

Mr. Prescott, professor emeritus, dies Monday

H-R March 16, 1978

Herbert L. Prescott, 69, professor emeritus of communications at Grinnell College, died of cancer Monday evening (March 13) at St. Francis Manor.

He had willed his body to science, and there will be no funeral or memorial service. Memorials may be made to Grinnell College or to Bowdoin College (Brunswick, Me.).

Born in Northport, Me., April 22, 1908, he was the son of Joel F. and Clemmie Churchill Prescott. He was graduated from Rockland (Me.) High School in 1925 and received his B.A. in English in 1930 from Bowdoin College, where he was a member of Kappa Sigma fraternity and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. He studied theatre at the University of Iowa in Iowa City the first semester of the academic year 1940-41 and received his M.A. in education from the University of Maine in Orono in June 1941.

From 1930 to 1940 he taught English and coached championship debate teams at Bangor (Me.) High School and also produced special programming for radio station WABI in Bangor. In 1941 he joined the Providence (R.I.) Journal and Bulletin as those papers' newscaster, heard several times daily over radio station WJAR.

He came to Grinnell in 1944 as director of publicity and instructor in English journalism and was director of

public relations by 1954, when he left administrative work in favor of teaching full-time until his retirement in 1974.

In addition to his teaching and administrative work, he was active with various special projects and as a writer and editor. He was Iowa director of the Crusade for Freedom in 1951 and president of the Grinnell Kiwanis Club in 1952, and he produced special motion pictures for the college and for the Congregational Christian College Council.

His work as writer and editor included several work- and textbooks for English teachers, two books of radio play scripts, and numerous published articles and short stories in a variety of professional and other periodicals. He was active in the Society of Professional Journalists-Sigma Delta Chi, serving as the Grinnell College chapter's faculty adviser from 1944 to 1974, and was a member of several professional organizations in journalism and English. From time to time he attended workshops under various grants, including the Bread Loaf (Vt.) Writers' Conference and television-production seminars.

Always interested in theatre, he had directed or acted in numerous amateur productions both in Bangor and in Grinnell.

Survivors include his son, Joel V.B. Prescott of Burnt Hills, N. Y.; daughter, Dr. Jane V.B. Prescott of Ames; half-sister, Mrs. Anthony Finnegan, and half-brother, Joel F. Prescott Jr., both of Belfast, Me.; and former wife, Ruth VanBuren Prescott of Grinnell.