

CANAWLERS AT REST

CHARLES BECHTOL

b. September 3, 1841

d. 1932

Find-A-Grave #73729359

By Carolyn I. Schmidt



Charles Bechtol was born in Stark county, Ohio on September 3, 1841 to David and Mary Bechtol. He was their third son. His mother died while he was still a child. His father, who was born in Westmoreland county, Pennsylvania settled, on a farm in Stark county when he was a young man. He moved to Indiana in his latter years and died at South Bend at age ninety-seven.

Charles grew up on the family homestead in Ohio assisting his father and brothers with cultivating the farm. This hard agricultural work, which he didn't like at all, taught him to be industrious and thrifty. His formal education was at the district school during its short winter terms.

By age 16 Charles had had enough of farming and began to learn the carpenter's trade. He followed this occupation for three years during the summer months.

In 1860, at about age 20, Charles came to Indiana and found work in a brickyard in Whitley county. He then moved to Huntington county, Indiana and was employed along the Wabash & Erie Canal running from Huntington to Junction, Ohio and then down the Miami & Erie Canal to Cincinnati, Ohio. We do not know if he was a boatman or worked at keeping the canal in repair. He also worked in the shops of the Wabash Railroad and the Erie Railroad in Huntington.

On March 2, 1865 Charles Bechtol, about age 25, married Mrs. Mary E. Anderson, the widow of George Anderson, in Huntington county. She was about a year older

than Charles. She had three children by her former husband.

Charles learned the trade of machinist and was employed in Toledo, Ohio for about eighteen months. He then returned to Huntington and was employed by the Erie Railroad. He became a carpenter and car-builder in the Erie shops.

In August 1874 Charles O. Bechtol was born into the family. Charles and Mary were in their early thirties at the time.

The 1880 U.S. Federal Census lists Charles Bechtol's occupation as a farmer. He is 39 years old, Mary is age 41, and Charles O. is age 5. Living with them are Harmon Bechtol, age 42, Charles' brother; Alonzo Anderson, age 20, Mary's son; and Alice M. Anderson, age 18, Mary's daughter. Harmon is a collar maker, Alonzo a compositor, and Alice a sewing girl.

In 1892 Charles was made a machinist in Huntington, and followed that trade until 1909 when he retired at age 68. He said he felt he had earned a rest.

Mary E. (Anderson) Bechtol passed away in May 1913. She was laid to rest in Section C of Mt. Hope Cemetery in Huntington, Indiana.

Charles was always thrifty and industrious. He had excellent judgment when making investments and became a holder of a number of valuable properties in Huntington in

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addition to his home on East Franklin Street.

Charles, as well as his wife Mary, followed the Methodist Episcopal faith. They consistently attended the first church of that denomination in Huntington.

He was politically an independent and liked to use his own judgment in selecting those for whom he voted rather than being led by a political party. He never desired to hold any political office himself.

Charles belonged to the Lafontaine Lodge No. 42 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. He had a genial and courteous manner. His warm, wide circle of friends appreciated his many sterling qualities as did his many acquaintances.

Charles Bechtol passed away sometime in 1932. He was laid to rest in Lot 6, Section C of Mount Hope Ceme-



Dr. Charles O. Bechtol

Charles Bechtol

Charles O. Bechtol, Jr.

Picture taken 1912-13

medical school and was a member of Beta Theta Pi in 1896. He finished his medical term at the University of Illinois College of Medicine in 1901 and was an intern in the Cook County Hospital and Alexian Brothers Hospital in Chicago. He married Nancy Lee Martin, daughter of Joseph and Jane Wilson (Lee) Martin on January 14, 1902. She was born on June 12, 1872 in Monmouth, Illinois. She was also a doctor having been prepared in Houghton, Seminary, Clinton, N.Y.; Wellesley College, 1895-96; A.E.I. located in Madison, Wisconsin, 1904-06; Marion, Indiana 1906-1919; and Long Beach California 1919-?.

Around 1906 Charles O. and Nancy Bechtol moved to Marion, Grant county, Indiana, where he became a leading surgeon. He was a member of the Grant Medical Association and a Fellow of the American Medical Association. Their only child, Charles O. Bechtol, Jr. was born on August 23, 1911. Charles Sr. died at age 44 on April 21, 1918 and was buried in Mount Hope Cemetery, Huntington, Indiana.. His wife, Nancy (Lee Martin), Bechtol, died in Grant county prior to February 6, 1930, the date of her obituary

Charles O. Bechtol, Jr., Charles' grandson, followed in his father's footsteps and became a doctor. He was born on August 23, 1911, was educated at Stanford Medical School 1940, and became internationally known for his research in biomechanics and orthopedic surgery. He chaired the Yale Medical School Department of Surgery, where he established the Yale Biomechanics Laboratory, before joining the UCLA faculty in 1957 as professor and



MARY E
1838-1913

BECHTOL

CHARLES
1841-1932

tery in Huntington, Indiana.

His son, Charles O. Bechtol was graduated from Huntington High School, attended Indiana University's

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chairman of the Department of Orthopedics.

Charles O. Bechtol Jr. made major improvements in artificial limbs. He designed the Bechtol "Total Hip" system, the Bechtol "fluted" bone screw and the Bechtol "continuous strength" bone plate as well as shoulder and knee prostheses. In 1971 he founded the Los Angeles-based Joint Implant Surgery & Research Foundation, which he chaired until his death.

On July 19, 1975 Charles Jr. married Leola L. Feitshans Schlesinger. He was 63 years old and she was fifty-two.

In 1991, he received the Markowitz Award from the

Academy of Surgical Research for a lifetime of outstanding contributions to medicine through experimental surgery. He passed away in Pasadena, California on July 16, 1998 at age 86.

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