

[Lehr, Lewis F.]

LEWIS F. LEHR PASSES FROM LIFE AT BURLINGTON
Prominent Malone Paper Manufacturer Joins Silent Majority
Following Long Illness.—Was Interested In Numerous Activities.

Lewis F. Lehr, widely known as one of the leading paper manufacturers of the North Country and prominently connected with other business enterprises in Malone, passed away at the Lakeview Sanitarium Burlington, Vt., Wednesday evening. Death was due to heart disease.

Mr. Lehr's health had been seriously impaired for months. He underwent an operation at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Montreal last April and was confined to the hospital for 11 weeks. Upon his return home he seemed to gain strength and was able to be out and even to resume some of his business activities, but the improvement in his condition did not continue. He suffered attacks of heart weakness that eventually compelled him to take to his bed. He was at his office for the last time a few days before Thanksgiving. During subsequent weeks his condition did not improve and it was decided recently to take him to the Lakeview Sanitarium in the hope that treatment there would prove beneficial. This hope was destined not to be realized. During the week reports from the sanitarium were to the effect that his condition was critical. Mrs. Lehr was with him during the last days of his life.

Mr. Lehr was born on a farm near Stone Mills, Jefferson county, June 23, 1866, a son of Nicholas and Elizabeth Lehr, both of whom were natives of Germany. Both his parents died when he was very young and he lived with his uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. John Lehr, in Dexter for several years. He attended school in Dexter. When he was 16 or 17 years of age he went to Nebraska and joined his brother, George Lehr, who was railroad agent for the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad. Lewis F. Lehr learned telegraphy and became train dispatcher and later station agent of the Chicago and Northwestern.

While living in the west he married Miss Emma Clark, only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edwin S. Clark, Dexter. After this marriage they lived in the west for a year or two. Mr. Clark then induced Mr. Lehr to come east and Mr. Lehr became associated with Mr. Clark in the general mercantile business in Dexter. Later Mr. Lehr left the store and entered the employ of the St. Lawrence Paper Company at Dexter, of which E. J. Birmingham was the head. After a comparatively short time Mr. Lehr was made manager of the mill. Two or three years later he came to Malone.

Edwin S. Clark, Brayton R. Clark, Fred T. Ford, Mark S. Wilder, James A. Outerson and Mr. Lehr formed the Malone Paper Company and bought the plant of the Wead Paper Company here. The mill had not been in operation for several years. It was originally a straw paper mill but had been converted into a pulp paper mill some years previously. It was successfully operated by the new company until May, 1903, when it burned. Early in 1903, before the mill burned, Mr. Lehr had gone to Pyrites as general manager of the DeGrasse Paper company where he remained for six years.

The Malone mill was rebuilt and was in operation in 1904. Mr. Lehr returned to Malone in 1909 and was made vice-president and general manager. He retained

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that title until the death of Brayton R. Clark in 1923, when he became treasurer of the company as well as vice-president and general manager. In 1930, following the death of H. V. Clark, Mr. Lehr was elected president of the company.

In 1920 Mr. Lehr and several associates bought the Frank A. Empsall & Co. department store in Watertown and Mr. Lehr was made a director and vice-president of the organization. The store is still conducted under the original name.

Mr. Lehr was vice-president of the Peoples Trust Company. He had been a director of the Peoples National Bank and was active in reorganization of the business into a trust company.

For several years he served a director of the Malone Light & Power Company. He had several other business interests here and elsewhere. His business judgment was regarded as sound and his advice was frequently sought on important matters.

Mr. Lehr was a public spirited citizen and was active in many local civic and fraternal organizations. He was a member of the local Masonic bodies and of Media Temple, A. A. O. N. Mystic Shrine, Watertown, and some of the Scottish Rites orders at Norwood. He was a member also of Malone Lodge, 1903, B. P. O. Elks, Malone Rotary Club, Malone Fish and Game Club, and a former member of the Black River Valley Club and the Malone Golf Club. He attended the Universalist Church when in Watertown and was a member of that faith. In politics he was a Republican but was not strongly partisan and sometimes voted independently.

He was interested in promoting the local hospital and during the last campaign gave a substantial contribution which was used to establish a memorial room in the name of his nephew, Lieut. Manderson Lehr, who as a member of the Lafayette Esquadriille (Flying Corps) made the supreme sacrifice in the World War.

Mr. Lehr is survived by his wife; two brothers, William, [of] Elgin, Nebraska, and Henry, [of] Albion, Nebraska; a half-sister, Mrs. Ora Donald, Gouverneur; a niece, Elizabeth Lehr, [of] Greeley, Colo.; and two nephews, Elmo Lehr, Elgin, Neb., and Dean Lehr, Albion, Neb.

A brother, George F. Lehr, died at Greeley, Colorado December 21, 1931.

Malone Farmer, Malone NY, Wed. 3 Feb 1932

Transcribed on 21 Apr 2009 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY