

## [Fisher, Lewis Beals]

### THE LATE DR. LEWIS BEALS FISHER Former Theological Professor Dies in Chicago Delightful Family Remembered by Many— Their Canton Home Once Welcomed Many

From Chicago last Tuesday came word of the death of Dr. Lewis Beals Fisher. To the younger generation in Canton that message meant little, but to those resident here thirty and more years ago there came back vivid memories of Dr. Fisher and his delightful family.

It was back about 1877 that Lewis B. Fisher came to Canton after graduating from Phillips Andover Academy. He was a giant of a man, his head crowned by a mass of heavy black hair. He had come here to prepare himself for the Universalist ministry at the Theological School of which his uncle Dr. Ebenezer Fisher had been the first president. The Fishers were Maine folk like many others imbued with liberal religious thought. From Maine came many a young man to the Theological School...

Lewis Beals Fisher was of this sturdy stock, a man keen of mind, broad of vision and of tremendous vitality. He graduated from the Theological School and began his ministry at Rochester where he met and married Miss Fannie Shaw, a vivacious young woman of great charm and personality. Later he preached at Bridgeport, Conn., where P. T. Barnum, the great showman, was one of the most loyal parishioners. His work in the ministry was of marked success and in 1891 he accepted a call to return to Canton where he became a professor at the Theological School. From then until he became President of Lombard College, Galesburg, Illinois in 1905 the family resided in Canton, and for many years some member of the family has been found each summer enjoying their Adirondack camp at the Hollywood Stillwater.

The writer has many vivid memories of the Fisher family and of Dr. Fisher. They lived in what is now part of the present Phi Sigma Kappa fraternity house, then a big, flat-roofed house. There were four Fisher children, the eldest a daughter, Carrol, now a professor of philosophy at the University of Chicago. Then came the three sons, Robert, now of Los Angeles, Jerome, now Dr. Fisher, of the Department of Geology at the University of Chicago, and the youngest, Lewis, now a writer living at Aurora, N.Y. It used to be said of these four that they were all typical minister's children, up to everything and into everything that four active, healthy young minds could think of.

Dr. and Mrs. Fisher opened the doors of their home to their friends. They were royal and delightful entertainers but the adults never had much preference over their children's friends. It was always a romp and a game, often with Dr. Fisher taking the lead. He was a towering man in stature,

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some six feet three or four and with a massive frame. A joyous laugh and greeting was ever on his lips. He would come striding across from the Theological School after classes and launch himself into games with the children, putting on a blindfold for blind man's buff, his great arms reaching out and sweeping around to engulf any nearby culprit. Out back of the house he erected a long wooden track and flat car for the children to use as a roller coaster. When the boys got into hot water over some mischief they had invented and they often did there was seldom more than a gentle reprimand. Mrs. Fisher was always setting two or three extra places for supper for hungry young mouths, and she was a charming hostess to both young and old.

Dr. Fisher left Canton with his family in 1905 to become President of Lombard College and from there moved to Chicago to become Dean of the Ryder Divinity School and Pastor of the Church of the Redeemer in 1923 and there in their home at Kenmore Place the Fisher family has since resided within the shadow of the University of Chicago.

It was in the Church of the Redeemer in 1918 that the writer next saw Dr. and Mrs. Fisher after a lapse of many years, having slipped away from the Naval Training station on his first leave-of-absence during the war. It was in their delightful home that he was made welcome more than once during the following months.

Mrs. Fisher died in 1931. From the Fisher summer retreat at Hollywood members of the family have frequently driven down to renew old Canton friendships, Dr. Fisher having spent several days in Canton last summer.

*St. Lawrence Plaindealer, Canton NY, Tue. 31 Mar 1936*

Transcribed on 15 Feb 2008 by Karen E. Dau of Rochester, NY