

# Charles Van Patten Young

*November 30, 1876 — November 12, 1960*

Few Cornellians have been so closely identified with the University as was Charles Van Patten Young.

Professor of Physical Education and Athletics from 1905 until 1944, and Professor Emeritus since then, he died at his home in Ithaca eighteen days before his eighty-fourth birthday.

C. V. P. Young was known and loved by thousands of Cornell undergraduates, who affectionately referred to him as “coat, vest, and pants.” It was his conception that all young men and women were better off with regular exercise and should develop abilities to play games, which could be continued after college. He was a strong advocate of golf, tennis, swimming, skiing, canoeing, and horseshoes, and his influence had much to do with providing facilities for those sports at Cornell.

His interest in Cornell athletics never diminished, and he never hesitated to offer gratuitous advice to the coaches when things did not please him. He was not a cheerful loser, so there were many such opportunities over his sixty years in Ithaca.

He and his great and good friend, Jack Moakley, were constant companions from the time Jack came on the Cornell scene as track and cross country coach in 1899 until Jack’s death in 1955. They took evening walks together and had the happy and comfortable kind of relationship, which permitted occasional vigorous differences of opinion without the loss of a moment’s respect and friendship. And these two vivid personalities had strong opinions on a wide assortment of topics.

“Tar” Young was a lovable cuss and an unforgettable one.

A graduate with the Class of 1899, receiving the A.B. degree, “Tar” was one of Cornell’s greatest athletes, and he maintained a deep interest in intercollegiate and intramural athletics until his death. On the varsity football team he was a brilliant quarterback; in baseball he was an outstanding pitcher and captained the team in his sophomore and junior years. He played major league baseball for one year as a pitcher with the Philadelphia Athletics.

He was instrumental in the development of Upper and Lower Alumni Fields, the Balch Hall athletic fields for women, and the ski slope, named in his honor, in the Caroline Hills eleven miles east of Ithaca. He had much to do with the construction of the old intramural boathouse on the west shore of the Inlet. He originated the Cornell

Outing Club, and Mt. Pleasant Lodge was built under his auspices. For many years he maintained an office in the Old Armory and conducted roller skating sessions in the gymnasium.

He organized the "Continuous Reunion Club," whose members returned to the campus each spring. For years he pitched for the Alumni against the Varsity at the Reunion baseball games and was campus tennis champion. He was a familiar figure at all track meets, where he served as a timer or finish judge.

He was the author of five books: *The Cornell Navy* (1907), *Courtney and Cornell Rowing* (1923), *How Men Have Lived* (1931), *Across the Borderline* (1946), and *Cornell in Pictures, 1868-1954* (1954). In 1951 he was made honorary associate of the University Archives. He assembled and classified thousands of photographs of every phase of the development of the University.

He was permanent secretary of the Class of 1899, a member of Alpha Delta Phi, and alumni adviser and treasurer of Quill and Dagger. The latter honorary society commissioned the portrait of him, which appears in Moakley House.

He was born in Middletown, Ohio. Following graduation from Cornell he attended Dickinson Seminary at Williamsport, Pennsylvania, and was graduated from Princeton Theological Seminary. While at the theological seminary he pitched several games for Princeton University. He preached for a year in Erie, Pennsylvania. Until 1903 he returned to Ithaca each fall to help coach the football team. In 1904 he was appointed Acting Professor of Physical Culture and director of the gymnasium. He was named Professor in 1905. His title was changed to Professor of Physical Education in 1916. In World War I he was director of athletics for the Cornell Student Army Training Corps.

He was a member of the First Presbyterian Church, a charter member of the Ithaca Rotary Club, a former president of the Ithaca Reconstruction Home, and a member of the Cornell Club of Ithaca; he was active in the old Town and Gown Club.

He was the last of five brothers, all Cornellians. They were William '93, Edwin P. '94, John P. '94 and George H. '00. He is survived by his wife, the former Eleanor Mahaffey; a daughter, Mrs. Ralph W. Head of Ithaca; a grandson, and two sisters, Mary and Carrie, Cornell '03, of Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

*Robert J. Kane, Erie J. Miller, Jr., Benjamin E. Mintz*