

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

FRANK CALEB GATES

1887-1955

Dr. Frank C. Gates, past-president of the Ecological Society of America, passed away on March 21, 1955. At the time of his death Dr. Gates was Professor of Botany at Kansas State College and Professor at the University of Michigan Biological Station, at Douglas Lake.

Dr. Gates was born in Chicago, Illinois, on September 12, 1887. He received the A.B. degree at the University of Illinois in 1910, and the Ph.D. at the University of Michigan in 1912. From 1912 to 1915 he was Instructor of Botany at the University of the Philippines, and from 1916 to 1919 was Professor of Biology at Carthage College, Illinois. He served during the First World War as 2nd Lieutenant in the Sanitary Corps. Following the war, Dr. Gates began his long association with Kansas State College, holding the ranks of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor successively. Since 1915 he also was a member of the staff of the University of Michigan Biological Station.

Dr. Gates' research interests were chiefly in the field of plant ecology, but he contributed much also in taxonomy and floristics. He was known for his vegetation studies in the central Philippines, Illinois, Michigan, and Kansas. He published a number of books and pamphlets, including: TREES IN KANSAS, WILD FLOWERS IN KANSAS, GRASSES IN KANSAS, and FLORA OF KANSAS. Perhaps his best known work is his FIELD MANUAL OF PLANT ECOLOGY, published in 1949 and based on the summer course which he taught at the Michigan Biological Station. His publications total about fifty.

Students, of whom Dr. Gates taught many over a period of forty-three years, found him to be an excellent teacher. He demanded careful observation and insisted that all reports be written as if for publication in a reputable scientific journal. He was an independent worker and thinker himself and tried to develop the same qualities in his students.

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Source: Bulletin of the Ecological Society of America, Vol. 36, No. 2 (Jun., 1955), pp. 57-58. Courtesy of JSTOR

Dr. Gates' interests and observations extended beyond the area of plant sciences. He was an ardent ornithologist and taught the subject as a student at the University of Illinois. For thirty-six years he kept an accurate record of birds seen in the yard about his home in Manhattan, Kansas, including also a record of what the bird was doing and what it ate. From his earliest association with the Biological Station he kept detailed meteorological records, as he did also at his home in Manhattan, plotting temperature and barometric pressure readings on graphs. In very recent years he learned Russian and Spanish in order to read scientific literature. He had earlier learned German, French, and Latin.

He was a member of the Ecological Society of America and served as president in 1951-52. In addition, he was a member of the AAAS, the Botanical Society of America, the Society of Plant Taxonomists, and the State Academies of Illinois, Kansas, and Michigan.

New Orleans, Louisiana Committee on Resolutions:

April 23, 1955

W. G. Moore, A. J. Sharp, W. A. Egglar, Chairman