

# FRANK WILLITS DIES AT HOME<sup>1944</sup> IN CONCORD TWP.

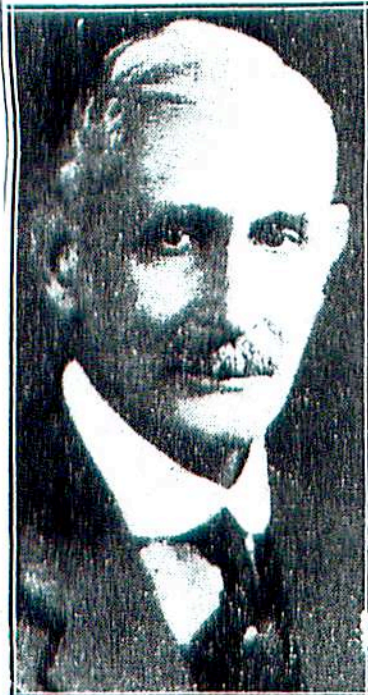
Prominent Farmer  
State Secretary Of  
Agriculture In '23

Frank P. Willits, of Ward, Secretary of Agriculture in the Pinchot cabinet from 1923 to 1927 and nationally-known agriculturist, died Thursday at his home in Concord Township, in his 89th year, after an illness of a month.

Starting life virtually as an orphan, his parents having died when he was six years old, the former cabinet member carved out his own Algeesque career, which carried him to high office and into the national councils of the farming and dairy industries.

Along the way, he was the spark which led to the organization of several national farming and co-operative bodies and the establishment of local institutions.

An honor which he particularly prized was his membership on the Board of Trustees of State College, a post he held from 1923 to 1944.



FRANK P. WILLITS

about the time that he was forced to admit it was no longer wise to "go out much".

However, up to the time of his illness a month ago, he retained the keenest interest in public affairs, particularly farming in which in late years he had been aided by one of his sons, Paul L., whom he had taken into partnership.

He was treasurer of the Pennsylvania State Grange for 30 years and for years had been honorary director of the Inter-State Milk Producers' Association and of the National Milk Producers' Federation, Washington, D. C., which he had served as president and treasurer.

He was one of the organizers and long director of the Grange National Bank, in Downingtown, and had been a director of the Joint Technical Fourth Grade Francis P. J. Colgan, Jr., 418 Oak Lane, Wayne; down: Private First Class Robert East Baltimore Avenue, East Lans- Sergeant William H. Cromley, 623 Raddourne road, Upper Darby; Staff

## Mrs. F. P. Willits Dies at 90

Mrs. Elizabeth Paschall Willits, widow of Frank P. Willits, who served as State Secretary of Agriculture from 1923 to 1927, died yesterday at her home in Concordville.

Mrs. Willits, crippled for more than 30 years, otherwise had been in health until a few days before her death. She was 90.

Her husband, well-known for his activities in the Grange as well as in politics, died in July, 1945.

Mrs. Willits was active in affairs of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and the Grange. She was a member of St. John's Episcopal Church, Concordville.

She is survived by two sons, Paul L., of Concordville, and Joseph H., of New York; six grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

Services will be held at 2 P. M. Tuesday from the establishment of Harold A. Famous, 101 S. Church st., West Chester. Interment will be in Media Cemetery.

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He died in 1885, two sons, Paul, his partner, and Joseph H., of Armonk, N. Y., and a sister, Miss Ellen Willits, who also lives at the home. Six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren also survive.

Mr. Willits was appointed Secretary of Agriculture by the governor on the eve of Pinchot's inauguration. He succeeded Frederic Rasmussen.

### Hailed By Pinchot

In announcing the appointment, Governor Pinchot said, "Mr. Willits is one of the two or three most widely known farmers in Pennsylvania, and a dirt farmer as well. We have worked together for many years in the State Grange and in the national board of farm organizations. His practical wisdom, wide and profound knowledge of the farm question, not only in Pennsylvania, but in the whole United States, and his remarkable success as president of the Interstate Milk Producers' Association, give ample promise of a sound and successful administration of his department. I am glad to get him."

Mr. Willits was born on a farm at New Creek, Berks County, Nov. 3, 1856. His father, David, and mother, Charlotte Parvin Willits, died when he was six years old. From that time until his 18th year, Mr. Willits worked on a farm in Chester County operated by a distant relative. In return for his labor he received lodging and clothing and was given enough time to attend public school and, later, the Maplewood Institute in Delaware County.

He then returned to Berks County and began his business career by conducting a store. He abandoned that enterprise in 1885 and bought a farm of 95 acres in Concord Township, this county, married and started on his brilliant career.

In time the acreage was increased until the farm covered 135 acres. The land was given over to general farming, dairying and mushroom growing. He marketed the mushrooms in New York.

In politics Mr. Willits was an Independent Republican and his family are members of St. John's Episcopal Church.