James Murray Luck founded Annual Reviews Inc. under conditions that would have suggested quick failure. Investment of capital was not encouraged during the Depression era. Luck's obligations as a young teacher weighed against the investment of sufficient time. Moreover, his only experience in the publishing business was in trying to sell books to farmers in Western Canada during the summer following his freshman year in college at the University of Toronto. Recounted here are some of the factors that led this young scientist, teaching at Stanford University in his early thirties, to create a nonprofit scholarly publishing enterprise that is regarded by the contemporary worldwide scientific research community as indispensable. The basic ingredients that were critically important in the development and continuing attainments of this enterprise, including Luck's own unique personal attributes, are summarized and evaluated against the challenges for change now appearing in the dawning age of electronic publishing.

On August 26, 1993, the long, active, and productive life of Professor James Murray Luck, whose career was centered at Stanford University, came to an end. His death is mourned by a very large number of his students, associates, authors, collaborators, and friends in all parts of the world.

In addition to his research and teaching activities as a member of the department of chemistry at Stanford University from 1926 to 1965, where he taught biochemistry to some thirty successive classes of first year medical students and chemistry majors, Dr. Luck launched the Annual Review of Biochemistry in 1932. He also thereby created the nonprofit enterprise that now publishes and distributes worldwide the authoritative, highly cited Annual Reviews in twenty-six fields in the biological and biomedical, social and behavioral, and physical sciences. The vital contributions made by these Annual Reviews to the health of the scientific research process bear witness to Murray Luck's unique combination of personal gifts as scholar, teacher, and entrepreneur, as well as to his unswerving commitment to the highest ideals of intellectual quality and service.

How did it come about that this unassuming young man, born the son of a blacksmith in Paris, Ontario, Canada in 1899, and newly arrived at Stanford University in California, with his recent doctoral degree from Cambridge University (1925) should—within a few years, and at the nadir of the Great De-
pression—start up a scholarly publishing venture that is held by contemporary science researchers and educators to be indispensable in the world of science and scholarship? Even now it is looking ahead to its sixty-fifth anniversary, when so many publishing ventures* and great corporations, and indeed, even whole nations, have gone out of existence in the intervening years.

Is there a story here? Yes, indeed there is. Publishing has been called "the accidental profession," a designation that seems quite appropriate in the case of Dr. Luck. So let us examine, in his own words, insofar as possible, how Annual Reviews Inc. came into existence and has grown into the respected institution it is today.

Fortunately, Dr. Luck left very detailed accounts of these matters in the archives of Annual Reviews during his active years there, and he recounted the origin and development of the organization in his inimitable style in his "Confessions of a Biochemist," the prefatory chapter he wrote for the fiftieth volume of the Annual Review of Biochemistry, published in the summer of 1981.

"Anyone who was born in the nineteenth century can only be flattered when those about him entertain the belief that he is still able to write something that may be worth reading," he began, noting that "The Editorial Committee... issued a strict injunction in its invitation... that I should discuss the origin and early years of this Review..." Dr. Luck outlined the story as follows.

I suppose it all began with my coming to Stanford University in September 1926, as Acting Assistant Professor of Biochemistry. The settling-in process lasted for two or three years, during which I wrestled with the problem of fashioning lecture and laboratory courses in biochemistry, appropriate to the presumed needs of medical students. The nature of laboratory instruction in biochemistry in those far-off days can be inferred from a laboratory manual entitled "Quantitative Analysis of Blood and Urine" which, as author, and until I knew better, I inflicted upon the students. Meyer Bodansky's book *Physiological Chemistry* was the recommended textbook for the lecture course, supplemented by a miscellany of fact and theory from other sources. The pearls of wisdom that dropped from the lips of this youthful novice were avidly seized upon by a few, some of whom behaved as if they were inspired. This was so rewarding to the lecturer that he decided to give a course on current research in biochemistry to a group of ten or fifteen graduate students. *Chemical Abstracts* and three or four of the principal periodicals in biochemistry provided the material for the course. I soon found myself knee-deep in trouble, and this brings us at once to the conception of the Annual Review of Biochemistry.

The chemistry and metabolism of amino acids and proteins and two or three other areas in biochemistry were the only parts of the whole field

* Including some of the six commercial firms alluded to by Dr. Luck below who "regarded the project as interesting but not the kind of a venture they would choose to undertake..."