

## John Briar

ISSN 0003-4827

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### Recommended Citation

"John Briar." *The Annals of Iowa* 29 (1947), 74-74.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0003-4827.7016>

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Maude Stewart of Chicago, and four sons, James W. Stewart, Miami Beach; R. G. Stewart, Mexico, Mo.; Donald Stewart, Havana, and Jack Stewart, Greenwich, Conn. The ashes of the deceased were flown to Cedar Rapids for interment near his birthplace.

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JOHN BRIAR, editor and official, died February 25, 1947, at his home in Wellington Villa, Alexandria, Virginia; born in Mount Pleasant, Westmoreland county, Pennsylvania, December 15, 1861, son of John and Elizabeth Briar; came to Iowa following the close of the Civil war, the family locating at Talleyrand, in Keokuk county; learned the butter making trade at Elwood in Clinton county and in 1882 went to Estline, South Dakota, where he built and operated the first creamery in that state; engaged also in buying and shipping draft horses from Iowa to South Dakota; removed to Des Moines in 1886 and was employed first by the J. W. Hill Nursery company; went with a chum, Vernon C. Reed, to Denver and then to Colorado Springs, where they operated a livery business; selling his half interest in the business to Reed, who later became very wealthy and died about ten years ago reputed to be worth sixty-five million dollars, Briar returned to Iowa in 1890 and started publishing the *Blockton Buzzsaw*, which he afterwards sold and came to Des Moines, becoming publisher of the *Des Moines Graphic*, a sensational Saturday weekly publication with a large street sale, which he edited several years, later becoming a reporter upon the *Iowa State Register*.

For some time Mr. Briar was the Iowa correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune*, but perhaps his most noteworthy newspaper work was upon the *Des Moines Capital* during the years prior to 1902 under the Lafayette Young ownership, becoming city editor and later an editorial writer; a supporter of the candidacies of Albert B. Cummins of Des Moines, for United States senator and then for governor, he became Governor Cummins private secretary from 1902 to 1908, and accompanied the latter to Washington when he was elected United States senator, serving him there as secretary for many years; purchased a tract of land favorable for plating and realized a handsome profit in its sale; became commissioner of War Mineral Relief, Department of Interior, in 1921 and served in that position until 1933.

Mr. Briar was married twice, first in Des Moines to Zoe McPheeters, who died in Des Moines September 6, 1906, prior to his leaving Iowa, they having no children; the second time to Florence Stowe, of Washington, who survives him, with a son, John Briar III, a grandson, John Briar IV, a grand daughter, Suzanne Briar, all of Wellington Villa, and a brother, Roy Briar, of Des Moines.

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