

# Eli P. Clark Passes Away

Early Resident of Grinnell and Good  
Friend of Grinnell College Dies  
In Los Angeles

RECEIVED DEGREE OF LL. D.  
HERE LAST COMMENCEMENT

Was a Big Figure in Civil and Financial  
Life of Los Angeles But Never  
Lost Interest in Grinnell

*March 1931*  
The death of Eli P. Clark at Los Angeles takes from life one of the big figures in the civic and financial life of that big city. Mr. Clark's early life was spent in Grinnell. The old home on Park street opposite the schoolhouse still stands and a large tree said to have been planted by Mr. Clark before 1860 has been marked with a proper medalion.

Mr. Clark was here at the last commencement, a man strong and active, and had a delightful time with the few early friends of his boyhood days still living here.

His death occurred last Friday at 11:15 and the Herald almost immediately received word from Mr. S. H. Herrick of Riverside of the death of this man, certainly one of the most successful of all the business men who have lived in Grinnell. Mr. Herrick sent us by airmail a story of his life as published in the Los Angeles Times and in the same mail came a story of his life taken from the Los Angeles Herald and sent us by Ella Cravath a former resident of Grinnell and a friend of everything that is good in this city.

The story as contained in the Los Angeles Times is somewhat longer than the other story and we are pleased to clip it entire. Mr. Clark's father for sometime lived on the farm one-half mile south of the old fair-ground more recently owned by William Harris. The story from the Times is as follows:

Eli P. Clark, for many years an outstanding figure in the development of Los Angeles, pioneer railway builder of Southern California and a leader in civic, philanthropic and social activities of the city, died yesterday at 11:15 a.m. at his home, 9 St. James Park, following a heart attack with which he was stricken last Saturday night. With him at the time of his death was his wife, Mrs. Lucy H. Clark.

Mr. Clark, who was 83 years of age, had been in good health prior to his fatal illness. He was in the habit of going to his office every day and had had no indication of heart disease. Throughout Saturday morning he worked at his desk, attended a luncheon at noon and it was not until late that evening that he became ill. Sunday it was realized that his condition was serious.

Funeral services will be conducted Monday at 2 p.m. at the First Congregational Church, 845 South Hope street, with Dr. Carl S. Patton and Dr. James A. Blaisdell officiating. Burial will be in the family mausoleum in Forrest Lawn Memorial Park. The body was taken to the W. A. Brown undertaking parlors, 1815 South Flower street, last night.

## RAILWAY BUILDER

Coming to Los Angeles in 1891 from Arizona, Mr. Clark at once became identified with the business life of the city and during his residence founded and developed many of the important and constructive enterprises of the community. Chief among these was the Los Angeles Consolidated Railway Company, now the Los Angeles Railway, in which he was associated with his brother-in-law, Gen. M. H. Sherman, and the story of its development also is the story of the development of the whole foothill country from Los Angeles to the sea.

The company was formed with Gen. Sherman as president and Mr. Clark as vice-president and general manager. It contracted with the Pacific Rolling Mill Company of San Francisco to build and equip 110 miles of electric street railway with adequate power plant and cars. By July 1, 1891, the first section had been constructed and put into operation and by August, 1893, consolidation of all the horsecar and cable lines of the city into one system and their conversion into the new electric railway organization had been accomplished.

At this time there were but three successful electric railway systems in the United States, which used generators of only 150 horsepower capacity. After studying these systems, Mr. Clark insisted upon at least 250 horsepower generators for the Los Angeles Consolidated Electric Railway, and also had one 500-horsepower generator built by the Westinghouse company, which was the first generator of that size ever built.

Early in 1894 Mr. Clark urged the building of a line between Los Angeles and Pasadena, and soon acquired the horse-car lines of the foothill city. The Los Angeles and Pasadena Electric Railway was formed, construction pushed forward and on May 5, 1895, the road was opened for operation. Subsequently, in 1893, this became the first unit of the Pacific Electric system.

In 1895 Mr. Clark took the first steps for an electric line to the beaches by acquiring the property of the old steam railroad from this city to Santa Monica. This road, the Los Angeles Pacific Railway, was rebuilt and equipped and opened for traffic April 1, 1896. Mr. Clark was president and manager of this latter company from its organization until the

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In 1903 the site of the present Subway Terminal Building was purchased and by the fall of 1905 Mr. Clark and Gen. Sherman, realizing that the building of a subway would some day be a necessity, had acquired a right of way in the purchase of property from Hill street to the Vineyard powerhouse for the first subway projected for Los Angeles.

When Mr. Clark first came here Los Angeles was a city of less than 50,000 inhabitants and on the verge of bankruptcy due to the financial depression which followed the collapse of the real estate boom of 1887, but with the building of the first electric railroad, a new hope was born which was reflected in increased real estate values, the coming of new residents and the growth of manufacturing industries, all of which started the city on the way to its present size and position.

The rapid transit facilities also resulted in thickly populating the entire country immediately surrounding the city of Los Angeles, thereby increasing its city limits to nearly three times its original area.

In 1906 Mr. Clark organized at Portland, Or., the Mount Hood Railway and Power Company, of which he was president and principal owner. This consisted of twenty-five miles of road and a large hydro-electric power plant. After this project was in successful operation Mr. Clark disposed of his interest to the Portland General Light and Power Company in 1911.

In 1913 Mr. Clark built and equipped the Hotel Clark and he was vice-president of the Subway Terminal Corporation, which erected and completed in 1926 the Subway Terminal Building, one of the finest and largest in the city.

Always intensely interested in civic organizations for the improvement of Los Angeles in cultural, educational and spiritual lines, Mr. Clark had been actively identified with numerous movements of this character. He was a member and vice-president of the board of trustees of Pomona College, a member of the First Congregational Church of this city and served on its board of directors, and was vice-president and chairman of the finance committee of the Y.M.C.A.

After he severed his railway connections, Mr. Clark devoted his time to private investments and at the time of his death he was president of the Eli P. Clark Company, the Clark & Sherman Land Company, the Del Rey Company, the Main Street Company, the Capitol Crude Oil Company and the Empire Oil Company.

#### BORN IN IOWA

Mr. Clark was born on a farm at Solon, near Iowa City, Johnson coun-

ty, Iowa, November 25, 1847. He was a scion of one of America's oldest families, the progenitor of which in this country was Lieut. William Clarke, who emigrated from Dorsetshire, Eng., in 1630. In about 1750 the "e" was dropped from the family name, since which time it has been written in its present form. Mr. Clark was of the seventh generation in direct descent from Lieut. Clarke.

Taught as a boy that he should always have a definite aim before him, early in life Eli P. Clark made work and yet more work his guide in life until his interests became broad and numerous. As a youth he attended public schools and later studied at Grinnell college. For one year he was master of a country school near Grinnell, where because of his youth, vigor and athletic prowess he was called "the boy school-teacher."

In 1867 he went with his father's family to Southwest Missouri, where he farmed near Granby and taught school during the winter months. However, when he was 26 years of age he contracted sciatica and decided to go to Arizona for his health. He left home with his own team and \$20, plus plenty of grit and ambition, and drove across the plains with a small band of pioneers until he reached Prescott, Ariz., on August 11, 1875.

#### FRIEND OF FREMONT

Mr. Clark's first employment in Prescott was as clerk and deputy postmaster, and since he worked on the theory that work never killed anyone, it is small wonder that at 30 he was appointed territorial auditor, which position he held for ten years. During this period he formed a friendship with Gen. John C. Fremont, then Governor of Arizona, which continued until the death of the great "pathfinder." While in Prescott, Mr. Clark also served one year as assistant postmaster and was engaged in the sawmill and lumber business there as well.

It was while he was in Prescott that he met Gen. Sherman and his sister Lucy, whom Mr. Clark married in 1880. On April 30, 1930, Mr. and Mrs. Clark celebrated their golden wedding anniversary.

During 1897 Mr. Clark was honored by Iowa College when the degree of master of arts was conferred upon him in recognition of his many useful activities.

Mr. Clark was a member of the Los Angeles Athletic Club, the California Club, University Club, Los Angeles Country Club, the Uulifters' Club, the Better America Federation and various other clubs and organizations.

He leaves his widow and four children, Mrs. Katherine Clark Barnard, Mrs. Mary Clark Eversole, Miss Lucy Mason Clark and Eugene Payson Clark.

## Eli P. Clark's - 1926 79th Birthday

All the old timers remember Eli Clark who lived in this town at an early day and in whose memory a tablet has been placed on a tree just across from the high school which says that "Eli P. Clark planted this tree."

Mr. Clark reached his 79th birthday November 25 and B. J. Ricker sends us a clipping from the Los Angeles Times which we are glad to present to readers of the Herald.

"Congratulations and tokens of esteem were extended by his many friends yesterday to Eli P. Clark, Los Angeles pioneer, capitalist, builder of the first electric street railways here, the Clark Hotel and numerous other enterprises, on the anniversary of his seventy-ninth birthday.

With his family he was the guest of his daughter, Mrs. W. K. Barnard, 600 Columbia street, Pasadena, during the afternoon at a birthday and Thanksgiving party in his honor.

Among the many to send tokens of esteem for his years of services, counsel and financial help was the board of directors of the Congregational Church Extension, representing forty churches; the Better America Federation; trustees of Pomona College; the directorate of the Young Men's Christian Association, as well as many personal friends and associates in the business and club circles of Los Angeles.

Mr. Clark is still active in business circles, appearing daily at his office. On Wednesday he attended meetings of three boards of directors.

He was born near Iowa City, Iowa, educated at Iowa College and in 1875 crossed the plains with his team, requiring almost three months to reach Prescott, Ariz., where he served as Territorial Auditor for five terms and became a close friend of John C. Fremont, then Governor of Arizona.

After his arrival in Los Angeles, Mr. Clark and his brother-in-law, Gen. M. H. Sherman, formed the company that is now the Los Angeles Railway. He later severed his railway connections and devoted his time to private investments and church and college activities, in which he always has been deeply interested."

# The Active Life And Busy Career of Eli P. Clark

Mrs. George Grinnell has received from Kybie Lummis newspaper clipping regarding the death and funeral services for Eli P. Clark, famous son of Grinnell whose death a few weeks ago was noted in these columns. Mr. Clark was known as a pioneer builder of street railways in Los Angeles and among the clippings is a series of pictures illustrating his activities. One picture shows the first car of an interurban railway, the Pasadena and Los Angeles, crossing the Arroyo Seco Bridge, May 7, 1895. Another shows crowds witnessing the arrival of the first electric cars at Santa Monica April, 1896. Another, taken in 1895, shows a scene in front of the old Los Angeles-Pacific depot. In building these pioneer electric lines Mr. Clark was associated with his brother-in-law, General M. H. Sherman.

Following is the account of Mr. Clark's funeral and sketch of his active life from the Los Angeles paper sent by Miss Lummis:

Homage to the memory of a great soul was expressed in abundant measure at the funeral services for Eli P. Clark, community builder, financier and philanthropist, when men and women from every walk of the city's life gathered at the First Congregational Church to give silent testimony of their regard for a departed friend.

Leaders from business, educational, social and religious circles of the city and Southern California were among those who thronged the house of worship. There were many from humbler stations as well who came to pay honor to the memory of the man of whom it was said that his greatest attributes were his loyalty to people and his great sense of friendliness.

Admired amidst a profusion of blossoms of infinite variety and coloring, stood the coffin blanketed with orchids and lilies of the valley, while from the pulpit above Dr. Carl Patton, pastor of the church, and Dr. James A. Blaisdell voiced the sentiments which already were in the hearts of those whose experience had been enriched by the friendship of Mr. Clark.

"Let not our hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid," was the burden of the passages which Dr. Patton read from the Scriptures, wherein the hope of immortality also was emphasized. After this Dr. Blaisdell spoke briefly of Mr. Clark as he had known him in an educational companionship.

"He stood in the heart of great enterprises," said Dr. Blaisdell, "buildings, railroads, the things which had to do with the fashioning of a great city and the formation of the ideals of the commonwealth, and he was a conspicuous figure, but most particularly he was our friend—the friend of the city, the region, the commonwealth and we remember him for what he was and what he did . . .

"It is hard to understand the promptings and initial forces of a great life, for we can never know the real drama of the inner soul. All that this man has accomplished has sprung

"From my companionship with him I knew something of the ideals he entertained and of the things he wanted to endure in the social fabric of the world, but before all of these things I was most impressed by the predominance of his great loyalties. There was his love of labor in which the task he had to do offered life's supreme attraction; his loyalty to the higher things of mind and his appreciation of truth; his high estimation of spiritual values, and lastly, the greatest of these—his loyalty to people. It is to that love that we bear testimony today."

Dr. Patton next paid tribute to Mr. Clark in an eulogy of the man rather than his deeds. He said, in part:

"He was a man of strong personal convictions and he was never afraid to express them, even though he stood alone. Yet he was tolerant of others' opinions. He had that great personal charm which comes from absolute integrity within a man, he loved the best in everything, he was an individualist, he was a man of deep and strong attachments with a sense of friendliness toward everyone, a man of genuine religious faith and a man of great modesty. Throughout his long career he had kept his faith unspotted, never lost his personal idealism, retained the love of his fellow-men and reached old age at peace with God and man. There is no greater achievement than this."

After a song by the choir and a closing prayer the mourners filed by the bier for their last look upon the face of an old friend, and then the funeral cortege made its way to Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Glendale, where, following a brief burial service conducted by Dr. Patton and Dr. Blaisdell, the body was laid to rest in the family mausoleum.

In addition to Mr. Clark's immediate family, including his widow and four children, Eugene Payson Clark, Miss Lucy Mason Clark, Mrs. Mary Clark Eversole and Mrs. Katherine Clark Barnard, he leaves a brother, Charles S. Clark of Hobart, Okla., who was here to attend the services, and three sisters, Mrs. Harriet M. Adams of Pomona, Mrs. Marv I. Kiddoo of Huntington Park, and Mrs. Estelle Stutz of Omaha, Neb.

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#### PIONEER ELECTRIC LINE

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