

Standard 4 1-13-47

# Gus' Becker, Noted Industrialist, Dies

Resident of Ogden  
Since 1890; Leader  
In Civic Activities

Dies at 78



G. L. (Gus) Becker

One of Ogden's most prominent citizens, Gustav Lorenz (Gus) Becker, 78, died Sunday at eight-ten p. m. in the family home, 2408 Van Buren avenue, of a brief heart ailment. He was nationally-known as an industrialist, business man and sportsman.

Mr. Becker was president of the Becker Products Co., Ogden, the Becker Brewing & Malting Co., Evanston, Wyo., and had served as president of the United States Brewers association.

He was one of 12 persons in the world to be awarded the American Legion medal for distinguished service and was selected as a lifetime honorary member of the Baker-Merrill post of the Legion because of his interest in the affairs of veterans of World war I and development of the Ogden post.

He was appointed president of the National Brewers association in 1939, shortly after the death of Col. Jacob Ruppert, owner of the New York Yankees baseball team. In 1937 he was selected from a group of 300 members at Christmas time to present a \$2,000 plaque made of Utah silver to Mr. Ruppert, then president of the association.

Previously he had served as director, chairman of the executive committee, grains committee, and hops committee of the association, one of the oldest trade organizations in the United States. He maintained an active interest in it until his death.

He was the first westerner to be adopted into the Bannock and Shoshone tribes of Indians, just after the same tribe adopted the late President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The title, Queen y' Tosh, Chief One Feather, was bestowed upon him. He also was an honorary member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

He was born in Winona, Minn., on April 7, 1868. He came to Ogden with his family in 1890. His father founded the Becker company, which he and his brother, Albert, continued to develop into one of the largest breweries in the west.

He was a member at various times of the following organizations: Lincoln Parks Traps club and Chicago Athletic club of that city; Alta club, Salt Lake; Zurah temple of the Mystic Shrine, Minneapolis; Ogden chamber of commerce, Elks, Weber Wildlife association, and Ogden Duck club.

**Led Pioneer Revival**

In 1934 he was named chief administrator of the "Ogden pioneer spirit recovery program," a movement launched by the chamber of commerce to revitalize the community and establish civic consciousness. In 1934 and 1937 he was appointed chairman of the president's birthday ball, a function aimed at raising funds to combat infantile paralysis. Astride his white horse he was a familiar figure at the head of Ogden Pioneer days parades.

It was recalled that the Becker plant was the only brewery in Utah which continued operation during prohibition days. It employed men in the manufacture of soft drinks and near-beer.

In June of 1933 the plant was enabled to begin manufacture of 3.2 beer while Utah still was a "dry" state. This was made possible under the Huggins bill, authored by State Senator Ira Huggins. The measure permitted manufacture of beer in Utah for sale in "wet" states. At that time there was much unemployment in the state, and reopening of the large brewery helped alleviate the situation.

**Philosophy of Work**

Mr. Becker's philosophy, once stated in an interview, was simple:

"The only things I have accomplished were to do the things that came to hand every day to the best of my ability. I've tried to do one important thing, to make two blades of grass grow where one grew before.

"That is to provide work for men. Every cent my brother (A. E. Becker) and I have invested has been with that object in mind, to provide work for men."

Mr. Becker married Thekla Bohn in Winona, Aug. 18, 1892. They celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary in Ogden last summer.

Survivors include his widow, two daughters, Mrs. Arthur Perkins, Ogden, and Mrs. Sidney Badcon, Hollywood, Calif., and his brother.

Funeral services will be conducted Thursday at one p. m. in the B. P. O. Elks home. The mortuary at 3408 Washington is directing arrangements.

ew Shipment  
TEA 7  
YOU SHOT

WAYS DIAL 7381  
Dial 494  
Iron Fireman Dealer  
H. BLAES  
WAYS AVAILABLE  
heating experience.  
nization with 30 years  
30 Monthly  
ent Necessary  
-tate Delivery  
KERS  
21, 3251 Wall, Ogden, Utah

TA  
TY  
BLA  
EVR  
C  
I  
H  
S  
H  
P  
fact

# Becker, Noted Industrialist, Dies in Ogden

Continued from Page One

filiated with many other Utah business concerns.

A native of Winona, Minn., he was born April 7, 1863. His father founded the Becker company, which he and his brother, Albert E. Becker, continued to develop into one of the largest breweries in the west.

He married Thekala Bohm in Winona, Aug. 18, 1892. They celebrated their 54th wedding anniversary in Ogden last summer.

Surviving are his widow, two daughters, Mrs. Arthur Perkins, Ogden, and Mrs. Sidney Babson, Hollywood, Cal., and his brother



G. L. (Gus) Becker was past president, U. S. Brewers Assn.

# Becker, Noted Industrialist, Dies in Ogden

Tribe Leased Wire

OGDEN, Jan. 12—Gustav Lorenz (Gus) Becker, 78, nationally known industrialist, businessman and sportsman, died Sunday at 8:10 p.m. in the family home, 2408 Van Buren ave., of a brief heart ailment.

Mr. Becker was president of the Becker Products Co., Ogden, the Becker Brewing and Malting Co., Evanston, Wyo., and had served as president of the United States Brewers Assn.

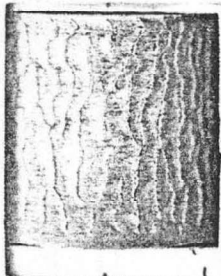
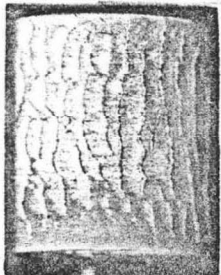
As a sportsman, he was perhaps most widely known for his ability as a trapshooter and his shooting exhibitions. He was recognized as one of the best in the world. He had held the trapshooting handicap championship of America and is one of the few men in the world to win the Globe trophy of the Sportsmen's Assn. of the Northwest three times.

Mr. Becker was one of the 12 persons in the world to be awarded the American Legion medal for distinguished service and was selected as a lifetime honorary member of the Baker-Merrill post of the American Legion because of his interest in affairs of veterans of World War I and development of the Ogden post.

The Ogden leader was appointed president of the national brewers association in 1939 shortly after the death of Col. Jacob Ruppert, owner of the New York Yankees baseball team. Previously he had served as chairman of the association's executive committee, grains committee, hops committee, and maintained an active interest in the organization up to the time of his death.

He was the first westerner to be adopted into the Bannock and Shoshone tribe of Indians, just after the same tribe adopted the late Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In addition to his connection with the Becker Co. he was of



## Gustav L. Becker Home

The home at 2408 Van Buren Avenue was constructed in 1915 for Mr. and Mrs. Gustav L. Becker.

Gustav Lorenz Becker was born in Winona, Minnesota, on April 7, 1868. His father, John S. Becker, had left his native Baden, Germany, in 1845 at the age of 16 because of his opposition to Prussian militarism. Arriving in Minnesota, the elder Becker was one of the early settlers of Winona.

Gustav Becker attended high school in Winona, then graduated from Lambert's College in his home town. Following his graduation he entered the business world and in 1890 moved to Ogden where he helped establish the Becker Brewing and Malting Company. The Brewery was begun by William Schellhas, a partner of John S. Becker, but in 1890 Becker moved to Ogden to operate the business with the assistance of his two sons Gustav and Albert.

In 1892 Gus Becker married Thekla Bohn, a native of Winona whose father, also a German emigrant, operated the Bohn Lumber Company. Two daughters, Thekla Katherine and Helen Eugenia, were born to the couple.

Gustav Becker served as president of the company while his brother, Alfred, filled the office of vice-president and his father that of secretary. The Ogden Brewery prospered during its first quarter century and became one of the most important distributors in the west. However, during the mid-1910's, the issue of prohibition threatened to close the brewery. As resourceful businessmen, the Becker Brothers were able to meet the new situation by changing their production to soft drinks and a non-alcoholic

cereal beverage known as Becco. In June 1933 when the consumption of 3.2 beer was permitted in surrounding states, although not in Utah, the Becker Brothers were able to secure passage of a state law which permitted the manufacture of beer in Utah for sale in "wet" states. The justification for this measure was the number of jobs which could be provided during the difficult days of the depression.

The importance of Gustav Becker in the national brewing business is evident in his appointment as President of the United States Brewers Association in 1939. Prior to that time he had served as Chairman of the Association's executive committee, grains committee, and hops committee.

In addition to the brewery business, Gustav Becker was active in several other Utah businesses. He served as director of the Amalgamated Sugar Company, Ogden State Bank, the Utah-Idaho Central Railway Company, the Superior Rock Springs Coal Company, the Ogden Morning Examiner, the Tintic Standard Mining Company, and Lion Coal Company.

As a second generation German-American businessman during the First World War, Gustav Becker was sensitive to potential charges of disloyalty. In 1918, at the age of fifty, he rejoined the Utah National Guard and worked strenuously to promote the interest of America's fighting <sup>forces</sup> ~~tones~~. His efforts were not unrewarded. He was one of twelve persons in the world selected to be awarded the American Legion medal for distinguished service and was made an honorary life-time member of the Baker-Merrill post of the American Legion in appreciation for his work in behalf of the veterans of World War I and the development of the Ogden American Legion Post.

Although well-known for his business activities, Gustav Becker was equally known as a sportsman. Recognized as one of the world's best trapshooters, he held the trapshooting handicap championship of America and

won the Globe trophy of the Sportsmen's Association of the Northwest three times. One of his most publicized accomplishments was the shooting of clay targets while standing in a motor boat as it skimmed across Pine View Reservoir at speeds approaching sixty miles an hour. Another popular feat was to play "My Old Kentucky Home," with a .22 calibre rifle on a chime target built for him by John Moses Browning, the world famous inventor of firearms. (Browning's Ogden home is a National Register site.)

In praise of Browning and Becker one newspaper writer observed, "Ogden has the unique distinction of being the home of two men who became known to all the world for their proficiency with firearms--John M. Browning, who developed them to a point of convenience and accuracy never before deemed possible, and Gus Becker, who demonstrated the art of shooting speedily and surely against all challengers."<sup>1</sup>

Gustav Becker died January 12, 1947, at his home in Ogden. His wife remained in the Van Buren Avenue home until her death in 1958. The Becker home was purchased in 1959 by Milton and Rita Berlin who <sup>renovated</sup> ~~renovated~~ the home for use as a wedding reception center. The home ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> now ~~owned by~~ <sup>owned by</sup> ~~Les Stuart of Estate Investment Associates and is still being used as a~~ <sup>of Estate Investment Associates and is being restored to its</sup> ~~wedding reception center.~~ <sup>original character.</sup> ~~wedding reception center.~~ <sup>has the offices</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Salt Lake Tribune, January 13, 1947.