

Obituaries

JACOB HIATT

Jacob Hiatt, entrepreneur and philanthropist, died at the age of ninety-five at his home in Worcester, on February 25, 2001. He became a member of the American Antiquarian Society on April 21, 1965, attended its meetings regularly, and served on the Council from 1981 to 1988. He was recognized at the annual meeting in 1989 for his contributions to the Society and named an honorary councillor.

Hiatt was a native of Lithuania where he received a bachelor's degree and a degree in jurisprudence from the University of Lithuania. He was an assistant district attorney and a circuit judge before coming to the United States in 1935, speaking Hebrew, Lithuanian, Russian, and German, but no English. Not long after his arrival in the United States, he met Frances Levine, a graduate of Boston University, who spoke Hebrew and became his translator and in 1937 his wife. After she died in 1980, he made gifts to underwrite educational projects at a number of institutions in her honor. These gifts included the Frances Hiatt Fellowship at AAS. During the years it was offered, this fellowship for a doctoral candidate brought to AAS twenty young scholars whose work has enriched the Society and the profession.

Hiatt began his business career in a small shop in Orange, Massachusetts, where he made shoeboxes for his uncle, Alexander Hiatt. The shoe business ultimately became Stride Rite Corporation, a leading manufacturer of shoes, while Jacob Hiatt's box business became Rand-Whitney Packaging Corporation, one of the country's largest manufacturers of packaging containers and

the original source of his wealth. Known as Jack, he was not the only distinguished member of the Hiatt family. His nephew, Arnold, who became Stride Rite's chief executive officer, has been a prominent spokesman for corporate social responsibility, and another nephew, Howard, has had an outstanding career at the Harvard Medical School.

Hiatt excelled in all his endeavors during his career in this country, beginning with becoming the speaker at the graduation ceremony of the school that he attended to learn English. Recalling that he had heard about Clark University when he was in Lithuania, Hiatt turned to Clark to further his education, and in 1946 Clark awarded him a master's degree in history. This was an important event not only for Clark but also for other educational institutions from public schools to private universities. Hiatt became so committed to higher education that he subsequently consented to join the trustees of the College of the Holy Cross and of Brandeis University, where he chaired the board. He also served as a trustee of Boston University, Becker Junior College, Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, and as a member of the advisory board of Assumption College.

As Hiatt's business prospered, philanthropy and education became his dual passions. No one knows the total amount of his charitable giving, but in 1990, eleven years before his death, an article in the *Boston Globe* estimated that he 'has given nearly \$30 million to improve education and the arts for the people of Worcester.' This 1990 estimate does not include substantial gifts to Brandeis and to programs in Israel.

The list of his donations is so lengthy that only a few of his major philanthropies will be mentioned here. At Clark University, he established the Jacob Hiatt Center for Urban Education with a \$7.5 million donation; the center's objective is to improve public schools, enhance teacher training, and implement education reforms. In addition, he donated two million dollars to establish the Frances L. Hiatt School of Psychology and also endowed a chair of European history. At the College of the Holy

Cross, he and his wife endowed a wing of the college library in memory of his parents. It is devoted to the collection of Holocaust materials and to its study. This was one of several such gifts inspired by the loss of his parents and other relatives in the Holocaust. This was not only a personal tragedy, but also instilled in him a profound conviction that the world must never be permitted to forget the Holocaust. At Brandeis, he founded the Frances Hiatt Career Center, designed to promote liberal arts studies, and the Jacob and Frances Hiatt Institute in Israel to provide scholarships for students across the United States to study in Israel during their junior year. An important aspect of Hiatt's philanthropy was public education, both locally and nationally. He was committed to the Worcester school system and established a number of programs for young people and teachers, including scholarships for Worcester students to attend colleges and nursing schools. While these kinds of gifts are now being sought, back then gifts such as the Hiatt Scholars and the Hiatt Fellows to public schools were unusual.

Major gifts to Brandeis and Holy Cross were a response to his lifetime mission of promoting understanding among people of different religions and cultures. Together with his daughter Myra and son-in-law Robert Kraft, he created a unique program in comparative religion in 1990 by establishing a chair at Brandeis in Christian studies and a chair at Holy Cross in Judaic studies with the holder of each chair having adjunct professor status at the other institution. The program includes scholarly interaction among the students, joint colloquia, research conferences, and guest lectures.

The Worcester Art Museum also benefited greatly from Hiatt's generosity. He contributed to the construction of the Hiatt Wing and established the Frances Hiatt scholarships, which enable the museum to undertake new education projects. In 1996 Hiatt contributed one million dollars to a project to expand and renovate the Jewish Community Center in Worcester. There were many other sizeable charitable contributions, some

of them made on the spur of the moment. For example, the morning after the spacecraft Challenger exploded, he gave \$750,000 to finance scholarships at Brandeis and Holy Cross to memorialize the astronauts.

Although Hiatt was willing to lend his name to the projects he financed, he was in fact a very modest man who lived simply without a display of wealth. Courty in manner, he was self-deprecating and generous in his praise of others. His friends included the presidents and a number of faculty members of Clark, Brandeis, and Holy Cross. Among them, the president of Holy Cross, the Reverend John E. Brooks, S.J., was his close friend for more than thirty years. In describing him, Father Brooks said: 'He is a sensitive man who is concerned about confronting evil. When we are together, we talk about the existence of God, the suffering in the world and how people must help to alleviate that suffering.'

But Hiatt was also very strong in his convictions. 'Oh, he is not a saint,' said James V. Wertsch, professor of psychology at Clark. 'There is another side to that calm, unassuming demeanor. Jack is very smart and tough. He is absolutely resolute. While others may be sidetracked by extenuating issues Jack can cut through the core and compel others with the strength of his vision.'

Hiatt met with many world and national leaders, including Pope Pius XII in 1946. He received numerous honorary degrees and many awards in recognition of his extraordinary contributions to society.

Hiatt was Worcester's most generous donor during the twentieth century. It is interesting to compare his career with that of Stephen Salisbury III, Worcester's greatest philanthropist of the nineteenth century. Totally self-made, Hiatt, a Jewish immigrant, personified the American dream and, like Horatio Alger, he amassed a fortune which enabled him to benefit the lives of thousands of students and of many others. Salisbury's background was a complete contrast. Born in 1835, he was the scion of a merchant

family that had been prominent in Massachusetts since colonial times. A Harvard graduate with inherited wealth, he was the founder of the Worcester Art Museum and a generous contributor to it and many other cultural institutions in the city. A bachelor, he left his entire estate to charities. Although these men's backgrounds were strikingly different, they shared a common commitment to benefit humanity through philanthropy. And they were both members and strong supporters of the American Antiquarian Society.

Fairman C. Cowan

HUGH AMORY

Hugh Amory, the most distinguished rare-book library cataloguer of his time, succumbed to cancer on November 21, 2001, in the midst of a very active post-retirement career. He was elected to membership in the American Antiquarian Society in October 1994, published in the *Proceedings* a paper on the inventory of the seventeenth-century Boston bookseller Michael Perry, and was a sparkplug in the Society's collaborative publication project *A History of the Book in America*.

Hugh was born in Lynn, Massachusetts, on July 1, 1930, to Harold Amory, a cotton merchant, and his wife, Amey Peters Amory, the third of their five sons. He graduated from Groton (1948), Harvard College (1952, magna with highest honors), Harvard Law School (1958), and Columbia University (Ph.D. 1964). In 1963 he married Judith Malev who survives him, together with their three sons. The following tribute is the best account of the character and achievements of Hugh that this memorialist is capable of composing.

The American Printing History Association (APHA) presented its Individual Award for 2001 posthumously to Hugh Amory,

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