

AUGUSTUS PEABODY LORING

Gus Loring was to many of his friends the quintessential New Englander. We appreciated the Yankee twang in his voice, the shrewd glint in his eye, and the chuckle that was immediately identifiable in a large group. His venerable felt hat, complete with hole and worn in almost every season of the year, his jaunty bowties, and a lock of hair falling over his brow, were all part of Gus's distinct personality and appearance. This appearance and personality was wonderfully caught in a pastel portrait by Bradley Phillips that hung for a while, by request of his family, in the Boston Athenaeum. The effect of seeing Gus in this painting was as galvanizing upon his friends and acquaintances as was his presence.

Elected to membership in the American Antiquarian Society in October 1955, Gus was following in the footsteps of his father, Augustus Peabody Loring, II, a long-time devoted member of the Society who served on the Council and was a principal support to Clarence S. Brigham in his activities as director. Gus's own service to the Society was as a member of its finance committee during the 1970s and as a generous donor to the library. Because of many professional and other obligations, Gus was an irregular attender of Antiquarian Society meetings, but he was host for the reception following the spring meeting of 1978. Gus was not a man to join organizations simply for the sake of joining, but he felt a commitment to those organizations whose invitations he accepted and had a Yankee sense of his obligation to them.

Born in Beverly, Massachusetts, on August 24, 1915, he was the son of Augustus P. and Rosamond (Bowditch) Loring. After Groton, he was a member of the Harvard class of 1938 and received his master's degree two years later from the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration. He joined his father in the trust business, remaining with the firm until the summer of 1942, when, after a number of unsuccessful efforts to enter the Navy, he was accepted for service by the Coast Guard. Four months of concentrated mental and physical gymnastics saw Gus emerge

from the Coast Guard Academy as an ensign. From January 1944 until V-J Day, Gus had a varied and active time serving with the Coast Guard, mainly on a 125-foot Coast Guard cutter off the coast of Greenland and out of Miami and Key West, with occasional weather patrols in the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico.

On his first two-week leave from the Coast Guard after receiving his commission, Gus became engaged to Elizabeth Blake of Boston, whom he married in 1944. Four children, Peter, Ellen, Christopher, and Jonathan, were born to the Loring, and Gus continued his course as a professional trustee, succeeding in 1951 to his father's business. This firm over the years became Loring, Wolcott and Coolidge. Part of Gus's strong personality came from his enthusiasm for yachting and the sea. He cruised the Maine and Nova Scotia coasts extensively in his boat *Jingo*, which he had helped design. His enthusiasm for sailing spilled over in a love affair with a series of charts called the Atlantic Neptune. He had a scholar's and sailor's knowledge of the charts and the region. His collection of charts and views, perhaps unparalleled in this country, were given to the Peabody Museum in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1983.

A long-time member and officer of Boston's Club of Odd Volumes, Gus's enthusiasm for libraries was well known to the club's members. For an extended period, he was one of the most devoted friends and significant supporters of the Harvard University Library, a member of the Overseers' Committee to Visit the University Library, 1960-86, serving as vice-chairman and then as chairman (1977-85). At Harvard he established a book fund, with the cryptic title The Brybo Fund, in honor of two of his favorite librarians, William H. Bond and Douglas W. Bryant.

Gus served the Boston Athenaeum, another Loring family tradition, as loyally and successfully as he did Harvard. He succeeded his father as a trustee of my institution in 1951 and was elected treasurer in 1957. He remained in this post until 1981, at which time he was reelected a trustee. His humor, patience, and clear, level-headed good sense helped steer the Athenaeum through

some difficult times and problems. His knowledge of the community and his ability as a negotiator, as well as his keen sense of what was right, were essential ingredients in the successful negotiations of the sales that eventually led to joint ownership of Gilbert Stuart's portraits of George and Martha Washington by the National Portrait Gallery and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Other organizations that he joined and served with distinction were the Bostonian Society, the John Carter Brown Library, the Peabody Museum of Salem, the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, the Trustees of Public Reservations, and the Wilmarth Sheldon Lewis Library of Yale. A member of Harvard's Board of Overseers, Gus was also a trustee at one time at Boston University, Connecticut College, Governor Dummer Academy, and the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution.

In his professional role, Gus served as president of the Plymouth Cordage Company and as a director of the New England Merchants National Bank, Haverhill Gas Company, Hollingsworth & Vose Company, Massachusetts Hospital Life Insurance Company, New England Merchants Company, and Community Workshops, Inc. Those of us who shared membership with Gus in a variety of social organizations will recall his appreciation of fine Madeira and a good dinner. He was a life member of Boston's Somerset Club, belonging also to the Tavern Club, the Union Club, and to dining clubs such as the Examiner Club and the Wednesday Evening Club of 1777. He was for many years a member of the Manchester Yacht Club and the Cruising Club of America as well of the Lodge of St. Andrew and of the Walpole Society. My own memories of Gus are particularly entwined with the trips we took together. Anything that was a challenge, such as going up the rocky slope of the Parthenon at a rapid trot, Gus wanted to do. We also shared an enthusiasm for collecting. The watercolors of Thomas Rowlandson were of as great an interest to Gus as the work of Des Barres, and he delighted in the antics and characters of other collectors.

Gus died on November 27, 1986, after a painful and long illness

that he humorously, bravely, and patiently endured. This last role was a Yankee performance by one who is much missed in the lives of a multitude of friends and in many New England institutions.

Rodney Armstrong

RICHARD BARKSDALE HARWELL

Richard Barksdale Harwell, historian, bibliographer, editor, and librarian, died in his home town of Washington, Georgia, at the age of seventy-three. A member of the American Antiquarian Society since 1964, he was a constant supporter of its interests and, until about five years ago, an occasional presence at Society meetings.

At the Society's semiannual meeting in Boston in April 1971 Rick Harwell made a presentation entitled 'Brief Candle: The Confederate Theatre,' a paper that typified the kind of thing he did best. Rick was happiest and most successful when exploring the soul and substance of the Confederacy, a phenomenon he perceived as a too 'brief candle' in its own right. The many works of his own authorship include his *Confederate Music*, *The War They Fought*, *In Tall Cotton*, and *Confederate Hundred*. If he wrote extensively, he edited even more, with some thirty-six books and innumerable papers benefiting from his editorial attention. These included John D. Billings's *Hardtack and Coffee*, Kate Cumming's *Diary of a Confederate Nurse*, and Henry Hotze's *Three Months in the Confederate Army*, as well as his *Confederate Reader* and, a rare departure, his *Union Reader*.

Rick had his own favorites among all of these edited works. One was his edition of *Margaret Mitchell's "Gone with the Wind" Letters, 1936-1949*, a Book-of-the-Month-Club alternate selection published by Macmillan in 1976. Another was his *Lee*, a one-volume condensation (issued by Scribners in 1961) of Douglas S. Freeman's *R. E. Lee*. Those who knew him will understand why Rick particularly liked these two titles: more than all else, he was a

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.