

Way We Were

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Meet the Gregors

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Park City has seen plenty of doctors throughout its history. Regular readers of this column, visitors to the Park City Museum, or Parkite old-timers might even recognize some old names: Dr. LeCompte, Dr. Goodwin, Dr. Snow, Dr. Oniki. One of the earliest doctors to treat Park City patients, however, was Dr. Gilbert D. Gregor.

Originally from upstate New York, Dr. Gregor received his medical training from University Medical College at New York University. He moved to Park City around 1885, just one year after the town was officially incorporated. Though Dr. Gregor's years in Park City were primarily focused on general and primary care, his true passion was for surgery. When surgeries were a necessity in the area due to mining accidents or other medical emergencies, Dr. Gregor's expertise was usually the first sought. He was on hand in June 1895 to help James Kescel, a foreman at the Anchor mine who, as the *Record* put it, "had the misfortune to get a piece of steel in his right eye." Dr. Gregor had to surgically remove the eye, but Kescel survived the accident otherwise unscathed.

In 1891, Dr. Gregor married Elizabeth Pegan, whom the *Park Record* called a "charming and popular young lady." Elizabeth was educated at the New England Conservatory of Music, which still operates today in Boston and is the oldest independent school of music in the United States. Upon graduating, she served for a time as the head of the vocal department at the Millersburg Conservatory, a small women's college in Kentucky. During her time in Park City she performed regularly for church gatherings and local societies.

After serving the town for thirteen years, not just as doctor but also briefly as mayor from 1891 to 1894, Gilbert Gregor decided it was time to return home to New York. He and Elizabeth, their son David, and daughter Mary packed up and readied to leave in the spring of 1898. In one last musical appearance, Elizabeth performed on the stage of the newly opened but woefully short-lived Grand Opera House accompanied by an orchestra made up of "the best local talent." As it was the final chance for her friends and admirers in Park City to see her before her departure, Elizabeth made her final bows before a full house. In May 1898, the Gregor family left Park City.

Dr. Gregor continued his practice in Watertown, New York, specializing in surgery until his retirement. He died in 1931, following several years of health afflictions. Elizabeth Gregor taught piano and vocals in Watertown until her unexpected death from cerebral hemorrhage in 1926 at the age of 58. The spring following his mother's death, the couple's son David married in Watertown. He followed in his father's footsteps, becoming a doctor himself after graduating from the College of Physicians and Surgeons, the medical school of Columbia University.



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Credit: Park City Historical Society and Museum,

Caption: The Gregor family just missed the Great Fire of 1898. Pictured here are the ruins of the Grand Opera House in June 1898, where Elizabeth Gregor had given her final musical performance just one month earlier.