

University of Delaware
Alumni News

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Dean Smith Number

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AN APPRECIATION

By An Alumnus

All Delaware's Alumni weep for Laurence Smith—he is dead! Beyond that low mist which cannot blot the brightness it may veil, Dean Smith still lives, loves and is loved. We mourn, but do not moan, our loss. For such a man gave of his spirit all, and giving this, wore his tired body out. For Delaware College his were the labors of Hercules and the shoulders of Atlas.

Buildings shall crumble and machinery rust, but his devotion and spirit will pass into the Great Tradition which he has so faithfully furthered—"Do it for Delaware."

If we can possess some small portion of similar devotion, his work has not been in vain. Monuments not reared in granite nor in stone, but created in the enduring ideals of our Alma Mater by this man shall ever commemorate him.

"It is for us the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which he has thus far so nobly carried on."

If this be done, Dean Smith still lives, loves and is loved.

From Walter Hullihen, President of the University of Delaware:

"In Dean Smith's death, the University and the community have suffered a heavy loss. He was beloved by Faculty and Students for his unvarying courtesy and friendliness and admired for his ability and courage in the performance of his onerous and often difficult duties. He carried a heavy burden of work cheerfully and accomplished it with high efficiency.

"We mourn the loss of a warm friend, a kind neighbor, a useful citizen and an invaluable college officer.—WALTER HULLIHEN."—Newark Post.

And from the student body he so dearly loved, came this message, written by Earl deWitt Brandt, president of the Student Self-Government Association:

"The death of Dean Edward Laurence Smith comes as a sad and overwhelming blow to the student body. Our best friend has gone; his sympathetic understanding and just ways endeared him to us long ago as our kindly confessor. We have many times appreciated his humor; we have been inspired by his faithful attendance at our athletic events; we have thanked him in the past when he has extricated us from the tangles of a student's life.

"We shall revere him as the happy combination of a fine sportsman and diligent scholar.

"Bowed in grief, we have the consolation of his memory—a man, a friend; and we can only wonder at the impartiality of death."—Newark Post.

Board of Trustees' Resolution On Death of Dean Smith

At the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the University on February 17, 1923, action was taken by the Board to express the sense of loss to the University through the death of Dean Smith. The feeling of loss to the University is shared by all who knew Dean Smith and were acquainted with the efficient and splendid service he rendered to the institution.

In his report to the Board of Trustees, President Hullihen said:

"In the sudden and untimely death of Edward Laurence Smith, beloved dean of Delaware College, the institution has suffered a grievous loss. Resolutions will be offered at this meeting expressing the Board's deep sense of bereavement in his death and its appreciation of his loyal, efficient, and faithful services during the long period of his connection with Delaware College.

"These resolutions will be included in the June report of the President of the University in which an historical record of Dean Smith's connection with Delaware College will be given."

Upon motion, duly seconded, the following resolution was adopted by the Board:

Resolved: That in the death of Edward Laurence Smith, Dean of Delaware College and Professor of

Modern Languages, on January 16th, 1923, after twenty-one years of devoted, faithful and capable service to the University in various ways, the institution has sustained a great loss, not only because of his ability but also because his fine spirit of sympathetic interest in the students was a strong influence for their good and for the welfare of the institution.

Resolved, also, that this resolution be given to the family of the deceased and to the press.

DEAN SMITH

If you would read my epitaph, look about you."

These words, carved over an arch of the great cathedral, St. Paul's in London make up the epitaph and tell the story of the life-work of the great English architect, Christopher Wren.

The words ring in our ear today and we can say nothing more fitting nor more truly of the life of Dean Smith. At such a time words fail utterly. His death came so suddenly. The heart of the whole community missed a beat. So stunned, that any estimate of his worth and influence has not yet found expression. The sum total of that influence has been so wide spread that true reckoning will never be recorded.

Personally, we knew him back in College Days as an upper classman with the reputation of being the best read man in College. Then we were fortunate to be associated with him in class work under the tutelage of that Master linguist and gentleman Dr. Manning. Then and all through the years he was the "scholarly gentleman," yet as democratic in his associations and living as any "man of the crowd."

Old Delaware was his life work. In class, on the field, in faculty discussion and committee detail, he was tireless in effort, unassuming in manner, genial always in disposition. He was a leader of men without any of the display. With the Trustees, his comment and judgment was definite and clear, backed always by an array of facts. He had a genius for statistics and their value for comparisons. At the same time, he saw a student point of view. No student escapade ever had a greater friend at Court. Nor was there a more exacting man for sheer Justice. He never

boasted nor prated about a Square Deal yet it was the keynote to his nature and practice. He was by temperament and ability, a scholar in language, yet Service to his Alma Mater and Men of the Hour was his passion. To these, he gave his life.

In his recreation, too, we find again true display of his character. He was a true sportsman. He loved the tenseness of a touchdown and the thrill of the angler. All in all, he was a student and gentleman, a citizen worth while and a man. He was practical and yet maintained the Ideals of Youth. And was enthusiasm itself when Duty called.

Taking advantage of that, we literally wore him out. He gave us his all—gladly. No man at the University had the various and intricate tasks that were his. Vacation was not in his vocabulary but Work and Service were writ large. Young in years, he lived intensely and completed early his work.

His genius for remembering names, dates and faces, his pleasing salutation to every one of whatever station in life shed a glow far in the distance. Town and Gown, professional and working man, alumni and undergraduate stand today awed and uncovered failing utterly to say what the heart feels.

"THE REST IS SILENCE"—

If you would read his epitaph look about you.

—Newark Post.

Dean Smith Saw Many Changes at University of Delaware

When Dean Smith left college in 1896, the institution was about to enter upon its period of modernization. In the Fall of that year President Harter, a lover of letters and a man of wide literary culture and excellent general education, recognizing that the college must have in addition to its libraries of the several technical departments, also the beginning of a general library, won from the Board of Trustees, the first considerable appropriation for the purchase of books properly constituting such a library. Then for the first time the men studying literature, were able not only to read "about" books, but actually to read the masterpieces of the English language. So also stu-

dents of history and of economics had an opportunity for collateral reading; and the like was true of some other subjects falling within the cultural courses.

In that year came to Delaware College as Professor of Modern Languages the scholarly, devoted, self-forgetting Delawarean, Dr. Eugene W. Manning. He obtained some books in French, German and other European tongues, besides putting much of his own library at the service of his pupils. Modernization had for some years been well under way in the engineering and other technical courses; it now began to take definite hold upon the cultural courses, though much of the older tradition survived there as elsewhere.

The class of 1896 numbered twelve graduates, of whom three, Dean Smith, Dr. W. O. Sypherd, and Clarence Albert Short eventually became highly valuable members of the Faculty. The members of that class numbered close to the average of the three or four preceding classes. By the opening of the new century, in spite of slowly rising requirements for entering college, and for staying in, graduating classes averaged half as many more, and in the first decade of the century the average in graduating classes was a fraction below twenty-one. The average has pretty steadily risen since then, and the total number of graduates since the resuscitation of 1870 now numbers about 850, as compared with about 125 in the first quarter century of Delaware College.

Dean Smith lived to see the Department of Modern Languages grow from one professor to its present size, and a corresponding growth in several other departments. He saw the creation and rapid growth of the Women's College, the marked expansion of the Agricultural Department with its beneficent activities at Newark and throughout the whole state, the restoration of beloved Old College, now, thanks to the loyal generosity of H. Rodney Sharp, one of the most appropriate and beautiful of American university buildings, and the one permanent physical link with the earliest past of the institution. He saw as well the expansion, physical and other, made possible by the large benevolence of Pierre duPont, as he had earlier seen the first considerable private gift to Delaware College,—Frazer Field,—so generously provided by Eben Frazer and his family as a memorial to his son Joseph. Finally, Dean Smith saw the whole higher educational undertaking centered at Newark assume blanket title, "The

University of Delaware," though happily preserving tradition by the retention of "Delaware College" as the name beloved of men delighting to call the old foundation Alma Mater, and showing jealous regard for the precious individuality of the Women's College.

Edward N. Vallandigham, 1873.

Dr. Caroline M. Purnell Dies

Dr. Caroline M. Purnell, '79, after a long illness, brought on by over-work during her war service in France, died on February 3 of this year. In recognition of her services during the World War, the French Government awarded her two medals and presented her with a bronze statue of Jeanne d'Arc.

Dr. Purnell's father, William Henry Purnell, was at one time President of Delaware College. After graduating from Delaware College at the age of 19, Dr. Purnell studied at the Women's Medical College in Philadelphia, where she received her degree. At a time when it was unusual for women physicians to study with famous surgeons, Dr. Purnell went to Cleveland and placed herself under Dr. George W. Crile, and later studied with the Mayo brothers, at Rochester, Minn.

Will You Help a Delaware Man to Get a Job

There are fifty-six men in the graduating class at Delaware College. Some of these men have jobs in view after they complete their course. But many have not. Won't you, as an alumnus, do what you can to help at least one of these men secure work for which he is fitted, and thereby contribute your share toward making your Alma Mater better known to the world and our Alumni Association of greater benefit to its younger members? If you will write to Miss Lina C. Kennedy, our executive secretary, stating the qualifications necessary in men to enable them to take jobs that you may know of, she will gladly furnish any information that you desire. The college is anxious to do all in its power to aid its graduates. It needs the assistance of the alumni. Will you do your bit?

For less than the cost of the daily newspaper each man can pay his debts to the University.