Walter Buckingham Carver

January 11, 1879 — July 4, 1961

Walter Buckingham Carver, Professor Emeritus of Mathematics, died July 4, 1961, in Ithaca, New York, at the age of 82.

Professor Carver was born January 11, 1879, in Town Hill, Pennsylvania. A graduate in 1899 of Dickinson College, which later awarded him an honorary D.Sc. degree, he received the Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins University in 1904. He came to Cornell in 1906 and continued, officially and unofficially, to be active in mathematics at Cornell for fifty-five years. He was chairman of the Department of Mathematics from 1938 to 1940. He became Professor Emeritus in 1948, but nevertheless continued his contributions to Cornell mathematics by occasional teaching and student counseling during fall and spring terms and by conducting special mathematics programs during summer sessions. He taught mathematics in the Shell Merit Fellowship Program for Teachers in the summers of 1957 to 1960 with vigor and enthusiasm, and he was cheerfully looking forward to repetition in 1961 when illness forced his actual retirement.

Professor Carver published several research papers and booklets in geometry, but he found his greatest satisfaction and usefulness in working with and for students and teachers of undergraduate mathematics. He broke all records for continuous active service in the Mathematical Association of America and for its official journal, the *American Mathematical Monthly*. In addition to holding many other responsible positions, he served as editor-in-chief of the *Monthly* from 1932 to 1936, and as president of the Association in 1939 and 1940. His contributions of problems and solutions of problems to the *Monthly* cover a span of 58 years, longer than that of any other contributor. His last article in the *Monthly* appeared just a week before his death, making a total span of sixty years for his contributions to this journal.

In all of his scientific work, Walter Carver required clarity and precision and complete honesty. His successes as a teacher and as an editor were well known to publishers of mathematical textbooks. Very few people ever knew the extent to which publishers were swayed by his masterful appraisals of hundreds of manuscripts that were submitted for publication. The mathematics of 1960 is better than the mathematics of 1906, and Walter Carver earned much more than one professor's fair share of the credit.

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