

SOAR Curricular Material #20

Paul Jonathan Allen (May 1919—Obituary of CWS Worker—Original Version)

It was with great regret that we received the sad news telling of the death of our esteemed alumnus Paul J. Allen. Active in many ways, he was a real Moravian College man, ready to help, or make a sacrifice; to strive for the Right and Just; he was a man. Paul J. Allen entered Moravian College in the year 1912, being a member of a class of ten. His brilliant and thoughtful mind soon placed him among the leaders of his class. Talented in many ways, he was especially successful in oratory, winning first place in one of the Comenius' Day Oratorical Contests. In athletics he was also a prominent figure, being college champion during his college career, and first man on the varsity tennis team. He graduated in 1916. After leaving college, he taught at Nazareth Hall Military Academy, at the same time taking special work at Lehigh University, which in the course of time would have given him the degree of Master of Arts. Upon the entry of our nation into the Great War, he enlisted in the Medical Corps of the United States Army. Later he was transferred to the Chemical Warfare Department, where as First Sergeant he superintended the manufacture of gas masks. At the time of the signing of the armistice he was located in the officers' training camp at Camp Taylor, from which place he was mustered out about December first with an honorable discharge. He was employed by the Texas Oil Co., in New York, but a short time ago he was transferred to Marcus Hook where the fatal accident occurred. He was overcome with gas while at work, and although efforts were made to bring him back to consciousness, he died a short time later in the hospital. We have lost a friend but his spirit lives on. May his life inspire us to seek only that which is worthwhile. We all join in extending our sincerest sympathy to those bereaved ones to whom he was a true son, brother, and friend.

Answer the following questions about the obituary. Use the back of this page if necessary.

- 1) What do we know about the person's life and persona after reading his obituary? List the 3-5 most important details we should know about Paul J. Allen.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
- 2) The obituary states that Allen was a member of a class of ten during his time at Moravian. How do you believe his death impacted his peers, if at all? How would this reaction be different among his peers if Allen had belonged to a class of 100 or more like it is today at Moravian?
- 3) Refer back to the "Their Bit" article from March 1919 that discussed the idea of the Chemical Warfare Service. How does this obituary reflect the conditions that the writer experienced while working in the plant? How might we use Allen's death to raise awareness of the dangers of working at a plant?