

# Clark Sutherland Northup

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When after forty-five years as an active member of the faculty, Clark Sutherland Northup retired in 1940, he had to his credit so many achievements and honors (including a Doctorate of Letters) that a mere enumeration would cover more than a page. Rather than list here the many things that he accomplished by the way, we shall speak chiefly of his major projects and services.

A history of his connection with Phi Beta Kappa Society is almost a history of its later years. Soon after becoming a member, he began a campaign to make it larger and more important; and before relinquishing active work, he had the satisfaction of seeing his hopes realized. For thirty years he held the office of Senator, except for two terms as National President; and he published two large records of the society's activities.

Although in his later years he might have contemplated such distinctions with great satisfaction, he never seemed to do so. Even in his last decade, he had his eye on the future and his chosen work. If he had to proceed more slowly with his projects, he still continued to keep several in hand, and until his health gave way, stood on the verge of further successes.

One motive runs consistently through his activities. He had arrived upon the academic scene just as serious study of literature entered upon a huge expansion, with scientific research displacing panegyric and ethical criticism. Workers in the new style needed special tools; and Professor Northup turned to the task of furnishing those invaluable helps to scholarship which made his name known everywhere: bibliographies of Gray and Mrs. Gaskell; the much-used *Register of Bibliographies*; and (for a time) an indispensable annual list of articles and books. He died as a bibliography of writings by and about Robert Browning (undertaken in collaboration with Professor L. N. Broughton) was about to appear.

The scheme of the new scholarship involved publication; here too Professor Northup did what he could to help. He supervised the publication of thirty volumes of the *Cornell Studies in English*; for forty-five years he was listed as cooperating editor of the *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, for which he reviewed a book in almost every issue. A colleague spoke of him as "rendering indispensable services in his long and distinguished career;" and many a young scholar received an ungrudging appraisal or encouraging word when such things meant much.

His students at Cornell had him to thank for the establishment and operation of the Hart Memorial Library, with its ample desk-space and sets of reference-works. They also discovered in him a novel attitude toward study and research. He felt sure that any one who would school himself properly in the new techniques could contribute something important; by his example, he filled others with confidence in their powers and destiny. Many who doubted their own abilities received from him encouragement and cheerful assurance.

He set an even more important example with his industry. For most of his life he worked day and night as a matter of routine, without showing signs of fatigue or exhaustion. If he tired of one task, he found relaxation in turning to another of equal importance. He even regretted having to relinquish, as an individual project, a Middle English Dictionary—a labor of Hercules that for the past twenty years has received generous financial support and has enjoyed skilled direction and the full-time efforts of several expert collaborators.

Professor Northup's determination to keep himself continuously employed at preparing things of use to other scholars and teachers contrasted sharply with the negligent individualism found in so many quarters. He set a higher value upon utility than upon self-expression. He remained close to the Cornell tradition of finding and making available the durable materials of scholarship, no matter how hard to come by, or how enticing or ready to hand the proffered substitutes.

His colleagues can scarcely hope to express an estimate of his work that would have proved more satisfying to so good a Cornellian.

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