

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON**

ON THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR EMERITUS JOHN D. WORKMAN

John D. Workman, professor emeritus of German, died in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, on May 14, 2005. Born in Lakewood, Ohio, in 1910, he first came to the University of Wisconsin as a freshman in 1929, but returned to Ohio to finish his B.A. degree at The Ohio State University (1933). He completed M.A. and Ph.D. degrees at Madison (1935 and 1939), having also studied at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland and the University of Berlin. He rose through the ranks at the University of Wisconsin and when he retired in 1972, he had been National Teachers Seminary Professor of German for twenty years, responsible for the Department of German's teaching assistants and pedagogical courses, and for its journal *Monatshefte*.

John Workman's years as a graduate student and member of the Department of German spanned the Nazi era, World War II, the post-war occupation and division of Germany, and the tensest decades of the Cold War. It is hard today to imagine the wide range of his experiences as an American Germanist. World War II brought no major outbreak of Germanophobia in this country such as had come with World War I, and the usefulness of German language studies was widely recognized. But there were special assignments and challenges. In 1944-45, John Workman served as language coordinator at the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration Training Center in College Park, Maryland, and after that with the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey. And there was the need to rethink and reshape education programs in German studies, a task he set for himself throughout, but especially in 1954-55, when he was in Munich as the recipient of a Ford Foundation grant.

John Workman was a teacher par excellence who shared his ability, knowledge, and devotion to his profession with generations of Wisconsin students and teachers. Year after year, he taught the first section of German 101 in the fall and of German 102 in the spring, classes that met five days per week at 7:45 a.m.; he asserted that this enabled him to stay in touch with the challenges and concerns of teaching assistants. Despite the hour, these early-morning classes were highly sought after by students. He described himself as a specialist in eighteenth-century German literature, but he taught a wide range of undergraduate and graduate literature courses spanning the eighteenth through twentieth centuries, as well as a heavy load of German language courses.

John Workman was a gifted editor of *Monatshefte*, who possessed analytic and stylistic skills, management capability, and an unparalleled ability to do enormous amounts of work. He was the talent and the energy behind the entire operation, and he ran it essentially without assistance, technical or otherwise. He used a typewriter rather than a computer; he had only limited clerical help rather than an editorial assistant; and he himself wrapped and mailed individual subscriber copies from his own office—for most of his tenure seven times per year. During these years, *Monatshefte* underwent substantial changes, gaining prominence, attracting attention in wider circles, and maturing into the journal we know today. In 1966, in response to its growth and success, the University of Wisconsin Press took over many of the business arrangements, including production management, marketing and distribution, and sales of advertising space. At the same time, *Monatshefte* became a quarterly journal.

John Workman proved his ability to live up to his own high standards through long hours of hard work, often even taking on extra duties. But he was also a person of great modesty who found satisfaction in performing the tasks and playing the parts life gave to him. In his retirement he enjoyed painting, reading, and family, which included his sons Robert Workman and William Workman and their wives, his

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grandchildren, and his great-grandchildren. He devoted himself to the care of his wife, Barbara E. Bates Workman (M.A. in German, University of Wisconsin, 1934), who died in 1994. The Department of German remembers him as an untiring and dedicated colleague and friend.

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