

## OBITUARY : WILLIAM McGOVERN

Dr. William Montgomery McGovern died in December 1964 in Evanston, Illinois, U.S.A.

Born on 28 September 1897 in Brooklyn, McGovern had his education outside U.S.A. He took courses in History and Philosophy in Sorbonne, Berlin and Oxford and later studied Buddhism in principal monasteries of China and Japan. To a good knowledge of Greek and Latin he added an equally good knowledge of Chinese and Japanese and had some acquaintance with Sanskrit and Iranian. McGovern thus shaped into an encyclopaedist with his interests ranging over antiquities, linguistics, religions and governments. His publications include *Modern Japan* (1920), *Colloquial Japanese* (1921), *Introduction to Mahayana Buddhism* (1922), *Manual of Buddhist Philosophy* (1923), *To Lhasa in Disguise* (1924), *The Early Empires in Central Asia* (1937).

As a research scholar and as a teacher McGovern's first love was history and civilisation of the East. While hardly thirty he made his mark as a Lecturer in Chinese and Japanese languages in the School of Oriental Studies, London,

Later he took up teaching Political Science at Harvard and North Western Universities, U.S.A. For over 25 years until his death he was Professor of Political Science at the North Western University. In this role he gained the high esteem of his students for his popular exposition of political theories and institutions; the lectures and talks were packed with data drawn from his wide studies as well as world wide experiences. At the same time his reputation as an Oriental scholar remained high.

After Pearl Harbour, he was called for service to a high advisory post in US war administration. This was as much because of his mastery of the two Far Eastern languages as because of his being a friend of the late Sun Yat Sen and his co-workers.

McGovern's passing away will be felt in circles connected with Central Asia and Mahayana. He was a pioneer and as such his studies in these fields may have been rendered inadequate by later discoveries of both archaeological and literary materials. The point for remembrance today is that McGovern was among the first few to notice the role of Central Asia in the entire history of man and to underline the importance of Mahayana for all students of history.

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