

CORYDON PERRY SPRUILL '20 – “He looks at you straight and talks to you straight and then straightaway goes and does just what he said he will do; and yet he is withal a quiet fellow, dignified and popular.”

So declared the 1920 Yackety Yack beneath the photograph of Corydon Perry Spruill Jr. His students and colleagues at Chapel Hill through the years since then would agree that this continues to be an apt description.

Entering the University in 1916, he went into the Army during World War I, yet managed to graduate with his class. As a student he won a Phi Beta Kappa key, lettered in gymnastics, managed the basketball team, ran a boarding house, and was president of his sophomore class, the campus cabinet and the Pan-Hellenic Council.

Tapped into the Order of the Golden Fleece for his contribution to student life, Corydon Spruill earned a still higher honor soon thereafter. He was selected as a Rhodes Scholar and earned an additional degree at Oxford University in 1922.

That same year he returned to Chapel Hill to become an assistant professor of economics. On leave of absence, 1928-30, he studied and taught at Harvard, then returned to Chapel Hill and was named a full professor in 1932. He retired as an Alumni Distinguished Professor 12 years ago.

In 1936, this Raleigh native became the first dean of the General College, a position he held (except for World War II service) until being named Dean of the Faculty in 1955. He was instrumental in setting up the undergraduate advising system, earning the praise of students by his exceptional concern for their welfare – a concern he also instilled in those who served with him.

Now retired in Chapel Hill and active in the town's historical society, he continues in his quiet, capable way to serve and help sustain the University community. With this award the alumni family also expresses its thanks for his distinguished service.