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CITY OFFICIALS

NAME Colden, Charles J. (deceased April 15, 1938)

PUBLIC OFFICES HELD (DATE)

CITY:

- Playground and Recreation Commission (6 mo.)....1924
- President, Board of Harbor Commissioners...1924-1925
- City Council.....1925-1929

COUNTY:

STATE:

FEDERAL:

- Member of 73rd Congress
- Member of 74th Congress

CIVIC ACTIVITIES:

- Member City Planning Association
- President, San Pedro Chamber of Commerce (2 years)
- Active in harbor development, addressing national gatherings on the subject

BUSINESS OR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Schoolteacher
Small town newspaper publisher
Building constructor
State legislator
City, county, and state official
Writer and speaker
Publicist
Realtor
Representative
Congressman

PORTRAIT:

ATTACHED OR ENCLOSED IN ENVELOPE:

PORTRAITS APPEARING ELSEWHERE (DATES)

Newspaper enclosed
Congressional Directory (1934)

ANECDOTES AND PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS:

Congressman Charles J. Colden would seem to follow the American pattern of education for members of the Congress of the United States.

This includes farm birth, country schools, rural schoolteaching, small town newspaper proprietorship, city, town and county official, business, politics, and then the Senate of the House of Congress—all of which is embraced in Mr. Colden's career.

A polished speaker, of a literary bent, Congressman Colden fosters the arts among his other activities.

He is of the opinion that the prosperity of Southern California is closely linked with that of Arizona and Nevada. Plans for adequate and proper naval coast defense are engaging his attention at this time.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

BOOKS:

Congressional Directory, 1934

McGroarty, History of L.A. County (Chicago and New York American Historical Society, 1924)

Ludwig, History of the Harbor Development of L.A.

NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS:

Los Angeles Times

PERSONAL INTERVIEW:

INTERVIEWED BY: Luella Sawyer

DATE OF INTERVIEW: November 28, 1934
Rewritten and amplified by Clare Wallace,
June 5, 1936

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The Los Angeles Public Library
Local History Collection
Biography

NAME Colden, Charles J.

Occupation Politician

Address San Pedro, California

Birth (Date and Place) August 4, 1870

Peoria County, Ill.

FATHER John Wesley Colden

Birth (Date and Place) Indiana

If Deceased, When Sept. 16, 1922, Nodaway Co., Mo.

MOTHER Hattie Gringrich

Birth (Date and Place) Ohio

If Deceased, When Feb. 15, 1911, Nodaway Co., Mo.
1st—Unknown

IF MARRIED, TO WHOM 2nd—Clara Norman

Birth of Same (Date and Place) 2nd—Minnesota

If Deceased, When

When Married 1st—1891
2nd—February 12, 1914

CHILDREN (Married Names of Daughters)

Vi June—Mrs. L. S. Hawthorne
Abbie Bell
Archibald John
Charles J., Jr.

TITLES OF BOOKS, ARTICLES, MUSIC, OR OTHER CREATIVE WORK

(In the case of printed matter, please give date and publisher; of periodical publications also name of magazine and date.)

Articles and speeches

REVIEWS, CRITICISMS, AND OTHER BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES

(Please note printed matter concerning yourself or your work. We would appreciate any such material you may send, clippings, reviews, portrait.)

Newspaper clippings enclosed

ANCESTORS OF DISTINCTION OR LOCAL INTEREST

(Please include names of local interest as "forty-niners," or any one connected with the affairs or development of the state or city, as officials, professional men, merchants, etc.)

The Colden family is descended from the distinguished Colonial family of Cadwallader of New York state.

Cadwallader Colden was Royal Lieutenant Governor of New York during eight terms. His son was mayor of New York after the American Revolution, and a member of the American Philosophical Society, of which Benjamin Franklin was a member.

Subject's father, John Colden, of Scotch ancestry, served with the Union Army in the Civil War being with the troops who accompanied Sherman on his famous March to the Sea.

Subject's mother was of Pennsylvania Dutch stock.

EDUCATION (Schools, Colleges, Degrees, Etc.)

Public schools of Mo.; Shenandoah College, Shenandoah, Iowa; Maryville Seminary, Maryville, Mo.; B.S. from Stanberry College, Stanberry, Mo.

CLUBS, LEARNED SOCIETIES, ETC.

Elk; Lions Club; San Pedro Golf and Country Club; Artland Club; City Club.

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION

POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS

Democrat

RESIDENCE IN CALIFORNIA SINCE

1912

SKETCH

(Please make this as full as possible, giving business affiliations, positions of honor or trust with dates if possible.)

Charles J. Colden was born August 4, 1870, on a farm in Peoria County, Illinois. He was taken by his parents when ten years of age to another farm in Nodaway County, Missouri, where he was reared as a farm boy until nineteen years of age. His education was accomplished in country schools and colleges.

After teaching in country schools for two years young Colden spent three years as principal and teacher in the Manilla, Iowa schools.

The next ten years were passed in Northwestern Missouri where Mr. Colden entered politics, edited "The Sentinel" at Parnell, of which he was the owner, and conducted a literary forum.

In 1900, at the age of thirty years, he was elected to the Missouri legislature and served two terms. He was President of the State Board of Regents at Maryville, where he resided until 1908, at which time he sold his country newspaper and made a tour of Europe.

In Kansas City from 1908 to 1912, Mr. Colden was engaged in building residences.

While on a pleasure tour of the west in 1912, he was attracted to the possibilities of San Pedro and became a builder and subdivider there. An authority on land, dock, and harbor improvements,

Mr. Colden has been a national publicist for the harbor development. He assisted in securing an appropriation from Congress for the breakwater at San Pedro, and the establishment of federal authority to control the natural resources of the Pacific Southwest.

From January to July, 1924, he served on the Los Angeles Playground and Recreation Commission under Mayor Cryer.

From March 1924 to March 1925, he was President of the Board of Harbor Commissioners.

In 1925 he was elected to the Los Angeles City Council, where he served until 1929.

At present Mr. Colden is a member of the 74th Congress of the United States, having been reelected after serving in the 73rd Congress.

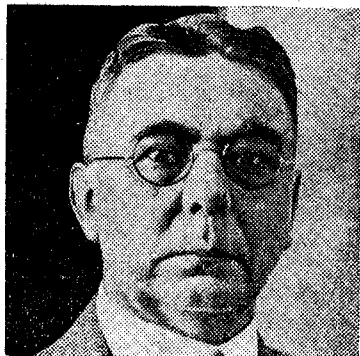
Congressman Colden Funeral Next Monday

April 19/38

N + E.

Funeral services for Congressman Charles J. Colden, representative from the Seventeenth California Congressional District, will be held in Washington, D. C., and at San Pedro where he lived for many years.

He died last night in the Walter Reed Hospital at Washington at the age of 68 years. He had been ill for a long time and cancer was



CHARLES J. COLDEN
Death Takes Congressman

said to have caused his death.

Services for Congressman Colden will be held in the nation's capital at 3:30 p. m. Monday. The body will leave Washington at 5 p. m. for San Pedro where funeral services will be held next Friday at 11 a. m. Burial will be in San Pedro.

His widow, Mrs. Clara N. Colden, and a sister, Mrs. B. C. Hall of Maryville, Mo., will accompany the body to San Pedro.

Besides these, Mr. Colden is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Lester Hawthorne of Stanbury, Mo., and Abbe Colden of Washington, and two sons, John C. Colden of Hemet, and Charles J. Colden jr., a student at University of California.

He was serving his third term in Congress and was considered one of the staunchest supporters in the lower House of President Roosevelt and New Deal measures. Until his illness he was said not to have missed a single roll call.

Born on a farm in Peoria county, Illinois, Colden worked his way

through Country College, Stanberry, Mo., and became a teacher. Afterwards he took up newspaper work, publishing papers in Parnell, Mo., and Maryville, Mo.

He has engaged in building business for a time in Kansas City, Mo., and came to San Pedro in 1912 to take up real estate activities. He played a conspicuous part in the development of the harbor district.

From 1922 to 1924 he was president of the San Pedro Chamber of Commerce and in 1923 was appointed a member and president of the Los Angeles Harbor Commission.

He also served as a member of the City Planning Association of Los Angeles and of the city Playground Commission.

In 1925 he was elected to the City Council from the Fifteenth Councilmanic District, being one of the first members chosen under the new charter which went into effect that year. He was re-elected in 1927 and in 1929 was an unsuccessful candidate for mayor.

While in the harbor commission and council Colden worked vigorously for the establishment of the harbor belt line railroad now in operation connecting all the rail facilities of the waterfront.

He also led the fight in the council to give the Santa Fe railroad access to the waterfront.

After leaving the council he took a trip around the world, studying harbor conditions.

Always a staunch Democrat, in 1932 he was nominated for Congress from the Seventeenth district, which is comprised mainly of the Los Angeles harbor area. He was carried into office with the first Roosevelt landslide, and was re-elected in 1934 and 1936. He was a delegate to the Democratic national convention in Philadelphia in 1936.

He served on the rivers and harbors committee of the House of Representatives and in 1936 introduced a bill for the construction of a \$2,000,000 marine hospital at San Pedro, which, however, failed to pass. He also sponsored legislation for a \$7,000,000 general repair base and navy yard in the harbor area.