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IN MEMORY

In a profession that forever speaks of reading as an adventure, as an un-locked door to limitless horizons, it was only natural that this profession should become intimately involved with Philip G. Hilaire, a teacher, writer, and world adventurer, who had visited or lived and worked abroad, and who had gloried in seeing the sun rise on most of the earth's exotic lands and peoples, of which books are filled.

Phil Hilaire, born May 9, 1924, earned degrees and did further study at Moravia College, LeHigh University, Temple University, and the University of Michigan. He taught language arts and reading and was a guidance counselor in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania; and a school psychologist in the Cumberland County Schools. He was reading consultant for the Oakland Schools from 1956-58, and again in 1964 until his death. He taught in American Schools abroad in Venezuela, Germany and England.

Phil brought to the United States directly from its English originator, his friend, Sir James Pittman, the Initial Teaching Alphabet, first in a program financed by the Ford Foundation, and then in another, in Oakland County, sponsored by the United States Office of Education.

Hilaire taught numerous courses in reading at all of these universities: Oakland, Michigan, Lehigh, Eastern Michigan, Toledo, and Wayne State. His influence on teachers of reading has been wide-spread, but he seemed to enjoy most of all giving demonstration lessons with elementary children, where his kindly good humor and talent in mime endeared him to pupils and teachers alike. He specialized in seeking out something positive to praise in the slowest learner until the child was almost consumed in pride and happiness. And he could leave a weary and dispirited teacher with a new sense of worth and mission and a vow to tackle again a difficult obstacle.

Phil Hilaire's heart stopped on May 6, 1974, a few days before his fiftieth birthday. The teachers and students that he imbued with his spirit of adventure and love of people know that the sun has not set for him or for them, but only that with each book cover flung back wide, they silently read his name and gratefully acknowledge the privilege it was to spend a few short hours in his time.

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