

Futile European Search; Youth Presumed Dead



Timothy P. McKibben

An anguished six-month search for Timothy P. McKibben, 21, son of Dr. William T. McKibben, professor of classical languages at Grinnell College, and Mrs. McKibben, instructor in classical languages, apparently ended Friday when the McKibbens received in the mail Tim's personal papers found in a soaked and weather-beaten knapsack on a mountain in Switzerland.

The papers were found with a few clothes and some books by a young Swiss, Helmut Langer, Nov. 1, lodged in the rocks on the west face of the Rochers de Naye, a mountain near Montreaux, at the upper end of Lake Geneva. Unable to carry the knapsack in addition to his own, he sent the papers directly to the McKibbens.

Summer of Travel

The search began early in June

after Tim left this country on May 28 to fly to Switzerland to begin a summer of travel. From Switzerland he planned to take the Orient Express to Istanbul to join a group to travel, mostly on foot, in Kashmir, Afghanistan and the Near East. When no letters or other news reached his family, inquiries were begun and it was discovered that there had been no trace of him since the day he landed in Zurich, Switzerland.

An intensive search in all parts of Europe and the Near East by the U. S. Consular Service, the Swiss police, Interpol and numerous individuals showed only some misidentifications and false leads. Discovery of his possessions leads to the theory that, following his plan, Tim had gone to Montreux or some nearby point on the main railway between Europe and the

East and, having some time before he could take the express, went up into the mountains where he met with an accident.

Andover Graduate

Tim was born Nov. 19, 1947, in Salt Lake City, Utah, while Dr. McKibben was teaching at the University of Utah. The family came to Grinnell in September, 1952, from a two-year stay in Rome, Italy. Tim attended Cooper, Gailey Park and Grinnell Junior High schools through the eighth grade when he won a Des Moines Register and Tribune scholarship to Phillips Andover Academy in 1962. He was graduated from Andover in 1966 with high honors, including mid-year election to the Cum Laude Society, special mention for scholarship, at least six awards in English and history and recognition on the Dean's List consistently

from his second semester at the school.

Upon graduation he was offered scholarships at Stanford University and Harvard, but chose to join the first class of the "Six-Year Ph. D. program" supported by the Ford Foundation at Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y. The summer of travel upon which he had embarked was part of the Ford Foundation program.

Injured in Fire

In a disastrous fire April 9, 1967, in the dormitory at Cornell in which participants in the special program were housed the first year, Tim suffered injuries to his right hand in tearing open a window from the outside to release a number of persons trapped on the third floor. Nine persons were victims of this fire, and Tim la-

ter was credited by officials and the chaplain of the University with being a stabilizing influence in the badly shaken group.

In the summer of 1967 Tim joined the Maritime Union and worked as a merchant seaman on the east coast and in the Caribbean.

Medieval Studies

Tim had taken and brilliantly completed graduate courses and seminars in his special field of medieval studies and English since his freshman year. He was on the Dean's List last semester and for 1968-69 had been awarded the Lane Cooper scholarship of \$2000 in addition to the half-tuition grant incident to the Ford Foundation program. He also was to have been president of his cooperative house this year.

In addition to his parents, Tim