

more the embodiment of the Library of Congress than any other person, perhaps because you loved it most.' President Lyndon Johnson wrote, 'All branches of the Government and scholars throughout the Nation regret your retirement from Federal service.' He continued to work as honorary consultant in the humanities to 1976, a position held only once before, by Robert Frost.

He was elected to membership in AAS at the annual meeting in 1966, but was present at only one meeting, in 1970. Upon hearing of his election, he wrote to Clifford K. Shipton: 'The news of my election to the American Antiquarian Society could not have made me happier even if I had deserved it. I am highly honored. Presuming you to be in daily communication with him, please present my grateful acknowledgements to the shade of Mr. Thomas.' Mearns represented the Society at the inauguration of President Clarence C. Walton at the Catholic University of America in 1969, and he donated a small group of materials pertaining to his great-great grandfather, a printer named David Chambers, to the manuscript collection.

Mearns was a member of other learned societies, including Phi Beta Kappa, and served with distinction on several Civil War centennial commissions and the Lincoln Sesquicentennial Commission. He also wrote several books, including a history of the first 145 years of the Library of Congress, *The Story Up to Now* (1947); *The Lincoln Papers* (1948); *Declaration of Independence: The Story of a Parchment* (1950); and *Largely Lincoln* (1961). He died May 21, 1981, in Alexandria, Virginia, at the age of eighty-one, and is survived by his wife, Mary Hume Richardson Mearns, and daughter, Anne Mearns Jacoby, as well as by two granddaughters and two great-grandsons.

ANDREW OLIVER

Andrew Oliver, lawyer, author, and devoted trustee and officer of many cultural and educational institutions, was elected to

membership in the American Antiquarian Society in the spring of 1961. In a sense, his election to our Society reflected two of Andy's lifelong interests: antiquarian and artistic endeavors and service to cultural institutions. Three other strands of Andy's life were devotion to family, the Protestant Episcopal Church, and the practice of law.

Born in Morristown, New Jersey, March 14, 1906, he was the son of William Hutchinson Pynchon Oliver and Lydia Winthrop Seabury, and a descendant of one of Massachusetts's great Loyalist families. Poor health resulted in Andy's attending the Mesa Ranch School in Arizona prior to entering Harvard in 1924. He received his bachelor's degree in 1928 and his law degree, also from Harvard, in 1931. For a year thereafter he was employed by the Joint Legislative Committee to investigate the affairs of the city of New York, as one of the many assistants to Judge Seabury. In the summer of 1932, he resigned his connection with the committee and entered the office of Alexander and Green, where he practiced law until 1970. He spent much time, among other things, on railroad reorganizations.

In one Harvard class report, he wrote, 'no layman could comprehend what a lawyer experiences in twenty years of active practice, but any lawyer could better any tale I might tell. I count it my greatest privilege during these twenty years to have been associated with my father, and for the last eight years, until his retirement, as one of his partners.' Ill health in his later years as a practicing lawyer suggested to Andy that the point had come where he should retire from professional endeavors and turn his highly trained mind, his intellectual interests, his warmth and humor, to those other endeavors in which many of his friends felt he was most outstanding, and of which I will speak later.

Blessed with great good fortune, Andy married Ruth Blake in 1936. Three children were born to them: Andrew, Jr., Daniel, and Ruth. The warmth, love, and companionship of the Oliver household was, in turn, a blessing to their friends.

Whether this home was in New York, or later in Boston, or during the summers in Mattapoisett, did not matter; the humor, kindness, hospitality were always the same. One of my great pleasures was to sit on Andy's porch overlooking the sea, in a Brumby rocker, and enjoy his witty appreciation of events, personalities, and institutions. I suspect, though, that Andy may have found this a pale consolation for the sailing which he had so much enjoyed in earlier years.

Andy participated actively in AAS, as well as in the many other organizations with which he was affiliated. He contributed generously to AAS book and unrestricted funds, served in 1967 on an ad hoc committee to review the Society's bylaws, and was one of the two hosts of the members' luncheon in the spring of that year. In New York, he served as a trustee of the General Theological Seminary of the Protestant Episcopal Church, as trustee and treasurer of the Protestant Episcopal Society Promoting Religion and Learning in the State of New York, as chancellor of the Episcopal Diocese of New York, and as vestryman of Trinity Church. He was a trustee of the Provident Loan Society and trustee and first vice-president of the New-York Historical Society. Andy took much pleasure and was highly capable in his post as a commissioner of the National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C. After his move to Boston, he served as president of the Essex Institute, Salem, as trustee of the Boston Athenæum and the New England Historic Genealogical Society, secretary of the Massachusetts Historical Society, and president of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts. In all of these organizations, and in many others, his devotion was matched by effective service. Certainly, as director of the Boston Athenæum I always felt that I could rely and call upon Andy's opinion and judgment at any time, and often did. Always discreet, it was by chance that I discovered on several occasions the generosity with which Andy treated many individuals—some only acquaintances—who, in his opinion, merited consideration and aid.

Among his many publications, space will permit mention of

only a few. The earliest ones had to do with his ancestors, such as the privately printed *Faces of a Family, An Illustrated Catalog of Portraits and Silhouettes of Daniel Oliver, 1664-1732 And Elizabeth Belcher, His Wife, The Oliver Descendants and Their Wives Between 1827 and 1850* (1960). In 1967, *Portraits of John and Abigail Adams* was published, and *Portraits of John Quincy Adams and His Wife* appeared in 1970. This was followed in 1972 by his edition of *The Journal of Samuel Curwen, Loyalist*. In 1977, Andrew Oliver compiled for the National Portrait Gallery *Auguste Edouart's Silhouettes of Eminent Americans, 1839-1844*, and also published *The Portraits of John Marshall* for the Institute of Early American History and Culture. *Windows On the Past: Portraits At the Essex Institute* with Bryant F. Tolles, Jr. was published in 1981.

Many distinctions and honors came to Andrew Oliver. In 1970, he was awarded a doctorate of canon law by the General Theological Seminary. While truly pleased by this honor, Andy remained amused that almost no one knew what a doctorate of canon law was. His humor and kindness illuminated his service as president of the Tavern Club, Boston, and his pungent comments (from the floor) did much to enliven my sometimes stumbling introductions of speakers at the Club of Odd Volumes. What fun he made every occasion, a sure toastmaster supplied with apt and prompt response. Fortunate, too, were those to whom Andy addressed some of his verse, or doggerel, as he preferred to call it.

A brief illness brought the conclusion of Andy's life on October 20, 1981, in Boston. A service was held at the Church of the Advent, widely attended by his many friends. His departure has left an unfillable gap, but I (like so many others), rejoice in the thought of his loving, effective life. He is survived by Ruth, their three children, and seven grandchildren.

Rodney Armstrong

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