

OBITUARY

COLLIER COBB

COLLIER COBB, professor of geology at the University of North Carolina for forty-two years and head of the department of geology for thirty-nine years, died at Chapel Hill on November 28, 1934, after an illness of more than a year. Professor Cobb was one of the pioneers in North Carolina geology and the first to become head of the department of geology. Previous to that time geology had been chiefly taught along with chemistry or zoology by the professor, who was also state geologist, beginning with Denison Olmsted in 1824 (the first state geologist in the United States), and ending with Professor J. A. Holmes, who later resigned as state geologist to organize and become the first head of the U. S. Bureau of Mines.

After two years' study at Wake Forest College and one year at the University of North Carolina, Professor Cobb entered Harvard University, where he took his A.B. and M.A. degrees. For two years before going to the University of North Carolina he served as instructor in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Professor Cobb has a notable record as an enthusiastic and inspiring teacher. He believed that the spirit of the subject was more important than the letter, and with this same appreciation many of his students have gone out into positions of responsibility and honor.

Professor Cobb was a native of North Carolina and was noted for his devotion to his state and its institutions, but this fact did not in any way limit his keen interest in travel and in world affairs and he was nearly as well known abroad as in the United States. His striking personality, keen intellect and remarkable memory, coupled with a wealth of rare anecdotes, made him a central figure in any group.

In his studies Professor Cobb covered a wide field of thought, although his greatest interest was in the work of the wind in desert and shore areas, as is indicated by: "Where the Wind Does the Work," "Lands and Dunes of Gascony" and the "Loess Deposits of China." Because of his travel and great interest in peoples and customs he will, perhaps, be best remembered in the scientific world as a human geographer and as a student of shore-lines and shore-line processes. Most of his scientific publications deal with one or the other of these two subjects.

The early intellectual development of Professor Cobb was remarkable. At the age of nine years he began the publication of *The Home Journal* in Shelby, N. C. He was editor, illustrator, printer and distributor. Many of the illustrations were drawn on wood blocks for printing and showed marked artistic ability.

Professor Cobb was such a keen observer of people, languages and customs and so well acquainted with different types of people that he was usually able to tell from what country and frequently from what province a foreigner had come. When meeting a new class for the first time it was his custom, as students responded to the roll-call, to tell them the state they came from and the county, if from North Carolina, and frequently much about their people.

Professor Cobb was a fellow of the Geological Society of America and a member of many societies, including the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Association of American Geographers, the Boston Society of Natural History, the American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers, the Seismological Society of America, the Elisha Mitchell Scientific Society, the North Carolina Academy of Science and Sigma Xi.

Professor Cobb resigned as head of the department of geology in 1932 and began the preparation of a book of reminiscences. It is very unfortunate that he did not live to finish this work, which held so much of interest for many people here and abroad.

WM. F. PROUTY

THOMAS HUSTON MACBRIDE

IN the death of Thomas Huston Macbride society lost a useful citizen, university life lost an inspiring leader, and science lost an able and devoted worker. He sold the idea of beauty to the people of Iowa, showing them how the ugly could be transformed to the beautiful. A striking example of this was his successful efforts in beautifying public squares, parks and cemeteries in communities throughout the state. He saw beauty, actual or potential, everywhere. Whether in the prairies, streams, lakes and groves of Iowa, the desert regions of the Southwest, or the mountains, shores and evergreen forests of the Northwest he always saw beauty as he went about his scientific work, and aroused enthusiasm for preserving this beauty and for restoring it where it had been destroyed. He saw beauty in the cabins and sod houses of the Iowa pioneers.

In his academic life his high personal ideals, his kindness and the beauty of his teaching had effects on his colleagues and his students which will last a long time. To his students he taught more than botany: he taught ideals of life and appreciation of beauty. Many took his courses, not because they wanted botany, but because they wanted to sit in the presence of a great personality.

Born at Rogersville, Tenn., on July 31, 1848, the son of a minister, he went with the family by wagon