

after a month's suffering with a heart ailment complicated by pneumonia.

In 1912 Van Doren married Irita Bradford, the present editor of the Book Review Section of the *New York Herald Tribune*. He is survived by their three daughters, Mrs. Jerome Davis Ross, Mrs. Tom Torre Bevans, and Mrs. Spencer A. Kaw, and by seven grandchildren. In 1939 he married Jean Wright, who died in 1945. C. K. S.

DIXON WECTER

Dixon Wecter was born at Houston, Texas, on January 12, 1906, a son of John Joseph and Eugenia (Dixon) Wecter. When he was four his father, an employee of the Southern Pacific Railroad, died. His mother raised the family by teaching school. Dixon took his B.A. at Baylor in 1925 and moved on to Yale, where in 1926 he took his M.A. and won a Sterling Junior Research Fellowship. With the aid of a Rhodes Scholarship he went in 1928 to Merton College, Oxford, where he rowed and took a B.Litt. degree in 1930. He returned to the United States to become an instructor in English at the University of Denver, whence, after a year, he removed to the University of Colorado, where he was assistant and associate professor in English until 1939. During those years he took his Ph.D. at Yale and married one of his students, Elizabeth Farrar. In 1939 he moved to California where he became a research fellow at the Huntington and an assistant professor at the University of California at Los Angeles. During the year 1945 he had the stimulating experience of teaching at the University of Sidney, the first professor of American history in Australia.

Wecter's background and his crossing of the fields of literature and history gave his writings a quality unique in

his generation. His *Saga of American Society* (1937) perhaps shows the imprint of his friend Thomas Wolfe, who encouraged it. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr., influenced his *Hero in America* (1941), which barely escaped being a popular book. His very apt *When Johnny Comes Marching Home* (1944) won the Life-in-America prize, which rather obscured the fact that the book was a work of profound research. As a result of the chapter on Mark Twain which he contributed to the *Literary History of the United States* he was in 1946 appointed literary editor of the Mark Twain estate. His last important work, *The Age of the Great Depression* (1948), reflects the fact that he was politically as well as physically born in Texas. He had also the appearance, charm, and courtesy which one associates with Texans.

After one of his early visits to this library he wrote that experience had taught him "that the AAS is just about the ideal workshop." We might have replied that he was about the ideal visitor. He was elected to the society in 1944, but never happened to be on this side of the continent at the time of our meetings. Like the rest of the fraternity of bookmen we were shocked to hear that he had died of a heart attack on June 24, 1950, shortly after making a speech.

C. K. S.

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