

ABOUT: THOMAS JAMES KELLY

Born: 8-6-1889

Place: Fort Wayne, IN

Died: 1-10-1951.

Ancestry: Irish father and mother

Cause of Death: Heart attack

Burial: Catholic Cemetery, Fort Wayne, IN

Married: 10-10-1916, to Margaret Russell

St. Patrick's Catholic Church, Fort Wayne, IN

Children: Mary Margaret (Mrs. Aaron Still), Helen (Mrs. Ben GiaQuinta), Josephine (Mrs. Don Dolan), Thomas J., Jr., Richard Emmett, Daniel Lawrence and Stephen Russell.

Dwellings: N.W. Corner of Third and Barthold Streets, South Street in Lafayette, Indiana, 3018 Shawnee Drive and 720 Nuttman Avenue in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Thomas was the oldest of eight children born to Robert E. and Ellen Ryan Kelly. He attended the Precious Blood grade school, Fort Wayne Central High School and Purdue University, graduating with a degree in Engineering in 1911.

He became associated with the Gas Co. after a brief period with Diamond Rubber Co. of Northern Michigan. The Gas Co. later became known as the Northern Indiana Public Service Co. and he remained with them until his death. At that time he was the general manager of the Fort Wayne Division.

He was active in the Fort Wayne Chamber of Commerce and served as president for two years, 1936 to 1938. He belonged to the Kiwanis Club, the Hibernians and the Quest Club. He was a Trustee of St. Patrick's Catholic Church as well as a Fourth Degree Knight of Columbus, President of the Holy Name Society, a member of the Fort Wayne Country Club and various other organizations.

Description: Height: 5'11", weight: 180 lbs., brown eyes and black hair that turned gray in later years. He was out-going, good humored, even-tempered, well liked and admired by those who knew him. He was called upon often to serve as Master of Ceremonies and as speaker of various community occasions. According to the newspaper at the time of this death he was "one of the best liked men in Fort Wayne." He was a dedicated husband and father and spent much of his time helping others. He was a staunch alumnus of Purdue University and a follower of their athletic teams, particularly, football.

As a young boy he carried papers and stated that his route consisted of everything north of Huffman Street and west of Sherman. Street. Once while serving as an altar boy his surplice caught on fire while he was lighting candles. He ran to the sacristy, removed the surplice, threw it out the window and returned to his position at the altar. He was a

Democrat along with the rest of his family until Roosevelt's 2nd administration, at which time he became involved in local politics in the Republican party and became "anti New Deal."

Walter Walb, Cliff Ward, Harry Hogan, Bert Sharon, Alex Robertson, Verne Mitchell, L.C. Heavner, Mel North, C.E. McBride and Bill Muller were some of his close friends and associates. Vera Nipper was his secretary for many years.