

1967

The Rev. Dr. J. Stanley Harker

Class of 1925

Dr. J. Stanley Harker, the fourth president of Grove City College, was ordained to the Presbyterian ministry by Shenango Presbytery in Pennsylvania. For 22 years he served churches in New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio.

Harker's last pastorate was with the First Presbyterian Church of Hamilton, Ohio. There, he began a three-year term on the nominating committee of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Throughout his years in the pastorate, Harker was deeply interested in the work of the Presbyterian Church colleges and the Westminster Foundations on the state university campuses.

In 1951, Harker accepted the presidency of Alma College, the Synod college of Michigan, in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Under his leadership, Alma experienced great growth in the student body and faculty. Four buildings were erected and an athletic stadium added. During his five-and-a-half years as president of Alma, Harker spoke and preached in more than 300 Presbyterian churches in Michigan, and greatly strengthened the financial support of Alma by the Synod of Michigan.

In July 1956, Harker returned to Grove City College as its president. During his years at Grove City, he encouraged academic excellence and provided a Christian climate on the campus. In the academic area, the faculty doubled in number. He broadened the curriculum, such as the addition of a certified elementary education program, and emphasized use of the library facilities. He also strengthened and supported the College's athletic teams. Harker taught one class each year in ancient history, and he preached each Sunday morning in the vacant pulpits of local Presbyterian churches.

During his tenure at Grove City College, six new buildings were built, all dedicated debt free. Harker stepped down from his work as College president in 1971.

He passed away Oct. 9, 1984.

Additional degrees: Bachelor of Divinity, McCormick Theological Seminary; M.A. and Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh; Honorary Doctor of Divinity, Grove City College; Honorary Doctor of Laws, Cadaver College

