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New This Day:

Hole, Francis Doan

MADISON - Francis Doan Hole died at Oakwood Village West Retirement Community, Madison, on Tuesday, Jan. 15, 2002, at age 88. He suffered from multi-infarct dementia. Francis was born on Aug. 25, 1913, in Muncie, Ind., to Mary (Doan) and Allen David Hole. He had one older brother, Allen David Hole Jr. He grew up in Richmond, Ind., in a house on the edge of the Earlham College campus, where his father was a professor of geology from 1900 until 1940. His mother had been a professor of English literature at Wilmington College in Wilmington, Ohio. Francis was the student librarian for the Morton High School symphony orchestra, and played the violin under the baton of Joseph Maddy, who later founded the National Music Camp at the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan. He also learned to play the piano. He graduated from Earlham College in 1933, majoring in geology and biology, and earned an M.A. in French literature at Haverford College in 1934. From 1935 until 1938 he taught French and other subjects at Westtown Friends School in Pennsylvania, during which time he furthered his violin studies by taking lessons from Emmanuel Zetlin in Philadelphia. From 1938 until 1944 he pursued graduate work at the University of Wisconsin, where he earned a Ph.D. in geology and soil science, interspersed with two periods of teaching geology at his alma mater, Earlham College. In June 1941 he married Agnes Calvert, a former Earlham classmate. As a conscientious objector during World War II, he performed two years of civilian public service at the U.S. Department of Agriculture facilities at Coshocton, Ohio, Big Flats, N.Y., and Gatlinburg, Tenn. In July 1946 he joined the University of Wisconsin faculty as an assistant professor, initially with the Geological and Natural History Survey. This involved participation in soil surveys of 10 Wisconsin counties, which during the summers entailed one- and two-week sojourns to collect soil samples, followed up with cartographic work leading to the publication of county soil maps. Over the years his responsibilities grew to include teaching and research with the Department of Soil Science, and later his teaching of the geography of Wisconsin course in the Department of Geography, which earned enthusiastic acclaim from his students. A classically-trained violinist who played with the Madison Symphony Orchestra and numerous informal ensembles, he was perhaps best known for utilizing the violin during his lectures, and for the presentation of numerous songs which he composed extolling the importance of soil and the critical foundation for plant, animal and human life. His teaching excellence was recognized formally when he received the Chancellor's Award for Distinguished Teaching in 1974. Notable among his many publications,

which often contained his own illustrations, were his "Soils of Wisconsin" and "Soil Genesis and Classification," a textbook still in use, co-authored with Drs. Ralph McCracken and Stan Buol. He also created "Soil Survey Horizons" in 1960, a periodical that has been continued by the Soil Science Society of America, and designed the "Soils of Wisconsin Map" published by the Wisconsin Geologic and Natural History Survey in 1968. His proudest accomplishment was the enactment of legislation in 1983 designating Antigo silt loam as the Wisconsin state soil, a culmination of his long campaign for a state soil symbol. Following his retirement from the University in 1983, he continued his active involvement as a professor emeritus by giving periodic lectures and courses. He also continued to give presentations on the importance of the soil, employing his soil songs and violin at schools and numerous other venues. Throughout his life and into retirement, he was involved individually and as a participant in organizations promoting world peace, non-violence, civil rights, social justice and preservation of the environment. A lifelong member of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), he continued his active involvement in the Madison Monthly Meeting, Friends General Conference, and the Pendle Hill Quaker Study Center in Pennsylvania. He also traveled widely, including trips to Alaska, Baja, Calif., New Zealand, China, India, England and Costa Rica. He is survived by his wife, Agnes; a daughter Sarah of Madison; and a son, Benjamin of College Park, Md. A memorial service will be held at the UNITARIAN MEETING HOUSE, 900 University Bay Drive, Madison, on Saturday, Feb. 2, 2002, at 3 p.m. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to Earlham College, Richmond, Ind., 47374. Gunderson East Funeral Home, 5203 Monona Drive, (608) 221-5420