

EMERSON DAVID FITE

1874 - 1953

Emerson David Fite, professor-emeritus of Political Science at Vassar College, died in Poughkeepsie on May 17th at the age of seventy-nine.

Professor Fite was born in Marion, Ohio, in 1874. He received the bachelor's degree from Yale in 1897, and the doctor's degree from Harvard in 1905. Before coming to Vassar in 1913, Professor Fite had held teaching positions at the Mt. Hermon School, Harvard University, and Yale. He was Vassar's first professor of Political Science and he remained at Vassar until his retirement in

Professor Fite was a distinguished scholar. He broke new ground with his Social and Industrial Conditions in the North during the Civil War (1910) and The Presidential Campaign of 1860 (1911). His History of

the United States, published in 1916, was widely used in secondary schools in the United States. Many an American schoolboy knew his "Fite." Professor Fite's other publications included The United States (with Archibald Freeman, 1923); A Book of Old Maps (1926); and Government by Cooperation (1932).

Professor Fite was not only a scholar; he was also an indefatigable public servant. He was elected Justice of the Peace in 1928; and from 1934 to 1943 he served the Poughkeepsie area as a member of the New York State Legislature. His outstanding achievement as Assemblyman was what is known as the Fite Civil Service Law.

Mr. Fite stimulated in his students a genuine interest in Political Science, particularly in the fields of international law and constitutional law; and in his teaching of American government, because of his first-hand experience with politics and politicians, he was able to bring life and substance into his classroom.

Professor Fite shall long be remembered by his students and his colleagues as a good teacher, a gentle friend, a kindly neighbor, and a wise counselor.

Evelyn Clark

Helen D. Lockwood

C. Gordon Post

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