MEMORIAL RESOLUTIONS OF THE FACULTY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN--MILWAUKEE
ON THE DEATH OF CHARLES H. SEARS

Charles H. Sears, faculty member emeritus of the University of Wisconsin--Milwaukee, and the oldest resident of Sheboygan County, Wisconsin, died at Sheboygan on July 23, 1958 at the age of 101. A native of West Brewster, Massachusetts, where he was born in 1856, he obtained his elementary and secondary education there and received in 1883 from the State Normal School of Westfield a diploma entitling him to teach in the high schools of the state of Massachusetts. In 1893 he was awarded his M.A. degree by Allegheny College and in 1895 his first Ph.D. from the same institution.

The teaching career of Dr. Sears was varied. His first teaching assignment was as high school principal and superintendent of schools at Cheshire, Massachusetts, where he served from 1885-1885. From 1885-1886 he taught at Prospect Park Institute in Brooklyn, New York; from 1886-1891 he taught Latin in the high school of Edinboro, Pennsylvania. In 1896, after receiving his doctorate from Allegheny College, he returned to Edinboro to teach in the normal school there. For the next four years he served as principal of the normal department of Claflin University, a freedman's aid school established in Orangeburg, South Carolina, after the Civil War to educate freed slaves. When he returned to the North, no one would accept him as a teacher because of his having taught in a Negro school; so he enrolled under G. Stanley Hall at Clark University at Worcester, Massachusetts, where he studied pedagogy and psychology. In 1901 he received his second Ph.D. degree from that institution with a major in psychology. At the same time he taught a course in psychology and the history of education at Westfield, Massachusetts, his old alma mater.

In 1901, after receiving his second doctorate, Charles Sears came to the old Milwaukee Normal School, located then at West Wells and North Eighteenth Streets, moving with the school in 1909 to the new building at Kenwood and Dummer, where he taught continuously in several capacities until his retirement in 1936. In 1901 he taught reading and language, psychology and pedagogy; from 1902-1917, in addition to teaching courses in general psychology and education, he supervised practice teachers. From 1917-1920 he was principal of the campus training school. From 1920 until his retirement in 1936 he taught courses in general psychology.

After his retirement Dr. Sears made his home in Milwaukee until 1953, moving at that time to Sheboygan, where he resided until the time of his death. His wife, Marianne Smith of Edinboro, died in 1939 at the age of 73. Her musical gifts were passed on to the son Bret, a concert pianist and music instructor in Milwaukee. Bret is Dr. Sears' only survivor.

When he was 95 years of age, Dr. Sears became the beneficiary of his own life insurance policies because he had outlived the span covered by standard mortality tables. Leading officials of the Equitable and Northwestern Insurance Companies came to Milwaukee at that time to pay him in person. At the birthday party given for him at Fountain Park Church in Sheboygan on October 8, 1956, his hundredth anniversary, officers of these companies were present to confer congratulatory gifts. On that occasion Dr. Sears related with evident relish incidents of his early life, several of which were connected with the Civil War. He remembered vividly the assassination of President Lincoln and other important historical events.
Dr. Sears was marked by deep religious faith and practice. While in Pennsylvania, he obtained from the Methodist Episcopal Church a license which entitled him to preach. In the last years of his life, his son drove to Sheboygan not less frequently than every other Sunday to drive his father to services. Until his death he retained his membership in Calvary Presbyterian Church in Milwaukee.

The colleagues of Dr. Sears in what was the Milwaukee State Teachers College remember him for his loyalty and devotedness to all those groups with which he was allied: the college, his family, his church, his students. He was marked by a spirit of cooperation, devotion to principle, and a quiet gentlemanly persistence in achieving what he thought was significant. Independent in spirit and body he made his quiet way down the years. Those who knew him briefly in the last decades of his long life marked particularly his independence and his delightful sense of humor. When he was in his nineties, he boarded a bus and went about the business of his weekly shopping and other personal affairs in the same spirit which had characterized him in his academic work. His kindly alert eyes retained their characteristic twinkle, his step its buoyancy, his greeting its friendliness and spice, his bearing its well-mannered ease. At his hundredth birthday party all these qualities were still in full flower.

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE:

Ruth Mary Fox
Mary-Virginia Rodigan
Herman Weil, Chairman