

Herbert Chayyim Youtie

(1904-1980)

Da più di tre anni Herbert Chayyim Youtie ci ha lasciati, e la memoria di lui è sempre vivissima fra quanti l'hanno conosciuto e hanno largamente attinto alla sua dottrina e alla sua generosa umanità. Per ciò abbiamo voluto che questo numero di Aegyptus si aprisse con un contributo a lui dedicato dalla Scuola di Papirologia dell'Università Cattolica di Milano, e si concludesse con un ricordo di lui dettato da chi gli fu collaboratore ed intimo amico.

On February 13, 1980, the death of Herbert Youtie, Emeritus, Professor of Papyrology at the University of Michigan, brought to an end fifty years of unremittingly productive scholarship. His activity covered the entire range of documentary studies for which his theoretical and methodological essays, derived from his practice and illustrated by his editions, set the standards. His six major works — P. Michigan IV, pts. 1 and 2, VI, and VIII; the Archives of Aurelius Isidorus and of Petaus — are supplemented by the collected articles and lectures comprising papyrus editions, critical articles, and essays on the technique of editing, which as *Scriptiunculae* — a characteristically modest and unassuming title — run to four volumes and 239 items. All of these in sheer extent constitute a life work sufficient to have won him many honors. Yet it was perhaps in the controlled imagination with which he entered the private worlds of the illiterate or scarcely literate writers or dictators of personal letters that he showed the highest achievement of his humanism. To be able, with consistently persuasive skill, to work out texts from garbled and often fragmentary papyri proved him to possess an intuition disciplined and trained to correlate evidence almost below the level of perception.

Fittingly, the honors accorded to him testify to his scholarly eminence. These included membership in the American Philosophical Society, Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy, Honorary President Association International des Papyrologues, Dr. Phil. honoris causa, Cologne, and a Festschrift, *Collectanea Papyrologica*, in two volumes.

Herbert Youtie remains the ideal exemplar of *amicitia papyrologica*. His criticism, accurate, unsparing and essential to the health of our art, focussed on the text, generously recognized any merit, and never disparaged the person. His function as intellectual surgeon and healer will be sorely missed.

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