

His first wife, Viola Lee, died in 1942, and his second wife, Ruth Hanrahan, in 1979. He married Norma L. Flynn, his literary secretary for thirty-five years, in 1980. He is survived by his widow and a sister, Marie Milligan.

MICHAEL JOSEPH WALSH

Michael Joseph Walsh, a member of the Society since 1959, died at his home in Hyde Park, Massachusetts on May 27, 1984, in his ninety-first year. He was a native of Skibbereen, County Cork, and came to this country as a boy of eight. He was educated at St. Raphael's School in the parish where he lived for the rest of his life.

On leaving school at the age of fifteen, he went to work for C. E. Goodspeed at his basement book shop on Park Street in Boston. On December 31, 1917, he married Elizabeth McMahon, and four days later enlisted in the United States Navy. On retirement from active duty after Armistice Day, he returned to work at Goodspeed's, but not long thereafter came down with tuberculosis and was hospitalized for a year and a half. He liked to say that he was given six months to live! After discharge from the hospital he returned once more to the book shop where, a quick learner and hard worker, he soon became an important part of what was becoming a substantial operation.

He was an instinctive trader and a born salesman. Since Walsh's specialty was historical Americana, Matt Jones, T. W. Streeter, Frank Deering, and Edna Little (later Greenwood) were among his friends and admirers. He loved to swap stories with customers and competitors at such gatherings as the late evening parties that used to follow the annual meeting of the John Carter Brown Associates. He was, as Dick Wormser used to say, 'a damn good bookman.' His reputation as such had been enhanced early on in his career by the fortuitous appearance on the market of a great library of Americana which had lain

undisturbed since the death of its builder in 1899. The collection formed by Sumner Hollingsworth was little known in 1927. That year, a chance inquiry by C. E. Goodspeed about a copy of the 1717 edition of the *Holy Bible in Verse* resulted in an invitation by Mrs. Hollingsworth to visit her library. There was no copy of the little juvenile there, but the resulting conversation with the collector's widow led to the sale of the whole library to Goodspeed's. The important part of the library was loaded into a station wagon and, the senior of the firm seated beside the driver, Walsh and a junior riding atop the load, the whole proceeded from the Back Bay to the summit of Beacon Hill.

Mrs. Hollingsworth had been told years before of one very valuable piece, believed to have a value of \$10,000 or more. The volume was not immediately in evidence, but before the week was out Walsh found it in the middle of a volume of pamphlets. It was one of four known copies of John Winthrop's *Declaration of . . . Passages and Proceedings betwixt the English and the Narrowansets*, printed by Stephen Day at Cambridge in 1642, the third surviving product of the Cambridge Press. This, with the other Hollingsworth books, appeared in the catalogue prepared under Walsh's supervision by Norman Dodge, who, as cataloguer, shared an office with him for forty years. It was Dodge who prepared a parody on the Declaration of Independence for circulation at a testimonial dinner given to Walsh in 1959:

He has for fifty Years lived in the sunny Company of Old Books.

He has pursued his Commerce with Acumen & Forthrightness which have earned him the Admiration of Collectors, Librarians, and Colleagues, and of two generations of Goodspeeds.

He has brought to the exciting and sometimes exasperating Business of Bookselling a Dignity and a Delight which enrich the Vocation.

He has sought to increase his Knowledge by the endless reading of Bibliographies.

He has devoured Catalogues & Catalogues & Catalogues, of the making of which there is no End.

He has pursued, and placed in the keeping of worthy Men, Women, and Institutions, major and minor Rarities too numerous to tally.

He has given his Time to Good Works within and beyond his Vocation.

He is Master of the Art of buying from those who know the Value of what they sell, and of the more difficult Art of buying from those who know not what they have, but come into Bookshops fearing that they may be gypped.

He has the Antiquarian's Regard for Sources and the Reporter's Zeal to get the Story.

He has spread the Gospel of Sabin to a hundred Libraries.

He has been a hard Man to finagle, and has earned the Respect of those who could finagle him not.

He is an Old Pro.

For many years he was a regular weekend golfer. He was an authority and devoted follower of the Great American Game. True to his heritage, he took great interest in politics. He was a member of the Massachusetts Historical Society to which he was elected in 1950, a former president of the Charitable Irish Society, whose annual March 17 dinners he attended faithfully, and held the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters from Boston College. His paper on *Contemporary Broadside Editions of the Declaration of Independence* which appeared in the *Harvard Library Bulletin* in 1949 remains the standard account of the subject.

Although he was in substantial retirement for the last few years of his life, Walsh continued as a consultant to the firm with which he had been associated for seventy-five years and on whose board of directors he had served loyally for more than fifty.

He is survived by two sons, two daughters, nine grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

George T. Goodspeed

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