

# Centennial Moments

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## Early presidents of CME—Newton Evans

Among the principal founders of Loma Linda University is Newton Evans, MD. He played a vital role as the fourth president and a pathology teacher for the University (formerly called the College of Medical Evangelists) from 1914 to 1927. A graduate of Cornell University School of Medicine, clinician, and former teacher at American Medical Missionary College in Battle Creek, Michigan, he brought greatly needed credentials and clinical expertise to the fledgling medical school at Loma Linda. In 1915 the school was given a "C" rating by the Council of Medical Education. This rating simply acknowledged that the school existed and little more.

At the autumn council of Seventh-day Adventists held in Loma Linda in 1915, the future of the school hung in the balance. In a miraculous manner it was voted to continue the school and develop the clinical component in Los Angeles. Thus the great task facing Dr. Evans was to develop a clinical facility and faculty in Los Angeles and improve the credentials of the existing and new teachers at Loma Linda.

To accomplish this, significant financial resources were needed. For Dr. Evans, the answer was found in the person of Percy T. Magan, MD. Dr. Magan had pursued a medical degree at Dr. Evans' urging

while serving as administrator at Madison College near Nashville, Tennessee.

Newton Evans, ever the careful administrator, had been grooming P.T. Magan for a position at the school. Dr. Magan was asked to direct the



clinical component in Los Angeles. He had the uncanny ability to establish rapport with medical thought leaders and groom financial contributors. Dr. Newton Evans' foresight in calling Dr. Magan was among the most important decisions made during his tenure as president. By 1917, the school was upgraded from a "C" rating to a "B" rating.

Walter Macpherson, MD, a later president of Loma Linda University, remembered Newton Evans as a man who always strove for excel-

lence. As a first year medical student taking pathology under Dr. Evans, he vividly remembered his teaching style. "As a teacher, Dr. Evans seems not to be particularly interested in what a student knows, but he exhibits an unusual ability in quickly finding out what he does not know and then he proceeds to make sure that the student learns it. Obviously there are times when this method causes considerable embarrassment to the student, but after the superficial wound has been healed, each student who has had these methods applied to him is most thankful for having had the experience."

After his long tenure as president of the College, Dr. Evans became chief pathologist and director of laboratories of Los Angeles County General Hospital. He served again at LLU as dean of the School of Medicine for two years during 1943 to 1945 until failing health forced him to retire.

Without Dr. Newton Evans' skill and able leadership, the history of Loma Linda University might have been very different. He was a person of vision who pushed the envelope of possibility and excellence to new levels. He believed that only a first rate Seventh-day Adventist medical school could adequately prepare medical missionary workers to serve as skilled and spiritual practitioners around the world.