

## Obituaries

### PAUL HERMAN BUCK

Paul Herman Buck, elected a member of this society in April 1955, was born in Columbus, Ohio, August 25, 1899, the son of Henry John and Adele (Kreppelt) Buck. He died in Cambridge on December 23, 1978, at the age of seventy-nine. He passed his youth near his birthplace and earned his bachelor's degree at the Ohio State University in 1921. There, he embarked upon the study of history. An unusually perceptive essay for the master's degree found publication in the October 1925 issue of the *American Historical Review*. More than a half century later, it remained a perceptive source of insight on the southern poor whites.

At Harvard where he came to work toward the doctorate, he studied with Arthur Meier Schlesinger, but also with W. S. Ferguson to whose training in the history of Greece he often referred. Buck acquired a broad background not only in American but in European history. He spent the year 1926-27 in France and England on a Sheldon Fellowship. His 1935 dissertation, a study of the aftermath of Reconstruction, published as *Road to Reunion, 1865-1900*, and awarded the Pulitzer Prize in history in 1938, was cultural and social history at its best.

Meanwhile, he had been drawn into administration of the university he loved. Having taught in the department of history as instructor (1926-36), assistant professor (1936-38), and associate professor (1938-42), he became, first, assistant dean and then dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (1942-53), in charge of the central instructional and research departments of the university. Buck became provost of the university (1945-53), then Francis Lee Higginson professor of history in 1955, and finally Carl H. Pforzheimer University Professor.

During the war years he was chief administrative officer of the university while President James B. Conant was away on national service. Later President Conant noted that they had worked as a team for more than a decade. 'I happen to have worn the ranking hat, but he carried the load.'

As dean, Buck began to integrate the work of Harvard and Radcliffe, introducing the then radical program of joint instruction in the two institutions. In 1946 he was the moving spirit in the preparation of the report on 'General Education in a Free Society' adopted in 1950 as the central element of the undergraduate curriculum. As provost he helped establish the Computation Laboratory, the Russian Research Center, the Department and Laboratory of Social Relations, and the Division of Engineering and Applied Sciences. Each was a monumental task in modernizing the structure of an ancient educational system.

In 1953 Buck became director of the Harvard University Library, a position he held until 1964. In that capacity he reorganized the staff of the world's largest university library, finding the financial means to preserve it as an effective teaching and research tool. His reflections of those problems appeared in *Libraries and Universities* (1964).

Outside Harvard, Buck was one of the founders and long a director of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences. As chairman of the Ford Foundation's Committee on the Role of Education in American History, he helped stimulate work in a subject he considered important and long neglected.

Through his other efforts, while plagued with recurrent illness, he retained a lively interest in history. His administrative burdens prevented him from applying his energies to his own work in that field. But his course on southern history continued to attract undergraduates and his seminar on historiography and educational history trained a generation of graduate students. Some of the products of those seminars appeared in a volume he edited, *The Social Sciences at Harvard* (1965).

Among his awards, in addition to the Pulitzer, were decorations from France and Greece and honorary degrees from Ohio State, Brown, Tufts, Harvard, Princeton, Coe, and Western Reserve.

He is survived by his wife, Salley Betts, and two sisters.

Oscar Handlin

### ALBERT EDGAR LOWNES

To have known Albert E. Lownes was to have known a Renaissance man. He was a man of such broad interests, with so many friends, that not even those who were closest to him knew the full range of his avocations. His activities as a Scout, naturalist, and book collector were best known. But he was also an artist, a bibliographer, teacher, writer, scholar, and stage manager.

Not all of his closest friends knew, for example, that he painted watercolors of New England orchids, which he examined in their natural habitat. He once visited Chappaquiddick Island to see a scarce little orchid, but was chagrined to learn that the same variety grew near his own house in South County. His teaching at Brown spanned thirty years following his appointment as visiting lecturer in the history of science. His competence as a bibliographer is revealed in an eleven-volume loose-leaf catalogue of his books printed before 1801 in which each volume is described with full collation, provenance, and a photograph of the title-page. As a scholarly writer, he was the author of articles about the transit of Venus, early garden books, seventeenth-century herbals, seventeenth-century drawings of birds, fishes, and insects, Charles Darwin and pollen allergy, orchids, and John J. Audubon. Each was based on materials in his library. He also wrote a delightful preface to *Renaissance Books of Science*, a catalogue of an exhibition at Dartmouth College based on books from the Lownes collec-

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