

Iowa's Notable Dead . . .

FRANK CHAPMAN PELLETT, naturalist, apiarist, lawyer and author, died at Atlantic, Iowa, April 28, 1951; born on a farm near Atlantic, July 12, 1879; the son of Ambrose and Ellen Chapman Pellett; attended rural and Atlantic schools; read law in the office of S. H. Rudolph there; married Ada E. Neff of Atlantic, April 8, 1902; operated a fruit farm from 1902 to 1904 near Salem, Missouri, and practiced law there two years after being admitted to the Missouri bar in 1905; returned to farm in 1907; appointed first state apiarist of Iowa serving from 1912 to 1917; established a laboratory at Atlantic for the study of biological problems; author of numerous books on beekeeping, honey plants, birds and flowers of the wild, horticulture and other nature subjects; was managing editor of the *American Bee Journal* at Hamilton, Illinois, from 1918 to 1924, and since has been field editor of the publication; studies at his official substation of the Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station resulted in the development of Pellett clover and other new plants, new uses for native plants as sources for essential oils used in medicines, soaps and flavorings, and the importance to agriculture of American honey plants, bee culture and pollination; maintained for nearly forty years a natural wooded tract in connection with his experiment station as a wild flower preserve affording habitat for Iowa birds, plants and flowers growing in their native wild state; an honorary vice president of the Apis club of England, honorary member of the Bee Kingdom of Cairo, Egypt, and in 1947 received the Skelly award for achievement in agriculture, honorary member of Tri Betas of Carthage college, the Hamilton, Ill., Kiwanis club, the Atlantic Rotary club and the Atlantic Garden club; a member of the Iowa Academy of Sciences, American Association Econ. Entomologists, a fellow of the A.A.A.S., a Methodist, an Odd Fellow and a Republican; survived by his widow, three sons and a daughter.

GILBERT L. HOUSER, educator and author, professor emeritis, department of zoology and specialty in comparative neurology, a State University of Iowa faculty member since 1892, died at Iowa City, Iowa, July 16, 1951, a few hours after completing funeral arrangements for his wife, Hattie, who passed away only thirteen hours previously, the coroner ruling Dr. Houser's death a heart attack; a brother-in-law, O. N. Riggs, stating that Dr. Houser had told him at one time, "I wouldn't care to live if Hattie ever died"; born in a log cabin on a farm in Lee county, Iowa, July 9, 1866; son of David L. and Malvina Houser, homesteaders in Lee county following the Civil war; attended the rural schools and three smaller schools before the Uni-

versity of Iowa, Whittier college, Salem, Iowa, no longer in existence, Howes academy and Iowa Wesleyan college, Mt. Pleasant; received a bachelor of science degree from S.U.I. in 1891, and a master's degree in biological science in 1892, joining the faculty the same year as an instructor in natural diseases; became an assistant professor in animal biology in 1895 and two years later named head of the department of zoology; included as a member of a university expedition to the Bahama islands in 1893, to collect specimens and study deep sea life; received a Ph.D. degree in zoology in 1901 from Johns Hopkins university; retired from State University faculty in 1914, but since did part-time teaching as late as this year; a member of the American Association for the advancement of Sciences, past president of the Iowa Academy of Sciences, member of the American Society of Naturalists and the American Society of Zoologists and author of many articles on zoology; married Hattie Riggs of Iowa City, June 21, 1899, and celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary two years ago; survivors are five sons, Arthur of Woodriver, Ill.; Harold of Chicago, Ill.; Paul of Sioux Falls, S. Dak.; Ralph in the Marines, San Diego, Calif., and Mark of New Haven, Conn., and ten grandchildren; a double funeral service was held, with joint burial.

ROSCOE P. THOMA, lawyer, died at Rochester, Minnesota, June 6, 1951; born in Fairfield, Iowa, also his late residence, on October 8, 1885, son of the late Louis and Antoinette Petzinger Thoma, formerly of Atchison, Kansas, and spent his entire life in Fairfield; a graduate of the Fairfield high school and graduated from Parsons college in 1906; attended the State University of Iowa, and graduated from the Harvard law school in 1910, and admitted to the bar the same year, when with his brother, Leo D. Thoma, established the law firm of Thoma & Thoma, continuing in same until his death; married to Mary Rice of Salina, Kansas, October 22, 1913, who survives with one daughter, Mrs. John Ingmundson, Detroit, Michigan, and two brothers, Leo and C. I. Thoma, also his step-mother, Mrs. Hattie Thoma, all of Fairfield; in 1940 served as special assistant attorney general and a year later was a member of an advisory committee for the supreme court of Iowa which assisted the court in preparation of new rules in civil procedure; was president of the Iowa bar association in 1940-41; long prominent in Iowa legal circles and active in the Republican party, being chairman of the Jefferson county central committee for several years up to his death; served in 1940 as a delegate from Iowa to the national Republican convention; currently a member of the ways and means committee of the Iowa bar association, also a member of the house of delegates for the American bar association, and a member of the Iowa board of law examiners; elected in 1938, as a member of the Parsons college board of trustees and continued as such until his death, also serving as a member of the executive committee of the board; a past president of the Fairfield chamber of

commerce; a member of the Masonic bodies, the Elks and the Presbyterian church.

JUSTIN R. BARRY, publisher and legislator, died at Cherokee, Iowa, July 15, 1951; born at La Motte, Iowa, January 20, 1873; son of Mr. and Mrs. James Nicholas Barry, the father a native of New York, and the mother from Pennsylvania; educated in the public schools, and for more than twenty years was editor and publisher of the *Walker News*; elected from Linn county as state representative in 1912 and served for two terms in 1913 and 1915; sold his paper at Walker and removed to Cherokee later in 1915, beginning the publication of the *Cherokee Times*, a semi-weekly newspaper, in partnership with his brother, Charles Barry, who died in 1928, at which time the *Times* was merged with the *Cherokee Chief*, and the *Cherokee Daily Times* founded with Mr. Barry as president of the publishing company and editor, and continuing as such until his death; a prominent figure in civic activities; a crusader in highway improvement campaigns and prominent in state politics; president of the U.S. Highway 59 association since its founding in 1834, and one of the founders of the Chicago-Black Hills highway (Iowa No. 3) program; a charter member of the Cherokee Rotary club and its president in 1921; active in the Chamber of Commerce and its president in 1926-29; a Mason, a Methodist and a Republican; married Adelaide L. Haight of Cedar Rapids in May 1904, who survives, as do also a brother, Arthur J. of Cedar Rapids, and a sister, Mrs. Ella Booth of Davenport; recognized by the Iowa Press association by its Master Editor-Publisher citation, and honored by Sigma Delta Chi, national professional journalism fraternity, the last award coming within a few months of his demise, though his last years had been saddened by the tragic death of a son two years ago in an automobile accident at Cherokee.

JAMES NORMAN HALL, author, aerial war ace and escapist, Iowa-born teller of South Sea tales, long a resident of Tahiti, having fled western civilization following World war I, died at Papeete, Tahiti, July 9, 1951; born at Colfax, Jasper county, Iowa, April 22, 1887, son of Arthur Wright and Ella Annette (Young) Hall; educated in the public schools of Colfax and Grinnell college, was graduated from latter with Ph.B. degree in 1910; spent four years in social work in Boston, Massachusetts; then traveled steerage to England for a bicycle trip; shortly after arriving in Britain in August, 1914, joined the British army, later becoming a flying ace in the Escadrille, and was Eddie Rickenbacker's aerial instructor; was a German prisoner for a short time; author of "Kitchener's Mob"; a war buddy of Charles Bernard Nordhoff, later gaining fame as co-authors of "Mutiny on the Bounty," "The Hurricane," and many other stories of the far islands; although neither cared much for the modern world, their books and the screen versions of them became very much a part of it; sailed to Tahiti in

1920 in company with Nordhoff, after having written magazine articles while at the war front; married Sarah Winchester, an English girl in 1925, and first settled at Arue, an island near Papeete; attended the fortieth reunion of his Grinnell college class in 1950, and visited friends and relatives, including his brother, Fred Hall, who resides at the old Hall home in Colfax; survived by his wife, two children, Mrs. Nicholas Rutgers, Honolulu, Hawaii, and Conrad, Hollywood, California, two sisters, Mrs. J. Clark Graham, Yankton, South Dakota, and Mrs. E. J. Forsyth, Fargo, N. D., and the brother.

CHARLES RUBEN KEYES, educator and archaeologist, died at Mount Vernon Iowa, July 23, 1951; born May 5, 1871, in the same city where much of his life was spent, the son of Marsden and Martha (Whittington) Keyes, pioneer residents of that area; was graduated from the Mount Vernon high school in 1888; enrolled the following year in the Cornell academy and later in Cornell college, but taught in the spring of 1891 in the Norway, Iowa, school; returned to Cornell college, from which he was graduated in 1894, and served as principal of the Blainstown schools the following three years; entered the Graduate School of Harvard university in 1897, received his master's degree in 1898 and completed his residence work for a doctorate; given a Ph.D. degree in 1923; following a summer of study in Germany in 1900, became instructor of German in the University of California, at Berkeley, where he remained three years until his return to Cornell college, and his residence in Mount Vernon has since been continuous with exception of a year's study at the University of Munich and Berlin in 1912-13; for thirty-eight years, until his retirement in 1941, Dr. Keyes taught the German language and German literature at his Alma Mater, Cornell college; married Sarah Naumann August 5, 1902, who survives, and two daughters, Mrs. Phillip L. Miller, New York City, and Miss Margaret N. Keyes, Mount Vernon; in early boyhood developed interest in archaeology and ornithology, in 1922 was appointed director of the Iowa State Archaeological Survey, and after completing this work gave lectures at Cornell and the State University of Iowa.

OSCAR JOHN BENJAMIN, newspaper publisher, died at Nevada, Iowa, May 5, 1951; born at Peoria, Illinois, July 26, 1869, a son of Jedediah and Julia Maria Tyrel Benjamin; attended schools of Peoria county, graduated from Princeville high school and attended Princeville academy for several semesters, but entered the office of the *Princeville Telephone* to learn the printing business, to which he largely devoted his life; aspiring to the daily newspaper field he was employed by several daily papers in the middlewest; came to Nevada in December 1894, and on April 5, 1895, with his brother, G. A. Benjamin and J. K. Laycock, founded the *Nevada Journal*, with which he continued until his death, a period of over 56 years, with exception

of a few months on the *Des Moines Register*; married Carrie Elliott, of Nevada, December 19, 1900; became active in numerous local enterprises connected with community development; expanded the newspaper property into a semi-weekly and later a daily publication; became the dean of Iowa newspaper publishers, and active in the Iowa Daily Press association and the Inland Daily Press association; a charter member of the Nevada Rotary club and the Nevada Community club; the partnership with his brother dissolved September 1, 1945, G. A. Benjamin selling his interest to Clayton F. Hanson, who had been on the staff as business manager for 20 years, who since has continued as a business associate; survived by his widow and brother and several nephews and nieces.

EVERETT LLOYD STEWART, farmer and legislator, died June 23, 1951, at his home on the farm where he was born four miles northeast of Washington, Iowa, February 9, 1885, a son of W. Allen and Margaret (McLaughlin) Stewart; graduated from the Washington academy in 1902, attended Monmouth (Ill.) college two years and in 1909 was graduated from the agricultural department of Iowa State college; married Jessie Mae White of Des Moines, March 15, 1913, who with four daughters survive; attained success as a farmer and stock breeder; became president of the county farm bureau and the co-operative shipping organization; served many years as president of the school board and a leader in the 4-H club work; for twenty-four years was an elder in the United Presbyterian church and a trustee at the time of his death; also a member of the county board of education from date of its organization until his death; served as Washington county's member of the Iowa House of Representatives from 1935 to 1943; a brain tumor occasioning surgery at the Iowa City state hospital, he was apparently making recovery at his home when he suffered a relapse.

RALPH JAMES LEYSEN, newspaper editor, died at Davenport, Iowa, May 28, 1951; born at Muscatine, Iowa, June 23, 1888; son of Jacob P. and Jane Cassidy Leysen; attended the Muscatine public schools and began his newspaper work in 1905, on the *Muscatine Journal*; advanced through various newspaper positions and came to Davenport as managing editor of the *Times* in 1922; married Ann Gault-Witcher in Des Moines, December 1, 1934; member of the Davenport public library board and various clubs and civic associations in which he had been active; vice president of the *Times* company and prominent in state and national newspaper circles; appointed by Governor Beardsley as a member of the Mississippi River Parkway board and actively supported inland waterways transportation, including development of the barge traffic on the Mississippi; survived by the widow and one daughter, Mrs. Walter D. Stockley, wife of an editor of *Time Magazine*, residing in Wilton, Conn.; also a grand-daughter, a sister and a brother.

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