

# JACK WATSON DIES FROM HEART FAILURE

June 15, 1924.  
Famous Athlete And Trainer Is Suddenly Stricken At His Home In Des Moines.

WAS SON-IN-LAW OF MR.  
AND MRS. W. C. WILLIAMS

Deceased Served Grinnell College As Track Coach For Period of Seven Years.

John P. (Jack) Watson, at one time world famous as a track and field athlete and in recent years known nationally as a trainer of college and high school athletes, died at 5 o'clock Sunday morning at his home, in Des Moines. His death, caused by heart disease, followed a serious and painful illness of three days.

Watson had devoted his entire life to athletics, first as a professional runner and jumper and later to coaching and training and to treating sprains and injuries. Starting at the age of 17 he entered the Caledonian games and followed them for eight years, there being no one in his class in his day as an all around track and field man in sprints, jumps, and hurdles.

His death came as a complete surprise and shock to his many friends for no one knew of his illness. Although heart had troubled him for a few months, no one but his wife knew it, and even during his recent illness he insisted that no friends or relatives be notified.

Watson first came to this state as track coach at Grinnell college in 1897. He served here for seven years, removing to Ames in 1904 where he became track coach and trainer at Iowa State College, a position he held for nine years. Leaving Ames in 1913 he went to the State University of Iowa in the same capacity but left there early in 1921 to accept a similar position at Dartmouth college, Hanover, N. H.

Although Watson enjoyed his work and liked Dartmouth he was not satisfied to be away from his western friends so last year he resigned as all year trainer but compromised and returned there last fall to train the football team. Last week he signed a similar contract to return there during the next football season, and his big worry during his brief illness was that he might not recover in time to join Jesse B. Hawley, former Iowa football coach, in handling the Dartmouth squad this fall.

Since he resigned at the state university Watson has made his home in Des Moines, Mrs. Watson having remained here except for brief visits in the east. He is survived by his widow, a daughter, Miss Ruth Watson, 15 years of age; two sisters, Miss Florence Watson, who has been making her home with Mr. and Mrs. Watson, and Mrs. J. F. Beck, Rochester, N. Y., and one brother, Peter Watson, of Toronto, Canada.

He was born Dec. 8, 1869, at Belfast, Ireland, of Scotch-Irish parents, and was one of fourteen children. When

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he was three years old his parents removed to Toronto, Can., and it was there that he spent his childhood.

When he was 17 years old the Caledonian games were scheduled in New York, and it was Watson's ambition to compete in them, a desire his father not only did not encourage but one that he considered foolish.

A Toronto friend loaned him \$200 barely enough to get him to New York.

Watson won \$90 in that meet, but has never divulged the number of first places he won, and statistics are not available. He followed the Caledonian games for nine weeks that year and in that time won \$1,100—a large sum in those days. Most of it he sent home to square accounts with his father, who quickly saw the wisdom of his son's action in refusing to be a clerk at \$10 a week.

Watson followed the games for eight years. In that time he gained fame not only for his winnings but also for the large number of events in which he competed. He became known as "One Jump" Watson, for invariably he conserved his energy by

taking only one of the three trials allotted in the jumps.

He won several events in the championships held at the world's fair in Chicago, in 1893, and it was through his performances there that Grinnell authorities became interested in him and signed him to coach at the Iowa school. Since 1897, when he first came to Grinnell, he has been closely associated with college athletics in this state.

During the off-season at Dartmouth he has treated college, high school and professional athletes here and had attained considerable fame and a following through his success in handling sprains, bruises and like injuries. Funeral services were held in Des Moines today and burial was at Ames.