

John Urban

May 15, 1869 - Nov. 11, 1916

This community was deeply shocked last Monday when the word was passed around that John Urban, one of the well-known Monticello business men, had passed away at a Madison hospital. Many of his friends had not known that he was among the ailing, while others had been in conversation with him only a few days ago.

Mr. Urban accompanied by Dr. Blumer went to the general hospital at Madison, Monday morning for an operation on account of an abscess affliction in his ear. The operation was performed by Dr. Jackson, but proved to no avail as the patient passed away at about one o'clock, a few minutes after leaving the operation table.

The deceased was born 47 years ago at Inkwyl, canton Berne, Switzerland. He came to America in the year 1890, following the vocation of a cheesemaker, later entering into the cheese and milk buying business. For many years he lived in the neighborhood of Barneveld, then settled in Monticello, becoming a leading stockholder in the firm, Edw. Wittwer & Bro. He was united in marriage with Mrs Euphemia Freitag and the union was blessed with one son, During the past ten years he visited his old home in Switzerland several times and was always active in the interest of his old fatherland.

The remains were brought Monticello, where the funeral was held Wednesday, and because of his wide acquaintance, was one of the largest ever held there. A very large number from here attended. Mr. Urban is survived by his widow and one son.

John Urban, whose death was chronicled in these columns last week, was born June 16, 1870, at Inkwil, Canton of Berne, Switzerland. In the spring of 1889 he left his native country and emigrated to America, arriving in Monroe on April 1. He was a cheesemaker by trade and for nine years following his arrival here he was employed continuously in a factory near Barneveld, Iowa county.

A little over fifteen years ago he came to Monticello and since that time he had been associated with the wholesale cheese firm of Edw. Wittwer & Bro., being one of the leading stockholders of the concern. He was an expert judge of all kinds of foreign cheese and of late years had done practically all the buying for the firm. Mr. Urban was a man of keen judgment and exceptional business ability. When he came here from the old country he had but ten dollars to his name, yet he was able to get a good start in life through the practice of rigid economy during his first few years in this country and when he passed away he was numbered among the wealthiest men in this vicinity. He was not only an expert in the cheese line, but was also a good judge of real estate values, and he had bought and sold many farms during recent years.

Mr. Urban was possessed of a friendly and open hearted disposition and was ever ready to lend a helping hand to the needy or those in distress. During the past year he was instrumental in raising a large fund for the needy in his native land and he was always ready and willing to donate money or lend his assistance in any worthy charitable undertaking. He was a public spirited citizen in every sense of the word, one who was always a loyal booster for his home town and county and a man of real worth such as any community can ill afford to lose.

Since coming to America Mr. Urban had made four trips back to his native land, where he visited his aged mother and other relatives. He had planned another trip after the conclusion of the war.

Mr. Urban's death occurred on Monday, Nov. 11, at the Madison general hospital, the particulars of which were given last week. He had reached the age of 46 years, 5 mos, and 26 days.

Mr. Urban was married to Miss Euphemia Freitag on March 4. 1904, who, together with one son, Walter, survive him. He is also survived by one brother and one sister, who still live in Switzerland, his mother having died in August of this year.