

The American Antiquarian Society joins with the American world of art and letters in tribute to its member Archer Huntington, the "wise and generous soul who did so much for his country and the cause of beauty, craftsmanship and integrity in its arts and in its life." T. J. D.

ROBERT LINCOLN O'BRIEN

Robert Lincoln O'Brien was born in Abington, Massachusetts, on September 14, 1865, a son of Patrick O'Brien, a native of Cork, and his wife Lydia Howard Dunham. At the age of fourteen he lost his father and left school to go to work in his brother's heel-manufacturing business. Here he kept the books, ran the steam engine, and drove the delivery wagon. To please his mother he entered the Bridgewater State Normal School in 1882. He never had liked the prospect of teaching, and when he found that his first job, in Natick, paid only \$10 a week, he was sure that he had been right. His next position was at Pinkerton Academy in Derry, New Hampshire, where he found time to learn Greek and Latin and otherwise to fit himself for college. After a year at Dartmouth he transferred to the Lawrence Scientific School, and thence into the senior year at Harvard College. When moved by circumstances he used to say that he was prepared for college at Dartmouth. At Harvard, he took the Sumner Prize in International Law and, although older than most of his classmates, was chosen president of the Harvard Union and secretary of the Harvard Economic Club.

On the Monday following his graduation *cum laude* at the Commencement of 1891, O'Brien went to work as a reporter for the *Boston Evening Transcript*. The next year

he was borrowed by Grover Cleveland to serve as his personal stenographer and secretary. After the election he moved into the White House with the title of "Executive Clerk to the President." In 1895 he became Washington reporter for the *Transcript*, and ten years later returned to Boston to become its editor. Here he remained until 1910 when the reorganization of the *Boston Herald* gave him the opportunity to become its editor and the president of the Boston Publishing Company.

The many delightful stories which are told of O'Brien's foibles and wit in the newspaper world must be left for the anecdotes of his associates. He was early a political oracle, for after his experience with Cleveland, he had charge of a *Ladies' Home Journal* column, "What the President Thinks," in which his work was to interpret Theodore Roosevelt. In political conversation his liking for a bon mot sometimes overcame his sense of accuracy. He became a member of the Gridiron Club in 1899, and thereafter in both Washington and Boston contributed to the gaiety of a number of such social organizations.

On the more serious side O'Brien was an organizer of the National Society for the Promotion of Fine Arts, chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Massachusetts State Library, and a member of the Massachusetts Historical Society and of the American Antiquarian Society, to which he was elected in 1928. He was not a good attender of meetings, but a reasonably generous supporter. For many years he promised to write an intimate biography of President Cleveland.

In 1928 O'Brien resigned from the *Herald*, and three years later he was appointed by President Hoover to the Tariff Commission. Reappointed by F. D. Roosevelt, he resigned after one year of his second term. He continued to lecture and serve on committees, and was justly awarded

four honorary degrees. After his formal retirement he continued to live in Washington in the winter and to travel in the summer. His first wife, Emily Ayers Young, to whom he was married on February 19, 1895, died in 1945. In 1950 he married Miss Helen Victoria Brown, and with her resumed the traveling which had fascinated him since his first voyage abroad in 1903 as a reporter. His activities continued until about two years ago, when he became incapacitated by the illness which carried him off on November 23, 1955.

Mr. O'Brien gave an impression of greatness which goes beyond the record of his career. He was no crusader. Although a lifelong Unitarian, he was comfortably orthodox on social and political questions. Perhaps the answer is that he was a great newspaperman, correctly interpreting the public mind instead of trying to change it. C. K. S.

STANLEY THOMAS WILLIAMS

Stanley T. Williams was born at Meriden, Connecticut, on October 25, 1888, a son of Charles Merriam and Emeline Beaumont (MacFarland) Williams. He took his B.A. at Yale in 1911, and his Ph.D. in 1915, and immediately joined the teaching staff there. Except for some study at the Sorbonne, two years of military service, and a year's teaching at Upsala, he spent all of his career at Yale, working up through the academic ranks to the Sterling Professorship of American Literature. He introduced the first formal course in American literature at Yale, and served as chairman of the Department of English and director of graduate studies in the Department of American Studies.

Although a most conscientious teacher, Williams found time to write or edit a score of books on English and Ameri-

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