

## JAMES MELVILLE HUNNEWELL.

There have been few things which have saddened me so much of late as the death of James M. Hunnewell on March 22, 1954. He was born at Boston on May 22, 1876, a son of James Frothingham Hunnewell, a merchant, book collector, and author, and Sarah Melville (Furness) Hunnewell. He was educated at High School, Boston, and at Harvard where he took his B.A. in 1898 and his LL.B. in 1904. He then entered the Boston law office of W. L. Briggs, but after a year went into private practice for himself. His chief interest, particularly in later years, was private work. Although he was one of the most gentle and quiet of men, he took an active interest in Republican and politics, and served a term in the General Court. In 1898 he joined the First Corp. Cadets, in which he in time became a captain. During the First World War he served in the State Guard and saw three months of service as a sergeant during the Boston police strike.

A classmate once remarked that Jim Hunnewell was interested in soldiering, yachting, and book collecting, but that his real hobby was good works. He was clerk and pillar of Trinity Church, and an industrious laborer in the interests of many charitable organizations. The learned societies benefited in the same way. He served for long terms as treasurer of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, the New England Historic Genealogical Society, and the Prince Society; and he was a faithful servant of the Massachusetts Historical Society and the Club of Odd Volume.

It was while Mr. Hunnewell was building up the book-plate collection of the last, that he came into contact with the American Antiquarian Society. He well remembered his father's active interest in this organization, of which he was a member from 1867 to 1916, and when he was living

elected in 1927 he had a pleasant feeling of resuming a family association. In 1937 he was elected to the Council, on which he has been one of the most faithful members. Several times he entertained the members of the Society at his home on Chestnut Street or at the Club of Odd Volumes after the Boston meetings.

Rarely is the son of a collector interested in his father's hobbies, or studies, or even in related activities. Jim was not awed by his father's vast collection of illustrated Americana, nor, in spite of the fact that he preferred to collect in easier fields, was he indifferent to it. It was because he appreciated it that he presented it to this Library in 1935, the most important single gift of books which the Society had received since the original Isaiah Thomas donation. Its importance did not lie in the fact that it comprised thousands of items, but that to a large extent it covered an area in which the Library had never been in a position to buy. It was the kind of collection which could have been built up only by a gentleman of large means, traveling through the bookstores of Europe between the Civil War and the First World War. It ranged from incunabula and DeBry's *Great Voyages* to the earliest American comics and almost unique sets of American views. Besides the illustrated material it included some of the great rarities of the first century of New England printing.

This was only the greatest of Mr. Hunnewell's many gifts to the Library. In 1937 he joined with Foster Stearns in buying for us the Hawaiian collection of Hiram Bingham, and to this he later added the collection of Hawaiian printing begun by his grandfather, James Hunnewell, the sea captain who carried the first band of missionaries to the Islands. These two collections gave us the largest collection of Hawaiian material in a mainland library. Having given his father's collection of Charlestown material to the State,

he built up a greater, which he gave to us. Sometimes he brought us rare newspaper files, or small bits from estates which he settled. His most surprising gift was a large bundle of United States currency, most of which had been placed in his father's safe in Civil War days for people who could never be traced thereafter.

I have spoken at length of Mr. Hunnewell's gifts because no one would ever have heard of them from him. Toward the many libraries which enjoyed his bounty he always maintained the attitude that they were conferring the kindness by accepting the gifts. Entirely modest, he was without affectation or self-consciousness. If he made a mistake, as we all do in complicated bibliographical matters, he was the first to call attention to it, without a trace of an alibi. When we made mistakes he tried to convince us that we were right, or at least that the mistake was the best thing that could have happened. For these good qualities we loved him, and it will take us a long time to become accustomed to his absence. He is survived by his widow, the former Emeline Cushman Ticknor, to whom he was married on April 20, 1911; by a daughter, Mrs. Richard S. Scott; and by four sons, James, Thomas, William, and Richard.

C. K. S.

### GEORGE ALBERT ZABRISKIE

George A. Zabriskie, a descendant of early Polish settlers and a native of New York City, was born on December 7, 1868, a son of John Albert and Martha L. (Knox) Zabriskie. He attended the public schools and entered the flour business in New York City in 1883. He was the representative of the Pillsbury company when Herbert Hoover appointed him national administrator of sugar and flour. For his work in this connection he was decorated by Belgium, Iceland,

Copyright of Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society is the property of American Antiquarian Society and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.