

Hon. John R Bartruff, (Died 31 Aug 1935), Duncannon Record, Thursday September 5, 1935

John Randolph Bartruff, jurist, lecturer, writer, traveler and philosopher, locally known as “Sage of Old Oaks”, died at his home, “Old Oaks”, Wheatfield Township, Saturday night at the ripe old age of 84 years. Perhaps, no man ever grew old more gracefully than did “Uncle John,” as he preferred being called by his friends, and they were legion. With simple tastes and rugged physique, he simply refused to grow old in spirit.

A quarter century ago he decided to settle down and devote his time to reading, but fates decreed otherwise, for with his retirement, came an insidious affection of the eyes that resisted all attempts to conquer and almost complete blindness resulted. This, indeed, was a great trial and misfortune, but his characteristic cheerfulness under every condition, prevailed and he was content to have others read to him. Much of his latter days were spent in quite a lot and deliberation on the political and social developments of these trying times. He was a faithful contributor to the *Record* for twenty-five years, his column under the caption of “Chaff from Wheatfield” and “Falling Leaves” was widely read and commented on.

Despite the fact that he was a student, his was a jovial nature. With a rich fund of wit, humor and pathos, he was a most congenial companion and fluent conversationalist. Charitable and generous to a fault, he was one of nature’s noblemen, a man among men, who never turned a deaf ear to pleas of the enforcement and distressed. A devoted husband and father, a neighbor and friend that will be sadly missed in the home community for his many good offices.

Born in Lancaster County, he immigrated to this county with his parents, the late **John Andrew** and **Sarah (Royer) Bartruff**, when he was a small lad, locating in Wheatfield Township, where a large family was reared on a farm the greater portion of which was hewed, from the forest, part of which is now known as Dick’s Hill.

When a lad of sixteen the subject of this sketch was apprenticed to a Lancaster coachmaker, where he learned the trade of coach making in all its branches. Later he conducted a successful coach making establishment at Bellfonte. About this time he entered the lecture field and traveled all over the United States in company with **Prof. Charles Tuft** whose lectures were the first to be illustrated by stereopticon views. Heeding Horace Greeley’s advice he went west and located in California and later spending several years in the state of Washington. Meeting with adversity he returned east and attempted to regain what he had lost in his experiences on the Pacific Coast. In this desire he was eminently successful and for the past quarter of a century had lived in retirement in the community where he was reared, the old **Bartruff** place on the Bloomfield highway, Wheatfield Township. Religiously he was a Presbyterian, being a member of the local church of that denomination, but also was a strong supporter of the Church of the Brethren, the faith of his parents. In politics he was a staunch Republican and served the term as associate judge in this county.

He is survived by three daughters, all residents of California, **Mrs. Helen Roothin**, **Mrs. Mary Crowther** and **Mrs. Jeanette Lefever**. A sister, **Mrs. Ida Snyder**, of Wheatfield Township, is the last surviving member of the large family.

Funeral services were conducted at his late home Wednesday morning at 10 o’clock, Rev. Calvin Eshleman, of New Kinkston, assisted by Rev. Roy Wingert, of Carlisle, conducted the services. Interment was made in the cemetery adjoining Snyder’s Church, Wheatfield Township.