

Doc Fehlman dies of pneumonia

REDDING — Doc Fehlman never made it home, and he'll not be back as he promised.

He died Tuesday in Redding at age 95, after a week-long bout with pneumonia.

Clinton "Doc" E. Fehlman left his post in November as keeper of the Santa Cruz High School alumni records, a job he originated more than 30 years ago. He was to have journeyed home to Beemer, Neb. But first, he wanted to visit his nephew in Redding.

Doc was a jolly, loud-talking, mild-cussing, totally optimistic tiger of a man. He was as steeped in Santa Cruz High's past, as the gym floor is in preservative oil.

He came to Santa Cruz in 1922 and began teaching science, economy, history and athletics at Santa Cruz High one year later.

After 30 years, "they kicked me out," he used to say with a cackle.

Doc was never "out." He retired in 1953 but never left the campus professionally.

He continued as keeper of the alumni records for 30 years as thousands threw off their cap and gowns and went into the cruel world.

A special alumni office was built in 1974 through private donations. Support continues to come in from former students around the world.

Doc made Santa Cruz High seem important and alive even for those high up in years.

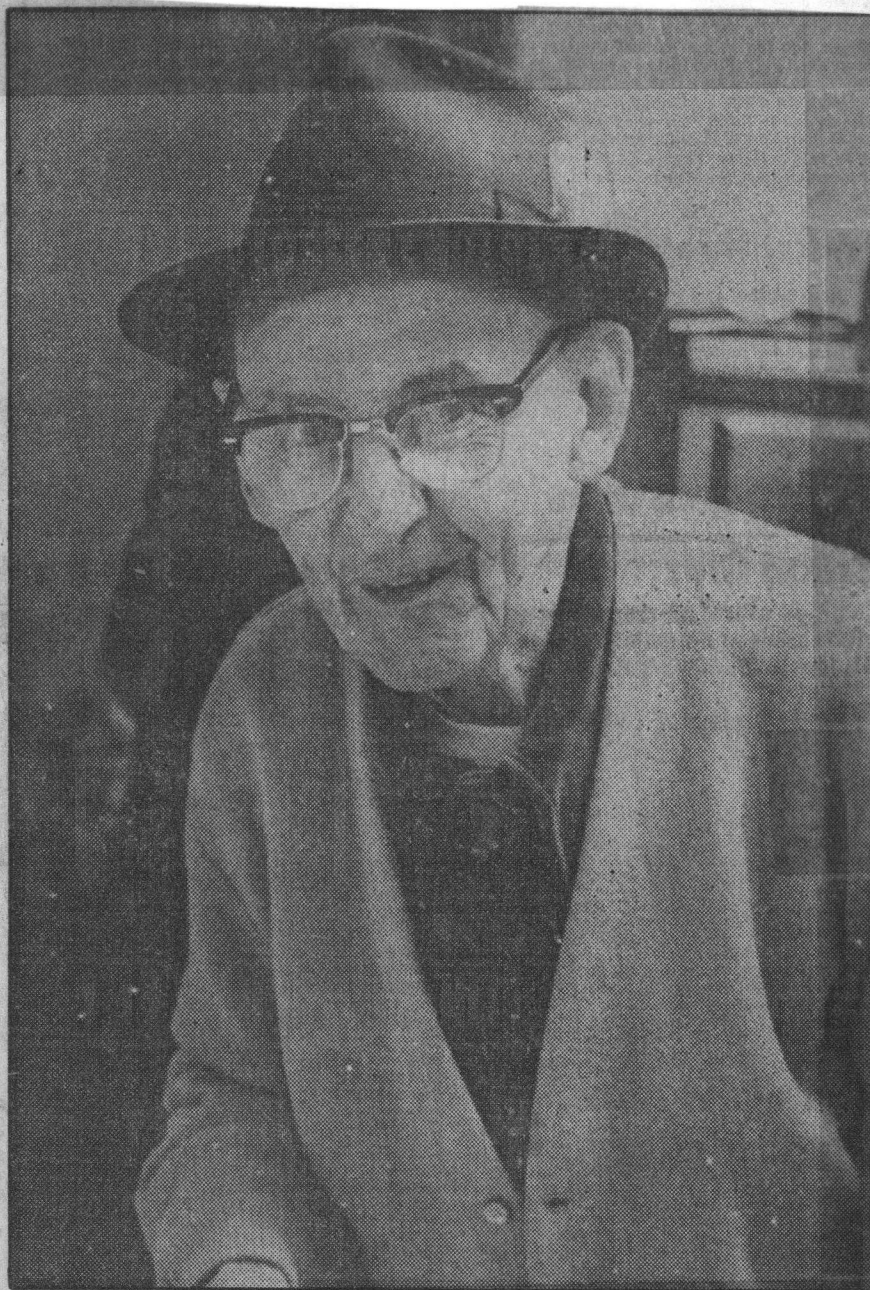
Until November he reported to work daily, "whistling slightly to disguise my shortness of breath," he said.

Doc figured some 15,000 grads are in the alumni hall files.

People were always giving parties for him and honoring him for this and that.

Doc graduated from the University of Nebraska, then taught school for six years in the Philippine Islands and did some football coaching there.

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Pete Amos/Sentinel

Mr. Santa Cruz High, Doc Fehlman

He came to Santa Cruz because this was the home of his late brother, Dr. Edward Fehlman. A part-time job at the high school led to his teaching career.

He served as timer at athletic events, especially in football, back to 1925. In fact the high school gym is named after the man.

In his last newsletter, written in December, he said he was going home, "I am still a Cornhusker at heart, although I will always have a warm spot in my heart for you folks and for the many who have made this organization what it is today."

Doc was a member of the Wisner,

Neb. Masons, F&AM 114.

He is survived by his nephew Walter Fehlman of Redding and two nieces, Ruth Boyd and Adeline Hotchkiss, both of Encino.

Services will be held in the Santa Cruz High School gym at 2 p.m. Saturday with the Masons in charge of the ceremonies.

Interment will be in the Soquel Cemetery.

Visitation will be at White's chapel Friday from 4 to 8 p.m. and Saturday, from 8 a.m. to noon.

Contributions to the Doc Fehlman Scholarship Fund, in care of the Santa Cruz High School Alumni Association, 415 Walnut Ave., Santa Cruz, 95060 are preferred.