



Merle Fainsod, 1907-1972

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Merle Fainsod

1907-1972

A MEMORIAL SERVICE for Merle Fainsod, Carl H. Pforzheimer University Professor and Director of the University Library, was held in Harvard's Memorial Church on 17 February 1972. The BULLETIN is privileged to record the remarks that were made on this occasion by Professor Zbigniew Brzezinski of Columbia University and Professor Paul A. Freund, Carl M. Loeb University Professor at Harvard.

Professor Fainsod's contribution to Harvard as Director of the University Library may be overshadowed by his other achievements; but the Library owes much to him, perhaps most of all for his emphasis on maintaining the strength of its collections and his successful effort to provide space for their continued growth.

His administration as Director of the University Library began with a series of more than thirty meetings at which he and members of the Library staff, with representatives of the various departments of the Faculty, attempted to forecast needs, identify opportunities, and more clearly define selection policies. As was stated in the Planning Study which he and the University Librarian submitted to the President of the University in 1966,

our inheritance of collections is so great that we may sometimes be tempted to relax and, in a sense, to live on accumulated capital. . . . Yet the dangers of such a course are manifest. Great collections that are not maintained rapidly lose their usefulness, and libraries which fail to respond to the needs of their scholarly communities cease to contribute to the advancement of learning. We know that our predecessors rejected this alternative; . . . it is our responsibility to build for the future by seeking to anticipate research needs.

Yet the same Planning Study identified space for the central research collection as the most urgent problem confronting the Library. Merle Fainsod embarked upon the effort to raise funds and — though he might have found continued emphasis on collection-building more congenial — he was successful; \$8,000,000 is in hand, and architects are at work on plans for the Pusey Library.

EDS.

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PAUL A. FREUND came to the Harvard faculty in 1939 after some years of government service, and has been Carl M. Loeb University Professor since 1958. Among his many publications is *On Law and Justice* (Harvard University Press, 1968).

MARY HYDE, author and collector, collaborated with her husband, the late Donald F. Hyde, on several books and articles and in forming the private library of which the Harvard College Library published a three-volume catalogue in 1965: *Catalogus Bibliothecae Hydeanae; The Hyde Collection of the Works of Samuel Johnson*, comp. by J. D. Fleeman

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