

James A. Dick Sr. Taken by Death At Age of 88

Retired Merchant

Came Here in 1904

James A. Dick Sr., pioneer El Paso businessman, civic leader and founder of the annual Easter Sunrise Service, died early today in Providence Memorial Hospital.

He was 88.

Mr. Dick became suddenly ill and was taken to the hospital at 5 a. m. He died two hours later.

He had been retired since the



James A. Dick

sale of the James A. Dick Wholesale Grocery Co. to Safeway two years ago.

Born in Iowa

Mr. Dick was born in Dubuque, Iowa, and reared on a farm near Holden, Mo. He once recalled that his first job was clerking in a Holden, grocery store at \$10 a month.

As a youth he went to Las Vegas, N. M., where he worked in a retail grocery store which he later bought, along with other stores. In 1904 he sold out and moved to El Paso, where he bought the Barkley-Drake Wholesale Grocery Co. and founded the James A. Dick Wholesale Grocery Co. with an investment of \$7000.

In the early days the company delivered groceries by wagon and mule, as well as by train. Mr. Dick built the business into a concern worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. He also acquired the Carter Tobacco Co.

Opened New Warehouses

In August of 1951 Mr. Dick opened a big new warehouse on the Carlsbad highway.

He was chairman of the board of the wholesale firm when it was sold to Safeway in 1952.

Music was Mr. Dick's hobby. As a youth he crawled through a window to practice on the organ in the First Presbyterian Church in Las Vegas.

In El Paso, where he taught a men's Bible class at the First Presbyterian Church, he conceived the idea of an Easter Sunrise song service uniting the various faiths on the Day of Resurrection.

He founded the Easter Sunrise Service in 1921 and thereafter led thousands of worshipers in mass singing at El Paso High School stadium.

Founded Credit Group

In 1934 he was too ill to lead the singing but attended. Not until 1950 did he turn over leadership to younger men. Through the years Mr. Dick included famous old hymns on the program, such as "Revive Us Again," "When the Roll Is Called up Yonder," and "Nearer My God to Thee."

Mr. Dick was a founder of the Tri-State Credit Assn., a past president of the El Paso Rotary Club, and a Mason.

His wife, the former Kate McMurry, whom he married in California in 1868, died in January of 1952. Mr. Dick resided at his home at 909 East Cincinnati street.

Survivors include a son, James A. Dick Jr., of El Paso, a daughter, Mrs. James F. Kilburn of El Paso, and three grandchildren.

Funeral arrangements are pending with Kester and Maxon Funeral Home.