

Centennial Moments

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Early presidents of CME—Percy T. Magan

It is difficult to summarize the accomplishments of the man for whom the central administration building, Magan Hall, is named. He served as dean of the School of Medicine beginning in 1916, became president in 1928, and continued in that latter post until his retirement in 1942.

Previous to connection with Loma Linda, Percy T. Magan, MD, played an important role as a leader in Seventh-day Adventist educational reform. Along with Edward A. Sutherland, MD, Dr. Magan led in the moving of Battle Creek College (today known as Andrews University) to Berrien Springs, Michigan, and later, helped Dr. Sutherland start Madison College in Tennessee.

Dr. Magan and Dr. Sutherland, while serving as administrators at Madison College, proceeded to take a medical course in Memphis and graduated in mid-life as physicians. Dr. Sutherland remembered how they traveled back and forth to school in Memphis by motorcycle. Many times they were soaked by rain and one of Dr. Magan's diary entries mentions how they even got arrested once for speeding. "P.T." as Dr. Magan was often called, was married to a physician, Lillian, who had been connected with Battle Creek Sanitarium.

In 1915, the future of the medical school at Loma Linda hung in the balance. The school held a "C" rating and

was deeply in debt. At a special constituency meeting the idea was circulating that it might be best to close the school and send the students to other medical schools. Dr. Magan, who had intended to keep silent at the meeting, made a strong



appeal that the school continue. Having recently graduated from a non-religiously oriented school, he could speak with authority on the importance of having a school operated by the Adventist Church. Finally, when it was voted that the medical school continue, he was asked to direct the clinical component of the school, which was conducted in Los Angeles. Thus began his long connection with the College of Medical Evangelists (CME), which today is known as Loma Linda University.

CME was deeply in debt when Dr. Magan was asked to accept administrative duties in Los Angeles. It was hoped that he would be able to raise money for the operation of the school. In fact, even his own salary of \$23 a week was dependent upon him raising the money. Therefore he was asked to join the faculty on condition that he meet "his own expenses in the work." History shows that within a few years he had raised many thousands of dollars for the school, of which his salary was a small part.

Besides raising money, Dr. Magan established many contacts with various medical training schools and clinical facilities. Within a short time, the Adventist school was raised to a "B" level accreditation. Later it received the coveted "A" level. Today, Loma Linda University is respected around the world for both its philosophy of wholeness and clinical education opportunities.

Percy T. Magan, the energetic Irish and man of faith, passed away in 1947 at 80 years of age. The department of archives and special collections has the personal papers, correspondence, and personal diaries of Dr. Magan. With this are many photographs and memorabilia. Those who wish to look at some of the items related to Dr. Magan and the University are welcome to visit the Heritage Room.