

CHARLES SPENCER McCANTS, M. D.
WINNBORE, S. C.

Ladies, Gentlemen, Friends of Dr. James Edgar Douglas, Sr. and Jr., I have been requested and honored by the Douglas family on this occasion to speak a few words about my late colleague and friend, Dr. James Edgar Douglas, Jr. or "Dr. Ed" as he was affectionately known to everyone.

Dr. Ed was born in the New Hope community of Fairfield County July 28, 1892 the eldest son of Dr. J. E. Douglas, Sr. and Margaret Jeanette Stevenson Douglas. He was educated at Mt. Zion Institute and was an Erskine College graduate. His medical degree was procured at South Carolina Medical College in Charleston, S. C. in 19 . He served a two year internship at Reper Hospital, and from there went as a 1st Lieutenant to Medical Base Hospital at Camp Greenleaf, Chattanooga, Tennessee. After this service in World War I, he returned to Winnsboro, and associated himself with his father who retired in 1940.

He was a member of the First Methodist Church, the Masonic Lodge, the American Legion, and a Director in the South Carolina Fox Hunters Association. For 30 years, from 1925 to 1955, he served on the Town Council. In appreciation of this long continuous service, he was presented with a silver cup by the Mayor. He married the former Annie Gibson and this union resulted in six children—two girls, Mrs. Wesley Melvin (Anne) and Mrs. W. R. Tregler (Dorothy) and four boys, James Edgar Douglas III, Carl M. Douglas, David M. Douglas and Jimmie M. Douglas, all of whom reside here in Winnsboro.

He was an active practitioner for 36 years until his exitus which occurred November 17, 1956.

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"Dr. Ed" was very popular with his class mates at Medical College. He endeared himself to his friends and patients alike. The minor impediment in his speech did only make his conversation more attractive, and his presence in any group, medical or otherwise, assured everyone some real skirmish of wit and humor.

Anyone who knew him, and I knew him intimately, rejoiced in his humor which always had an original, personal basis. He would always tell of something that happened to himself. He never cared for off-color jokes, nor did he make light of other people's infirmities. I never heard him express any malice toward others. He owed no one hate. He envied no one's happiness.

Foremost in his character was the fact that he was a proud family man. He loved his family, and they loved him.

On one occasion, he was receiving a pat on the cheek by his devoted wife. A Neighbor who was standing by remarked, "Ed my husband and I have been married longer than you and Annie, and I warn you, that's not going to last forever." Dr. Ed replied, "Well I am going to enjoy it while it does last."

Another incident, although his wife did not appreciate it so much, also illustrates his family attitude. He had just finished the new house equipped with highly polished hard wood floors. Coming home, Ed was troubled with a crying wife. "Ed, you will just have to do something to these children. They have been skating all over the house and have ruined our floors." He expressed only a minimum of sympathy for her, but after assuring her the floors would be repaired, he said, "Annie, stop crying for when the house gets too good for the children, it's too good for me."

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There is one favorite story that his boys will remember. Entering the house after his office hours, he was informed that the boys were sick and in their beds upstairs. Dr. Ed went up and witnessed the nausea, vomiting and greenish complexion of his patients. He assured their mother that the boys would be all right, however, he was uncertain as to the origin of the upset. The next day, he suspected that the contents of his cigar box had been diminished. The next night, he escorted them to the motion picture theatre. Very soon, a man smoking a big cigar was flashed on the screen. The diagnosis of his sons' illness was made then and there, for the Doctor heard one whisper to the other, "That man does not know how sick he is going to be."

There is another story that I must tell you. For several years, I have been attending a Medical Meeting where a doctor from Greenville, N. C. asks me every year, "How is Dr. Douglas' patient getting along?" I have to repeat this story to him and others.

Dr. Douglas was visited one morning by a dear friend and patient. "Dr. Ed, I want no foolishness out of you this morning", he said. "I'm sick, I went to a fish stew last night, I ate too much fish, I drank too much liquor, and I want you to do something for me." Dr. Douglas gave him some medicine and with a twinkle in his eye replied, "Your diagnosis is wrong. Those two things you mentioned have not hurt you at all. You must have a virus."

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"Dr. Ed" was an enthusiastic fox hunter and kept many hounds for that purpose. After a successful race, he would demand that his dogs be given fried chicken and cake. "Rowdy", his favorite hound, once placed himself on the front seat of his auto, his front paws on the steering wheel. Dr. Ed tenderly told Rowdy "You have sense enough but you have no license and I cannot let you drive me home."

Early one morning, I came across Ed and several other fox hunters in the Ridge section of the county. I upbraided Ed for his remark that Rowdy was in the lead of the pack. He upheld his claim and told me that he knew where his dog was as well as he knew where his children were.

Now, we are here to honor a truly, beloved, dedicated family physician, who endeared himself beyond belief to his patients. He was a supernatural physician to many of them. When he started his general practice, the paved roads were few, fees were single and often were bartered for potatoes and pork. There was no hospital or laboratory facilities, no miracle drugs or antibiotics. His patients were his problems, and he gave them very understanding sympathy and skillful and practical medical attention. His children have every reason to bless his name and cherish his memory.

He was a large man with a big heart full of love for his fellow man. His radiant personality will linger as long as there are voices to rehearse his life story and as long as there are eyes to behold his portrait.