

NORMAN S. B. GRAS, 1884-1956

NORMAN S. B. GRAS, economist and historian and until 1950 Professor of Business History in the Baker School of Business Administration at Harvard University, died of a coronary thrombosis on October 9, 1956, at his home in Cambridge, Mass. Born in Toronto on July 18, 1884, he received his earlier education in London, Ont., graduating B.A. and M.A. from Western University in 1906, having taken two honours courses through his undergraduate years. He proceeded at once to Harvard University for graduate work in economics and received his Master's degree there in 1909. He was awarded a travelling fellowship and continued his studies in England 1910-12. He received his Doctor's degree from Harvard on his return from England and was appointed Assistant Professor of History at Clarke University. In 1917 he was raised to the rank of Associate Professor. During 1915, 1916, and 1918 he had lectured at Harvard in economic history and in the latter year was appointed Professor of Economic History at the University of Minnesota. There he remained until 1927 when he was appointed Professor of Business History at Harvard, a post which he held until his retirement through ill health in 1950. In 1924 he had been awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws by his Alma Mater, the University of Western Ontario.

Dr. Gras was the author of more than a dozen books in the fields of history, economics, and business, and the editor of many more. He was for long editor of the *Harvard Studies in Business History*, almost a score of which have been issued, and articles from his pen frequently appeared in the leading economic journals of England and the United States. He was a fellow of the Mediaeval Academy of America, a member and vice-president of the Economic Society of England, and had been closely associated through all his teaching career with the American Historical Association and the American Economic Association. Two of his books have been translated into Japanese and one into Chinese. At the time of his death he was still at work on a projected three-volume history of American business.

He was one of the founders of the Business History Society, its vice-president, and responsible over some years for its management and many of its activities. At a later date he organized the Business History Foundation, designed to write the history of large American corporations. The first project undertaken was a history of the Standard Oil Company, two volumes of which have already appeared. Dr. Gras's connection with the Foundation has now been taken over by his close friend and fellow graduate of Western, Dr. Ray Palmer Baker, former vice-principal of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, at Troy, N.Y.

Dr. Gras was married in 1915 to Ethel G. Culbert, of Lucan, Ont., herself an able scholar and closely associated with him in his work. She and three sons survive. Dr. Gras's body was cremated and the ashes are to be buried at Blenheim, Ont., this coming summer.

FRED LONDON

Vol. XXIII, no. 2, May, 1957