

ALBERT COATES '18 was once called by a colleague "an authentic genius, with matchless words upon his tongue, peerless magic in his pen, lofty ideals in his heart, and iron purpose in his soul." All who know him will accept this as an accurate description of Albert Coates during his more than three score years in Chapel Hill.

One of nine children in a Johnston County farm family, he came to the University on a \$100 loan from a hometown banker. In succeeding years he invested his wisdom and worldly assets in a vision for its public service. Many times over he has repaid his own \$100 debt in the inspiration he has given students and public servants alike for stewardship and skill in their respective callings.

Alma mater has been his life. Even as a self-help student, he was secretary to President Edward Kidder Graham. Albert Coates returned to Chapel Hill from World War I to teach and to work in the alumni campaign for a student union building before leaving to earn a law degree at Harvard. Again he returned to Chapel Hill—convinced, in his own words, that there was "something I could do in a law school that I could not do in a law office."

As a teacher of criminal law he quickly determined his personal need to know the law as it was applied every day, rather than simply as quoted in casebooks. This conviction led to the formation in his mind—years before bricks and mortar substantiated it—of the Institute of Government. Despite constant discouragement and an almost total lack of funds, his dream persisted and grew, until the Institute of Government became a part of the University in 1942. As a courageous and tireless idealist he brought his ideas to practical reality.

The University rewarded him in 1952 with the O. Max Gardner Award for outstanding service to humanity. He accepted that honor "not as an individual but as a symbol of the Institute of Government," and insisted that it be shared with his constant helpmate in all endeavors, Gladys Hall Coates. During the three decades he presided over it, the Institute of Government came to be an irreplaceable center for training, research, and information on government.

Following his retirement as Institute Director in 1962, Albert Coates continued to teach on the law faculty. His accomplishments were widely recognized and he received honorary degrees from Duke, Wake Forest and the University at Chapel Hill. In addition he was presented the North Carolina Award, the State Bar Association's John J. Parker Award for Distinguished Service, the Di-Phi Joint Award, the North Carolina Citizens Association public service award, and this year, the North Caroliniana Award—all recognizing his outstanding qualities and contributions.

In his retiring years, scarcely slowed even by a serious stroke and heart attack, his contributions have continued, especially in his writings on the significance of the University which he has termed "A Magic Gulf Stream in the Life of North Carolina." President Frank Graham once said of Albert Coates, "His loyalty and devotion have become as much a part of the traditions of the University as the ivy on the Old East Building, the shade of the Davie Poplar, and the moss on the rock walls of Chapel Hill."

On one occasion when an honor was bestowed upon him, Albert Coates called it "a touch on the shoulder—a nod of approval and a wave of the hand to keep on going—an expression of faith." On another such occasion he said he wished he could bring in a report of greater service, for he "could not bring in a report of greater love." The General Alumni Association returns that love in this presentation of its Distinguished Service Medal.