

a paper, "Mapping the American West," at the Spring meeting.

The testimony of his many friends is ample evidence that Carl Wheat was a charming man and a delightful companion. Through his efforts such fellowships as the Roxburghe Club of San Francisco and the Ancient and Honorable Order of E Clampus Vitus were formed and have flourished. Our regret is that we were unable to know him better.

Mr. Wheat died at his home in Menlo Park, California, on June 23, 1966. He is survived by his widow, Helen Mills-paugh Wheat, whom he married on September 22, 1919, and their sons, Francis Millspaugh Wheat, of Washington, and Dr. Richard Pierce Wheat, of Los Altos, California.

M. A. McC.

ROBERT WILLIAM GLENROIE VAIL

Glen Vail, one of the most distinguished of American bibliographers, was born at Victor, New York, on March 26, 1890, a son of James Gardiner and Mary Elizabeth (Boughton) Vail. After taking his B.A. at Cornell, he attended the Columbia University Library School for two years, working at the same time in the New York Public Library. There he remained, with time out for a tour in the Coast Artillery, until 1920, when he became librarian of the Minnesota Historical Society. That position afforded the opportunity to collect for which he had longed, but in 1921 it was dwarfed by the opportunity to organize the library of the Roosevelt Memorial Association. Back in New York, he collected with joy and abandon, lectured and wrote, and edited the 24-volume *Memorial Edition of the Works of Theodore Roosevelt*. When the library was transferred to Harvard in 1928, he returned to the New York Public Library as General Assistant.

At the Public Library, Glen was happy in the association with the men who ran it, and particularly in his assignment to the task of completing Sabin's *Dictionary of Books Relating to America*. He had time, too, to produce a number of small bibliographical studies, such as his "The Ulster County Gazette and its Illegitimate Offspring." While working on this he came into contact with Clarence Brigham, who with his usual enthusiasm to help, turned over his own collection of notes on that subject.

From this connection developed the call which brought Vail to the American Antiquarian Society as librarian. It was a hard wrench for him to leave the music and the theaters of New York City, but he felt frustrated because the Public Library was not collecting, and would not buy the "splendid items" which he "discovered for them." At the moment, Cornell and Duke were making advances to him, but he had doubts of their willingness to purchase any of the available collections on which he had his eye, and he knew that Clarence Brigham would be interested.

Matters turned out differently. Brigham was a genius at stretching the funds available to cover the books needed, and he was uncharitable to less canny librarians. When he returned from his first vacation after Vail's installation at Worcester, he was distressed to see the uses to which the purchasing funds had been put, so he took the reins back into his own hands. So far as administration and purchasing were concerned, Glen never did function as librarian of the Society. That was perhaps just as well, for the result was that he had the time to prepare his famous hour-long Librarian's Reports, which were studded with carefully prepared bibliographies. Many of them were reprinted, along with his articles on "The American Sketchbook of Charles Alexandre Lesueur," "California Letters of the Gold Rush Period," "Random Notes on the History of the Early American Cir-

cus," and "Susanna Haswell Rawson," which became best-sellers, as our publications go. He also completed Sabin by using a crew of assistants, a technique which some other bibliographers thought both dangerous and improper.

Vail's relations with Brigham were coldly formal, but he so appreciated the opportunity which this library gave him to do the bibliography which he loved, that it was only an overwhelmingly better financial offer which in 1939 took him to Albany, New York, as State Librarian. Glen was always a man to hold in affection old associates and familiar places, so once he had left Worcester, the tensions disappeared, and his normal warm friendship, interest, and helpfulness reinstated itself.

In Albany, Vail was not entirely happy, for his duties included responsibility for legislative reference services, medical law, libraries for the blind, and a dozen other things which did not really interest him. His correspondence with us in those days was very heavy, because we were a bibliographical outlet for him. In 1944 he gladly embraced the opportunity to go back to New York City, this time as the Director of the New-York Historical Society. Here he was entirely happy in his associates, his environment, and his work; and in 1949 he completed his most important bibliography, *The Voice of the Old Frontier*. The usual honors came his way. He was elected to the Grolier Club, the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Historical Society, and in 1944-45 he was president of the Bibliographical Society of America. He received honorary doctorates from Dickinson in 1951 and from Clark University in 1953.

In 1959 Vail experienced a series of mild heart attacks. The next year he retired from the Historical Society and moved to Albuquerque to be near his daughter and her husband. He continued to be interested in everything around him, and he loved to write long single-spaced letters to his

old associates in the East. His chief complaint was that his weakness had made him fall 300 letters behind in his correspondence, but he happily set about to answer every one. He had not caught up when death took him on June 21, 1966. He is survived by his wife, the former Marie Rogers, and by two children.

C. K. S.

ARTHUR MEIER SCHLESINGER

Arthur and I were "academic twins," having been appointed full professors at Harvard on the same day. And it is difficult for a surviving twin to write about his departed other half. Nor is it necessary to say much, as Arthur wrote his autobiography, which appeared as *In Retrospect. The History of a Historian* in 1963.

He was born and brought up in Xenia, which Lippincott's Gazetteer of 1883 describes as "a handsome city, the capital of Greene Co., O., on the Little Miami River. . . . Pop. about 10,000." There his parents from Germany had settled over a century ago. He was a bright boy, a voracious reader, head of his class at the local high school. We two, then unknown to each other, imbibed history around the turn of the century, not from our school textbooks but from the works of G. A. Henty, J. O. Kaler ("James Otis") and Alexandre Dumas; another of Arthur's favorites was J. Fenimore Cooper. From high school Arthur proceeded to Ohio State University where he graduated with honors, and in 1910 entered the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Columbia University. His doctoral dissertation *The Colonial Merchants and the American Revolution* was written under the aegis of Professor Herbert L. Osgood, whom Arthur used to describe as the dullest lecturer and most thorough scholar he had ever met. The subject

Copyright of Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society is the property of American Antiquarian Society and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.