

JANUARY 1965

# Owen M. Booher, Former C. of C. Secretary, Dead

25 Jan 1965

Owen M. Booher, 79, former secretary of the Kokomo Chamber of Commerce, former alumni secretary of Purdue University and well known as an insurance agent, died Sunday at 5:15 p.m. at St. Joseph Memorial Hospital following a prolonged illness.

He became alumni secretary at Purdue in 1929 and was one of that university's staunchest and most enthusiastic supporters. While at Purdue he edited the alumni magazine and brought many improvements to the alumni office. He was known to thousands of graduates and students of the university.

He returned to Kokomo in 1939 to become secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, holding that position until 1947 when he became a salesman and special agent for the Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company. He held the insurance position until 1962 when he retired because of poor health.

During his early years in Kokomo Mr. Booher was active in Chamber of Commerce work



O. M. BOOHER

and served in many fund-raising campaigns, including the original YMCA building fund, Liberty Bond drives during World War I, fund-raising drives to save the Haynes Automobile Company and many others. He was a charter member of the Kokomo Rotary Club and

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In 1924, he accepted an offer from the late Lowell T. Boyd to join his Equitable Life of Iowa agency as a salesman; and for several years was one of the leading producers. His service as Purdue alumni secretary and later with the Kokomo Chamber of Commerce followed. 25 Jan 1965

Surviving are the widow, Nell (Peterson) Booher; a son, Ned, of Kokomo; and a sister, Mrs. Harry A. Davis, Los Angeles, Calif. Last April Mr. and Mrs. Booher celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary.

Funeral services will be held Tuesday at 2 p.m. in the Ellers Chapel, with the Rev. Earl P. Seltz, pastor of the Main Street Christian Church, officiating. Burial will follow in Sunset Memory Gardens.

Friends may call at the funeral chapel after 5 p.m. Monday.

## Booher Pallbearers

Pallbearers for Owen M. Booher, 79, former secretary of the Kokomo Chamber of Commerce, who died Sunday in St. Joseph Memorial Hospital, will be John Sweet, Robert Longfellow, Lee Bromley, Walter Cross, Noel Bauer and Lee Dixon. 26 Jan 1965

Honorary pallbearers will be Mayor John W. Miller, C. V. Haworth, John P. Fredrick, R. H. Blackledge, A. B. Watkins, Dow Richardson, Herbert E. Williams, Frank Gregory, W. S. Carlston, R. T. Schwartz, A. H. Schwartz and Curtis W. Roll.

## Owen M. Booher

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served one term as its president and also as its secretary. In 1927 the members of the club sent him as a delegate to Ostende, Belgium, to attend the International Rotary convention. He was accompanied by C. V. Haworth and the late Kenneth Rich. He was a member of the Main Street Christian Church for many years.

During his tenure as secretary of the Chamber of Commerce he was instrumental in getting U. S. 35 paved to Logansport, in getting the First National Bank established, various government housing projects, and in bringing the General Electric Company and several other new industries to Kokomo. He was a long-time member of the Elks Club both here and in Lafayette. He also served as secretary of the Purdue Class of 1908 for more than 50 years. His classmates presented him with a special award for his long service shortly after he retired from this position. He was long a booster for Purdue athletics, particularly football and basketball, and for more than 40 years The Kokomo Tribune published his "All Big Ten" selections that appeared before any of the national news service selections were announced.

Mr. Booher was born Feb. 7, 1885, east of Darlington, Ind., the son of George W. and Belle (Duke) Booher, and was graduated from high school there. He attended Purdue and graduated with a degree in electrical engineering in 1908.

After graduation he came to Kokomo where he had accepted a position with the Kokomo, Marion & Western Company (later the Kokomo Railway & Light Co.), then managed by T. C. McReynolds. He sold the first electric irons, toasters and stoves used in Kokomo. He also directed the installation of many of the first rural electric lines in this area, as well as the wiring of many houses and business establishments here.

In 1920, he left the electrical field and became manager of the newly formed Kokomo Brick Company, located on North Ohio Avenue and the old Cloverleaf Railroad. This company made brick from clay taken from an area just east of the plant. But when alkali began to appear in the clay the company was forced to suspend operations.