

CLEMENT FRANKLIN “TED” SOUDER, JR., '16, ME Superman and Scoutmaster

Ted was born March 5, 1892 in Toledo, Ohio, the son of Clement F. Souder and Emma Hattendorf.

As a Cornell undergraduate, in addition to Alpha Theta, Ted was a member of the Cosmopolitan Club, varsity track, varsity cross country, his college soccer team, and the Cornell chapter of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers. It being the golden years of Cornell track and cross country, Ted was a member of many of Coach Jack Moakley's IC4A championship teams as an undergraduate.

No records have turned up on any World War I service.

By 1920, he is working in Akron as an industrial engineer for one of the major tire manufacturers.

By 1930, he is back in Toledo, working as an engineer for a printing machinery company, and in addition to his wife Gertrude, has a son Clement Jr., born 1918, daughter Barbara, born 1920, daughter Susanne, born 1926, and son William G., born 1928.

From 1937 until his retirement in 1957 he worked as the advertising manager and marketing vice president of the Dana Corporation. At Dana, he was an innovator in using cartooning in Dana's product advertising.

Dana Corporation was founded in 1904 Plainfield, New Jersey, originally named the Spicer Corporation, for Clarence Spicer (Cornell '04). It is quite probable that Ted and Clarence came to know each other in the Cornell alumni community in Toledo, or in the Cornell engineering alumni community. While still a Cornell student, Spicer had been awarded a patent for his design of the first practical universal ball joint for an automobile power train. Previously, power had been transmitted from engine to wheel by chain and sprocket drives. So, as the Dana Corporation's website notes, Clarence Spicer literally unchained the automobile. Dana thus became an early supplier to Buick, Olds, Mack Trucks, American Motors, and later to Ford and his Model-T, and the World War II era Jeep. Dana relocated to Toledo in 1928 to be closer to its major customers in Detroit. Dana is today a \$7.22 billion worldwide manufacturer of automotive powertrain components, such as axles, drive shafts, off-highway transmissions, thermal management products and service parts. Today the company's customers include virtually every major vehicle manufacturer in the world, and they employ 23,400 people in 26 countries.

Aside from his “day job”, Ted left two interesting legacies.

While still at Cornell, Ted held the one half-mile track record for Ohio for 16 years, and in 1913, won a 7.5 mile race around Toledo's old Long Belt streetcar line. He beat 27 other contestants in a time of 50 minutes, one minute faster than the street car travelled the line.

Here's a question for Ed Catto: Didn't Superman do something like that in his earliest comic book?
Answer: Eureka! He did indeed:



But remember: before there was a Superman in 1938, our Ted Souder '16 was into that sort of stuff in 1913.

In 1937, as the Scoutmaster of Troop 7 of St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Toledo, his troop was cited as the only mounted Boy Scout troop remaining in the United States. (A nice counterpoint to his day job at Dana, as a major supplier of parts to the auto industry.) Ted received the Silver Beaver Award, Scouting's highest award for leadership at the Council level, in 1939.

Ted died November 20, 1975, at age 83 in Sacramento, California where he had been living with his son Clement (1918-2006) in San Mateo for the last twelve years of his life.¹

Footnote: It took a while for his class correspondent to catch up: in the Class of '16 column in the *Cornell Alumni News* of May, 1976 (five months after Ted's death) wrote regarding who was coming to the class' 60th Reunion: "Gertrude and Ted Souder may change their minds if Ted's MD will let him return in June. Ask him again, Ted, and drink some more vinegar and honey."

At the Reunion, the Class reunion chair read Ted's regrets in not being able to attend.

But he also noted that at the class dinner on Wednesday, Alex Anderson '16 (below) sang and played Hawaiian songs on his ukulele to everyone's delight, and the Glee Club Hangovers performed with their usual harmony. Alex again entertained Saturday night and the applause still echoes from the West Hill."²

¹ *Clement Souder, Jr. Obituary*, (Toledo, Ohio: Toledo Blade) November 22, 1975, page 12.

² *Cornell Alumni News*, May, 1976 and September 1976, page 39.