Obituaries

JULIAN PARKS BOYD

Julian Parks Boyd was born at Converse, South Carolina, on November 3, 1903, the son of Robert J. Boyd and Melona Parks Boyd. He graduated from Duke University and obtained a master's degree in history there in 1926. He became an instructor at the University of Pennsylvania and in 1928 he became editor of *The Susquehanna Company Papers* for the Wyoming Historical and Geological Society in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. In 1932, he was named director of the New York State Historical Association. In 1934 he returned to Pennsylvania as librarian and editor of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. In 1940 he was named librarian at Princeton University. In 1952 he became a full professor of history at Princeton and remained in that office until he became professor emeritus in 1972. He died on May 28, 1980, after a long illness throughout which he persisted in his work on *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*. He is survived by his wife, the former Grace Wiggins Welch, and by a son, Kenneth M. Boyd of Washington, a sister, Frances Flintom of Charlotte, North Carolina, and a brother, Henry T. Boyd of Lake Wales, Florida.

This brief biographical summary conveys only the faintest intimation of Julian Boyd's career, his genius, and his contributions to the unfolding history of his own times.

Julian Parks Boyd will be remembered chiefly for his work on the *Jefferson Papers*, which he began in 1943, and which he continued for the rest of his life. It is indeed the great testimony and monument to his scholarship and genius, but his life in the learned community of America would have been notable if he had never edited the *Jefferson Papers*.

That career produced a succession of volumes on American

history. It included a long and vigorous leadership of the scholarly community in behalf of the preservation of the nation's archives. It was followed by his services on the National Historical Publications Commission (1951–64). It was remarkable for its impact upon the whole vast effort at preservation of the papers of historical figures shaped not only by his exertions to enlist the talents of others and by the example of style and technique set in the *Jefferson Papers*, but also by his frequent and invariably influential remarks at meetings of learned societies of the nation over a long period of years. It was climaxed by his presidency of the American Philosophical Society, the oldest learned society in America. It was marked by the almost numberless pamphlets, reprints, and discussions that flowed from his pen over the long years of his career. His leadership included an international effort that led to the gift of Battle Abbey, the site of the Battle of Hastings, to the British government.

Boyd's formal association with the American Antiquarian Society began with his election to membership in April 1936 although he had begun corresponding with Clarence Brigham and had visited the library a decade before. He twice addressed meetings of the Society and had the results published in the *Proceedings*. The first, 'Horatio Gates Spafford: Inventor, Author, Promoter of Democracy,' was read in October 1941 and published in Volume 51 of the *Proceedings*. The second, 'Historical Editing in the United States: The Next Stage?,' was delivered as part of the Society's sesquicentennial celebration and was both read (October 1962) and published (Volume 72), paired with Lyman Butterfield's assessment of 'The Recent Past' of American historical editing.

His books invariably are distinguished by felicitous prose and by remarkable historical perception. The list begins with *Indian Treaties Printed By Benjamin Franklin*, which he compiled with an introduction by Carl Van Doren. *Anglo-American Union*, which was published in 1941 by the University of Penn-

sylvania Press, is a study of Joseph Galloway's plans to preserve the British Empire. Its distinguishing quality is the special Boyd perception of the anguish of conservatives like Galloway, struggling to reconcile the irreconcilable. Like conservatives in other revolutionary crises, Galloway, Boyd pointed out, 'failed to understand the meaning and direction of the American people.'

The Declaration of Independence: Evolution of the Text, published in 1945, was the product of many years of study and examination, and it put to rest long-standing controversies over the emergence of the draft inserted in the journals of the Congress, fresh from the press of John Dunlap.

Fundamental Laws and Constitutions of New Jersey was edited by Julian Boyd in 1964 and published by D. Van Nostrand, Inc., for the New Jersey Historical Series. It is distinguished by Boyd's usual meticulous treatment of the texts of the state's records and by his usual skill in finding the common ingredient of these records: 'A fragile thread of gold—elusive, readily mistaken, sometimes forgotten, but unbroken and indeed indestructible—running through all of these fabrics of government and connecting the last with the first. The nature of that thread was identified by the first compilers of a collection of the fundamental laws of New Jersey, two centuries ago, as "Liberty, the great Legament." '

The Scheide Library: A Summary View of Its History and Its Outstanding Books, privately printed in 1947, is not among the best known of Boyd's books, but it deserves to be better known for an eloquent preface, for its careful examinations of the great books in the collection, for the chapter on the books of science, and for one luminous sentence: 'the very air of America had been filled from the beginning by an inordinate respect for the printed page.'

Number Seven: Alexander Hamilton's Attempts to Control American Foreign Policy was one of the inspired expanded footnotes into which Boyd was led by his examination of the

Jefferson papers. It treated the ominous first example of a divided cabinet, in which one ambitious member felt no constraint on his efforts to further a foreign policy differing from that of the administration and from that of the secretary of state.

The Philosophical Society under his presidency undertook a reexamination of its historic role as America's oldest learned society. The American Historical Association under his presidency also experienced the impulse that his imagination and historic sense gave to every enterprise with which he was identified. Countless other learned societies called upon him for timely utterance on their own problems and on the issues of the time. In these extracurricular excursions his constant theme was a war upon irrationality, intolerance, and ignorance.

In 1951, at a meeting in Richmond where a mural depicting the Virginia Declaration of Rights was unveiled, Boyd addressed himself to the anticommunist hysteria of that era. He warned that intolerant demands for loyalty oaths, the loose allegations of demagogues, and the suppression of books endangered the letter and spirit of the Bill of Rights.

In 1968, when the threat was from another segment of society, he spoke to the annual meeting of the Association of University Presses and sternly asserted: 'that enduring virus called charlataneria eruditorum is now prevalent in epidemic proportions among the universities of the world.' Herbert S. Bailey, Jr., in a preface to the subsequently published text *Between the Spur and the Bridle* related how the 300 delegates at the meeting rose 'in prolonged applause' to Boyd's attack on another species of irrationality, then pervading the campuses.

Those who examine the many addresses he gave to scholarly meetings over the years will be struck by the pains he took with tasks that some would have regarded as ceremonial. He endeavored to strike the right note for every such occasion. And on many of these occasions he gave utterance to memorable truths and conferred upon his auditors memorable coun-

sel. At Trenton State College, on May 14, 1970, he spoke on 'The Imperishable Gleam' at the dedication of a research library, and penned these fine sentences: 'The battle between dogmatic authority and the questioning mind has been fought in many times and places, under many guises, and its annals are filled with the names of martyrs as well as tyrants. It is a contest that, in the very nature of things, can never be won with finality. But, whatever miraculous forms of communicating thoughts and aspirations of men may in future be added to the book, the contest—so long as libraries exist and presses are free—can never be irrevocably lost.'

In 1976, he made a notable contribution to the *Virginia Law Review*, in an article on fundamental principles. 'The great lesson of our revolutionary experience,' he concluded, 'is that political creativity emerged from strife and conflict because the people understood their rights, were resolute in defending them, and possessed those attributes of character which made them equal to the awesome responsibility of self-government.'

Boyd made one of his fond excursions into little-known sidelights of history in an address at the American Philosophical Society in 1958, speaking on 'The Megalonyx, the Megatherium, and Thomas Jefferson's Lapse of Memory.' It is a picture of Jefferson valiantly struggling to answer the Buffon reflections on the inferior size of American wildlife.

Few roles were more congenial to Boyd than the unraveling of historical mysteries. A clue to some hitherto undiscovered facet of history would send him to archives in London, Paris, or Madrid. An article in the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* for October 1976 fairly bubbles with enthusiasm engendered by a search for the lost original copy of the Declaration of Independence. He traced the text as it came from the Committee of Five to the Dunlap composing room where it quite evidently was cut up and distributed to compositors. The Dunlap broadside took its place in the space that Secretary Thomson has reserved for it in the journals of Congress.

Sooner or later, someone will search the archives of our learned societies for the almost numberless contributions that Boyd made to their records over the years. The items referred to in this paper are only a few specimens of a kind of literature at which he was especially adept and skillful.

His great work, and crowning achievement, of course is *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, the twentieth volume of which was sent to press the week he died. There will be more than fifty volumes when the series is complete. There may be hundreds of new interpreters of Jefferson over the years, but none of them will find it necessary to go to the original sources or labor upon a new edition of Jefferson's papers. Some scholars, over the years, grew impatient with Boyd's painstaking methods and with his insistence that the *Papers* illuminate the Jeffersonian material with all available resources. Gilbert Chinard described Jefferson's letters as 'the richest treasure house of historical information ever left by a single man.' Boyd intended to have a modern copy of that treasure as accurate as it could be made by modern research. He was insistent that the texts themselves conform to the very highest standards of literal accuracy; and equally insistent that the supporting information convey the essential truth. In any situation where texts seemed obscure, ambiguous, or suggestive of some unknown information, Boyd sought further material. He was led into long exploratory footnotes that made apparently innocuous statements relevant and significant. He was immodest enough to know that if a textual sentence was not meaningful to him it would not be meaningful to anyone else. So he sought for the accurate meaning as well as for the accurate text. Many of his colleagues wished to see the separate volumes emerge more rapidly, but he resolutely stuck by his initial deliberate purpose to make this not just a collection of Jefferson's papers but *the* final, definitive collection.

In the first volume of the *Papers*, published in 1950, Editor Boyd and his associate editors (Lyman H. Butterfield and

Mina R. Bryan) presented a general view of the work proposed and a careful, detailed description of the editorial method to be followed. To the standards then proclaimed and the methods there outlined, Boyd adhered, with amazing constancy, through all the volumes he sent to press.

Julian Boyd's interest in and enthusiasm for the great task he set for himself did not diminish as the work proceeded but seemed to increase over the years. He gained, as the years went by and the work continued, such a familiarity with and such an insight into the philosophy, the style, and the very nature of Thomas Jefferson that those associating with him got the sensation of collaboration with the third president himself. Like Jefferson, Boyd had acquired a remarkably effective writing style, and was scarcely capable of constructing a graceless or awkward sentence.

The secret that caused the rise of Jefferson's popularity as 'the leading sage for all seasons and purposes' intrigued Boyd. He attempted an explanation of the growing resort to Jefferson in a preface he wrote for a new edition of J. P. Foley's *Jefferson Cyclopedia* in 1967:

> First of all, there was the distinctive style, ingratiating and felicitous. It shared but was not imprisoned by the granitic quality of Washington's powerful prose. It had none of the earthy wit of Franklin, none of the pungency of Adams, none of the flamboyance of Paine, none of the tumescence of Marshall, none of the mystic overtones of Lincoln. But it had a grace, a flexibility, and an adaptive precision that set it apart from these other gifted pens. Whatever the object—whether a report to Congress on decimal notation for money demanding exactness and clarity, or a response to an address of welcome calling for formal simplicity, or a declaration of the rights of man requiring sublime eloquence—Jefferson had an acute instinct for the right expression and a dexterity in supplying it that made his words memorable.

It was a fortunate circumstance that put the papers of a statesman with such a distinguished style and such a reverence

for the written word into the hands of a historian of similar taste and deference for the language. Of course, it was no mere technical fluency that steadily increased Boyd's respect for Jefferson's writings. He found in Jefferson's gifted words 'an accurate expression of the American mind in 1776' and one that 'became thenceforth the controlling principle of his life.'

As the preparation of the *Jefferson Papers* proceeded, Julian Boyd increasingly became the authority to which scholars turned, not only for information about Jefferson, but for enlightenment on the methods and techniques of editorship. His influence thus widened beyond the scope of his own project to the other works inspired by the National Historical Publications Commission. As Whitfield Bell said at the memorial services at Princeton, June 12, 1980: 'A great deal of Julian Boyd and of the *Jefferson Papers* is imbedded in a score of editions of historical papers—Franklin's, the Adamses', Madison's, Latrobe's. . . . Everyone knew that the *Jefferson Papers* from their inception had set a standard against which all historical editing would be measured for generations to come.'

The *Papers* were Boyd's stern taskmaster, but they did not utterly eclipse his broad interests in other historical matters or his lively concern with contemporary affairs. He enjoyed the fellowship of scholars and of public men, enlivening many a discussion with keen wit and sometimes irreverent asides. He was, besides, one of the last great letter writers. His correspondence with friends exhibited a talent for jest and satire more reminiscent of Franklin than of Jefferson. He wrote engagingly of the foibles of his own generation. He kept in close touch with a wide circle of correspondents with whom he shared his views on literature, history, and public affairs. He would not have pretended to such a universal grasp of contemporary science and affairs as that which distinguished Jefferson but he was widely read in an astonishing number of fields of inquiry.

No estimate of his life and work would be complete without allusion to the warmth of his patriotism. He had a deep and

abiding love of his country, and a lifelong personal commitment to the American ideas and ideals of the eighteenth century which were so much a part of him. A life spent in research on the history of the nation and the shaping of its policies increased his firm conviction that the American experience had advanced the cause of mankind and had preserved the best hope of the future progress of human society.

James Russell Wiggins

ERNEST STANLEY DODGE

In our increasingly mobile society, Ernest Dodge's distinguished career at one institution and life in one community will become an even greater rarity than it was in his time. Born in Trenton, Maine, March 18, 1913, the son of George Flint and Beatrice Marion (Dolliver) Dodge, Ernest was brought up on an eighty-acre farm on the rockbound seashore. His schooling began in a traditional rural one-room schoolhouse, eight grades in one room. Later he attended high school in Ellsworth, Maine, and Phillips Academy at Andover, Massachusetts. After graduation from Andover, with a career in conservation in mind, he joined the staff of the Peabody Museum, Salem, in 1931 as a temporary employee so he could accumulate funds for studies at the University of Maine. Enjoying his work so much at the museum, he gave up plans for college, though later (1937–38) he was a special student in anthropology at Harvard. He became assistant curator of ethnology at the Peabody in 1937 and curator 1943–46. He was made assistant director in 1946 and director in 1950. His determination, energy, and vision were major forces in the growth of the Peabody Museum from a local to a national institution. In the past ten years, Ernest's greatest efforts went into the museum's $5,000,000 building program which included a new wing with a 43,000-square-foot exhibition hall that nearly

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