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## OBITUARY

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### In Memoriam: Phillip E. Sartwell (1908–1999)

On the 26th of November, 1999, epidemiology lost one of its preeminent gentlemen and scholars with the death of Philip E. Sartwell. Born in Salem, Massachusetts in 1908, he obtained his M.D. degree from Boston University in 1932 and an M.P.H. degree from Harvard in 1938. For the next 5 years, he was the assistant director of the Division of Tuberculosis in the Massachusetts Department of Health. He joined the U.S. Army in 1943 and was assigned as a major to the Epidemiology Section in the Office of the Surgeon General. Appointed an assistant professor of epidemiology at the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health in 1947, he became a full professor and chairman of the department in 1954—a position he held until 1970, when he relinquished the chairmanship to Abraham Lilienfeld as the departments of Epidemiology and Chronic Disease merged. He retired from the faculty in 1973 and moved to Marblehead, Massachusetts.

Throughout his years at Johns Hopkins, he maintained a close relationship with the *Journal* and with its predecessor, the *American Journal of Hygiene*. He was chairman of the Board of Overseers from 1953 to 1957, Editor-in-Chief during 1957–1958, and chairman of the Board again from 1964 to 1984. Dr. Sartwell was also the Editor of the first volume of *Epidemiologic Reviews* and a coeditor of volume 2 with Neal Nathanson. During his long period of ser-

vice, he was frequently called upon to act as one of the editors. The *Journal* owes much to his wisdom and guidance.

Like Frost and Maxcy, who preceded him in leading the Department of Epidemiology, Phil was not a prolific writer. Like them, too, his influence on epidemiology came more from the guidance he gave to his students and colleagues than from his own research. Not that his research was lacking—on the contrary, it was solid and important, notably in the fields of thrombotic complications of oral contraceptives, distributions of incubation periods of infectious diseases, occupational exposures to medical radiation, the efficacy of vaccination against influenza, and the design of population-based studies. He was the Editor of the ninth and tenth editions of *Maxcy-Rosenau Preventive Medicine and Public Health*, and Editor Emeritus of the 11th edition.

Always the quintessential gentleman, Phil was considerate, courteous, and self-effacing, supporting his younger colleagues and maneuvering them into positions of leadership in their joint projects. When interviewed at the time of his retirement in 1973, it is said that he told the reporter not to make the report too glowing, to soft-pedal his accomplishments, and to make sure his colleagues were mentioned. We could use many more like Philip E. Sartwell.

*The Editors*