

Holton, Holland ^[1]

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by [C. Sylvester Green](#) ^[2], 1988

13 May 1888–20 Aug. 1947



Prof. Holton Holland assisting with summer school registration at Duke University, June 12, 1939. Image from the Duke University Archives.

^[3]Holland Holton, educator, the son of Samuel Melanchthon and Aura Barrett Chaffin Holton, was born at Dobson, but his family moved to [Durham](#) ^[4] in 1894. He completed his secondary education in Durham High School in 1903 and in the fall of that year entered Trinity College (now [Duke University](#) ^[5]), where he was graduated with the B.A. degree in 1907. Holton began his career as principal of East Durham High School (1907–9). From there he went on to become head of the department of history at Durham High School (1909–10), principal of West Durham High School (1911–14, 1915–19), instructor in public speaking at [Trinity College](#) ^[6] (1912–19), and assistant superintendent (1915–19) and superintendent (1919–21) of the Durham County schools. Meanwhile, he attended the Trinity College School of Law (1910–11, 1914–15) and the University of Chicago Law School (summers, 1915–17). He received the doctor of jurisprudence degree in 1927 after spending the 1926–27 session at Chicago.

In 1921, Holton joined the faculty of Trinity College as professor of education and the legal phases of educational administration, and as head of the Department of Education. He had been named director of the Trinity College Summer School in 1920 and held that post until his death. While at Duke University, Holton devoted much personal and professional time to his contacts with public schoolteachers, providing them with offschedule classes, seminars, and conferences.

Recognized as a national authority on secondary education, Holton served as secretary of the [North Carolina Commission on High School Textbooks](#) ^[7] (1919–23), a member of the commission on secondary schools of the Southern Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges (1927–47) and editor of the Southern Association *Quarterly* (1937–47); and a member of the North Carolina College Conference (president, 1937–38), North Carolina Education Association, and National Education Association. He was also a member (and secretary) of the Durham County Board of Health (1922–26), of the North Carolina Constitutional Committee against the Repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution (elected 1933), and of the Selective Service System (1940–47).

A [Republican](#) ^[8], Holton served for two years on the state executive committee. He was a member of Duke Memorial Methodist Church and active in its lay program, particularly the [Sunday school](#) ^[9]. In addition, he was a [Mason](#) ^[10] (3rd degree), a Knight of Pythias, and a member of the Kiwanis Club of Durham (president, one term). Among his [fraternal affiliations](#) ^[11] were Phi Beta Kappa (scholarship), Tau Kappa Alpha, Kappa Delta Pi (education), and Phi Delta Kappa.

On 24 Dec. 1911, he married Lela Daisy Young, the daughter of George Polk and Arthelia Belvin Young. They had three sons: Winfred Quinton, who died in his youth; Samuel Melancthon; and Holland Young. Holton died and was buried in Durham.

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Additional Resources:

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Archives, Duke University. "Summer School Registration, June 12, 1939." Photograph. June 12, 1939. *Flickr*, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/dukeyearlook/7205011786/>^[3] (accessed April 9, 2013).

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