

A. B. Poe, Business Leader, Dies



A. B. POE

Andrew Bascom Poe, 78, outstanding business and civic leader, died Saturday morning in his home, 711 Elm Road. Death came in his sleep from a heart disease that left him seriously ill seven years earlier.

Funeral services will be held at 4 p. m. Monday in Trinity Methodist Church, where he had been a member of the board of stewards for many years. Burial will be in the family plot at Evergreen Cemetery, under the direction of Harding & Orr Funeral Home.

Dr. Walter R. Willis will officiate at the funeral.

Mr. Poe's body will lie in state in Trinity Church from 3 to 4 p. m. Monday for view by friends and relatives.

Mr. Poe had been an alderman for four terms, starting in 1923, and in 1931 succeeded R. Ewing Thomson as mayor when Thomson resigned to become U. S. representative.

He was born on a farm near Little Rock, Ark., Sept. 3, 1872. He left the farm when he was 18 to enter business school in Little Rock, working his way as a grocery and shoe clerk. In 1898 he started his own business as "A. B. Poe, the Shoe Man." The business expanded until other stores were opened throughout Arkansas. He also started the Hub Clothing Co. in Little Rock and gained wide recognition as a successful retailer.

In 1902 he married the former Miss Lillian Watson, daughter of a Methodist minister, in Little Rock. Also surviving are two children, Mrs. Louise Poe Shelton and A. B. Poe, Jr.; and three grandchildren, Alton B. Poe III, Richard Curtis

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Poe, and Claudia Louise Poe, all of El Paso.

In 1918 Mr. Poe sold all his stores and moved to El Paso where he began selling automobiles in 1923. In 1928 he established the Chrysler and Plymouth dealership that he operated here until his death. His dealership covered a wide territory and in 1939 he was third ranking distributor for the company in the U. S.

Almost from his arrival here he took a strong interest in local political and civic work. In 1935 he served as president of both the Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary Club and as general chairman for the Community Chest. He was a charter member of Rotary.

He was a Mason, member of El Mada Shrine, a Knight Templar and an Elk. One of his pet civic projects was the Good Will Boys Club. Through his leadership in financing the construction, the club was able to build an imposing home here. Mr. Poe also was active with

the Red Cross for many years, serving several terms as chapter chairman.

Mr. Poe was an early supporter of the Pleasant View Home for the aged, at 315 West Yandell Boulevard, installing the elevator in the building and contributing heavily during the drive to raise \$50,000 for the new addition in 1947.

He was an owner of Evergreen Cemetery and later was a member of the cemetery's board of trustees. In 1934, during one of the worst years of the depression, he accepted the chairmanship of El Paso Relief Board. In 1937 he represented the far west end of Texas in the drive to raise \$1,000,000 for the establishing of Big Bend National Park.

As director of the Broadway of America Highway Association, for the State of Texas, he pushed the fight to publicize the highway that starts at Broadway in New York and extends through El Paso to Broadway in San Diego, Calif. During World War II, Mr. Poe was named to a national committee

by the Office of Price Administration to advise with the Federal agency on problems relating to the automobile industry. He was one of three Texans named to the panel and at the time he was serving as president of the Texas Automobile Dealers Association.

Once he was proposed for a Carnegie Medal, in 1930, for rescuing a girl from drowning at the Sunset swimming pool.

Through his wife, he presented a mobile X-ray truck and unit used by El Paso County Tuberculosis Association. Another of his favorite projects was the annual Christmas tree in San Jacinto Plaza.

In 1935, the Poes purchased a home at 1810 East Yandell Boulevard and donated it to the Women's Division of the Chamber of Commerce. It later was given away at a drawing for the benefit of the women's group.

A. B. Poe, Jr., who has been associated actively in the management of the company since it was

organized, announced that the offices and shop will remain closed all day Monday. The son had been selling cars while attending Southern Methodist University and Mr. Poe said he had launched the business only so that he might have his son associated with him. The motor company was purchased from Border Motors, Inc.

Mr. Poe had attempted a political comeback in 1936 when he ran for mayor on a ticket that included as aldermanic candidates Oscar J. Allen, Joe M. Evans, J. F. Driscoll and Julian Harrison. He was defeated by Marvin Harlan in the 1937 election.