west; retired in May, 1959 when the big show ceased its cross-country tours, and later signed with the International circus at Palisades, New Jersey, but was not happy "just darting around the country to get into towns the best way you can and perform for three or four days"; survived by his wife.

CLINTON AMOS CLAUSON, governor of the State of Maine, businessman, former internal revenue official, and chiropractor, died at the executive mansion in Augusta, Maine, December 31, 1959; born on a farm near Mitchell, Iowa, March 28, 1895, the son of Albert Clausen; shortly moved with his family to Otranto in Mitchell County, completed elementary school there, and attended the high school at nearby Lyle, Minnesota, his first job being to build a fire in the schoolroom stove each morning for five cents a day; served in the army overseas in World War I, graduated from the Palmer School of Chiropractic at Davenport, Iowa in September 1919, and borrowed \$500 from his father to begin practicing in Waterville, Maine; married Ellen Kelleher of Waterville; began his political career as a Democratic committee worker in the largely Republican State of Maine in 1923, was chairman of the Waterville city committee seven years, member of the Kennebec County committee from 1928 to 1935, city treasurer, 1930-31, gained considerable prominence in fraternal organizations and in 1933 began nineteen years as United States collector of internal revenue for Maine; retired from his practice by 1938, served as state administrator of the War Bond sales program from 1941 to 1943; entered the oil distribution business about 1952, was mayor of Waterville, 1956-57 and, lacking the support of the top leaders of his party, waged a vigorous handshaking campaign to win the Democratic nomination for governor in 1958, later defeating former governor Horace A. Hildreth in the general elections, this being the first election of a governor in Maine to a four-year term and the last of Maine's traditional early September elections; as governor sought to hold down public spending to reduce the impact of the 1957-58 recession; had a natural liking for people and never forgot his friends; was a former president of the Maine Association of Chiro-

practors, Federal Businessmen's Association, and vice president of the National Association of Collectors of Internal Revenue; also was a member of the Advisory Board of the Depositors Trust Company, Newcomen Society of North America, Maine Cancer Society, the American Legion, the Masons and the Shrine; survived by his wife, a daughter, Mrs. Marjorie Chasse, Brunswick, Maine, and a son, Cornelius K. Clauson of Waterville.

NORRIS BROWN, retired attorney and former United States Senator, died at a rest home in Seattle, Washington, January 5, 1960; born at Maquoketa, Iowa, May 2, 1863, the son of William Henry Harrison and Eliza Ann (Phelps) Brown; attended the common schools, graduated from the law department of the the University of Iowa in 1883, was admitted to the bar the following year, and received an M.A. degree in 1885; married November 28, 1885 to Lula K. Beeler who died March 2, 1925; commenced the practice of law at Perry, Iowa, but moved to Kearney, Buffalo County, Nebraska in 1888; served as prosecuting attorney of Buffalo County, 1892-96, deputy attorney general of Nebraska, 1900-04, and attorney general, 1904-06; became quite widely known as the result of winning a tax suit totaling more than a million dollars against the railroads, the money being used to open schools; was elected as a Republican to the United States Senate in 1906, serving from March 4, 1907 to March 3, 1913; fathered the Sixteenth Amendment which legalized the federal income tax, introducing the resolution to send the amendment to the states for ratification in 1909, the measure becoming law in February, 1913; failed to win renomination for the Senate in 1912, but was delegate at large to the Republican National Convention at Chicago in 1908; moved to Omaha in 1912 to continue the practice of law as a member of the firm of Brown, Crossman, West, Barton & Fitch; married February 5, 1927 to Ann L. Howland who died December 24, 1939; believed to be the last remaining member of the Sixtieth Congress and the class of 1883 at the State University of Iowa; was a Congregationalist, a Mason, and member of the Omaha, Commercial, County, Palimpsest and University Clubs.

LEE MCNEELY, retired district court clerk, former newspaperman, secretary to several notable congressmen, frontier merchant, real estate representative and postmaster, died March 12, 1960 at Milwaukee, Wisconsin; born in Beaver, Pennsylvania August 21, 1876, the son of Thomas McKean and Mary Busbey McNeely, moved with his family to Washington, D.C., in 1878; attended Eastern High School in that city and at 18

was Washington correspondent for the *Philadelphia Times* and several midwest newspapers; came to Dubuque, Iowa in 1897 as private secretary to Col. David B. Henderson, congressman from the Third Iowa District, also serving as assistant clerk to the Judiciary committee, 1897-1899; was speaker's clerk during Henderson's two terms as Speaker of the House, 1899-1903, continued in that capacity under Speaker Uncle Joseph Cannon, 1903-05, taking on the same duties for Benjamin P. Birdsall, who succeeded Col. Henderson, and for Congressman Wiley of New Jersey; served as secretary to Iowa's Senator William B. Allison from 1905 till the latter's death in 1908; married at Dubuque May 4, 1910 to Marian Kent Hurd, a recognized author and poetess, who was fatally injured in a traffic accident December 18, 1930; took up homesteading in Tripp County, South Dakota in 1908, became a small town merchant, developed real estate interests working for a land company, edited the Winner, *South Dakota Journal*, and was postmaster at McNeely; named a stenographer for the chairman of the Republican national committee in New York during the presidential campaign of William H. Taft, and was appointed clerk of the United States District Court for the Northern District of Iowa by Judge Henry T. Reed in November, 1912, beginning his duties and forty-five years in this position on December 12th; served as food administrator and member of Liberty Bond drives during World War I; came to be greatly admired and respected for his integrity, efficiency and helpfulness, and was honored by a special session of his court on the fortieth anniversary of his clerkship, December 13, 1952, attended by a number of judges and federal officials and over one hundred attorneys of the district; enjoyed horticulture before and after his retirement in 1957; was a past president of the National Association of Federal Court Clerks, the Dubuque Humane Society, a life member of El Kahir Shrine, and was active in the Elks, Masons, York Rite and Knights Templar; a daughter, Mrs. Carol Willis, died recently, but is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Barbara Lee Mueller, Madison, Wisconsin, Mrs. Silvia Rodenbach, Columbus, Ohio, and a son, Lee McNeely, Jr., Boston, New York.

RUSSELL A. PATRICK, farmer, cattle feeder and former state representative, died October 5, 1959 at Hawarden, Iowa; born on a farm near Hawarden December 6, 1899, the son of J. A. and Ima Hastings Patrick; graduated from the local high school, attended the University of Minnesota, and was an outstanding athlete in his youth; was a veteran of World War I; married Stella McAninch in 1922, who preceded him in death; became a farm owner and engaged in extensive farm and cattle feed-

ing operations the remainder of his life; participated in community affairs, serving as treasurer of the school board and township assessor for many years; was active in the rural electrification administration, being secretary of the Sioux Electric Cooperative association since its organization; a firm believer in local self-government, was successful Republican candidate for representative in the state legislature in 1946 and re-elected four consecutive terms, serving as chairman of the house appropriations committee, in addition to sitting on a number of other important committees; cited by the press and radio as the outstanding member of the house of representatives during the 1955 session for "his vigor, courage and desire to do the right thing despite his poor health"; retired from public life that year; was a past master of the Masonic lodge, a past noble grand of the Odd Fellows lodge, member of the American Legion, and belonged to the Methodist church; married Bernita Conway of Garner in 1953; survived by his wife and four of five children: Mrs. Charles Bickett, Akron, Ohio; Mrs. Jerry Skogman, Hawarden; Ronald Patrick, a student at Iowa State University; and Jon Patrick, Glenwood, Iowa.

WALTER H. BEAM, long-time state official, farmer, businessman and community leader, died at his home in Martensdale, Iowa January 3, 1960; born on a farm in Warren County, Illinois, September 4, 1875, the son of Orlando John and Emma Adelaide (Lofftus) Beam; went to country school for about two years, moved with his family to Avon, Illinois, and then five years later to Abingdon, Illinois, attending the North Abingdon high school two years, graduating at sixteen; worked as a printer for the local Abingdon paper while in high school and the old Hedding college there, 1892-3; also took a year at Illinois State Normal University at Normal, Illinois and began teaching in Illinois; came to Iowa and with his sister, Grace, helped to buy the family farm near the present town of Martensdale, teaching two winters at Middle Valley, one at Social Plains and one at Reddish, but rented the farm and returned to teach two more years in Illinois where the salaries were higher, before returning to Iowa to farm; took some three months work in the commercial department at Simpson College in Indianola and in 1903 helped to organize the Wick Field Association which conducted the forerunner of today's widely publicized state and national plowing matches; married to Katie Ruth Darling at Bedford, Iowa, December 28, 1910; resided in Indianola three years following his election as Warren County auditor in 1908, serving four years; began 27 years on the county board of education in 1913, giving much

time to the selection of text books for the county schools; also accepted appointment as file clerk of the state senate at the beginning of 1913, an association with the state legislature that lasted almost 44 years, missing only two sessions; founded the town of Martensdale in the spring of 1913 and organized a town site company together with John F. Martens, L. E. Hiatt and William Buxton, became manager of the townsite, built the first house, and on July 23 began buying wheat, continuing in the grain and coal business there for ten years, also operating a service station for three years; later became engrossing clerk of the senate, assistant secretary in 1935 and was secretary several sessions, becoming recognized as an authority on legislative proceedings; disposed of his business and moved to Des Moines as assistant editor of the Iowa Code to work on its revision in 1923-24, helped in the preparation of every subsequent code through 1952 except for the one in 1950, and as auditor of state printing under the comptroller, handled the same work on succeeding session laws through 1957; resided a short time in Indianola and then moved back to Martensdale in November 1927; purchased a small hand press about 1948 and obtained much satisfaction from doing small local printing jobs, also personally hand-setting and printing in 1952 a small volume of his recollections, experiences and favorite quotations, *Real and Personal*; had been secretary of the Iowa Pioneer Lawmakers Association, 1953-59 and was long active in the Methodist Church in Indianola and Martensdale; survived by his wife and four sons: Charles Louis and George J. of Indianola, Burl Byron, Martensdale and Max Willis, Boston, Massachusetts.

ANNA HERKNER, pioneer social worker and child labor reformer, died in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania December 2, 1959; born at Cedar Rapids, Iowa in 1878, the daughter of Antony and Mary Herkner, who were both born in Bohemia; attended the public schools and received a bachelor of arts degree in sociology and languages at the University of California; began social work in Baltimore, Maryland in 1906, starting the Ann Street Settlement; helped Polish and Bohemian immigrants to master the English language at night school, took them to lectures and public exhibits, was also identified with the Austrian immigrant home, helping newly arrived immigrants at the port in many ways; became the subject of considerable favorable comment for her unusual ability in this field; spoke German, Polish, Russian and Croatian, and made a study of conditions in several foreign countries, especially in Russia; her influence helped bring about the enactment of Maryland's child labor laws, prior to her appointment in 1912 as assistant to Frank A. White, the

new chief of Maryland's bureau of industrial statistics and information, her duties including factory inspection and enforcement of the new child labor laws; made three trips to Russia, disguising herself as an immigrant in the steerage of the vessel on at least one trip, to gather information for the federal immigration commission; her reports are credited with furthering federal legislation regulating the steamship companies' handling of immigrants; did social work in New York from 1916 till 1922, then went to Russia as field director of the American Service Committee during the severe famine in that country; only survivor is a niece, Ann Jelinek of Philadelphia.

JUNIUS G. LUCAS, longtime newspaperman and former state senator, died January 31, 1960 at Iowa Methodist hospital in Des Moines, Iowa; born January 8, 1879 on a farm southwest of Luther, the son of Corydon L. and Nancy Sturdevant Lucas, pioneer Boone County residents; later moved with his family to Madrid, attending grade school there and graduated from the high school in 1895; finished a two-year business course at Palmer College in Le Grand in 1899, learned the printing trade on the Madrid newspaper conducted by his brother, John W., and remained with him for two more years on another paper at Platte City, Missouri; worked as a reporter on the Leavenworth *Times* for about a year, and was also with the Kansas City *Star* for a short time before returning to Madrid to farm for reasons of health; married at Madrid December 15, 1904 to Maude Halsey, who died in 1953; became associated with the *Madrid Register-News* in 1899 and purchased it from J. A. Silford in 1904, beginning a half century of editing and publishing this paper; formed the Western Printing and Lithographing Company in 1910, which with the assistance of two sons, Max L. and Robert L. and son-in-law, Jack A. White, was operated as a family institution in conjunction with the newspaper, specializing in the printing and manufacture of bank and creamery office supplies; became active in civic affairs as a member of the Madrid school board for 12 years, was a member of the board of trustees of the Boone County Hospital, helped reorganize the city government as a member of the city council, was a 4-minute man during World War I, being active in drives, the defense council, and was coal commissioner of the Eighth Congressional District; was past president of the Iowa Press Association, receiving its Master Editor Award in 1938; became active in politics, serving several terms as chairman of the Boone County Republican central committee; served as state senator from Boone and Story Counties from 1944 to 1948, and again from 1952 to 1956; sold the

Register-News to William Wilcox of Adel in 1958; was director of the Farmers Savings Bank, the G. W. York Company, the Red Ball Company, City State Bank in Madrid, member of Grant Club in Des Moines, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, charter member of the Madrid Lions club, and 50-year member and past master of the Masonic lodge; served as Sunday School superintendent and member of the board of the Congregational Christian Church for many years; survived by two daughters, Mrs. Kathryn E. White, Mrs. Lillian R. White, and one son, Robert L. Lucas, all of Madrid; Max L. Lucas, his oldest son, died in 1947.

CLARK WOOD, retired country newspaper editor, died at Vancouver, Washington January 5, 1960; born in Monona County, Iowa June 7, 1869, and came west with his parents by mule train in 1871; went to work as a printer's devil on the *Western Leader* at the age of 13, worked as a reporter and city editor of the *Pendleton East Oregonian*, and was on the staff of the *La Grande Chronicle* before buying the *Leader* in 1896; published it for 51 years before it was merged with the *Milton Eagle* in 1946; wrote, set in type, and printed much of the paper himself; his pithy editorial paragraphs came to be quoted all over the world, especially in the *Literary Digest* and on motion picture screens, few realizing the widely publicized *Leader* was a weekly, one-man operation in the small town of Weston; retired in 1950; had never married and is survived by a cousin, Mrs. Charles W. Myers of Portland.

STANLEY WATTS, funeral director, farm owner and former state legislator, died at Chariton, Iowa, November 20, 1959; born at Kilbourne, Iowa, January 3, 1894, the son of Amos and Anna Watts; attended country school in Van Buren County, graduated from the Birmingham high school in 1912, and studied at Iowa Wesleyan College, the State University of Iowa, Iowa State Teachers College and the Williams Institute of Embalming; taught school five years, working in chautauqua shows during the summer; served in France during World War I as a member of Hospital Unit R from August 8, 1917 to March 12, 1919; married to Fannie Eide of Des Moines at Fairfield December 15, 1917; went into business at Birmingham around 1921, serving four years as mayor; elected state representative from Van Buren County on the Democratic ticket, 1931-1932; removed to Murray, Iowa around 1934, operating a funeral and furniture business in Murray, Lorimor and Macksburg; became active in civic affairs and Clarke County Democratic circles, acquired farm interests in Clarke County, specializing in the breeding of Corriedale sheep; took a partner in the operation of his business which became Watts-Soll

Furniture store and funeral home; returned to the state legislature in 1956 as the representative from Clarke County, and after apparently winning re-election in November 1958, lost his seat on a contested vote soon after the legislature convened in 1959; was past president of the Iowa Pure Bred Sheep association and secretary of the Iowa Corriedale association; held the French medal of honor, was American Legion post commander, member of the Methodist Church, Masons, Eastern Star and Lions Club; survived by his wife, a daughter, Mrs. Virginia Miller of Waterloo, and a son, David Watts of New York City.

ROBERT B. CARSON, attorney and former state legislator, was fatally injured in an automobile accident near Bondurant, Iowa March 10, 1960; born March 30, 1920 at Moulton, Iowa, the son of D. Craig and Mae (Black) Carson; graduated from the Moulton high school in 1937; served over three years in the army during World War II, and was stationed in the Central Pacific 34 months; received a B.A. degree from Parsons College at Fairfield in 1947; married to Shirley Delores Sinn of Independence that year, both obtaining their law degrees from the Drake University law school in 1950; began the practice of law at Independence in February 1950; was Buchanan County attorney three terms, 1950-54, and was a charter member and one of the first directors of the National Association of County and Prosecuting Attorneys, 1952-53; served as finance chairman and chairman of the Buchanan County Republican central committee; elected to the state legislature in 1954, appointed to the agriculture, appropriations, bank, highways, insurance and judiciary committees, and following his re-election in 1956, was chosen Republican majority leader in the House; did not seek re-election to the 58th General Assembly; traveled abroad during the summer of 1957 and fall of 1959; had been actively campaigning for the Republican nomination for governor of Iowa since January, William O'Connell having become an associate of the family law firm; was president of the Buchanan County Bar Association, member of the Iowa State Bar Association, past president of the Independence Rotary Club, and a trustee of the Iowa United Fund organization; became council member-at-large of the Wapsipinicon area council of the Boy Scouts in 1953, recently was named county chairman of the Crusade for Freedom, and was also an active member of the Masons, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Elks Club, and a trustee of the First Presbyterian Church; survived by his wife.

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