

John Joseph Seerley

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M. Sc. in 1889, and of D. Sc. in 1925. He also received from Washington University, Saint Louis, the degree of Ph. D. in 1898. He was a private assistant to Dr W. G Farlow of Harvard University in 1885 and 1886, and was an assistant to Dr. Trelease in the Shaw School of Botany at Saint Louis from 1886 to 1889. After doing special work for the United States Department of Agriculture, Division of Forestry, in 1889, he that year removed to Ames and became professor of botany in Iowa State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, which position he held until 1929. He was president of the Iowa Academy of Science in 1893 and again in 1923, was president of Iowa Park and Forestry Association from 1905 to 1907, and was president of the Iowa Board of Conservation from its organization in 1918 to 1927. He was the author of "Weeds of the Farm and Garden," 1910; "Manual of Poisonous Plants," 1910; "Ecology"; "Weed Flora of Iowa," and had recently finished reading the proof of an 800-page book on "Honey Plants of Iowa." Besides these he was the author of a very large number of pamphlets, bulletins, etc., and numberless articles in newspapers and magazines mainly on scientific subjects, principally botanical. His contributions to the ANNALS OF IOWA were noteworthy, especially "Buffalo in Iowa" and "The Arbor Day, Park and Conservation Movement in Iowa" articles. During the last fifteen years thousands of Iowa people have listened to him talk on nature study and conservation. As an advocate of conservation and park establishment in Iowa, he, perhaps, became more widely known than any of the small group of men and women who led the movement. His influence as a teacher, lecturer and writer extended far beyond the borders of his adopted state. He was a devout member of the Episcopal church.

JOHN JOSEPH SEERLEY was born near Toulon, Stark County, Illinois, March 13, 1852, and died in Saint Petersburg, Florida, February 23, 1931. Burial was in Aspen Grove Cemetery, Burlington, Iowa. His parents, Thomas and Louisa Ann (Smith) Seerley, removed with their family to a farm near South English, Keokuk County, Iowa, in 1854. Homer H. Seerley, later president of Iowa State Teachers College, was an older brother. John Joseph attended public school, was graduated from the Liberal Arts Department of the State University of Iowa in 1875, was principal of the Iowa City High School in 1876, was graduated from the Law Department of the University in 1877, and began the practice the same year in Burlington. For several years he practiced alone, but later C. C. Clark joined with him as Seerley & Clark, and later the firm became Seerley, Clark & Hale. Mr. Seerley was city solicitor of Burlington in 1885-90, and again in 1893-95. He was the Democratic candidate for Congress from the First District three times, in 1888, 1890 and 1892, running against John H. Gear each time. He was successful in 1890 and served in the Fifty-third Congress. He was held in high esteem in Burlington, was president of the Merchants Life Association, a director of the National State Bank, president of the Burlington Hospital, and was owner of several farm properties.

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