

# Earle R. Pitt Dies After Long Illness

## Newsman, Creator of 'Putterville,' Long a Prominent Figure in City

Earle R. Pitt, 78, who was a colorful and vital part of the Lansing story he told for a generation of State Journal readers, is dead.

The dean of Lansing newsmen and the best-known among them upon his retirement in 1947, Earle Pitt not only chronicled the happenings in Lansing in his inimitable style, but contributed so much of his humor and originality to the community that he became a Lansing institution.

Although the whole city received his attention as a gatherer of news and a mirror of community folkways, Earle's special interest was centered in North Lansing, which he covered daily on his charted and sometimes uncharted rounds. That interest was reflected when he coined the slogan: "North Lansing Against the World."

A veteran newsman, who died at 11:30 p. m. Saturday in a convalescent home in Ionia, had among his many distinctions, the honor of having founded a community. Many of those who for many years read of the doings of the folks in Putterville grew almost to think of it as a real place and its citizens real people, rather than the creatures of Mr. Pitt's fertile imagination.

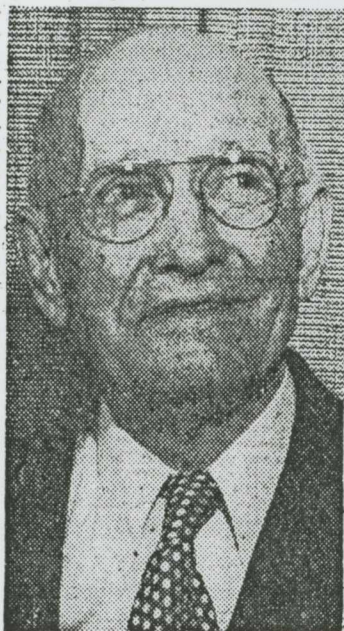
### ILL 18 MONTHS

Seriously ill for more than 18 months, Mr. Pitt suffered a relapse early Saturday evening. Death came before he could be removed to Ionia hospital.

He was known widely as the writer of the columns, "Putterville Folks," "Wayside Pickups," "On the Side," and "City Hall Grouch."

Death was caused by a heart ailment complicated by a stroke suffered nearly two years ago. It was not until then that his prolific typewriter was stilled and the stream of news, humor and philosophy he had produced for The State Journal ceased when he became bedridden.

Before being fatally stricken, Mr. Pitt had continued to contribute his folksy feature stories. He had prepared many columns of material for the Centennial edition, printed April 28, 1955.



EARLE R. PITT

From the time he began his reporting of news in 1907 Mr. Pitt counted among his confidants men like W. C. (Billy) Durant, Edward VerLinden, R. E. Olds and other leading citizens who made news and kept him informed and discussed with him their newsworthy activities.

Back in those early days, North Lansing was the "hub" of activities of a growing Lansing and it was there he helped father one of the city's first service groups—"North Side Commercial club."

### COLUMN POPULAR

His "Putterville Folks," which began to appear early in the 1900s, brought its author thousands of followers and still was widely read until he became too ill to continue chronicling the news of the imaginary hamlet he had created.

\*Population figures by wards and precincts not available.  
†Varies some from canvassers' statement.