

John Hutchins

October 15, 1909 — October 28, 1996

John Hutchins was one of the pioneer faculty members of Cornell's Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management. Over the years, he devoted his talent and energies to the school initially called the Graduate School of Business and Public Administration ("B&PA") and to the Department of Economics. Throughout his long career at Cornell, he retained a joint appointment in the Department of Economics and was deeply involved in the affairs of that department.

John received his undergraduate degree from MIT, where he was honored with membership in Tau Beta Pi. He did his graduate work at Harvard, where he became an expert on Business History and Transportation (the latter, the fore-runner of what has evolved into the field of Business Logistics.) At Harvard, he was the recipient of the David Ames Wells Prize, the most coveted and prestigious accolade in economics graduate (Ph.D.) study, awarded annually by Harvard's Economics Department. John's dissertation was published in the "Harvard Economic Studies" series.

From 1942-45, John served as director of the Russian and East European Shipping Area of the War Shipping Administration in Washington. He was also a member of the President's Soviet Protocol Committee, of which Harry Hopkins was chairman, working to resolve a number of disputes with the Soviets. In 1945, John handled transportation for the United Nations relief for Poland and Czechoslovakia.

His book, *The American Maritime Industry and Public Policy, 1789-1914*, published by the Harvard University Press in 1941 and reprinted in 1969, is one of the outstanding works in the field of transportation economics and business history. For many years, John served as a Trustee of the Business History Foundation and as a Trustee of the Committee on Research in Economic History, Inc.

John Hutchins was a member of that group of unusual scholars that first created and then provided the backbone for Cornell's Management School over which they presided with intellectual honesty, openness, and magnanimity. Their personal and professional loyalty to the institution was legendary. Their breadth, commitment, and insight made possible the creation of the new school and its culture of civility, a culture that has survived and flourished with its tradition of the faculty "open door." Generations of students benefited from their inspiration and instruction.

John was an active participant in the fundamental decisions that created B&PA. For example, John originated and taught the required course, Business and Government, to the full second year class. The architecture of the first

two floors of Malott Hall was determined by John's judgment that it was important that the school have a large lecture hall. The result was Bache amphitheater — a teaching and lecture space that has served the school and the university well since its construction more than thirty years ago.

In 1960, John published a review article in the *Administrative Science Quarterly* dealing with two studies of American business education (one by the Ford Foundation and the other by the Carnegie Foundation) that together had a huge impact on the development of modern M.B.A programs. John had little quarrel with the contents or recommendations of these reports; rather, he used his article to discuss further, broad issues including the relationship between administration and entrepreneurship, and between business education and the quality of business leadership. These issues are on the agendas of leading business schools today; John's article is worthy of a careful re-reading today.

At faculty meetings of the school, John assumed his seat at the right hand of the dean. He contributed his observations and insights to discussions on every topic in his quiet and dignified way. His colleagues will never forget his comments on an applicant for a faculty position with the school's economics group. While attesting to the candidate's intellect and excellent record, John described the candidate as, "Not being cooked yet!" That phrase captured an intellectual immaturity and naiveté of the candidate — matters that would not have stood him in good stead with M.B.A. and M.P.A. graduate students.

At another level, John would take the extra steps to support the intellectual freedom of his junior colleagues. He volunteered assistance whenever it was needed.

Back in the days when the University Faculty met as a Faculty, John was a welcome and active commentator on the vital policy issues of the day. It was rare that John missed a session. His comments enriched and influenced the understanding and perceptions of this group, thus influencing the policies and direction of Cornell for over thirty years.

John Hutchins was a "Boston Brahmin" in the best sense of those words. He was consistently pleasant, optimistic, courtly, and gracious. He and his wife Leila were active creators of community and comity for the school and its faculty. All faculty newcomers to the school, were "called-on" by Leila and John. This welcome to Ithaca was unique. No matter what the circumstance—even with the Hutchins arriving to welcome a young faculty couple busily painting their living room or changing diapers—each occasion is remembered to this day with warmth and affection.

The Hutchins' lovely, livable home was frequently a site for gracious and tasteful entertainment to welcome the new arrivals to the school, to celebrate the holiday season, to signal the coming of Spring. Leila was a wonderful, friendly hostess who put everyone at ease. John's stentorian laughter (and unique bridge-play) kept guests at ease.

John's commitment to maritime matters took many forms. He was a scholar but also an avid and expert recreational sailor, an activity he shared with a multitude of guests each summer. They would put to sea from the Hutchins' summer home in York, Maine in "Blue Squawl," a yawl of some forty feet.

John Hutchins is survived by Leila, his wife; daughters, Leila Phipps and Mary Adelman; and sons, Morton, B&PA '67, and John; as well as by a dozen grandchildren: six granddaughters and six grandsons; and two great grandchildren. We all miss him.

Harold Bierman, Jr., Alan K. McAdams, Seymour Smidt