

Mary R. Moody, National Bank President

By Karl Sanford Kabelac

MARY R. FLEECE, THE DAUGHTER OF JAMES and Louisa (Yeates) Fleece was born in July 1863 in Lake City, Calhoun County, Iowa. Her parents had recently moved to this community and she is said to have been the first white girl born in the county. She married Lewis Warren Moody of Pomeroy, Iowa on September 3, 1882.

Pomeroy is also located in Calhoun County, an agricultural area in the northwestern part of the state. It was named for Charles W. Pomeroy, an early landowner in the area and a one-term congressman from Iowa. Its population at the beginning of the last century was slightly over 900 residents, today the population is about 650.

Lewis W. Moody, born in 1856 in Virginia, had settled in Pomeroy in 1881. Through hard work and perseverance, he became a successful land developer, lawyer and banker. He was the founding president of The First National Bank of Pomeroy (charter #6063) in 1902, and served as its president until his death on October 9, 1914.

His widow, Mary R. Moody succeeded him as president with the local weekly newspaper of November 19, 1914, carrying a short news item, "At a meeting of the stockholders of the First National Bank, M. R. Moody was elected president and director." She served for several years until 1917/18 when W. C. McCulloch, the vice president of the bank, assumed the presidency.

Mrs. Moody died on April 16, 1945, and is buried in the family plot in Union Cemetery in Pomeroy. The bank itself had closed in 1931.

Sources and Acknowledgements

The county history, *Past and Present of Calhoun County*, Chicago, 1915, v 2, pp. 5-10 has a picture and biographical sketch of Lewis W. Moody. His obituary appeared in *The Pomeroy Herald* for October 15, 1914, with a long tribute by J. A. Davy, a friend of over forty

years, appearing in the paper on October 29, 1914. The notice of Mary R. Moody's election as president and director appeared in the paper on November 19, 1914. Unfortunately, the issue of the paper that would have contained her obituary in 1945 has apparently not survived. The assistance of Jim Ehrhardt, who shared his research on Mrs. Moody, is gratefully appreciated. ♦

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The weekly *Pomeroy Herald* carried a front page ad each week for The First National Bank of Pomeroy. This ad from November 26, 1914, is the first with M. [Mary] R. Moody listed as president and director. The week before a short notice about her election as bank president and director had appeared in the paper.

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