Roy Arthur Hunt
1881-1966

"... A tree planted by the rivers of water ...

With sorrow The Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania records in its Minutes the death of Roy Arthur Hunt, a member of the Society for half a century and a leader in all matters, industrial and cultural, that are the strengths of Pittsburgh, of Pennsylvania, and of the Nation.

Roy Arthur Hunt was born in Nashua, New Hampshire, August 3, 1881, and with his parents, Alfred E. and Maria McQuesten Hunt, came to Pittsburgh when a small boy. He was graduated from Shady Side Academy of Pittsburgh in 1899, received the Bachelor of Arts degree from Yale University in 1903, an LL.D. from the University of Pittsburgh in 1944, and, later, honorary degrees from Oberlin and Grove City Colleges. In 1913 he married Rachel McMasters Miller, who died in February 1963. Four sons survive their parents, Alfred Mortimer Hunt and Torrence Miller Hunt, officials in Alcoa, Roy Arthur Hunt, Jr., vice-president of the Mellon National Bank and Trust Company, and Richard McMasters Hunt, a professor and an assistant dean at Harvard University.

In 1888 Roy Hunt’s father, Alfred Hunt, with six other Pittsburgh industrialists, organized a company to produce aluminum. Under Roy Hunt’s direction the company grew into the Aluminum Company of America, one of the world’s greatest industrial enterprises. Mr. Hunt grew with the Company — starting as a mill clerk the year he was graduated at Yale, and advancing through the ranks as cost clerk, assistant superintendent, general superintendent, vice-president, president, and from 1951 to 1963 chairman of the Executive Committee of the Board. He was cited by the United States Army for “outstanding patriotic service” in World War II — a war in which his four sons served in the armed forces.

Mr. Hunt held important trusteeships besides his trusteeship in Alcoa — notably, Magee-Woman’s Hospital, Pittsburgh Skin and Cancer Foundation, Pittsburgh Testing Laboratory, National Union Fire Insurance Company, Mellon National Bank and Trust Company, Allegheny Cemetery, Grove City College, Carnegie Institute, and the Carnegie Institute of Technology.
Besides his tremendous accomplishments in industry centering in Pittsburgh, Roy Hunt and his wife Rachel were ardent and generous patrons of Pittsburgh’s cultural life in music, education, history, art, literature, and in the collection and preservation of good and beautiful books. Together they gave more than $2,000,000 to establish the Hunt Library on the campus of Carnegie Institute of Technology, which has on its fifth floor the Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Botanical Library, beautifully housed and containing some of the finest known botanical books and prints, an outstanding memorial to a woman who was a scholar, a discriminating collector of books and flower prints, an authority of fine binding and rare books, a superb gardener and conservationist, and an author of excellence. Together the Hunts encouraged young people interested in all these endeavors, and their home was graciously open to connoisseurs, artists, historians, teachers, scholars, and bibliophiles. To the day of his death Roy Hunt attended business affairs in his office and continued his interests in the cultural pursuits which he and his wife had shared with others. Pittsburgh and the Historical Society, of which they were both long-time members, will miss their wisdom and their generosity. But Roy and Rachel Hunt leave behind them, besides their own outstanding contributions to the best life of Pittsburgh, four sons and their wives and children to foster the Hunt tradition and carry on in Pittsburgh the good life of the spirit. To them goes the deepest sympathy of the Historical Society’s officers and members.

Agnes Lynch Starrett