

IS THERE A DOCTOR IN THE AREA? (Concluded)

In 1945, Dr. Niles Clarke Was discharged, in Mississippi, from the U.S. Army having served for 5½ years. He had been a member of the National Guard. Following V.J. Day veterans who had served since before Pearl Harbor were among the first released. He and his family decided they did not want to go back to Detroit to his earlier practice. Washington was considered as a possible site to hang his shingle. His wife, Wilma, drove with their two boys from Gulfport, Mississippi, to Denver and on to Washington when they decided against that plan.

Dr. Clarke visited the State Medical Society in Lansing for advice on where to settle. Partly because his family had connections to the Ben Hur resort area, off Flint Road, the Clarkes also researched Brighton. Tom Leith, who was active in city government at the time, introduced him to Dr. Archie McGregor and the decision was made. His office was opened at 716 Spencer in 1945 and his practice grew quickly. (Office hours every evening except Thursday and Saturday.) By 1948 he practiced surgery and obstetrics at the McPherson Memorial Hospital in Howell, transferring from Mellus Hospital in Brighton.

By the mid 1950s his office was located in the old Masonic Hall building at 202 W. Grand River. He was on the steering committee with Dr May to successfully arrange for D.O.s and M.D.s to practice together at McPherson. When the McPherson Health Center was built he transferred in 1968 and moved his office and private practice there. He also conducted the physicals for the hospital employees. In 1971, Dr Clarke, an all around good family doctor, died and is buried in Fairview Cemetery.

Since the 1970s the Brighton Area has not been without the availability of sufficient medical attention. Clinics to serve every physical, emotional and mental distress dot the region. From the top of one's head to the tip of the toes, and everything in between, one can find a practitioner to apply the remedy. Emergency facilities are available; 'natural healing'; pediatrics; rehabilitation; hearing; vision; chiropractors and acupuncturists are among the many varieties of assistances available to one's need. Within an hour's comfortable drive one can find some of the world's finest hospitals. Much has changed. A dozen eggs, bushel of apples or a chicken will not pay the bill. Nor does one find so many young mothers' or children's graves. I, for one, am satisfied with the changes.

In 1845, a call was issued to local doctors to form the Livingston County Medical Society. Then in 1876 the Livingston County Medical Association was formed. This writer has exhausted her research material regarding these organizations. There appear to be no local records or archives of either of these organization. Assistance of the Michigan Medical Association needs to be requested for more information. Are there those of our readers who can help with this? (Compiled and edited by Marieanna Bair. Thanks are extended to Pete Baldwin, Mildred Clarke, Don Keehn, Dave Lehman, Mary Mathias, Horace P. Taylor, Helen Wilkinson, Brighton City cemetery records person, Dóris Petersen and to the several who have contacted the writer, giving of their experiences to enhance these writings and to more fully complete our files. Much information was gleaned from "Michigan Memorabilia" by William Pless and the 1880 History of Livingston County by Franklin Ellis.)

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