

DORA DEPEW



Eulogies from the Tattler

Miss Dora DePew



(Friday, June 2, 1961) Miss Dora DePew used to say she “would rather teach geometry than eat a chocolate soda.” This characteristic enthusiasm for her work made a noticeable impact on her students, many of whom would return during their college vacations to reminisce and report their accomplishments. She inspired several of her students to decide on mathematics teaching as a career.

Miss DePew would always tell her classes that if they would work as hard as they could, she would help them as much as she could. In the classroom she insisted upon strict discipline and never let the classes forget that she was in charge. Yet she did this without harshness and rarely lost her sense of humor.

In one of her classes were a boy and a girl, aptly described by her longtime associate, Miss Martha Neighbour, as “one of those lovey-dovey couples.” One day while this class was concentrating on an assignment, and she was cruising about the room, as was her custom, observing them, she happened to come up behind the boy as he leaned over toward his beloved and softly whispered, “Dear...” Miss DePew promptly answered, “yes?”

Miss DePew had a great interest in all forms of music. Every Christmas she looked forward to having the Brass Choir play as much as the Brass Choir looked forward to the enthusiastic welcome and the candy she would have for them. She also enjoyed attending concerts and liked to hear the entire orchestra trumpeting forth with all its might. She felt slightly cheated when the orchestra took time away from its program to allow a small ensemble to perform.

Miss DePew participated in many activities. For a number of years she was in charge of the school clubs’ treasuries, and at one time she played basketball with the girls after

school. As Our Miss Brooks, in the 1956 Spring Production, she ran away with all the honors, playing the role that came most naturally to her, and on which she was always an expert on stage and off – the teacher.

In most of Miss DePew's classes, it wasn't a question of passing toe regents, it was the question of getting a 100. She never failed to correct her regents papers immediately and was proud to announce how many 100's her students had earned that year. Yet she was no less proud of the passing grades made by her less able students with whom she had worked many hours after school and in the evenings.

Miss DePew was vitally interested in the cadet teacher program. Mr. William Beischer and Mrs. Ann Holley were formerly cadets under her supervision.

Another of her outstanding qualities was her love for individuality. Her students were constantly encouraged to think for themselves. Her friends always found her ready to listen to their ideas. She would often say, "I guess I'm just too open minded. When someone presents an argument, I see so much good in it that I can't help but agree. Then when another person expresses his point of view, I can see good in that also. So there I am – agreeing with both." This ability to see the good in the thinking of everyone and to foster individual thought won her the admiration and love of many.

Miss Dora DePew

A very wise man has said "A teacher affects eternity: He never knows where his influence ends."

Because of the kind of person she was, we know a great deal about the influence of Miss Dora DePew, for 17 years a member of our faculty.

Her influence touched her students, who found her classes challenging and stimulating. She made them want to do their best because she herself did her best. She was eager to learn, eager to teach.

Her influence touched the faculty, not only the teachers in her department but the rest of them also. Her honesty, her deep concern for the best in education, her sympathy, her humor – these qualities everyone knew in her. Perhaps some became better teachers because, unconsciously, they measured themselves by her standards.

Her influence touched many students who hoped to become teachers. Through these cadet teachers, as they went from her classes to many scattered communities, something of Miss DePew entered the life of other school systems in addition to our own.

Her influence reached out far beyond her classes into the homes of this community as the sons and daughters of those homes came and went in her classroom.

This influence, which touched so many people, was a good influence. It was based on her love and respect for her students, for her colleagues, for mathematics itself.

Miss DePew's influence will go on and on in the lives of those who knew her, for she was one of the great teachers. "A teacher affects eternity: he can never tell where his influence ends."