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In memoriam Char Bradford Welles

The Journal of Juristic Papyrology 18, 7-8

1974

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Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

IN MEMORIAM CHARLES BRADFORD WELLES

On the 8th of October, 1969, untimely death removed from us one of the most eminent members of the Editorial Council of the Journal of Juristic Papyrology, Professor of Yale University — Charles Bradford Welles. This is scarcely the place to assess his indefatigable scholarship. But we have an eloquent testimony to it in the bibliography of his works which is given in *Essays in Honour of C. Bradford Welles*, a volume presented to him in 1966 “as a token of the respect and affection of his students and colleagues”, which appeared as the first volume of *American Studies in Papyrology*. However, the moment may perhaps be deemed an appropriate one to call to mind some of the special qualities which graced this scholar and teacher, and of which readers of his numerous publications may be unaware. Creator and first President of the American Society of Papyrologists, papyrologist and epigraphist, editor of the *Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Period*, and of numerous *Papyri and Parchments from Dura Europos*, and finally of the *Yale Papyri*, one of the foremost experts on the Hellenistic culture and on the whole of Greek culture, Professor C. B. Welles always managed to find time, in the midst of his very full life, to give a helping hand to young adepts taking their first steps along one of the paths he himself had chosen. “Scholars are busy, of course”, he wrote in a letter dated 23rd May, 1957, “but they always have time to help younger colleagues”. This was certainly true of himself. For many years he kept in touch with a younger colleague by correspondence, taking an interest in all his achievements, and always ready with help and advice. Unasked, he would procure access to needed texts, and would send books, offsets, photocopies, etc. His talent for teaching was remarkable, even at a distance, even across the whole width of the Atlantic. His letters frequently had a personal note, and were by no means restricted to scientific matters, so owing to this and to his exceptional gift for establishing rapport with others, friendship soon ripened. The result was that when, after more than a dozen years of contact solely by correspondence, personal contact was established, he seemed no stranger but at once a dear, kind, familiar friend. In order to convey something of the special aura which pervaded his letters, I should like, as a “correspondence student” of Professor Welles, to quote a letter he

wrote me on 29th November, not quite a year previous to his death, from his beloved retreat in Cape Cod, State of Massachusetts:

“It has been a quiet day, the holiday after our Thanksgiving, but that has brought out into the marches numerous duck hunters, whose bangings have probably destroyed no ducks — I did not see a duck all day — but which do disturb the peace. Otherwise, however, it is quiet and rather solitary. I walked through the woods this morning with the dogs, and there was no-one there but the winter birds. This afternoon we were on the beach below our house. I was gathering drift-wood washed up by the violent storm of two weeks ago, whilst the dogs looked for crabs and molluscs or other matters of interest. The spaniel kept walking out into the water, undeterred by the very cool temperature which made my morning and mid-day swim quite hasty. But then, I do not have a thick coat of brown and white fur. So it is an atmosphere of relaxation. In the summer there is much automobile traffic, but now hardly a car. And only a few distant lights of neighbours. As I have written you, I have a small library here, and can work fairly well, bringing down what I need...”

The death of Professor Welles has left a gap which will be felt painfully even in Warsaw, a city which he never saw.

[Warszawa]

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