

Standard Form For Members of the Legislature

Name of Representative WITT, Frederick Burton senator \_\_\_\_\_  
Represented Butler County, Iowa

1. Birthday and place 24 July 1884, Grand Forks, N.D.

2. Marriage (s) date place

Laura Carter Mansfield (Ia. 21 July 1884 - 28 Feb. 1935), 10 June 1908, Shell Rock, Ia

3. Significant events for example:

A. Business Lumber, coal and grain dealer; printer, general mdse, grocery

B. Civic responsibilities Knight of Pythias; Mason; Shiner; Eastern Star; Odd Fellows

C. Profession Newspaper work at the Shell Rock News; lumber, coal and grain business; general merchandising; grocer; Operes home owner

4. Church membership Baptist

5. Sessions served 44th GA 1931-32, Butler Co.

6. Public Offices

A. Local ~~VIRKER~~ School Board, County Board of Education

B. State \_\_\_\_\_

C. National \_\_\_\_\_

7. Death 28 February 1934, auto-train collission; at Hubbard, Iowa; bur. Riverside Cem. Shell Rock

8. Children (1) Mansfield (c. 1912 - ); (2) Richard (cx. 1919 - )

9. Names of parents Frank L. Witt (7 Oct. 1860 - 19 March 1921); Vashti Griggs (St. Paul, Minn. 1861-Jan. 1934). father was newspaperman; taught school; theater; owned Shell Rock News 1900-1910; Deputy collector of internal revenue 1905-1913.

Witt, Frederick Burton

10. Education \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. Degrees \_\_\_\_\_  
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12. Other applicable information <sup>Family came from Grand Forks to Shell Rock</sup>  
in 1900. Father was printer. Fred worked for him for a time, then was partner in general  
merchandise that burned; when fire destroyed most of downtown; grocery for time, then  
grocery; in 1912 became partner in retail lumber co, and bought partner out in 1920 and  
operated as Witt Lumber Co.

~~Chair~~ Republican County Central Comm. Past Worshipful Master of Masonic Lodge,  
also Commandery, Shrine, Eastern Star, Chancellor ~~Commander~~ of local Knights of Pythias.  
Wife killed in same accident. Survived by two sons, brother, two aunts, uncle.

*Republican*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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Sources Log For Legislation Entries

Applicability

Source	Non Applicable	Applicable	Information obtained
Shell Rock News, Thur. Mar. 1, 1934		x	death
Shell Rock News, Thur. Mar. 8, 1934		x	funeral, obit
Stork/Clingan, legislators		x	sessions served
House Journal 1935	x		
WPA Cemetery records		x	father, Fred, Laura
1910 Census Butler Co.		x	Fred, Laura, mo-inlaw; bro-inlaw
1920 Census Butler Co.		x	Fred, Laura, Mansfield
1925 Census Butler Co.		x	fam with 2 sons
Butler Co. Hist. (1915)		x	bio of father

- Iowa Official Register 1931-1932, p. 259
- Shell Rock News - Iowa States Under the Bridge 2005, p. 136, 183-184; 217; 256 446
- rootsweb.com (accessed 26 Aug 2009)
- Annals of Iowa - Vol. 13, 3rd Series, 1933-1935, p. 320
- Obituary - Waterloo Daily Courier, Waterloo, Iowa  
Thursday, March 1, 1934, p. 1, col. 6, 7

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# FRED WITT AND WIFE ARE KILLED INSTANTLY

## Meet Death at Rail Crossing in Hubbard.

Entire Town Struck Speechless  
as They Hear Sad News  
of Terrible Accident.

Bodies Brought to Shell Rock Early  
This Morning—Funeral to Be  
Held Saturday at 2 p. m.

Fred B. Witt and his wife, Laura Mansfield Witt, in coming home from Des Moines, where he had been in attendance upon the annual meeting of the Iowa Retail Lumbermen's association, met their death in an accident at the edge of the town of Hubbard, Ia., at 1:37 o'clock yesterday afternoon.

Fred Witt was killed instantly and his wife only lived long enough for a physician to reach her side.

Fred was driving the car, and did not see an oncoming electric railroad car on the Northwestern railroad, at the intersection of Highway No. 65, a car on the Northwestern railroad, at paved road.

Their bodies reached Shell Rock some time last night, both terribly mangled.

As soon as the news was spread to members of the family, W. W. Richards, Mansfield Witt, C. R. Thompson and Harvey Carter started for Hubbard by way of Hampton, where Carl Mansfield, now located at Coulter, a brother of Mrs. Witt, met them on their way to Hubbard.

Particulars of the accident came to the mayor of Shell Rock, A. D. Scougal, from Coroner W. L. Man of Hardin county in a telephone message received at the Walter Renning residence at about 6:10 o'clock last evening.

Mansneid, now located at Coulter, a brother of Mrs. Witt, met them on their way to Hubbard.

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The mayor immediately went to the Jim Carter residence, where he broke the sad news to him, who in turn apprised other members of the family.

The coroner stated that the accident occurred at the crossing of the railroad near Hubbard, Mr. Witt's big Buick running full force into an electric car. The crossing is an open one, and for a considerable distance either way a train could be easily seen. However, Shell Rock drivers say that one does not see the railroad until close upon it. Just how the accident occurred will probably never be known.

Words are inadequate to describe the consternation the mayor felt upon listening to the news over the wire. It was the saddest task of his life, as he thought of the sorrow of the two sons and Mrs. Witt's venerable mother, Mrs. Carrie Mansfield, who for all the years of her mature life has been rather a guardian angel of Shell Rock people when afflicted with sorrow or want.

But it was a task that had to be performed quickly and with what wit he could collect in the face of such a sudden and severe blow.

Forest Whitaker, J. A. Whitaker and Donald Whitaker, with two auto ambulance cars, went to Hubbard last night and returned to Shell Rock with the bodies at about 1:30 this morning.

The ill-fated Buick was completely burned.

Another car was only about 300 feet behind the Witt car when the accident happened, driven by a farmer, who stated that the Witt car was traveling between 35 and 40 miles an hour.

It has been stated by some who think they are correct that six people have been killed at this same crossing in the past three years.

**Funeral Will Be Held Saturday.**  
The funeral will be held Saturday afternoon at 2 o'clock from the Fred Witt residence.

**BUSINESS HOUSES TO CLOSE SATURDAY FROM 2 TO 3:15 P. M.**

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## BEST RITES IMPRESSIVE

Funeral of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Witt Draws Mammoth Crowd.

MANY COME FROM AFAR

Beautiful Service of Masonic Order Administered by John T. Ames of Traer.

Baptist Pastor Pays High Tribute to Deceased Couple as Friends and Neighbors.

The funeral ceremonies held last Saturday afternoon over the remains of Mr. and Mrs. Fred B. Witt, who met their death in an automobile accident at Hubbard, Ia., Feb. 28, at 3:37 p. m., were so largely attended that the Baptist church could not contain all who desired admission.

The vastness of the crowd was testimony of the sincere sorrow of all who knew the ill-fated couple. Besides the citizens of Shell Rock cars containing their friends and relatives were here from Clarksville, Athlon, Waverly, Dumont, Bristow, Charles City, Coulter, Parkersburg, Waterloo, Greene, Dumont, Waterloo, Mason City, Cedar Rapids, Fort Dodge, Hampton, Clinton, Cedar Falls, Des Moines, St. Cloud, Minn., Lancaster, Wis., and Chicago.

All Shell Rock business places were closed in respect to the memory of the deceased man and wife.

Intimate friends and representatives of the Masonic order, the Eastern Star, Daughters of the American Revolution, Knights of Pythias and Odd Fellows lent their presence in homage to the deceased couple.

Masons and Eastern Stars formed a procession for the bodies. It was a general outpouring of sympathetic friends and relatives. It was probably the largest funeral ever held in Butler county. No auditorium in the county could have contained the people who



FRED B. WITT



MRS. WITT

"NEXT TO GOD," GIVE ME A FRIEND," Rev. Marc W. Darling

The untimely passing of Fred B. Witt and his wife, Laura Witt, from the realm of life to the veil beyond makes one think by how slender a thread hangs human life at best. The night that the news of their death came to Shell Rock so shocked the community that few could compose themselves for the night's sleep. The blow was stunning to everyone who knew them.

To take from this community one of its best business men and his wife leaves a void that can not be filled, either socially or in a business sense. Both were actively interested in community welfare. Both did their share and more to make this community a desirable one in which to live. Fred was an ideal father, and Laura was an ideal mother. No sacrifice was too burdensome for them to undertake if only their boys' welfare were at stake. As chairman of the Red Cross dispensations in Shell Rock Mrs. Witt was unflagging in her efforts to ameliorate want and destitution.

Fred Witt had been a caller in The News office nearly every day for the more than fourteen years the present proprietor has lived in Shell Rock. This writer came to know Fred perhaps as well as any other living man, except his brother Charlie. His ambitions were all for his family rather than himself. He had no motive apart from his family's welfare. In his business dealings he was honest to the penny, and this was said of him before he died. In financial matters he was the soul of honor. He was truthful. He was kindly and considerate. On the tablets of his mind were catalogued the good traits of his fellows rather than their faults.

Fred Witt will be missed in Shell Rock as no other man has been missed in many years. All his paths were well beaten by the footsteps of integrity.

Fred was a man of scholarly attainments—well and widely read on matters of human interest. He discussed political questions with fair and impartial mind. As a citizen, a lodgeman, as a state legislator his

and civic life of our community from boyhood. For some years he was associated with his father and brother in the operation of The Shell Rock News. He learned the trade of printer under his father's tutelage and became an expert in that line. Later he engaged in the general mercantile business with C. M. Carson, which association was terminated by the fire that destroyed much of Shell Rock's business district. Following that he operated a grocery store until 1912, when he became a partner of Charles P. Bement in the retail lumber busi-

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#### Services at Home and Church.

Following a short service at the Witt home at 2 p. m., services were held in the Baptist church, with Rev. E. L. True, the pastor, and next door neighbor of the lamented twain, in charge.

Mrs. Wayne-Weinberg of Clarksville sang "The Old Rugged Cross" for the opening hymn, and "Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me," for the closing song. The pastor preached a short sermon after reading the scripture on the uncertainty of life and its problems. He was visibly affected in his eulogy of the departed ones as neighbors.

John T. Ames of Traer, custodian of the Masonic grand lodge of Iowa, gave the Masonic eulogy and oration, unaffectedly and impressively. The solemn and beautiful words of the ritual were profoundly impressive and comforting to all who heard them.

The floral offerings were many and beautiful, and so profuse as to lend an enchanting aroma throughout the auditorium.

The Masonic burial rites were administered at the graveside in Riverside cemetery.

Casket bearers for Mr. Witt were August J. Demmel, Louis Hecklinger, and Arch W. McFarlane, of Waterloo; Dr. J. W. Long, Mason City; E. R. Latham and A. D. Scougal, Shell Rock.

Bearers for Mrs. Witt were Dr. Reed Thompson Waterloo; R. E. Mason, Lancaster, Wis.; Geo. R. Hughes, John Bolton, Frank Elwell and Claude Richardson, of Shell Rock.

#### Were Pals in Life and Pals in Death.

Laura Carter Mansfield, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Mansfield, was born in Shell Rock, July 21, 1886. With the exception of two years during her infancy, all of her life was spent in this community.

Frederic Burton Witt, son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank L. Witt, was born in Grand Forks, N. D., July 24, 1884, and practically all of his boyhood was spent in that city. He came to Shell Rock with his parents in December, 1900, and since that time resided here continuously.

Source: Iowa Historical and State Legislators Collection compiled by volunteers and staff at the State Historical Society of Iowa Library, Des Moines, Iowa.

### MRS. WITT

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#### Both Active and Loyal in Civic Life.

Mr. Witt served at various times as member of the local school board; was still a member of the county board of education and of the republican county central committee, of which he was chairman for a number of years. He resigned this chairmanship when he was elected a member of the Iowa house of representatives, in which body he served during the forty-fourth general assembly, being also a member of several important committees.

Mr. Witt was active in fraternal affairs; he was past worshipful master of Escallop lodge No. 261, A. F. & A. M.; and was also affiliated with the Royal Arch Masons, the Commandery and the Shrine and the Order of the Eastern Star. In the order of Knights of Pythias he had a state-wide acquaintance through grand lodge activities. Following service as chancellor commander of Imperial lodge No. 283, Shell Rock, he served on several important committees at state conventions of the Pythian fraternity.

#### Their Passing Deeply Mourned.

Mrs. Witt attended the local grade schools and was graduated in 1904 from the Shell Rock high school. She was a student in Grinnell college for two years. She was a member of the local chapter of the Eastern Star, being past worthy matron, and was a past presiding officer of the D. A. R. chapter at Waverly; she was also a member of the Legislative Ladies' League in Des Moines, an organization composed of the wives of members of the legislature. Because of her natural sympathies and superior capabilities, she was an acknowledged leader in these organizations. She was actively interested in Red Cross work, and gave freely of her time and talents for its promotion, and had charge of the distribution of supplies. She shared the ambitions, the successes and the misfortunes of her husband, and together they reached the

BUTLER TWP. FARM BUREAU

NO MORE NEXT TUESDAY

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Fred, here's to you and yours. May you be reincarnated again in a healthy human body, bringing with you as a start on another journey in life, all the good that you took with you. Verily, we shall meet again, and shall understand why you were taken from us so untimely and with such sundering of the heartstrings of love and fellowship. And if perchance you had not made the goal you had aimed for, may it come to you in the fulness of time, and may you be surrounded by those you loved and labored with here. May the joy of the peace that passeth understanding be yours now and forever more.

#### FOR SUPERVISOR, 1ST DISTRICT

I hereby announce that I am a candidate for supervisor of the First district of Butler county, subject to the decision of the republican voters to be expressed in the primary election of June 4, 1934. JOHN WESSELS, Shell Rock, Iowa.

#### MISS GWENDOLYN BENTON BECOMES A BRIDE

Miss Gwendolyn Benton and John A. Kluitter were united in marriage Saturday, March 3, at 3:15 p. m., by the Rev. Hilmore Cedarholm, pastor of the Burton Avenue Baptist church, in Waterloo. They were attended by the bride's cousin, Genevieve Tanner of Cedar Falls, and Leonard L. Siler of Waterloo.

Miss Benton is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Benton of Janesville. She graduated from the Shell Rock high school and for some time taught in rural schools of Butler county.

Mr. Kluitter is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Kluitter of Clarksville. He attended school in Butler county and has been engaged in farming.

Mr. and Mrs. Kluitter will be at home on the Charles Benton farm, southeast of Shell Rock, after March 10th.

## 'Rooseveltian' Recovery Program

his first few months in office, in so far as executive power and its aim—recovery—are concerned. But in the French program an important feature of the program is to keep on the gold standard and bulwark the franc against attack.

Uses Roosevelt's Tactics.  
The 70-year-old premier, who entered office three weeks ago as head of a national coalition government, hammered a reluctant parliament into granting him his powers by using President Roosevelt's tactics.

He appealed to public opinion over the heads of politicians, not by means of direct speeches into homes but by saying, whenever he asked anything of parliament:

"This is necessary, if it is not granted I must resign." To resign, he and parliament knew, would plunge the country into chaos much worse than that of the recent riots.

As soon as he could do so gracefully, Doumergue planned to send parliament on vacation so that he might wield his great powers in an atmosphere free of politics.

He plans to inaugurate a modest public works program to relieve unemployment and to reorganize government departments, notably the ministry of commerce along the lines on which President Roosevelt reorganized his commerce department.

There was even a further Rooseveltian analysis—the plan which, the United Press learned, the French heavy industries, including steel producers, are studying for a voluntary code, to govern their activities for the next three years.

## ROOSEVELT ASKS WIDE POWER FOR TARIFF TREATIES

### Requests Right to Raise or Lower Rates Up to 50 Pct. in Facts.

Washington, D. C.—(AP)—The tariff—that old disturber of the congressional peace—became a hot issue again Thursday.

President Roosevelt wrote out, for delivery to congress during the day of Friday, a request for new powers to fix the tariff within wide limits. Leaders of congress forewarn some trouble, but the Democrats believe that in the end the request will be granted.

There is a possibility that the issue will prolong this session of congress long beyond the date originally contemplated for adjournment. Some extremists said congress may even be here until July.

Asks Full Powers.  
Trade expansion is the nub of the new proposal. It would give Mr. Roosevelt authority to shift tariff rates up or down by as much as 50 per cent in negotiating reciprocal tariff treaties with other nations.

The treaties negotiated by the president would not have to be confirmed by the senate, as other treaties do. Nor would the president have to deal with the tariff commission. His new authority, however, would be limited to three years and no article could be placed on the free list, or removed from it.

Considerable Republican opposition is certain. The minority will gain some Democratic support.

Watson Flays Roosevelt.  
Wilmington, Del.—(AP)—James E. Watson, former United States senator from Indiana, says President Roosevelt is administering "doze" to business instead of remedial medicine in his economic prescription.

Watson called on Republicans to "remain true to the idea of a protective tariff."

Criticizing the civil works program as a dolt which many workers find more attractive than their regular jobs, he said: "We have already seriously invaded constitutional principles and if the present rate of spending continues we shall find that we have more nearly approached bankruptcy than many of us dream."

## Senator Nelson, Nevada, Runs for Agriculture Post

Des Moines—(AP)—State Sen. Fred Nelson of Nevada, Thursday announced his candidacy for the Republican nomination for the U. S. House of Representatives in the June primaries. Nelson, the first candidate in the field for the party nomination, now

## SHELL ROCK PAIR LOSE LIVES WHEN AUTO HITS TRAIN

### Fred Witt, Prominent G. O. P. Leader, and His Wife, Are Victims.

### BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN BLINDED BY BRIGHT LIGHT

### Returning from Des Moines Lumber Convention; Funeral Saturday.

(Courier Special Service)  
Hubbard, Ia.—Fred B. Witt, 40, Shell Rock, Ia., former state representative from Butler county, was instantly killed, and his wife, Mrs. Laura Mansfield Witt, 45, fatally injured at 4:30 p. m. Wednesday when their automobile struck a Chicago and Northwestern passenger train at the grade crossing one-half mile north-east of here.

Mrs. Witt died a few minutes after being freed from the burning wreckage of their automobile, which was carried about 10 yards along the track, completely demolished, and caught afire.

Bodies of both were so crushed as to be unrecognizable. Mrs. Witt also was burned extensively. Any of their numerous head and chest injuries probably would have caused death.

They were returning from the state convention of lumber dealers at Des Moines.

The view of the crossing is not obstructed but persons familiar with the locality said Witt probably was blinded by the light from the west and failed to see the train in time. The train, an electric passenger, was eastbound, and reported to be traveling about 35 miles an hour.

Carl Beckner, operator of a filling station near the scene of the wreck, extricated the bodies.

Served in Legislature.  
Mr. Witt served in the Iowa house of representatives from 1920 to 1922, being elected on the Republican ticket. He was prominent in Butler county and Third district political circles. For the last several years he had operated the Witt Lumber company at Shell Rock.

Mr. Witt was born at Grand Forks, N. D., July 24, 1884. He went to Shell Rock, Ia., in 1909. For several years he engaged in newspaper work there with his father, the late Carl Witt, who was editor and publisher of the Shell Rock News for many years. Mr. Witt's mother died at Shell Rock Jan. 17.

Married in 1908.  
He was married to Laura Mansfield June 10, 1908.

Mr. Witt was a member of the Knights of Pythias, A. F. & A. M., Royal Arch Masons, Commandery and Shrine.

For many years he was a member of the Butler county Republican central committee, and served as chairman of that body from 1928 to 1930.

Two Sons Survive.  
Two sons, Mansfield, 24, and Richard, 14, survive. Mr. Witt is also survived by a brother, Charles, Chicago, and an uncle, James Carter, Shell Rock.

Mrs. Witt is survived by her mother, Mrs. Carrie Mansfield, Shell Rock; a brother, Carl, formerly of this place, now a bank receiver at Coulter, and by a half-sister, Mrs. Harriet Bemert, Shell Rock.

Mrs. Witt was a member of the Order of Eastern Star and a past noble grand of the Shell Rock Rebekah lodge. A meeting of the past noble grand association scheduled for Friday of this week at the M. B. Chesbro home has been postponed because of her death. She graduated from Shell Rock high school with the class of 1904.

Services Will Be Saturday.  
The Hardin county coroner notified Mayor A. D. Scougal of Shell Rock of the tragedy. The son, Mansfield, accompanied by a cousin, Harvey Carter, Clarksville; W. W. Richards and C. R. Thompson, Shell Rock, left for Hubbard soon after being notified.

The funeral will be at the family home in Shell Rock at 2 p. m. Saturday. Rev. E. L. True, pastor of the Baptist church, will officiate. Interment will be here.

## Gas Main Breaks; Two Dead, 100 Ill

Philadelphia, Pa.—(AP)—Two men were killed and 100 others injured when a main broke.

## Couple Killed



FRED B. WITT



MRS. WITT.

Speeding home to Shell Rock Wednesday evening, from Des Moines, where they had attended a convention, Mr. and Mrs. Fred B. Witt, Shell Rock, were killed when their automobile struck a motor passenger train at Hubbard, Ia.

## SECRETARY DERN RAPS HUGE BOOST IN ARMY PLANES

### Flays House Committee for Proposal "Beyond Any Sane Estimate."

Washington, D. C.—(AP)—Secretary Dorn snatched a "beyond any sane estimate" label Thursday across congressional plans for a wide expansion of the army aviation.

The war department and its one-time traditional ally, the house military affairs committee, thereupon broke off friendly relations. The committee promptly prepared a comeback of its own.

Dorn singled out for attack two bills introduced by Chairman McSwain, one of which would give the army 4,384 new planes. In a statement to the committee he termed them "one-sided," "pactious," and "even prompted by self-interest."

"The first of these two bills," he said, "would provide an air force so far beyond any sane estimate of our defensive needs, and so costly, that its passage could be construed by the world only an evidence either of ardent militarism, or immediate war."

Defends Air Force.  
Secretary Dorn took opportunity to crack back at a recent criticism by Representative McParland (D-Tex.) that this country's best military planes were worse than those of most other powers.

"Belgium could beat the United States in an air combat," said the Texan.

"The performance of our airplanes equal, and in some instances exceed those of any other military airplanes in the world," replied Dorn.

The war secretary's argument to the committee was that aviation is only one arm of a "well-balanced land defense force."

### State Stores Meet to Herring; Pronature Expert

### HOUSE PASSES A COMPULSORY D

### Bill Would Extend Realty Redemp March 1, 1

Des Moines—(A) state senate Thursday noon completed five action on a control bill by ad report of the committee by a v to 21.

The house earlier had adopted by a vote of 88 to the bill now will governor for signi

Des Moines—(AP)—Cor required to automatical redemption period in closure suits until M where the redemption expired under a bill 30 by the Iowa house lives Wednesday.

The measure provides cases no sheriff's deed until next March, but i make provision for th taxes and direct the i any balances.

The owner would r property.

The senate continue on the direct iv bill.

Passed Last 1 While approving the the redemption, peop last week defeated a world, require the cc continuance in forec closings where, the defen in default for want c appearance.

As the redemption t up, Rep. Johnson of point of order coner was the same subject sidered in the bill to mortgage foreclosures, however, ruled there w between the two meas the point was not wel

Vote Against

Those voting against Avery, Heath, Bowers, Dole, Doran, Durant, worth, Falvey, Felle Goode, Grau, Hartn Laughlin, Lichty, Mc home, Osborne, Peet, P Stanzel, Strachen, T Wieben and Willis.

Absent or not voting and McGroery.

Asked by Go

Speaking for the bi the McKinney of He were merely trying to and property of the told the house the bill ed by the governor anc attorney general.

Representative Rice t tended that the sp: measure were asking: sonable.

Representative Gall said the bill was t to grant continuance proceedings, adding t another step toward repudiation of a ju s

Take Up Gu

The house then c eration of the senat simply and clarify t tional guard law and form to the federal s Representative McK motion to defer cons the old age pension acted upon, telling amendments were tea and insisting the bill troversial. His motio to 53 vote.

Kill Debate Previously the ho down by a vote of 2 tion by Representi Washington to limit t hate to five minutes ber.

He said much time debate, adding that change any vote.

Aesch of Plymouth tion "rag rule," while source of King said minutes for each spe

Guard Bill A In launching into the military bill R

## CWA Worker Die

in Treatment

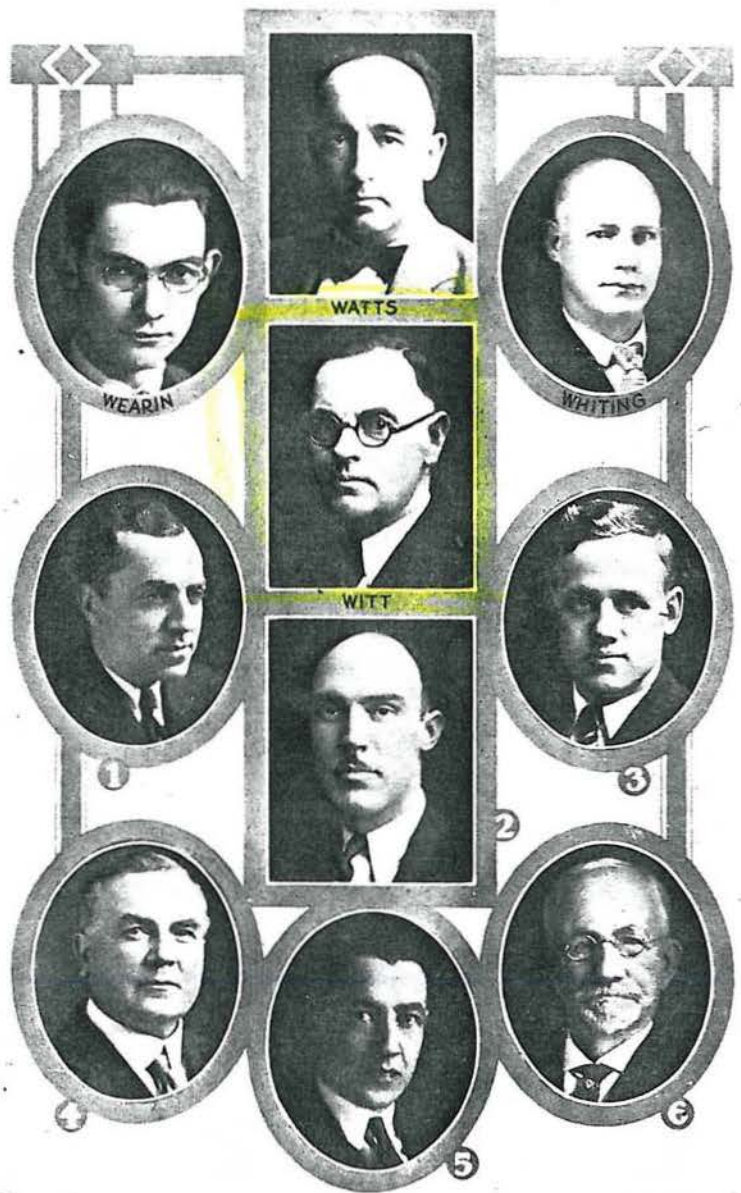


*Iowa Official  
Register 1931-1932*

**OTHA D. WEARIN.**—Representative from Mills county, was born on a farm near Hastings, Iowa, January 10, 1903. He attended country school, graduated from Tabor College Academy in 1920 and received B.A. degree from Grinnell College 1924. Prior to and since that date he has been associated with his father in the operation of Wearin Farms, upon one of which he has always resided. Elected treasurer of rural school district. He has served as vice-president, secretary and president of Mills county farm bureau. Delegate to Iowa state democratic conventions 1924, 1926, 1928, and 1930; assistant secretary of Iowa democratic convention, 1928; temporary chairman, keynoter and permanent chairman of Iowa state democratic judicial convention, 1930. He was elected to Iowa state legislature 1928, re-elected 1930; appointed by Governor Hammill as a delegate to International Mid-west Aeronautic's convention in Minneapolis, 1930. He traveled abroad in 1927, studying farm production and doing research work in International Institute of Agriculture at Rome. Traveled in old Mexico in 1930. Married Lola I. Brazelton, of Hastings, Iowa, 1931. Editor of weekly syndicate, "An Iowa Farmer In Foreign Fields", 1927; Co-editor of weekly syndicate, "New Roads in Old Mexico", 1930; staff contributor to Wallace's Farmer. Author "An Iowa Farmer Abroad", 1928; "The Story of Two Men", 1931; "Old World Gardens", 1931. Member of Iowa State Historical Society, Valley Forge Historical Society, American Peace Foundation, Iowa farm bureau. A democrat in politics.

**SAMUEL D. WHITING.**—Representative from Johnson county, was born at Clermont, Fayette county, Iowa, May 16, 1875. Family moved to Iowa City in August, 1885. Graduated from Iowa City high school in 1892; from University of Iowa, liberal arts, 1896; and from University of Iowa law school in 1904. Taught in rural schools of Johnson county and in Shueyville high school, and served as county superintendent of Johnson county schools from 1897 to 1902. In 1904 was married to Miss Caroline Buresh. Has four children, three boys and one girl. Served on the Iowa City board of education six years. Past Grand of Eureka lodge, No. 44, I. O. O. F.; Past Patriarch of Good Samaritan encampment, No. 5; retired captain of Canton, Iowa City, No. 29; Deputy Grand Master I. O. O. F. of Iowa; secretary of Will H. Dilg League, of Iowa City. Member of First Congregational church of Iowa City. A democrat. Elected representative from Johnson county in 1926. Re-elected 1928, 1930.

**FRED B. WITT.**—Representative from Butler county, was born at Grand Forks, North Dakota, July 24, 1884. In the year 1900 he located at Shell Rock, which has since been his home. For several years he was engaged in newspaper work and later entered into mercantile pursuits, and has been in the lumber, coal and grain business since 1912. He was married to Laura Mansfield on June 10, 1908, and they are the parents of two sons, Mansfield, nineteen, a student at the State University of Iowa, and Richard, eleven years old. He is a member of the Knights of Pythias, A. F. & A. M., R. A. M., Commandery and Shrine. He has been a member of the Butler county Republican central committee for a number of years, and for the past two years has served as chairman of that body. He was elected as representative in 1930. A republican in politics.



REPRESENTATIVES IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND HOUSE OFFICERS

(1) Sam C. Ragan, chief clerk; (2) H. A. Selfe, reading clerk; (3) John J. Montgomery, assistant chief clerk; (4) Charles A. Lindenau, file clerk; (5) Walter R. Cook, assistant sergeant-at-arms; (6) Oley Nelson, sergeant-at-arms.

THE  
ANNALS OF IOWA

A HISTORICAL QUARTERLY

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VOLUME NINETEEN—THIRD SERIES

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EDITED BY  
EDGAR R. HARLAN  
CURATOR

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41579  
PUBLISHED BY THE  
HISTORICAL, MEMORIAL AND ART  
DEPARTMENT OF IOWA  
DES MOINES  
1933-1935

school and Wilton Normal School. He followed farming in Cedar County for many years. He became prominent in business activities. Among other enterprises he helped organize two banks in Wilton, one at Atalissa, and one at Downey, being president of the one at Downey. For six years he was a member of the Cedar County Board of Supervisors, the most of the time being its chairman. In 1895 he was elected representative, and served in the Twenty-sixth General Assembly, and also in the Twenty-sixth Extra. In 1909 he removed to West Liberty.

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JAMES WALLACE BAILEY was born at Camp Point, Adams County, Illinois, May 21, 1871, and died in Harlan, Iowa, February 13, 1934. His parents, Cyrus and Elinor Bailey, removed to Des Moines, Iowa, in 1872. James W. grew up in that city and in 1892 removed to Harlan. During most of his early manhood he was employed in some capacity or other by Shelby County. In 1914 he was elected representative and was re-elected in 1916, and served in the Thirty-sixth and Thirty-seventh general assemblies. At the time of his death he was city clerk of Harlan, and had been for several years. He had the reputation of being an efficient and popular official. He was a Democrat in politics.

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FRED B. WITT was born in Grand Forks, North Dakota, July 24, 1884, and died in an automobile accident near Hubbard, Iowa, February 28, 1934. Burial was at Shell Rock, Iowa. His parents were Frank L. and Vashti (Griggs) Witt. He was with his parents when they removed to Shell Rock in 1900. For several years he was in newspaper work, and later engaged in lumber, coal and grain business in Shell Rock. For several years he was a member of the Butler County Republican Central Committee, and was its chairman in 1928. In 1930 he was elected representative and served in the Forty-fourth General Assembly.

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JOHN SHERMAN PRITCHARD was born at Pittsfield, Washtenaw County, Michigan, May 6, 1847, and died in Los Angeles, California, October 29, 1933. Burial was at Belmond, Iowa. He was a son of Philo A. and Eliza (Woodard) Pritchard. His father having died, John Sherman when a mere boy had to earn his own living, working at whatever he could find. The family removed to Wright County, Iowa, in 1856. On January 4, 1864, he enlisted in Company F, Second Iowa Cavalry, and was with that regiment until he was mustered out September 19, 1865. Returning to Wright County he followed farming, first as a renter, later as a land owner, varying farming with buying and selling livestock. His residence was near Alden for a time, but later at Belmond. He was a member of the county Board of Supervisors from 1892 for six years. In 1901 he was elected representative, was re-elected and served in the Twenty-ninth, Thirtieth, and Thirty-first general assemblies. He was influential in the enactment of the drainage legislation of those sessions. During his later years he resided in Los Angeles.

**IOWA CLOSE-UP**

**Shell Rock**  
in Butler County

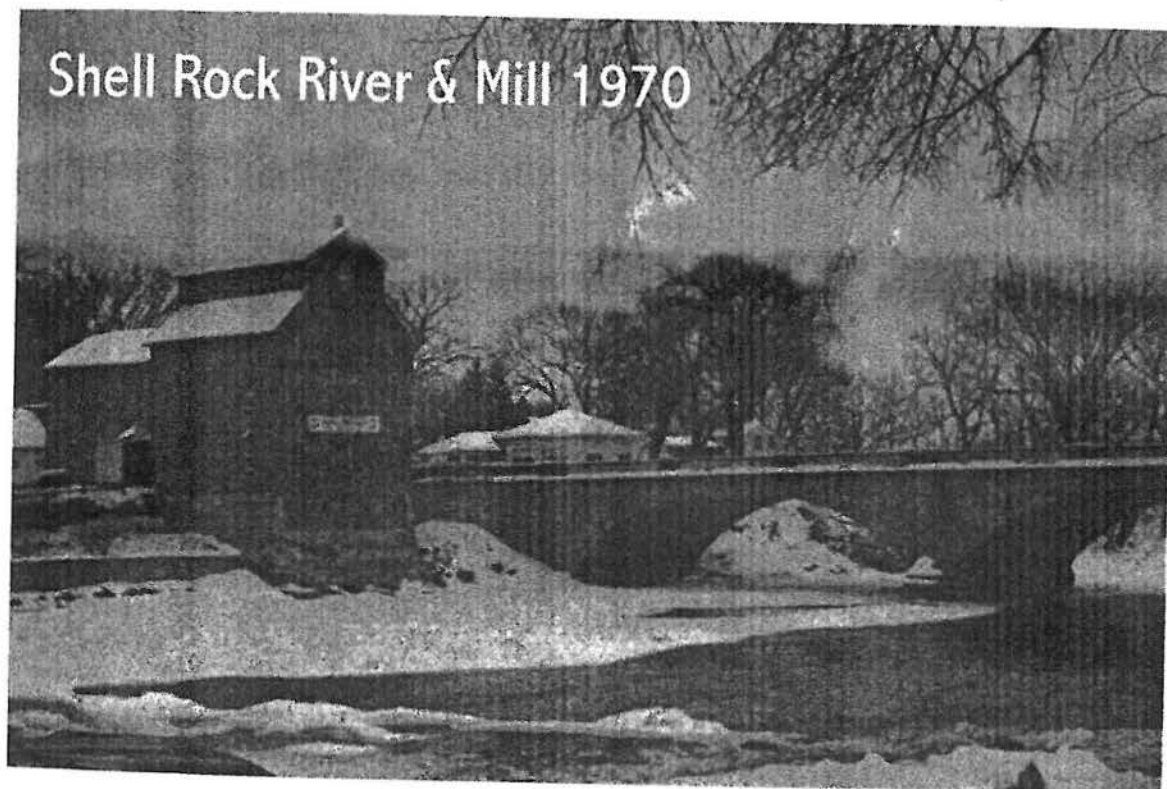


**POPULATION:** 1,385  
**FOUNDED:** 1873  
**HOW IT WAS NAMED:** For the river that runs through it.  
**TOP EMPLOYERS:** Hobson Mould Works Inc., Unverferth Manufacturing  
**CLAIMS TO FAME:** Annual Spring Swing Variety Show, a volunteer effort that raises about \$25,000 a year for the town. Annual smelt feed.

1998

# MORE WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE

Reflections on 150 Years of Shell Rock's History



**SECOND EDITION**

*Shell Rock Historical Committee*  
Shell Rock, Iowa  
2005

into the audience following a show. There was a balcony, and teen-agers loved to sit there. The building was razed in 1932. A September 8, 1932, news clipping states, "The Opera House, for a number of years, was a paying institution as a moving picture house, but of late years, the building has failed to be a source of profit."<sup>184</sup> Helen Savage played piano for the silent movies.

*We always went to the movies at the "opera house" on Saturday night. These were silent movies, and the first that I remember were two reel movies. 5 cents was the admission price for youngsters. The kids would all get to the opera house well ahead of the time that the movies would start. This would be a time to chase each other up and down the aisles and wrestle on the floor until the lights were put out so the movie could start. Quiet was maintained while the first reel of the movie was shown. The lights would then be turned on again until the second reel could be put on the projector. Wrestling and foot races again developed and continued until the lights were again turned off so the show could continue. Shows gradually lengthened to three reels and then to a continuous show without having to change reels. There was no popcorn to buy or coke to drink, just a show.*<sup>185</sup>

Fred B. Witt, who owned Witt Lumber, owned the Opera House. In 1932, he tore down the Opera House and constructed a gas and oil station on this location. In the 1940's, the **RIVERSIDE GARAGE** was a car garage located next to the river, from at least early 1914 until about 1948. Theo Neal was the manager in 1914. Vic Wilson was manager of it during part of the time. A Mr. Kemp managed it following Wilson. The owner is unknown.

**IOWA PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY** had offices in a brick building next to the Riverside Garage. They built a garage and office building on this site in 1971. The building was constructed at a cost of \$59,000. The Power Company occupied the site until 1990 when they removed their local agent from Shell Rock.

Archie Anderson operated **ARCHIE'S STANDARD SERVICE** next to the IPS Building. Chuck Cain operated **CAIN'S STANDARD SERVICE** from 1954 to 1968. They leased the station from Mansfield 'Doc' Witt. Following Cain's, Ralph 'Bandy' Bandfield and Mark Dana ran the station.<sup>186</sup>

"**Cherry Coke Park**" is located at **200 South Cherry Street** owned by Stephanie Janssen. An addition to the café next door occupies part of the lot. A 1902 and a 1910 plat map show that the post office was located in this building at that time. In 1917 Miss Nettie Flood had a **MILLINERY SHOP** at this location. A "milliner" is a maker of women's hats. It came from Milan, Italy, where the practice first began in 1529.

Although early in the 1900's most hats were enormous and adorned with flowers, feathers, ribbons and tulle, by the mid 1920's women's hair had become much shorter with the shingle cut

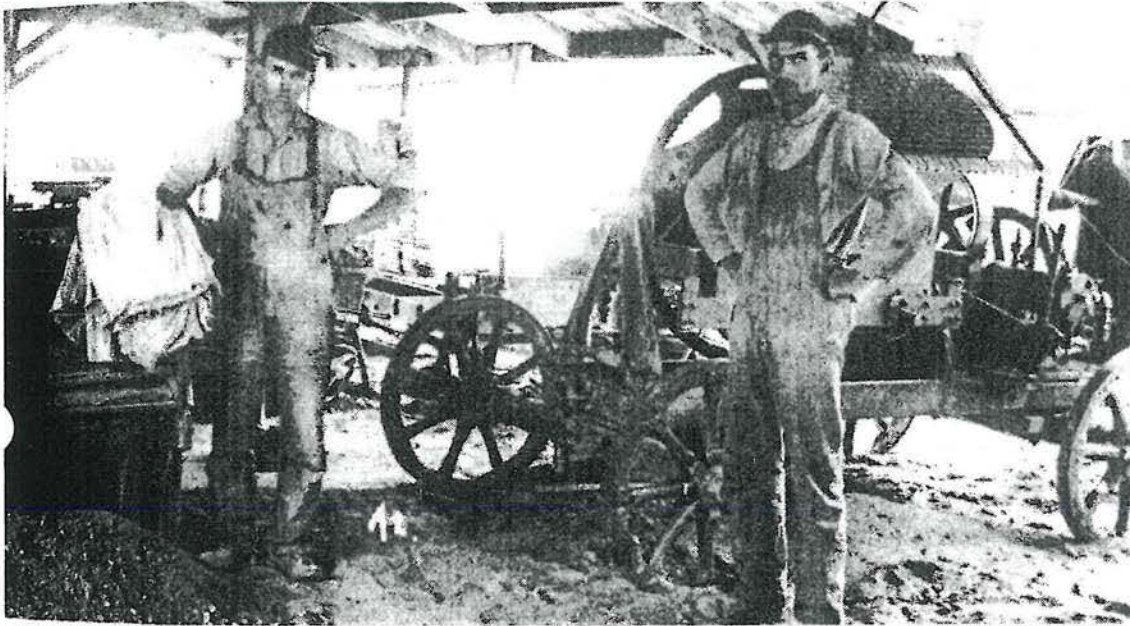
<sup>184</sup> Shell Rock News

<sup>185</sup> Rex Dewey, *Things That I Remember*

<sup>186</sup> Information from Charles and Winnie Cain, old telephone books, newspapers

JP Bement family came to Shell Rock in 1872 and Mr. Bement established a business in grain and lumber. His sons, Frank and Charles Bement later operated this business. Frank was a partner until 1907, and Charles remained until 1920.

Fred Witt had been manager for the Bements and later operated the business as the **WITT LUMBER COMPANY**. In 1934, Mr. and Mrs. Witt were killed in a car-train accident. Their son, Mansfield Witt, took over the business at that time. In 1965, Mansfield Witt moved the lumber company to 416 Washington Street, now **112 West Washington Street**. As early as 1895, Auner and VanVlack had a lumberyard at the West Washington location. A member of the Bement family used this location to make cement blocks in 1902.



1908- Bill Anderson on right. Cement block factory at Bement Lumber Co.

**SHELL ROCK LUMBER COMPANY** began in 1914 at the **112 West Washington** location. Henry and Walter Renning with Frank Bowen owned this. In 1920, they sold it to the **ECLIPSE LUMBER COMPANY**. Known managers were F. R. Bowen in 1925, Keith Thompson from 1944 to 1945, and Donald Forbes from 1949 to 1953.

**WITT LUMBER COMPANY** was in the lumber business from this location from 1965-1975. Keith Knoedler bought the business and operated it as **KNOEDLER LUMBER** from 1975 to 1983. Knoedler sold it to Merlyn Gulick, who managed it for **PAYLESS CASHWAYS** during 1993 to 1994. Following that, Merlyn used it for his custom cabinet and woodworking business. With his extended illness and death in 2005, the building now stands empty.

Sanford W. Remington came to Shell Rock in 1884. He operated **Remington Lumber** on the half block of Prospect and Walnut Streets. The lumberyard continued until 1917.<sup>256</sup>

Contributed by Faye Vossberg



Since Lloyd Gibson was the banker, he had a chance to get involved in many businesses. Duane Wessels approached Lloyd with the idea of building a hog confinement factory in the early 1970's. Lloyd used the money from the hatchery to finance this, which was called Tasco. Upon Lloyd's death, his son, Jim, took over the bank and his business ventures. Unfortunately, the hatchery was too heavily mortgaged to ever recover from Tasco's business losses. The hatchery closed about 1983.<sup>301</sup>

### 705 South Cherry Street/727 South Cherry St.

FARMERS COOPERATIVE is the name and location of the elevator, grain storage, feed business and agronomy business located in Shell Rock in 2005. This was once two businesses, one on the north side and one on the south side of the railroad tracks. This was the name to which the elevator changed about 1967 at the old address of 190 Cherry Street.

The Co-op at 705 South Cherry (190 Cherry) was originally **Witt Lumber Company**. When Witt Lumber relocated to 416 Washington Street in 1965, the Farmers Coop from Dike purchased the buildings. Bob Allan managed it until 1974, and some of the employees were Chuck Winkey, Arlo Walters, and Dennis Walters. The Bremer Elevator purchased it in 1974. Bob Eskridge was part owner and manager. It was known as the **Shell Rock Elevator** and sold Kent Feeds. It increased the grain sales and storage in the Shell Rock area. Bob was one of the elevator managers responsible for getting the Iowa Northern Railroad to come down this rail line to pick up grain stored by the elevators and move it to the Cedar Rapids market.



At this time the office and scales were at 702 South Cherry with the feed and grain storage at 705 South Cherry (across the street). In 1988, a "temporary trailer" office was moved in at 705 South Cherry, between the feed shed and the railroad tracks, with a new scales added at the same time. In October 1996, the Farmers Coop from Readlyn bought this business and built a new office and feed storage shed in 2002. They have continued to add grain storage bins. As of the end of 2005 they have 500,000 bushels of bin storage for corn and beans, and 450,000 bushels of temporary corn storage.

### 727 South Cherry Street (153 Cherry Street)

**W. R. Grace** started this business in the early 1960's. This was mostly a fertilizer business but did sell some Walnut Grove 4 X 4 feeds. In 1975 **Farmers Coop Readlyn** purchased this property and built a new fertilizer Plant. This plant has inside storage for 2,000 tons of fertilizer

<sup>301</sup> Marvin Reynolds, telephone directories, newspaper articles



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## Stark and Schroeder Family Tree

**Entries:** 4429    **Updated:** 2006-04-20 18:23:01 UTC (Thu)  
**Contact:** Gloria Schroeder [gshroeder@charter.net](mailto:gshroeder@charter.net)

[Index](#) | [Descendancy](#) | [Register](#) | [Download GEDCOM](#) | [Add Post-em](#)

- *ID:* I4319
- *Name:* Frederick B. WITT
- *Surname:* Witt
- *Given Name:* Frederick B.
- *Sex:* M
- *Birth:* ABT 1885 in North Dakota
- *UID:* 8E3EA9FD2B962644AE5272E626D5123A3C3C
- *Change Date:* 21 Jan 2006 at 10:01:29

■ **Ancestry Hints for Frederick B. WITT**  
 6 possible matches found on Ancestry.com



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*Marriage* 1 [Laura M. MANSFIELD](#) b: ABT 1887 in Shell Rock, Iowa

**Children**

1. [Frank M. WITT](#) b: 20 Oct 1911 in Iowa
2. [Richard F. WITT](#) b: 5 Feb 1920 in Iowa

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