

In Memory of John W. “Jack” Cell (1935-2001)

Jack Cell, a friend and trusted advisor died in a boating accident October 26, 2001. He was 66.

For eighteen years Jack was a loyal member of this journal’s editorial board, and the journal benefitted from his acute judgments about the ever-changing scholarship in British imperial history. Numerous authors found welcome his evaluations of their work, even when they did not issue in our publication of their work. Jack never insisted on a single way of writing history, except that it be clear, intelligently based on all appropriate sources, and make a useful contribution. His standards for making these judgments were high, but he never insisted that his was the superior assessment of someone’s work. Over the years we, like other journals, have received articles from graduate students that often were still a long way from being ready for publication. Our internal debate was whether to read and report on such submissions, and Jack’s position was always they deserved honest assessment. His generosity and commitment to teaching knew no bounds and helped this journal to make its professional contribution. His respect for others earned their respect for him, although few authors ever knew to whom they felt obligation.

Jack Cell was widely known for his own contributions to imperial history, most notably through two major works, which have been praised without exception. *The Highest Stage of White Supremacy: The Origins of Segregation in South Africa and the American South* was published in 1982 and demonstrated his ability to use comparative historical study to illuminate complex issues of race, class, and industrial politics. Ten years later in 1992, he produced a model biographical study of Lord Hailey that built upon years of study of imperial policy.

Jack will be sorely missed not only by me and others associated with this journal’s work, but by his many friends and colleagues who were fortunate to have met, lived, and worked with him. It is no secret that he was deeply loyal to Duke University, and it was through his colleague there, Richard Preston, that I was introduced to him nearly twenty years ago. It resulted in an association I have valued and learned from, and will continue to cherish, reminded always of the fragility of our lives.

Michael J. Moore