

W. H. Ragsdale Memorial Service
May 4, 1914

Had we divine power to see and analyze we would know that every man contributes a part in the onward march of civilization. God in His alwise providence has so ordered human events that every type of human life contributes something that directly or indirectly swells the tide of human progress. The kicker by his kicks may prevent some strong man from kicking or make some other man pull stronger with a resultant forward movement.

The man who sees good in all, ignoring the bad, emphasizing the good, is one of the strongest factors in human uplift. He takes hold of hope and kindles the fire of desire that burns out retardation and sets free those latent forces that move the laggard on to the leader. Thus the man who is a hopeful stimulus becomes a potent factor for progress. Such a man was W. H. Ragsdale.

He was with this school from its beginning. I first knew him the day I became president and from that day until he answered the final summons he was a true friend to the school, and an indefatigable worker for its best interests.

There was never a task too severe for him to undertake, there was never a duty too lowly for him to perform. It seems to me, now as I look back, that it was a real joy to him to do things for the young women who came here to study.

As teacher of School Management he was a close vital connecting link between theory and the practice. This school was fortunate to have in its faculty a man who was daily meeting the problems in the field. He was always ready to tell us how a given thing worked out in practice. He helped us to stay close to the problems that confront us.

As a teacher, I scarcely knew how to express myself, he took hold of the simplest detail and dealt with it with snap and contagious enthusiasm.

He told the young or inexperienced teacher many things usually ignored by teachers of School Management, but vital to the success of the young teacher. His work was always practical. He never wandered into the field of the speculative. He never evolved from his inner mental consciousness beautifully spun theories applicable only in an ideal community. As the stream of human events moved on to the sea of success Mr. Ragsdale did not stand upon the bank and watch it flow. He was always one in the stream working and struggling to help others. He did not live the ideal but the real life. And his teaching had his stamp upon it. Earnestness, enthusiasm and inspiration were ever present in all he said and did. He found the best in folks and magnified that while minimizing the undesirable traits. He believed in the true greatness of his work and made others feel that their tasks were worth doing well. Every student felt his inspiration for it was contagious. He was a great teacher and he has built for himself a monument in the hearts of his people. As I reflect upon the life of this man I am persuaded that the most appropriate monument to his memory would be an endowed scholarship that would annually send to this school, free of charge to her, some Pitt county girl; for that would be a live monument, constantly taking the inspiration of his life into the lives of the people he loved so well.

Our Personal Relations - You will pardon me for a moment. I will not say much for the keen cut that has come to me in his death is too great for many words. He was my friend loyal and true. Sweet are the memories of true friendship. If God loves the man who loves his fellowman then surely God loved Mr. Ragsdale.

A friend of mine has passed beyond, from cares and labors free
He rests with Him we hope to meet when we no toil shall see.
He is not dead but lives anew in lives he loved below,
May we when death shall call us home ~~relieve~~ with those we know,
Yet join our friend who's gone beyond our friendships' to renew.
And may our lives be spent as his with friendships just as true,
But while we linger here below with errors to amend
May we still know the worth of him and what his life has been.

I can not say more.