IN MEMORIAM

KENNETH CHARLES RATHBUN

Kenneth Charles Rathbun, Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering, died at his home July 8, 1961 from acute anemia at the age of 40. He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Katherine Harris Rathbun of Austin; three sons, Lawrence Lee Rathbun, Kenneth Randolph Rathbun and Richard Charles Rathbun, all of Austin; his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Hume J. Rathbun of St. Petersburg, Florida; and a brother, Norman H. Rathbun of Charlottesville, Florida.

His elementary and high school education was obtained in Baltimore, Maryland, where he was born July 28, 1920. Because of his outstanding record, he was awarded an Alumni Scholarship to the University of Virginia. His scholastic record and the fact that he was on the Dean's List of Distinguished Students every term but one indicates that he was an excellent student. In 1942 he received a bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering.

Before graduating, Professor Rathbun succeeded in winning the highest honor bestowed by the University of Virginia - the Raven Award for outstanding service and scholastic achievement. He also received the Spectator Trophy, a recognition given annually to the outstanding scholar-athlete of the University, and his name was listed in "Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges." He was elected vice-president of his graduating class and was a member of Theta Tau, Omicron Delta Kappa, and Tau Beta Pi, being president of the latter during his senior year.

In the field of athletics he completed a four-year career in boxing, track and football by winning the 1942 national collegiate middle-weight boxing title. In track and field he was second in the 1939 National A.A.U. Decathlon, and in his senior year not only won the state high-jumping championship but also was high-point scorer in every meet.

Following his graduation from the University of Virginia, this young man entered professional service with several prominent companies. For two years he was Assistant to the Chief Engineer of Merck & Company where he had supervision of the mechanical shops and general plant maintenance. After this experience he was with Tennessee Eastman Corporation for three years, first as a technical assistant and then as a plastic development engineer.

In 1949 Professor Rathbun entered the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to do graduate work in his field of interest. He received a Master of Science degree in January, 1951, and in 1952 was awarded a Mechanical Engineering Professional degree. Following his graduate studies, he returned to professional work and was associated with Experiment, Incorporated, a privately owned research and development organization, for five years. Here his work was primarily in the missile field, and was concerned with solid and liquid propellant fuels, turbo rocket engines, guided missile propulsions, atomic energy applications, and anti-aircraft guns.

During his brief professional and academic career, Professor Rathbun received many honors. He was a member of Tau Beta Pi, Sigma Xi, American Society of Mechanical Engineers, Pi Tau Sigma, Institute of Aeronautical Sciences, and the American Rocket Society. He was listed both in American Men of Science, 1955, and Who's Who in Engineering, 1959.

As a teacher he excelled, particularly at the undergraduate level. His first experience as a teacher was as an Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Clemson College, which position he held for one year. He then became Assistant Professor at the University of Virginia. After an interim of eight years in industry, he came to The University of Texas in September, 1957 as Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering, which position he held until his untimely death.

When Professor Rathbun came to the University in 1957 from private industry, he set up an aircraft and missile laboratory at the Balcones Research Center. He began work in this highly technical field to give undergraduate students primarily the opportunity to learn in the class room and then apply the knowledge in the laboratory. This program was a departure from the accepted approach to study in the field since emphasis was put on undergraduate students. At his home he built a laboratory and workshop for use in teaching youngsters with mechanical interests.

Professor Rathbun was a devoted member of the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection and was an inspiration to the boys of the Sunday School Class which he taught. He was devoted to his family. His students and all who worked with him loved and esteemed him for his untiring efforts to lead them. His life was truly an example of service to others.

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