



## Civic Leader Dead



C. C. A. BALDI

## C. C. A. BALDI DIES SUDDENLY AT 68

Member of Board of Education  
Found Dead in Bed  
by Servant

### ROSE FROM LOWLY STATION

C. C. A. Baldi, member of the Board of Education and one of Philadelphia's most influential citizens of Italian birth, was found dead in bed of cerebral apoplexy yesterday morning.

Although Mr. Baldi was 68, his health had been unusually good until a few months ago. The night before his death, he attended a holiday party at the First Italian Exchange Bank which he founded thirty years ago, and is said to have been in unusually good spirits.

Since the death of his wife, the former Miss Louisa E. Sobernheimer, in 1924, Mr. Baldi had preferred to live entirely alone in an apartment over his bank at 928 South 8th street. A servant came during the day to look after his needs.

Yesterday morning, the bank porter, Tony Laporta, took the Sunday papers to Mr. Baldi's apartment and was unable to rouse him. Finding him dead in bed, the man notified Mr. Baldi's eldest son, Dr. Frederick M. Baldi, who ascertained that his father had died of an apoplectic stroke in the course of the night. He had been dead several hours, it was said.

#### Rose From Humble Station

From an immigrant lad of 14 who knew no English, Mr. Baldi rose to be the undisputed leader of the Italian-American colony, a man of great political power, thrice honored

## C. C. A. Baldi Dies Suddenly at 68

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by the King of Italy, and the possessor of a large fortune.

At the time of his death he was banker, coal dealer, undertaker, insurance and real estate man, and publisher of L'Opinione, Philadelphia's only Italian daily. He repeatedly declined to hold a political office.

He is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Louise Douglass, and five sons, all of Philadelphia; Dr. Frederick M. Baldi, a physician; Vido M. Baldi, real estate operator; C. C. A. Baldi, Jr., a member of the State Legislature from the Second District; Joseph F. M. Baldi, a member of the Legislature from the Fourteenth District, and Virgil M. Baldi, a banker. Two brothers, Virgil and Alfonso, also survive.

Mr. Baldi was born in Castelnuovo, Cilento, in the Province of Salerno, Italy, on December 2, 1862. He learned to read and write and soon supplanted the parish priest as letter-writer for the neighborhood.

#### Sails for America at 14

At the age of 14, he decided to seek his fortune in America. With his brother, Tony, 12, he shipped to this country in the steerage, and arrived penniless. Friends of the family on this side wanted to raise money to send the boys back to Italy, but they refused to go.

A friend lent the boys a route for selling lemons, which netted them occasionally as much as \$5 a week. Having saved \$125, Carlo bought out a fruit stall where the Hotel Walton now stands. He lost every cent in the venture.

Profiting by his experience, the boy borrowed money and opened a stand in the market stall at 22d and Spring Garden streets. He rose at midnight to attend the early morning auctions of fruit, and succeeded so well that he added a horse and cart to his business.

At that point he was obliged to return to Italy for two years' service in the army. Returning to this country at the expiration of his service, he took out his first citizenship papers.

A youth of pleasing personality, he rose steadily in the esteem of his fellow-countrymen and was pressed into service by the Italian Consul

when a puzzling situation arose in a strike on the Schuylkill Valley Railroad.

#### Honored by Railroad Company

He succeeded so well in ironing out the dispute that the company made him paymaster. When a new roadbed was to be built, Baldi became a contractor. In the course of excavation he uncovered a rich vein of coal, which he obtained permission to mine. Thus began his coal business, which still exists as one of his largest ventures.

His fellow countrymen came to rely more and more upon him in matters involving the transfer of money from Italy to the United States and kindred matters. At first he tried to avoid the responsibility, but later turned it to advantage and opened a bank, the financial integrity of which has never been in the slightest doubt.

Defying a prevalent Italian superstition, Baldi next engaged in the undertaking business, which later grew into one of the largest in the city.

It seemed that everything he laid a hand to prospered, but to his good luck he joined boundless energy and absolute disregard of personal hardship.

Politically, Baldi allied himself with the powerful Vere organization, and only once was his prestige as head of the Italian colony threatened. That was in 1917, when he was ousted from the Circolo Italiano, which sponsored an Italian Reconstruction Committee to which Baldi was opposed. The movement had little effect on his standing in the community, as he remained until his death the best-known and best-loved man of his race.

#### Home Was Bombed

His allegiance to the Fascist regime in Italy is believed to have caused the bombing of his beautiful home on Dewey Street and Green Lane, Roxborough, at midnight, April 20, 1923, when he was returning on shipboard from a visit to Italy, during which he had an audience with the King, Mussolini and the Pope.

In October, 1924, Mr. Baldi was appointed to the Board of Education, a post which he regarded as the supreme achievement of his life.

From the King of Italy Mr. Baldi received the decorations Chevalier and Commander of the Order of the Crown of Italy, and Chevalier of the Order of St. Maurizio and Lazzaro, an honor which has been bestowed upon only one other man in the United States.