

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

ROBERT HENRY HARCOURT (1880 – 1940)

Robert Henry Harcourt, a son of a British naval officer, was born in Ireland, May 29 1880, and died at his home in Palo Alto, January 21, 1940.

He received his early education in the Protestant schools of Ireland and, at the age of eighteen, was persuaded by his brother Charles to come to America. In 1898, he entered the employ of the Risdon Iron Works in San Francisco as a blacksmith's apprentice.

After becoming a journeyman, Mr. Harcourt followed his trade in San Francisco and worked for the Risdon Iron Works, the Hammond Car and Electric Company, the National Iron Works, and Abner Doble Steel Works, where he rose to foremanship in the Forge Shop.

In 1907, he came to Stanford as instructor in Forge Practice, and, with the exception of two leaves of absence, in 1923-24 and 1927-29, he served the University continuously.

During this period of teaching, he constantly added to his knowledge of metals by independent study and by attendance at other schools. He graduated in 1917 from the Santa Barbara State Normal School and he was a student at a Summer Session at the University of California. He was instructor in Machine Shop Practice, Forge Practice, and Sheet Metal Design at the Santa Barbara State Normal School during the Summer Sessions of 1919, 1922, and 1923.

Mr. Harcourt was the author of four textbooks; "Elementary Forge Practice," "Oxy-acetylene Welding and Cutting," "Electric Arc Welding," and "The Working and Heat Treating of Steel."

At all times, Mr. Harcourt was anxious to assist others in the construction of research apparatus. An interesting example of this was the forging of a bar of silver into rails for use by the Chemistry Department.

On two occasions he represented Stanford University at meetings of the American Welding Society, and last year he was a member of the Welding Research Committee of the Engineering Foundation.

Mr. Harcourt was an excellent teacher; he appreciated technical skill and derived real satisfaction from being a master craftsman of the old school. His interest in students extended beyond the classroom, and he was one of the most sought-after faculty members on days of class reunion. On the yearly engineering picnics, held at Dean Hoover's ranch, Mr. Harcourt took especial interest in the preparation of the meat for which he designed and built most of the barbecuing equipment.

As a craftsman Mr. Harcourt took joy in making ornamental wrought iron furniture, not only for himself but also for students and friends. His sense of proportion and of balance in design made his wrought iron creations truly artistic. Second only to his affection for his home and his students was his love for the outdoors; gardening and hunting were his favorite recreations.

In the death of Mr. Harcourt, Stanford University has lost a loyal teacher; the faculty, community, and students have lost a true friend.

Therefore, Be It Resolved, That the Academic Council of Stanford University hereby expresses its sympathy to his surviving relatives, and that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the Board of Trustees and that this memorial be spread on the minutes of this Council.

A. B. Domonske
L. S. Jacobsen
P. H. Kirkpatrick