

he turned sixty-five and was retired from Norton's and became a full-time worker here, concentrating on the management of the manuscripts. He was also able to continue work on his study of the people, houses, and institutions of Worcester on which he had been working since 1938 and of which he wrote that 'it's sometimes tedious, and often I get stuck, but it's fun,' and he was perfectly happy at the Society 'working daily at a very interesting job, and enjoying health' and he hoped 'I can keep going for years in this work.' During those years he worked diligently, cataloging a large number of our manuscript collections, and in April 1955 he was elected to membership. He attended every meeting from then until the mid-sixties when he was struck first by blindness and then by the death of his sister with whom he had lived in the family home since boyhood. Unable to see to work or to get around safely, he spent the last few years in a nursing home in town from which he traveled in good weather on Wednesdays to visit us here and have his mail read to him. Soon even these short journeys became too much for him. When I last saw him early this winter at the home, he had slipped badly and it appeared only a matter of time. His time came on February 6, 1971, when he died, aged eighty-eight, in the nursing home. He never married, left no family, and had outlived most of his friends, as the smallness of the group at his funeral service sadly bore witness. Those few there though remembered the engaging and firm-minded man he had been in happier years.

J. E. M.

LAWRENCE COUNSELMAN WROTH

At the time of his death, last Christmas Day, only one member of the American Antiquarian Society could claim seniority over him, Admiral Morison. Dr. Wroth was elected in April, 1923, and his relations with the Society and its directors and officers were always most cordial. Until ill health kept him at

home he was a faithful attender of meetings and he presented papers on several occasions. Clarence Brigham was a member of the Committee of Management of the John Carter Brown Library, where Dr. Wroth was librarian for 34 years, and the two men worked in harmony and mutual esteem.

Dr. Wroth was born in Baltimore, January 14, 1884, a son of the Rev. Peregrine and Mary Augusta (Counselman) Wroth. He was graduated from Johns Hopkins University in 1905 and immediately became the librarian of the Maryland Diocesan Library in Baltimore, remaining in that post until 1912. Thereafter, for eleven years, he was assistant librarian of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore. He moved to Providence to the John Carter Brown in 1923, the year he was elected to this Society, and he served the JCB until he retired in 1957.

He became the second American to be awarded the Gold Medal of The Bibliographical Society (of London) and he was awarded honorary degrees by Brown University, Michigan, and Yale. Almost every organization of which he was a member eventually elevated him to honorary membership. He had been president of the Bibliographical Society of America and was a vice-president of the British Bibliographical Society.

He was a consultant to the Pierpont Morgan Library and the Library of Congress. A painstaking but prolific writer, he wrote during his 65-year career approximately 550 titles. The first to establish his scholarly reputation was *A History of Printing in Colonial Maryland, 1686-1776*. His last great work, published only a few months before his death, was *The Voyages of Giovanni da Verrazzano 1524-1528*. In between these two landmarks came such bibliographical classics as *The Colonial Printer, The Way of a Ship, The Early Cartography of the Pacific, An American Bookshelf, 1755*, and *Some Reflections on the Book Arts in Early Mexico*. Also, for many years he wrote a weekly rare book column, 'Notes for Bibliophiles,' for *The New York Herald-Tribune*. But probably as characteristic of his rich mind and fine style as any of his writings were the annual reports of the

John Carter Brown Library, which no one has yet quite dared to flatter by imitation.

Dr. Wroth was an honorary member of the Elizabethan Club at Yale, Society of the Cincinnati in Rhode Island, Society of Printers of Boston, Phi Beta Kappa, Providence Art Club, Grolier Club, Club of Odd Volumes, and the Walpole Society. He was a member of the New-York Historical Society, and a corresponding member of the Massachusetts Historical Society and the Colonial Society of Massachusetts. He was the Rosenbach Fellow in Bibliography at the University of Pennsylvania in 1932-33, and had been president of the Providence Athenaeum.

When the libraries and museums of Yale were re-opened after World War II, Dr. Wroth was asked to give the principal address at the special convocation, and he chose as his subject 'In Praise of Antiquarianism.' Presenting him for an honorary degree, Prof. Chauncey Brewster Tinker said of him:

'Mr. Wroth is the connecting link between the mad collector and the sane librarian. . . . In all his writings there is clarity and charm, but nothing "punchy." He assumes the presence of an audience at once mature, fair minded and educated—an audience, in other words, like unto himself.'

Though to those who did not know him well his personal shyness sometimes seemed to signify aloofness, he could be very pleasant company among friends, and he had a fine sense of humor which only his intimates were permitted to experience. He was devoted to his wife, the former Barbara Pease, and with a touching inscription dedicated the Verrazzano volume to her. She and three sons survive him.

B. F. S.

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