

Obituaries

MORGAN BULKELEY BRAINARD

Morgan Brainard was exceedingly interested in this Society. We wrote him frequently on historical matters, and he donated to the Library many rare publications, chiefly of Connecticut interest. Yet he never attended a meeting of the Society during the fifteen years of his membership. Attention to the affairs of the Aetna Life and participation in the meetings of the many corporations with which he was associated interfered with his outside engagements. But he promised faithfully that he would be present at our annual meeting in Worcester in October of this year. Death intervened, when he passed away peacefully on August 28, 1957.

Morgan Brainard was born at Hartford, January 8, 1879, the son of Leverett Y. and Mary Bulkeley Brainard, nephew of Morgan B. Bulkeley, Governor of Connecticut and United States Senator, and grandson of Eliphalet A. Bulkeley, founder of the Aetna Life Insurance Company. He was graduated from Yale in 1900, with a degree in law three years later. After a brief practice in law, he entered the service of Aetna Life in 1905. In 1922 he was made president. In 1956 he retired as president, after serving more than half a century with the company. During this period the Aetna Life Company increased its premiums from nine to nearly five hundred million dollars, and insurance

in force soared from \$250 million to \$15 billion. His company became the seventh largest of American insurance companies.

A story that has become legend relates to a time in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, when a reporter was questioning Mr. Brainard, and asked him to what he could attribute his rise to the presidency of the Aetna Life. Mr. Brainard pondered for a moment, and then gravely replied: "To my sterling character and worth." The reporter, with equal gravity, prepared to write this down. "Don't write that," Mr. Brainard laughed, and added: "You'd better say I became president because my uncle was president before me."

Mr. Brainard was a director of many local and nationally known business organizations. He maintained a close relationship with Yale, being secretary of his class. He was a director of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad until his resignation in 1955. He was elected a member of the American Antiquarian Society in 1942. The organization in which he took the greatest personal interest was the Walpole Society, a group of collectors and scholars, of which he was the senior member, its treasurer for many years, and finally its chairman presiding at the meetings. His tact, his wit, and his ability to make friendships will always be remembered by the members of the Walpole Society.

He possessed a keen historical sense and was a well known collector of Connecticut antiques, specializing in ancient tavern signs, clocks, and Old State House china. He had a remarkable knowledge of early Hartford history.

Mr. Brainard married Eleanor Stuart Moffat, April 27, 1905, and was survived by her, and by four sons and a daughter.

C. S. B.

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