

Col. A. J. Boe, chaplain in the U. S. Army, and a sister, Mrs. A. M. Sattre of Moorhead, Minnesota, also mourn his passing.

C. A. Mellby, Northfield, Minn.

WILLBUR A. REASER, Portrait Artist

The passing of Willbur Aaron Reaser was almost unnoticed in Iowa, where he made his start for a notable career as an artist, because he was of a generation of long ago. He was 82 years old. He was a self-made and self-educated artist who rose high in his profession, and his work will be admired by many yet unborn.

The State of Iowa has in the portrait gallery of famous Iowa men, a part of the State Department of History and Archives, four admirable productions from the brush of Mr. Reaser.

A very large and striking portrait of the late Henry Wallace, the founder of Wallace's Farmer, famous in advancement of agriculture; father of Henry C. Wallace, secretary of agriculture, and grandfather of Henry A. Wallace, also secretary of agriculture, and vice president of the United States.

Portrait of James Wilson, first secretary of agriculture from Iowa; famous as a writer on agricultural topics; prominent in founding and development of the State college at Ames.

Portrait of Rev. William Seeley Lewis, bishop of the Methodist church and founder of Morningside College.

Portrait of James Depew Edmundson, who provided in his will for the building of the Edmundson Museum of Art in Des Moines; notable for his charities.

These are all fine specimens of the good work of Mr. Reaser. Late in 1939 Mr. Reaser gave an exhibition of his work in Des Moines, including a number of portraits of Iowa people, and for this he also had the Edmundson and other portraits on loan from the Department. Mr. Reaser had been called "the official portrait painter of Des Moines" because of his work in the capital city. In

a letter to the present curator telling of his Des Moines exhibition of the Edmundson portrait, Mr. Reaser wrote:

"It might give you pleasure to know that I have never had such public appreciation of any portrait that I ever painted as I did for the one of my dear old friend Edmundson. I believe it was viewed by 5,000 people."

Mr. Reaser had long taken great interest in the Iowa portrait collection, to which he contributed so much, and on his last visit, about two years before his death, he said:

"I want to say to you that in my opinion there are very few collections of portraits of eminent men concerned in the history of their state the equal of this one in Iowa; in fact, I know of but one or two that are better. Iowa is fortunate in having this splendid portrait gallery. It could not be reproduced at any cost."

Mr. Reaser was the first artist employed by William Randolph Hearst about the year 1880, and for several years he was in the service of the San Francisco Examiner. He painted portraits for the Municipal museum in Minneapolis. His portrait of William B. Allison hangs in the corridor of the national capitol at Washington. He painted a fine portrait of Jonathan P. Dolliver from life. What is perhaps his best-known work, "Mother and Daughter" is in Carnegie Hall.

While Mr. Reaser started in a most humble way in Fort Dodge, Iowa, where he came with his parents when he was five years old, he studied in the Academie Julien and the Academie Calarollssi, in Paris, and elsewhere. He was awarded bronze and silver medals at the art exposition in San Francisco in 1894, and he was given prize recognition by the National Academy of Design in New York in 1896.

It seems proper to conclude this brief story of the life of an Iowa painter, who was of the old school, who followed the century old traditions of art, who always sought to elevate and inspire by his work, with the following newspaper story sent from Washington and

published in the Des Moines Register and Leader, June 3, 1905:

An Iowa artist, who has for several years been attracting attention in the East and who is beginning to win a favorable reputation in this city (Washington, D. C.), has been in Washington this week. The young man is W. A. Reaser, who as a flaxen-haired boy played on the streets of Fort Dodge. Mr. Reaser has risen in art solely through his own native talent and industry and in a quietly picturesque way has had a remarkable career.

He was born in Fort Dodge, went to school there, married a young schoolmate and in some way, although he was poor, scraped together enough money to pursue art studies abroad. He had early in life developed a talent for drawing and sketching and he took up the art of the painter with great enthusiasm. Just how he managed to live in Paris would make an interesting story. At any rate, he and his devoted wife lodged in the most humble sort of rooms and eked out the most economical sort of existence. After several years in Paris, Mr. Reaser went to Holland and studied with great energy and persistence there.

He finally returned to this country and his old-time friends found he had developed into a painter of portraits and scenes of unusual ability and, moreover, that he had acquired a thorough knowledge of art, its history and all that pertains to it. For several years, Mr. Reaser has been lecturing before art clubs, women's clubs and other organizations interested in art. He has attracted the most favorable notice everywhere. He appeared in Des Moines, among other places, and he was received there by art lovers with great enthusiasm. His attention, however, has been directed to portrait painting.

He is rapidly coming into great prominence in this and within the last year, he has painted portraits for many persons in Washington prominent in public life. Senator Scott of West Virginia is one of these. He has also painted a portrait of Senator William B. Allison, of George E. Roberts, and many others that might be named. One of his most lifelike works is a portrait of Father Dolliver. He is now engaged in painting a portrait of Senator J. P. Dolliver.

Mr. Reaser has reached a point where he receives adequate compensation for his work. For one portrait recently, he received \$2,500. He and his family lived during a large part of the year in a charming residence on the Hudson about forty miles above New York. While in Washington this week he has been visiting with his brother, the Rev. George Reaser, who was also formerly of Fort Dodge until his parents moved to California.

It should be mentioned that Mr. Reaser's fine portrait of the late Senator Dolliver is in the keeping of the State Department of History and Archives. Mr. Reaser stated that he was never compensated for his great portrait of

James Wilson, now in the portrait gallery in the State Historical building and that it was stolen from his rooms and finally found its way to Iowa.

O. W.

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER, Mystic Scientist

It is with some reluctance that I, with a considerable scientific background, as well as some religious experience, open up my heart and mind to the general public to bare the tender, intimate, secret impressions I have of George Washington Carver, through my very close association with him while we were obtaining our Bachelors and Masters Degrees in Agriculture in the same group at Iowa State College. This reluctance on my part springs from my fear that my scientific contemporaries, who may not also have been close students of the Bible, and who have not been deeply consecrated to the service of the church, and through the church to their fellow men, will secretly, if not openly, deny the existence of supernatural forces that I want to discuss. I want to present this very humbly, knowing that many outstanding people of the scientific world will brand me as an unorthodox scientist, and there will be not a few religionists who will also brand me as an unorthodox Christian. I refuse to allow myself to be bound by man-made creeds in either science or religion.

Few white men, I believe, knew George Washington Carver as well as I did. We were students together in classes that were small, where the individuality of each member of the class had opportunity to make full contact with the individualities of other members of the class; and outside the classroom we studied and played and prayed together. I ate with him and I slept in the same bed with him. We exchanged confidences as young men who are sincere friends often do. Until I saw him I had scarcely ever seen a colored man. I had no impressions, no prejudices, to overcome, and I simply accepted him as

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