IN MEMORIAM

JIM G. ASHBURNE

Jim G. Ashburne died at home on June 20, 1996, age 84, with strength in his handshake despite his long illness and confinement. He was Professor Emeritus of Accounting, having retired August 31, 1976, after serving on the faculty from the time he received his Ph.D. degree in accounting at The University of Texas in 1953.

He was born on April 30, 1912, in Bonham, Texas, to Isaac Seaborn Ashburn and Pearle Ashburn. His father was a circuit-riding Methodist minister (by horseback at first) in the North Texas Conference. The presiding elder in his father’s Methodist church was Jim Gober, hence he was named at birth Gober Graham Ashburn. In 1942, after the Bonham courthouse burned, Jim changed his birth certificate and took the name we all knew, Jim Gober Ashburne (with his mother’s blessing, adding the “e” to Ashburn for distinction).

He earned a B.A. degree in English from North Texas State Teachers College (now University of North Texas) in 1930 and an M.A. degree in English from Southern Methodist University in 1932. His honors and awards included the W.H. Bruce Scholarship society, Kappa Delta Pi, Pi Omega Pi, Beta Gamma Sigma, Beta Alpha Psi, Delta Sigma Pi, and Delta Pi Epsilon. This education led him to teach English in Texas high schools in Royce City (1932-1933), San Antonio Edison (1933-1935), and Dallas Crozier Tech (1935-1943) where he served as assistant principal in 1946-1947. During this time he enrolled in extra accounting courses at Southern Methodist University. He also organized theatrical stage plays in the schools and communities. On July 25, 1936, he married Jean Tipton.
Jim joined the U.S. Army in 1943 and served in England, France, and Germany, being discharged with the rank of master sergeant. He earned theater ribbons and two bronze service stars for post office and personnel work.

Thereafter, he taught accounting courses at Oklahoma A & M (now Oklahoma State University) until 1949. While teaching in Oklahoma, he fell into the company of Glenn A. Welsch, and they applied to The University of Texas Ph.D. program at the same time, arriving in Austin in 1949. He taught UT courses and earned the Ph.D. degree in 1953, thence continued on this faculty as Assistant Professor, Associate Professor (1955), Professor (1964), and Professor Emeritus (1976). He took leaves to be a visiting professor at the University of Hawaii in 1966 and the University of Arizona in 1971. He became a Texas CPA in 1953. He was admitted to the UT graduate faculty in 1959.

Jim taught at least twelve different courses while he was active on the faculty, including courses in intermediate financial accounting, advanced financial accounting, managerial accounting, controllership, research seminar, accounting systems, and writing communications. His outstanding doctoral students included William Shenkir, James Wooley, Rex Cruse, J. T. Ball, Charles Titus, Samir Fahmy, and W. Baker Flowers. He counseled many graduate and undergraduate students, served as faculty adviser to the Beta Alpha Psi professional accounting fraternity and the Beta Gamma Sigma chapter, and served on numerous department, college, and University committees, including extended service, continuation and probation, English and writing, student evaluation, curriculum, Ph.D. admissions, honors plan, budget council, graduate studies, and commencement. He worked on the plan for a five-year accounting program 20 years before it came to fruition at U.T. Outside the University, Jim served on the American Accounting Association Committee on Doctoral Programs and on the American Institute of CPAs Committee on Relations with Universities, and he was the President of the Austin chapter of the National Association of
Accountants. He was the editor of the Texas Society of CPAs’ journal, *The Texas CPA*, for several years.

Jim attended the Methodist church but joined Jean and Joan as Episcopalians when he was confirmed at All Saints Episcopal Church, Austin in 1953. Then-rector, and later Bishop of the Diocese of Texas, Scott Field Bailey asked Jim to serve on the vestry and help with the church accounting. He became the “accounting warden” and treasurer and a close associate of Scott Field Bailey during the 1950s. He served with the Sunday morning breakfast committee with such Austin stalwarts as Rooster Andrews, Richard Lucas, Bill Gammon, and Voyd Bennett. He was a member of the All Saints Episcopal Church vestry in 1964. He had many friends in the Austin community.

He was a member of a faculty of giants who during the 1950s and 1960s continued to build the award-winning national reputation of the U.T. Department of Accounting. He was predeceased by illustrious professors emeriti John Arch White, George H. Newlove, C. Aubrey Smith, and Raynard Sommerfeld. He is survived by equally illustrious professors emeriti Glenn A. Welsch, Charles T. Zlatkovich, and Charles H. Griffin. Jim’s contributions covered a wide range of activities. He was most pleased with his time as adviser to the Beta Alpha Psi accounting honorary fraternity. His research, writing, and consulting was directed toward the oil industry, and he worked summers to gain experience with Merchants Fast Motor Lines, Columbia-Southern Chemical Corporation, and Sun Oil Company. He was listed in *Who’s Who in the Southwest* and *Who’s Who in American Education*.

In 1970, chair of the department C. T. Zlatkovich wrote of Jim: “He is noted for the earnest, painstaking, and patient manner in which he works with students. He is particularly
effective in working with students on research projects, theses, and dissertations. His integrity is beyond reproach.”

Jim G. Ashburne was survived by his wife Jean (one month short of their 60th anniversary), his daughter Joan and son-in-law Dale Dennis and their daughter Jennifer Pearl Dennis, and by his sister Mary Ward Ashburn Leberman and her son and daughter. He was predeceased by his brother John Moore Ashburn. A well-attended memorial service was held August 3, 1996, at All Saints Episcopal Church, Austin.

Larry R. Faulkner, President
The University of Texas at Austin

John R. Durbin, Secretary
The General Faculty

This Memorial Resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors Jack C. Robertson (Chair), Charles H. Griffin, Kermit D. Larson, and John J. Willingham.