



Pierce Butler

March 9, 2007

Butler, Pierce Age 88 Of Minneapolis. Stop all the clocks, cut off the telephone, Prevent the dog from barking with a juicy bone, Silence the pianos and with muffled drum Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come. Let aeroplanes circle moaning overhead Scribbling on the sky the message He Is Dead, Put crepe bows round the white necks of the public doves, Let the traffic policemen wear black cotton gloves. W.H. Auden Pierce Butler, the third by that name, died March 3rd at Presbyterian Homes of North Oaks. He was 88. Grandson of US Supreme Court Justice, son of a founder of the United World Federalists, all three generations were in the law office of Doherty, Rumble & Butler, St. Paul. Pierce Butler continued family interest in the law, civil justice, education and the arts. Born in the Panama Canal Zone where his father served as a cavalry officer in the US Army during WWI, Pierce grew up in St. Paul, graduated from St. Paul Academy, Harvard College "1939", and attended Georgetown, Harvard and University of Minnesota Law Schools, interrupted by enlisting in the Army two weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Trained at Forts Leonard Wood and Belvoir, he was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant in the Corp of Engineers and served in the New Guinea campaign. Sick with malaria, he taught himself the Malay language and read the complete works of Thackeray from his hammock. He served as intelligence officer in Japan under General Douglas MacArthur. While practicing with the DRB firm, he specialized in corporate, mining and timber law. His interests were in politics, social justice, literature and the arts. He

participated in founding the Minnesota International Center "U of M", and was active in the Minnesota Historical Society, the Hill Reference Library, the Minnesota Science Museum, Walker Art Center, Guthrie Theater, and many smaller artistic, environmental and literary organizations, including the Playwrights Center. Pierce was consul for the Netherlands for twenty years. Termed by his daughter, Tara Butler, "a professional eccentric", he quoted Shakespeare, the Bible, Italian poets, Bobby Burns, French and English writers, and all of the major Irish writers and thinkers. He was intellectually omnivorous and wrote poetry, prose, and multilingual humor. He often referred to Sheppard's Atlas, and pontificated on a wide variety of subjects ranging from the Ming Dynasty to the "History of Iceberg Lettuce". Pierce is survived by his wife Joyce Mork Butler, daughter Tara Butler, stepdaughters April "Charlie" Murphy, Natalia "Patrick" Armitage and Heather "Scott" Simonett, step-grandchildren, Patrick, Caitlin, Miles, Cole, Brooks, Hadley, Allie, Natalia, and step-great-grandson Jackson Gathering will be at 9AM Saturday, Mass at 9:30AM at the BASILICA OF ST. MARY, 17th St and Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis. Donations are suggested to the Minnesota Historical Society and the Guthrie Theater. Washburn - McReavy Davies Chapel 612-377-2203