

Abraham Benjamin Funk

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NOTABLE DEATHS

ABRAHAM BENJAMIN FUNK, born January 12, 1854, died May 3, 1940. He was the son of Rev. Solomon and Jane Walby Funk and he began life in a village in Adams County, Illinois. After a long and useful career as a public servant he passed away suddenly in Des Moines and was buried at Spirit Lake, his home during most of his lifetime. He had not been active for his last year and was returning from spending the winter in California when he was stricken while visiting in Des Moines. With his parents he removed when 11 years old to near Homer, in Hamilton county, Iowa, in 1865. He engaged as a printer in Indianola and Estherville, then a part owner and editor of the *Spirit Lake Beacon*. He removed to Flandreau, S. D. where he established the *Enterprise*, and also became first mayor of that territorial town. He returned to Iowa and became editor of the *Beacon*, with which he was connected for many years. He was made first mayor of Spirit Lake and served as postmaster from 1888 four years. He was sent to the state senate from the large district which included Dickinson county and served three terms starting with the Twenty-second General Assembly in 1888. He was president pro tem, and chairman of important committees. He was head of the capitol improvement commission which overhauled the state capitol and completed work left undone. He was then drafted to be member of the state board of education in charge of the colleges and university and had a large part in advancing the cause of higher education. He resigned when asked to become state industrial commissioner, which position he held for 22 years. He virtually created the department of workmen's compensation and set high precedents for the administration of this work which commanded the confidence of the courts and the support of all persons concerned.

Mr. Funk was married in 1878 to Dena Bergman and surviving them are two daughters and a son—Mrs. George S. Joslin, of Long Beach, Cal.; Mrs. James G. Clark, of Chapel Hill, N. C.; and Ben A. Funk, of Selkirk, Manitoba. Mrs. Funk died in 1912. He was survived by a brother and three sisters also. He married Nettie Sawyer in 1915 and she passed away in 1934.

In a newspaper career of half a lifetime and in public service more than 50 years, Mr. Funk had a large share in the making of Iowa. He was a clear and forceful writer and he carried this quality into the preparation of hundreds of decisions involving claims for industrial accidents. He wrote a delightful biography of his friend and associate in the senate and in business, Fred L. Maytag, of Newton, which was published privately. In his later years he contributed freely to the press out of his abundant store of information as to persons and events. At the time he was stricken he had the completed manuscript of his personal recollections of the Republican national convention of 1884, which he had prepared for

the *Annals of Iowa* on request. He was one of the Iowa delegation to that convention. He was strongly urged for nomination for congress, and received substantial support for the nomination for governor and for the United States senate.

Mr. Funk had been a member of the Masonic order for 65 years. He took delight in the Prairie Club of Des Moines. His religious convictions were well established. He carried through life a steadfast adherence to principles of honor, justice and fairness. In his retirement he took great pleasure in returning to the scene of his life work and most enjoyable achievements on the shores of the northern Iowa lakes.—ORA WILLIAMS.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN SHAMBAUGH, university teacher, administrator, and historian, died in Iowa City, Iowa, April 7, 1940, of cerebral thrombosis. The son of John and Eva Ann Shambaugh, he was born in Elvira, Iowa, January 29, 1871. After an early youth on the farm he entered the State University of Iowa, being graduated with a Ph.B. degree in 1892, and receiving his M.A. degree in history the following year. Two years later he received his Ph.D. degree from the University of Pennsylvania. In later years he studied at intervals in the universities of Halle, Leipzig, and Berlin, Germany. The same year in which he received his Ph. degree he began his forty-five years' association on the faculty of the state university. First as professor, then as head of the newly formed department of Political Science in 1897, Professor Shambaugh established a nationally recognized reputation in that field, as a teacher and an administrator.

With a marked interest in local Iowa history, Professor Shambaugh had been associated with the State Historical Society of Iowa several years before 1907, the date he was named superintendent of the society. In 1903 he was largely responsible for the launching of the *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, and contributed articles and reviews to that journal. With energy and zeal in the years since 1907 he has caused to be produced a wealth of material which has enriched the story of Iowa and the understanding of her peoples, through biographies, monographs, and other special studies, many of which were undertaken at his direct inspiration. In 1920 the society began the publication of the *Palimpsest*, a popularizer of Iowa history.

Distinguished in appearance, cultivated in taste and manner, Professor Shambaugh touched many fields and exhibited many interests, leaving behind numerous traditions in the university he loved so well. Probably none will prove so fruitful, however, as his "Campus Course" inaugurated in 1933, in a protest against over specialization and the resultant ignorance of the cultural forces which have produced and have moulded our society.

Professor Shambaugh is survived by his wife, Mrs. Bertha H. Shambaugh, a brother, and a sister.

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