

EDGAR D MEACHAM

(1887-1952)

THE DEATH OF DEAN EDGAR D MEACHAM has taken from the University of Oklahoma more than a man who was associated with it for over forty years. Something has gone which had quite literally become part of the University, and a part which the University can ill afford to lose. We of the College of Arts and Sciences are those who can most appropriately pay tribute to his memory, since his services to the University were largely performed through service to that college.

Dean Meacham's achievements have been enumerated elsewhere, and need not be detailed here. It will suffice to say that he was associated with the University as student, as teacher, and as administrator, and that he achieved distinction as all three. As student he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and received the Letzeiser award. As teacher, his achievement can be summed up in the words of one of his students: "His engaging personality, forceful and skillful manner of teaching, love of mathematics, and the evident joy which he experienced in teaching combined to inspire many of his students to follow him in the teaching profession. He knew intimately a large number of outstanding mathematicians incident to his graduate study at Harvard and Chicago Universities, and the mathematical inspiration which he gained from them was in turn implanted in his own students. It was fortunate for many students that he enjoyed teaching the calculus during the years of his deanship for he retained to the end his strong enthusiasm for mathematics and thus inspired students to set for themselves a goal of excellence in the subject. It was characteristic of his teaching methods that he was able to develop in his students appreciation of

broad concepts and a view of the subject much in advance of the current material in hand—this without sacrificing thorough assimilation of the daily assigned work." As administrator, his insistence upon high standards, his encouragement of research, his interest in all colleges of the University and all departments in his college demonstrate his major contribution to his college and his university—his determination that the College of Arts and Sciences be truly a stronghold of liberal education. As long as the University of Oklahoma remains, Dean Meacham will be a part of it, for his contribution is of a kind which does not pass away. On this campus it might well be said of him, in a slightly different sense than in St. Paul's Cathedral of Sir Christopher Wren, "*Si monumentum requiris, circumspice.*"

To those who had the privilege of working immediately with him, however, there is another aspect in which he will be even more clearly remembered than in any of his official capacities. That is as a man. It is perhaps unfortunate that it should be high praise to say of anyone that he was unswervingly honest, courageous, and loyal; but this is in fact the highest praise, and of Dean Meacham unqualifiedly true. Add to these traits, dignity which was always carried with good humor, courtesy which was characteristic of the man and always present, and good judgment which was cheerfully and kindly imparted to faculty and students alike, and you have something like the picture of Dean Meacham as he was—not an administrator, but a gentleman who out of loyalty to an ideal turned his hand to administration, and finally, in a very real sense, gave his life for that ideal.

*"He was a man, take him for all in all;
We shall not look upon his like again."*

Adopted by the Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences of The University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma, at its meeting on October 7, 1952, and incorporated in the minutes of that meeting