

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

GEORGE CLINTON PRICE (1860 – 1950)

Dr. George Clinton Price died at his home on the Stanford Campus on August 11, 1950 at the age of slightly more than ninety years. His death removes one of the few remaining links with the early history of the institution, his having joined the faculty in 1892. He thus failed by only one year of being one of the "Old Guard" who were with the University from its opening, in 1891. He was born May 30, 1860 and spent his early years on a farm in Jackson Township, Tippecanoe County, Indiana. His early schooling was in the local schools, but in September, 1881 he entered the preparatory school of what was then called Asbury University and was later to become DePauw University. He dropped out of school in December 1883 and in 1884-85 he taught school at Odell, Indiana and in 1885-87 at Sugar Grove, Indiana. In the fall of 1886 he returned to DePauw, where he was a student of the late Dr. O. P. Jenkins who became head of the Physiology Department at Stanford University. It was during this period that he became interested in Biology through reading the works of Thomas Henry Huxley.

In the summer of 1889 he went in company with Dr. Jenkins and one of his schoolmates to the Hawaiian Islands, where they engaged in collecting fish. On his return to the United States he was appointed to teach Geology at DePauw while still an undergraduate. He graduated from DePauw in 1890 and that year entered Johns Hopkins University as a graduate student in Biology. In the summer of 1891 he accompanied a party of students to Jamaica, where their time was spent in collecting and studying the animals. During this time at Johns Hopkins he became a close friend of Dr. J. M. McFarland, who was later for many years on the Stanford faculty. In 1892 he taught in the summer school of DePauw University and then came to Stanford, where he had been appointed as assistant in Zoology and began his long association with this University.

In 1895 he went to Germany to the University of Munich, where he studied Embryology for a year, returning to Stanford in 1896. He was granted the Ph. D. from Stanford in 1897.

In December 1899 he married Edith Basye, whom he had met while at DePauw and who survived him in company with his son, John Price, who was born in 1906.

During the year of 1903-1904 he and Mrs. Price engaged in a journey about Europe, traveling in England, France, Switzerland, and Italy and spent part of the time in the laboratory of Oscar Hertwig, one of the leading biologists of the period, at the University of Berlin. Coming back to the United States he worked for a time at the Harvard Medical School. Also, during the second semester of 1911, he worked at Harvard in the laboratory of Professor Minot.

For 23 years, from 1893 to 1915, he taught in nearly all the summer sessions of the Hopkins Marine Station of Stanford at Pacific Grove, and until the time of his retirement he was especially concerned with the teaching of elementary Zoology and Embryology in the then Department of Zoology at the University. He retired in 1935.

Throughout his period of service to the University, which lasted 33 years, his main interest was in teaching and his one-time students remember him as an extraordinary elementary teacher, possessed of an infinite fund of patience and kindness and a great ability to illustrate by drawing and modeling in clay the most intricate problems of vertebrate embryology. Those who had the experience of starting their work in Zoology under him remember him as a genuinely great teacher.

After his retirement he maintained his residence on the campus, and, as long as he was physically able, he came to his office and laboratory in Jordan Hall where he worked on the embryology of the salmon.

His passing removes one of the few persons still remaining who were familiar with the early days and the early struggles of the University and is regretted by his former students, to whom he was a friend as well as a teacher, in the days when the institution was still small and the relations of students and their instructors could still be personal and intimate to a degree that is now denied to all but a small proportion of advanced and graduate students.

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