

RUSSELL STURGIS PAINE

The death of Russell Sturgis Paine at the age of eighty-seven on January 3, 1959, brought to an end a dynasty intimately connected with this Society since his ancestor William Paine was elected first vice-president in 1812. Russell was a son of James P. and Sarah L. (Turner) Paine, and was educated at the English High School and graduated at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in 1891. He had a natural bent for engineering and mechanics, but the death of his father left him with problems of real estate management which occupied most of his time for some years. His one real break with his background came during World War I when he saw active naval service as a navigating officer.

Mr. Paine was moderately active in local organizations, being a trustee of the Rural Cemetery and of the Natural History Society, and a member of the First Unitarian Church. He early took to sending us books which turned up as he settled estates, and in 1926 he was elected a member. Since 1938 he has been a faithful member of the Council. He has wisely advised as to investments, has contributed generously to our funds, has scouted for libraries which we might acquire, and has with amazing consistency turned up useful and valuable books, although this was a field which he knew only as a reader with wide interests. His real hobby was the collection of the common stock of short-line railroads and similar obscure corporations. Since his knowledge of these was unusual and his judgment good he did not fare too badly even though his main financial activities were in connection with New England textiles.

A keen interest in tennis kept Mr. Paine and his wife, the former Susanne Riddle, active in Worcester society for many years. After her death, on March 6, 1953, Russell was

rarely happy. A capitalist to the core, an old-school Republican, he saw little in the modern world to please him. The proposal to run what seemed to him to be a needless super highway over the site of his house seemed to him to be typical of the times. Although there were occasions in our long years of association when I had to disagree with him, I found him a very lovable individual, and it was with deep sadness that I watched the approach of the end which he welcomed. From his estate we shall eventually obtain the means adequately to record the services of the Paine family to the Society.

C. K. S.

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