The Secretary's Letter

PILES MOVENTO!

to R. I. Officials

Rotaly International, 35 E. Wacker Drive, Chicago I, Illinois, U.S.A.

No. 15

31 January, 1947

My dear fellow Rotarians:

FUNERAL OF PAUL HARRIS

The funeral of Paul Harris was held at the Morgan Park Congregational .Church, Chicago, at 3:00 p.m. on Thursday afternoon, January 30th, with the Reverend Hugh S. MacKenzie officiating. Many nearby clubs had sent delegations. Tom Warren represented all of the clubs in the Eastern Hemisphere. Ernesto Santos Bastos represented the clubs in Portugal. James H. Roth, a former commissioner of Rotary International in South America, represented the Brazilian Government, Brazilian Rotary clubs, and Past President Pereira. Ralph Dunne, Director from Zone 5, U.S.A., was in attendance. There was a large delegation from the Rctary Club of Chicago and from the staff of the Central Office, Past President Arch Klumph came in from Cleveland and Past Director Will Taylor came in from Springfield, Illinois. Past President George Hager was in attendance. Harry Rogers had planned to fly from San Antonio, but because of the storm, all planes were grounded, so he was not able to get to the funeral. Many other past presidents had expressed the desire to be in attendance, but were prevented by commitments not cancellable.

The ushers were selected by Alex Shennan, President of the Rotary Club of Chicago, from the earliest members of the club. They were: Max Goldenberg, a member since 1905; Charlie Eckel, a member since 1906; Max Stienz and George Landis Wilson, members since 1909; B.O. Jones, a member since 1911; and George Stephen, a member since 1913.

The pallbearers were: Alex Shennan, President of the Rotary Club of Chicago, and the following past presidents of the Rotary Club of Chicago:

Herbert J. Taylor
Paul A. Westburg
Charles E. Herrick
Herbert C. Angster

Charles J. Becker Richard C. Vernor Howard K. Jackson

The honorary pallbearers were Richard C. Hedke, President of Rotary International, and all of the past presidents of Rotary International.

A very simple service of some forty minutes was deeply impressive and a high tribute to Paul. The Reverend Hugh S. MacKenzie began the service with devotional readings and a prayer, followed by pertinent remarks concerning his contacts with Paul and Jean.

Chesley R. Perry, long-time Secretary of Rotary International and early associate of Paul in the development of Rotary, represented the Rotary Club of Chicago.

T. A. Warren of Bournemouth, England, spoke on behalf of Rotary in the Eastern Hemisphere.

Richard C. Hedke of Detroit, as President of Rotary International, represented the 6,006 Rotary clubs of the world.

Flowers had been specifically limited by Paul's and Jean's wishes, and some fifteen beautiful pieces surrounded the casket. Rotary International provided a large blanket of white carnations to cover the casket. On the blanket was a blue ribbon on which were the words "Rotary International". The Rotary Club of Chicago provided a large floral piece of the Rotary emblem in blue and gold on which appeared the words "Rotary Club of Chicago" with a numeral one in the center.

The service was simple and dignified, as Paul wished it to be, and as Jean had arranged it.

Interment was at Mount Hope Cemetery at 115th and South Fairfield, with the body lying next but one to Paul's long-time devoted friend, Silvester Schiele, who himself had been buried but a few months before.

You will be interested in the remarks made by the four speakers aforementioned:

The Reverend Hugh S. MacKenzie: -----

We are gathered here this afternoon in order that we might pay, in this service of Christian faith, our tribute of respect and affection to Paul Harris, and in order that we might, by our presence, also express our sympathy for those who are near and dear to him, and who are bereaved on his passing.

Paul Harris would have been 79 in the month of April, had he been spared, but his friends had noticed for several years past how his strength was failing, and he was no less conscious of it than those who knew him and constantly saw him. On one of the occasions very recently -- only a matter of days ago -- when I was with him, he repeated to me a story which has been often told concerning John Quincy Adams, who, when he was 80 years of age and a friend met him in Boston, greeted him and said, "How is John Quincy Adams today?"
"Very well, thank you," was the ex-President's reply. "John Quincy Adams himself is quite well, I thank you, but the house in which he lives at present is becoming dilapidated. Time and the seasons have nearly destroyed it. Its walls are much shattered. It trembles with every wind. It is becoming almost uninhabitable now. I think John Quincy Adams will have to move out of it soon, but he himself is quite well, quite well."

I think it was thoroughly characteristic of Paul to tell that story, and I know that in telling it he was thinking of his own weakness, of which he was conscious -- not weakness only, but constant pain, which he bore with cheerfulness and courage.

He has often worshipped in this church during the years that I have known him -- became a member of it. We who have known him have always held him in high respect and affection. He had qualities, personal qualities, that made friends, and it has been said that that is the real wealth of life -- that our wealth consists in the number of those we love and bless.

He found spiritual kinsmen wherever he went -- wherever a man was -giving the best that he had, he knew he was a spiritual kinsman, and
gladly recognized him. And he was especially concerned in every
effort to remove the barriers that separate man from man -- the
barriers of ignorance and misunderstanding and animosity and of intolerance, and of all those things that spoil human relationships
and keep men apart, and he has the distinction, as you know, of having set on its way and being the Founder of an organization that has
this as one of its great objectives -- cultivation of international
friendships and cultivation of a spirit of good will amongst men in
every land -- a movement that has grown and expanded in the 41 years
since it was started into 75 different countries -- a very great and
a very significant movement of our day.

It was his faith that created that -- his faith in men and his faith in God, to whom we all owe our life -- his belief in the ultimate decency and righteousness of the world in which we live -- his faith that backed this great effort and this great movement.

And so it is right, I am sure, and appropriate in every way, that at this service in which we are paying our tribute to him, we should have representatives of that great organization. Mr. Chesley Perry will speak to us first of all, representing the Chicago Rotary Club, and then, after him, Mr. Tom Warren, the Immediate Past President of Rotary International, whose home is in Bournemouth, England, and who is here just at this time on a short visit, and then Mr. Richard Hedke of Detroit, who is the President of Rotary International, will speak to you.

Chesley R. Perry: -----

It was about a year ago, when we were gathered here in Morgan Park to pay our affectionate tribute to Silvester Schiele, the first president of the Chicago Rotary Club, and now we have come together again to do honor to Silvester's dear friend, neighbor, and fellow Rotarian, Paul Harris, the inspired and far-visioned Founder of Rotary.

Although the idea for the club was Paul's and he was the active and diligent promoter of it, he declined the presidency until after Silvester Schiele and Albert White had each served a term in that office. It was while Paul was president that I came into the club. Harry Ruggles, who today is in California, succeeded him in the presidency, and, if I had received a few more votes at the next election, I would have been the fifth president of the club. Thirty-four years later the honor of the presidency came to me, and now President Alex Shennan has kindly asked me to speak for him and our club on this sympathetic occasion, when we mutually share the sorrow that is particularly that of Jean Harris, but, in a larger sense,

embraces not only those gathered here today or the 700 members of the Chicago Rotary Club, but hundreds of thousands of people all over the world.

Young Paul Harris was a great traveler. From his birthplace in Racine, Wisconsin, to his boyhood home of his grandparents in the New England valley among the mountains of Vermont, then to the academy, to the University of Vermont, to Princeton, to the University of Iowa, on into the mountains, to the Pacific coast, to Louisiana and Florida, then across the ocean to England and Scotland and France and Italy and Germany, always paying his own way by such employment as he could find. He always traveled under his own steam. It was only a couple of weeks ago that I sat talking with him in the dining room of his home on Longwood Drive. He was rather shaky, but still fighting the good fight. Finally he said, "We must go into the other room where the ladies are," so he had me give him my arm. With a stiff elbow and with the help of his cane in the other hand, we went through the hall. As we approached the doorway of the other room, he said, "Now drop my arm, Ches, and I will go in under my own steam," and he did.

As Paul traveled he not only made pathways on the face of the earth, but kept opening new pathways in his brain by his thinking. What he saw and what he heard he turned over and over in his mind. He recognized that people lacked understanding and good will, that people were strangers to one another, and he wanted to do something about it. Finally in the gay and turbulent '90's he settled in Chicago, which for more than 50 years has been his home. Here he began to practice law, but the mere acquisition of money was not his inspiration. He was lonesome for friends, for mutual helpfulness. In his office hangs a plaque. "He who has a thousand friends has not one friend to spare." So Paul founded a club of young men who wanted to be friends, who wanted to be helpful to each other, men of different businesses and professions, who, except for the club, would never have known each other. He promoted rollicking good fellowship and a personal interest in each other's ambitions and problems. He encouraged their minds to travel in unprecedented channels of thought. He taught them to be thoughtful and helpful -- not only to each other, but to other people as well. The thousands of people who have been or who now are members of the Chicago Rotary Club are grateful to Paul Harris for having given them an opportunity to belong to such a club, and in their name I express gratitude.

Others joined in making the club a success, which was as Paul wanted it to be, for he had the inspiration -- perhaps subconsciously -- that in a democratic society, nothing will be truly successful without participation -- active, personal participation -- by the people. That is a lesson our State and our Nation and the United Nations have not yet learned, but Rotary is opening the way to education, participation, understanding, good will and fellowship.

As the years went by, illness came upon Paul Harris and his activity in the club had been lessened, but his interest in it never ceased. When he had recovered sufficiently to resume an active participation in Rotary, he found that his child had grown into a great international movement. In fact, before he was stricken, he himself had started his

child on the road to national and international greatness. Rotarians of many lands demanded that he give something of himself to them, and he did so very generously. Consequently, many Chicago Rotarians of the later years have not had the privilege of an intimate, personal acquaintance with Paul Harris, but to them and to us he has been and always will be our great Rotary inspiration.

Fortunately for Paul and for the Rotary movement, he took unto himself a wife many years ago, Jean Thomson, his bonnie Scottish lassie, and all through the years she has been his constant, faithful companion, and today the Chicago Rotary Club pays grateful tribute to her for her gracious and immeasurable contribution to the Rotary career of our distinguished leader. We hope that her sorrow and loneliness of this hour will be softened by our sympathy and by a mutual realization with us that we all should be happy that Paul at last is at rest in a peaceful rest. We hope that her years on this earth may well be sweetened by the memory of Paul's glorious life of service to mankind.

T. A. Warren: -----

I, a son of England, stand in a privileged place today. By the accident of circumstances, I am here on a pilgrimage as the representative of tens of thousands of men from all the way across the great Eastern Hemisphere.

We for whom I speak come from China, from India, from the islands of the Pacific, from Australia, from New Zealand, Africa, the countries of the Middle East, Europe, Great Britain and Ireland, and many other countries. We differ in color, creed and culture; but we stand united as the faithful followers of the leader who now sets out on the greatest of all his journeys in search of the peace. This time he will find it. He will find it eternally -- so well and so nobly has he served. Few there are -- few there ever could be -- who might so translate inspired vision into courageous action as to recruit men from almost every nation for a mission demanding absolute selflessness and sacrifice. Yet, that is what Paul Harris did. He prayed in this House of God, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," and away into the uttermost parts of the earth he strove -and strove successfully -- to bring that prayer into better and wider effect. And all of us from the north and the south, east and the west, are bettered from having come within the shining influence of that fine American citizen.

We sorrow for our dear Jean. We wish for her the peaceful contentment of happy retrospect when once the first sharp pangs of temporary parting are assuaged.

For our leader we cannot really mourn. We sorely feel his loss, and come into this hallowed place to pay him homage and to give thanks for the immense influence that he has had upon us.

But Paul Harris is not dead. His spirit lives on. It abides everywhere. It is woven into the very fiber of other men's lives. And so we take leave of his mortal self this day, and, as we take that leave,

we rededicate ourselves to the never-ending task he has inspired and bequeathed to those who will assuredly follow his paths down the years to come.

May God, in His all-providing mercy, grant eternal peace to his great soul.

Richard C. Hedke: -----

We who are gathered here today have been drawn by the cords of love. We have come to pay tribute to one who had attained the stature of true greatness. The story of the life of Paul Harris is the story of America at her best. Conquering over the obstacles that rose before him, he attained the heights of worth-while living. Woven into the very warp and woof of his character was his devotion to the very highest ideals in living. Along with those ideals in noble living there burned within the man the spirit of friendliness and kindliness. Many have been warmed and cheered by the spirit of this great man. The example which he has given us for hobler and better living reached its climax in his loving devotion to his Scotch lassie. Never has there been a better example of fine companionship and successful marriage than that which they gave to the world. It is because of the wide sweep of his life touching thousands and making them friends and his devotion to the highest and best in life that we stand here at his bier to pay him homage.

We are grateful to him for his organization of Rotary. Truly this organization in all of its finest flowering is the daughter of Paul Harris. She has attained world-wide importance today because of the noble ideas which he conceived and gave to her. Rotary came from his compelling conviction that men in business and profession could be and should be friends. He needs no monument of marble or stone to mark his life, for he has given to the world an organization whose members shall cherish his memory with love undying. Our day needs desperately to learn again the lessons of friendship. To answer this need and to honor its Founder, we shall do all in our power to carry the Rotary spirit of friendliness and the high principles of service and helpfulness to all the world.

The passing of Paul Harris leaves a void in our midst, which never can be filled. Edwin Markham, the American poet, speaks of the passing of Abraham Lincoln as the falling of a mighty tree which leaves an empty space against the sky. There is an empty place within our hearts because of the passing of this dear friend. The utter simplicity, the gallant purpose, and the complete consecration which he gave to life shall ever be an example to us to ascend the steep pathways of more noble living.

"Let us do our work as well,
Both the unseen and the seen;
Make the house where gods may dwell
Beautiful, entire, and clean.

"Else cur lives are incomplete, Standing in these walls of time, Broken stairways, where the feet Stumble, as they seek to climb. "Build today, then, strong and sure, With a firm and ample base; And ascending and secure Shall tomorrow find its place....

"Thus alone can we attain
To those turrets, where the eye
Sees the world as one vast plain,
And one boundless reach of sky."

From "The Builders"
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow