

Noble Wayne Abrahams

August 1, 1900 — February 15, 1991

Noble W. Abrahams began his second career in 1957 when he left his well-earned retirement as Captain in the U.S. Navy, to accept an appointment as assistant professor in the then Department of Engineering Drawing in the Sibley School of Mechanical Engineering. Noble was born in Dublin, Texas. He attended grammar school and high school in Washington, D.C. and in 1920 received an appointment from the State of Texas to the U.S. Naval Academy. Upon graduation from the Academy in 1924, he began his long and productive career as an officer in the U.S. Navy.

Until the end of World War II, his duty assignments were highly engineering oriented. He served at sea in many capacities, including being engineering officer on a number of ships—from destroyers to cruisers to battleships. His major shore-duty assignments were to the Philadelphia and New York Navy Yards, the San Francisco Damage Control School for Naval Officers, and the Philadelphia Naval Damage Control Training Center. At the navy yards he was responsible for the installation of machinery and the testing of all systems during the construction of a number of cruisers, and he commissioned and fitted out several other major vessels including the battleship U.S.S. Iowa. He organized, commissioned, and commanded both the damage-control schools. His last sea-going assignment was as Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. Amphion, a Fleet Repair Ship and the Flagship for the Commander of the Service Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet.

Noble's post-war assignments included duty as Senior U.S. Naval Liaison Officer to the European Command Headquarters, Frankfurt and Heidelberg, Germany; Head of the Coordinated Procurement Branch of Procurement, Policy Division, Washington, D.C.; Chief Staff Officer, Military Sea Transportation Service, Western Pacific Area, Tokyo; Chief Naval Staff Officer with the High Command in Tokyo; and, finally, Intelligence Officer, Headquarters Potomac and Severn River Naval Commands.

Upon his retirement from the Navy in 1954, the Abrahams chose Trumansburg for their permanent residence and built a home overlooking Cayuga Lake, high on the hill just North of Taughannock Park. After a relatively short time, Noble decided that he was too young to simply sit and enjoy the view and that there should be some place nearby that would offer an interesting and challenging opportunity for using some of his experience and expertise. Fortunately for Cornell, he made contact with the Sibley School of Mechanical Engineering—where just such

an opportunity existed in teaching first-year mechanical engineering students descriptive drawing, mechanical drafting, and freehand drawing.

Professor Abrahams was a dedicated teacher who took a personal interest in each student. One result of his efforts and concern was his being a runner-up in the balloting, by freshmen, for one of the 1965 Philip Sporn Teaching Awards in Engineering. Another result was the founding of numerous life-long friendships with students and their families.

Noble officially retired from Cornell in 1967; but his talents were in such demand that he continued to work, on a year-to-year basis, until June 1970.

He continued to be very active as a citizen, devoting time and money to the development and growth of community institutions, the Church of the Epiphany, the Philomathic Library, and the Cornell ROTC.

Professor Abrahams is survived by his wife, Mary Barlow Abrahams; one daughter, Elaine Abrahams; a sister, Virginia Alleman; a brother, Otis; two grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Bart Conta, Dennis G. Shepherd, Richard M. Phelan