

IN MEMORIAM

THOMAS GREENSHIELDS HENDERSON (1906-1969)

THE unexpected death, from heart failure, of Thomas Greenshields Henderson, in Florida on January 23, 1969, has brought sadness to his friends and colleagues.

He was born in Montreal in 1906 and remained a Montrealer throughout his life. After preparing in Selwyn House and Bishop's College School, he entered McGill, receiving in 1927 his B.A. with the Prince of Wales Gold Medal for Mental and Moral Philosophy, and the M.A. in 1928. With his family background, it is not surprising that he then accepted employment with the stockbroking firm of Burnett & Co. But after four years in the business world he returned, no doubt with a sigh of relief, to the academic life, entering the Harvard Graduate School in 1932. There he received his Ph.D. in 1939, and was tutor in philosophy at Harvard from then until 1942. During all his years at Harvard he was a member of Eliot House along with such distinguished contemporaries as W. V. Quine, Harry Levin, and John H. Finley, Jr., all of whom became his close personal friends. Professor Finley has written of him: "What a charming and honourable man, a kind of Canadian Athenian with suggestions alike of the pure snow and the pure Acropolis."

After the interruption of the War, in which he served with the Black Watch, he taught at the University of British Columbia, and then returned to McGill in 1946 as assistant professor of philosophy. There he spent the rest of his career, serving as chairman of the department of philosophy from 1953 to 1960, and as full professor from 1956 until his retirement in 1965.

His many students, who became acquainted particularly with Plato and Aristotle in his courses, appreciated his unflinching kindness and admired the scholarly integrity and straightforward clarity of his teaching. He was known among his colleagues in the philosophical profession as specially competent in the philosophy of A. N. Whitehead and that of George Santayana. In his last years he was engaged in writing a book on Whitehead, and planned, when that should be completed, to write on Santayana.

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