

**In Memoriam**

**Eugene Boris Altschul**

**1909 • 1939**

**Hennepin County Bar Association  
District Court  
Fourth Judicial District  
Minneapolis, Minnesota**

**February 17, 1940**

## Eugene Boris Altschul

Everett Dean Martin, the eminent philosopher, has written a most persuasive treatise to demonstrate that the True, The Good, and The Beautiful are, in the last analysis, always identical. In proof of his thesis he might well have adduced the life of Eugene Altschul.

Mr. Altschul, he whom we honor, was born in 1909 in Strassbourg, Germany. He was reared in a cultured milieu, his father a university professor, his mother a woman of education and refinement. Eugene attended the the Universities of Heidelberg, Freiberg, and Frankfort, and passed the bar examinations in the German law. Together with his parents, he then came to America.

In 1934 he entered the University of Minnesota law school, receiving his degree three years later. In 1938 he passed the state bar examination. Last December 12th, while repairing a minor defect in his motor car, he succumbed to the insidious onslaught of carbon monoxide gas. At the time of his death he was but thirty years of age.

For three years I was seated next to him in our classes at the University, and I came to know Eugene very well. Studying in a strange language, his attainments in scholarship were, nevertheless, exceptional, and the conclusion of his course found him master both of our law and of our American language.

To our friend Altschul the law was no mere matter of statutes and decisions, the study of law no dull routine. The technical, aspects of law he studied diligently, but more than that. The philosophy which underlies all law, the social and economic changes which both cause and result from the nature of law: upon these matters he fixed an intelligent scrutiny. The great American constitutional tradition was a matter of vital and personal significance to him, and I recall the avidity with which he read the great civil liberty decisions of our Supreme Court. Had the opportunity been given, it seems a certainty that he would have made a valuable contribution to our profession. Grounded as he was in both the Civil and the Common Law and regarding his profession almost in the light of a sacrament, his future might well have been illustrious.

In Eugene Altschul, America gained a genuinely desirable citizen, a citizen lost even before his final papers had been granted. To him American citizenship was not the matter-of-fact thing that it is to most of us. He consciously sought, in the few years that he lived here, to become a true

American, to make our history, our traditions, and our customs a part of himself.

Coming from the highest level of the great Germanic culture, Eugene possessed a cosmopolitan appreciation of the arts—an appreciation which knew no boundaries of space or time. The arts were an integral part of him. A symphonic score he read with the delight and facility like unto that with which he read a dissent by Holmes. And all literature he took to his province.

It was an amazing sight to see this young German win the acquaintance, then the respect, then the affection of so many friends. Lovingly devoted to his family, generous in judgment, unselfish, socially congenial, we can ill bear his sudden and premature death. Those of us who knew him well hold our memory of him as a treasure, a rare thing, a shrine within to which we turn with pleasure, sure that time will not obscure it.

The True, The good, and The Beautiful were identical in the person of Eugene Altschul.

J. Millard Ahlstrom  
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