



Edward E. Hill

Edward E. Hill, a Fellow of the Society of American Archivists, died on 17 April 1986, at the age of 57. Born on 14 October 1928, in San Mateo, California, he went to Washington to work for the National Archives and Records Service in January 1957. He was employed there as an archivist when he died.

Mr. Hill attended the University of California at Berkeley, receiving an A.B. in history in 1951. He served in the United States Army from 1951 through 1954, primarily in Korea, where he was seriously wounded. He returned to the University of California and received his M.A. in American history in 1956. At this time he met Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes who encouraged him to pursue his interest in Indian records at the National Archives. He later resumed his for-

mal studies at American University in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Hill wrote many articles and finding aids during his archival career. He compiled several preliminary inventories including those for the records of the Bureau of Reclamation and the National Park Service (National Archives, 1958 and 1966). For his two-volume *Preliminary Inventory of the Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs* (National Archives, 1965), he was awarded the Waldo Gifford Leland Prize. He won another Leland Prize in 1982 for the *Guide to Records in the National Archives Relating to American Indians* (National Archives, 1981). Hill's other major work was *The Office of Indian Affairs, 1824-1880: Historical Sketches*, published by Clearwater Publishing in 1974.

He contributed the biographical sketch of John Q. Smith in *The Commissioners of Indian Affairs, 1824-1977*, edited by Robert M. Kvasnicka and Herman J. Viola (University of Nebraska Press, 1979) and the chapter, "The Preparation of Inventories at the National Archives," in *A Modern Archives Reader*, edited by Maygene F. Daniels and Timothy Walch (National Archives, 1984).

During his career with the National Archives, Hill worked with the Interior Branch, the Civil Archives Project Branch, the Social and Economic Records Division, the Archives Branch of

the Washington National Records Center, the General Archives Division, the Modern Military Field Branch, the Old Military Records Branch, and at the time of his death, the Military Archives Staff. From 1968 through 1973, he served as the Book Review editor of *The American Archivist*. He became a Fellow of the Society of American Archivists in 1970.

He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth L. Hill, and two sons, Bruce E. and Douglas L. Hill. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

ELIZABETH L. HILL

Harold Larson

Harold Larson, 84, who had a long career in archives administration, historical research and writing, and teaching, died at his home in Arlington, Virginia, 21 March 1986. He was born 7 July 1901, in Sioux City, Iowa. Taking his B.A. at Morningside College in Sioux City, and received an M.A. in 1928 and Ph.D. in 1943 from Alexander Hamilton's *alma mater*, Columbia University. He studied at the University of Oslo in 1929. From 1931 to 1936 Larson taught history, American government, and political science at several midwestern colleges and universities.

On 1 July 1936, he began his archival career at the National Archives as a reference supervisor. Later he succeeded Philip C. Brooks as Deputy Chief of the Independent Agencies Archives, appraising, accessioning, and supervising the servicing of records of those agencies. Dr. Larson spoke and/or read Norwegian, Danish, Swedish, and even a little Icelandic, and read Gothic script; he translated Scandinavian archives literature and served as Archivist R.D.W. Connor's interpreter for visiting Scandinavian archives officials.

Hardly a month after Larson joined the Archives, Dr. Connor transferred him, because of his fluency in Danish, to become Special Assistant to Lawrence W. Cramer, Governor of the Virgin Islands. After the U.S. purchase of the islands, the Danish government had transferred the fullest set of records to Denmark. Larson appraised the old Danish records remaining and supervised removal and accessioning into the National Archives of the United States. Preservation of this valuable heritage led to his becoming known in the Islands as "Savior of Our Old Records." An important byproduct of the survey was Larson's discovering hitherto unknown records about the family background of Alexander Hamilton and his youth on St. Croix. Dr. Larson publicized these discoveries in "The Birth and Parentage of Alexander Hamilton," *American Genealogist* (21 [January 1945]:161-167), and "Alexander Hamilton: The Fact and Fiction of His Early Years" *William and Mary Quarterly* (3d ser. 9[April 1952]:139-51).

Larson resigned from the Archives in June 1943 to serve as Senior Historian of the U.S. Army Transportation Corps.

From October 1946 to October 1957, he was successively Chief Historian, Headquarters XXIV Corps, U.S. Army in Korea; U.S. Army Historian in the Pentagon; and Historian, U.S. Air Force, Air University Historical Liaison Office, Washington. He co-authored *The Transportation Corps: Operations Overseas* (Washington, 1957) and *A History of the United States Air Force, 1907-1957* (Princeton, N.J., 1957).

During 1938, 1942-1943, and then from October 1957 to June 1971, Dr. Larson was Lecturer, American Government and U.S. Foreign Relations, at the University of Maryland. He required students to read and report on at least two rolls of microfilmed U.S. diplomatic records at the National Archives. Perhaps partly because of this, several students became interested in the foreign service.

After retiring from teaching, Dr. Larson learned that the National Archives had no one who could read the old Danish records. With the approval of Archivist James B. Rhoads, he became a volunteer consultant to the archives, serving as an official volunteer until early in 1986, assisting staff members and researchers with the Danish records. Dr. Larson was widely known among researchers from the Virgin Islands; they would come to the Archives asking for him. Those who could not come frequently employed him to search these records, and Scandinavian and West Indian sources as well. Even in his eighties, when he knew a researcher was coming to the Archives, he would make a special trip; he helped several graduate students find sources for their theses. During the 1970s and early 1980s, he traveled to Scandinavia and the West Indies, researching in the Norwegian and Danish national and provincial archives, in St. Croix and St. Thomas, and in the British colonial records still on the island of

Nevis (where Hamilton and his mother were born). Frequently he carried out some mission for the Archivist. He urged on Virgin Island officials the establishment of a much-needed archives service and the appointment of a Coordinator and Historical Records Advisory Group to work with NHPRC. He found documents in Danish for the John Paul Jones Papers, thus opening records in foreign archives that might otherwise have remained closed to NHPRC-sponsored projects, and searched for William Thornton items in the Virgin Islands.

Almost a charter member of the Society of American Archivists, joining in 1938, Larson stayed active, contributing many reviews to the journal and regularly attending annual meetings and the ICA congresses held in Washington. In 1980, the Society honored his contributions by electing him a Fellow.

Possessing the highest standards of scholarship, Dr. Larson had the respect and admiration of his colleagues: "a gentle man and a distinguished scholar" (Fellow Jane F. Smith); "a fine and modest scholar" (Dr. Thornton Mitchell). The scholarly world will continue to benefit from Harold Larson's life and work: all his books, research notes, and correspondence relating to Alexander Hamilton will go to Columbia University, and half his estate will aid Lydia C. Roberts Fellowships in History there (by which he was enabled to study at Columbia and Oslo); the other half will establish a scholarship at Washington University, St. Louis, in his wife's memory.

MARY JANE DOWD
National Archives