

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION
JOHN CONRAD ALMACK
(1883-1953)

After 31 years of highly productive work at Stanford, John C. Almack, Emeritus Professor of Education, died on October 5, 1953, at nearly 70 years of age.

Professor Almack was born in Houston, Missouri, but soon moved to the state of Washington and grew to manhood in the Pacific Northwest. Before completing his college education, he was superintendent of schools at Rockford, Washington from 1905-15, editor of the Colfax, Washington newspaper 1915-16, and superintendent of schools in Coquille, Oregon 1916-17. He then obtained the A.B. and A.M. degrees from the University of Oregon, serving also as instructor of education there until coming to Stanford to secure the Ph.D. degree in 1923, where he remained on the Stanford education faculty until his retirement in 1948.

Professor Almack was especially noted for his broad grasp of the many aspects of professional education. His extensive writing in the field included books on administration, methods of research, citizenship, United States history, introductory textbooks in several professional areas, the effects of alcohol and narcotics, and manners and morals for children. As a teacher he was very skillful as a lecturer and director of discussion in class, insistent upon obtaining the facts before forming judgments, and a strong influence over the intellectual outlook of his students. He was notably firm in his stand for the values represented in the accepted standards of morals, taste, and speech. He believed in democracy in practice and wanted it to be made real in all parts of school work, not as the rights of teachers alone but of all, and not as rights alone but as obligations as well. His interest in these values made him seem to some a strong conservative in his viewpoint. However, he had a profound respect for facts and the findings of science, and he was never carried away by sentimental appeals or popular fads. He was always vitally interested in Stanford and Stanford's leadership in the field of education. He took a leading part in founding Pi Lambda Theta, national honorary education society for women, at Stanford. He participated in many school surveys, the last one being a comprehensive report on the needs of the Sequoia High School. For many years he served on the Board of Education in Palo Alto.

Outside the field of education, Dr. Almack pursued a variety of interests with distinction. He wrote a number of stories for boys, and his talent for poetry found expression in a book of verse entitled "Track of the Sun," published in 1937. A selection from this book was included by Alfred Powers in a 1947 anthology called "Poems of the Covered Wagon." For a while he tried his hand at oil painting. He thoroughly enjoyed the study of how to invest his considerable royalties from professional writing. His love of the soil and his talent for farm management led him, after retirement, to acquire a large acreage at San Gregorio where his tenants raised artichokes and other vegetables. He also purchased, developed, and eventually sold several fruit farms on the beautiful uplands back of Monterey Bay in the neighborhood of Aptos. He gave serious consideration to the possibility of developing in this area a retreat for retired professors.

Those close to John Almack were aware of his unselfishness and instinctive urge to help those around him. His interest in each individual student was real, and he always had time to talk to a student either at his office or at his home. In his relations with his colleagues, he was always willing to carry his full share of the load, and never told others what to do or how to do it.

They always found him friendly, sincere, and kind. Above everything else, he was a man of integrity, of blunt, uncompromising honesty. His name is an honored name, and his loss is deeply felt.

Maud L. Knapp

Jesse B. Sears

Lowell Turrentine

Lawrence G. Thomas, Chairman