

Claude Henry Neuffer

In July, 1977, Claude Henry Neuffer brought to a close a distinguished career when he retired from teaching at the University of South Carolina. For 30 years he had inspired his students through his knowledge and had won their hearts through his whimsical humor and his genuine concern for them.

Born and reared in Abbeville in Up-Country South Carolina, he grew up steeped in the history and traditions of his native state and inspired with a deep love for it. It was only natural, then, that when he came to the University of South Carolina he should teach a course in South Carolina writers, in which he made his students aware of the good writing produced by South Carolinians. His students had an opportunity to meet some of these authors, whom Claude prevailed upon to talk to his class. So well-known did he become because of this course that upon one occasion arrangements were made for students from another college to come to Columbia to hear him lecture. But he was not a "one-course" teacher. Equally as popular as South Carolina Writers was his Vocabulary and Semantics. He was and is a master of word nuances and, in addition, brought to his teaching a thorough knowledge of the Greek and Latin backgrounds of the English language. Students pre-registered for this course, and those not lucky enough to get a place in it often asked to be put on a waiting list. A third course for which Claude became well-known was Introduction to Writing. Many a former student of his is a better writer today because of having taken it.

Besides teaching, Claude found time to serve the English Department and the university in other ways. His activities included being chairman of freshman English, acting as adviser to the student publication *The Crucible*, serving as chairman of the English Department Information Committee, reading manuscripts for the Havilah Babcock Award in Creative Writing, and chairing the Maximilian LaBorde Scholarship Committee.

As editor of *Names in South Carolina*, Claude Neuffer needs no introduction to readers of *Names*, for his journal is now nationally and internationally known. Perhaps the secret of its success is that in it the editor appeals to layman and scholar alike. This magazine, the first state place-name journal in the United States, began as a five-page

mimeographed volume in the spring of 1954. Its publication was due to the efforts of Havilah Babcock, late Head of the Department of English at the University of South Carolina; Francis W. Bradley, late Dean of the Faculty; and Claude Neuffer, then Assistant Professor of English. From the very beginning Claude served as its editor and has continued in that position to the present. Under his guidance *NSC* has become an annual printed volume with an average of 50 pages and with subscribers in nearly every state and in several foreign countries. It is of inestimable value in that it preserves for present and future scholars material that might otherwise be irretrievably lost.

We at the University of South Carolina are happy that, though he has retired from teaching, Claude will maintain an office on campus from which he will continue to edit *Names in South Carolina*. We have not said goodbye to him, but only *au revoir*.

Edward F. Nolan

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