



JOHN LOVELL SPERRY

January 18, 1894 — January 21, 1945

In the city of Riverside, California, on January 21, 1945, the productive life of John L. Sperry, member of our Academy since 1931, came to a close.

John Sperry was born in Oaklawn, Rhode Island, January 18, 1894, the son of John and Nellie Julia (Reed) Sperry.

He graduated as a civil engineer from Brown University in 1914, and for a period of time served with the United States Reclamation Service in Wyoming, and with the Providence Water Supply Board in Rhode Island.

As a youth he was interested in natural history, and more particularly in entomology. In this avocation he was ably seconded by his first wife, Grace Herreshoff Sperry.

In 1925 the Sperrys moved to Riverside, California, and thereafter most of their spare time was devoted to collecting and classifying Lepidoptera (butterflies and moths).

The growth of their collection soon necessitated the building of their own private museum. Along with this activity John Sperry

gradually accumulated an excellent library covering his specialized field of research.

He was early and prominently identified with the Lorquin Entomological Society of this city, and was recently honored by being elected to the Executive Council of the Lepidopterists Society, an international organization.

Mr. and Mrs. Sperry were very active in collecting, and their excursions covered nearly all of the inaccessible localities of the United States. With this was combined a correspondence and exchange with collectors throughout the civilized world.

This eventually resulted in the publication of a series of technical papers in various scientific journals, which earned an international reputation for John Sperry, as an authority on the Geometrid moths. These papers recorded many new species, and some of them shed valuable light on the biology of the insects.

Between the years of 1932 to 1952 our Academy "Bulletin" carried ten of these technical papers.

Following the death of Grace Sperry, the active field work was discontinued, and a period of study and correspondence ensued.

Shortly thereafter John Sperry married Bertha Randall Minor of Kingston, R. I. Bertha had been a lifelong friend of both Grace and John Sperry. She was a widow at the time she decided to come to Riverside.

All of John's friends are of one mind, that Bertha brought into his life a rare understanding, sympathy and helpfulness at the time of their greatest need.

No one can be reconciled to the regrettable early termination of that companionship.

The Sperry collection of Lepidoptera, including all of the types, will go to the American Museum of Natural History of New York City, where it will be of greatest service to the entomologists of this and other countries.

— *John Adams Comstock.*