

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION ON THE DEATH OF MARION E. PORTER

Marion Edward Porter was born in Macon, Georgia, on July 17, 1911. He spent his early years in Atlanta and later attended Washington and Lee University, from which he was graduated in 1933. He then became a graduate student at Princeton University, receiving the A.M. in 1935 and the Ph.D. in 1937. From 1936 to 1941 he served as Assistant Professor of Modern Languages at Southwestern University in Memphis. After the war he returned to Southwestern for the year 1946-47 as Associate Professor of Romance Languages, leaving this position to join the Indiana faculty in 1947 as Assistant Professor of French and Italian.

He spent the years 1941-46 in the Counter-Intelligence Corps of the United States Army, leaving with the rank of Major. Aided by his knowledge of several Romance Languages and of German, he served with distinction in a number of areas, particularly Mexico, where he was for a time military attaché, North Africa, Italy, France, and finally Germany, where he participated extensively in the concluding operations of the war. He had received serious shrapnel wounds during one of these campaigns. He was most highly regarded by the military authorities and returned to active duty in Washington for one year after coming to Indiana, to which he returned permanently in 1949.

In 1956 Professor Porter married Barbara Christopher of Minneapolis. A daughter, Susan, was born of this marriage.

His primary field of interest was medieval French language and literature in which he was trained by Professor Edward Armstrong of Princeton, under whom he wrote his doctoral dissertation on a phase of the Roman d'Alexandre, a work on which many of Armstrong's students did very significant research, Porter among them. His work was later incorporated into the great edition of this romance which grew out of these doctoral studies. Armstrong was a perfectionist and this quality was inculcated into his students. As a result Professor Porter's publications were not extensive, but they were meticulous and sound. Of late years he had worked particularly in the field of medieval French hagiography. This resulted in publications concerning the Old French lives of Saint Edmund, the medieval French lives of Saint Fiacre, and, in collaboration with others, the text of the Vie Monseigneur Saint Fiacre. In 1952 he collaborated on an extensive text book for world literature courses, The Literature of Western Civilization, for which he prepared all the texts and notes having to do with continental European literature. Most recently he had completed an edition of the great Provençal romance, Flamenca, with accompanying translation by Professor Hubert of the University of Cincinnati. This work will soon be published.

Professor Porter's teaching was thorough and meticulous, and was, despite its demanding quality, greatly appreciated by graduates and undergraduates. Graduate students were attracted to his courses and a considerable number chose to do doctoral work in the Middle Ages. For these he was most generous with his time and effort, occasionally giving, in addition to his regular program, a course in palaeography or Provençal for a student who needed it. On more than one occasion he relinquished to a doctoral student a subject on which he had already done much preliminary research. In recent

years he had also taught many graduate students to read French for their doctoral requirements. They appreciated his exactitude, his wit, his skill in imparting the knowledge which they needed. Many have spoken with admiration of his classes.

As a person he was urbane, vivacious, interested in many things, sometimes mercurial, sometimes annoyed, sometimes overjoyed. He spent much time pursuing his hobby of hi-fi equipment, and recording and playing the operas he loved. He also concerned himself very much with the general welfare and interest of graduate students in French. For many his home was a welcome haven to which they repaired frequently for advice and relaxation. They will long remember him and the firm friendships they cemented with him and with other students whom they met at his home. For many, more than a professor is gone, and Indiana University and this community are keenly sensitive to this loss.

Be it resolved that the Faculty pay its deepest respects to the memory of Marion E. Porter, that this resolution be recorded in the Minutes of the Faculty Council, and that copies of it be sent to his mother, Mrs. Anne L. Porter, to his former wife, and his daughter Susan, and to his sister, Mrs. Caroline Shelburne.

Hulet H. Cook
Francis W. Gravit
Edward W. Najam