

Isaac Clark

1870 - 1936



Isaac Clark

An eulogy delivered by his friend
JAMES M. BURKE
at funeral services conducted
by Brother Elks of Visalia Lodge
on Tuesday, July Seventh, 1936

ISAAC CLARK—FINE
EXAMPLE OF A MAN

The memory of Isaac Clark will not fade easily, nor will the example of his life be forgotten. He exemplified rugged individualism in its finest sense. His integrity was as firm as the rocks of his beloved Maine, and his soul as full of life as its evergreen pines. He was an American from head to foot, and possessed a high sense of public duty. With it all he had a sprightly Yankee humor, and a ready sympathy for the misfortunes and sufferings of others. He would go out of his way to do a favor for a friend. It is a privilege to have known Isaac Clark. He was the highest type of citizen—a good man, good friend, good husband and father. His family and friends will mourn him, but they will have nothing except love and joy in their memory of him.

*Editorial from the
Visalia Times-Delta
July Seventh, 1936.*

Exalted Ruler, Brothers
and Friends:

WHATEVER we may think of present day trends of new social theories, the fact remains that America to now has been a land singularly adapted to the development of strong characteristics in the individual. This has been true because of several factors—first that the earliest settlers and generations who came after them from foreign lands to settle in this new land of opportunity, were strong-willed, sturdy and determined, else they would never have ventured on the long journey to make their home in new and strange surroundings; second to the fact that the opportunities which America offered, while free and generous, were nevertheless opened most widely to those of courage and perseverance and lastly to the urge of competition and the stress attendant upon the tremendous development of an entire continent in little more than a century.

One of the most vitally interesting phases of this growth of individual characteristics among the people of America is the differences from geographic location in the tendencies of the individual. Thus we find the broad acres, the balmy climate and the plantation system producing the chivalry and the gentility of the

south, the vast expanses and the pioneer adventuring of the far west producing a hardy and somewhat reckless strain, and, most notably, the severe climate, the rugged soil, the stress of competition and the old traditions of New England developing men with the highest sense of duty to family, state and nation, unfaltering honesty, devotion to principle, industry and perseverance in the course they chose to follow through life.

I think that all of us who knew him, looking back upon our association with him, will at once realize that Brother Isaac Clark, whose departure from this life we mourn today, singularly exemplified and typified these splendid New England virtues which have meant so much to America.

It was my privilege to know and value him as a tried and true friend for 25 years, and to be rather closely associated with him in various public matters for several years. I saw him put to the test on more than one occasion; and it is grateful duty I perform here today in recording that he never failed to meet the test of good citizenship, community service, honorable dealing with simple sincerity and unfailing instinct for doing the right thing at whatever cost rather than the expedient thing.

There had come to him in the blood of his

forbears and out of the traditions of New England a high sense of civic duty. His fidelity to the performance of his duty as a citizen might well, I think, be set up as an ideal for younger generations, too prone in these times to pass over lightly the responsibilities attendant upon American citizenship. So we remember him active and keenly interested in public affairs, not seeking office or preferment for personal gain, but serving his city as a member of the city council and in other ways, faithfully and with ability for years, simply because he took it as a duty so to do. Out of deliberate judgment he espoused the cause of his chosen political party in state and national affairs with true zeal but with the broad tolerance of one who accepted the high privilege of American citizenship with a full sense of its incumbent responsibilities. America at its best, all its ideals, its institutions and its precious liberties will be safe in spite of stress and strife, depressions and disasters, so long as there are mingled among its citizens, everywhere, men of the type of Isaac Clark.

Good citizenship has its real root in devotion to family ties. This truth is again demonstrated in the life of our departed brother. His heart was in his home, his greatest happiness was found in the quiet peace of that home, and his joy of accomplishment in business success

through industry and skill was not in the material things it brought to him, but in that it made life more abundant to wife and children to whom he gave the last full measure of devotion.

Finally, as we catalogue the characteristics of our departed brother and record his virtues upon the tablets of love and memory, we cannot fail to make note that in a long and successful business career, no shadow of unfair or dishonorable dealing ever marred his acts. The closed business places of this city as we lay him to rest today, this gathering of business associates and business competitors assembled to pay tribute to his worth, are a testimonial far beyond any poor words of mine to the just esteem which he had earned among his fellows for honesty, truthfulness, charity and tolerance.

As I knew and remember Isaac Clark, I am very sure there is nothing he would value less for himself than mere words of fulsome praise—however well deserved. He was not built to crave adulation or to covet applause. The mere sense of duty well performed was to him the all-sufficient reward for all his efforts.

So, in that spirit, not for his sake, not even for his family's sake, do I endeavor here to clarify and make clear the virtues that marked him as a man. Rather I do so, because very

sincerely I feel that in these days we need to praise and take stock of what are the real values and the abiding virtues in life. There is abroad in our land a spirit of cynicism, a breakdown of faith in simple honesty, persevering industry, tolerance and civic responsibility which to my mind is a real threat to all we hold dear; and I take it there can be no more opportune time to once again point out that there is no substitute for those virtues than over the bier of one who exemplified them so well. It is exceedingly worth while to pause today and realize that the ideals and the strength, the real fibre of true American manhood which we call the tradition and the glory of New England is still one of the most distinctly valuable attributes of this country, and very much worth while to grasp that fact concretely in contemplation of the life of such a one as him whose memory we honor here.

We shall miss Ike Clark, miss his friendly greeting, his sympathetic interest in our well-being, his companionship, and his unfailing answer to every call for assistance in a worthy cause. We can know only in a small degree how his dear ones will miss his loving tenderness and constant care for their happiness.

But their consolation and ours must be in the faith that lies deep in every breast that we shall meet him again some day in a land where

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there will be no parting. As grief wells in our hearts at losing him thus, it must be assuaged by the memory of his well-spent life, the realization of the lasting impress for good he has left in this community. And if we would pay real tribute to him it would not be in words of praise, but in emulation of those splendid but simple virtues, his rich heritage from the New England hills, which marked him among his fellows. Could he but speak today I know he would have it so.

