

## OBITUARIES

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### RALPH EARLE

Ralph Earle, Rear-Admiral of the United States Navy and President of Worcester Polytechnic Institute, died in Worcester, February 13, 1939. He was born in Worcester, May 3, 1874, the son of Stephen Carpenter Earle, noted as an architect, and Mary Eaton (Brown) Earle. He was a student at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in the class of 1892, but left to enter the Naval Academy at Annapolis, from which he was graduated, fourth in his class, in 1896. He immediately entered upon a naval career, which was to last for a period of nearly thirty years and was destined to elevate him to high rank in naval annals. As an ensign he saw action in the Spanish-American War, served with constantly growing rank on various naval vessels, was connected with the Naval Academy where he was especially interested in the Department of Electrical Engineering, and later in the Department of Ordnance, and in 1916 became chief of the Bureau of Ordnance of the Navy Department. When the World War came and this country entered the conflict, Admiral Earle's engineering skill and organizing ability contributed greatly to the success of the Allies. He originated and directed the plans for laying the great mine barrage across the North Sea, thus crippling the activity of submarines, and he developed the plan of placing 14-inch naval guns on railway carriages in France, capable of throwing 1400-pound shells for twenty-five miles. It was this mobile artillery that aided greatly in the effectiveness of attacks on German positions far back of the lines. After the War he continued in service both on land and sea, and in 1923 assumed command of the Naval Torpedo Station at Newport. In 1925 he retired from the Navy to become

President of Worcester Polytechnic Institute. Secretary of the Navy Daniels enumerated his notable services during the War, which he said constituted "one of the finest chapters of naval achievement in its whole history." In 1930 in recognition of his services he was promoted to the rank of Rear-Admiral.

At the Polytechnic Institute his technical and administrative ability was soon manifested. New buildings were constructed, the faculty was strengthened, the courses were enlarged, and a new spirit pervaded the institution as a result of his personality and his high quality of leadership. At the time of his death he was beginning upon a new program of enlargement, destined even further to increase the prestige of the Institute in the field of education.

Admiral Earle, upon his return to his native Worcester, became connected with several local societies and clubs, taking an active interest in those which made for civic betterment. To the American Antiquarian Society he was elected a member in 1927, and was a constant attendant at the meetings. He married, September 29, 1898, Janet Turner Schenck, daughter of Caspar Schenck, U.S.N., by whom he was survived, with two children, Ralph Earle, Jr., and Mary Janet Hines.

C. S. B.

#### WILLIAM MacDONALD

William MacDonald, historian and journalist, died in New York City, December 15, 1938. He was born at Providence, R. I., July 31, 1863, the son of Rev. William and Frances (Jordan) MacDonald. He prepared for college at the Newton High School and entered Harvard, from which he was graduated with the degree of A.B. in 1892. He then taught history and economics at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in 1892-1893, was professor of history and political science at Bowdoin College from 1893 to 1901, and professor of history at Brown University from 1901 to 1917, with courses primarily in American history. After leaving Brown, he lectured on history and government for occasional years at the University of California and

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