

Generations of his readers learned that their country was truly admirable and that, if it sometimes stumbled, it always righted itself. Dr. Commager, who called himself an independent Democrat, wrote with the faith of a Jeffersonian liberal in the aims and abilities of the American people and clearly admired the nation's past.

As a champion of the U.S. Constitution, once calling it the "greatest monument to political science in literature," he wrote of this country's greatness as not unrelated to the sweeping growth of social justice.

He lectured Americans not only in classrooms but also in some of the best-received general history texts of his time. He may be best known for "The Growth of the American Republic," written with Samuel Eliot Morison and published by the Oxford University Press in 1931. Noted historian Allan Nevins hailed the book as "the most entertaining, stimulating and instructive single-volume history of the United States as yet written."

Dr. Commager and Nevins collaborated on the work's 10th edition, which was published in 1987.

In 1941, Dr. Commager co-wrote "Our Nation," which became a leading high school U.S. history text. In 1942, he and Nevins co-wrote "America: The Story of a Free People," a best-selling book for the lay reader that covered U.S. history from the first British settlers to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941.

In addition to immensely popular general histories, Dr. Commager also wrote on more specialized topics. These included a 1936 biography of a pre-Civil War New England theologian and abolitionist, and such philosophical offerings as "The American Mind," "Freedom, Loyalty and Dissent," "The American Character" and "The Empire of Reason."

He also was a prodigious editor, making historic writing more accessible to the general reader. Works he edited included Alexis de Tocqueville's "Democracy in America," Benjamin Franklin's "Autobiography" and Francis Parkman's "The Oregon Trail."

He once maintained that his most significant work may have been his now-legendary "Documents of American History," first published in 1934. Growing to more than 600 documents, its 10th edition was published in 1988.

Dr. Commager was born in Pittsburgh and grew up in Chicago. Orphaned before he was 10 years old, he was raised by a grandfather, a Chicago clergyman. The future historian began earning his living at age 15 by working in a local library.

He received a bachelor's degree in philosophy and master's and doctoral degrees in history from the University of Chicago. He also received a master's degree in politics from Oxford University in England and attended the University of Copenhagen.

During World War II, he worked for the Office of War Information in Europe and also was an official Army historian. He taught history at New York University from 1926 to 1938 and then at Columbia University before joining the faculty at Amherst College in the 1950's.

As a teacher, Dr. Commager promoted discussion if not downright battles in the classroom. A champion of civil liberties, he had tangled with Sen. Joseph McCarthy (R-Wis.) in the 1950's over the professor's opposition to loyalty oaths.

Even in the 1980's, he continued to lecture politicians on history and civil liberties, quoting Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes to the effect that "we should be ever receptive to loathsome ideas."

George McGovern, the former South Dakota senator and Democratic presidential candidate, who once taught history with one

of Dr. Commager's popular texts, told the Associated Press that the historian's public pronouncements helped sway policy makers to question the Vietnam War.

"He certainly influenced me in making certain that I was on the right track. My own instincts and reading and study convinced me of that. To have a person of the status of Henry Steele Commager saying the same thing was very reinforcing," McGovern said.

Over the years, Dr. Commager wrote for such publications as Current History, the Atlantic Monthly and the Nation. History, however, reported that he owned at least a thousand classical record albums, which he played while working.

Dr. Commager also was enthusiastic about sports. He had written works on baseball and was a rabid college football fan. At least one parent of an Amherst graduate recalls Dr. Commager shouting "advice" from the stands, in no uncertain terms, to an embattled Amherst football coach.

Dr. Commager was a member of numerous historical societies, as well as Phi Beta Kappa, and the American Scandinavian Society.

[From the Washington Times]

Henry Steele Commager, a prolific American historian who championed the Constitution as a model of political genius, died yesterday at the age of 95.

Mr. Commager, who died at his home in Amherst, wrote a body of works spanning much of this nation's history. But his best-known work was "The Growth of the American Republic," which in various revised versions served as a standard college text for generations of students.

His impact went far beyond fellow historians and students. Mr. Commager wrote as much for the popular press as for the scholarly journals. In both arenas, he championed principles of the Constitution, which he called the "greatest monument to political science in literature."

The self-described independent Democrat also did not shy at lecturing Congress and presidents about what he viewed as their moral and constitutional obligations.

Mr. Commager was John Woodruff Simpson lecturer at Amherst College—a post previously held by poets Robert Frost and Archibald McLeish. Before coming to Amherst in 1956, he was on the faculty of New York University and Columbia University.

He also held chairs in American history at Cambridge University and Oxford University. He lectured at universities in Latin America, Japan, Israel and most of the countries of Western Europe.

Mr. Commager, who earned his doctorate from the University of Chicago in 1928, also wrote "Theodore Parker," 1936; "Majority Rule and Minority Rights," 1943; "The Story of the Second World War," 1945; "The American Mind," 1951; "The Commonwealth of Learning," 1968; "Jefferson, Nationalism and Enlightenment," 1975; "The Empire of Reason," 1977; and "This Day and Generation," with Edward Kennedy, 1979.

In 1934, he edited "Documents of American History," a compilation of nearly 500 writings. The 10th edition was published in 1988.

"The Growth of the American Republic" was written with Samuel Eliot Morison in 1931. Mr. Commager collaborated with Alan Nevins on the 10th edition published in 1987.

Born in Pittsburgh and orphaned before his 10th birthday, Mr. Commager was raised by his grandfather, a Chicago clergyman. He said he began earning his living at the age of 15 by working in a library.

Mr. Commager married Evan Carroll in 1928, and they had three children. He married Mary Powlesland in 1979.

She survives him. His other survivors include two daughters.

#### TRIBUTE TO THE QUARTER BACKERS OF THE SOUTHAMPTON HOSPITAL

**HON. MICHAEL P. FORBES**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 1998

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the members of the Quarter Backers Club of Southampton Hospital, who for 20 years have poured their hearts and valuable time into helping the hospital acquire the most technologically advanced, life saving medical equipment and services for the East End, Long Island community.

As a lifelong resident of the Long Island Town of Southampton, I am very proud to count the Quarter Backers as my personal friends and neighbors, men and women whose commitment to our home town knows no bounds. Motivated solely by the selfless desire to help Southampton Hospital provide the best medical care available, the Quarter Backers have raised and donated more than \$100,000 annually for the purchase of the best diagnostic, therapeutic and emergency medical equipment in the industry. Their labors have produced the greatest fruit imaginable, for they have saved the lives and eased the suffering of countless numbers of their neighbors.

The brainchild of John Grattan, a member of the Hospital's Board of Directors who came up with the idea while he was a patient at the hospital, the group was christened the Quarter Backers because members offer quarterly contributions to Southampton Hospital. With the help of Richard J. Micallef, the current chairman of the Quarter Backers Steering Committee and a member from the beginning, John Grattan organized the many East End business men and women, community leaders and others who were committed to supporting the hospital. Born at Southampton Hospital 21 years ago, the Quarter Backers Club has grown into one of the most vital and active members of the hospital family.

Today, the Quarter Backers number more than 200, men and women from every walk of life who have helped Southampton Hospital adjust to rapid advancements in medical technology. They have raised funds to acquire cardiac diagnostic machines, expand the orthopedic sports medicine facilities and supply mammography equipment that formed Southampton Hospital's Breast Health Center. Collectively, the Quarter Backers are as integral to Southampton Hospital as the 120 staff physicians, sixty consulting doctors, nurses and other staff members in building a healthier East End.

More than just fundraisers, the Quarter Backers are the hospital's ambassadors to the East End, reaching out to their neighbors, business groups, local media and schools, building and cementing relationships with the community. Their devotion to Southampton Hospital and their commitment to saving lives and improving community health is all that motivates the members of the Quarter Backers. This is the reason why they have flourished and grown during two decades of service.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join in me in proudly saluting the Southampton Hospital Quarter Backers as the group enters its 21st year of proud service to the hospital and the East End of Long Island.

EXCHANGE CLUB OF LONG  
BRANCH HONORS POLICEMEN OF  
THE YEAR

**HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 4, 1998*

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, this evening, Wednesday, March 4, 1998, the Exchange Club of Long Branch, NJ, will honor two officers as Policemen of the Year as part of its annual crime prevention week.

Cpl. Howard Townsend and rookie officer Michael Ahart are being honored for preventing a possible case of arson. On May 7, 1997, the police received a call to respond to a person possibly attempting to burn down a house. Cpl. Townsend and Officer Ahart responded to the scene and confronted an individual at the back door of the residence. The subject lit a cigarette lighter and instructed the officers not to come any closer or he would set fire to the house. The two officers responded to the emergency like the well-trained professionals that they are. Cpl. Townsend called for fire engines, paramedics, ambulances and a negotiator. He prudently advised the emergency vehicles not to use their lights or sirens to avoid further alarming the individual in the house. Officer Ahart remained with the subject, talking until he was able to get close enough to take a lighter and a gasoline-soaked rag away from him. It was subsequently discovered that the downstairs apartment—where an 85-year-old man and his disabled 83-year-old wife lived—had been completely soaked with gasoline.

Mr. Speaker, the actions of these two police officers are a source of pride to the Long Branch community. While I'm sure that Cpl. Howard and Officer Ahart would object to being described as heroes, and would insist that they were just doing their jobs, their decisive action under severe pressure reminds all of us of the great contributions that police officers around our country make to our security, often at serious personal risk.

The Long Branch Exchange Club is part of a national organization of civic clubs devoted to allegiance to the flag and programs to benefit and educate children. They also stage festival events and other community programs throughout the year.

TRIBUTE TO ANNIE SMITH OF  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

**HON. DANNY K. DAVIS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 4, 1998*

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to a citizen of this country who represents the best of what America has been, is and can become.

Mrs. Annie Smith was born in Mississippi in 1906, moved to Arkansas with her family and ultimately settled in Chicago, Illinois.

God blessed her with the gift of creativity. She learned cosmetology and millinery, established her own shop and was an outstanding business woman for many years. She was a graduate of Madam C.J. Walker's Beauty College and was an Eastern Star.

Mrs. Smith was a member of the St. Luke's Baptist Church for many years before joining the Carey Tercentenary A.M.E. Church, until her death, under the leadership of Rev. K.K. Owens. She was preceded in death by her husband, Joseph Smith and son Charles Gordon.

Best wishes are extended to her son, Mr. Eugene Ireland, and grandchildren, Charlotte Willis, Vernetia Johnson, Jeffrey Johnson, Kevin Johnson, Ann Hill, Rosalynn Hill and her other grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and other family members and friends.

TRIBUTE TO DENT MIDDLE  
SCHOOL

**HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 4, 1998*

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dent Middle School for being honored with the Palmetto's Finest award. This award is given annually to four schools in my home State of South Carolina for excellence in an educational facility. It is sponsored by the Carolina First bank and the S.C. Association of School Administrators.

As a former high school history teacher, I congratulate them with heartfelt pride for the work that is being done at Dent Middle School. Under the leadership of principal Cheryl Washington, a personal friend, Dent was chosen based on factors including how they teach, what classes they offer and how well the school interacts with parents and the local community. Site visits are also made by the judges, who comprise a team of educators representing schools that have won the award previously. Schools may win this prestigious award only once.

Dent Middle School, located in the Midlands area of the Sixth Congress District, is a unique school that represents the diverse population of my district very well. Dent has not only an economically, but also racially, diverse student body of 1,200. Students come from affluent suburban areas, lower-income apartment communities and nearby Fort Jackson. Students also come from across Richland District 2 for a magnet program housed at Dent. The magnet program, The Learning Cooperative, offers a longer school day, smaller teacher to student ratios, and challenging subjects for approximately 240 students from across the school district.

Aside from the magnet program, Dent offers an after-school tutoring program, study sessions and help with homework for students who need extra assistance. They also offer a program called ALERTS who offer special challenges for academically talented students.

Aside from being chosen as one of the Palmetto's Finest, Dent Middle School is a finalist for the Blue Ribbon School award given by the U.S. Department of Education. The other schools in South Carolina chosen as Palmetto's Finest are Riverside High in Greenville County, Reidville Elementary in Spartanburg

County and Shell Point Elementary in Beaufort County. All four of the Palmetto's Finest schools will be honored by Governor David Beasley and state Superintendent of Education Barbara Nielsen at a March 10 gala in Columbia.

Principal Washington says the awards bestowed on Dent aren't won easily and it takes the "commitment of everyone here, the collaboration of everyone working together." It is obvious that Dent Middle School is indeed very committed to meeting the needs of an extremely diverse student body and has proficently collaborated their efforts so that each student gets the educational attention they deserve. Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join with me in paying tribute to Dent Middle School, with congratulations to Ms. Cheryl Washington; two of the Palmetto State's Finest.

HONORING THE HOUSTON FOOD  
BANK ON ITS 15TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. KEN BENTSEN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 4, 1998*

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Houston Food Bank on 15 years of service to the community. The Food Bank will celebrate its anniversary with a gala birthday luncheon on March 12, 1998. In keeping with its tradition of seeking ever new ways to serve, funds raised at the luncheon will be used to expand delivery of fresh fruit and vegetables and provide nutrition education to thousands more needy families.

There is much to celebrate. Since it opened its doors in March 1982, the Houston Food Bank has steadily grown into the nation's fourth-largest food bank, serving 36 counties in southeast Texas and feeding 200,000 people each month.

When it began, the Houston Food Bank consisted of volunteers picking up food in a psychedelic Volkswagen bus and icing it down in picnic baskets. Today, the Food Bank operates from a 73,000-square-foot warehouse featuring 160,000 cubic feet of freezer and refrigerated space. It operates three bobtail trucks, two tractors, and eight trailers for pick-up of donated food provided through a partnership with 300 food companies.

Since its inception, the Food Bank has provided 160 million pounds of food to people in need. Last year alone, the Food Bank provided 20 million pounds of food and other essentials to 400 member charities, including food pantry programs, shelters for the homeless, nutrition programs for the elderly, and group foster homes.

These accomplishments are reason enough to celebrate, but the Houston Food Bank recently received more good news when it was honored with the Congressional Hunger Center's 1997 "Victory Against Hunger Award." The Center praised the Food Bank as "a national model for innovation and efficiency in feeding the hungry," specifically citing programs that "engage all facets of the community in the fight against hunger."

This is but one of many well-deserved honors the Houston Food Bank has received. In 1984, the Houston Food Bank became a certified member of Second Harvest, a network association of 185 food banks across the