

A Tribute to the Late William Hedden



William Hedden

William Hedden died on November 8, 1982. News of his death came to the officers of the SMPTE during the 124th Conference. Perhaps it was the way Bill would have wanted it. A Past President of the SMPTE, he was devoted to the Society and to the furtherance of its aims. He had been an active participant in the SMPTE Conferences, and it was a touching coincidence that his death should occur during the one Conference he could not attend. He will be greatly missed. Aside from the outstanding abilities that he dedicated to service for the Society, he was a man whose warmth and sincerity gave special meaning to his friendship.

Kenneth Mason, a Past President of the SMPTE, and a close friend of Hedden's said, "Bill Hedden was one of the finest persons I have ever known. It was my privilege to call him my friend. Very few people have been as devoted to the laboratory industry and technology as was Bill. He had a true engineer's interest in technology.

"I first knew Bill at Eastman Kodak. Following his graduation from Purdue University in 1940, he joined Kodak in the Cine Processing Division, where he remained until he joined the U.S. Navy in 1942. He was assigned to the Photographic Science Laboratory at the Naval Air Station in

Anacostia, D.C., where, a few months later, I joined him."

(*Ed. Note:* In a 1977 interview, Hedden spoke of his experience at PSL as a "tremendous opportunity, working with some of the real Titans of the motion picture industry." In the same interview, he said he had become acquainted with a number of people who later became close friends and associates, mentioning especially 'a gentleman named Ken Mason.'")

"An important event in Hedden's life," Mason said, "occurred when he met Forest Calvin and Lloyd Thompson, who were quick to recognize Hedden's great talent and offered him a job in what was then a small but growing company. Much of the success and subsequent rapid growth of the company can be credited to Bill's know-how and devotion.

"Bill's dedication to the SMPTE was unqualified. During his term as President (1977-1978), through his leadership, significant advances were made by the Society, particularly in the area of service to its members. Bill had, from the beginning, a special feeling for the SMPTE. I remember at the PSL, I noticed *Journals* of the (then) SMPE on his desk and when I asked about them I was impressed by his enthusiasm when he talked about the Society.

"Bill represented the best in American traditions, and he instilled his ideals and virtues in his two sons and two daughters. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him."

Charles Anderson, SMPTE President, spoke for the membership of the Society when he said, "During his term as SMPTE President, Bill Hedden gave unqualified devotion to the advancement of the Society. His life was an inspiration to all who knew him."

Robert Smith, a Past President of the SMPTE, spoke warmly of his friendship with Bill Hedden. "He was a man who had a gift for

friendship," Smith said. "We grieve for his loss, but we cherish our memories of his life."

A Good Life

Hedden retired from Calvin Communications on June 15, 1982, at the age of 65, after 36 years of distinguished service with that company. At the time of his retirement, he was Senior Vice-President, a post he had held since 1959.

A civic-minded person, Hedden took an active part in community affairs. He was particularly interested in the Boy Scouts and at various times had held offices at troop level, district level, and council level. He was also active in the Kiwanis Club. He had also served on the Board of the Television, Radio, and Audiovisuals Committee of the Presbyterian Church.

Born in New Albany, Indiana, his ancestral background was that of American pioneers who had settled in the Midwest. Bill Hedden retained the characteristics of those pioneers — characteristics thought of as typically American — honesty, integrity, and a capacity for hard work.

It was once said of him that to describe the man himself, four adjectives must be used — sincerity, warmth, friendliness, and intelligence. He was one of those whose power and ability were of the quiet kind, but none-the-less effective.

Hedden was a man of vision, especially where the Society was concerned. One of his long-range goals was to make the Society's services continually increased to the benefit of even the newest member. He frequently expressed his belief in the future of the Society as one of the truly important influences in the wide range of motion picture and television technology. His dedication to the SMPTE and his many services resulting in the Society's advancement can never be forgotten.