

Hackettstown's Oldest Resident Dies At Hospital In 98th Year

Services for Hackettstown's oldest resident and active businessman, J. Clark Staples, 97, of 81 Main Street, were conducted yesterday afternoon at the Cochran Funeral Home with the Rev. August J. Kling of the First Presbyterian Church officiating. Interment followed in Tranquility Cemetery.

A medical patient for the past 10 weeks at Newton Memorial Hospital, Mr. Staples died on Sunday, January 26, 1958. Born on October 5, 1860, at Johnsonburg, his parents were the late John D. and Anne Willett Staples. His father, a Civil War veteran, died when Clark was only eight years old.

As a boy, he worked on farms in the Johnsonburg - Huntsville area. Later he went to Newark and became a conductor on the horse cars that then rumbled along the city's streets.

After two years of city life, the young man returned to farming, followed by milling work at Johnsonburg, Allamuchy, Hope and Serepta. In 1896 he established his own milling business. In 1929, he sold his farm property at Johnsonburg and moved to Hackettstown, where he conducted his flour business from his Main Street property until overcome by ill health.

Oldest Driver

Mr. Staples marked his last birthday by enjoying dinner with friends at the Cochran House, Newton. He was reputed to be New Jersey's eldest licensed automobile driver. He acquired his first car, a Maxwell, in the early twenties and traveled 112,000 miles in that vehicle before he traded for a Nash. He still had a third car. He had a 1929 pickup truck to haul feed and flour to his largest customers - Blair Academy and Centenary Collegiate Institute. He had never had an accident and only last year received a ticket for over-time parking, which cost him a fine.

Mr. Staples' only survivors are nephews and nieces. His wife, the former Lena Dunn, and a daughter preceded him in death. Mr. Staples was also a member of Oriental Lodge No. 51 of Newark for over 50 years. He was a member of the First Presbyterian Church here but was formerly affiliated with the Johnsonburg Christian Church, now disbanded.



J. Clark Staples

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OBITUARY: J. Clark Staples
Date of Death,
January 26, 1958