

M E M O R I A L

Stephen Frank Voorhees

Stephen Frank Voorhees was born on February 15, 1878 in the little town of Rocky Hill, New Jersey. He passed away on January 23, 1965, in New York Hospital, just a few weeks before his 87th birthday.

Living so close to Princeton, his interest in it began as a young boy, so it was natural for him to choose Princeton as the college he wished to attend. His devotion and loyalty to the University, and to the Class of 1900, is a matter of record. Neither a University nor a Class ever had a more dedicated alumnus.

Not many men have had a more varied and active career - nor one more unselfish. His interests and capabilities drew him into many fields - professional, civic, governmental - and made him a leader in each. Following is a record of some of Frank's accomplishments, sent to me by Miss Mildred Mohr, who has been Frank's faithful and efficient secretary for many years, and the

careful keeper of our 1900 Class records: *Stephen F. Voorhees was graduated from "Model School", connected with N.J. State Normal School, Trenton, N.J. in 1896.*

*taking a Scientific Course*

Starting out from college as a graduate civil engineer, he entered the office of William P. Field in Newark, New Jersey. Two years later he shifted to architecture, and joined the firm of Eidlitz & McKenzie. In 1910, the partnership of McKenzie, Voorhees & Gmelin was formed, and he continued as a partner of this architectural firm through many changes of name, until his retirement in 1959 to consultant status.

It would be difficult to list all his contributions to the building industry. After many years of service on committees and in other directions, he was elected President of the New York Chapter of The American Institute of Architects in 1930, and the same year was elected an Honorary Member of the Bricklayers, Masons & Plasterers International Union - the latter distinction was as highly prized by him as the former. In 1944, the New York Chapter awarded

him the Gold Medal of Honor for "distinguished work and high professional standing." From 1935 to 1937 he served as President of the national body, The American Institute of Architects.

Always he strove for a better understanding and relationship between the profession and labor and, to this end, was one of a group who organized the New York Building Congress, composed of the many aspects of the building industry. He became its first President, and guided it successfully and securely through its first five years. On his retirement from the presidency, a group of some thirty leaders in the building industry presented him with a framed scroll bearing this tribute:

"His intelligence, initiative, brilliant ability, untiring energy, faithful service and ardent devotion to the performance of his duties have been an invaluable asset through the years. The noble qualities of heart and mind which he has shown on all occasions, not only in his work with the Executive Committee and other committees, but also as the presiding officer of the Congress, have endeared him as a leader and proclaim him Guide, Philosopher, and Friend to all the Congress."

He was appointed chairman of the Board of Design of the New York World's Fair of 1939-1940. This appointment was made by the Planning Committee - a group of New York civic leaders in charge of the organization of the Fair. The Board of Design was responsible for approving or disapproving the design of each building erected at this Fair.

He was a Trustee of The Metropolitan Museum of Art since 1945, and also served for a number of years on the Vocational Education Board of the Board of Education in New York City.

As an undergraduate he served in the Spanish American War, and with great pride, he would refer to himself as Corporal and Cook in the First Regular U. S. Volunteers which served in Puerto Rico. In the First World War, he was a Major in the Sanitary Corps of the U.S. Army, serving in the Surgeon General's

office in Washington, D.C., in charge of hospital design. In the Second World War he was a consultant to the War Production Board.

Among the happiest of his duties, was his service to Princeton, and this seems to be a never-ending list. From 1930 to 1944, he was the University's Supervising Architect. In 1943, he was elected a Charter Trustee, becoming Emeritus in 1948, - and rarely did he miss a meeting in those many years. Along with much varied committee activity, he also served as President of the Princeton Engineering Association, the Princeton Architectural Association, The Princeton Club of New York, and, of course, as President of his Class, following many years as Secretary of the Class.

This record of his activities is necessarily incomplete. No one has left a better record - no one has inspired and encouraged more people. In concluding this memorial, we might well borrow a phrase from the tribute of the New York Building Congress, quoted above, and "proclaim him Guide, Philosopher, and Friend to all."

The Class of 1900