

## NECROLOGY

## MRS. LEE CLINTON

1876—1951

Susan Merrill Clinton, wife of Lee Clinton of 1322 South Guthrie Avenue, Tulsa, Oklahoma, passed away on December 17, 1951.

Mrs. Clinton's early home was in Jasper, Georgia. She was born on January, 1876, the daughter of Major and Mrs. Sherman Morton Merrill. Her father was a chaplain in the United States Army.

She was educated in Georgia, at Young Harris College. While in school there she met and married Lee Clinton who was also attending college in Georgia. Together they came to Indian Territory, the native home of Mr. Clinton, and together they have given Tulsa and the State of Oklahoma one of its outstanding pioneer families.

Mrs. Clinton is survived by her husband; a son, Walton S. Clinton; a daughter, Mrs. William K. Kellam; a grand-daughter Sally Merrill Kellam; and two sisters, Mrs. Leo A. O'Brien and Mrs. Fred Damman, all of Tulsa. She is also survived by five nieces, Mrs. G. E. Bruner, Washington, D. C.; Mrs. Robt. C. Ports, Coronado, California; Miss Alice O'Brien, New York City; Mrs. Robt. M. Hardy, Yakima, Washington; Mrs. David M. Bradly, Evergreen, Colorado; and one nephew, Mr. J. Donald McBirney of Tulsa. There are also three great nieces surviving; Mrs. John H. Heller, Miss Alice Brunder, and Susan Merrill Ports; and one great-great niece Carolyn Flake Heller.

Mrs. Clinton, a woman of culture and eminence, came to Oklahoma before statehood and from that time until her passing she was an influential figure in all of the social, cultural and civic events of Tulsa. Not only in her home, but throughout the state and nationally her personality and influence were brought to bear upon all the many organizations to which she lent her interest and endeavor.

She was a charter member of most of the educational and social clubs organized in Tulsa in early days: The Tuesday Book Club, the Thimble Club, Shakespeare Club and Ruskin Art Club which later became Tulsa Art Association of today. She held a trusteeship in the Philbrook Art Center which she was influential in helping to establish. Hyeckka, Tulsa's first music club, recently made her an honorary member in Tribute to many years of her active and efficient service.

Mrs. Clinton's chief interest in organizations and the one which was outstanding throughout the State and Nation was that in the Daughters of the American Revolution. She was a founder of the Tulsa Chapter which was organized in her home at Fifth Street and Houston Avenue. She was twice elected to the regency of the Tulsa Chapter, and once was State Regent of Oklahoma D.A.R. It was during her state regency and owing to her untiring work and efficiency that the Hugo Chapter of D. A. R. was organized. She was chairman of the Insignia Committee and a member of the American Indian Committee of the National D.A.R. It was under her leadership as chairman of the Memorials and Historical Spots committee in 1937 that the marker on East 41 Street was placed to mark the site of Tulsa's first U. S. Postoffice. Her devotion and Loyalty to D.A.R. was recognized throughout the organization, and her loss is mourned by all of its members.

In 1947 Mrs. Clinton was chosen to preside over the ceremonies dedicating the Oklahoma state bell in the carillon of the Geo. Washington Memorial Chapel at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. She was a promoter of the Priscilla Mullins Society of Children of the American Revolution in Tulsa, and was named a national promoter of the parent society of D.A.R.

Mrs. Clinton was a member of the National Society of Colonial Dames, and was on the Oklahoma City board of the organization. She was a charter member of the Daughters of the American Colonists, and was honorary state regent of its Oklahoma chapter.

Her name is inscribed on the corner stone of the main Library building at Cheyenne Avenue and Third Street, as a member of the original board of the Tulsa Public Library which was formed in 1914. She remained on this board for twenty-seven years. In 1917 she was appointed treasurer of the War Library Fund, and received wide recognition for her services to the W.L.F. during World War I. One of her most notable contributions to the Tulsa Library system was the Clinton Family gift of the large plot of ground upon which the Red Fork library is located.

Mrs. Clinton's civic activities also included long service to Y.W.C.A., and membership in the Tulsa Pioneer Association. She had the true pioneer spirit, and gave herself unstintingly to the betterment of her chosen home city and its people. She had a broad and sympathetic understanding of the needs in early days when the foundations of things to come were being laid in her beloved Oklahoma.

Mrs. Clinton's funeral service was held in Boston Avenue Methodist church where she had held membership for most of the fifty years she had lived in Tulsa. Officiating in the service were Dr. Paul V. Galloway, pastor of Boston Avenue Church, Dr. H. Bascom Watts, District Superintendent, and Rev. J. H. Ball, one of her former pastors there. During the service which was at three o'clock on the afternoon of December 19, 1951, the sun came through the many colored glass windows, centering its rays on the blanket of beautiful pink carnations covering the casket. To the mourning friends, this seemed a benediction straight from heaven to mark the passing of one of God's great, noble women. Everyone there will remember the feeling of gentle awe which enveloped those present at the sight of God's apparent sanction and approval of her life on earth. Stanley's Funeral Service was in charge, and burial was in Oak Lawn Cemetery, the pioneer cemetery of Tulsa.

Mrs. Clinton had a warmth of personality, a gentle dignity, and sympathetic understanding of people which made for her a host of friends. In her home life, her love and loyalty endeared her to her family. Her life is exemplified in the following lines from Bailey: "We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths; in feelings, not figures on the dial; we should count time by heart throbs"; and "He most lives who thinks most, Feels the noblest, acts the best."

—Fred S. Clinton, M.D.

*Tulsa, Oklahoma*