

Obituaries

EDGAR ERSKINE HUME

General Hume was born at Frankfort, Kentucky, on December 26, 1889, a son of Dr. Enoch Edgar and Mary (South) Hume. He took a B.A. at Centre College in 1908 and an M.A. in 1909. Thence he proceeded to Johns Hopkins where he took his M.D. in 1913. After a year on the staff of the Johns Hopkins hospital he went to Europe, where he took medical degrees at the universities of Munich and Rome. After the earthquake of 1915 he served as Medical Director of the American Relief Expedition to Italy. Returning to the United States, he entered the Army Medical School from which in 1917 he was graduated first in his class. He was serving at Fort Leavenworth when ordered back to Europe to take command of a base hospital with the Italian army. During the War he saw active service in Italy and France, and after it was appointed American Red Cross Commissioner to Serbia. In this capacity he made a name for himself battling the spread of typhus in the Balkins.

In 1920 Hume was placed in charge of the army laboratory at Boston, where with his usual intellectual eagerness he took advantage of the opportunity to study in the departments of Public Health at Harvard and M.I.T. From 1922 to 1926 he was editor in charge of the publication of the great catalogue of the Army Medical Library, again taking advantage of his location by taking his doctorate in Public Health at Johns Hopkins. After a turn as a medical inspector he returned to the Army Medical Library as

librarian in 1932. Four years later he was transferred to Carlisle to become Director of Administration in the Medical Field Service School. He went to North Africa on the staff of General Eisenhower and participated in the invasion of Italy, serving as chief of public health in Sicily and chief of Allied Military Government of the Fifth Army in the Mediterranean Theatre. He served as head of the military governments of the chief Italian cities as they were successively taken, and had the pleasure of appointing a mayor of Rome. After the War he served four years as supervisor of health in the United States Zone of Austria.

On his way back to service in the United States, Hume picked up his M.P.H. degree at Harvard. He was serving as chief of the reorientation branch of the Department of the Army in June, 1949, when he was promoted to the rank of major general and appointed Chief Surgeon of the Far East Command. The next year he was appointed Surgeon of the United Nations Command in Korea. He returned to the United States in November, 1951, retired from the army on December 31, and died of a heart attack at the Walter Reed Hospital on January 24, 1952. He is survived by a son, First Lieutenant Edgar E. Hume, Jr., and by a daughter, Mrs. Eleanor Hume Ofutt of Frankfort.

Of Dr. Hume's work as a medical man and an army administrator, it is enough to point out that he received an incredible number of decorations, thirty-nine of them from foreign governments. He held twenty-three honorary degrees, more than half of them foreign. Essential in making his success possible was his remarkable facility with foreign languages and his ability to get along with people of other nations. Although his personality was that of a strong administrator, his attitude toward those in his charge was that of a friend rather than a conqueror. Many times he was sent to represent the United States at con-

gresses or commemorative events. His social instincts were strong. He was a member of more than forty medical, historical, fraternal, and social organizations. At the time of his death he was Vice President General of the Society of the Cincinnati. Incredibly, he found time to write some four hundred books and articles, mostly on historical and biographical subjects. He was elected to this Society in October, 1951, in recognition of his work and in anticipation that he would be an active member. C. K. S.

VICTOR HUGH PALTSITS

Dr. Paltsits had attained the distinction of being the second oldest member of this Society when death claimed him on October 3, 1952. He was born in New York City on July 12, 1867, a son of William Thomas and Sidonia Ida (Loose) Paltsits. From the public schools he went to Cooper Institute, where from 1882 to 1886 he took scientific courses, working for two years of the period with Thomas A. Edison in his first machine shop. However, linguistics drew him, and at Columbia and with tutors he studied not only modern and classical languages, but ancient Egyptian and Coptic as well. In 1888 he entered the employ of the Lenox Library as reading-room attendant, and in the course of years worked up to the office of assistant librarian. He firmly believed that "the most enjoyable part of life is work," and he bemoaned the fact that life did not contain hours enough to permit him to do all of the historical research and editing which were waiting for his hand. Although the volume of his careful, meticulous writings is amazing, he had an equal appetite for the company of the librarians, bibliographers, book collectors, and historians, whom he found at the meetings of societies. Conscience

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