

# O B I T U A R Y

William Carl Nettles, Sr.

1907 - 1985

William C. Nettles, Sr., Professor Emeritus of Entomology, died March 17, 1985, at the age of 77. He was born on August 11, 1907, in Sumter County, South Carolina and died at Clemson Downs, Clemson, South Carolina.

Carl obtained the B.S. degree in Agriculture with an entomology major in 1930 from Clemson University and the M.S. degree in entomology in 1932 from Ohio State University. Additional study was pursued at Ohio State during 1933; however, the severe depression of 1933 caused Carl to return to South Carolina.

His first entomological work began in 1928 as Research Assistant at the Sand Hill Station (S. C. Agricultural Experiment Station) followed by appointment as Student Assistant-Entomology Department and in 1930 as Assistant Entomologist, S. C. Agricultural Experiment Station, Clemson. Upon his return from Ohio State he was appointed as Extension Entomologist, a position he held for the next 39 years. In 1947 he became Leader of Extension Entomology and Plant Pathology and Insect Survey Coordinator. In 1960 he was given the added responsibility of Chemical Leader. In 1968 he became Principal Specialist-Entomology. Carl retired in 1972 holding the longest continuous service record in the School of Agriculture and nationally as an Extension Entomologist-Plant Pathologist.

Carl specialized in applied entomology especially in the control of insect pests of agricultural crops. Extension demonstrations conducted under his leadership ranged from cotton seed treatment in 1936 to new pesticides to replace DDT in 1970. He published many extension bulletins, information cards and other publications for farmer use. He once estimated he had written over 1400 extension articles and had over 35,000 news items published in South Carolina news outlets.

Carl introduced the use of cryolite for lepidopterous pests in 1937 and he was involved with the first use of DDT on peaches in 1944. He often cited the highlight of his career as solving the serious outbreak of stable flies in a sewage plant in Greenville County in 1934.

Carl used a number of novel approaches to entomological education. For example; in 1938 he used cartoons to promote the control of cattle lice with dust which was widely accepted; in 1949 he used a series of tombstones with "Here Lies" messages for control of various pests; in 1938 he promoted one of his most wide spread activities, Goodby Mr. Roach, of which several thousand copies of a flannel board display were prepared and distributed. He also was responsible for



several very successful state-wide rat control campaigns from 1945 to 1955. One of Carl's projects of which he was most proud was the Clemson University-USDA Insect Photo project which was initiated in 1969 and completed in 1971. Carl was instrumental in obtaining the \$100,000 plus grant which produced a slide series of 400 insects and plant diseases and 28 color picture sheets. The color sheets and slides have been used in many insect and plant disease publications nationally and internationally.

Carl was named Progressive Farmer "Man of the Year in Agriculture in South Carolina" in 1960. He became a member of the Entomological Society of America in 1930, served as Cotton States Branch as Vice Chairman in 1947 and Vice Chairman and Chairman of the Southeastern Branch in 1966 and 1967, respectively. He was a charter member of the South Carolina Entomological Society and served as Secretary in 1959 and President in 1963, a charter member of the Tobacco Workers Conference where he served as Secretary, Chairman of the Entomology Section (1951) and General Conference Chairman, 1967; and a charter member of the Professional Peach Worker's Conference.

Carl had an intense interest in insect surveys and served as Extension Representative on the National Survey Committee which established the Cooperative Economic Insect Survey Report in 1951.

His interest in the genealogy of South Carolina families led him to become one of the better known lay genealogists in the state.

His vast store of financial knowledge and his good sense of humor made him a favorite source of financial advice for many faculty and townspeople.

He is survived by his wife, Ruby Mae Stevenson Nettles; one daughter Julia Donnaleen Plunkett of Savannah, Georgia; two sons, W. C. Nettles, Jr. of College Station, Texas, and J. A. Nettles of Simsbury, Connecticut; and three grandchildren.

His accomplishments, his enthusiasm for life, and his unique ability of always lifting up his fellowman will be long remembered by friends and colleagues. A host of friends will miss the beautiful camellias he so proudly grew and shared with so many.

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