

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

EDWARD KELLOGG STRONG, JR. (1884 – 1963)

Edward K. Strong, Jr., was born in Syracuse, New York, August 18, 1884. His father, a Presbyterian clergyman, became pastor of a church in San Francisco in 1902. Edward entered the University of California that year, and won the B.S. degree in 1906, his major being Biology.

Thinking of a possible career in forestry science, he joined the U.S. Forestry Service. The months which he spent in the California forests held pleasant memories for him always; his hearty enjoyment of tramping and camping in wooded hills never ended. But a new interest had taken hold of him -- the developing field of Psychology. He decided upon research and teaching as his life career.

He returned to Berkeley for his Master's degree and then enrolled in Columbia University where he won the doctorate in 1911.

From 1911 to 1914, Dr. Strong was Research Fellow in Advertising for the Association of National Advertisers, and Lecturer in the Extension Division of Columbia University.

In 1914, he became Professor of Psychology in the George Peabody College for Teachers. In 1917, he was called to the General Staff of the Army, serving as Lieutenant-Colonel and member of the Committee on Classification of Personnel until the end, of the war.

In 1919, he joined the faculty of Carnegie Institute of Technology, heading the Department of Vocational. Education and the Bureau of Educational Research. His pioneering research won the attention of the Psychologists of the nation, including Dr. Lewis M. Terman, who was building an eminent department of Psychology at Stanford. With unerring perception of true scholarship, Dr. Terman brought Dr. Strong to Stanford in 1923. If there had been, at the time, a vocational, guidance and placement service for scholars, it might well have cited this appointment as the precise example of a happy meeting of man, place, and work-to-be-done!

Dr. Strong soon began the work for which he is most widely known, the search for a measure of interests which might serve usefully in vocational. guidance. The enormous labors that were involved in compiling and validating the Strong Vocational Interest Blank are related in his monumental book, Vocational Interests of Men and Women, which won the Butler Silver Medal, Award in 1944.

"When I began working on interest measurement," Dr. Strong once remarked, "no one believed you could build scales to measure interests, or that such scales would yield any kind of stable scores. As a matter of fact, I didn't really believe it myself until I had been working on my test for several years. Each time we got a new occupational group tested, I fully expected to discover that we couldn't differentiate it on an interest basis, and that the whole concept of interest measurement would fall apart,

"What really convinced me emotionally that we had something was a personal experience. My son had been an indifferent student in college and had no idea what he wanted to do vocationally. He took my test and came out with an A

on Physician, an occupation he had never considered entering. Well, he went to medical school, got straight A's throughout, and has been a dedicated and successful physician ever since. I began to think maybe we had a method that would really help young people find where they belonged."

How many young people have thus been helped to find a career suited to their interests, it would be impossible to estimate. Millions have taken the Strong test. It is estimated that a quarter of a million now take it annually. Its use is not confined to vocational counseling alone. It has been an important tool for many researchers in the fields of personality characteristics and motivation. In methodology, as well as in the substance of his findings, Dr. Strong's work has supplied a foundation for a great deal of psychological research.

Besides his work in vocational interests, Dr. Strong's study and writings enriched a number of fields. His *Introductory Psychology for Teachers* was published in 1922. During the 1920's, he published several books on advertising and selling. An important contribution was his The Second Generation Japanese Problem, published in 1934. A widely used textbook appeared in 1938, Psychological Aspects of Business. A complete list of his books, monographs, and articles would contain nearly two hundred titles, including a score that were published after his retirement.

This generous harvest of research and writing was not reaped at the expense of his teaching. During almost every year of his long service in Stanford, he carried a full teaching load. In 1925, he joined the faculty of the newly started Graduate School of Business as Professor of Applied Psychology. He retained his post as Professor on the faculty of the Department of Psychology, conducting seminars and guiding doctoral candidates. But from 1925 until he became Emeritus, most of his courses were offered in the Business School, where he became an institution, revered by all the students and perhaps a little feared by some, since he could be sharp-tongued about indolence, and abrupt with glibness. Alumni have remarked in this vein about his courses: "Often he had me trying to wade beyond my depth. When I received a passing grade in one of his courses, it was a pleasant surprise. But in the years since I left the School, I have found that what he gave me has been immensely helpful. to me."

On his retirement in 1949, a testimonial dinner was given him by the men whom he had taught during the quarter-century of his career in Stanford. The outpouring of affection and esteem was memorable.

In 1911, Edward married Margaret Tower Hart. She had been a student in a course he gave in Barnard College. He confessed, in later years, that he had often taken extra care in grading her papers and examinations, hoping that his marginal notes thereon might lead her to confer with him about her studies. Without recommending this stratagem generally, let it be deemed pragmatic Fifty-two years later, Dr. and Mrs. Strong had a treasure-house of rich memories. Three children were born to them: Margaret (Mrs. Thomas Harrell), Frances (Mrs. Ralph Berdie), and Edward K. Strong, M.D. To them, to the eight grandchildren and a great grandchild, and to Mrs. Strong, we extend sincere sympathy.

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