

## Obituaries

### ROBERT B. HALL, JR. (1924–88)

Robert B. Hall, Jr., of the University of Rochester died on November 16, 1988, after a long illness, at the age of sixty-four. At the time of his death Hall was a professor in the university's Department of History. Despite a general interest in Asia, Hall's first love was always Japan of the postwar period. He will be missed by his family, colleagues, present and absent, like myself, and especially the countless students he taught across thirty-seven years to whom he imparted his knowledge, understanding, and respect for Asia.

Hall was born in Ann Arbor and educated in its schools and the University of Michigan, where he earned an M.A. and a Ph.D. in geography. Beginning his teaching career as an assistant professor of geography at Yale University in 1951, Hall joined the University of Rochester the following year. His scholarly work concentrated on the problem of economic development in postwar Japan, especially questions relating to land utilization and the modernization of Japanese agriculture. An author of several articles and reviews, Hall published an important text in 1963 called *Japan: Industrial Power of Asia* (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company), which foresaw the profound economic changes that were to come in Japan and Asia. He won two Fulbright awards in 1951 and 1961, the latter a teaching fellowship at Tōhoku University in Japan. He continued to return to Japan, as well as travel to other parts of Asia such as India, for research.

At Rochester Hall was promoted to full professor in 1965 and became the first director of the university's East Asian Language and Area Center. Throughout his years at the university, he was a consistently enthusiastic and energetic spokesman for broader and deeper instructional programs on Asia and international studies at the undergraduate level. Hall also served as an associate editor of the *Journal of Asian Studies* from 1972 through 1974. He was a longtime member of the Association for Asian Studies and a number of professional geographical groups.

While his family, friends, and associates will mourn the loss of a good and civil colleague, the loss will be greatest among students who first encountered Japan and East Asia in Hall's courses at the university. But Hall was as accessible to students interested in Japan outside the classroom as he was inside it. His enthusiasm for the subject and his unfailing generosity in sharing his knowledge at a time when Asian studies were beginning to enter American academic life will constitute an imperishable and enduring inheritance to remind us of how fortunate we have been to have had people like Robert Hall at the inaugural moment.

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