



DR. C. E. HARRIS

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Dr. C. E. Harris, Physician 60 Years, Dies; Native of Grinnell

Dec. 15 1954

Dr. Clinton Ephraim Harris, for many years a practicing physician in Grinnell, died Wednesday evening in a local hospital after a long period of failing health. He had passed his 79th birthday, Dec. 2, 1954.

The body will be cremated and a memorial service will be held Monday afternoon at 1:30 from James Funeral Home.

Grinnell Native

Dr. Harris was born in Grinnell Dec. 2, 1875, the son of Dr. Ephraim and Rachel Hanlon Harris. His father, one of Grinnell's pioneer physicians, was a brother of Joanna Harris Haines, also member of a pioneer family, who married R. M. Haines, one of Grinnell's early day lawyers. She lived to become a loved and beneficent influence to the whole community.

Dr. Harris' mother died in his early boyhood. He grew to manhood in Grinnell and in 1896 graduated from Grinnell college, where he made a name as a crack football player and also for his dramatic ability.

Practices in Newburg

About three years later he graduated from Rush College of Medicine in Chicago and after serving an internship in a Chicago hospital returned to this community to take up his medical practicing, locating first at Newburg where he spent a few years.

In the fall of 1897 and continuing through the fall of 1900 he acted as coach of the Grinnell college football team, which made an excellent record under his leadership.

Later he transferred his medical practice to Grinnell and for a number of years was a part-

ner of Dr. O. F. Parish.

In 1907 Dr. Harris was united in marriage with Jean Kerfoot in Elora, Canada. Mrs. Harris had been a trained nurse.

Move to Colorado

Their married life was supremely happy and the Harris home was a center of cordial hospitality for a wide circle of friends. Their happy and active life in Grinnell continued until 1917 when Mrs. Harris was stricken with tuberculosis and was forced to go to Colorado to combat the disease. Dr. Harris went with her, having been forced to decline a commission in the army for World War I

berculosis sanitarium near Colorado Springs.

Return to Grinnell

Mrs. Harris' health improved and in the fall of 1936 Dr. and Mrs. Harris again took up their residence in Grinnell, after Dr. Harris had pursued special studies at Harvard Medical School for several months. Mrs. Harris passed away in November of 1945. Dr. Harris continued his practice until his retirement because of failing health about two years ago.

Surviving are an adopted son, Frank Harris of Colorado Springs, four first cousins, Mrs. W. G. Ray and Mrs. F. I. Herriott of Des Moines, Dr. James Haines of Stillwater, Minn., and Charles H. Harris of Denver, Colo., a second cousin, Mrs. Arthur McMurray of Des Moines, a sister-in-law, Mrs. Minnie Harris of Missoula.

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Dr. Harris----

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Montana and her three daughters, Rachel, Mrs. Vere Batzner and Mary, Mrs. Robert Tait, both of Missoula and Lela, Mrs. Bernard Moore of Eugene, Oregon.

He had three brothers, Arthur, Luther and Will, all of whom preceded him in death. His brother Arthur practiced medicine in Grinnell before him.

City Health Physician

Dr. Harris was distinguished for his devotion to his profession and for his community spirit. He served a term as president of the Iowa Medical Society and was a sort of perpetual secretary of Poweshiek County Medical society. He was always forward looking and up to date in meeting the demands of his medical practice. He served his community well as health physician for an extended period of years and Grinnell's milk ordinance is a monument to his patient persistence. He was a member of the Congregational church.

Endowed with rare personal gifts he was a colorful and magnetic personality. Grinnell will not be the same for those who knew "Doc" Harris in his prime.

Good Citizen, Beloved Friend 1954

We believe that it is only just and right that mention should be made in this column of the passing of Dr. Clinton E. Harris because of the impact which his life has brought to the community of Grinnell, not only in matters of health but as an influence for good citizenship. More than that, he was our very dear friend and our own sense of personal loss is great.

Recent comers to Grinnell who have known Dr. Harris only in these last years of increasing feebleness, can have no realization of "Doc" Harris in his prime. Born in Grinnell, the son of one of Grinnell's pioneer physicians, he spent his entire life in Grinnell with the exception of a short stint on the staff of the old Des Moines Leader and a period of about ten years in Colorado, where he was on the medical staff of the Woodman sanitarium while his wife was a tuberculosis patient. During all the years he stood steadfastly for what he believed was for the best interests of Grinnell, the town he loved and of which he always, wherever he was, considered himself a part.

His was a many sided character. He was always an enthusiast. He was enthusiastic about a great many things and was outspoken in his enthusiasms but always back of whatever he was doing, whether it was playing football or coaching football or practicing medicine or acting as city physician, there was always the sound core of integrity and love of his fellowman.

Clint Harris first came into our life when we were a high school student and we saw him as "Shylock" in "The Merchant of Venice", presented in a Des Moines theatre by a college cast. And what a Shylock he was and how he brought the old Jew to life before our eyes. We have never forgotten it. He possessed a rich vein of dramatic talent as he demonstrated many years later when he played Katisha in the Elks presentation of "The Mikado."

We knew him then also as a crack football player on Grinnell college teams, but we came to know him best when we were playing football here in Grinnell and he was our coach. In that capacity he was inspirational in the extreme and his addresses to the team before games were enough to draw tears from a graven image. In his coaching as in everything he did he threw the full force of a rich and varied personality.

We can see him in our mind's eye as he was in those days, a big, husky 200 pounder, full of vim and animation, but back of all his enthusiasm there lay always a vein of rich humor which endeared him to those who knew him best.

When we returned to Grinnell to enter the newspaper business "Doc" was here practicing medicine. He was in partnership then with our classmate, Dr. O. F. Parish and when we weren't busy we were apt to be found in the Parish & Harris office. When we married, Dr. and Mrs. Harris made us welcome in their home and a close and enduring friendship sprang up which has continued unabated through the years. Those were happy days. We look back on them with fondness.

After the untimely death of Mrs. Harris our friendship continued, and now this is the end.

Grinnell can thank Dr. Harris for more things than it realizes but his particular legacy to the community is the milk ordinance, which he achieved after a long and painstaking effort. As city physician he was active and efficient; as a doctor he was painstaking and devoted; as an individual he was in a class by himself.

Our heart is full as we write these words. One of the hard things about growing old is to see our friends dropping along the way.

We were proud to call Clint Harris a friend and we will never forget him and Jean as long as we live. —A.L.F.