

PORTRAIT OF
DR. RAYMOND E. COOK

by

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Dr. Cook was an alumnus of the old College of Puget Sound and attended it when it was down at the 6th and Sprague campus. He was very proud of the fact that he was a member of the varsity football team and that he was on the team that either beat or very nearly defeated the University of Washington. He mentioned to me on many occasions that he was rather small in stature at that time and if there were only a few yards to gain, they sometimes picked him up and threw him over the line - which was an illegal play in those days.

Dr. Cook was a very outstanding educator. He was at one time Superintendent of Schools in Bremerton and then in Chehalis and later on at Everett. He achieved a state-wide reputation as an educator and he was asked to come and be principal of Lincoln High School in Tacoma, Washington, which he did. While there he also enhanced his reputation as an outstanding educator.

He was earlier related to Dr. Todd in the development of the University of Puget Sound and was also very loyal to the University through the years.

At the alumni meetings in the latter years, when he was also a trustee of the University, I would say, "We have a distinguished alumnus with us in the person of Dr. Raymond E. Cook and he was from the class of 1906."

Dr. Cook had a way of saying, "Well, Doctor you are just about right, I am from the class of aught-seven."

The next year, I remember I said Dr. Cook is from the class of aught-seven and he looked at me and said, "Doctor, you are about right, I am from the class of aught-six." After I knew I had been caught in his ploy for attention, I always said, "Alright, now which class were you in and he would announce which class. Sometimes it was 06 and sometimes it was 07.

Dr. Cook was always very student oriented and had a very fine rapport with his

students in his various schools. Through the years at the Board of Trustee meetings, he always voted for increase in faculty salaries and always voted against tuition increases. One time I asked him how he thought we could increase the faculty salaries without increasing tuition and he said, "Well, you will just have to go out and raise more money for endowment."

To the very end, he voted consistently for faculty increases and consistently against tuition increases.

He was an outstanding Methodist leader. He represented his local Methodist Church at the various Methodist conferences a good many years ago and was proud of his relationship with the Methodist Church.

His first wife, Lola, died many years before he did. He remarried and his second wife died 5 or 6 years before he succumbed at Wesley Gardens. I visited him often in the infirmary there and he was very keen in recalling outstanding things which had happened at the University of Puget Sound.

In his association with Dr. Todd, he was one of the ones that would agitate for the fine new campus. He felt that the location at 6th and Sprague was too small and would not allow for the proper growth of the college. In early 1918-19, the Trustees began to talk about locating in a different area and Dr. Cook was one of the ones that led the idea that the campus should be relocated. At a meeting in 1919, Dr. Vrothers, who was then the minister of the First Methodist Church in Seattle, made the motion that the Trustees be authorized to find a new campus and Dr. Cook seconded the motion and made quite an unusual speech concerning the future needs of the school. The Board of Trustee minutes show quite often that Dr. Cook was one of the men who seconded motions and who gave rather dynamic speeches in behalf of whatever was before the Board.

Dr. Cook met his first wife, Lola at the College of Puget Sound and they were both very loyal alumni. He was talking constantly in terms of what would be of greater benefit to the college, the kinds of programs we should inaugurate although from where I stood as president, he did not very often relate them to the cost which he recommended.

Dr. Cook was married in the Irle family and from that came some very outstanding missionaries, Dr. and Mrs. Irles. When I was in Santiago, Chile, Bishop Sommer mentioned the fact that Santiago, Chile had a great heritage from the College of Puget Sound. Mr. Irle was a civil engineer and he had married Dr. Cook's sister. Being a civil engineer, he constructed many outstanding buildings in Boliva, Peru, Chile, Panama, and Argentine. The ones I was shown in Santiago were the church, school, and the hospital and Bishop Sommer said it was because of the outstanding ability of Dr. Irle, who was a civil engineer, as well as a missionary, that these fine things were done. Bishop Sommers also mentioned two other people - Dr. Pflaum, who had been a distinguished missionary in Santiago for many years for the Methodist Church and Harry Allen, who likewise had been a very outstanding missionary. Harry Allen's son, Foster Allen and his daughter, Eunice, also graduated from the College of Puget Sound.

For many years he was a Sunday school teacher. His original home was Castlerock and his wife, Miss Irle came from Summer where the family had been very strong in the leadership of the Methodist Church.

Toward the end of his life, he was not able to take an active part in the direction of the University of Puget Sound. When he was approached with the idea that he might like to relinquish his place to someone who could assume responsibility, he was very reticent because he said he wanted to be a full member for 50 years. He was a full member for 50 years and it was one of the

proudest moments in his life when he completed his 50th term as a Trustee of the College of Puget Sound and University of Puget Sound. He was always very supportive in his approach to the University and liked very much to be briefed personally about the contemplated development and hopes and aspirations for the University.

In his later years he lived at Wesley and several times a week he played golf with John D. Register who had been academic dean of the University for many years and who retired to Wesley Gardens.

Dr. Cook was a good Trustee. He was loyal, he was dedicated, he was very much interested always and worked as hard as possible for the development of the University.