

F. LeMoyne Page *1900-1964*

Memorialized by
The F. LeMoyne Page Memorial Fund in
The New York Community Trust
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The F. LeMoyne Page Foundation was established by Benjamin Page as a perpetual memorial to his brother. It was transferred to Community Funds, Inc., where it is known as the F. LeMoyne Page Memorial Fund.

Hard working. Determined. Competitive. Even at times controversial. That was LeMoyne Page. Creative. Inventive. Devoted to family, friends and community. That, too, was LeMoyne Page.

In a 30-year career in advertising, he sold more than 100 million dollars of ad space. His specialty was transportation advertising, and the firm he established in the middle of the Depression, Transportation Displays, Inc., generally known as TDI, was so successful that at the time of LeMoyne Page's death at the age of 63, his company was the recognized leader of the transportation advertising industry.

Francis LeMoyne Page was born in Pittsburgh in 1900. His father, Benjamin Page, was founder and president of The Pennsylvania Trust Company, a Pittsburgh banking establishment. His mother, Mary LeMoyne Page, was the granddaughter of Dr. Francis J. LeMoyne, a prominent 19th Century

abolitionist from Pennsylvania.

LeMoyne, as he was called, received his preparatory education at Shady Side Academy in Pittsburgh and later, The Choate School in Wallingford, Connecticut. At Choate, he was an ardent member of the crew and represented the crew at graduation, when he delivered his first public speech — a milestone he recorded in his diary. The date was May 29, 1918; the setting was a dinner banquet: “We will always look back on our crew,” LeMoyne declared, “as an incentive to pull together with the best Choate spirit in every race!”

From Choate, LeMoyne proceeded to Princeton. Caught up in the patriotic fervor that first semester (the fall of 1918), he joined the Princeton Color Guard and spent hours attending to the Guard’s uniforms and other details. He attempted several times that semester to join the Officers Training Corps, but was informed each time that he was too young. In November the Great War ended, and LeMoyne’s interest turned, once again, to sports and academics. He became a member of the varsity crew, wrestling and football teams; still, he had time to be business manager of *The Princeton Tiger*, the college magazine that celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1983.

LeMoyne’s major at Princeton was architecture, and in his senior year he was offered a scholarship to continue studying architecture in Paris. A number of LeMoyne’s friends and advisers urged him to accept the scholarship and make architecture his career. But back in Pittsburgh, Benjamin Page wanted his son to follow in his footsteps. And that is what LeMoyne did — or, at least, started out to do.

He returned to Pittsburgh immediately after graduation and went to work at his father’s bank. He became secretary, and then director of the Pennsylvania Trust Company during the boom years of the ’20s. LeMoyne was working in the bank’s advertising department, where he put into practice his belief that, contrary to the prevailing

conservative type of “tombstone” advertising employed in the world of finance, appeals to the public should be more aggressive and hard-hitting. In fact, LeMoyne had written a paper advocating this position while he was still studying at Princeton.

At the same time, LeMoyne was keeping active in other pursuits. Architecture (though not the career he had chosen) became for him, for the rest of his life a weekend occupation, an after-hours’ commitment to one or another design and construction project. The first was the recon-



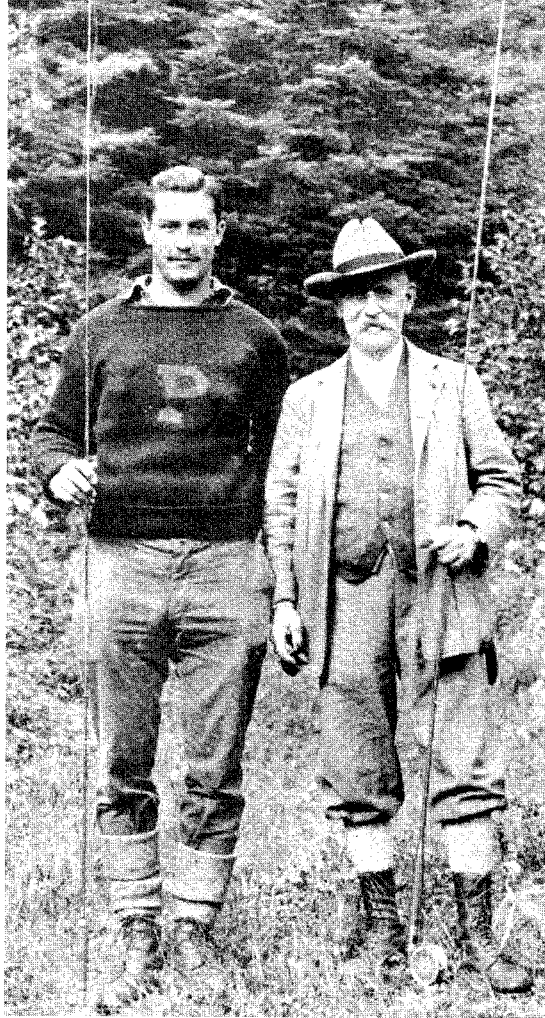
*LeMoyne Page,
age seven or eight.*



*LeMoyne, in his Color
Guard uniform at
Princeton.*

struction of a pre-revolutionary log cabin in Pittsburgh’s Fox Chapel district. Another was the conversion of an old stone grist mill in Mendham, New Jersey into a home.

LeMoyne’s most ambitious building enterprise took place over a period of 15 years on a small island in Long Island Sound, off the coast of Greenwich, Connecticut. There, he built a luxurious summer retreat, a complex whose design evoked a ship: The pilot house from an old tugboat



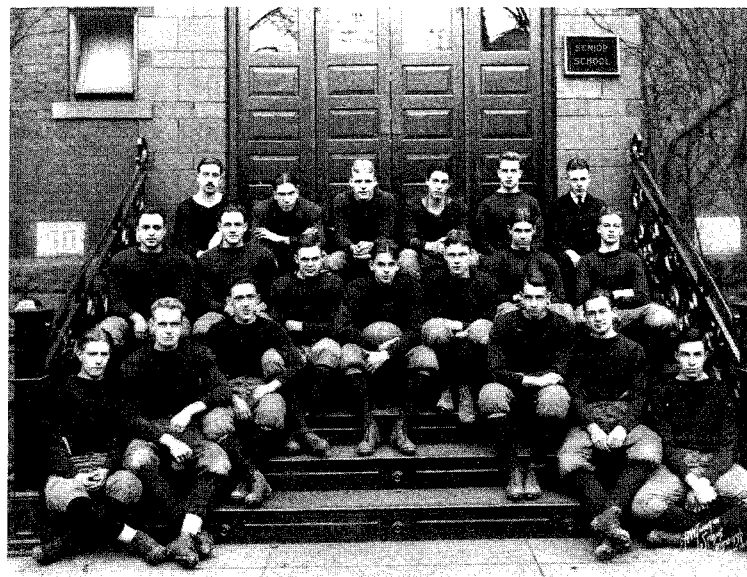
Two "Compleat Anglers": LeMoyne with the writer Henry Van Dyke, who lectured at Princeton, and whom LeMoyne greatly admired.

constituted a "prow"; decks and catwalks connected other structures. LeMoyne's last project was the renovation of the old white clapboard house on East 93rd Street in New York City, where he was living with his wife and children at the time of his death.

LeMoyne *always* kept busy with projects and ventures. In Pittsburgh in the 1920s, he formed a coal mining company, which afforded him another outlet for his energies as well as an

opportunity to demonstrate a new method of soil conservation.

At the same time, LeMoyne was learning to fly an airplane. That interest, too, grew into another business venture; soon he was the president of an aviation company called Airways and Aircraft of America. The company was headquartered at Pittsburgh's Bettis Field, and its booming business



Football was one of LeMoyne's lifelong passions. Here, seated third from the right, top row, he's shown with the Varsity Team at Pittsburgh's Shady Side Academy.

helped Bettis emerge as the city's first commercial airport.

Even the depressed economy following the 1929 stock market crash became for LeMoyne a challenge to find new opportunities. In 1931 he moved to New York and joined the staff of Barron Collier, an advertising company that specialized in placing ads in streetcars and newsstands. Soon he had a lot of transportation advertising ideas of his own and, in 1934, left Collier and acquired an

independent franchise to handle advertising for the New Haven Railroad. Already he was anticipating the burgeoning of the suburbs and the potential of the suburban railroads as a significant new advertising market. He personally led the service crew in placing "car cards" in the trains and posters in the stations. Business grew, and in 1938 LeMoyne formed Transportation Displays, Inc. (TDI). His goal: to combine all the suburban railroads into a single new advertising package of high-income railroad commuters known as "TDI Commuter-Land." In the early 1950s, TDI began installing advertising displays at airport terminals. In this way, LeMoyne felt advertising could reach a new intercity market of "managers-on-the-move."

According to *The New York Times*, LeMoyne's ideas "were not always popular, but they seldom failed to draw attention." For example, the *Times* reported that LeMoyne Page

...initiated a short-lived program of music and commercials in Grand Central Terminal. It was expected to net the owners of the terminal \$90,000 a year.

But the public, led by Harold Ross, then editor of *The New Yorker*, protested at a series of stormy hearings, and the broadcasts were suspended.

Controversy, however, did not hurt business. In 1964, TDI was selling ad space in all of New York's commuter rail systems; in the rail systems of Chicago, Philadelphia and Boston; and in major airport terminals across the country.

A physically powerful man, LeMoyne was almost six feet tall, with a heavy, muscular build. He was athletic and highly competitive. He possessed a determined will to do whatever job was on hand — whether it was moving boulders to bulwark his island home against the sea, or seeking out and obtaining a new advertising franchise. Always the individual, he wore bow ties exclusively...and never an overcoat or hat. When the



LeMoyne and Dorothea, at their island home off the coast of Connecticut.

weather grew cold, LeMoyne Page settled for adding a vest and gloves.

In 1921, at Princeton, LeMoyne had written in a diary (under the heading, "Things that I have always wished for"), this goal: "To have a family ranging from four to ten... To make my home complete and entirely happy within itself." Thirty years later his wish began to come true.

In 1953, LeMoyne married Dorothea Fiske. (They had met when she came to work at TDI in the '40s; she had since left the company.) In 1955, the first of their four children was born, a son named Francis LeMoyne, Jr. Susan Mary followed in '56; Pamela Oldham in '58; and Peter Fiske in '59. LeMoyne doted on his family and in making their new home a comfortable one. They had moved from an apartment to an old turn-of-the-century house on East 93rd Street in 1957. The house needed much renovation and became LeMoyne's pet project: he installed bathrooms, built a pantry, unblocked the fireplaces. Most of the work he accomplished alone.

But LeMoyne did not have many years to spend in his new home with his family. In 1964



LeMoyne with his children, around 1963. From left to right: Peter, Lee (Francis LeMoyne, Jr.), Susan and Pam.

he suffered kidney failure after an operation. One week later he lapsed into a coma. Seven weeks later he died.

The funeral was held at the Brick Presbyterian Church in Manhattan, where LeMoyne had been deacon and president of the Men's Council. Other organizations had also benefited from his help. For 25 years, LeMoyne Page chaired the Graduate Council of *The Princeton Tiger*; he had served as president of the Alumni Association of the Choate School and as a member of the school's Board of Trustees. In addition, at the time of his death, he was a member of the University Club, the New York Yacht Club, the Rockefeller Center Luncheon Club and the Princeton Club in New York.

In his college diary, LeMoyne Page wrote, "Creation is a process, not a product." In a way, his words live on, for the LeMoyne Page Scholarship Fund has been established at The New York Community Trust by his brother, Benjamin Page, Jr., to make awards each year to students who demonstrate outstanding creative achievement.



The New York Community Trust is a publicly supported community foundation which provides centralized management for many charitable funds. Its corporate affiliate is Community Funds, Inc.