

Eli L Moore (1863 – 1907)

Eli Lewis Moore was born January 6, 1863, the second son of Eli W. and Elizabeth C. (Moore) Moore. In 1880, the family was living at 22 Pontiac St. N, Ann Arbor, and Eli, age 17, was working in a machine shop, presumably the family business, a manufacturer of farm implements. Eli later studied Dentistry at University of Michigan, graduating ca 1890. Following his graduation, Eli worked in partnership with Dr. C. F. Porter in Bay City, Michigan. After a few years, he opened his own practice.

Eli attended the First Baptist Church in Bay City, and there met Jessie L. Briggs, the daughter of E. E. Briggs. Jessie was born in June, 1874, and was 20 years old at the time of their marriage in 1894. Eli was 31 years old. Their first child, Mildred, was born in June 1898. By 1900, the family was living at 620 N. Sherman St., Bay City. A second child, Eli Lewis Moore, Jr. (known as Lewis), was born Dec 10, 1902.

According to a newspaper account at the time of his death, Eli bought a lot on Lincoln Street in Bay City and “built a fine house”, doing much of the finishing work on the interior himself.

Eli and Jessie were divorced in 1905, after what was described in the Bay City Times as “one of the sensational divorce cases of the Bay (County) circuit court.” Jessie initially filed for divorce, but Eli contested the action, claiming that if the couple were left to themselves, they could work out their differences. The judge agreed with Eli and denied the divorce. However, two months later Jessie again filed for divorce, which Eli did not contest. Custody of the children was awarded to the mother.

On the 1910 census, Jessie Briggs is shown living in Bay City with her parents and children Mildred and Lewis. Her occupation is listed as “teacher- public school.”

Eli married Irene Oldfield July 10, 1906. She was born May 13, 1886. At the time of their marriage, he was 43 years old and she was 20. The marriage took place in Windsor, Ontario. Thereafter, the couple left Bay City and Eli set up a practice in Pinckney, Livingston County.

Eli died April 9, 1907 at a cottage owned by his brother Walter on Portage Lake in Pinckney. He was 44 years old. The cause of death was listed as “gunshot wound”. Eli’s brother, Walter, was the informant listed on the death certificate. Eli was survived by both parents and his brothers Walter, and Wendell, in addition to his wife, Irene, and two children.

A daughter, Melody Moore, was born to Irene five months after Eli’s death, on September 24, 1907.

Ann Arbor News, April 10, 1907

THIRD ACCIDENT WAS A FATALITY

Dr. Eli L. Moore was Accidentally Shot Yesterday at Portage Lake where He Was Duck Hunting.

Two Members of Family Have Met with Accidents in the Same Cottage Within Six Months

Dr. Eli Lewis Moore, son of Mr. and Mrs. Eli Moore was shot and instantly killed yesterday afternoon about 4:30 while at his brother's cottage at Portage Lake.

Dr. Moore was alone at the cottage with his wife when the accident happened.

A strange fatality is attached to the cottage which belongs to Dr. Walter Moore of Ann Arbor, a brother of the dead man. The cottage is situated on the far side of the lake on a bluff and is one of three cottages on this side of the lake, the majority of the resorters being located on the other side. Less than a year ago, a cousin of Dr. Moore, of this city, was spending a few days at the cottage hunting, when a gun was accidentally discharged and he was shot in the foot with the result that his toes had to be amputated.

In October last Dr. Walter Moore was spending a few days at the cottage with his wife and three children. In handling a shot gun it was discharged accidentally and a full charge of shot entered the leg of the little girl six years old with the result that it was necessary to have it amputated. The child has just recovered from the operation. The third accident was the fatal one and Dr. Walter Moore, owner of the cottage, says he will never enter the cottage again.

Dr. Eli Moore was born in Ann Arbor January 6, 1863 and was educated here. He was graduated from the dental department of the University in 1890 and settled in Bay City where he married. Later family infelicities arose and he was divorced from his wife about a year ago, the latter taking the two children, a boy and a girl.

He was married again, this time to Miss Irene Oldfield, also of Bay City, last July in Detroit and they later went to Pinckney to live where he established a practice. The accident occurred while Dr. and Mrs. Moore were sitting at a table in the cottage. In some manner the gun fell to the floor and was discharged. In falling the ball penetrated Dr. Moore's temple killing him instantly. His wife is prostrated by the accident.

Mrs. Eli Moore, mother of the dead man, was seen this morning and said that while her son had had a great deal of trouble and unhappiness and often felt discouraged over it he always tried to look on the bright side of his troubles and was not melancholy.

The two brothers Wendell Moore and Dr Walter Moore went to Portage Lake this morning and will return this afternoon with the body, which will be taken to his parents' home, 661 Swift Street, where the funeral will be held.