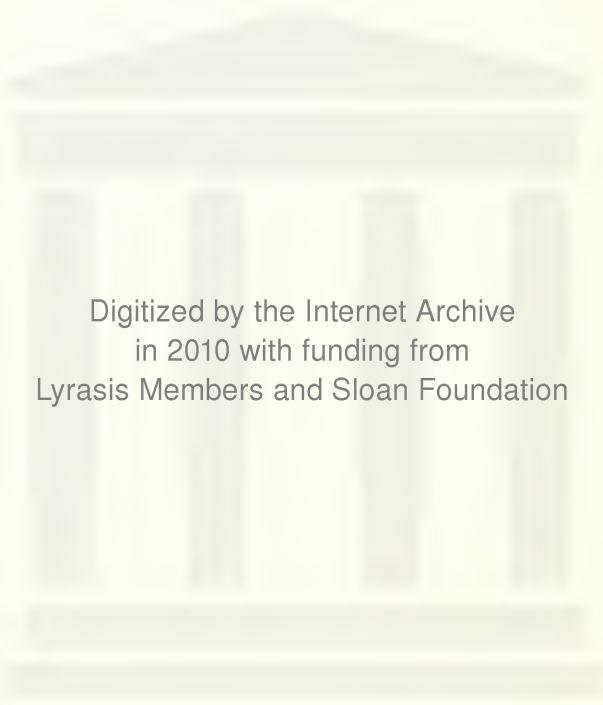


Memorial Service
for
EDGAR ODELL LOVETT
(1871 - 1957)



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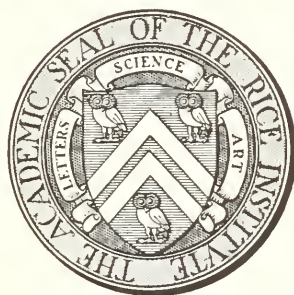


(from the portrait by Wayman Adams)

EDGAR ODELL LOVETT

FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE RICE INSTITUTE: 1908-1946

Memorial Service
for
EDGAR ODELL LOVETT
(1871 - 1957)



WILLIAM V. HOUSTON
President of the Rice Institute, Presiding

On the Afternoon of
Sunday, September 29, 1957
IN THE FONDREN LIBRARY OF THE
RICE INSTITUTE
Houston, Texas

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR EDGAR ODELL LOVETT

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Memorial Service
for
EDGAR ODELL LOVETT
(1871-1957)

September 29, 1957

(William V. Houston, President of the Rice
Institute, Presiding)



THE CONVOCATION

By Dr. Houston

BECAUSE THE RICE INSTITUTE was not in session last August, and many were away from Houston, it seemed appropriate to provide this opportunity for all of us to pay a special tribute to the memory of Dr. Edgar Odell Lovett. For his spirit pervades this university. The things we admire and cherish most about Rice are the evidence of his vision and his devotion to that vision.



I have asked the Reverend Mr. Stanley Smith of the Palmer Memorial Church to open with a prayer and invocation.

THE INVOCATION

By the Reverend Mr. Stanley Smith

ALMIGHTY GOD, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for Thy care and abiding Presence in the Rice Institute through the past years; for the faith Thou hast given to Thy children which has kept them faithful and strong. Enable us now, we beseech Thee, to open our hearts and minds and wills to Thee, that Thou mayest build in us and through us, upon the foundations Thou hast laid, what Thou hast planned in and through the Rice Institute, that Thy purpose may be fulfilled in the pattern of our Lord Jesus Christ by the power of Thy Holy Spirit.

O eternal and everlasting God, the Life and the Resurrection of all that believe in Thee, trust Thee, and serve Thee; that art always to be praised as well for the departed as for such as be still living upon the earth; we give Thee most hearty thanks for Thy servant, Edgar Odell Lovett, who has entered into rest; beseeching Thee to show forth upon Thy whole Church, in Paradise and on earth, the bright beams of Thy light and heavenly comfort, and to grant that we who are alive this day may follow the steps of all those who have served and loved Thee here, and have gone before us, in the confession of Thy holy Name, that with them we may at length enter into Thine unending joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*



DR. HOUSTON: At their meeting last Wednesday, September 25, 1957, the Rice Institute Board of Governors adopted a resolution in honor of Dr. Lovett; and I have asked Mr. J. Newton Rayzor, alumnus and trustee, to read the text.

A TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF
EDGAR ODELL LOVETT
FROM THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF
THE RICE INSTITUTE

Read by Mr. J. Newton Rayzor

EDGAR ODELL LOVETT, the first president of the Rice Institute, enjoyed a long and useful life of four-score and six years. From it came many blessings. He intimately touched and greatly influenced the lives of thousands of young people, who since 1912 have passed through Rice's Sallyport and from her campus. During his tenure as president he chose and inspired a splendid faculty and constantly led them to loftier heights and greater efforts of scholarly attainment. At all times he gave strength and dignity and stability to the institution he loved.

We shall always remember his personal charm, his fine sense of classical humor, his ability to meet those of lesser attainments with quieting ease, and his graciousness and pleasant words for all. He will forever remain in our memory a rare combination of the dignified scholar and superb gentleman.

His scholarly attainments stand out in clear relief against a background of scientific and classical training enriched by a true devotion to the humanities. He received his B.A. degree from Bethany College, West Virginia, in 1890 and later his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Virginia and a Ph.D. from the University of Leipzig in 1896. He received the honorary LL.D. from Drake University, Tulane University, Baylor University, Bethany College, and Princeton, and a Sc.D. from Colorado College. He occupied various teaching positions from Professor of Mathematics in West Kentucky College in 1890 to Pro-

fessor of Astronomy at Princeton in 1905-08. He was a member of several distinguished societies such as the American Philosophical Society, the American Astronomical Society, American, French, and English mathematical societies, and Phi Beta Kappa. He made contributions on geometry, mechanics, mathematics, and astronomy to various American and foreign journals. In addition to his academic achievements, he lent a helping hand in the management of the Institute by serving as a Trustee from 1910 to 1946 and Trustee Emeritus from 1946 to 1957.

As a scholar, he symbolized, in the truest sense, the basic principles on which Rice was founded and the lofty goals she and her sons and daughters will continually strive to reach.

For Edgar Odell Lovett and all he has meant to the Rice Institute and this community, we offer thanks to Almighty God.

As this Board of Governors goes about its business in conducting the affairs of the Rice Institute, let us hope and pray that this great citadel of learning, as Edgar Odell Lovett planned and dreamed, will always hold a position in the front rank and move onward and upward to higher ground, with the torch of genuine intellectual endeavor illuminating its path to the end that our people may continue to enjoy the advantages of education and forever remain free.



DR. HOUSTON: To many of the earlier alumni who knew him best, Dr. Lovett symbolized the scholarly spirit and aspiration of the new university; and Judge Phil Peden, president of the Association of Rice Alumni, will speak on behalf of the alumni.

A TRIBUTE FROM THE ALUMNI

By Judge Phil Peden

AS ALUMNI of the Rice Institute we are among those who benefited most from the life and deeds of the remarkable man whom we honor today. We cannot measure the impact which Dr. Edgar Odell Lovett and his works had upon our lives; we cannot count the ways in which he enriched them.

We are all familiar with the important role he played in the creation and building of this great university, but we must not overlook the example he set for mankind in the way he lived his full, rich life among mortal men. Perhaps the ultimate in compliments is to refer to a man as a "gentleman and a scholar"; and who can imagine a more fitting phrase to describe our beloved friend?

Dr. Lovett was a man of unfailing dignity and composure, yet there could not have been a more dedicated and determined planner. I am told that in the early stages of the planning for the Rice Institute, and while he was still living in Princeton, New Jersey, it was not unusual for this reserved scholar to discuss with enthusiasm the university of his dreams with even casual acquaintances. And like a proud grandfather with his photographs, he always just happened to have a pamphlet about Rice in his pocket. His enthusiasm must have been highly contagious for him to persuade so many brilliant educators to give up their established positions and come to this new and unproven project. What a salesman he must have been to assemble such a famous faculty!

Of course no man builds alone, and there are many to whom we are indebted for making the Rice Institute what it is today, but we alumni are deeply grateful for the memory of the full life of Dr. Lovett. His fine, erect figure

as seen on his daily walks to and from the campus is a picture that is as indelibly etched in our minds as the outline of the Sallyport. We are glad we have been able to preserve on film a little of his spirit in the Alumni Association's motion picture, *Through the Sallyport*. At first, when viewing this sequence, one may feel that the speaker was weary, but before the finish Dr. Lovett looks up, and with head held high his eyes show the strength of his feeling as he says:

"The Rice Institute is a theater of action, a grove for reflection, a laboratory of discoverers, a library of knowledge, a field of sports, a hall for speech and song, a home of complete living."



DR. HOUSTON: The senior members of the Rice faculty, who came here in the early days of the Institute, had a special opportunity to know Dr. Lovett. I have asked Professor Radoslav A. Tsanoff to speak on behalf of the faculty.

A TRIBUTE FROM THE FACULTY

By Dr. Radoslav A. Tsanoff

AT THIS MEMORIAL SERVICE honoring President Edgar Odell Lovett, I have been granted the privilege of speaking for the members of the Rice Institute faculty. And I should represent not only those of us here present and now serving Rice, but also our colleagues of the past forty-five years who are no longer with us. A university is, of course, a foundation of material resources and a physical plant of buildings, libraries, and laboratories; but it is also, and vitally, a company of productive minds, advancing knowledge and imparting it to youths who are to be their successors in the ongoing march of ideas. In this conviction Dr. Lovett cited the ancient words of Pericles: "'Tis not the walls that make the city, but the men." Our Board of Trustees showed fine insight when they renamed the former Administration Building of the Rice Institute, Lovett Hall. On the dedication plate the following line from Horace was engraved most suitably: *Exegit monumentum ære perennius*—"He reared a monument more enduring than bronze." We are all proud of this monument, and of the other beautiful buildings that have joined it on our campus. But from the start of his work of building the Rice Institute, Dr. Lovett brought here brains as well as bricks, minds as well as marble.

Let us recognize clearly Dr. Lovett's deep wisdom in his high ideals for Rice to which he dedicated himself from the very beginning of his presidential office. His own educational career was world-wide and of a highly distinguished quality. The range of his intellectual mastery spanned over the sciences and the humanities. He was a renowned mathematician and astronomer and also a clas-

sical scholar. His annual addresses to the students, as incoming freshmen or as graduating seniors, were enlivened with wisdom from modern scientists or from ancient philosophers and poets. Note the wide range of thinking that is reflected in his chosen inscriptions for the marble tablets which beautify our buildings. On the cornerstone of Lovett Hall you may read the Greek words of Democritus: "Rather would I discover the cause of one fact than become King of the Persians." And on its court façade this tribute to literature from Pindar: "The thing that one says well goes forth with a voice unto everlasting." And then these great words of the philosopher Plotinus: "Love, beauty, joy, and worship are forever building, unbuilding, and rebuilding in each man's soul."

Before coming to Rice, Dr. Lovett had studied or lectured at many universities on both sides of the Atlantic: at Virginia, Christiania, Leipzig, Chicago, Johns Hopkins, Princeton. He undertook the planning and directing of the organization of the Rice Institute by taking a trip around the world, to study the variety of university methods. And here in Houston, Texas, he sought to make Rice a true university, vitally responsive to the life and work of universities all over the world. The opening of Rice in 1912 was marked by a most distinguished academic gathering of world-famous minds, who brought salutations from near and far. For his new faculty Dr. Lovett assembled on our campus a cosmopolitan group of young scholars and scientists, not only from the best American universities, but also from Oxford and Cambridge and from London, Paris, Heidelberg, and Rome. And besides these resident professors, a long succession of leaders in the sciences and the humanities came on longer or shorter visits to Rice, to share their knowledge and wisdom with us. While Houston

was growing to national and international prominence in trade and industry and shipping, the Rice Institute was becoming more and more truly Houston's intellectual Ship Channel, drawing us ever closer to the world-wide currents of thought. Dr. Lovett had a great ideal for Houston as well as for Rice. Who has spoken finer words for the high destiny of our city than these words from his inaugural address of 1912?—"Great trading centers have often been conspicuous centers of vigorous intellectual life: Athens, Florence, Venice, Amsterdam were cities great in commerce; but inspired by the love of truth and beauty, they stimulated and sustained the finest aspirations of poets, scholars, and artists within their walls. It requires no prophet's eye to reach a similar vision for our own city. I have felt the spirit of greatness brooding over the city. I have heard her step at midnight, I have seen her face at dawn. I have lived under the spell of the building of the city, and under the spell of the building of the city I have come to believe in the larger life ahead of us, in the house not made with hands which we begin this day to build." This is Edgar Odell Lovett speaking about Houston, forty-five years ago.

President Lovett chose the name "The Rice Institute" to express the dedication of our university to research as well as to teaching. But he always esteemed highly the importance of university teaching, and as he sought good teachers, so he set high standards in the selection and admission of students. The entire Rice program was dedicated to growing perfection in quality. This fine resolution which from the outset established the character of Rice has been and will remain President Lovett's greatest achievement as a university administrator. Listen to the words in which he expressed his ideal for Rice as a university of liberal and

technical learning: "By the spirit of liberal and technical learning I understand that immortal spirit of inquiry or inspiration which has been clearing the pathway of mankind to intellectual and spiritual liberty, to the recognition of law and charm in nature, to the fearless pursuit of truth and the ceaseless worship of beauty. Its history is the history of the progress of the human spirit."

Those of us who came to know Dr. Lovett more intimately through long years of association can never forget certain personal qualities of his character. He was deliberate in reaching conclusions, and was particularly reluctant to form an unfavorable judgment of another person, be he professor or student. He resisted impetuous action and could not be moved easily by an emotional appeal. But his mind recognized the imperative power of sound reasoning, and he would change his view or decision if good evidence and logic demanded it. To his occasional acquaintances Dr. Lovett sometimes appeared serious-minded, and we do not recall any frivolous lapses in his manner. But he had a real sense of humor, to which he would give apt expression at a suitable time. So in one of his addresses, alluding to the extracurricular attachments of the young people on our Rice playground, he reminded them that "there may be belles in the cloister, but I am the bell in the tower."

President Lovett had a sort of timeless contemplation of Rice. Generation after generation, all of us, students and faculty alike, share our lives in the growth of Rice, but sooner or later Alma Mater has outlived us and will outlive us all, and will renew her youth through the ages to come. On reaching his seventieth birthday, in 1941, President Lovett tendered his resignation, but yielded to the earnest request of our Trustees to continue in office and direct the work of finding his successor. Despite the inevitable

delay caused by the war years, this selection was made most happily in 1946, when Dr. Houston came from the California Institute of Technology to become the second president of the Rice Institute. For the following decade of his advancing old age, Dr. Lovett followed with deep interest the remarkable expansion of the institution which from the very beginning he had conceived and started on its high destiny.

No account of Dr. Lovett's career can fail to pay tribute to Mrs. Lovett, whose gracious leadership of the social life of the Rice community and whose active interest in all cultural activities welded Rice and Houston in all that makes life worth living. Mrs. Lovett's long illness until her death in 1952 was a source of deep sorrow to all her friends on and off the Rice campus.

The true estimate of a man like Edgar Odell Lovett is best expressed not in words of praise but in the plain record of his words and deeds. To anyone connected with the Rice Institute his death marks the honorable closing of an epoch. We on the Rice faculty grieve that he is no longer with us, but above and beyond our grief is an inspiring conviction of his noble work in laying the solid foundations of the institution to which we have given our lives. There is something symbolic about the naming of our first building Lovett Hall. It is the gateway to the Rice Institute. The meaning of this name will abide. Long centuries hence, the newcomer to Rice, as he enters under the noble arch of our Sallyport, will read on the dedication plate the name of Edgar Odell Lovett and will honor the man who first dedicated the Rice Institute to its great purpose and destiny.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

By President William V. Houston

SEVERAL YEARS ago the Trustees honored Dr. Lovett by naming the administration building Lovett Hall. Professor Alan D. McKillop prepared the inscription which was carved into the stone at the entrance to the Sallyport. That inscription includes the quotation, "He built him a monument more lasting than bronze." When I showed the proposed text to Dr. Lovett, he remarked that it seemed quite appropriate since he had always tried to build, in the Institute, a monument to William Marsh Rice. The modesty was characteristic, but I think we all agree that the Rice Institute is a monument, as well, to Edgar Odell Lovett, a monument which will outlive the bricks and mortar we now see; for he has truly "built himself a monument more lasting than bronze," a living monument in the minds and hearts of men.

THE BENEDICTION

By the Reverend Mr. Stanley Smith

THE PEACE OF GOD, which passeth all understanding,
keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and
love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord: and the
Blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the
Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always.
Amen.

APPENDIX

Resolution of the Trustees at the Unveiling
Of the Wayman Adams Portrait of Dr. Lovett
May 12, 1946

RESOLUTION OF THE TRUSTEES AT THE
UNVEILING OF THE WAYMAN ADAMS
PORTRAIT OF DR. LOVETT

May 12, 1946*

Read by Mr. B. B. Rice

OUR GREATEST HOPE for the future lies in the consciousness of our past. The two are linked by personality—the vital bridge between what has been and what is to be. The powers that work for good must be embodied in the human spirit, and since education is essentially the drawing forth and mustering of those powers, it must be conveyed in the subtle medium of personality. In this living medium all our plans and ideals must find their nutriment; abstractions like scholarship, discipline, enlightenment, leadership, research, and progress can only thus take on meaning and vital warmth. It was the good fortune of the Trustees of the Rice Institute at an early and crucial stage of their work to find this living medium in the personal leadership of Edgar Odell Lovett. Emerson has said that “an institution is the lengthened shadow of one man.” As far as the individual embodies the universal, this is profoundly true, and the history of the Rice Institute affords one of the most signal instances in educational annals of the effective translation of personal integrity, intelligence, and force into high action and achievement.

The social and economic history of the Southwest would seem inevitably to call for a university of the highest standards just in this place and just at the time when Edgar Odell Lovett decided to devote the rest of his life to the new foundation. The challenge was irresistible; the responsibility was tremendous; foresight, skill, resolution, and

*The resolution was adopted at a meeting of the Board of Trustees on May 8, 1946.

good fortune as well were required to meet it. The unremitting labors and strong sense of direction which President Lovett brought to bear on the fulfillment of the imperative requirements of a new era in Texas education—these qualities were not a gift from the gods, conjured up for the occasion; they were made possible by labors and drives directed apparently in other directions: they were made possible by his early and brilliant achievements in mathematics and astronomy, his deep feeling for literary and historical culture, and, fusing these together, his profound sense of the university as a corporate entity. Beyond all this he had concentration and continuity: "This one thing I do." To a rich endowment of character and of training at great centers of learning in America and Europe were added other fortunate gifts which were to be manifold blessings for the future of the Rice Institute—a happy marriage which bound him by ties of deepest affection and interest to the South, an exacting taste which required for the new institution the highest standards in architecture, and a sense of propriety and a power of felicitous utterance which invested academic ceremonial with added dignity and significance.

For a year following his acceptance of the presidency of the new university he traveled around the world and engaged in a study of educational institutions that extended from Great Britain to Japan. Never losing sight of the best academic tradition, he sought patiently and deliberately to adapt this precious heritage to the needs of this place and time. The manifold duties of the presidency—the recruiting of a faculty, the construction of a curriculum, the use of the site and the planning of new and beautiful buildings, the establishment of inter-university relations, the knitting of the university into the community—

all were clearly related to one central purpose. We can look back now and confirm the truth of the words of the *American Yearbook* for 1912:

The opening of the Rice Institute at Houston, Texas, is the most significant event of the year as regards higher education. The endowment has secured to the state and to the entire Southwest opportunities for the intellectual development of the people and for scientific research which in the older states have been the outcome of long effort and much sacrifice. The carefully matured plan of operation developed under the direction of the appointed president, Edgar Odell Lovett, places the new foundation in the group of institutions that are essentially national in scope.

Thus the spiritual as well as the physical foundation of the Institute was celebrated in the academic festival of October 10 to 13, 1912, memorably recorded in the magnificent *Book of the Opening*. Thus early did the farseeing leadership of the first president of the Rice Institute commit the new enterprise irrevocably to the principle that scholarship and research best serve state and region when they range afar on a national and international scale. Though we do not know all that the future may bring, we feel certain that when *The Book of the Opening* is centuries old this principle will still be valid.

President Lovett has had the rare privilege of unfolding and executing his plans consistently and coherently during the span of a third of a century. The good idea and the high ideal are never completely with us here and now; their full realization always lies in the future, the long vista which we view through the arch of present experience. Who knows to what far goals at long last the beautiful cloisters of the Institute may lead the steps of coming generations, or what high enterprise may find a footing on this campus? Unseen things are eternal, and however noble our

building, "a man's thought must be the building in which he lives." A due consideration of ways and means has never deflected President Lovett's leadership from envisaging things eternal. But, that the meaning of our lives may stand out more clearly, we may now fittingly pause a moment and say simply, "It is good for us to be here." This is the appropriate moment for us to pay tribute to him who has guided us hither and has pointed us forward.

Be it therefore resolved by the Trustees of the Rice Institute, speaking not only for ourselves but for all who share our devotion to the life and ideals of this institution, that we extend to Edgar Odell Lovett our unbounded thanks and gratitude for the execution of a great task boldly undertaken and faithfully performed in the fullness of his wisdom and loyalty.

