

the almanian EXTRA

Alma College, Alma, Michigan

Tuesday, Nov. 12, 1957

Dr. Molyneux Succumbs To Heart Ailment; Services Held at College Chapel on Sunday



by Bruce Johnstone

Dr. Max Molyneux, head of the Department of English, Alma College, died early Friday evening at the Gratiot Community hospital from a coronary attack suffered the previous Monday. Under oxygen most of the week, he held limited conversation with only his family and most intimate friends until he passed away 7:15 Friday evening.

Services were held Sunday, Nov. 10, at the Alma College chapel with the Rev. Bernard F. Didier, pastor of the Alma First Presbyterian church; and Dr. Robert Swanson, president of the college, officiating. More than 400 students, associates and relatives attended. Final services will be held today (Tuesday) at the Houghton Methodist church, Houghton, New York, and interment will be there also, in the River-view cemetery.

Perhaps the best single word to describe Dr. Max Molyneux is "gentleman." Admittedly that word, like many others, is badly over-used, and so sounds trite. In relationship to Mr. Molyneux, however, the word can be justified. It would imply a deep sense of integrity. In all things he did the best of which he was capable.

Was Sponsor to National Literary Society Here

Phi Sigma Pi Motto
Characteristic of
Sponsor's Ideals

Although he shared the sponsorship of Lambda Iota Tau with other members of Alma's faculty, Dr. Molyneux's presence has had great effect on members of this group.

The name of the college honorary society, Phi Sigma Pi, means, in effect, "We strive to excel in the love of wisdom." With the presence of Dr. Molyneux in Lambda Iota Tau, the spirit of one society's motto carried into another society, for it has been his excellence in the love of wisdom which has created and enlarged the spark of originality and higher inquisitiveness in many of LIT'S members.

From the time Dr. Molyneux received his B. A. degree from Oberlin College of Ohio, to the end of his career at Alma Friday evening, he did not betray that integrity. Even though his collegiate major was chemistry and he, in fact, taught science from 1924-1937, he began to feel, according to his son, Joel, that his true calling lay in literature and the humanities. Therefore, the doctorate which he received from Cornell University in 1937 was in Literature rather than in science.

His son said that, like most of us, Dr. Molyneux was for a long time in doubt religiously. He had the courage, however, to search within himself until he arrived at a satisfactory answer. His diary states that on April 22, 1924, he completely surrendered himself to God and Jesus Christ.

He made friends wherever he went because he had a deep interest in others. This trait also is implied in the word "gentleman." This interest was seen in his concern for and kindness to his students.

Courage was another of his traits which was a basic part of this integrity. He had no fear of saying what he thought merely
See SUCCUMBS back page

SIMPATICO

Recalls Grade School Days

Recollections are difficult efforts. One does not usually make an effort to conceal his admiration for one who can recall memories and seemingly forgotten bits of colorful personal history, and so I was surprised and filled with admiration at the Inaugural Ball.

To begin with, we felt out of place in our stuffed shirts and crisp formals and my wife and I stepped into the Commons like jugglers carrying raw eggs on the end of a pole. Attempts to feel at ease in such a formal situation, produce rather slow responses, and, as is often the case, seem to backfire altogether. The self-conscious attempt to be cheerful results in flippancy; the nervous attempt to be agreeable ends in parroting; and the desire to carry on an intelligent conversation leaves the striver with a chagrined opinion of his own stupidity and the taste of shoe-leather in his mouth. We surmounted some obstacles, failed miserably at others. Then we came to Dr. Molyneux.

Actually, the enjoyment of the evening began with the simple formality of introduction to Dr. Molyneux. He was the last in the line and perhaps the tensions within us relaxed at that point, but I will always believe that it was Dr. Molyneux that changed the evening.

It was easy to talk with him. He was interested and his words were curiously free of the classroom aura which seems to prevail in the speech of professors, either on or off the campus. It was a conversation easily and evenly participated in and I found myself enjoyably compelled to the small-talk of the moment. As I look back I can realize that I would have continued talking with him indefinitely under different circum-

stances. He asked questions about me, and when he learned that I had transferred here from Berea College he bent his head thoughtfully
See SIMPATICO back page.



Last year's Lambda Iota Tau is shown above with Dr. Molyneux in the back row. In the front row, left to right, are: Ann Reavey, Senior; Lotus Witham, graduate; Nancy Martin, graduate; Gerri Bishop, graduate; Alyce Conti Gaines, graduate. Back row, left to right: Karen Homan, graduate; Jeanne Lyons Presslar, graduate; Mary Margaret Johnson, graduate; and Dr. Max Molyneux.



The Almanian
Founded 1900

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Forever a Champion...

"And the cell divided and redivided until it became a human being; and the human being looked back within the cell and said, "There is Eternal Life, incessant, turbulent, persistent." And as lightning with the clap of thunder brings heaven and earth together, so man was reunited with his Maker, the Life-giving Principle, entering into the mind of Christ with God.

"In every human being, in every society, as in the single organism, there must be conservation and transmission and adoption of the principle of Life. And for man and for society that Life is the belief that he has that Life from God, the Life that is the Light of Man."

The above quotes, from Dr. Molyneux's book, **Peace Now and Forever**, published in 1942, express more, it seems to us, than just a bit of philosophy. Not that we could, if we would, detract from it, nor can we be sure that we fully understand the significance of meanings as deep as a man's life. But this we can perceive: there is in his words the ring of authority which can come only from the inspiration of a man who has given himself, completely and unreservedly, to God thru Jesus Christ. Such a man is Max Molyneux.

We speak of him in the present tense. We do not, by this, deny worldly reality, but we do recognize the immutable fact that by his life he has become one of the eternal memories of Alma College—and that is something which can never be regarded as anything else but present tense.

Dr. Swanson has spoken, a number of times, on Dr. Molyneux's zeal as a "champion of liberal arts." At the pre-school conference held this year on the campus Dr. Molyneux participated in a panel discussion at Tyler Center in which he crusaded, as he has done at numerous other times and places, for a re-evaluation of liberal education towards an ideal consistent in the very concept of "liberality." That Alma College is working toward such ends is evident in the Administrative emphasis in long-range planning. That Alma has determined to effect certain changes representative of truly liberal education is evident also in increased student participation in administrative committees and other campus organizations heavily controlled by faculty and administration in previous years.

There are a number of forces contributory to this new emphasis on our campus, certainly, not the least of which has been our beloved Dr. Max Molyneux.

Let us come to a concrete example. The Almanian, of course, is most closely concerned with the Publications Committee. Dr. Molyneux has been the chairman of that group this year. Foremost under his leadership has been the establishment of three important sub-committees, equally composed of faculty and students. One of these committees is primarily concerned with the Almanian, another with the Scotsman, and the last with the Pine River Anthology which, under Dr. Molyneux's urgings, is to resume publication this year after a lapse of some time. In all of the subcommittees, the purpose is to formulate a five-year plan of operation, purpose, improvement and advancement of the campus publications. These plans are then to be proposed to the Publications Committee, and later, in final form, to be submitted to the Committee on Long-Range Planning. Inasmuch as Dr. Molyneux is responsible for the initial step in this plan, the task now becomes a sacred responsibility, and the acceptable results will forever bear the imprint of Alma's devoted champion of liberal education.

As for our own particular sub-committee, we think that should Alma ever become fortunate enough to have a department and separate building for journalism (and this is NOT out of the realm of possibility) nothing could be more fitting than to name such a department or building in memory of Dr. Molyneux.

We like the "cartoon" on this page because it contains a greater story than it does a picture. He is not dead, for memories are living things, too, and his office is no more empty now than it was at times when he was away at conferences and meetings promoting the cause of liberal education. When a man's crusade is fulfilled it is because he has reached the ultimate source of the power for change. We believe that Dr. Molyneux is at the High Conference now . . . what more can we say than to express the conviction that he will be forever a champion of liberal arts.

Almighty God, whose purposes are from everlasting to everlasting, and in whose hands are the issues of life and death; hear us now as we wait before Thee in confidence and hope.

Grant us, we beseech Thee, the comfort of Thy presence and the quiet ministries of the Holy Spirit. Renew within us the gifts of faith and patience that we may temper our sorrow with gratitude and discover new sources of courage for the days that are ahead.

We give Thee thanks for him whose earthly labors have wrought an indestructible inheritance of truth and beauty. We praise Thee for his intellectual honesty, for the fearlessness and diligence with which he pursued the truth; for the high vision he had of his calling as a teacher; for his quiet humility before all mystery and all knowledge; for his gentle way as a colleague and a friend; for the glimpses of Thee we saw in him as he walked among us, and for the many occasions when we sensed the secret power of his life—his unimpeachable integrity.

We thank Thee for the home ties with which Thou didst enrich him and we commend unto Thy tender mercies those whose sense of loss is especially great. Fold them to Thy great heart and use the sympathy of all of us to minister Thy loving kindness to them. Teach us all to understand that those whom Thou callest to Thyself are not separated from Thee as they are from us, for Thou has promised, "I will not fail thee nor forsake thee."

Be with all of us who were his friends and fellow workers. Consecrate us more fully to our tasks by the enriching memories we have of him and of his faithful life. Help us to walk amid the things of this world, as he did, with eyes that are open to beauty and with our hearts and minds given to Thee. Fix our hearts upon the rewards which Thou has promised to them who serve Thee; that whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just; whatsoever things are pure and of good report—we may think upon and do these things for the sake of Thy son, our Lord. Give us now, we pray, such knowledge of Thee that in every disappointment we may be sure Thou art still loving us; in every darkness Thou art still enlightening us; in every sadness Thou art comforting us, and in every death Thou art giving us life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

—prayer delivered by
Dr. Swanson at the
Memorial Services Sunday.

Simpatico

(Continued from front page.)

and struggled for the memories which the name "Berea" seemed to evoke.

In our conversation I learned that the two of us seemed to be parts of a triangle of minds at that moment, the three legs represented by Berea, Oberlin and Alma colleges. To say that it is a small world is to say little. To believe that the interactions of people in this small world are a reflection of some mysterious and divine fore-planning would have been more

illustrative of the situation in which we, Dr. Molyneux and I, suddenly found ourselves.

One of my close associations at Berea was with a person with whom Dr. Molyneux had attended grade school. He smiled as he recalled the person's features, bits of her personality and together we discussed the question which must come before the minds of educators thousands of times—"I always wondered what happened to her."

I was struck by the timelessness which seemed to surround us as we talked. Dr. Molyneux carried no far-away look in his eyes, yet they were alive with the reality of infinity and he seemed to be ac-

**FROM THE DIARY
OF
DR. MAX MOLYNEUX**
"22 April, 1924. I definitely gave myself over to God through the belief in His son, Jesus Christ. I feel that it will change my whole life. At the time I felt an outpouring of God's grace upon me. Since that time I have continuously felt myself growing in the grace of God. Cut me not off from Thy mercies, O Gracious God . . . Lord, keep the vision ever perpetually before me."

tually living the recollections coming now in the realm of words. The mysterious thing about it all was the fact that I, too, seemed removed from the time and place through no effort of my own, but rather I was a "rider" in the mystical conveyance of the personality before me.

Later, when he spoke at chapel that year, he talked of "simpatico" and illustrated his points with stories of men, attuned to the world of ideas mutually created, talked untiringly into the sunrise hours. I realized then that the only explanation of our conversation at the Inaugural Ball, lay in that word, "simpatico" . . .

It has often been my thought, and my desire, since then, to be alone with Dr. Molyneux, and to become "simpatico", drawing on the mystical energy of that concept just to talk "into the sunrise hours."

Perhaps, God willing, I shall someday have that opportunity.

Succumbs

(Continued from front page.)

because such thoughts might be unpopular, and he did not broadcast his own problems. Even his last illness was one which he refused to admit, one against which he fought uncomplainingly.

Academically he was excellent because anything less than that simply would not be good enough. Between 1943 and 1946 he published two books: **Peace Now and Forever** and **The Institution of a Young Nobleman**. The latter was published in the Scholar's Facsimile Series. The second volume of it was in preparation at the time of his death. His son stated that perhaps he had "too much guts for his own good." He simply would not stop, but put himself completely into everything he did.

In speaking of Dr. Molyneux, then, we would have to speak of such characteristics as honesty, interest in humanity and the individual, and courage; all these are part of the integrity which was his.

Admittedly the ranks of the true gentlemen are thin, but Dr. Max Molyneux is a worthy member.

