E. ADELAIDE HAHN

Professor E. Adelaide Hahn, foundation member of the Linguistic Society of America and life member from 1935, died on 8 July 1967. The cause of her death was cancer.

Adelaide Hahn was born in New York on 1 April 1893, the daughter of Otto Hahn, a native of Austria, and Elenore (Funk) Hahn. Except for her graduate work at Columbia University, her education and her life were bound up with Hunter College. Her mother was a Hunter alumna of 1875. When it came time for Adelaide to enter high school, she was enrolled in the Hunter Model School (her mother had tutored her at home up to that time). She received the A.B. from Hunter in 1915, and the A.M. and Ph.D. from Columbia in 1917 and 1929 respectively. She also did post-doctoral work in 1929 at the American Academy in Rome, and in 1930 at Columbia.

At Hunter her major was at first mathematics, but she later switched to a Latin major and Greek minor, with an extra major in French. She was always proud of the fact that she could speak French with ease (even though with a New York accent!) At Columbia she continued the Latin major with minors in Greek and archaeology. It was here at Columbia University that Adelaide's interest in Indo-European linguistics was first awakened, when she was enrolled in 1915–16 in a course in the comparative grammar of Greek and Latin taught by Edgar Howard Sturtevant, then Assistant Professor of Classics. Insofar as one can determine, this was the only course she ever took at Columbia under Sturtevant, since his teaching career there was brought to an abrupt end in 1920, and Adelaide was in the intervening years an instructor at Hunter College. However, it was Sturtevant who influenced Adelaide's future academic career most profoundly; after the founding of the Linguistic Institute at Yale in 1928, she was a regular participant wherever it was held, particularly in the courses offered by Sturtevant, and it was under his influence that she began the study of Hittite. Besides her continued study at the Institute, she used to commute to New Haven to follow the linguistic seminars held there, at a time when interest in linguistics was at its height with the participation of scholars like Franklin Edgerton, Albrecht Goetze, Eduard Prokosch, Edward Sapir, and later Leonard Bloomfield, all under Sturtevant's watchful eye.

These were great years for Adelaide. And, for that matter, for whom would they not be? For her, however, the relationship with Sturtevant was more than the usual one between student and favorite teacher. She became his disciple, his constant companion on every occasion where their mutual scholarly interests brought them together, and in his later years, especially after the death of Mrs. Sturtevant in 1949, his solicitous attendant. It was she, along with his daughter, who brought him home to New Haven after his almost fatal heart attack at the Linguistic Institute in Berkeley in 1951. The second edition of Sturtevant's

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Hittite grammar bears her name also, since it was planned for her to write the syntax.

Adelaide Hahn's entire professional career was tied to Hunter College, except of course insofar as she taught in the Linguistic Institute. It began with a temporary instructorship in French in 1917–21. (For one year, 1918–19, she was also a substitute teacher of Latin in Hunter High School.) In 1921–22 she held the same position for Classics, but the following year this appointment was made regular; in 1925 she became assistant professor, then associate professor in 1933 and professor in 1936, at which time she also became head of the department. She held this position until she reached the mandatory retirement age in 1963.

For Hunter, Adelaide Hahn was much more than a faculty member. She was a part of the life of the college. She was one of its most loyal alumnae, always ready to do battle for its scholarly reputation, and especially for that of her own department. Compromise in a matter of educational standards she would not tolerate. She succeeded her mother as editor of the *Alumnae news* in 1944 and was president of the Alumnae Association from 1958–62.

Second only to her fierce loyalty to Hunter College was her allegiance to the Linguistic Society of America and the Linguistic Institute. She never failed to attend a meeting, either winter or summer, of the Society, nor to give a paper until illness forced her to do so. She was addicted to attendance at the Linguistic Institute and pursued there a great variety of subjects. She taught in the Institute at the University of Michigan in 1947, and was its Collitz Professor at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1951. She served the Society as a member of its Executive Committee from 1930 to 1934, and was its vice-president in 1940 and its president in 1946. She was a member of a dozen or so other associations, including the American Philological Association, the Archaeological Institute of America, the American Oriental Society (vice-president in 1952–53), the American Classical League, the Classical Association of the Atlantic States (president, 1960–62), the New York Classical Club (which she served as secretary-treasurer, 1926–39, and as president, 1939–41), and many more. She was particularly vigorous in the councils of Phi Beta Kappa, and always objected with vehemence to the admission of institutions which did not offer adequate instruction in Greek and Latin.

She had, admittedly, several prejudices, one of them against the South, about which she knew nothing until she attended a part of the first Linguistic Institute in Chapel Hill in 1941. Then, but only grudgingly, would she grant that some of her conceptions were unfounded. She was a militant liberal, yet the first to agree that she often did not live up to her own ideals.

Her prejudices were not without reflection in her scholarship at times. A staunch and often aggressive defender of the Classics against the gradual erosion which they suffered from the pressure of the social sciences, she was always ready to leap to her feet to put a 'descriptivist' right if he were presumptuous enough to attempt to use Latin materials in any synchronic statement. Her watchdog tactics were likewise not without their salutary effect at times. Anyone who used Latin or Greek in a paper before the Linguistic Society was sure to do his homework first!

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It would take a more skillful pen than mine to write a sketch of Adelaide Hahn's personality and character which would mean anything to those who did not know her, or satisfy in any way those who did. If one adjective might be used and none other, it would be feminist. She was fierce in the defense of a woman's rights as well as of a woman's responsibilities if she were to have those rights. Like her devotion to Hunter College, this attitude was congenital. She has told me of her early memories of tagging along with her mother at the women's suffrage meetings and marches. Adelaide and her mother always remained very close and lived together for many years in their apartment on Riverside Drive. The death of Mrs. Hahn in 1944 was a tragic loss for her. She once told me how grateful she was to Bernard Bloch for forcing her to read proof for LANGUAGE as 'busy work', to take her mind off herself at that time.

In her defense of the Classics she was fearless. Both her colleagues and the administration at Hunter thought twice before issuing her a challenge in matters of curriculum if it affected the study of Latin or Greek, or indeed, of languages in general.

She was also a faithful attendant at the Christmas meetings of the American Philological Association. It was not unusual, in fact it was routine, for her to give papers both there and at the meeting of the Linguistic Society, flying from one to the other when they were not in the same city.

One of the honors she prized most was being chosen to speak for the United States at the final meeting of the International Congress of Linguists at Oslo in 1957. She recorded with satisfaction that 'the other four' (representing England, France, Italy, and Russia) 'were all men'! Few who were there can forget how she ended her speech with 'mange takk', spoken with her usual New York accent.

Adelaide was a personality or, rather, what is commonly known as a 'character'. She knew it and she reveled in it. The difficulty with using such a popular word to describe her is that it has too many connotations. As I use it, I mean she was a person no one could ignore, nor, having known, could ever forget. One personal trait which no memorial statement for her dare omit was her love for hats—especially for big hats, tall hats, hats which she wore low down on her forehead and from under which she projected her gaze (and her voice!) over the assemblage at any meeting she attended when she rose to speak formally or informally. She never went anywhere for a stay of more than one day without two or three hats.

Adelaide was a tireless writer and productive scholar, as her bibliography will bear witness. In fact, because of the vast range and variety of her writings, I have felt it necessary to be selective in this compilation. The notices of papers given at the meetings of the American Philological Association and reported in *TAPA* are omitted. Letters, notes, or reviews of current books in the daily press, especially in the New York *Herald Tribune*, have mostly been ignored; yet many of these were on Classical matters and were in a way significant, even if not actually amounting to scholarly contributions. Likewise omitted are her reports as an officer of the many groups she served, which are mentioned above.

Professor Hahn's interest in her research lasted to the day of her death. During

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her last illness she finished her work on *Some naming-constructions in Indo-European* and submitted it to the American Philological Association, which has accepted it for its series of monographs.

Those of us who knew Adelaide Hahn well will miss her grievously, yet we may be thankful that it was our privilege in our time to have her as a friend and colleague. She left her imprint on the scholarly world, and it will never be erased.

GEORGE S. LANE, *University of North Carolina*

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The following abbreviations are used:
AJPh. = American Journal of Philology
CJ = Classical Journal
CO = Classical Outlook
CW = Classical Weekly (later Classical World)
JAOS = Journal of the American Oriental Society
Lg. = Language
TAPA = Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association

1920

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1922

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1943

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