

IN MEMORIAM

COLLIER HENDRIE BUFFINGTON

Collier Hendrie Buffington came to Gold Beach as a young man in 1914. He was born in Emerson, Iowa, in 1889, the son of Charles Rollin and Sophia Hendrie Buffington. History mentions a Buffington as one of William Penn's associates in the beginnings of Pennsylvania, and there is a Buffington Island in the Ohio River near Cincinnati. These were his people.

He was educated in the public schools of Iowa and attended Simpson College from 1906 to 1909. In 1912 he got his degree in law from the University of Idaho, a member of the first graduating class. Made a member of the Idaho bar in 1912, he was admitted to practice in Oregon in 1914.

He married Xenia Knorr in 1915 in Gold Beach. They had seven children: Nancy, now Mrs. Frederic Starkweather, of Sausalito, California; Collier Buffington Jr., now in Korea as a lieutenant in the Marine Corps; Richard, now in business in Gold Beach; Ann, now Mrs. Curtis Ryan, living in Ophir; Deborah, now in Salem as secretary to Supreme Court Justice Warner; Charles, who lives in Ophir; and Donald, now in the navy. These children have children of their own, nine in all.

The law has been the calling and profession of Collier Buffington throughout his entire life. Elected three times as District Attorney of Curry County, he served nine years in this office. Since 1932, he practiced largely alone. In 1946 he associated with George Belt in the firm of Buffington and Belt. After Belt's untimely death in 1948, he associated with David Shaw in the firm of Buffington and Shaw, in which he practiced until his death.

In business he was almost as outstanding as he was in the practice of law. For many years he managed the Gold Beach Cannery and had commercial fishing interests both here and in Eureka, Calif. He had extensive interests in timber, in the lumber business and in banking. He was an enthusiastic and successful dairyman, stockman and horticulturist.

These are the bare facts of the man's life; they are not his measure. They do not portray him as the giant he was. For he was this and more; both physically and mentally. His life was strenuous in what he did, in what he thought and in what he said. His life was a process of constant learning; learning by reading, learning by working, learning by knowing people. And he learned well, for he thought clearly and his words showed the precision and vigor of his mind. He was not a soft man nor a sentimental one. He despised sham and was intolerant of injustice or mediocrity.

The law to him was no drab career or dull task. It was an opportunity to learn, to grow and to express a growing self. His appearances in court were the end result of thorough preparation. This gave him confidence which shaped the massive weight of his persuasion. Possessing an exact and colorful vocabulary in the service of a precise and profound mind, he was well equipped to become the great lawyer that he was. He brought honor to the profession, both as a practitioner and as a man. His clients were of all types, as he believed that every man deserved the right to counsel. And cases involving small problems received

the same careful attention as the large ones. When people were in trouble, they came to him.

A man who has enjoyed learning and has felt its excitement as deeply as he did is quite likely to believe in its importance to others. He did. For many years he took a great interest in the School Board of Gold Beach. His library and his time were always at the disposal of those who wanted to learn—to learn about anything in this rich world of fact and ideas. For he found adventure in the arts, in history, in science and particularly in language, which he spoke so beautifully and expressively as to make us all proud of our tongue.

Perhaps the core of the man was courage. He stood always unafraid. Big himself, he was not awed by size or pressure. Injustice or incompetence had to be fought, no matter who was guilty. The man was free—free of cant, free of fear and free of spirit.

This is the man's measure—but not his story. This story can't be told without telling that of the people he lived among, the community of which he was a part and the family of which he was the head. It is told in the hearts of those who knew him in situations which test men's mettle. It is told in the history of Curry County, in the development of our industry, in the growth and prosperity of our ranches and in the wealth of our community. For this man will leave not only a splendid family and an excellent reputation; he will leave an emptiness that will not be easy to fill. For we shall all miss that feeling of bigness we had when talked with him. We shall miss the mental stimulation and something of the pride we felt for our community. For we knew we had among us an Olympian—and we feel better when we look up.

To the end, when God's finger touched him and he slept, Collier Buffington was a giant. He died, as he wished to, with the harness on his back. For to him to live was to function, to think, to learn and to work. This kind of an end is a triumphant one.

"Come, come, no time for lamentations now
Nor much more cause; Sampson
hath quit himself
Like Sampson, and heroically
hath finished
A life heroic."

NOTICE

Person or persons who are stealing light bulbs from Chetco Store porch, please come in and they will be given bulbs from our shelf stock. This will save them the trouble of taking them from the sockets.

Relatives and friends helped Charles Young of Young's 5 & 10, celebrate his birthday, Friday night at the home.

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