

**MEMORIAL RESOLUTION**  
**FREDERICK L. BEATY**  
(1926-2016)

Fred Beaty was born and educated through college in Texas. He graduated *magna cum laude* from the University of Texas in Austin in 1946 with a major in English, and was then awarded a Lehman Fellowship for graduate study at Harvard, from which he received a master's degree in 1948. He also won a Rhodes scholarship for study at Oxford, from which he received the degree of BLitt in 1950. He then received another Lehman fellowship to return to Harvard to study for his doctorate, which he received in 1952 with a dissertation on the fiction of the Elizabethan writer Thomas Lodge. But while serving as an assistant at Harvard in undergraduate courses he became interested in the writing of early-nineteenth-century British romantic poets, and he gave his career principally to teaching and writing about this rich body of literature.

Before he began his academic career, however, Fred fulfilled his military obligation by serving for two years (1952-54) in army counterintelligence. Upon his discharge from the army, he became an English instructor at Cornell University, but a few months after his arrival in Ithaca he received and accepted for the following year a better offer from Indiana University, and he came to Bloomington to stay until his retirement in 1991. In 1955 Fred married Martha Jean Ross, an English teacher in a Dallas high school. During their early years in Bloomington Fred and Martha became the parents of two daughters – Margaret Lee (born 1957) and Emily Ann (1960) – and later the proud grandparents of five grandchildren. Besides parenting, Martha continued her own career as a public-school teacher of English, and as a part-time instructor in the Department of English. Later she served as a librarian in various branches and offices of the IU Library (education, personnel, and journalism).

Most of Fred's publications and advanced teaching were given to the literature and ideas of the British romantic period, although he also published essays on some Elizabethan and late eighteenth-century writers. He edited (1957) a collection of letters between Charles Lloyd and Thomas Manning, interesting presences in the literary, political, and religious circles of early nineteenth-century London. His first book, *Light From Heaven: Love in British Romantic Literature* (1971), showed in a series of steadily managed and illuminating readings of writers from Robert Burns to Charlotte Brontë how the idea of love moved from comic celebrations of its pleasures (Burns) to exultant hopes for its redemptive power (Wordsworth, Shelley). Reviewers praised its "comprehensiveness and wealth of information" and wrote that it "will take its place among the books necessary for an understanding of the English Romantic period." Fred's study of *Byron the Satirist* (1985) exhibits the same strong qualities of criticism and scholarship, calling on his knowledge of Roman satire, continental literature, Byron's biography and habits of composition and publication, and the literary politics of the period to show Byron's growth from the topical comedy of his early satires to the large social and moral themes of his unfinished masterpiece *Don Juan*. In 1997 Fred was nominated for the award of Distinguished Scholar by the Keats-Shelley Association of America, although he was unable to attend the ceremony at which this distinction was awarded.

On the title page of Fred's final book, *The Ironic World of Evelyn Waugh: A Study of Eight Novels* (1992), he honors the assistance of his wife Martha Ross Beaty and dedicates the book to their five grandchildren. In the book he distinguishes between satire and irony; the latter, in his view, lacks the moral center and certainty of judgment of satire. He again calls on a range of knowledge, from the conventions of Oxford debates to the techniques of film and the ideas of Oswald Spengler, to describe in

authoritative readings of the novels Waugh's movement from his early mockery of a morally bankrupt culture to attempts after his conversion to Roman Catholicism to find divine purpose in a pagan world.

Fred Beaty directed dissertations and honors theses on Wordsworth, Shelley, Byron and other Romantic writers, and on the Gothic novel, the writings of George Meredith, Thomas Hardy, Waugh, and D. H. Lawrence. Over the years he garnered the reputation from students at all levels as a kindly but always challenging teacher, thoroughly in command of everything that happens in his classes but easily approachable by students in need of advice or information. In a nomination of Fred for a teaching award, a former chair of the Department of English wrote that "in his quiet way Professor Beaty is one of our strongest teachers. Graduating seniors mention him often as one of the best teachers they have had." Indeed, student evaluations gathered from Fred's classes over the years contain numerous statements like this one: Professor Beaty is "interested and caring. He is helpful, insightful, and approachable. His teaching style and content are unsurpassed." Moreover, he has "a great sense of humor and [is] a joy to listen to . . . I never felt bored or [even] mildly disinterested." For good reason in 1989 Fred received an award from Golden Key, Blue Key, and Mortar Board for "excellence in teaching."

Fred's service to the department, the university, and his profession was diligent, varied, effective, and cheerfully undertaken. Among the many departmental committees on which he served he is remembered especially for his work for four years as a member and chair of the doctoral examinations committee, for which he was known to both committee members and the many graduate students who took their examinations during those years as a person who maintained the highest standards but who was also scrupulously fair and who treated students with great kindness and concern. Outside the department Fred served, among other committees, on the College honors committee, the executive committee of the local Phi Beta Kappa chapter, the grant-in-aid committee of RUGS, and (perennially and for four years as chair) the Rhodes-Marshall selection committee.

Fred Beaty contributed many essays and reviews to the principal journals in his expansive field of study, read manuscripts submitted to these journals and to the university presses of Indiana, Princeton, and Missouri, and served as secretary and later chair of the MLA committee on the critical study of Romanticism. He frequently gave public lectures on Burns, Wordsworth, and Byron, and in a 1987 summer institute in Bloomington for Indiana high school teachers, he spoke on the very large topic of "Romanticism and Nature."

After his retirement in 1991 Fred and Martha remained in Bloomington for a decade, enjoyed travels to Europe with their daughters, and then moved to Lake Oswego, Oregon to be near their family. His obituary in the local paper in Oregon recalls that he was active in the movie committee of his retirement community, often spoke on literary topics and European travel, and gave readings at services in his church. The writer of the obituary concludes: "Frederick was a loving husband, father, friend and scholar who touched the lives of many people He will be dearly missed."

We request that this tribute be presented as a memorial resolution in the Bloomington Faculty Council, that it be preserved in the minutes and archive of the BFC, and that after its presentation copies be sent to Professor Beaty's wife and daughters.

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