

Youngsters Learn Languages Early

By VERNA SHIMAVONIAN

One Of Several Shows

"Bon jour, madame," chorused to fourth grade students recently when Mrs. Marian Walter visited their class at Hillcrest School in Burlington.

This incident is the result of a new development on the North Carolina public school scene: elementary school children undertaking the study of a foreign language—and showing good grasp of the subject.

The Burlington students and several other North Carolina school groups are becoming bilingual through the efforts of Mrs. Walter and the staff of WUNC-TV, the state's pioneer educational television station.

Since late September Mrs. Walter has been conducting "Rendez-vous en Francais," a language course for children, given on Channel 4 every Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings at 11 o'clock.

Emphasis is on the spoken language, and everything said on the program from the first day has been in French. This differs from the usual high school or college French course, in which beginners are drilled on reading, writing or grammar exercises.

Never Translates

Mrs. Walter does not translate and she as underlined heavily her instructions to classroom teachers "never to translate." Thus the children learn French the same way that they learned English, hearing words and phrases and then repeating them.

Mrs. Walter uses songs, games, pictures and puppets to make clear what she is saying. Two of her most valuable teaching aids are puppets Jean and Marie, who also "speak" only French. She also illustrates much of her conversation with clever sketches on the blackboard. Although Mrs. Walter often repeats a word or phrase, the context and pace are so varied that the program remains fresh and interesting.

For instance, boys and girls watching "Rendez-vous en Francais" through December will learn to talk in French about Christmas presents and trees, the Nativity, and about clothes for the holidays. They will also learn a French Christmas carol. But interwoven with this exciting fare will be a study of arithmetic combinations, vocabulary review, and several new verbs.

The program is one of several "school-related" shows telecast by WUNC-TV every week. It is on the suggested viewing list for principals and teachers who wish to introduce foreign languages to their students via television. With this kind of informal arrangement, that is no official registration, it is difficult to know how many schools are taking advantage of this unique opportunity. However mail response has been encouraging from teachers, students, and from adults who are following the series at home. From Sanford, one mother writes:

"I have only just begun simple conversations in French with my own four children. They have never heard any foreign languages spoken and think it strange coming from Mother whose only apparent accomplishments are cakes and cookies. With the world growing smaller by the hour, we Americans are foolish indeed not to prepare our children properly. . . . Sanford schools don't carry "Rendez-vous en Francais," but I am going to talk to the principal and teachers, and perhaps even to the PTA. . . . May I compliment you on your presentation of "Rendez-vous en Francais." You have the most cheerful and refreshing smile. The children must love you."

From a fifth-grade student at Hillcrest School came the following letter: "I sure did enjoy your visit to my room. I'll keep on watching you on television and try to do what you told me about trying not to think in English to speak French, but to think in French to speak French."

Mrs. Walter and the staff of WUNC-TV hope that the response to "Rendez-vous en Francais" will be great enough to warrant a repeat of this first-year course, and possibly an intermediate French course and an elementary Spanish course on television next year.

Well Qualified

Mrs. Walter is very well qualified to teach both French and Spanish. She has a knowledge of 10 languages and has taught French over a period of years to kindergarten, elementary school, high school and college students. She learned French as a child, studied in France on a Fulbright grant, taught English in Nicaragua and has cooperated in setting up language laboratories at several colleges. She currently is completing the requirements for a Ph.D. degree in Romance languages at the University of North Carolina. "Rendez-vous en Francais" is a course she has written especially for children from the second to the sixth grades.



PORTER COWLES—Assistant Director of University of North Carolina Press stands beside bookshelf containing some of the hundreds of books published at Chapel Hill in her 25 years with the Press. Miss Cowles is holding "I Rode With Stonewall" by Henry Kyd Douglas, the first best seller produced by the UNC Press.

learning them as well as in English, but with a novel and sharpened focus."

Best Time For Learning

In answer to the educator's argument that there isn't time in the elementary schools for foreign languages, Mrs. Walter says, "Not only is this period recognized as the most economical time to learn languages, but, far from competing with other work, a recent study has shown that children studying foreign languages in elementary schools register higher in all subjects than those not studying it. It must be recognized that words in any language are the most facile material for thought; that they represent ideas. For example, a child learning arithmetic combinations in French, or making the acquaintance of geographical, artistic, or social phenomenon in French, is not only

Porter Cowles Spurns Offers Of Non-Academic Publishing To Stay With UNC Press

By PETE IVEY

Porter Cowles has spurned many offers to take jobs in the non-academic publishing world. Instead, she has chosen to stay in Chapel Hill, with the University of North Carolina Press.

On the occasion of her 25th year with the Press in the University, the board of governors this week made formal acknowledgement of her work here since 1933.

Miss Cowles, who in private life is Mrs. C. N. Pickell of Chapel Hill, has had a part in the publishing of 584 books, supervising the manufacture of most of them.

The University of North Carolina Press was established in 1922 with Louis R. Wilson as director. It was 11 years old when Porter Cowles came to it in 1933. During these 11 years it had published 161 books. Today it has published 745

She has served with three directors: W. T. Couch, Thomas J. Wilson, now director of the Harvard University Press, and Lambert Davis, the present director.

The resolution follows:

"The Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina Press takes this occasion, the 25th anniversary of the beginning of her service, to express its appreciation to Porter Cowles for her many contributions to the success of the Press. She began her work with the Press in the summer of her graduation from the University of North Carolina in the class of 1933, and she has served with distinction in every area of its publishing activity, including two extended terms as Acting Director and her present office of Assistant Director and Business Manager.

While it is difficult to single out individual achievements in her career without appearing to neglect others, it does seem fitting to

point to her, singular success in maintaining the organization of the Press in difficult periods and in bringing it to its present state of professional efficiency and high morale. Also of importance to the Press have been her successful relations with printer in developing high standards of book production, and especially her friendship with E. D. Fowler, which has been the basis for a collaboration between the Press and the Seaman Printery in Durham from which the Press has profited greatly over the years.

"The Board is proud that Miss Cowles' attainments have been recognized by her colleagues in university publishing, signified in her election as Secretary-Treasurer and Executive Committee Member of the Association of American University Presses. The Board is happy to know that, although she has received flattering offers from other organizations in the publishing world,

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