

To Remember My Brother,  
Robert L. Hayne

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It is neither fashionable nor common in the American culture to eulogize the living. This is unfortunate. We express some of the most endearing thoughts of affection for our friends and colleagues only after it is too late for them to hear. This is not entirely true of Robert L. Hayne, ISI®'s Chief Editor, who died on July 18, 1977. Bob heard me tell him—though much too late in our long "marriage"—that I loved him as much as my own brother. I would have preferred that Bob read this public tribute to him. He did confess his enjoyment at reading my recent acknowledgement of his role in my book of essays.

But while he was alive he expressly forbade me from doing this, even though I had published tributes to other ISI executives. In fact, he even went so far as to suggest that after his death the less mention of his name the better.

Since we will all achieve that eternal obscurity and oblivion soon enough, I hope he would forgive this trespass. If Bob Hayne does not want the world to know he left it a better place because of the unique person he was, certainly his children and many friends will appreciate some verbalization of their own feelings.

When I wrote about Hayne recently I erroneously confused his alma mater, William & Mary, with another well-known American college. He forgave this error when he saw it, even though he winced. But he did not question my main point: that his education had produced a person of such unique culture that he surely must have seemed an anachronism. Actually he was not only a consummate scholar, a Renaissance Man, and a man for all seasons—he was a cosmic soul. It is hard to believe that such a force does not live on in one way or another.

Part of the grief I feel for Bob is undoubtedly caused by guilt. Sometimes we take our best friends for granted, never realizing how little we know about them. Bob and I knew each other for 26 years, yet I hardly know his children. As I try to biograph him I realize that all I can remember is that he was an orphan brought up in Washington, D.C., and was later adopted as a teenager by a woman I never met.

Bob and I lived in four eras. The first was before we knew each other. We met while working on the National Library of Medicine's Subject Heading Authority List with Seymore Taine, Sanfred Larkey, Helen Field and

Williamina Himwich. We both then went through a long period of association with Smith, Kline & French Laboratories and shared a close friendship with Ted Herdegen. Finally there was our long ISI association, beginning in 1969.

While he was alive it was difficult for me to let on to other colleagues that I considered Bob as close as a brother. It may be for that reason that I often pushed him to perform incredible feats of data compilation and analysis. He worked with such amazing speed that it was hard to realize just how much was getting accomplished.

We agreed to disagree about many things. Perhaps our most recent dispute concerned an essay he drafted entitled "Leonardo in Blue Neon," about a Philadelphia artist's rendering in neon lights of DaVinci's painting, "The Last Supper." I went to look at it and told Bob I didn't like it, but I couldn't get him to agree to discuss our disagreement in *Current Contents*®.

Bob was as comfortable with artistic masterpieces as with graphic design, with literary classics as with technical writing, with Mozart as with David Bowie. His intimate knowledge of ancient mythology made one think he must have lived in ancient Greece, as well as Rome and Scandinavia. He could read innumerable languages. His last request to me was to purchase an Arabic-language Bible so that he could use it for studying Arabic in the way he preferred. We both discussed many linguistically oriented projects—not the least of which is the as-yet incomplete transliterated dictionary of Russian, on which he had made considerable progress. This project will be completed in

the near future and will be a further testimony to his mark on me and on the world.

Bob's greatest failing as a manager was his difficulty in saying no. He wanted everything to get done and to get done perfectly. For years to come the essays appearing in this column will owe a large measure to Bob's ideas and contributions.

Those of you who particularly enjoy the *ISI Press Digest* should realize that it was launched under his tutelage. The same is true of *Citation Classics*. He helped train many of my ISI co-workers and numerous others elsewhere. He was habitually adopting "orphans" of one kind or another.

Those who worked for Bob considered him an ideal boss. He demanded a lot, but he recognized and appreciated work well done. And his competence was so broad that he never had to ask anyone to do something he couldn't do himself. Bob was respected by everyone at ISI, but could laugh and joke and show a genuine interest in everyone from clerks to vice-presidents. Some employees who didn't know Bob may have been intimidated by his sarcastic wit, but all of those who got close to him enjoyed his sharp, perceptive intelligence and his readiness to laugh.

Nothing can be said that can properly do justice to a person's whole life, and I would not even attempt to cover all of Bob's talents or accomplishments or character. It is certain that he will be sorely missed by all of his friends. I am confident that ISI and *Current Contents* will survive, but I am equally confident that without Bob they will never be the same.