

# Jacob Roland Collins

*March 28, 1891 — September 16, 1948*

Jacob Roland Collins, professor of physics, died September 16, 1948, after having suffered poor health for several years.

Professor Collins was born in Byesville, Ohio, March 28, 1891. He graduated from Byesville High School and entered Ohio University at Athens, Ohio, from which he was graduated in 1912. He was appointed graduate student assistant in physics at Purdue University in 1912 and was granted the Master's Degree by Purdue in 1914. He continued at Purdue as an instructor of physics and studied during Summer Sessions at the University of Chicago, until his appointment as instructor of physics at Cornell in 1918. He received the Ph.D. Degree from Cornell in 1921, was appointed assistant professor of physics in 1921 and professor of physics in 1938.

He was married to Emma Keturah Ford in 1915 and to them was born a son, Richard, Cornell '41, who was lost on a bombing raid over Germany during World War II.

Professor Collins was of a modest and retiring nature. He arrived independently at his stand on the problems of the department, community, and nation ever without compromise with justice. He was a brilliant student and set high standards for any class of which he was a member. He had complete disdain for mediocrity in whatever field it appeared although always a warm, friendly heart for all students irrespective of their specific day-to-day performance. Few men have the broad knowledge of the whole field of physics that Professor Collins possessed. It has been said frequently that he was the only member of the Physics Staff able to teach, and teach well, each of the many courses offered in the physics curriculum. He was a scholar in the true sense of the word.

He was foremost in the development of a physics laboratory course for advanced students which is unique in American Universities. Many Cornellians, both in industry and teaching, acknowledge their indebtedness to the thorough training they had received in this course under his direction. He was at his best in advanced courses in which his lectures were always thoroughly prepared and presented with a clearness that attracted students to him later for discussions of their research problems.

It was in the field of infrared spectroscopy that he did most of his research and published many papers. He was a co-author of a text on high temperature measurements.

Professor Collins was a Fellow of the American Physical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He was a member of Phi Kappa Phi and Sigma Xi and of many other scientific societies. For many years he served as the physics editor of the Americana Encyclopedia.

As a colleague he was loved and respected. He was always ready and willing to help one in difficulty and many of his colleagues profited by his consideration of their problems. Those who have worked with him will miss his wise counsel, scholarly inspiration, and deep friendship. Truly, the University has suffered a severe loss in his death.

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