MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

ON THE DEATH OF EMERITUS PROFESSOR GEORGE W. WASHA

Professor George W. Washa died October 13, 1999 in Madison. He is survived by Janet, his wife of 65 years, and three sons.

He was born in Milwaukee on May 6, 1909. His undergraduate career included two years at what was then the Milwaukee extension of the University of Wisconsin and two years in Madison, resulting in a B.S. degree in Civil Engineering in 1930. A position as instructor of engineering mechanics followed, while he worked on his M.S. degree (1934) and Ph.D. degree (1938), both in Engineering Mechanics. The Ph.D. degree was the first such degree awarded by the Engineering Mechanics Department. He became assistant professor in 1942, associate professor in 1947, and professor in 1952. From 1953 until 1974 he served as chair of the Engineering Mechanics Department, and retired in January 1978.

His research interests included materials of construction, especially masonry materials. He did research on the creep of concrete, collaborated on 28 publications, and was closely involved with a project on the long-term strength and durability of concrete that began in 1910 and is not expected to conclude until 2037. Two textbooks, Mechanics for Engineers: Statics and Dynamics (1945), and Materials of Construction (1954), were written in collaboration with others. In addition he prepared laboratory notes for materials testing, wrote several correspondence courses for UW Extension, and contributed to the World Book Encyclopedia. Six Ph.D. degrees were awarded under his supervision. He received the Benjamin Smith Reynolds Teaching Award in 1977.

He contributed to the university, the profession, and the community by serving on numerous committees and boards. Prominent among these are chair of the Auditoriums Committee and 12 years on the Public Functions Committee, including six years as chair, where his major duty was to manage the graduation ceremony. He also served on the UW Athletic Board. As a member of the American Concrete Institute and the American Society for Testing Materials, he served on several committees of these organizations, including service as chair of three. He was awarded the Wason Research Medal by the American Concrete Institute in 1940 and again in 1977. Community service included five years on the village board of Shorewood Hills.

It is scarcely necessary to say that he worked hard. Somehow he found time to be active in church, attend UW basketball and football games, and do woodworking as a hobby. As department chair he was never authoritarian. He treated department members fairly, encouraging them and helping, when possible, with summer support. He is remembered as a man of integrity who set a fine example.

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