

May 10, 1940.

In the course of his 67 years the lot of Hiram Chase was cast in many places. He was born to the marriage of Hiram Chase, a Scot, native of Vermont and Muzianza, a full Omaha Indian woman at the Omaha Agency, Territory of Nebraska on September 9th, 1861. There he associated with traders, soldiers, missionaries and Indians. He received his elementary education at the Presbyterian Mission School. Upon the death of his parents in 1875 he was sent with his sister to the Masonic Orphans' Home at Palmyra, Pennsylvania and remained there for five years. In 1880 he entered the Teachers' College at Peru, Nebraska and pursued his studies there until 1882 when he wooed and wed my mother; a woman of pure English stock and a lady of dignity and force of character. They lived upon the farm at the Agency for two years. Seeing that he was not suited for agricultural pursuits he began the study of law on the farm. With an intense desire for higher developed intellect he moved with his family to Cincinnati, Ohio and in 1887 was graduated from the College of Law. In 1891 he began the practice of law at Pender, Nebraska and met with success from the very beginning. Seeing that he needed help to carry on his practice he prevailed upon Thomas L. Sloan a half blood Omaha to leave his clerkship at the Agency and begin the study of law with him. He took a brotherly interest in his pupil and Sloan became a fine lawyer. Thus Chase & Sloan became the first Indian law firm in the United States. Few American Indians, men in public life, have had so multitudinous an experience and few illustrate so many types of national character. He was endowed with a New England tradition for learning, a Western knowledge of organization and an unusual insight into the American system of government. His ability, courage and good fortune gave him many opportunities to show his powers of leadership. Throughout his life he was a great reader--practicing voice and enunciation hours at a time. He became a recognized public pleader before the courts because of his knowledge of the law was unsurpassed, but he would rather argue on the principle than the law. His speeches showed that they were controlled by pre-meditated thoughts and were delivered with force and direction. His dignified bearing added impetus to his speech and though his grammar was sometimes incorrect when warmed up to his subject there were flashes of the eloquent. He had a genuine love for his people and because of his education and knowledge he felt entitled to and did lay out for them an economic program which would contribute to their advancement. In exchange for his services he naturally expected support from them to help him in his political endeavors-- but some of them felt a pressure put upon them to subordinate their plans to his judgement and broke away from him to turn up on the opposing side. In his political life he served two terms as County Judge and two terms as County Attorney of Thurston County, Nebraska. He was a man of great strength of character; he was kind, considerate and just and to him my mother showed beautiful tenderness and love. She was counselor and advisor to him-- and in

the dark days her love and devotion never waned. Upon the death of my mother in 1915 his public reputation came to an end and he spent the rest of his professional career in the interests of his people. He was a public spirited citizen--generous to a fault--giving of his time and funds when it should not have been so. When he passed to his Maker on December 3rd, 1928 he died a poor man. Such was the lot of Hiram Chase, a fine fellow, a good citizen and a wonderful dad. My Dad!!!

Extracts from the biography  
of Hiram Chase III  
by Hiram Chase IV

notes by Kenneth Chase: Youngest son of Subject:  
He appealed Law Cases to Nebraska Supreme  
Courts. (On Record) also to Supreme Court  
of United States, when ~~Howard Taft~~ <sup>Charles Evans Hughes</sup> was  
Chief Justice. ~~Taft~~ <sup>Hughes</sup> was Law Professor  
at Cincinnati Law School when Chase  
studied there and was appointed to Supreme  
Court Justice by Pres. ~~Roosevelt~~ <sup>Woodrow Wilson</sup>.  
Wm Howard Taft. 1910  
He appeal cases to Supreme Court while Hughes  
was Chief Justice in behalf of the writer of  
the above Biography - for an allotment  
of Indian Land, for Hiram Chase IV.  
This is on Record in Supreme Court Library  
Washington D.C.

joining the regular army, his place of duty being on the frontier, one will be thoroughly impressed with the idea that in his young days, at least, he knew no such thing as fear.

The firm of Chase & Sloan are prominent throughout the State and County as Indian attorneys.

**E**D. ROSE, a liveryman in the village of Pender, came to Thurston County in the spring of 1887, and located on a partly improved farm of one hundred and sixty acres, just north of Pender. On this place he made some substantial improvements in the way of a house, barn, shedding, etc., which involved an expense of \$1,500.00. He operated this place three years, when he sold out and went into the stock business in the village of Pender. He then drifted into the livery business and is now proprietor of what is known as the Star livery barn. He carries a stock valued at \$2,500.00. He still devotes some time in the stock business. In connection with his livery business he runs a bus and transfer line in connection with the Peebles house.

He was born at Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, July, 1863, son of Solomon and Mattie Rose, natives of Ohio, who are the parents of seven children, our subject being the oldest child. When three years of age, in company with his parents he came to Omaha, Nebraska. His father was a government contractor, furnishing supplies to the different forts. His father afterward purchased a ranch near Hermon, Nebraska, on which our subject grew to manhood, and from there he came to Thurston County.

He was united in marriage in the spring of 1887, to Mattie Ray, daughter of Edward and Elizabeth Ray, natives of Illinois, who had a family of two children, George and Mattie.

Our subject and his wife have been blessed by the birth of two children, Nettie and Inez.

He belongs to the Knights of Pythias Order, Lodge No. 127, of Pender. In his political choice he is a Republican.

**H**IRAM CHASE, attorney at law, doing business in the village of Pender, under the firm name of Chase & Sloan, located in that town in 1891. Soon after his arrival, this firm was formed, an office rented, and a law shingle put out. The firm's practice has been principally, with the Indians, and are known throughout the state and county, as Indian lawyers.

Mr. Chase was born on the Omaha Indian Reservation, Nebraska, September 9, 1861. His father, a Government interpreter and trader among the Indians, was Hiram Chase, Sr. (a white man), his mother was Nunzainza, granddaughter of Wahnookega, chief of the Omaha Indians. From such lineage, the subject of our sketch, derives an equal mixture of white and Indian blood. He attended the Government and Mission schools on the reservation until fifteen years of age, after which time, under the guidance of a paternal will, he was constantly away from the place of his birth, under efficient training and schooling, at Zelenople, Pennsylvania, and also at the State Normal School of Peru, Nebraska, until 1879, when he returned to his old home. From that date until 1886, most of his time was passed at Decatur, Nebraska, (near the Reservation,) and on his farm on the Reserve.

Cynthia Snyder became his wife in the spring of 1882. She is the daughter of S. G. Snyder, of New York; they are the parents of four interesting children: Isabelle, Gertrude, Ethelyn and Thurman, all of whom are living.

Our subject commenced reading law in 1885, while on his farm; admitted to the Bar

in the summer of 1889, and became distinguished as the first lawyer of Indian blood, ever known in Nebraska, and perhaps in the northwest. In the fall of 1885, he moved with his family to Decatur, and there read law in the office of Thomas R. Ashley, and while there, was instrumental in the organization and publication of *The Eaglet*, a small newspaper.

At the age of twenty-six years, under a general law of Congress, he with many others was declared a citizen of the United States, February 8, 1887. From that fall until the spring of 1889 he attended the law school of Cincinnati, Ohio; graduating from that institution, with the degree of Bachelor of Laws. He then returned to his old home, and was admitted to the Bar, during the summer of 1889, as before stated.

Socially, Mr. Chase is a member of the Masonic Order, A. F. & A. M., Lodge No. 88, Decatur, Nebraska. Politically he is a staunch Republican.

**D**WIGHT N. WHEELER, a real estate dealer, located in the village of Pender, dates his settlement in Thurston County from the spring of 1883, at which time he located in the Logan valley, one mile from where the village of Pender is now situated.

Mr. Wheeler was born in New London, Connecticut, October, 1861, son of Dwight and Louisa Wheeler, also natives of Connecticut. There were four children in his father's family, named as follows: Dwight N.; Maria; Sarah and Hattie, three of whom are living; our subject the only one, however, residing in Nebraska. When eight years of age his parents moved to Harrison County, Iowa, where his father engaged in agricultural pursuits. In 1878, when but fifteen years of age, Dwight left home and

went to Kansas, where he worked by the month at farm labor about one year, after which he came to Wayne County, Nebraska, and followed the occupation of farm laborer until 1883, when he came to his present location.

When Mr. Wheeler located in Thurston County he purchased one hundred and sixty acres of wild land, and immediately commenced to break it out. For three years he lived in an old shack of a house, which he rented. At the end of this time he erected a residence which cost \$3,000, also added barns and outbuildings at a cost of about \$4,000. He has since added to his landed interests until he now has one thousand and twenty acres, five hundred acres of which is in timothy and clover, the balance under the plow; all surrounded by a good fence and divided into lots of from forty to one hundred acres. He continued in the farming and live stock business until the fall of 1892, when he added real estate and loan, and now does business under the firm name of Wheeler & Chittenden. He still superintends his lands and carries on an extensive live stock business. His annual output from his farm is about eight hundred head of cattle, which he feeds the year round, and three hundred head of hogs. He is assisted in the management of his farm by a competent foreman.

Mr. Wheeler was married December, 1886, to Minnie Breneman. Two children have blessed this union: Hattie and Timothy.

Mr. Wheeler believes in the principles of the Republican party, and therefore casts his vote with that body.

In his social relations it should be said that he belongs to the Masonic Order A. F. & A. M. Lodge No. 203, of Pender, and also of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

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—OR—

The Chase System of Reading  
and Recording the Omaha  
and Other Indian Lan-  
.. guages ..

—BY—

*Hiram Chase.*

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THE  
REPUBLIC PRESS,  
Pender, Neb.

THE UPSTREAM PEOPLE:

An Annotated Research  
Bibliography of the  
Omaha Tribe

by

MICHAEL L. TATE

*Native American Bibliography Series, No. 14*



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NE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

sources, but he utilizes some invented dialogue to carry the story.

728. Chase, Hiram. "Indian Blames Uncle Sam." *Indian School Journal*, 9 (June 1909), 23.

Hiram Chase, member of the Omaha Tribe and County Attorney for Thurston County, Nebraska, blames federal treaty-breaking for the recent "Crazy Snake Uprising" among the Oklahoma Creeks. Three years earlier Chase had met Crazy Snake and other notable Creeks in Washington, D.C., and was much impressed by their case.

729. ———. "The Law and the American Indian in America." *Ohio Law Reporter*, 9 (October 30, 1911), 345-49.

Hiram Chase, member of the Omaha Tribe and 1889 graduate of the Cincinnati Law School, presented this speech at the first convention of the Civilized Indians of America, held in 1911 at Columbus, Ohio. He covered the general historical examples of how federal laws had reduced American Indians from a position of sovereignty to wardship. Although better assessments of the legal pattern have been written by other historians and legal scholars, this remains a unique essay from the vantage point of a highly educated Omaha tribal member.

730. ———. "A Letter from an Omaha." *Southern Workman*, 16 (May 1887), 59.

Hiram Chase (mixed-blood Omaha) was a lawyer for his Omaha Tribe. He also served as county attorney of Thurston County, Nebraska, and later was a defender of the Native American Church. This letter was written by Chase from the Omaha Reservation on April 12, 1887, to students at Hampton Institute. It explains the recent visit of Colonel Robert Gardner, U.S. Indian Inspector, to inform the inhabitants of their new citizenship rights. It also describes the new mission building, as well as the poor condition of the other government buildings. A leasing agreement for placing white-owned livestock on the reservation has recently been concluded.

731. "Death of Mrs. John Pilcher." *Nebraska History*, 5 (July-September 1922), 49.

Harriet Pilcher, widow of John Pilcher and daughter-in-law of Joshua Pilcher, died on December 14, 1921, at Walthill, Nebraska. She had long been honored in the Omaha Tribe and the family name has earned much tribal respect.

732. Densmore, Frances. "The Life of Blackbird the Omaha." *American Boy*, 5 (February 1904), 108.

This somewhat fictionalized account was aimed at teenaged readers, and most of it deals with Blackbird's youth, about which very little is known even from oral traditions. Densmore also describes the familiar story of Blackbird's use of poisons to kill rivals, his own death at the hands of smallpox, and his burial astride his favorite horse.

733. "Ellis Blackbird." *Indian Leader*, 19 (March 1916), 14.

Brief obituary for Omaha tribal leader Ellis Blackbird (Shongaska) who died on January 25, 1916, at the approximate age of 85. Blackbird resisted efforts to sell tribal land but willingly adopted many white customs and values.

734. Gilmore, Melvin R. "The True Logan Fontenelle." *Publications of the Nebraska State Historical Society*, vol. 19. Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1919, pp. 64-71.

Argues that Logan Fontenelle was not a true chief, but rather rose to prominence within the tribe because of his association with white agents and traders.

735. "Hiram Chase." *Indian's Friend*, 21 (July 1909), 8.

Hiram Chase, county attorney for Thurston County, Nebraska, defends the recent "Crazy Snake Uprising" among the Creeks of Indian Territory. Brief article congratulates Chase for his legal skills and his willingness to help his Omaha people.

736. Hraba, Joseph. "The American Indian and Ethnicity in Iowa's Future." In *The Worlds Between Two*

1014. ———. *The Present Condition of My People*. New York: American Missionary Association, 1880. 8 pp.

Josephine Barnaby, working as a missionary for the American Missionary Association, describes life on the Standing Rock Reservation. Poverty dominates most people's lives, but some have attempted farming and are sending their children to school. She scolds the traditionalists who refuse to adopt "civilized ways" and who resist the total acceptance of Christianity. She conversely praises the missionaries who have produced a Lakota-English Bible, and wishes that such a translation existed for her own Omaha Tribe.

1015. Cayou, Frank. "Past, Present and Future of the Carlisle Indian School Team." *Red Man*, 14 (January 1898), 5.

Frank Cayou graduated from Carlisle Indian Industrial School in 1896 and subsequently taught athletics at Washington University in St. Louis. He later attended Illinois State University, and eventually worked for the Spalding Sporting Company of Chicago. This article describes the celebrated Carlisle football team.

1016. Chase, Hiram, Jr. "My Trip to Kansas City." *Carlisle Arrow* (January 23, 1914).

Hiram Chase, Jr. (Omaha) was from Pender, Nebraska, and graduated from Carlisle Indian School in 1915.

1017. ———. "Valedictory." *Carlisle Arrow* (June 4, 1915).

1018. Fletcher, Alice C. "Letter." In *Ten Year's Work for Indians at Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute*. Hampton, Virginia: Hampton Institute, 1888, pp. 61-66.

This letter, dated February 8, 1888, describes the many Omaha men and women who have returned from Hampton Institute and Carlisle Indian School to lead productive lives on the reservation. She especially singles out for praise Philip and Minnie Stabler, Noah and Susan Lovejoy, Mary Tyndall

and Marguerite La Flesche. She also discusses some problems which slow the acculturation process.

1019. Fontenelle, Eugene. "Our Summer Out." *Southern Workman*, 17 (January 1888), 8.

Eugene Fontenelle (Omaha), son of Henry Fontenelle, was born about 1860, and attended Hampton Institute from 1885 to 1888. He describes a visit to New York City with fellow students, and praises the teachers at Hampton for their true commitment to Indian education.

1020. Freemont, Henrietta R. "Specialties." *Red Man*, 12 (February 1895), 4.

1021. ———. "That the Negro is Superior to the Indian." *Red Man*, 12 (January-February 1894), 4.

Henrietta R. Freemont (Omaha) was born about 1870 on the Omaha Reservation. She attended mission school on the reservation, enrolled at Hampton Institute in the mid-1880s, and graduated from Carlisle in 1895. She briefly attended Swarthmore College before taking a job in the Indian Service in South Dakota. She returned to Walthill, Nebraska, to make a permanent home. In this article, written about a formal debate at Carlisle, she argues the affirmative case.

1022. "From Our Indian Trained Nurse." *Southern Workman*, 19 (December 1890), 131.

Reprints two letters from an unidentified nurse, formerly educated at Hampton Institute and the New Haven Training School, now assigned to the Omaha Reservation. She mentions the need for temperance workers to help the Omahas break their cycle of alcoholism, and she praises the medical work of Susan La Flesche on the reservation. The unidentified letter-writer is apparently Josephine Barnaby who had previously served at the Standing Rock Hospital.

1023. Fuller, Elsie. "A New Citizen." *Talks and Thoughts*, 2 (April 1887), 1.

Elsie Fuller (Omaha) was born in Nebraska about 1870. She attended Hampton Institute from 1885 to 1888.



1751. Densmore, Frances. "Omaha Music." Manuscript written in 1944 and now available at the Bureau of American Ethnology in Washington, D.C.
1752. Dorsey, James Owen. "Omaha and Ponca Personal Names." Undated typescript in National Anthropological Archives, Washington, D.C.
1753. "Dougherty, John Letterbook, 1826-1829." State Historical Society of Missouri in St. Louis, Missouri.  
Scattered correspondence, especially between Agent John Dougherty and officials at Ft. Leavenworth during 1828 and 1829, reveals continuous problems caused by the Sacs raiding along the Missouri River. Omahas, Otos and Yankton Sioux are the special targets of these depredations, and they constantly complain to government representatives about the lack of military protection.
1754. "Enrollment Records of the Records of the Land Division of the Bureau of Indian Affairs." Record Group 75. National Archives, Washington, D.C.  
These records include eleven indexed volumes of registers of Indian families, as compiled by allotting-agents for the Omaha and eight other reservations between 1884 and 1909.
1755. Estle, Hulah. "Bright Eyes (Susette La Flesche)." WPA manuscript located in Special Collections of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, in file folder labeled "Ethnicity—French-Indian." 2 pp.  
A useless typescript which discusses Susette La Flesche's role with the celebrated Standing Bear Case.
1756. "First Indian Lawyer." WPA manuscript located in Special Collections of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, in file folder labeled "Ethnicity—Omaha Indians (A-L)." 1 p.  
A brief biography of Hiram Chase (Omaha), the first Indian to become a member of the Nebraska Bar Association. He

- graduated from law school in 1890, and passed the state bar examinations the following year.
1757. Fletcher, Alice C. "Correspondence with Franz Boas." Manuscript collection in the Library of the American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia.  
Twenty-five letters written in the 1890s-1904, describe the music of the Omaha and Kwakiutl.
1758. Fortune, R. F. "Correspondence with Franz Boas, 1931-1934." Manuscript collection in the Library of the American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia.  
Collection consists of 19 letters, some of which include reports on field notes on Omaha secret societies made during 1930.
1759. Frank, Ane. "Logan Fontenelle." WPA manuscript located in Special Collections of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, in file folder labeled "Ethnicity—Omaha Indians (A-L)." 3 pp.  
Traditional story of his life which imparts no new information.
1760. ———. "Manuel Lisa." WPA manuscript located in Special Collections of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, in file folder labeled "Nebraska: Early Explorers and Explorations." 4 pp.  
This generalized typescript contains a few errors and imparts no new information.
1761. Free, Lydia W. Interview with Lydia W. Free (Winnebago) April 14, 1976. Audiotape of 30 min. Located in American Indian Oral History Project, Department of History, University of Nebraska at Omaha.  
Free, health officer at Winnebago, Nebraska at the time of this interview, describes health care facilities for the Omaha and Winnebago reservations, including specifics on alcohol-

# HIRAM CHASE DIES AT CHADRON

Hiram Chase was born on the Omaha reservation, Sept. 9, 1861, and died on December 3, 1928, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Fred. Ammons at Chadron, Nebraska. His father was government inspector for the Omahas and was a white man, while his mother was a granddaughter of Wa-noo-ha-ga, Chief of the Omaha tribe.

Mr. Chase attended the government and Mission schools on the reservation until he was fifteen years of age, when he and a younger brother went to an orphan's school in Pennsylvania. He later attended school at Bellevue College and the Normal at Peru, Nebraska.

In 1879 he returned to his home on the reservation. He commenced the study of law on the farm and in 1889 went to law school at Cincinnati, Ohio, where he graduated with the degree of bachelor of laws. In 1889 he was admitted to the bar in the state of Nebraska.

In 1893 he was elected county judge of Thurston county and served one term. In 1898 he was elected county attorney and reelected in 1901. He practiced law in all the courts of the state and in the Supreme Court of the United States, and was regarded as a successful lawyer and one of the county's respected citizens.

Mr. Chase was a member of the A. F. and A. M. fraternity. He was married in 1882 to Miss Cynthia Snyder, an employee at the Mission on the Omaha reservation.

To this union were born nine children: Isabelle of Chadron, Gertrude of Scotia, Ethelyn and Thurman of Chadron, Hiram and Donald of Portland, Oregon; Russel of Omaha, Kenneth of Chadron and Margaret who died in infancy. He is also survived by 16 grandchildren.

Mrs. Chase preceded her husband in death fourteen years ago and since that time Mr. Chase has suffered a decline in health.

Mr. Chase was married again to Mrs. Nellie Springer of Macy, Nebraska, where they made their home until the last three years. Due to his ill health he divided his time between his daughters at Scotia and Chadron.

Funeral services were conducted in the Presbyterian Church at Pender, Thursday by Dr. B. M. Long. Interment was in Pender cemetery.

The remains were brought here by his son Kenneth Chase.

Sympathy is extended to the family by their many Pender friends.

Attorney Hiram Chase, of Pender, is a promising young man who commands the respect of all with whom he comes in contact, wherever he goes. Mr. Chase received a wide newspaper notice at the time he graduated from the eastern law school which he attended, and also from time to time as he advanced, and was admitted to practice in higher courts. While in Lincoln recently he was extended that courteous treatment by the press which he has always merited and received. The HERALD has watched the advances of Mr. Chase and taken a great interest in his success achieved often under unfavorable circumstances because he is worthy and is of necessity envied by a band of selfish mortals whose ambition is thwarted by him. The HERALD will always take a sweet pleasure in noticing Attorney Hiram Chase's triumphs, and hope his moral life and business conduct will be such as to sometime win him distinction and fame.