

City of Chino ❖ Hall of Fame

presented on April 6, 2010 honoring

Dr. Elgar Reed *Mary Sawyer Reed*

Elgar Reed, MD, and his nurse-teacher wife Mary, served the Chino community's medical and health needs for more than a decade, starting when they set up practice in 1911.

"Undoubtedly, no human being in the community lived so close to its people than did the genial doctor," wrote the Champion at the time of his death in 1924. Of his wife, it said that "to her is due a large share of the credit for the wonderful manner in which he served."

Dr. Reed, often accompanied by Mary, delivered at least 100 babies a year. Regardless of whether the parents could pay or not, he came, usually in his old Buick. He was noted for his "cheerfulness and jokes."

The Reeds were confronted with such infectious childhood diseases as measles, diphtheria, whooping cough, polio, and typhoid fever. During the flu epidemic of 1917, the couple went from home to home, working day and night. Four days before his death, under stress of a lingering illness, he vaccinated 80 children.

Dr. Reed also served as city health officer and campaigned for better sanitation. He was active in several fraternal organizations and a vice president of the local building and loan association.

Elgar Reed was the son of a lumberman, born in Cincinnati, Ohio, on December 12, 1866. He moved west in 1884. He was one of the first three graduates of University of Southern California Medical College, where he met his future wife. After graduation, he returned east to attend the Cincinnati Medical College.

In 1894, the Reeds married, and Dr. Reed set up practice in El Monte. In 1910, they moved to Mexico intending to practice there, but because of the revolution, they returned to California and to Chino.

Upon his death on February 19, 1924, area schools and businesses closed and flags were flown at half staff.

Mary Sawyer Reed, who was also a "beloved teacher" and community leader, was born in Colorado in 1870. She came to California by covered wagon and was the first woman to graduate from the University of Southern California with cum laude honors.

After her husband died, Mrs. Reed was librarian at the junior and senior high schools, and taught Americanization classes at night. She counseled students and took many troubled girls "under her wing."

Mary Reed died of pneumonia in 1940. She had been active in the Red Cross, the Methodist Church, and was a founding member of the Chino Valley Chapter of Eastern Star.