

1-31-01

Edwin M. Phillips 1891-1929

Two weeks ago, in a story that appeared here entitled "The Show Off" (Vol. XXIII, No. 3), it mentioned that the play was dedicated to the memory of Edwin M. Phillips.

Here is his story. He was the eldest child of Edwin H. and Mary Ann Marquis Phillips, born in 1891. His brother was Arthur W. Phillips (Rowena) and his sister was Mary (Mrs. Frederick) Houghton).

The family lived on East State Street in Albion, and in 1927 built a fine stucco residence on Ingersoll Street, across from Merrill-Grinnell Funeral Home.

Mr. Phillips graduated from Albion High School in the class of 1911. He immediately took employment with Citizen National Bank in Albion where he was a teller at the time of death.

He also was the senior member of Phillips Brothers Variety Shop on East Bank Street.

In public service, he excelled as an outstanding citizen. He was very prominent in Masonic circles, first as a member of Renovation Lodge No. 97 where he served as Master of the Lodge as well as trustee. And he was a past High Priest of the Orleans Chapter of Royal Arch Masons.

He also was a past Master of the Alpha Omega Council of Medina of Royal and Select Masters as well as past Grand representatives of Nevada Grand Lodge in New York Grand Lodge.

Phillips had been assistant Grand Lecturer of the Niagara-Orleans district and was a Past Noble Grand in the local lodge of Odd Fellows.

For several years, he had served as a Vestryman in Christ Episcopal Church and he was a member of the Albion Conservation Club. He also served as the treasurer for the Albion High School Alumni Association and he advocated for a high school gymnasium.

Over the west door, in what is now the Albion Middle School gymnasium, there is a bronze plaque which states:

In Memory of
Edwin M. Phillips
Class of 1911
Whose tireless efforts and
Love for his Alma Mater
Inspired the Alumni
Association of
Albion High School

To raise funds to purchase
The original equipment
For this gymnasium
And to build the
Alumni Athletic Field.
Edwin Phillips did not

live long enough to see the realization of a high school gym. But after 1932, when the gym was built, the memorial plaque was placed there in recognition of his earlier labors.

His death notice elaborated as follows:

"We are once more insistently reminded that character is the most important of man's attributes. Beauty fades, gifts and talents fall with the passing of time... wealth is an accident. It is the character a man builds, through long years in his daily fight against adversity and temptation, by which makes an impression on his fellows for which alone he is liked, respected and remembered."

"Let us now praise simple men, men of little showing for their work lives after them, far beyond their knowing."

