

## ANDERSON, JOHN ROSS

### Birth

June 11, 1898 at home, Des Moines, Polk Co., Iowa



### Death

May 21, 1959 at home, Cumming, Iowa

### Cause of Death

Murdered – Was shot in the head by neighbor, Perry Farr

### Cemetery Lot

Buried on Lot 108  
Lot was purchased by Walter Anderson on August 26, 1920

### Father

John Anderson

### Mother

Mary Florence Tate

### Census

1900 – Lee Twp., Polk Co., IA; Vol. 63; ED 100; Page 17; June 15, 1900  
Dwelling 357; Family 357

Anderson, John	44	farmer Married 9 years	NY	Scot	Scot
Mary F.	35		IA	VA	IN
Walter S.	07		IA	NY	IA
<b>John</b>	<b>01</b>		<b>IA</b>	<b>NY</b>	<b>IA</b>

1905 – Des Moines, Ward 7, Polk Co., IA; Post Office, Sevastopol  
Card #69

<b>Anderson, John</b>	<b>06</b>		<b>IA</b>	<b>NY</b>	<b>IA</b>
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1910 – Linn Twp., Warren Co., IA; ED212; Page 10A; April 30, 1910  
Dwelling 132; Family 133

Anderson, John	54	farmer	NY	Scot	Scot
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		Married 18 years			
Mary F.	45		IA	VA	IN
Walter S.	27	farm labor at home	IA	NY	IA
<b>John R.</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>farm labor at home</b>	<b>IA</b>	<b>NY</b>	<b>IA</b>
Florence	03		IA	NY	IA

1915 – Linn Twp., Warren Co., IA;  
Card #145

<b>Anderson, John R.</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>IA</b>	<b>NY</b>	<b>IA</b>
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1920 – Linn Twp., Warren Co., IA; ED 218; Page 9A; line 43; roll 517; January 22, 1920

Dwelling 221; Family 223

Anderson, John	64	farmer	NY	Scot	Scot
Mary F.	55		IA	VA	IN
Walter S.	26		IA	NY	IA
<b>John R.</b>	<b>21</b>		<b>IA</b>	<b>NY</b>	<b>IA</b>
Ruth F.	13		IA	NY	IA

1925 – Linn Twp., Warren Co., IA; Book 80; Line 21

Anderson, Mary F.	60	Wd	IA	VA	IN
		Father, Ben Tate, born in Virginia			
		Mother, _____ Beeson, born in Indiana			
Walter	32		IA	NY	IA
		Father, John Anderson, born in NY			
		Mother, Mary F. Tate, born in Iowa, age 60			
		John and Mary were married at Dexter, IA			
<b>John</b>	<b>26</b>	“ “	<b>IA</b>	<b>NY</b>	<b>IA</b>
		Father, John Anderson			
		Mother, Mary F. Tate			
Ruth	15	“ “	IA	NY	IA
		Father, John Anderson			
		Mother, Mary F. Tate			

1930 – Linn Twp., Warren Co., IA; ED 91-18; Page 6A; April 19, 1930

Dwelling 120; Family 120

Anderson, Walter S.	37		IA	NY	IA
<b>John R.</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>brother - farmer</b>	<b>IA</b>	<b>NY</b>	<b>IA</b>
Mary F.	65	mother – Wd	IA	VA	IN

1940 – Linn Twp., Warren Co., IA; ED91-19; Page 3B; April 8, 9, 1940

Family 70

Anderson, Walter S.	47	Farmer	IA		
		Value of home \$700; Own home			
		Same house in 1935			
<b>John R.</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>Farmer – brother</b>	<b>IA</b>		
Neubauer, Marie	23	Housekeeper, private home	IA		

My grandmother, Mary F. Anderson has been missed on this census as she lived at this residence. She would have been 75. That is why they had a housekeeper to help with her care.

WW1 Draft Card Registration

Serial No. 1717

Order No. 77

Date of Registration: September 12, 1918

John Ross Anderson

Residence: Cumming, Warren Co., Iowa

Date of birth: June 11, 1898

Age: 20

Occupation: Farmer

Nearest relative: Father, John Anderson, Cumming, Iowa

Height: Tall

Build: Slender

Color of eyes: Gray

Color of hair: Light

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WW11 Draft Card Registration

Date of Registration: February 16, 1942

John Ross Anderson

Residence: Cumming, Warren Co., Iowa

Date of birth: June 11, 1898

Age: 43

Place of birth: Polk Co., Iowa

Weight: 155

Complexion: Light

Color of eyes: Blue

Color of hair: Gray

Height: 6'

Next of kin: W. S. Anderson

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B.F. Galloway Burial Records

John R. Anderson, residence, Cumming, Iowa; born June 11, 1898 in Polk Co., Iowa; died May 21, 1959; he was single and a farmer; father was John Anderson, born in New York; mother was Mary Florence Tate, born at Dexter, Iowa.

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Misc.

[The Des Moines Tribune, Friday May 22, 1959, page 6]

## FARMER IS SLAIN NEAR HERE

Cumming, Iowa; John Anderson 60, bachelor farmer, was found shot to death at his farm home one mile east of here early Friday morning.

Warren County Sheriff C. J. Richards said Anderson was killed by a shotgun charge fired through the kitchen window. The sheriff said that Anderson had no known enemies and no motive has been found for the shooting.

Cumming, population 131, is east of Interstate Highway 35 in northwest WarrenCounty.

Anderson, who died of gunshot wounds in the neck, was found by his brother Walter, 66, at 2 a.m. Friday. The two bachelors lived alone on the 500-acre farm.

“We both came in from doing the chores about 10 p.m.,” Walter said.

“I went to bed in a bedroom off the front room and John sat down in a chair in the kitchen where he always read The Des Moines Tribune.

Anderson said he got up at 2 a. m. and found his brother in the chair. “He was just leaning over like he had gone to sleep. The pellets from the shotgun had broken the window near him and had torn the curtains a little,” Walter said.

Walter said he was at a loss to explain the shooting. “I didn’t think either of us had an enemy in the world,” Anderson said.

Sheriff Richards said John apparently had been shot at close range from a nearby porch. Walter said the L-shaped porch runs past the kitchen window on one side.

Walter Anderson said he and his brother-in-law, George Miller of St. Marys and Irvin Flinn of Cumming spent most of Thursday building a new corncrib.

Walter said the only other persons at the farm Thursday were a feed salesman and two men who came to the farm to make an arrangement for shearing the 45 head of sheep the brothers raise. I’ve known both those men for several years,” Walter said.

The Anderson place is a 500-acre grain and livestock farm. Walter said he and his brother came here with their parents in 1903 and that after their father died the two brothers formed a partnership in 1918. The brothers own 320 acres and rent 120 more.

Anderson said neither he nor his brother ever married. “We just lived by ourselves and had a housekeeper, Mrs. Clara Phillips, come in during the day,” Anderson said.

Only other member of the Anderson family is a sister, Mrs. George Miller of St. Marys.

(There are two pictures with this article.)

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[The Des Moines Register, Saturday, May 23, 1959, page 12.]

## HUNT SLAYER, FIND MAN DEAD

Cumming, Iowa – Police officers searching for the slayer of John Anderson, 60, Friday afternoon found the body of Perry Farr, 62, of 1101 Army Post road, Des Moines, hanging in a barn near the Anderson farm.

Sheriff C. J. Richards of WarrenCounty said a 16-gauge shotgun was lying near Farr’s body. He said this was the kind of gun with which Anderson was shot and killed in his farm home a mile east of here Thursday night.

Anderson was found by his brother, Walter, 66, about 2 a.m., leaning over in a chair near a kitchen window in their home. A shotgun blast fired through the closed window had struck John Anderson in the neck.

Sheriff Richards said the state bureau of criminal investigation will be asked to make a ballistics test of the gun and shells fired from it. He said a fired 16-gauge shell was found outside the Anderson home.

Authorities found Farr's auto about noon Friday abandoned on a dirt road a mile south of the Anderson farm. They came upon his body in the barn about 3:30 p.m. They found nothing explaining Farr's suicide.

Farr owned the farm where his body was found, but had not resided on it for a number of years. It is adjacent to the Anderson farm.

The Andersons are bachelors. The brothers moved to the 500-acre grain and livestock farm with their parents in 1903 and had operated it as partners since 1918 following their father's death.

In the search party which found Farr's body were five state agents, Sheriff Richards and his deputy, Ron Davidson, and Madison County Sheriff Rex Rouse.

Besides his brother, Anderson is survived by a sister, Mrs. Ruth Miller of St. Charles. Services will be at 2 p.m. Monday at the Galloway-McLaren Funeral home at Norwalk. Burial will be at Orillia.

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[The Indianola Paper, Tuesday May 26, 1959]

### **Suicide Solves Cumming Murder**

The suicide of one Cumming area man solved the murder of another Cumming man last Friday May 22.

John Anderson, 60, who lived a mile east of Cumming on the Cumming to Norwalk road, was found shot to death in a kitchen chair of his home at 2 a.m. Friday morning.

The body of Perry Farr, 62, was found hanging in his barn across the road from the Anderson farm at 3:30 p.m. the same day, Friday May 22.

Sheriff Richards said that Farr shot Anderson and then took his own life.

An empty 16 gauge shotgun shell, found beside the Anderson home, matched a new 16 gauge shotgun, which was found in the barn beside Farr's body.

Farr also mailed a note, received Monday by a third party, which indicated that he intended to take his own life, the sheriff said.

#### **Sheriff Led Investigation**

Sheriff C. J. Richards led the investigation, which resulted in solving the case in less than one day.

The sheriff said that Farr and Anderson had a number of minor differences of opinion a number of years ago. The sheriff added that Farr apparently nursed these disagreements until they began to prey on his mind.

Farr was admitted to a Des Moines hospital in a depressed state Sunday May 17. He was found missing from his hospital room later that same day.

Farr owned the place across the road from the Anderson farm and he operated the farm last year. He had reportedly been planning to operate the place again this year. Sheriff Richards and others found the body in the barn after finding Farr's car on a road near the Anderson farm and tracing Farr back to his home place.

Northwest Warren county residents rested a lot easier this past weekend after John Anderson's murder was solved so quickly.

Everyone had connected it with the shooting of Ben Perkins, a neighbor of the Andersons, who lost an arm after a mysterious shotgun assault months ago. Several neighbors expressed the fear that a maniac was loose after Mr. Anderson was found shot to death.

Sheriff Richards later announced that there was no possible connection between John Anderson's death and the Ben Perkins shooting. The sheriff stressed that Mr. Perkins was shot by a youth, who was accompanied by several other youths. The sheriff is continuing his investigation of the Perkins case.

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### **Murder and Suicide**

A coroner's jury returned a verdict of murder and suicide in the case after an inquest here Saturday evening. Among the witnesses was Jack Barnett, a ballistics technician for the state bureau of criminal investigation. He testified that the shotgun shell found near the Anderson home was fired from the shotgun found near Farr's body. The coroner's jury also visited the scene where Farr's body was found hanging. Earlier they had viewed the scene where John Anderson had been fatally shot.

Perry Farr's funeral was held at 2:30 p.m. Sunday at the Galloway-McLaren Funeral Home at Norwalk and burial was in the Orilla cemetery. He was survived by two sisters, Mrs. Mabel Allen and Mrs. Harry Seid, both of Des Moines.

John Anderson, 60, who lives one mile east of Cumming, was murdered by a shotgun blast as he slept in a chair near a front window in the kitchen of his home either late Thursday night or early Friday morning of last week.

He was found by his brother, Walter Anderson, who got up at 2 a.m. Friday.

Walter saw the kitchen light on and he went into the kitchen and found his brother seated in the chair, with his arms folded across his chest and his feet up on another chair. A newspaper was beside him.

But he was not alarmed as John customarily fell asleep in the chair while reading the paper.

Walter went over and tried to rouse his brother, but the latter's body was cold. He thought that it was a natural death until he noticed blood in his brother's right ear. Then he looked further and found a hole in John's neck below his right ear.

### **Killed Instantly**

The bottom pane of the front window was shattered and there was also a hole in the curtain covering the window. It is believed that the end of the shotgun barrel was only a few inches away from John's head when the fatal shot was fired. The blast entered his brain, killing him instantly.

Walter tried to telephone Sheriff C. J. Richards but the phone was dead so he drove to Frank Hanrahan's at Cumming and Mr. Hanrahan called the sheriff at 2:30 a.m. They returned to the Anderson farm and found that the telephone line had been cut by a sharp instrument.

One empty shotgun shell was found beside the house, as if the killer had reloaded his shotgun to wait for Walter. But he is somewhat hard of hearing so he did not hear the shot, or any other sounds.

Walter told authorities that he and John had worked until 10 p.m. Thursday doing chores on their huge 500 acre farm east of Cumming. They have a large number of both cattle and hogs. Walter had finished choring first so he helped John complete the rest of the work.

The two brothers then went into the house together. Walter went right to bed and John stayed up to read the paper, as they were in the custom of doing.

The time of death was not known definitely, pending the results from an autopsy, which was performed Friday at MercyHospital in Des Moines. But it is known that the murder took place between 10 p.m. when Walter went to bed, and 2 a.m. Friday, when he awoke and found his brother's body.

John Anderson was known as a hard-working man who worked long hours on his farm. He rarely left the farm.

The two men were bachelors and they lived alone in the farm house. They had one regular hired man who lives in Cumming. They also have a housekeeper, Mrs. Roy Phillips of Cumming, who goes to the farm every day to cook and keep house for the two men.

A three-man coroner's jury was impaneled at the Anderson farm at 5 a/m/ Friday. Jury members are Frank Hanrahan and Carroll Spencer, both of Cumming and George Miller of St. Marys.

The two brothers also have a sister, Mrs. Ruth Miller, who lives southeast of Martensdale.

The body was taken to the Galloway-McLaren Funeral Home at Norwalk, where funeral services were held at 2 p.m. Monday. Burial was in the Orilla cemetery.

#### Administrator's Notice

No 8324

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED:

That on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of June, 1959 the undersigned was appointed by the District Court of Warren County, Iowa. Administrator of the estate of John R. Anderson deceased, late of said County. All persons indebted to said estate will make payment to the undersigned and those having claims against the same will present them, legally authenticated, to said Court for allowance.

Dated June 22, 1959

W. S. Anderson  
Administrator