

LIFE CLOSED FOR MILTON W. SWISHER

Milton W. Swisher located in Grinnell in 1892 as the junior member of the firm of Swisher Brothers. He was born in Brighton, Iowa, June 10, 1858, and if he had lived only a few months would have reached his 68th birthday.

Mr. Swisher grew up in Brighton and attended the public schools. He first entered the mercantile business in that town as a member of the firm of Tracy & Swisher. Later Tracy & Swisher formed a partnership with a gentleman named Garrett and conducted a mercantile business in Indianola. After a short time they bought out Mr. Garrett and removed to Red Oak where they conducted a general store together until 1892. At that time Mr. Swisher sold his part in the business and came to Grinnell to go into the clothing business with his brother, C. A. Swisher, and has been since that period identified with the clothing business of Swisher Brothers, a period of thirty-four years, retaining the old name since the death of Charlie in 1917.

Swisher Brothers bought an interest in a business at New Sharon and for a number of years the older brother, C. A., represented the firm in that city, the business being conducted under the name of Swisher Brothers & Day. After they sold out in New Sharon C. A. returned to Grinnell, they continued in business here, although M. W. was the more active charge, his brother being particularly identified with the Easy Fit Legging Co.

M. W. Swisher was married May 25, 1882, to Julia Fleak at Brighton and to this union one son, Floyd, was born. The wife and mother died in 1892, just after they had moved to Grinnell. Floyd grew up into a strong, bright, attractive, vigorous manhood and graduated from Grinnell College in 1905. His death two years afterward in Aberdeen, S. D., where he was employed in the office of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul railway, was a severe blow to his fond father, who loved him with the deepest devotion and whose love was reciprocated in the most sincere manner.

December 20, 1899, Mr. Swisher was united in marriage with Miss Florence Bray of Grinnell and for nearly twenty-seven years they have traveled life's journey together, congenial, loving, happy and contented. Besides his wife, one daughter, Virginia, a Junior in Grinnell College, survives a devoted husband and father.

Mr. Swisher all his life enjoyed the best of health and when a winter cold fastened itself upon him sometime ago he paid little heed to it. He went to the clothiers' convention in Des Moines, February 8, 9 and 10. His wife joined him and there together they were to look after some business of Mr. Henry Bray, but Wednesday afternoon Mr. Swisher's cold had become so severe that he returned to Grinnell leaving his wife and her sister, Mrs. Kate Bray Haines, to look after the matters which they were to jointly care for. When he returned home he had a high fever and it was manifest that he was suffering from pneumonia. His physician advised him at once to go to the hospital, but he refused, feeling that he was not very sick. However, he went to the hospital the next day for rest and recuperation and continued to improve though slowly until last Saturday. On Sunday he suffered a relapse, but on Monday he was again better and his physician felt that he was on the way to recovery. However, his lungs became infected in another place and he grew steadily worse until about ten o'clock Wednesday night when his condition was so serious that his family was called to the hospital. He was perfectly conscious to the last, passing kind greetings to his wife and daughter until his death occurred about eleven o'clock Thursday morning.

The name of Swisher Brothers in Grinnell has always been identified with that of public spirit, enterprise, honesty and square dealing. Mr. Swisher has during all his years here

maintained a reputation as a manly dignified man, true to every honest instinct and he lived a life without blame. In business, on the streets, in church and in society he was especially marked by a generous courtesy and this courtesy was all the more noticeable because it came from the heart and was never used for the occasion.

The writer has known him since his first coming to Grinnell. We have met him in the lodge room, we have associated with him in the church, we have met him in society and we have dealt with him in business and can testify that he was a man among men, one worth while to have for a friend, a man who was a credit to the community in which he lived as well as an example of upright living to all who knew him. The writer has taken many trips in the '90's alone with Mr. Swisher. We loved him as a friend then, and though not so closely associated since the families of both men had come to demand their first attention, we have always retained for him the deep regard which we held in the old days when we were bicycling together.

As a high school girl, as a girl in the Sunday School and as a woman, we have always held his devoted wife in warmest friendship and can appreciate the severe shock which has come to a true hearted and devoted wife.

Earliest friendships are always strongest and the days when Mr. Swisher and the writer were still young men and the hours we spent together were times which have bound us, as the writer believes, in firmest friendship and most delightful memory.

Mr. Swisher was courteous in his business. He was a gentleman among gentlemen and yet the most marked trait of his life was his devotion to his family, his wife and his daughter, who returned his love with all the warmth of woman's heart. His affection for his wife and for his daughter and his pride in his daughter's womanly development and her advancement in college were marked traits of character and when the best things have been said that can be said about a worthy and upright man, there still remains to those who knew him a memory of his helpfulness, lovingness and true heartedness to his home.

Mr. Swisher was a member of the Iowa State Retail Clothiers Association, and for more than a decade was a member of its board of directors. This indicates the high esteem in which he was held by his associates and fellow clothing dealers in his state-wide acquaintance.

The Herald extends its sympathy to his wife and daughter in their deep sorrow.

Besides his wife and daughter there survive Mr. Swisher two brothers and three sisters: John of Steamery; Frank of Brighton; Mrs. Lida Moyer of Grinnell; Mrs. Ellen Pitzer of Brighton who is now spending the winter in Riverside, California; and Mrs. Eugene Reilly of Sioux Falls, S. D.

Mr. Swisher had many friends among the students. He and his wife had made their home attractive to young people and among the college students were many and sincere friends. These friendships were not only the friendships of his son Floyd but were friendships that have lasted through all the years, each continuing generation bringing in new and true young people to whom the Swisher home was a haven of joy.

The funeral will be held Sunday afternoon at three o'clock at the home, conducted by Dr. E. M. Vittum, assisted by Dr. Steiner. Mr. Vittum was the pastor who united Mr. and Mrs. Swisher in marriage and who a few years ago baptised the daughter, Virginia, into the church. A quartette from the Grinnell Glee Club will furnish the music. The Masons will have charge of the services at the grave.

M. W. SWISHER'S SUDDEN DEATH SHOCK TO CITY

Feb. — 1926.
Grinnell Mourns Passing
Of Fine Gentle-
man.

Milt Swisher is dead. Big-hearted, kindly Milt Swisher is dead.

The end came late this forenoon, in St. Francis Hospital, with family and near relatives at his bedside, where since last night he had been fighting bravely for his life. Apparently recovering from an attack of pneumonia, his condition last night grew suddenly worse, infection developed in an affected lung and he failed rapidly. Oxygen was supplied to maintain his respiration and all that medical skill could do was enlisted in the futile effort to save his life. He grew steadily weaker and at last it became evident that there was no hope, and death came shortly after eleven o'clock today.

The Register is unable, at this hour, to supply its readers with detailed, statistical information in regard to M. W. Swisher's life, but his life story, written in the hearts of all who knew him, hardly needs to be repeated here. The story is told, better than words can tell it, in the look of sorrow on the faces of all his old friends today, the hushed talk, the tender references to this big and kindly man, all these are written in the imperishable ink of human comradeship and human love.

They are speaking of him today as they have always spoken of him — as a beloved man, a kind father and husband, a charitable, honorable man, whose friendships came readily, and grew richer as the years passed on. Milt Swisher had few enemies and hundreds of friends. In all the years that he has lived in Grinnell he has been associated with all classes and he knew and loved them all. Second only to his splendid love of home and family came his love for Grinnell and Grinnell people, and he rejoiced at every good thing that came to the city which he loved so well. He was sincerely interested in the welfare of his town and of its people, and many a kindly act will be recalled for there were many of them in his life.

To the grief-stricken wife and daughter and the other near relatives is extended the sincerest sympathy of all. Just as, in life, his love for them transcended all else, so now, at his death, is their grief beyond expression, although understood by all and, in large measure, shared by everyone in the community who in past years has been privileged to know him.

Although the funeral arrangements have not been completed it is understood that services will be held Saturday afternoon from the home.

HOME SERVICES PAY TRIBUTE TO M. W. SWISHER

Life of Loyalty Is Honored By A Large

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The funeral service for the late M. W. Swisher held at the family residence yesterday afternoon was largely attended. The Reverend Mr. Vitlum and Dr. E. A. Steiner, speaking from the standpoint of personal association and friendship stressed the unflinching fairness, kindness and consideration of the deceased, and his loyalty and devotion to his family, his friends, his community and his ideals.

A song by a quartet from the Grinnell College Glee Club opened and closed the simple service. The ever beautiful and impressive ritual of the Masonic Lodge, with Prof. J. W. Gannaway in charge, was performed at the grave. The pall bearers were S. J. Pooley, W. C. Rayburn, J. H. McMurray, V. G. Preston, Ross M. Work and Chas. K. Needham.

The following from out of town were present at the service:

Mrs. Eugene Reiley, Sioux Falls, S. D.; Mr. and Mrs. John Swisher, Sigourney; Mr. Frank Swisher, Brighton; Mr. Keith Prizer, Fairfield; Mr. Leslie Swisher, Chehalis, Wash.; Miss Louise Moyle, Shenandoah; Mrs. Katherine B. Haines and son, Robert, Des Moines; Mr. H. B. Storm, Chicago; Mr. E. B. Shoop, Chicago; Mr. C. H. Crowe, Clarion; Mr. T. J. Bray, Oskaloosa; Miss Pigeon Boyer, Oskaloosa; Mr. John A. Day, New Sharon; Mrs. G. F. Thayer, Marshalltown; Mr. and Mrs. W. K. Simpson, Mrs. Rella Moore, Bray, Des Moines.

Milton W. Swisher was born in Brighton, Iowa, June 10, 1858, and lacked only a few months of reaching his sixty-eighth birthday at the time of his death, Feb. 25, 1926. During his early life and prior to locating in Grinnell he was a member of the firm of Tracy and Swisher, engaged in business, successively, in Brighton, Indianola and Red Oak.

His career in Grinnell began in 1892, when he came here to join his brother, C. A. Swisher in the clothing business, which has continued under the firm name of Swisher Brothers ever since. Thus for thirty-four years he has been constantly and actively allied with Grinnell, in a social and business way. For a time the two brothers owned and operated a store in New Sharon, with C. A. Swisher assuming the active management, so that the younger brother has been continuously in business in Grinnell ever since he came here.

He was married, May 25, 1882, to Julia Fleak, at Brighton, and one son, Floyd, was born to them. Mrs. Swisher died in 1892, just after they moved to Grinnell. Floyd grew to manhood in Grinnell, graduating from Grinnell College in 1905, and his death, two years later, in Aberdeen, S. D., was a real tragedy to his father. Floyd was a handsome, honorable youth, and gave promise of splendid manhood and his death was a severe loss.

On December 20, 1899, Mr. Swisher was united in marriage with Florence Bray, of Grinnell, and to this union a daughter, Miss Virginia, was born. There are few in Grinnell and the immediate vicinity who do not know of the inspiring, mutual love which always has actuated the Swisher home. For over twenty-six years they have held an important place in the community life of Grinnell and their home has been one of hospitality and good cheer.

To know him as a friend meant more than classing him as an acquaintance, for his friendship included loyalty, kindness and steadfast unwavering faith. With such characteristics as these dominating his life it is hardly necessary to add to the list of his virtues. A man who is honorable in his dealings, high-minded and loyal is of necessity a clean-minded man, moderate

in his habits of daily living, temperate in all things and these were the characteristics that stamped Milt Swisher as a man who could be trusted, admired and genuinely liked.

He was a director of the Iowa Retail Clothiers Association for more than ten years and the honor came to him year after year, because he was as popular among his business associates over the state as he was in the city which has known him for so long.

In addition to the bereaved wife and daughter, he leaves two brothers, John, of Sigourney; and Frank, of Brighton; and three sisters, Mrs. Lida Moyle, of Grinnell; Mrs. Ellen Prizer, of Brighton, and Mrs. Eugene Reilly, of Sioux Falls, S. D. To these also must be added his nephew, Leslie Swisher, who was more like a son to him. Milt Swisher's liking for Leslie was characteristic, for they were at once uncle and nephew, father and son, and pals.

Men who have known Milton Swisher for many years have unconsciously paid him the greatest tribute. "I didn't know Milt was sixty-eight years old, he seemed hardly more than fifty", they have been saying, and at once they have somehow grasped the essential character and philosophy of the man. Milt Swisher was sixty-eight years old, every day of it, when the ripe knowledge and human understanding of sixty-eight were needed, but he was, also, much younger in his interest in life, in the easy companionship of middle-aged men, young men and lads in their teens. He had the qualities of human comradeship that knew no age limit that were confined to no class or stations.