



DR. JAY W. SEXTON

J. W. Sexton Dies at 86 After Stroke

Dr. Jay Wesley Sexton, revered retired superintendent of Lansing schools, died Wednesday afternoon at St. Lawrence Hospital after suffering a stroke earlier in the day. He was 86 years old.

His death was unexpected, friends said. Dr. Sexton, who headed the city's school system from 1916 to 1945 had been in relatively good health since his retirement.

"He had served Lansing in a very progressive way," said Dr. Dwight F. Rich, who worked under Dr. Sexton in the 1920s and '30s and who succeeded him as school superintendent in 1945.

LAI D FOUNDATION

"He was instrumental, I believe in laying the foundation of a good educational system in our city," Dr. Rich said.

An example of Dr. Sexton's progressive approach to education was the construction of Pat-tengill, Walter French and West Junior High Schools during the 1920s under his leadership while the junior high school concept was in its infancy.

"This shows he was keeping very well informed on the progress of education in those early years," Dr. Rich said.

Under Dr. Sexton's regime, the school system experienced surging growth. In addition to several elementary schools, Eastern and J. W. Sexton High schools were built while he was superintendent. The city honored him by naming the west side high school after him in 1943.

He was sensitive to the educational needs of the handicapped children. The Walnut Street school was constructed during his tenure. The start of the school system's guidance program also came while he was superintendent.

ALBION GRADUATE

Dr. Sexton was born Nov. 28, 1876 in Victor Township of Clinton County and spent his boyhood working on his parents' farm and attending a one-room country school.

He was one of seven children of Job W. and Catherine Sexton, pioneers in the Round Lake area.

While attending Laingsburg high school, he earned his board by working for a local doctor, taking care of the physi-

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cian's horse and carriage and doing office chores.

Following graduation from high school, he taught in a rural school and then continued his studies at Albion College, where he was graduated in 1902 with a bachelor of arts degree.

The following year he was principal of Fenton High School. In 1903, he became superintendent of schools there, a position he held until 1911 when he became principal of Lansing high school.

In 1916 he was appointed superintendent of Lansing's public schools.

He was awarded his master's degree by the University of Michigan in 1912 and in 1935 Albion College conferred on him the LL.D degree. In addition to his educational work during the regular school year, he taught summer sessions at teacher-training institutions at the University of Michigan and Harvard University.

Dr. Sexton was a member of the Michigan and the National Education Associations and was president of the MEA in 1928 when its present quarters were dedicated.

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