

Clarence Ellsworth Townsend

April 7, 1882 — May 27, 1967

Professor Clarence Ellsworth Townsend was born in 1882 in the town of Painted Post, New York, near Corning. He was the son of Frederick J. and Viola R. Tibbot Townsend. He attended Painted Post High School and Wyoming Seminary of Kingston, Pennsylvania, then graduated from Cornell University with a degree of Mechanical Engineer in 1907.

He was employed by the Ingersoll-Rand Company in Painted Post and by the International Harvester Company in Auburn as a designer. He started his teaching career at Cornell in 1910 as an instructor in machine design. He was promoted to an Assistant Professor of Machine Design in 1919, working with Professor C. D. Albert. In 1921, he became Assistant Professor of Engineering Drawing.

In 1924, Professor Townsend was promoted to a full professorship and appointed head of the Department of Engineering Drawing. He began a long association with Professor Stephen F. Geary. Together they prepared the textbooks and related instructional materials, *Introductory Mechanical Drawing*, *Questions on Introductory Mechanical Drawing*, and *Machine Layouts for Working Drawing Problems*. The layouts were unique in providing assembly drawings from which detail drawings were prepared by students. A principal layout was for a high-speed woodworking lathe for a production shop, and many hundreds of Cornell engineering students made the drawings.

Although soft-spoken and quiet in many of his ways, “Tommy,” as he was affectionately called by some, was popular with staff and students, and many would inquire about him when they returned to visit Cornell. He enjoyed athletic events, attended football games, and acted as a judge at track meets. After forty years of teaching at Cornell, he retired in 1950 as Professor of Engineering Drawing, Emeritus.

During much of his career, Professor Townsend was interested in the management of a farm in Lake Ridge. He attended classes in agriculture, and he spent much of his extra time at his farm. After his retirement, he specialized in the breeding of purebred Hereford cattle, until his illness in 1960. He was at times a member of the Forest City Grange, the Farm Bureau, and the American Hereford Association.

Professor Townsend was married to Clara Antoinette Davis in 1915. She died in 1943. In 1946, he was married to Florence May Van Iderstine. Living at their Lake Ridge home, Green Meadows, they were well known for their

teas on the Sundays before Christmas, when, in a beautifully decorated house, they entertained faculty friends and townspeople.

Professor Townsend served the Society for the Promotion of Engineering Education (now the American Society for Engineering Education) on a national committee to develop standards for drawings, and drafting room practice. His memberships included the Cornell Society of Engineers, the American Association of University Professors, Phi Kappa Phi, and Lambda Chi Alpha. He was a member of the Masons for more than sixty years, starting with the Painted Post chapter. He was also a member of the Sons of American Revolution, the Eagles club, and the Ithaca Rotary Club.

Professor Townsend died on May 27, 1967, in the Oak Hill Manor nursing home, after a long illness. He is survived by his wife, Florence.

Joseph O. Jeffrey, John R. Moynihan, Arthur H. Burr