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Stewart Johnson A Personal Sketch

Editor's Note: In another column of this issue of Winnetka Talk appears a notice of funeral services for Stewart Johnson, Winnetkan and secretary of the American legation at Cairo, Egypt, who died at Alexandria, September 10, from injuries received in an automobile accident.

(Contributed)

Stewart Johnson was 11 years old when his family came to Winnetka, in 1891. In spite of absences at college and during the past eleven years abroad, he always regarded this as his home, and remained loyal to the many friendships of boyhood and early manhood.

Early years in Mexico, where his father was a railroad official, gave him ease in meeting foreign people, a broad outlook, and a practical command of Spanish.

After graduation from Yale, his father's alma mater, in 1902, two years were spent in Rio de Janeiro as clerk of legation under Charles Page Bryan, then minister to Brazil. Then he studied law at Harvard and specialized in international law. He practiced in Chicago for eight years, taking a lively interest in local affairs. In 1915 he decided to re-enter the government service, and his legal training and knowledge of languages, including Spanish, French, German, and Portuguese, secured him an excellent ranking.

Among Revolutionists

Mr. Johnson served as secretary of legation and as charge d'affaires successively in Santo Domingo, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Venezuela. At each of these posts he showed tact, adaptability, and skill in smoothing out troublesome conditions. In Guatemala he aided in monetary reform. In Costa Rica he had to contend with a revolutionary government which Washing-

ton was not willing to recognize. In Caracas he helped frame boundary treaties.

In 1920-21 Mr. Johnson was in Washington at the Bureau of Latin American republics, as assistant and as acting chief. Offered any post in Europe, he chose Berlin and was first secretary under Ambassador Houghton for two years, playing a useful and active part in the diplomatic affairs of that reconstruction period.

Early in 1924 the state department needed a man at Cairo to cope with a situation needing careful handling. They picked Mr. Johnson. He was first secretary and during several years charge d'affaires, during absences of Minister Howell. He was promoted to be Foreign Service Officer of Class 4.

Wins Host of Friends

In Egypt Mr. Johnson won the confidence and esteem of the British and Egyptian officials and of the foreign diplomatic corps. He and Mrs. Johnson made many friends among them and among the members of the American community in both Cairo and Alexandria. He lent active interest and support to the Y. M. C. A., the Assiut university, and the Mission at Tanta, where an address which he had prepared was read after his death at the dedication of a new building. Letters from the men and women in charge of these institutions and from diplomats and officials tell of their loss in his death and their respect and affection for him.

Stewart Johnson found opportunity for the use of fine talents. He never looked for personal or political preferment, but tried to do his best at each post task assigned him. The government at home, officials abroad, trusted and depended upon him. He stood by his own convictions and by his own high standards, but could always see and allow for differing viewpoints. A letter from the state department said: "He is a very real loss to us. His ability was unquestionable. He was an unusually fine type of man and a gentleman through and through."

In 1917 Mr. Johnson married Catherine Haven ReQua of Chicago. Their daughter, Catharine, was born seven years ago in Caracas. Mr. Johnson was a member of the Winnetka Congregational church and of the University club of Chicago.

KNOW ILLINOIS

Shortly after perfecting the "time lock" for banks, James Sargent, the inventor, installed his first product on the vault door of a bank in Morrison. This original device is now the prized possession of the First National Bank of that city.

Paying income taxes of almost 177 millions of dollars, Illinois ranks third among the states.

The West's pioneer elevated railroad started operation in Chicago on May 27, 1892, with steam dummies. The first division was electrified in 1895.

East St. Louis started telegraphic communication with the Eastern seaboard in December, 1847, when the first wire was completed and dedicated.

Wild Bill Hickok, Civil War hero and one of the most expert pistol shots of his day, was a native of La Salle county, claiming Troy Grove as his birthplace.

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