

IN MEMORIAM
WILLIAM DEMING HORNADAY

William Deming Hornaday, the University's former publicity director, died at his home in Austin at 4 o'clock, Sunday afternoon, December 6, 1942, after having suffered a stroke earlier that afternoon. He had enjoyed comparatively good health until a few hours before his death, visiting his office the previous day and making a trip to the downtown section of Austin early Sunday morning.

Mr. Hornaday had been a resident of Austin since 1899 and had been associated with the staff of the University for twenty-five years.

He was a native of Indiana, having been born on a farm near Plainfield, February 4, 1868, the son of Anson Deming and Sarah Hanna Hornaday. His inclination toward journalism expressed itself when he was a lad just old enough to be helping with the chores about the farm. Writing anonymously, he contributed personal items to one of the county newspapers the Danville Gazette. Some months later he visited the Gazette office and introduced himself as "your correspondent from Washington township."

He continued this correspondence and wrote for other papers while attending grade schools and Plainfield Academy, but his first regular newspaper job was that of printer's apprentice in the office of the Fowler (Ind.) New Era.

During the next thirty-two years, he was employed on newspapers in Ohio, Colorado, Tennessee, and Texas, edited a magazine that was distributed in Mexico, and served, as a correspondent for dozens of the leading newspapers and magazines of this country.

His first position after leaving Indiana was with the Columbus (Ohio) Republican, for which paper he gathered and wrote all of the local news. Like many other young men of that era, he became interested in the West, and in 1887, he quit his position in Columbus and went to Denver, Colorado, where he joined the staff of the Denver Times.

In the years immediately following, he made several changes, coming to Texas in 1889 to work as city editor of the San Antonio Times and assistant secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, and having employment with the Memphis (Tenn.) Commercial Appeal during the early part of 1891. He was married to Miss Margie Rochow of San Antonio, February 26, 1890.

His long affiliation with the San Antonio Express, was started in 1891, his first position being that of city editor. He remained with the Express in that capacity for four years, later rejoining it as Capitol correspondent in Austin, which position he held from 1899 to 1917.

During his absence from service with the Express, in the years from 1895 to 1899, he conducted a job printing establishment in San Antonio, edited and published the Industrial Journal, a Spanish-American trade paper distributed in Mexico, and served as publicity director of the National-Railways of Mexico.

His experience in editing a magazine for Mexican businessmen familiarized him with personages and conditions in Mexico, and thus enabled him to establish a reputation as an authority on that country. In later years he wrote hundreds of articles about Mexican politics and business for the large newspapers and trade journals of the United States, and in 1910 served as war correspondent for American newspapers during the Madero-Revolution.

The by-line "W. D. Hornaday" became recognized in most of the metropolitan newspaper offices of America, and this reputation was enhanced when he made a trip around the world in 1913, syndicating his own articles to scores of newspapers and magazines.

This was one of two round-the-world tours, which Mr. Hornaday financed by his writing. The second trip was made in 1921-22, after he had become connected with the University. On this second trip, he attended the convention of the Press Congress of the World, in Honolulu, serving as the delegate of the University of Texas and reading a paper on "Education for Journalism in the United States." This paper was later published and distributed as a University of Texas bulletin.

Travel was Mr. Hornaday's favorite avocation, and the spot in distant lands which he loved the most was Honolulu. He made nine trips to that island city, the last one having been made in 1940, two years after his retirement from the office of Director of Publicity.

In newspaper offices outside of Texas, he was best known as the writer of industrial articles on Texas and Mexico. In Texas and on the University campus, he was best known as the courteous, kindly director of the University's news service for state papers.

He assumed this position at the invitation of President R. E. Vinson in 1917, joining the University staff with the title of Director of Public Lectures and Publicity. From that time until 1920, he served as chairman of the Public-lectures committee, but in 1921 his title was changed to Director of Publicity, and henceforth he gave his full attention to the problem of publicizing the University through the State press. His success in this undertaking has been recognized for many years by college publicity men in this and other states. Some idea of the quality of the materials which his department contributed to the newspapers, as well as the relations which he enjoyed with Texas newspaper editors, may be gained by trying to visualize 70,000 column inches of reading matter, which was the volume published during one of the peak years of his directorship.

Mr. Hornaday's conception of the purpose of his bureau was that of furnishing authentic, well-written, interesting news and feature articles on the University's staff and its educational program, and he never deviated from that policy. To evaluate the results of this work, which he directed from 1917 to 1938, is impossible, but all of us who have served the University during this era know that the influence of this informational program was very great.

Probably the influence of many of the thousands of articles furnished the newspapers was infinitesimal, but others may have had untold value. One news article, which Mr. Hornaday gleaned from a scientific bulletin prepared by Dr. J. A. Udden of the Bureau of Economic Geology, is credited with having brought to the attention of Texas oil operators the possibility of locating oil on the University lands in West Texas. The men who first leased the University lands

for oil exploration and who later developed the Big Lake oil field have stated that Dr. Udden's opinion was first brought to their attention by Mr. Hornaday's article in a West Texas newspaper.

Besides serving as director of publicity, Mr. Hornaday taught a course in news writing for the Department of Journalism for a period of fifteen years. His philosophy of teaching seemed to be embodied in the idea that personal interest and words of encouragement will build self-confidence and ambition, thus leading students to strive for knowledge and professional ability. Some of his students have attained notable success in Journalism, and Mr. Hornaday frequently referred with pride to their attainments. They in turn attributed much of the credit for their success to his encouragement. Such tributes have been paid him by J. Ed Angly, Far Eastern correspondent of the Chicago Daily Sun; Stanley Walker, associate editor of the New York Herald Tribune; Jesse Mary Hill and Margaret Cousins, New York magazine editors; Ruby Black, Washington correspondent; and Lloyd J. Gregory, managing editor of the Houston (Texas) Post.

Another of Mr. Hornaday's contributions to the University was the organization and management of the Students' Clipping Bureau, a project which has furnished employment regularly throughout the years for one or two-dozen girls. Approximately five hundred young women have been helped through school by working in this bureau.

As a tribute to Mr. Hornaday's very useful life, we offer an excerpt from an editorial which appeared in the San Antonio Express on the morning of December 8:

"Texas newspaperdom will feel the loss from its ranks of a veteran who served his profession and his state's progress with vigor, high intelligence, and great usefulness... As a sympathetic interpreter and enthusiastic promoter of Texas' social, educational, and economic development -- with particular emphasis on the place of the state press and the University in building for the future -- he retained a large interested following. His friendliness, sincerity, sound judgment, and tireless service kept for Mr. Hornaday a respected standing in the traditions of the Texas press, and recognition among the citizens who furthered this state's welfare -- particularly in

the pursuit of good government. His fellow-workers may best honor his memory by emulating his service."

One member of our committee described Mr. Hornaday in words that accurately express the estimate which all of us share:

"He was modest and unassuming, but there was a core of character in him that was as hard as flint. Touch him, for instance, on the honor of the profession of journalism; or question the facts in some serious article he had published; or probe into ethical considerations in business or politics; and you quickly found a man of deep convictions, wide information, and great skill in stating his views.

"He wrote more and talked less than any other man I ever knew. He could drag a column interview out of almost anyone who had the information without wasting more than a dozen of his own words. He was a walking question mark. His favorite salutation was 'What-do you know?' If you returned the question, he would go into his shell, only to come out again with some provocative remark calculated to start you talking."

We feel we have lost a very dear friend, the University has lost one who contributed greatly to its service, Austin has lost a valued citizen, and the family has lost a kind, loving husband and father.

Special Committee on Hornaday Memorial Resolutions

Roy Bedichek
Hal Bybee
L. L. Click
Lorena Drummond
C. C. Glascock
Paul J. Thompson, Chairman