



VIGNETTES IN  
COASTAL PLAIN GEOLOGY

HAROLD ERNEST VOKES  
(1908- )

Harold Vokes was born in Canada but moved with his family to Pasadena, California, when he was 12. There he attended Occidental College, where he originally intended to be an English major, but the usual required Science course in Geology was all that was needed to change his life. A post-doc at Yale led to his appointment at the American Museum in New York, where he was a curator of Invertebrate Paleontology from 1937 to 1943. World War II found him hunting Uranium in the Green River Desert and after the war he joined the faculty at The Johns Hopkins University. Here he began his life-long research on the molluscan faunas of the Gulf and Atlantic Coastal Plain. In 1956, Tulane University, having decided to expand its Geology department and add a graduate program, brought Harold to New Orleans for this purpose. He remained at Tulane for the rest of his professional career, finally retiring from teaching at the then mandatory age of 70, in 1978. However, he continued his research until failing health ended his publishing record in 1994. In the 60 years between 1935 and 1995 Harold published about 130 scientific papers (not including numerous abstracts and book reviews). Undoubtedly, the most valuable contribution was his *Genera of the Bivalvia*, first published in 1967, with a revised edition in 1980, and a final addenda in 1990.