

A Tribute To Willard Shambaugh

By

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A Tribute To Willard Shambaugh
On The Occasion Of The Dedication
Of The

Willard Shambaugh School

March 22, 1964



Willard Shambaugh

Numerous public schools have been given for their identification great names from our historic past, such as Hanna, McCulloch and Francis Slocum. Today we are dedicating a school to which we have given another great name--Willard Shambaugh, lawyer, banker, business man, philanthropist, public servant, warm-hearted friend and seeker after good schools.

The illustrious forbears of Willard Shambaugh are an integral and intimate part of the history of this country and this great city. His family came to America many years before the Revolution. His maternal grandfather, Colonel ~~W~~^R S. Robertson, was a hero of the Civil War, Lieutenant Governor of Indiana, a historian of note, a great civic leader, a scholarly lawyer and a gentleman of many diverse intellectual interests. His father, William Shambaugh, was a banker, an able lawyer and public spirited leader who served Fort Wayne as City Attorney and school board member. He was one of the founders of the Lincoln National Bank.

Willard Shambaugh earned his baccalaureate degree at the University of Michigan and his L.L.B. at Harvard Law School. At the latter institution he was the pupil of Felix Frankfurter, Samuel Williston,

Austin Wakeman Scott and Roscoe Pound.

A long-time member of the directorate of the Lincoln National Bank and Trust Company, Mr. Shambaugh, as Chairman of the Board and member of the Loan Committee of that institution has had a significant role in creating and building the integrity, prime solvency and ever-burgeoning greatness of that massive financial structure.

In his profession of the law, Mr. Shambaugh has never been notable as a noisy pleader of causes before juries. In serving his own clients and in dealing with his opponents on the other side of the case, he has been an apostle of compromise, conciliation and peaceful accord. His cases simply have not reached the jury. They have been settled fairly, equitably and quietly out of court. Tranquility rather than hostility, peace rather than litigation and harmony rather than discord have been his watchwords. Personality contests have not elicited his support. His efforts have been directed toward the solution of Men's difficulties.

Since 1938 Willard Shambaugh has channeled his practice of law into corporate, banking, trust and real estate law. He has thereby attained high reputation in the legal profession. His principal client was and is the Lincoln National Bank and Trust Company of Fort Wayne. He has been counsel for the Wayne Pump Company since 1923 and its successor by merger in 1958, the Symington Wayne Corporation. He has

been and is yet director and counsel for numerous other industrial and commercial corporations. In his practice before the Supreme Court of Indiana, Willard Shambaugh has tried important cases and has obtained decisions which in more than one instance have charted new and original principles of law.

Quietly and unostentatiously Willard Shambaugh has supported worthy causes. His benefactions, religious, charitable and civic have extended over a wide area and have paralleled the good life of this community. In the record of Fort Wayne's progress in the past thirty years his hand, his counsel, and his guidance have been felt in worthwhile things far more than is true of most men.

Willard Shambaugh is a member of both the Allen County Bar Association and the Indiana Bar Association, the Fort Wayne Country Club, and the Harvard Law School Association. His religious affiliation is with the First Presbyterian Church. Politically he claims to "belong to both parties," being nationally a Republican and locally a Democrat. His hobby has been a country home with a twenty acre private lake known as "Soggy Hollow" on a 350 acre farm in DeKalb County, Indiana, about 15 miles north of Fort Wayne. He was married to Mervyn Pidgeon, now deceased. They had one daughter, Shirley, married to James A. Beaman, Jr. There is one grandson, James Willard Beaman.

Since time immemorial men have sought to

perpetuate their names and memories by building costly and magnificent tombs, temples and other structures of marble, granite and limestone. In the main such attempts have been fatuous because they were inspired and executed as private and selfish projects. One can reflect at length on such fatuity. Such edifices have seldom served their purpose. The Temple of Karnak at Luxor stands forbidding and mysterious meaning to most people who see it, only one more sentinel of the past. The Sphinx and pyramids, dedicated to the memory of long since forgotten potentates long ago became the refuge of thieves and were robbed of their contents by an irreverent and unappreciative posterity. The Pharos of Alexandria, gigantic in physical size and costly in the expenditure of human treasure, soon collapsed and now lies on the bottom of the Mediterranean. Our cemeteries are marked by the structures of marble and granite which mean less than nothing to posterity because they were selfishly created.

But here, today, we are dedicating a meaningful and imperishable memorial to a great friend of education. A grateful city is here and now endowing its latest, architecturally most elegant and educationally its most complete edifice with the name of this great public servant whose greatest services to man were never rewarded financially. There was never any thought of material gain in what Willard Shambaugh did for his fellow men. We are now rewarding him with an accolade. No potentate ever contrived for the perpetuation of his name so sincere, deserving

and so appropriate a symbol as this magnificent school building. The common purpose of this grateful public is nowhere so unified, so indicative of democracy and so devotedly manifested as in the field of education. It is fitting, therefore, that a great school system should honor the name of one who so prominently and essentially contributed to make it great.

As a long-time member of our board of school trustees, serving for twenty-six years and a part of that time as President, Secretary and Treasurer, Willard Shambaugh has made numerous notable contributions to the education of youth.

He supported assiduously and persistently a movement to upgrade teacher's salaries and working conditions. He initiated and strongly sponsored and guided policy and measures to pay for buildings from current revenues. He tolerated nothing which detracted from the solvency and fiscal strength of the school corporation. By his open and vigorous diplomacy he contributed toward the morale of the teachers and their confidence in and respect for the Board.

Aristotle was once asked how much educated men were superior to those uneducated. He answered "As much as the living are to the dead."

Aristippus being asked what were the most necessary things for boys to learn said: "Those things which they will put in practice when they become men." A modern educator has answered this query by saying

"The desirable things they will do any way."

Willard Shambaugh has contributed much to this theme of excellence and humanity in education. He has been for his fellows on the Board, for the administration and to the classroom teacher "A pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night." Thus were the ancient Israelites guided to their far away and worthy goal. Under his hand and guidance and under his imprimature of humane existence and developing excellence the theme of his enlightened educational philosophy has shone about us and influenced our directions.

Today as this generation moves down the corridor of time in the direction of the sunset glow of history, in naming this magnificent school building, "The Willard Shambaugh School," it not only honors a great friend of education but the building itself and ourselves.