

## Leicester Bradner

The community of Renaissance scholars suffered a great loss with the death on April 11, 1988 of Leicester Bradner. One of the most learned historians of English and comparative literature, he played a leading role in the Committee on Renaissance Studies of the ACLS, in the New England Renaissance Conference, and in the Brown Renaissance Colloquium. He was a founder member of the Renaissance Society of America.

Leicester Bradner was born in New York City on January 14, 1899. He received his B.A. in 1920 and his Ph.D. in 1926, both from Yale University, where he was a Sterling Research Fellow in 1937–38. He taught at Brown University from 1926 to 1968, becoming an associate professor in 1934 and a professor in 1945.

In addition to many articles, Bradner published a book on the poet Richard Edwards (his thesis, Yale, 1927) and a widely used book on Edmund Spenser (Chicago, 1948). He also edited the poems of Queen Elizabeth I (Brown University Press, 1964), and (jointly with Charles A. Lynch) the Latin Epigrams of Thomas More (Chicago, 1953). Perhaps his most important contribution was *Musae Anglicanae*, a history of Anglo-Latin poetry from 1500 to 1925 (New York, 1940). An important volume on Renaissance drama in Western Europe remains to be published posthumously. After his retirement, a Festschrift was compiled in his honor, edited by Elmer M. Blistein and entitled *The Drama of the Renaissance: Essays for Leicester Bradner* (Brown University Press, 1970).

As a long-time member of the Renaissance Committee of the ACLS, serving as its secretary (1938–43) and chairman (1943–47), Bradner was responsible for a number of important initiatives and projects. Under his leadership, the committee organized an annual bibliography of Renaissance Studies published in *Studies in Philology*. It also commissioned a series of Surveys of Recent Scholarship in the Period of the Renaissance, published in a single volume in 1945. In 1946 the Committee encouraged F. W. Sternfeld to publish a Renaissance Newsletter, which was taken over by the Renaissance Society of America in 1955 and renamed *Renaissance Quarterly* in 1967.

The Committee sponsored several regional Renaissance conferences, including, under Bradner's leadership, the New England Renaissance Conference, which continues to be active today. The

Committee also encouraged the publication of a union catalogue of sixteenth-century Latin imprints in New England libraries, to which Bradner himself contributed, and it sponsored the *Catalogus Translationum et Commentarium: Medieval and Renaissance Latin Translations and Commentaries, Annotated Lists and Guides*. Six volumes of the *Catalogus* have been published so far, with Bradner serving for many years as member and chairman of its Executive Committee. He was of great help to the other editors through his experience and good advice. When the Committee on Renaissance Studies was discontinued in 1955, the resulting gap in leadership was filled by the founding of the Renaissance Society of America, which became for all practical purposes its successor.

Bradner was a reserved and unassuming person, deeply devoted to his work and scholarship, an active organizer and coordinator of scholarly projects and activities, and a faithful and reliable friend and colleague. He will be gratefully remembered by all those who had the privilege of knowing him and of working with him.

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