

AKG:BC

31st August, 1982.

Mr. Ian Dobbie,
Secretary,
S.A. Branch of the A.M.A.,
80 Brougham Place,
NORTH ADELAIDE S.A. 5006

Dear Ian,

I am enclosing an original, and a carbon copy, of an attempted Obituary on Dr. James Harley. I recognize that this may be rather lengthy but it is some indication of my respect and affection for Jim, and I have spent some time in its production. Please, feel free to edit my draft if this is considered necessary. However, I believe that James Harley was an important person in the affairs of South Australian and Australian medicine and that it is appropriate to pay him proper recognition. I will be pleased to learn of your reactions.

Yours sincerely,

A. KERR GRANT
M.B., F.R.A.C.P., F.R.C.P.,
Senior Director,
Gastroenterology Unit.

Encl.

James Froomes Harley, known to his colleagues and many of his patients as 'Jim', died in Adelaide on 27 July, 1982 after a long, gradually progressive and exhausting illness. He bore the many stresses and pains of this illness with a fortitude and lack of complaint which had characterised his personality during a life of self sacrifice. As always, his reactions to these great personal problems were completely submerged by his concern for the well being of his patients and his many friends, and his belief that he was a person of little importance. His life's record denies this humble self assessment, but the latter is an indication of the nature of the man who dedicated much of his life to a very human care for his fellow beings, and to the highest possible standards of medical care, particularly in general practice medicine. This great integrity of character was strongly evident when I first knew Jim Harley as a fellow student at St. Peters College, Adelaide in the late 1930's and early 1940's. Personal and professional associations became even closer after his graduation from medicine at the University of Adelaide in 1951, since he married the late Rosemary Harley who had passed through her medical undergraduate course with me during the war years. After their marriage, Rosemary and Jim combined to provide a remarkably excellent general practitioner service in the Adelaide suburb of Burnside until Rosemary developed a progressive and very distressing illness. James Harley suffered the stresses of his wife's increasing ill health while continuing to work full time in his general practice, as well as excessive hours in his many committee responsibilities. It was a cruel stroke of fate that he had then to battle with the onset of his own illness shortly after his wife's death some three years ago, but he fought on to the end. This end came at too early an age, since he still had much to offer and he deserved some time to enjoy his other interests after 30 years of sacrifice to the community.

Jim Harley was born in Woodend, Victoria on 18 May, 1924. Secondary schooling was at Melbourne High School and later at St. Peters College. After a year in a Bachelor of Science Course at Adelaide University, he joined the R.A.A.F. and served overseas as a Navigator Officer until his discharge in 1945. He then entered undergraduate medical training at Adelaide University and during this time his interest in committee work developed. He played an important part in the St. Marks Collegians Association and became its President. After his residency at the Royal Adelaide Hospital, he entered general practice and immediately became concerned in the standards and integrity of medical practice, particularly general practice medicine. He played an important role in the development of the Burnside War Memorial Hospital, serving on its Board from 1966 and as the Board's President from 1972. He was elected President of the Eastern Suburbs Medical Practitioners Association in 1970 and, thus, commenced years of service with the South Australian Branch of the Australian Medical Association. He was a member of its Council from 1970 until June, 1982 (except for a year of respite in 1972/1973). He became President of the S.A. Branch of the A.M.A. in 1976 and he was re-elected as an Ordinary Member of Council after he retired as Immediate Past-President in 1978. The latter is some indication of the trust and affection which he enjoyed from his colleagues, as well as their regard for his honesty and integrity, his ability and devotion in community work and also for his wit and sense of humour. He had a remarkable habit of collecting and relating funny stories of a wide variety of shades of decency. Jim Harley's long association with the A.M.A. involved him in heavy responsibilities on many committees at State and national levels, which are too numerous to indicate. He was, also, involved from an early stage in the activities of the National Association of General Practitioners of Australia when it was formed in 1972 and he became its President in 1976. He was Chairman of the General Practitioners

Committee from 1974 until late 1979. His remarkable service to NAGPA was recognized by his election to Honorary Life Membership in early 1982 - a recognition which moved him deeply. He was admitted to the Role of Fellows of the Australian Medical Association in 1979 - a tribute to his years of service to medicine in all its aspects.

James Harley's other absorbing interest was in many areas of sport, particularly Australian Rules Football, although he was the first to admit that his interest was not matched by practical ability in more youthful years. This lack of expertise was replaced by untold hours of service to the Adelaide University Football Club and he was the medical officer to the South Adelaide League Football Club from 1951 until shortly before his death. He was the representative of the S.A. Branch of the A.M.A. on the Institute for Fitness, Research and Training Advisory Committee.

James Froomes Harley was a gentle and humble man who had no time for hypocrisy or arrogance, and he suffered fools with scant impatience. He is survived by three sons and a daughter. To them, and his other relatives, great sympathy is extended for his departure from a life which he enjoyed to the full, and in which his purpose was to serve the community in very many ways.