ALBERT HENRY MARCKWARDT

On August 20, 1975, humanistic scholarship and the science of linguistics suffered an irreparable loss in the sudden death of Albert Henry Marckwardt. He had been on a ten-day tour of England and Scotland with Mrs. Marckwardt, and was stricken in a hotel near the London airport shortly before emplaning for a return to the United States.[1]

Al Marckwardt—as almost all the world knew him—was one of the small group of linguistic scholars of our era who have made America eminent in our science, and no scholar will serve the science with exactly his combination of gifts for a long, long time. Of late years, the type of linguistic activity which has been most honored is development of linguistic theory. Al was conversant with all the exciting and sometimes controversial developments in this area, but essentially chose to follow different paths. One field within linguistics is the history of languages, and here Al was preëminent among scholars of the history of English. Another area for study of English, besides that of history, is English dialectology, and here again Al was a leader. Yet his greatest contribution is that, more than any other linguist, here or abroad, he labored tirelessly to bring linguistics and its results to bear on classroom teaching. One need only peruse the bibliography which concludes this article to realize how devotedly he wrote for small (even out of the way) teachers' periodicals on questions dealing with instruction in English, both to native speakers and to speakers of other languages. We shall not see his like again.

It has been one of the privileges of scholarship for me that I was long and intimately associated with Al. As a teacher who was pretty much an unlicked cub at the University of Michigan, I was fortunate enough to have Al first as a graduate student, and then when he joined the faculty, as an office mate. We thus had the pleasure of being young men together, a pleasure replaceable only by being mature scholars together also. There are many memories of those days now long ago. One that returned to me, when I read William G. Moulton's amused strictures on the somewhat unnecessary phonetic transcription of Al's name in *Who's*

[1] There have been numerous obituary articles, and one biographical article for Albert Marckwardt. Those which have been most useful in preparation of this appreciation are 'A biography and bibliography of Albert H. Marckwardt', by William G. Moulton, in *Studies in honor of Albert H. Marckwardt*, ed. by James E. Alatis (Washington, DC: TESOL, 1972; vi, 166 pp.—the Moulton article is on pages 1–14); and the obituary by Harold B. Allen, prepared for the *Linguistic Reporter* (18:3.4–5, Nov. 1975), which I used in mimeographed form. I also used a biographical data sheet prepared by Marckwardt himself for the Center for Applied Linguistics.

It should be added that the bibliography in the Moulton biography was my chief source for the list given here. The bibliography was originally prepared by Marckwardt himself, and I have contented myself here with adding such further items as I could discover. These are principally reviews and one article later than 1972. I have also tried to give somewhat fuller information than is present in Al's informal listings. I have been aided in identification of several items by a number of Al's colleagues—Kenneth Croft, Harold Allen, Frederic G. Cassidy, James E. Alatis, Robert Hogan, and Kenneth Pike.

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who in America as '(mark'-wart)', was the direction that he gave me when we first met, which was far more necessary—'Spell my last name with as many letters as possible.' I have never since had trouble, and am amused that the direction inadvertently put him in a class with Shakespeare for literal redundancy. In those years I profited by a process which I hope will never end—that of learning from my students; and Al began it, first with German folk songs, then with bits on how to teach literature, and finally with clear and incisive insights on such matters of history as the development of paradigms like *deal–dealt*, the subject of his dissertation. I remember also his amusedly asking me about the past participle of *stride*: 'Is it *stridden*?' I have been listening ever since for an example of this curiously non-existent form. More importantly, perhaps, I remember his infrequent reminiscences of his years as a high school teacher in Wakefield, an isolated Upper Peninsula town, and the contrast he felt between his high school students, living largely in the open, and his townie students at Ann Arbor. He had had no difficulty in awaking active student response to the nature poetry of Wordsworth, and the other Romantics, in his Wakefield classes; but to Ann Arbor students, even in the twenties, country life and country sights, however enlarging they may have been to initiated readers, were yet too distant for immediate participation.

Al belonged to that generation of linguists who were trained in literature departments and who did much of their teaching there. Both he and I were students and disciples of Samuel Moore, and received from Moore meticulous training in the detailed history of the English language and its dialects. Both of us also received from Moore a deep respect for evidence and an approach to scholarly problems which rested on evidence which was clear, together with disregard of that which was ambiguous. It is altogether fitting that the training Al received from Moore brought forth, in 1951, a thoroughly revised and up-dated version of Moore's *Historical outlines*.

Passing to the public record of Al's career, I begin it with the statement of his birth, on December 1, 1903, in Grand Rapids, Michigan: He received all three of his academic degrees from the University of Michigan: his A.B. in 1925, his A.M. in 1928, and his Ph.D. in 1933. He was an undergraduate member of Phi Beta Kappa, and his Ph.D. dissertation, 'Origin and extension of the voiceless preterit and past participle inflections of the Old English weak verb conjugation', was not one of those uninspired academic compilations that gather dust in unpublished obscurity. It was duly published in the Michigan *Essays and studies in English and comparative literature* in 1935, and formed an authoritative statement of what evidence could be brought to bear on the puzzling question of what could explain creation of forms like *felt*, since there was no development like assimilation to account for the voiceless form of the ending. Al showed that the occurrence of these forms was essentially analogical, not the result of physical process.

Al began his teaching in 1925, and he continued to be an active teacher until the end of his life—a span of fifty years. His first position as a high school teacher in Wakefield was followed in 1926 by a similar appointment in Grand Rapids. In 1928 he entered the Graduate School of the University of Michigan, serving as instructor from the same year. Thereafter he served through the several grades of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor, achieving the last position

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in 1946. His teaching at Michigan was interrupted by many visiting appointments, the most notable of which was as Visiting Professor Extraordinary and Director of the English Language Institute at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. He was twice a visiting professor at UCLA, first in the spring semester of 1940, and second in the summer of 1945. He was twice on the summer faculty of Columbia, in 1948 and 1949. While still at Michigan, he became Director of the English Language Institute, a position first held by his long-time colleague and mentor Charles C. Fries, and held this post from 1961 until he left the University in 1963. It was also in these years at Michigan that Al began a series of arduous tours of duty abroad in the interest of teaching the English language. He was a Fulbright lecturer at the Universities of Vienna and Graz in Austria in 1953–54; and to these were joined shorter appointments as State Department Consultant on Teaching English—in Colombia in 1945, Panama in 1946, and Italy in 1954. It should also be said that his teaching at Michigan was signally honored toward the end of his tenure there by the receipt of the Distinguished Faculty Service Award from the University.

In 1963 Al left the University of Michigan to accept an appointment as Professor of English and Linguistics at Princeton University, becoming Paton Foundation Professor of Ancient and Modern Literature in 1969, and holding that position until he became Emeritus in 1972. As might have been expected, during his years at Princeton he continued to serve abroad: as a member of the U.S. Educational Commission in Japan in 1968, and as consultant for the State Department on teaching English, in several tours beginning with Eastern Europe in 1965, Colombia in 1968 and 1969, and Peru in 1971. He was also a consultant for a University of Pittsburgh project on teaching English in Thailand in 1968. In 1971 he went to India at the request of the U.S. Information Agency, to investigate teaching programs there. In each visit, short or long, he made an important impact on language education in the host country. Thus it was typical of his work that Trusten W. Russell, of the Fulbright Office in Washington, speaking of his report on the trip to Eastern Europe, said that it was 'an insuperable job'.

In the years following his retirement from Princeton, he demonstrated that retirement for him was, to quote Falstaff, only a word. Thus he became a visiting professor at his own University of Michigan in 1972, and continued to hold that position until 1975, though with an intervening tour of teaching and scholarship as Visiting Scholar at the East-West Center in Honolulu. In 1971 and 1972 he was Acting Director of the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, and in the year of his death he had accepted a joint teaching and administrative appointment from the Center and Georgetown University.

There were, however, three other careers which Al carried on simultaneously with his teaching, each one of which would have been very nearly sufficient as full-time activity for a more ordinary man. The first of these was in government and foundation service, something which grew naturally out of his many trips abroad as teacher and adviser. Thus in 1961, Edward R. Murrow, Director of the USIA, appointed him chairman of the Advisory Panel on English Teaching, a position which he held until his death. He was also on the Research Advisory Council of the U.S. Office of Education from 1963 to 1967, and on the National Advisory

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Committee for Exchange of Teachers from 1965 on. In addition, he was a member of the advisory committee for the 'English for today' series, developed by the National Council of Teachers of English, though with an initial impetus and grant from the USIA. His connection with the Ford Foundation was primarily through his devoted service to the Center for Applied Linguistics, but certainly extended far beyond the CAL. Thus Melvin Fox of the Ford Foundation said of him, in his letter to the Center on the news of Al's death:

> The influence of Al on the language development work of the Ford Foundation, in part directly and in part through the Center for Applied Linguistics, has been continuous since the meeting in Ann Arbor in the summer of 1957 at which the concept and initial plan for the Center was germinated. From then until his contribution as a principal consultant in the recent retrospective survey of the Foundation's work on language problems from 1952 to 1974, Al's counsel has been regularly sought, given, and used.

Al's value to the two government agencies which he most steadily served is attested by the fact that each gave him a special ceremony of honor. The first was from the Department of State, at the presentation of a plaque on January 18, 1974. It bore the words: 'For three decades of exceptional dedication and pioneer leadership in teaching English as a second language under the Educational Exchange Program'. The second was in November of the same year, when he received a certificate of appreciation from James Keogh, Director of the USIA.

The second of Al's major careers, beyond his teaching, was in the many educational and learned societies which he served. Most important to linguists was his long association with the LSA, of which he was President in 1962. His Presidential Address was a signal service to the Society, since it was a first move in the campaign to reorganize the Society and make it more responsive to professional needs, particularly in the education of linguists. The Society had been devoted quite narrowly to research, since it was organized by a group who found it impossible to carry on linguistic research in comfort in other societies as they were in 1924, when literature dominated scholarly activity. Al's address was printed in Bulletin 37 in 1964, since it was the policy of the Society that matters concerning practical affairs should be published outside its journal.

But the society in which Al was most active was the National Council of Teachers of English, as is plain from a glance at the many publications sponsored by that group. He was President of the NCTE in 1967 and served on many of its committees—e.g., the steering committee on linguistics in 1956, and a later committee to oversee preparation of a series of pamphlets on the English language. His service in preparation of the 'English for today' series has already been mentioned. As past president of the Council in 1968, he was the principal mover in an important analysis of its structure, leading to significant reform in its organization. In 1973 he became Director of the Council's Commission on the English Language. He received two important honors from the NCTE: first, the David Russell Award for Distinguished Research in the Teaching of English in 1970; second, the Council's Distinguished Service Award in 1972.

The American Dialect Society was the third learned group which he served as President, a triple crown which (to my knowledge at least) no other linguistic scholar has received. His presidency fell in the years 1962 to 1964, and was remark-

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able for his active leadership in a conference which formulated the research needs in American English, and which is reported in the society's publications. But beyond his service in the three societies over which he presided, he was valuable in others as well. For the American Council of Learned Societies, he was Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors in 1961 to 1964; he was delegate from the LSA to the ACLS from 1965–73; and he served as delegate to the Conference Board of Associated Research Councils, 1965–70, as well as holding membership in many ACLS committees on various phases of its programs in linguistics. The value placed on these services is shown in a recent letter to me from Charlotte Bowman, Vice President of the ACLS—'a record of almost thirty years of service, for which the Council is most grateful'.

For the Modern Language Association, Al was a member of the Executive Council, 1956–59, and a member of their Committee on Research Activities, 1946–53; he served on the MLA Advisory Committee on the Foreign Language Program, 1953–60. It was this last committee which was responsible for formulating the role of the MLA in the foundation of the CAL.

As a sort of grace note, I can add that Al even found time to serve still another group, The American Name Society, for which he was a member of the Board of Governors from 1965 to 1969.

The third and in many ways the most important of Al's secondary careers was in research. The bibliography appended to this memorial is the full record of that research; but it is still important to point out the principal channels into which it was directed, and some of the most important results which sprang from it. As would any scholar with Al's interests who began his work in the 1920's, he began his work in the history of English. His dissertation on the history of irregular verbs has already been mentioned, but it should be pointed out that this historical interest was continued in his edition of Nowell's *Vocabularium Saxonicum*, his *Introduction to the English language*, and in the two books he revised: Moore's *Historical outlines* and Krapp's *Modern English*. These several books have remained in steady use since their appearance, and now often give a much needed understanding of a kind of linguistics older than that of Chomsky, but no less scientific. Of the *Introduction to the English language*, Harold Allen recently remarked that it was 'a book that helped to free several thousand English teachers from the confines of misinformation and outworn myths of usage'. Al's interest in historical study continued into the 70's, since he produced the grammatical portions of the excellent grammar and reader *Old English language and literature* in 1972, together with James L. Rosier.

It was, however, Al's interest in doing away with 'the outworn myths of usage' which first brought him to the attention of a large public. Though the *Introduction to the English language* was indeed a freedom-fighter, it was *Facts about current English usage*, which he wrote with Fred Walcott, which first developed the idea that usage was something to be investigated, rather than merely to be pontificated about. Al later wrote the *Scribner handbook of English*, also unique among such works for being based on investigation.

Allied to these works was Al's *American English*, as well as the work on the relations of British and American usage, *A common language*, which he did with

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Randolph Quirk. It was an interesting outgrowth of this work that the two authors appeared on the NBC 'Today' show, where their knowledgeable comments on differences in vocabulary formed a welcome contrast to the attitudes of most of the network's panelists on language, who usually fulminate against things like the misuse of 'hopefully'.

But while these works on usage and on dialects are important, it is probably less noticeable work on dialects which is even more important. In 1938 Al was inspired by Hans Kurath to seek and find funds for the field work for the Linguistic Atlas of the North Central States, a work which Al carried on until press of business forced him to release it. It was this work which formed the basis for the dialect material in *American English*, and which was largely responsible for his receipt of the Russell Award for distinguished research.

Just as Kurath was responsible for Al's involvement in dialect research, it was Charles C. Fries who was largely responsible for his entry into the field of teaching English to speakers of other languages, since it was Fries who requested him to take up his duties as a visitor to the University of Mexico. His major works in this field (the articles and minor works are too numerous to mention) are *Language and language learning* in 1968, and *Linguistics and the teaching of English* in 1966. The latter work covers, however, the teaching of English to native speakers as well as foreigners.

It remains to speak at least briefly of Al as administrator and moderator of numerous conferences and meetings. Of the first function, Moulton says:

> When he arrived [at Princeton] in 1963, our English Department offered almost no courses in English linguistics, and our modest Program in Linguistics was suffering from malnutrition. A few years later, without our quite knowing how it all happened, the English Department was offering a full sequence of courses on various aspects of the English language, and the little Program in Linguistics had somehow become vigorous—with Al twice serving as its Acting Director.

Of Marckwardt as a moderator, Harold Allen says vividly:

> He led not by overriding and browbeating but by cogent and incisive persuasion. During a meeting on policies and plans he, as chairman or as participant, would listen as others set forth their reactions and views, often with interruptions and sometimes acrimonious crosscurrents. Then Marckwardt would call upon his never-failing simple stratagem: "Three questions seem to arise from this discussion" or "There now appear to be two ways in which this problem might be solved." And always his deft use of the numeral gave him the opportunity to speak without interruption as he presented the keen analysis he had been constructing.

Of Marckwardt as a person, it is impossible to give a picture without an account of his family life, which was touched by tragedy but, withal, was singularly happy. In 1928 he married a Michigan graduate student, who served as secretary in the office of the Early Modern English Dictionary under Charles Fries. Margaret Marckwardt died suddenly and tragically, almost before she was established as Al's wife. Al had the resilience to recover from the blow, and married Grace A. McCarroll on June 19, 1934. The marriage has been rightly called a story-book union, and the Marckwardts built a home always warmly hospitable, and obviously and outstandingly happy. Grace was not only a home-maker and mother, but an active and effective community servant in her own right. It is one of my pleasures to remember a dinner prepared by Grace in the summer of 1947, and the efficient

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and gracious way in which she repaired the ragged sleeve of the shirt I was wearing, out of necessity in those days of scarcity. The Marckwardts had three children, all now grown and successfully established in their own communities. They are Mrs. Judith Marckwardt Getis, Mrs. Elizabeth Marckwardt Oliver, and Mr. Albert McCarroll Marckwardt. In preparing the bibliography for this article, I encountered a work in Spanish on human genetics, by an Albert Marckwardt: since Al was notably wide in his interests, I was quite prepared to put it in the bibliography, until I noticed the middle initial M.

Grace Marckwardt died in January 1972, after a painful illness. Al's last days were not lonely, however, since on August 9, 1973, he married Maybelle D. Cox, and again the relationship was happy. I am fortunate to have met her with Al, at the 1974 meeting of the Society, and it was clear that the two were enjoying each other. No one can be other than glad that they were together on the day in London when Al was stricken.

There were a number of ceremonies honoring Al, descriptions of which make a fitting close to this article. The first of these was on his retirement from Princeton, May 23–25, 1972, at Princeton. There were five lectures by distinguished scholars in the study of American English: Allen Walker Read spoke on 'National varieties of English', Nelson Francis on 'History of the English language', Raven McDavid on 'Dialectology', Donald Bowen on 'Teaching English as a second language', and Sumner Ives on 'Teaching English as a native language'. There were, besides, a total of thirty invited outside participants, of whom I was fortunate enough to be one. The meeting was marked by the presentation of the volume *Studies in honor of Albert H. Marckwardt*; the lead article is a biography and bibliography of Al by William G. Moulton, from which I have quoted frequently. There are sixteen articles by Al's students, all of whom have distinguished themselves in teaching of English to other than natives. The meeting left with me the happy memory of an evening with Al and his younger daughter in the pleasant home they had made after the cruel loss by fire of their earlier home at Princeton.

A second noteworthy ceremony honoring Al was the joint Georgetown and CAL Memorial Service held in Washington on September 21, 1975. Al's abiding interest in literature was signalized by readings from Yeats and Chaucer, but the most impressive part of the ceremony was a letter from Melvin Fox of the Ford Foundation, from which I quote:

> There is not a corner of American academia concerned with language as a central factor in communication and self-realization, or of those parts of the world where public and private agencies have tried to respond to a need for assistance on problems of language development, that have not benefited by Al's knowledge, experience, patient persistence, commitment and capacity to translate innovative ideas and concepts into action.

The importance of Al's scholarly and educational activity could not be better summed up. I can only say that, besides the loss to scholarship that every one of us must feel, those of us who were privileged to know him feel the loss of a steadfast, generous, and urbane friend. Our consolation is that, knowing the productive activity of his last years, we can say with Housman that he carried 'back bright to the coiner the mintage of man'.

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