

knew Fred Field especially well in college days, and followed his career with interest ever since his graduation. He was in every way a worthy successor of our great Puritan chief justices.
C. S. B.

LATHROP COLGATE HARPER

The death of Lathrop Colgate Harper on August 11, 1950, in the eighty-fourth year of his age, removed one of the last remaining links between bookmen of the present generation and those of the closing decades of the nineteenth century. His career in bookselling carried back through sixty-three years to the later Brinley sales and failed to reach by one year only the Samuel L. M. Barlow sale of 1886.

Lathrop Harper was the complete bookman. Throughout his long business life his mind was continuously absorbed in problems of book buying, bookselling, or book collecting. In the course of those years he saw everything and met everybody in his field of interest, and he forgot nothing that came within his experience. In his ordinary conversation memorable figures of the past walked in and out as if they were still in the flesh and living just around the corner, such figures as those of the well-remembered New York bookseller, Charles L. Woodward, and his young clerk, Wilberforce Eames, later to become the greatest of American bibliographers. Reminiscences of notable copies of great books, of booksellers of America and Europe, of auctioneers and auctions, of collectors, or of bibliographers crowded one another in that timeless world of books in which he lived and which, without conscious intention, he reconstructed for those who sat and listened to his words. Especially notable in this procession which passed in review in Mr. Harper's talk were the collectors—Lefferts, Have-

meyer, and Dr. Purple of the early days, or, of our own time, Henry F. De Puy, Grenville Kane, Herschel V. Jones, Matt Bushnell Jones, James Comly McCoy, John H. Scheide, Tracy W. McGregor, and, it could be said almost with literal truth, others too numerous to mention.

Lathrop Harper, a veritable New Yorker, was born in 1867, the son of James Philip Harper, wholesale tea merchant, and Margaret Perego, descendant of a family long settled in New Jersey and New York City. His great-grandfather, James Harper, came to this country from England before the Revolution and settled on Long Island. One of James Harper's sons was the father of the four brothers of the historic publishing firm of Harper Brothers of New York. Samuel Barker Harper, another son of James, and the grandfather of Lathrop, married Christina, daughter of Philip J. Arcularius, alderman of New York City and member of the state Assembly. Lathrop Harper was married in 1912 to Mabel Herbert Urner, of New York, who survives him.

After completing his education at home and in the public schools of New York, Mr. Harper went into the rare book business in 1887 with an elder brother, Francis P. Harper. From its original location at 4 Barclay Street, the firm thus established moved successively in the next forty years to 17 East 16th Street, 14 West 22nd Street, 437 Fifth Avenue, and in 1928, to 8 West 40th Street, the present location opposite the New York Public Library. Francis P. Harper retired from the business in 1910 and died in 1930.

It was after his brother's retirement that Lathrop Harper turned slowly towards specialization in Americana of the period before 1800. Before many years he had reached a position of international distinction among dealers in American books. His catalogues were careful, scholarly productions, printed without the device of scareheads to

emphasize the unusual title. One felt an instinctive confidence in the wares thus offered and in his estimate of their importance to the collector. His descriptions of condition were based upon the rule of integrity which governed every department of his life. In the pricing of his books he followed, though slowly and with restraint and consideration for the buyer, the general advance which occurred in his time. Collectors seldom got a bargain to boast of in their dealing with him, but neither did they ever get a falsely described book or an overrated book. The series of six Americana catalogues which he issued in the period 1941-1948 mark the height of his attainment in that particular field of bookselling. It was characteristic of Mr. Harper's attitude towards his chosen subject that these catalogues, full of bibliographical data, were more notable for variety and breadth of scope, for predominance of important printed source material than for the presence in them of individual high spots. But neither were the high spots without good representation.

The titles that appeared in these catalogues, however, by no means represent the full list of works of Americana which passed through Mr. Harper's hands. It sometimes seems, indeed, that his greatest sales were of books which he bought at auction, or on his annual tour of the European markets, and sold before he had a chance to catalogue them. Among these were such items as the first Latin Columbus Letter of Rome, 1493; the Spanish Southwest books collected by Henry R. Wagner; one of three known perfect copies of the first issue of John Smith's *True Relation*; one of three known copies, with the maps, of Joannes de Stobnicza, *Introductio in Ptholomei Cosmographiam*, Cracow, 1512; a copy of Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations*, with the "Wright-Molyneux" map in two sheets in pristine condition; a perfect copy with maps, of the Ptolemy of

1477, misdated 1462; the Cushman *Sermon* of 1622; Cartier's *Discours du Voyage* of 1598; the Lallemand Jesuit Relation of 1627; Muenster's *A treatyse of the newe India*, of London, 1553; and the Gentleman of Elvas *Relaçam* of the De Soto expedition, of Evora, 1557. Not many more important books than these exist in their respective fields.

Early in the 1920s Mr. Harper expanded the scope of his business to take in the buying and selling of books of fifteenth-century origin. In this field, also, his catalogues were marked by careful annotation, exact description of condition, and soundly based prices. He was humble in his reverence for the great typographical monuments which passed through his hands. A series of five annotated catalogues, with introductions, issued in the period 1927-1930, offered for sale one thousand incunabula from the Harper stock, an extraordinary feat for an American bookseller. These catalogues, collected and issued in a single volume with the title, *A Selection of Incunabula*, have become works of reference. Their one thousand titles did not comprise an aggregation of books brought together regardless of subject matter simply because of their fifteenth-century origin. Each one, on the contrary, had been acquired by Mr. Harper for some feature of special interest. He respected the study of incunabula from the standpoint of type and presses, but to him subject matter and position in the history of learning, art, and literature were all-important. In his introduction to the collected edition of these catalogues, George Parker Winship, rejoicing in our escape from the old slavery to bibliographical and typographical problems in incunabula study, wrote as follows: "Mr. Harper, combining the wisdom of his years in the bookmarts with an undimmed freshness of vision, saw the way in which scholarship ought to go, long before the professional plodders knew that there was ever to be any turning."

The achievement of which Mr. Harper was proudest in his life was the part he played in the formation and development of certain great libraries and private collections. He brought his stock together without much thought as to casual sales. He bought with definite ends in view, keeping always in mind the needs of his friends among the private collectors and collecting libraries. It was useless to try to persuade him to sell you a book he had bought with another customer in mind, and it was almost as useless for the other customer to think that he really didn't need that book and to resist buying it. Sometimes it took years for him to realize that Mr. Harper was right. Usually he found that the book had been laid aside for him and could be bought at no advance in price.

Many institutions of today gratefully recognize Lathrop Harper's interest in them as a factor of importance in their foundation and development. He looked back with satisfaction, but without complacency, upon the part he played in assembling the books which form the William L. Clements Library at the University of Michigan; the Chapin Library at Williams College; the McGregor Library at the University of Virginia; and the John Work Garrett Library, now the possession of the Johns Hopkins University. He sold a good number of books of consequence to the Pierpont Morgan Library, with which he was closely associated through his long friendship with the late Belle da Costa Greene. His helpfulness to the John Carter Brown Library over a period of nearly thirty years took many forms. Not only did he bring to light in great numbers books which it needed, but in periods of financial stringency when payment was necessarily difficult he laid aside for it and held for years many specially desired books. In other ways he served its interests as unflinchingly in hard times as in periods of ease. It is revealing also that he held in great affection many libraries

to which he never sold a book. He loved quality in men and books and institutions.

Mr. Harper's interest in books led him naturally to take an important part in the affairs of the Bibliographical Society of America and to maintain continuous interest in the activities of the Grolier Club. For years he was a member of the Visiting Committee of the Harvard College Library, a position he felt he could properly hold because he never tried to sell any books to Harvard. In 1936 he was elected to membership in the American Antiquarian Society, and thereafter made the annual October visit to Worcester one of the chief events of his year.

Academic honors came to Mr. Harper in the form of an honorary M.A. conferred upon him by the University of Michigan in 1928, and an honorary Litt.D. by Brown University in 1948. Paraphrasing the concluding sentences of his citation for the Brown doctorate, we may say of him that he practised bookselling in the spirit of a learned profession and thereby achieved lifelong personal happiness and a place of honor in the memories of many men and many institutions.

L. C. W.

GLENN TILLEY MORSE

The Reverend Glenn Tilley Morse was born at St. Louis, Missouri, on July 30, 1870, a son of Thomas Perry and Mary Amelia (Glenn) Morse. He attended Smith Academy, St. Louis, and Mr. Stowell's School, in Lexington, Massachusetts, from which he entered Harvard College in 1891. After two years he left, but he returned to finish his course and take his B.A. in 1898. Then he entered the Episcopal Theological School, at Cambridge, where he received his B.D. in 1901. As a deacon, he became at once curate of St. Anne's Church in Lowell. In 1902 he was ordained and

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