

George Francis Atkinson

January 26, 1854 — November 14, 1918

The University Faculty desires to express its profound sorrow and its sense of great loss, through the death, on November 14, of George Francis Atkinson.

Since his return to his Alma Mater in 1892, he had been a member of this faculty. In 1896 he was appointed a professor of Botany. During this period of more than a quarter of a century, which was devoted unceasingly and enthusiastically to research, he became an active working member of numerous scientific societies and attained an eminent position among the botanists of the world. In mycology, particularly, he had an international reputation and he was regarded as the foremost authority on the fleshy fungi of this country. In June, 1917, the Board of Trustees generously relieved him of all further teaching and administrative duties in order that he might devote his time entirely to his researches in this field. His exceptional ability and high place among American men of science was formally recognized by his election to the National Academy of Sciences in April, 1918. To his services as a teacher in that higher sense of the word which implies ability to impart enthusiasm and love for research, the success of the large number of botanists throughout the country who have been his pupils bears glowing testimony.

His end came suddenly as the result of influenza followed by pneumonia, incurred during a collecting trip on the Pacific Coast in pursuance of the great monographic study of fleshy fungi upon which he had been engaged for many years, and which was nearing completion. In the death of Professor Atkinson, not this faculty alone, but the whole community of working men of science have lost a gifted colleague, a man of genius who contributed much to the world's knowledge of botany. His work lives after him not only in his writings but in the inspiration imparted to a younger generation of investigators in the field in which he was an honored master.

Source: Faculty Records, p. 1011 Resolutions Adopted by The Faculty of Cornell University on The Eleventh Day of December Nineteen Hundred and Eighteen