IN MEMORIAM

LEO HUGHES

Leo Hughes was born in Carlyle, Illinois on November 20, 1908. He attended the University of Illinois, receiving his B.A. degree in 1933, his M.A. degree in 1934, and his Ph.D. degree in 1938. The first academic in his family, he was encouraged in learning and particularly in English by his high-school English teacher, Ms. Addie Hochstrasser. In 1938 he returned to Carlyle to marry Mildred Robert.

Leo Hughes came to the University of Texas English department in 1938 and served it well and wittily until his retirement in 1978. He was a colleague of independent mind and voice and generous in the time and encouragement he gave to younger faculty. He liked to tell stories, in the hall, at lunch, or in the Executive Committee. It was important for him to do so, for he acted as a bridge between younger members of the department and the past.

Professor Hughes' excellence as a scholar was recognized both at home and abroad. He received grants from the University Research Institute and two from the Folger Shakespeare Library, where he was a Fellow in the summer of 1953 and in 1966. He was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1956-1957, with time spent at the British Library [then the British Museum]. He was a Visiting Professor at NYU during the summers of 1949 and 1958 and at Rice University in academic year 1961-1962.

His specialty was the English drama of the period 1660-1800. One of the popular dramatic forms of the eighteenth century was the farce. When he began work, it had not received the scholarly attention that had been given to Restoration and Eighteenth-Century comedy and tragedy. He thought it was an important form—as indeed it was. He and his friend and one-time colleague Arthur H. Scouten published a volume Ten English Farces (1948, reprinted 1971). It was an important publication; for the first time readers outside libraries like the British Museum or the Bodleian could read these popular theatrical entertainments. He followed this up with A Century of English Farce (1956), published by Princeton University Press. Popular forms now are taken for granted, but it took scholars like Professor Hughes, who had the courage to write on "low" subjects, to open up the field of popular culture.
The important result of his Guggenheim fellowship was his book *The Drama's Patrons* (1971), which earned the MLA Scholars' Library Award as well as the Texas Writers' Roundup Award. It is a book about the eighteenth-century theater audience, its taste, its changing taste, and its influence upon actors and playwrights. It was a book that required a tremendous amount of reading and very organized note taking. But it doesn't read like a book that was a lot of trouble to write. Published in 1971, *The Drama's Patrons* anticipated a popular current topic, the influence of the reader upon the writer.

When Professor Hughes came to the University of Texas, he joined a department whose senior faculty were men of substantial reputation. What Professor Hughes and those who joined the department during that time brought was a heightened sense of the role they played in national education and scholarship. The present department has grown out of the vision which those members who joined in the thirties and forties brought with them.

Professor Hughes valued his teaching as well as his scholarship. He was chairman of the freshman course, and he and Professor Mody Boatright edited a book for freshmen, *College Prose*. Also, he was active within the University, serving on numerous committees. His colleagues outside English will remember him particularly for being Associate Dean of the Graduate School 1958-1965, for chairing the Minority Groups Committee, the University Fellowship Committee, and the University Press Advisory Board.

He was a longtime supporter of St. Austin's and the Paulists and helped in the planning of the University Catholic Center. In recognition of his service, he was decorated a Knight Commander of St. Gregory in 1967. He was also active in Professor Joe Witherspoon's literacy project in East Austin.

Professor Hughes died on March 3, 1995. He is survived by his son Robert, his daughter Barbara (Mrs. Jerrold Buttrey), and four grandchildren. At the time of his death, one who knew him well wrote this about him:

Allowing no room for academic flim-flam, Leo Hughes was the very last professor a student wanted to face unprepared or ask to sign a drop card. Yet behind his scholarly demeanor, he was approachable, supportive, and generous to a fault. Just as he was warmly remembered by his students, he loved to follow their careers in return.
He will be remembered by his colleagues as a fine scholar, an excellent teacher, an active department member, and a friend.

Robert M. Berdahl, President
The University of Texas at Austin

H. Paul Kelley, Secretary
The General Faculty

This Memorial Resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors W. O. S. Sutherland (Chair), William B. Todd, and Larry D. Carver.