

## Wylie Young - 1899 - 2002

Wylie Young peacefully let his life go on March 16, 2002. He was 103. Memorial gifts could be sent to the First Presbyterian Church Memorial Fund, 300 E. Main Street, Batavia, NY 14022, the church Wylie served for 18 years before his retirement.

Wylie Young was a gifted speaker, of whom it was said (by Mike Curtis, as Nadine Stoner recalls) when Wylie spoke at the 1979 international Geogist conference in San Francisco, "he could make rocks cry." For those who didn't have the privilege of being acquainted with Wylie Young, the following is from the jacket of his 1976 book, *Antidote for Madness*, which was published by the Schalkenbach Foundation.

*Wylie Young was graduated from the College of Wooster Ohio, and then attended Princeton Theological Seminary. In 1929 he became the minister of Westminster, then the second largest Presbyterian church in Toledo, Ohio. Shortly after assuming his duties the depression struck Toledo with unusual force and he became caught up in a determined effort to discover why the economy had broken down. His search resulted in his discovery that there is, and always has been a basic flaw in our economic system — a flaw which had been clearly exposed one hundred years ago. However, the analysis, so logically worked out, and the cure, so simply stated by one of the world's most original thinkers, had been rejected by the richest and most powerful elements in our society. The flaw still persists. Indeed, it is blindly accepted by good and bad alike and is so much a part of our way of life that it is doubtful if its debilitating effects can ever be avoided. Nevertheless, this one basic flaw is seen by the author as being the root cause of the malfunction of our economy and of the madness that marks our times.*

*For twenty years he was the Senior Minister of the First Presbyterian Church of Batavia, New York and in 1957 was elected to serve as Moderator of the synod of New York. He says that he majored in religion and minored in economics for forty years and now that he has retired he can speak more freely regarding the root causes of our economic difficulties. He spent five years with the Economic Education League of Albany, New York, teaming up with Dr. Harry Gunnison Brown in a teaching and lecturing campaign to alert many of the Cities of the third Class in Pennsylvania to the advantages of a new law in that state.*

**Without realizing what we were doing, by taxing land and buildings alike, we have instituted injustice and greed. We could just as easily, had we only known, have instituted justice and goodwill. We have done it many times and we can do it again. Our founding fathers did just that when they incorporated the Bill of Rights into the Constitution. Evils, long endured, were declared illegal. When they guaranteed us freedom of religion, freedom of speech and freedom of assembly they instituted tolerance and goodwill. When they separated church and state they instituted tolerance and forbearance. Now the time has come to add to the decrees which govern the affairs of our people by instituting a new tax policy which will usher in a new day of economic justice.**

**— from *Antidote to Madness***