

FOWLE, W. FARNSWORTH

37

White River Jct., Vt. — W. Farnsworth Fowle, a retired reporter for the New York Times and a correspondent for CBS radio in the early years of international radio broadcasting, died on Saturday, Dec. 3, 2016, in an assisted living facility at Valley Terrace near White River Junction, just a few days short of his 101st birthday.

Mr. Fowle was born on Dec. 8, 1915, in Istanbul, Turkey, the second son of Luther and Helen Curtis Fowle, American Board missionaries. His father, Treasurer for the Board in Turkey, was responsible for American interests in Istanbul during World War I as American attaché to the Swedish legation, and was later the first Treasurer of the American Hospital of Istanbul.

Mr. Fowle was named for his great-grandfather, Rev. Wilson Farnsworth of Thetford, Vt., who, with his wife and Thetford Academy schoolmate, Caroline Palmer Farnsworth, went to Turkey as a missionary in 1852. Mr. Fowle attended Deerfield Academy and Williams College, where he was editor of the Williams Record. Mr. Fowle graduated from Williams in 1937 with high honors in history and a Rhodes scholarship to Oxford, where he attended Exeter College.

At Oxford, Mr. Fowle qualified for a B.A. in Philosophy, Politics and Economics in 1939, later receiving a master's degree. When World War II broke out in September, 1939, he was visiting his parents in Turkey. In 1940, he began reporting for Time Magazine and in June 1940, when France fell, Mr. Fowle made his first news broadcast for CBS from Ankara. He continued working with Edward R. Murrow and his team of CBS newscasters throughout the war and its immediate aftermath.

In 1941, Mr. Fowle broadcast for CBS from Sofia, Bulgaria when the German forces arrived to seize Yugoslavia and Greece in preparation for the invasion of Soviet Russia. In 1942, he went to Egypt as a war correspondent for Hearst's International News Service and in 1943, resumed broadcasting for CBS from Cairo, Jerusalem, and Algiers. He was attached to the British and American forces that chased Rommel across North Africa into Libya. Later, he covered the Italian campaign from the invasion of Sicily and Salerno to Rome. He returned to the Balkans after the liberation of Yugoslavia and to Greece as the Cold War was beginning to take shape.

In April, 1945, CBS sent him to Moscow where he covered the final months of the war. He returned to the USA in the summer of 1946, where he could broadcast a more candid view of Soviet affairs without censorship. After a season of news analysis broadcasts for the CBS station in Chicago, Mr. Fowle returned to overseas reporting in Palestine, where the British Mandate was expiring and a United Nations partition plan between the Zionist Jews and the Arab majority was being designed, with Jerusalem as a separate U.N. enclave. He covered the ensuing conflict as the British withdrew and the new State of Israel was formed. Mr. Fowle finished his career with CBS at its London bureau.

In 1949, he joined the New York Times in Turkey where he covered the first free election that replaced President Ismet Inonu. Later that year, he joined the paper's Frankfurt bureau, where he met and married Phyllis Propp, an Iowa-born lawyer who was serving in the Army's European Command. One of only two women to graduate with a J.D. degree from the University of Iowa in 1933, captain Propp was commissioned in May, 1944, as the first women officer in the Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Corps. During her service in Europe, Propp was promoted to lieutenant-colonel and she remained as a judge advocate in the Army reserves after her retirement in 1951.



Mr. Fowle subsequently joined the New York Times' city staff in New York. In 1957, Mr. Fowle joined the paper's coverage of the troubled integration of Little Rock High School, in Arkansas, including the arrival of Army forces to maintain order. At the Times, Mr. Fowle was active in the Newspaper Guild, heading its Times unit for two years.

In 1966, he took a temporary leave from the paper to take part in a program for French-speaking Vietnamese journalists in Saigon under auspices of the International Federation of Journalists. He also wrote for the Rockefeller Foundation about its programs on agricultural development and family planning in Mexico, Turkey and the Philippines.

Mr. Fowle and his wife moved to the Riverdale section of the Bronx in 1951 and remained there after his retirement in 1978. His wife died in 2000. Due to failing health and to be nearer to his remaining family, Mr. Fowle moved to Valley Terrace, an assisted living facility near White River Junction, in 2011.

Mr. Fowle's older brother, Curtis, died in 2009. His younger brother, James, died in 2015. He is survived by his youngest brother, Richardson of West Lebanon, N.H., a sister, Helen Joy Smith (Mrs. Gale M.) of Princeton, N.J. and many nieces and nephews.

Farny's final years at Valley Terrace were made comfortable and pleasant by the extraordinary environment at Valley Terrace in White River Junction. His longevity is certainly a result of the loving care and companionship he received from the Staff there, aided and abetted towards the end by services from Dr. Furmansky of APD, Comfort Zone Inc., Bayada Hospice, and the Visiting Nurses of N.H. and Vermont. His family are most grateful to all those involved.

