

Dr. William A. Hipke, Marshfield Clinic Founder  
Nominated by Brian Finnegan, MCHS History Archive

Born January 12, 1865 in New Holstein, WI, William Hipke was the oldest of the clinic's six founders, being two years older than Karl W. Doege.

He entered the Physicians and Surgeons Department of the University of Illinois and received its medical diploma in 1891 at the age of 26. Dr. Hipke established practice in Hustisford, a little town just southeast of Beaver Dam where he married Jennie and they had one daughter, Elseba. After 17 years in that location, they moved to Milwaukee for one year where Hipke decided to specialize and went on to Vienna, Austria where he studied ophthalmology and otolaryngology.

After completion of his education, he established offices in Marshfield on the second floor of the Adler building on East Second Street. His residence was located at 212 S. Vine Ave in the Pleasant Hills district.

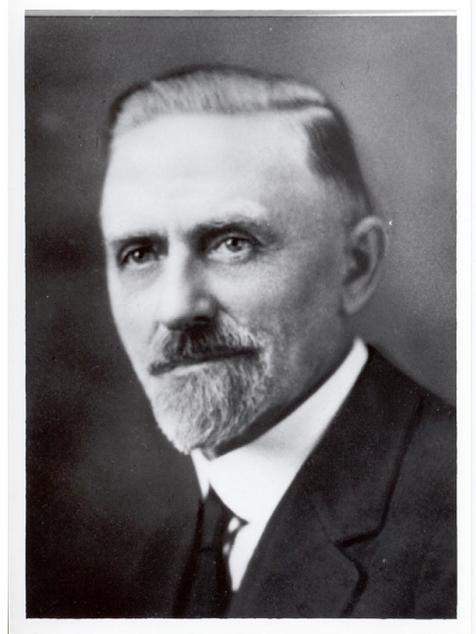
Physically Hipke was tall and lanky, slow in motion. By nature he was a quiet and courteous man. Among people he was soft-spoken, warm and unobtrusive yet outgoing. He listened more often than he spoke. He was impeccable in his dress. Those who remember him invariably recall his pointed goatee, which made his long angular face even longer. It gave him a rather distinguished appearance.

In 1916, when the concept of a Marshfield Clinic was being finalized, Hipke was 51 years old and had practiced in Marshfield barely 7 years. He was well known in the community and an accepted citizen and practitioner. He supported the clinic concept and willingly agreed to the terms for joining the group.

Hipke was the first eye, ear, nose and throat specialist for Marshfield Clinic. His organizational ability is recognized by the administrative responsibilities he acquired. He was elected first treasurer of the clinic, a position he held until 1935. He was also appointed to the Business Committee whose job it was to set salaries for the administrative staff and employee physicians as well as to oversee office expenses.

By 1932, at 67 years of age, his professional work included a little EENT but mostly he did simple medical tasks for the group. When World War II broke out, he spent his time doing Army physicals. He retired at age 70 but continued to work running errands between the clinic and the hospital or wherever his courier services could be used.

Dr. William Hipke passed away at the age of 86.



Taken from the writings of Stanley Custer, MD, first historian of Marshfield Clinic  
Submitted by Brian Finnegan, MCHS History Archive