

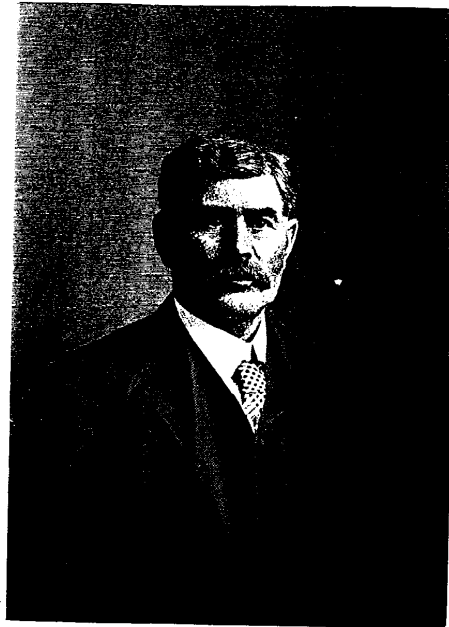
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CHARLES H. ONTHANK.

Among the worthy citizens of Poweshiek county who have passed to their reward, leaving behind them memories of useful labors and kindly acts that cannot be forgotten by the present generation, should be named Charles H. Onthank. He was born in New York, June 13, 1860, and departed this life December 21, 1908, being then in his forty-eighth year. His parents were George H. and Isabella (Woods) Onthank, both of whom were natives of New York state. At the time of the Civil war the father enlisted in an Illinois regiment and served as a musician until the close of the Rebellion. He acquitted himself so creditably that he was placed in charge of a hospital in Tennessee after the war was over and having discharged this duty came to Iowa with his family in 1869 and for several years worked at the blacksmith's trade at Grinnell. Later he became connected with the Iowa Central Railroad at Grinnell as baggage agent and was also employed in the postoffice at Grinnell. He died June 6, 1908, but his wife is still living at Grinnell. Politically he gave his support to the republican party and fraternally was a valued member of the Masonic order and the Grand Army of the Republic. In religious faith he adhered to the Baptist church in which he took a great interest, serving for a number of years as deacon. Two children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Onthank: Charles H. and Martha, the wife of George L. Brown, of Grinnell.

Charles H. Onthank came to Grinnell with his father at the age of ten years and received his early education in the public schools. After reaching manhood he went to South Dakota and took up government land, but after spending three years in that state he returned to Grinnell and worked in the freight house of the Iowa Central Railroad Company. About 1891 he purchased fifty-five acres of land in Grinnell township, later acquiring fifty acres additional. After cultivating his farm for a while he sold it and purchased two hundred acres in Washington township, which he improved, greatly adding to its value. This place he also sold and in December, 1899, bought a farm of two hundred and thirty acres, which is still in possession of the family. He made a specialty of raising hogs and cattle for the market and became known as one of the prosperous and progressive men of the community.

On the 21st of August, 1889, Mr. Onthank was married to Miss Viola Robinson, who was born July 7, 1870, in McDonough county, Illinois, and is a daughter of Robert and Mary Jane (Holden) Robinson. The father was born near Louisville, Kentucky, October 8, 1841, and the mother near Cincinnati, Ohio, July 10, 1841.



Charles H. Onthank

chased a farm of eighty acres in Grinnell township. He sold his farm in 1893 and retired with his wife to Grinnell, where he passed away May 30, 1901. His wife died August 2, 1908. They were both consistent members of the Baptist church. In politics he was a supporter of the republican party and being an earnest friend of education served very acceptably as a member of the school board in Grinnell township. Eight children constituted the family of Mr. and Mrs. Onthank: Florence, who was born October 20, 1891, and is now the wife of William Van Wyk, of Lynnville, Iowa; Lillian M., born July 20, 1893, who married Charles F. Kimball and is now living on the old homestead; Charles H. R., born May 20, 1895; Grace Isabelle, born April 1, 1897; Alma Viola, born February 11, 1899; Edward W., born June 20, 1901; Paul L., born June 17, 1903; and George W., born October 20, 1909.

Mr. Onthank was a firm believer in the Christian religion and a sincere member of the Baptist church, as is his widow. In politics he gave his support to the republican party and served for two terms as school director. Fraternally he was identified with the Odd Fellows and he had many friends in the order and also in Poweshiek county. Mrs. Onthank continues to reside on the old homestead and receives from her children and from all who know her the love and respect which is due to unquestioned worth.