

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-

tion. Not the least of his activities was serving as stage manager for the Providence Art Club Christmas shows, which were spoofs on town and gown. He even co-authored a show entitled "Hammer and Tongs."

Born in Whitehall, New York, May 10, 1899, Albert Edgar Lownes was the son of Edgar J. and Therese K. Lownes. His education was at Moses Brown School and Brown University from which he was graduated in 1920. The late Barbara Spring was his wife. He left three daughters, a son, and a sister following his death at age seventy-nine on November 17, 1978.

His interest in science began early. His mother compiled a list of plants he could identify before he could write. It is quite possible that, at age fourteen, he was the discoverer of the periodic Comet Encke, although credit was given to a professional astronomer.

Al became infected with books in a grand manner when, as a small boy, he wandered into the John Carter Brown Library. George Parker Winship was then librarian and he showed the young visitor some of the treasures of the library. Later, after collecting books in several fields, he recognized that great books of science had not yet become popular as a field of collecting. There were no guides to the literature, so he compiled his own. He had the field to himself at a time when prices were low and competition had not developed. In his lifetime he saw the history of science recognized as a field of study in leading universities. He often made it clear that his was a collection of significant books of science, books from which one might write the history of science.

When he worked, he was a textile executive, president, and later board chairman of the American Silk Spinning Company. But he was like the character in an essay on book madness by Lawrence Wroth who did the serious work of the day among his books after leaving the office.

An early interest in natural history, particularly in native plants of New England, and pleasant friendships with librar-

ians led him to collect books while still an undergraduate. Starting with local florae of New England, he gradually widened his fields of collecting to include all sciences. He gathered about 12,000 books, which included many of the classic works of science, technology, medicine, natural history, and some manuscripts.

He was, in fact, happiest among his books. They surrounded him like close friends, and, through them, he sensed a bond with the great scientists. It pleased him immeasurably that scholars consulted his books, and many authors acknowledged their debt to him. He was generous in loaning his books for library exhibitions, and, on occasions, he even selected the books, wrote the exhibition labels, and mounted them in cases. An equal pleasure was the informal teaching he did at Brown as visiting lecturer in the history of science. It was an appointment without salary but one to which he responded with the greatest seriousness. He would show up weekly at the appointed time with a suitcase full of books which were passed among the students as he talked informally about them. It was an unforgettable experience for undergraduates to handle for the first time, for example, three great books printed within a few months of each other, including Copernicus's revolutionary work that placed the sun at the center of the solar system; *De Historia Stirpium* by Leonhard Fuchs, one of the most beautiful of all herbals, containing the earliest pictures of plants from the New World; and the great illustrated work on human anatomy by Vesalius.

A few foundation works eluded him; one was William Harvey's book on the circulation of the blood. 'Mountain peaks,' he called them, which were 'as elusive as Everest.' He would have been equally displeased if he had found them all, because, he wrote, 'The joy is in the hunt.'

Al had the advantage of a good education, and never ceased adding to his fund of knowledge by extensive reading of scholarly and bibliographical journals and antiquarian booksellers'

catalogues. He read the books he acquired and knew the importance of each and its place in the literature of science. Though not a linguist in the formal sense, he was not awed by Latin or other languages. Language was to him a key that unlocked his books.

Learned without ostentation, witty in a quiet way, he was a humanist with the gentlest disposition. His interest in people was revealed by a firm handshake, and, in turn, his friends had an affectionate regard for him. In his home he made laymen and scholars equally welcome. He could describe the significance of a rare book in a manner that was meaningful to a friendly neighbor, or that answered the inquiry of a learned scholar.

Lunching at the Providence Art Club or the Club of Odd Volumes, he was never awed by the presence of an astronomer, a roentgenologist, a geologist, or a United States Senator. He could carry a conversation with the most learned, but spoke only when there was something significant to add. He would listen to an erudite conversation, then, with preciseness of language and a touch of humor, summarize the conversation succinctly. One learned not to argue with Albert Lownes without command of a subject, for he could bring an idle conversation to an abrupt close with astute accuracy.

Mr. Lownes was elected to the American Antiquarian Society in October 1963 and attended all but three meetings during the ensuing thirteen years. He served on the library committee 1967-71, was host at the annual meeting in 1974, and was a regular and generous contributor to appeals for annual and development funds.

In his letter to Clifford Shipton following his election he wrote: 'I thought that the areas of my particular interests were remote enough from the main stream so that I would never be considered. If I had been asked I would have said that the chances were roughly those that a non-lawyer would have of appointment to the Supreme Court.'

Pursuing extraordinarily elusive scientific works had a par-

ticular appeal. His earliest letter to the Society sought information about two pamphlets of James Logan of Philadelphia that were almost unknown to bibliographers. They were printed in Leyden in Latin in 1739 and 1741, and contained a brief account of his experiments with maize and a somewhat longer treatise on the reflection and refraction of light. Even though they are the 'earliest significant scientific works written in this country,' they were not American imprints, and for that reason were not in Worcester. Al had each, the 1741 study on light being the only copy in America.

Al was asked to contribute his superb set of the elephant folio edition of Audubon's *Birds of America* to the Society, and his reply was typical of the way he reasoned. 'I was interested in your plea,' he wrote to Marcus McCorison,

for a copy of Audubon's *Birds*. If a copy were offered I wonder if the Library Committee would accept it. It is too late in date for our primary collection and it wasn't printed in America. We might collect the first three volumes of his *Ornithological Biography*. The first was printed at Philadelphia twice, in 1831 and 1832; the second was printed at Boston in 1835; and copies of the third volume intended for American sale have a printed slip pasted in recording the American copyright. The Edinburgh printings of the fourth and fifth volumes were supplied to American subscribers.

No doubt you know that Audubon expected to sell a copy to your predecessor, Mr. Haven. He visited the Library 12 December 1840. Mr. Haven put him off and told him to return in the afternoon. Audubon met a friend and they tarried too long at their wine. When Audubon returned to make the sale, Haven had left, 'we not having been punctual with him, and thereby lost a subscriber.'

Al's loyalty to Brown was unwavering. During a recent illness he deplored having to miss Commencement. On his fiftieth reunion he presented his set of *The Birds of America*. How well he knew that no great science collection could be complete without this book. Only a few years earlier he had presented to

Brown his remarkable collection of works by and about Henry David Thoreau.

Almost without precedent, he was the recipient of two honorary degrees from his *alma mater*: a Master of Arts on his twentieth reunion, and Doctor of Laws on the occasion of his fiftieth.

Al still had time to give to the community. He was the founder and first president of the South County Museum; founder, second president, and honorary director of the Friends of the Library of Brown University; president of the Rhode Island Historical Society and of the Providence Art Club; incorporator of the Natural History Society of Rhode Island, and of the Providence Public Library; director of the Audubon Society of Rhode Island, and of the Early American Industries Association. He was a life member of the Appalachian Mountain Club. His memberships in scholarly organizations included, besides the Antiquarian Society, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, American Association of Museums, American Ornithological Union, Bibliographical Society of America, the Club of Odd Volumes, the Grolier Club, Field Naturalists Club, History of Science Society, Index Society, the Associates of the John Carter Brown Library, New England Botanical Club, Torrey Botanical Club. He was an honorary member of two ladies' garden clubs. He was appointed by Governor McGrath to the Committee on Conservation and Recreation of the State Planning Board, and was a charter member of the Rhode Island Heritage Week Committee of the Rhode Island Development Council.

Howard R. Swearer, Brown University President, paid tribute to Mr. Lownes as one of 'Brown's most illustrious alumni . . . and for all he did for the University over a period of more than fifty years. To use the words of the University's charter, he discharged "the offices of life with usefulness and reputation."'

Albert Lownes belonged to a tradition of distinguished collectors whose books achieved international recognition. His

contributions will long be remembered, but none will be more enduring than his achievements as a bookman. His books are now part of the Brown University Library and will remain his monument.

Stuart C. Sherman

GABRIEL NADEAU

Gabriel Nadeau, man of science and man of letters, was born in Saint-Césaire de Rouville, Quebec, on March 20, 1900, son of Napoleon and Eglantine Auclair Nadeau. His early education at the Séminaire de Saint-Hyacinthe prepared him for the University of Montreal from which he received the Doctor of Medicine degree in 1928, six years after receiving the baccalaureate degree. His internship was completed at St. Justine's Children's Hospital and Hôtel-Dieu in Montreal.

Shortly after completing his medical training, Dr. Nadeau entered employment in the Public Health Department of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as an assistant physician until he acquired his medical license in Massachusetts in 1932. His own affliction with tuberculosis and his professional training led him to a staff position and eventually to the assistant superintendency (1957) and to the superintendency (1964) of Rutland State Sanatorium. During this long and distinguished career in public health medicine, Dr. Nadeau was a participating member of the Worcester District Medical Society, the Massachusetts Medical Society, the Massachusetts Thoracic Society, and the American Medical Association, and was a Fellow of the American College of Chest Physicians.

The avocational experience of Gabriel Nadeau revealed his passion for history, particularly for medical history and Franco-American history. His writings in these areas were extensive and earned for him the 'Médaille de la Reconnaissance Française' in 1947. To support his research in these fields of history,

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