MEMORIAL OF JOSEPH HYDE PRATT

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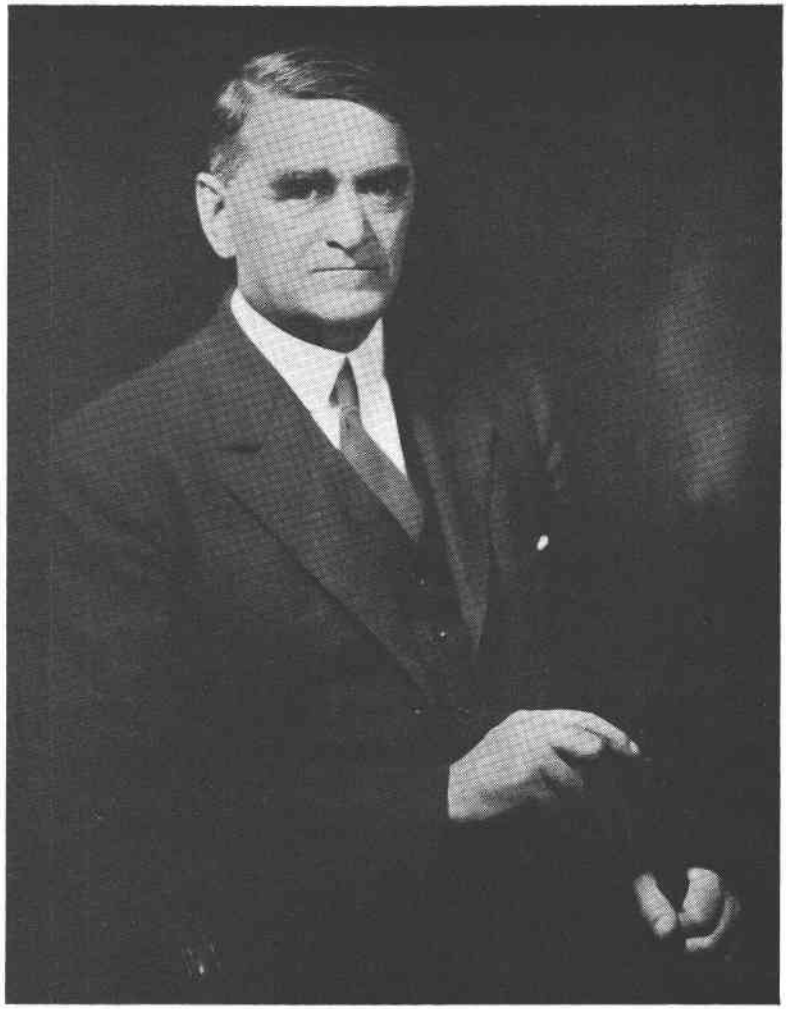
Joseph Hyde Pratt was born in Hartford, Connecticut, on February 3, 1870, the son of James Church and Jennie Abby (Peck) Pratt. He came from early colonial stock, his forbears having settled in New England about 1632. He died on June 2, 1942, in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, where he had made his home for forty-five years, and was buried in the cemetery there.

He received his early education in the Hartford Public High School and then attended the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale University, where he received the degree of Bachelor of Philosophy in 1893, and the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in 1896. As an undergraduate, his chief interest was in chemistry in which he made a brilliant record. In the summer of 1892, he went on a mineral collecting trip through western North Carolina with S. L. Penfield and J. A. Holmes, and this experience doubtless changed his chief interest from chemistry to mineralogy and geology. He served as laboratory assistant in chemistry at Yale during the year 1893–1894, and as a laboratory assistant in mineralogy during the years 1894–1896. He was instructor in mineralogy in the Harvard Summer School of 1895, and at Yale in 1896–1897.

In 1897, he came to North Carolina as State Mineralogist. He served as State Mineralogist from 1897 to 1906, and as State Geologist from 1906 to 1924. He was Lecturer in Mineralogy in the University of North Carolina from 1898 to 1904 and Professor of Economic Geology from 1904 to 1924. He also served as Assistant Field Geologist to the U. S. Geological Survey from 1899 to 1910, as a member of the International Jury of Awards at the St. Louis Exposition in 1904, as direction of briquetting experiments at the U. S. Geological Survey Coal Testing Plant at St. Louis in 1904–1905, as Chief of the Department of Mines and Metallurgy at the Jamestown Exposition in 1907, and as a special expert to the U. S. Twelfth Census on a number of minerals, among which were asbestos, barite, fluorspar, monazite, mica and talc, and soapstone.

During the period he served as State Mineralogist of North Carolina, his work was devoted almost entirely to mineralogy and geology, and he made many valuable contributions to the literature. He was the discoverer or co-discoverer of four new minerals, pirssonite, wellsite, rhodolite, and mitchellite. His method for the determination of ferrous iron in silicates is still a standard procedure. Early in his work as State Mineralogist, he became interested in the wide variety of gems and gem minerals in North Carolina, and for many years, until it was stolen, carried with



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him a small case of gems for demonstration purposes. At the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo in 1901, and the Charleston Exposition in 1902, he was awarded diplomas and gold medals for his exhibits of North Carolina gems and gem minerals.

As State Mineralogist, Dr. Pratt had become interested in the conservation movement in the South. His appointment as State Geologist in 1906 made it possible for him to spend much of his time, without entirely neglecting geology and mineralogy, in conservation work. He was a pioneer advocate of good roads and worked incessantly for the passage of the Weeks Law authorizing the acquiring of land for National forests.

When the United States entered the war in 1917, he joined the military forces of his country and was commissioned a Major on April 24, 1917. He was assigned to the 105th Regiment of Engineers where he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel on November 11, 1917, and Colonel on October 9, 1918. He served as Commander of the regiment and division engineer with the 30th Division in France from July 1918 to May 1919, and was at the front in the Ypres sector, Flanders and Belgium, and in the Somme offensive. He received the Distinguished Service Medal in recognition of his services in these actions.

After the war he returned home with impaired health from which he never recovered. Being unable to assume all his former duties, as State Geologist, he resigned the position in February 1924. Retirement as State Geologist did not mean that he was to stop work. From 1924 to 1933 he was engaged as Consulting Engineer when his health would permit. With improved health he served from 1933 to 1938 as engineer with the Civil Works Administration and the Resettlement Administration. During 1938 he served as engineer consultant to the U. S. Geological Survey and as senior engineer consultant during 1939 and 1940.

Dr. Pratt was a Fellow of the Geological Society of America, the Mineralogical Society of America, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Chemical Society, the National Geographical Society and the American Geographical Society, a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers, the American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers, the Mining and Metallurgical Society of America, the New York Academy of Sciences, the North Carolina Academy of Science and Sigma Xi.

In 1923, Yale University awarded him the Honorary M.A. degree in recognition of his achievements. He had been recommended and approved for the Honorary degree of Doctor of Engineering at the 1942 Commencement of the North Carolina State College of Agriculture and

Engineering, of the University of North Carolina, but his last illness prevented his being present to receive it.

Dr. Pratt was married to Mary Dicus Bayley of Springfield, Ohio, on April 5, 1899. One son, Joseph Hyde Pratt, Jr., now a physician at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, was born to them. After the death of Mrs. Pratt, in 1929, Dr. Pratt was married on August 29, 1930, to Harriet White Peters of Baltimore, Maryland, and Washington, D. C. He is survived by Mrs. Pratt, one son, Joseph Hyde Pratt, Jr., and two step sons.

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