

A Lover Of Beauty Dies

4-25-1930
Professor Selden L. Whitcomb, Former Member of College Faculty Here, Passes Away.

FUNERAL SERVICES HELD HERE THURSDAY MORNING.

Professor Whitcomb Came of One of the Prominent Families in Early Grinnell History.

The death of Prof. Selden L. Whitcomb of Kansas university takes one of the men who belonged to the pioneers of Grinnell. His father, Abram Whitcomb, came to Grinnell in 1854 and during their residence here this family was one of the most notable in Christian living of this city. The Fisher family were a large family. Forty years ago a reunion among them would include very close to forty members. There were the Charles, Edward, and Herman Fisher families, the James Thomson and Rev. George H. White families all of Chester. Rev. G. H. White was for many years pastor of the Chester Congregational church. In Grinnell were the Whitcomb, Howard, and Shaw families. These families were noted for their Christian living, for their high degree of intelligence, for their generous giving to promote the best causes and for their love of education.

Mr. Whitcomb was the younger member of the Whitcomb family. Four children have died and there remains Mrs. Abbie Whitcomb Robbins who lives at Eugene, Oregon as representative of one of the finest families that located in Grinnell.

The body was accompanied to Grinnell by Prof. W. S. Johnson of Kansas university. Mrs. Whitcomb was unable to come.

Funeral services were held Thursday morning at the Congregational church conducted by Rev. E. M. Vitum. The body was then taken to Des Moines for cremation.

Selden L. Whitcomb was born in Grinnell July 19, 1868. He graduated from college here in 1887. He later took degrees from Columbia and Cornell Universities and taught at Iowa State Teachers College from 1890 to 1892. In 1895 he became professor of English Literature in Grinnell College and remained here for ten active, constructive years. He was a great believer in the study of form and in the critical analysis of the construction of literary master pieces and he blazed what was then a new trail in the study of literature. He brought a lasting contribution to many of his students.

In 1905 he joined the faculty of the University of Kansas, where he was professor of English and comparative literature.

Professor Whitcomb was widely known as a poet and writer and was a member of many societies and clubs for the advancement of poetry and literature, including the Iowa Press and Authors' Club. He won the Kansas Authors' Club poetry prize in 1923 with "The Pathmakers", published in "Poetry" in August, 1924.