

MEMORIAL TO TOMAS H. SPIERS (1896-1985)

Mr. Spiers was a life-long student of the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. Here was a man whose roots ran deep into the history of the several churches which grew from this theological source. He was an active member of the General Convention of the New Church, and, from 1943 until his conscious entry into the spiritual world, was an active life member of the Swedenborg Foundation.

Tom had a full life as an international banker, which brought the opportunity to live in Europe and South America with his wife and family. His two sons told me that if a New Church was not in the area where the Spiers resided, "Dad" would lead services of worship every Sunday.

Upon retirement from business, he became a full-time volunteer worker at the Swedenborg Foundation, serving as its executive secretary, and indeed its guiding mind for many years. During this period, Tom was actively translating Swedenborgian collateral literature from French to English, and Swedenborg's works as well as collateral material from English into Spanish.

From this it is clear that Tom was a gifted linguist. In addition to his special competence in French and Spanish, he was well versed in Latin, in which he had majored at John Hopkins University.

During the long train rides home from the monthly Foundation meetings in New York, I came to appreciate certain ideas that this gentle and wise man held regarding the translation of Swedenborg's theological works—the Writings. Tom's view was that in translation, one must be true to the idea, not a slave to the words used to convey it.

The Swedenborg Scientific Association gained the benefit of Tom Spiers' counsel when he was elected to the Board of Directors in 1962. He continued to serve until 1980, when the difficulty of driving at night forced him to resign.

He continued his work at the Swedenborg Foundation in a consultative capacity until the very week of his passing, in his 90th year.■

Grant R. Doering