

Dr. Bassler returned to Myerstown in 1931 and, except for a trip to South America to expedite the gathering of rubber during the second World War, he spent most of the rest of his life there. He was a member of numerous foreign learned societies, and he received honorary degrees from Lehigh and Albright. His bibliographical work brought him to the attention of this Society, to which he was elected in 1932. He took great pleasure in completing our files of the publications of Pennsylvania historical societies, and we were in a position to further his last great enthusiasm, the collection of Pennsylvania-German publications. He bought his first book in this field in 1945, but within five years he had built up what is possibly the largest collection of such material. By the purchase of the Unger collection he added forty-five tons of books in one lot. This collection he deposited at the Franklin and Marshall College library until such a time as the Pennsylvania German Society, of which he was a director, could raise funds for a building to house it. It was while bringing a station wagon full of books on March 14, 1950, that he and his friend Rudolf Hommel were killed in a traffic accident near Downingtown, Pennsylvania. It has been announced that his library of South American material goes to Lehigh University. C. K. S.

ROBERT DIGGES WIMBERLY CONNOR

Dr. Connor, who was elected to this Society in 1919, died of a brain hemorrhage on February 25, 1950. He was born at Wilson, North Carolina, on September 26, 1878, a son of Henry Groves and Kate (Whitfield) Connor, and was graduated Ph.B. at the University of North Carolina in 1899. On December 23, 1902, he married Sadie Hanes. For several years he was a teacher and principal in the

public schools of North Carolina, but his driving personality and his genius for friendship, his delightful manners and his amazing ability to get things done without making enemies, caused him to be drawn into executive work. Within a few years he became secretary of the Educational Campaign Committee (1904-07), the North Carolina Teachers' Assembly (1906-12), the North Carolina Historical Commission (1907-21), president of the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association (1912), and secretary of the board of trustees of the University of North Carolina (1914-20).

It was as secretary to the Historical Commission that we came to know him, for he was helpful in the compilation of Mr. Brigham's newspaper bibliography, and we could be of use to the Commission. He prepared for reading at our meeting of October 1933, a paper on "William Gaston, A Southern Federalist of the Old School and His Yankee Friends, 1778-1844," but at the last minute was prevented by his official duties from coming to Worcester. The paper was printed in volume 43 of our *Proceedings*. He took small part in the affairs of this Society because he was pre-occupied with the work of the North Carolina State Literary and Historical Association, the Southern Historical Association, the American Historical Association, and the Society of American Archivists. It was he who breathed the breath of life into the last.

Connor was primarily an executive, but he published a biography of Cornelius Harnett in 1919, a *Life and Speeches of Charles B. Aycock* in 1912, and a history of colonial North Carolina in 1919. His only term of formal professional study came at Columbia in 1920-21, after which he was called to the Kenan professorship of history and government at the University of North Carolina. During his twenty years there he usually stood at the head of the

student poll for the most popular member of the faculty. He was no handshaker or campus character and, far from being pompous, he was modest and humble. His wit was keen but gentle. An enthusiast for football, golf, and cards, he was regarded as a liberal and a man's man.

These qualities made Connor a natural choice to be the first archivist of the United States in 1934. This is not the place to narrate his achievements in that office. The LL.D.'s which were awarded him by Duke and North Carolina, and the encomium of President Roosevelt on his service at the time of his resignation in 1941, were justified. Back at Chapel Hill, Connor became Craig professor of jurisprudence and history, and chairman of the North Carolina Department of Archives and History. At the time of his death he was engaged in writing a history of the university.

C. K. S.

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