

Gilbert Holtan

Notes from his obituary, died 3 Jan 1953

One of the largest crowds to attend a funeral in McLean county gathered Tuesday afternoon at the Washburn school for last rites for Gilbert Holtan. The funeral was conducted in the gymnasium of the school by Rev. Carl F. Nelson of Minot. Many accompanied the casket to Sverdrup cemetery which is near the area where he lived as a boy. The body was laid in the family plot there.

Mr. Holtan was born April 11, 1881 at Forest City Iowa, a son of Hans and Margit Holtan. The family came to McLean county in the fall of 1886 among the pioneers who settled this area. The family homestead is located near the Washburn airport on Highway 83.

He returned to Iowa to complete his education at Brekenridge Decorah Institute, and in 1901 and 1902 he came back to McLean County to teach school. In April, 1902 he filed on a homestead 11 miles northwest of Turtle Lake. In 1914 he turned to the implement and hardware business, opening the Holtan Hardware store.

He next venture was to run for county treasurer and in 1934 he was elected to the post and reelected for the next term. He then moved over to the county auditor's office and was about to begin his eighth term when he was stricken Friday by a blood clot of the heart and died in a Bismarck hospital that evening.

Mr. Holtan was a vigorous athlete in his youth and was widely known as a catcher on the turtle Lake baseball club. He was the favorite with the pitchers as he made a study of batters' weaknesses and his call of signals often made the difference between winning and losing a game.

He was married to Clara A. Severts March 8, 1909, who died Oct 20, 1940. He married Mrs. Mattie G. Thelen June 23, 1940.

He was a member of the First Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Brotherhood and the Lions Club.

Active pallbearers were Howard, Horace and Hubert Holtan and Arthur Grothe, all of Washburn; Lyle Holtan, Elbowoods and Harold Severts, Turtle Lake. All are nephews of the deceased.

Surviving are his wife, a daughter, Miss Lucille Holtan, Washburn, and one son, Harley L. Holtan, Turtle Lake and two brothers, Martin Holtan, Washburn and E. H. Holtan, Bismarck. Two sons, one daughter, seven brothers and three sisters preceded in death.