

by insatiable curiosity, and infectious good humor that made any encounter memorable. Anyone wishing to take the measure of his vision and his philosophy may do so in the 'Epilogue' to his *Autobiography* (1979), written (in the style of a humane elder Cato) just before his eighty-fifth birthday. He died in Cambridge, Massachusetts, at the age of eighty-eight on May 11, 1980, leaving his wife, Bessie Zaban, his daughter, Eleanor, and a host of students who remember him with affection and respect.

W. H. Bond

#### LEONARD WOODS LABAREE

Leonard Woods Labaree was born on August 26, 1897, near the town of Urumia, Persia (now Iran), the son of Benjamin Woods and Mary (Schauffler) Labaree. His parents were American citizens who served as teachers at a college run by the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions for the Nestorian Christians living in the area. In 1904 his father was killed by Kurdish tribesmen who had mistaken him for another missionary. Mrs. Labaree then brought Leonard and his older sister Clara to the United States, settling in Connecticut, where she became superintendent of the New Britain City Mission and instructor in missionary practice at the Hartford Seminary Foundation. Labaree prepared for college at the Hotchkiss School, Lakeville, Connecticut, and began Williams College with the class of 1919. When the United States entered World War I in 1917, he volunteered for the Army Air Services, receiving his commission as a balloon pilot. After the war he returned to Williams, where he graduated Phi Beta Kappa with his original class one year late in 1920. Following commencement he married Elizabeth M. Calkins, of New London, Connecticut. The couple had two sons, Arthur C., of Old Say-

brook, Connecticut, and Benjamin W., of Mystic, Connecticut, and through them five grandchildren.

In the fall of 1920 Labaree enrolled as a graduate student in history at Yale University, specializing in colonial American history under Charles McLean Andrews. His first teaching position was at the Milford School (1920–22), and then in 1924 he began his forty-five-year membership on the Yale faculty, starting as an instructor. He was promoted to assistant professor in 1927, the year after he completed his dissertation on the royal governors in the American colonies and received his Ph.D. In 1929–30 he was invited to serve as Carnegie visiting professor in Armstrong College of Durham University (England), and upon his return to Yale his first book appeared. *Royal Government in America: A Study of the British Colonial System before 1783* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930) won the American Historical Association's Justin Winsor Prize. In the year following he edited and contributed to *Essays in Colonial History Presented to Charles McLean Andrews by His Students* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1931), and two years later his master's thesis appeared as a pamphlet entitled *Milford, Connecticut: The Early Development of the Town as Shown in Its Land Records* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1933) as part of the series commemorating Connecticut's tercentenary.

Labaree's appointment as an assistant professor was renewed in 1930. Promotions were virtually frozen during the depression, however, and he remained untenured until 1938, by which time he had succeeded Professor Andrews as Yale's colonial American historian. With the opening of the residential colleges in 1934 he was appointed a fellow of Davenport College, an affiliation that afforded him great pleasure for the remainder of his career. He had by then discovered that the role of editor was his strongest forte as a historian. In 1933 he had begun a fourteen-year stint as editor of the *Yale Historical Publications*, during which time he helped guide some forty

volumes of the series through the University Press. Most of these works had originally been written as doctoral dissertations, and Labaree won both respect and gratitude from younger scholars for his editorial assistance in publishing their first books. Meanwhile, his own work continued with the publication of his two-volume edition of *Royal Instructions to British Colonial Governors, 1670-1776* (New York: D. Appleton Century Co., 1935). When Professor Andrews fell ill in 1938, Labaree immediately stepped in to see the fourth volume of his mentor's *The Colonial Period in American History* through the press. For the Connecticut Tercentenary Commission he chose locations and wrote texts for the one-hundred-odd historical markers that to this day stand along the state's roads and highways. When New Haven celebrated its own 300th birthday in 1938, he delivered a graceful commemorative address at Center Church on the Green. Three years later, in 1941, Labaree assumed the duties of historian for the state of Connecticut. During his ten-year term he edited five volumes of *The Records of the State of Connecticut*, covering the period 1782-96.

When the United States entered World War II, Labaree was faced with a difficult decision. He had been a staunch interventionist for over two years and felt it his duty once again to volunteer for the armed services. Yet he was now in his mid-forties with the responsibilities of a wife and two teen-aged sons. He finally decided to stay on at Yale, where he undertook with other members of a much-diminished civilian faculty the teaching of successive waves of Army and Navy officer-candidates. Class schedules ran year-round until the summer of 1945.

After the war Labaree took his turn at various administrative responsibilities, including two successive terms as chairman of the history department. A full professor since 1942, he became Durfee professor and then Farnam professor of history, the latter chair once held by Charles McLean Andrews. Beyond the Yale scene he was the Anson P. Stokes lecturer at New

York University in 1947, the result of which was published as *Conservatism in Early American History* (New York: New York University Press, 1948). He served on the editorial board of the *New England Quarterly*, on the council of the Institute of Early American History and Culture at Williamsburg, Virginia, and was elected to the American Antiquarian Society, the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Historical Society, and the American Philosophical Society. His election to AAS occurred in April 1943. The following April, at the Society's semiannual meeting, he presented a paper, 'The Nature of American Loyalism,' which was published in volume 54 of the Society's *Proceedings*.

When in 1954 Yale University and the American Philosophical Society agreed to sponsor a major new edition of Benjamin Franklin's papers, Labaree was chosen its first editor. Five years were spent collecting, transcribing, and arranging Franklin's voluminous correspondence, during which time Labaree established the rigorous editorial standards for which the series is justly famous. To mark the 250th anniversary of Franklin's birth the editors brought out in 1957 a charming little volume of some of his most delightful letters under the title *Mr. Franklin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957). Two years later the first volume of *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959-) came off the press. The reviews gave the editorial staff highest praise for its achievement, and, as succeeding volumes appeared over the years, Samuel Eliot Morison, Max Savelle, and other leading historians of early American history agreed that the *Franklin Papers* was a remarkable editorial accomplishment. During the next few years Labaree received honorary degrees from Williams College, Bucknell University, Franklin College, Franklin and Marshall College, Dickinson College, and Lehigh University. Labaree continued as editor until the eve of his seventy-second birthday in 1969, by which time fourteen vol-

umes of the *Papers* and a new scholarly edition of the *Autobiography* had been published.

After early residences in Milford and New Haven the Labaree family made its home in Hamden until 1951, when Leonard and Elizabeth bought an old farmhouse in Northford, which they lovingly restored as closely as possible to its original condition of 1778. Labaree quickly won the respect of his new neighbors. His good sense and impartiality earned him positions as town moderator and as chairman of its first planning board. The Labarees also owned a cottage on Nantucket Island, where the couple had been for their honeymoon in 1920. For well over fifty years the family spent at least a part of each summer there, until the cottage was sold in 1977.

Labaree's retirement years were extremely busy and happy ones. He found in genealogy a fascinating challenge which permitted him to continue as a hobby what had been his profession—the study of history. He completed the three-volume history of the Shepard family undertaken by the New Haven Colony Historical Society and with his wife enjoyed many afternoons tracing Labaree and Calkins forebears through town records and cemeteries throughout the state. As the result of their joint searches he was able to present to his sons a remarkably complete account of their ancestors on both sides of the family, a record compiled to the same rigorous standards that distinguished his fifty-year career as a historian. The onset of failing health gradually restricted his physical activities, but until the last months of his life he continued to keep up with current events and his reading of history. He died at his home in Northford on May 5, 1980, at the age of eighty-two.

As teacher, author, and editor, Leonard Labaree dedicated his career as historian to the service of his fellow historians. As husband, father, and grandfather he was the affectionate head of a family in which he took great pride.

Benjamin W. Labaree

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