

IN MEMORIAM
ELLSWORTH P. CONKLE

E. P. Conkle came to teach at The University of Texas at Austin in 1939, one year after the founding of the College of Fine Arts. Having received degrees from the University of Nebraska and his doctorate in Playwriting from the University of Iowa, and after spending two years at Yale in George Pierce Baker's English 47 class, he developed and led the playwriting program of the Department of Drama (now Theatre and Dance) for thirty-four years. He also became the departmental graduate advisor and was instrumental in instituting the M.F.A. and Ph.D. degree programs. For eight summers Professor Conkle taught playwriting at the Banff School of Fine Arts in Banff, Canada.

Besides teaching and advising drama students Professor Conkle constantly wrote for the theatre, himself. He had more than fifty plays published, both one-act and full-length, and for a time his own writing included a weekly CBS radio show, *Honest Abe*. The series was based on Conkle's play about Lincoln, *Prologue to Glory*, originally written for and produced by the Federal Theatre Project on Broadway in 1938. His *200 Were Chosen* was also produced on Broadway.

Many of his plays, rooted in American folk life, capture the humor and wisdom of country and small-town living a generation or more ago. The most famous of the short plays in this genre is the frequently produced *Sparkin'*.

The Department of Theatre and Dance has produced several of Conkle's folk plays including *Johnny Appleseed* in 1940. A musical version of the play, entitled *Fresh From Heaven*, was performed in 1973, the year Professor Conkle retired and was named Professor Emeritus. Premiere productions of full-length plays *No Time for Heaven* and *Quest for an Answer* were also mounted by the department.

Among Conkle's students when he taught playwriting at the University of Iowa was Tennessee Williams; at The University of Texas students included Pat Hingle, Tommy Tune, and Fess Parker.

Ellsworth Prouty Conkle was born on July 10, 1899, and grew up on a farm in Nebraska. He received his bachelor's and Master's degrees from the University of Nebraska. He did graduate work at Yale University from 1926 to 1928, won a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1929, and received a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship from 1934 to 1936. He received a doctorate in playwriting at the University of Iowa in 1936.

Dr. Conkle is survived by his wife, Virginia, and a son, E. P. Conkle II, of Austin, a daughter, Alice Elena Cogdell, of Arlington, Texas; two brothers, Francis, of Wheatland, Colorado, and Orville, of Peru, Nebraska; and six grandchildren.

Robert M. Berdahl, President
The University of Texas at Austin

H. Paul Kelley, Secretary
The General Faculty

This Memorial Resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professors Coleman A. Jennings (Chair), David Nancarrow, and Webster Smalley.

Conkle's Published One-Act Plays:

Afternoon Storm
Arlie, The Bug Boy
Bauble for the Baby, A
Chickadee
Chief Sittum Bull
China Handled Knife, The
Day's End
Feller from Omaha, The
Funeral Piece for Rosalie, A
Gold Is Where You Don't Find It
Granny's Little Cherry Room
Hawk a'Flyin'
Heave Is Such a Long Time to Wait
If You Can't Eat Fish With Out Tenderloin
Incident at Eureka Bumps
Jewel In Papa's Crown, The
Juber Bird, The
Kitten in an Elm Tree
Lace
Lavender Gloves
Least One, The
'Lection
Little Granny Graver
Loolie
Lots of Old People Are Really Good for Something
Madge
Minnie Field
Muleshoe
Muletail Prime
'Nitiated, The
No More Was, But The Moon
No Time for Heaven
Oak Leaves Burning
Owl and Two Young Men, The
Papa Never Done Nothing...Much
Poor Old Bongo
P'taters in the Spring
Quest for An Answer
Reticent One, The
Son-of-a-Biscuit-Eater
Sparkin'
Things Is That-a-Way
This Is The Draft Board
Three of a Kind
Water Works
We'd Never Be Happy Otherwise
What D'You Call It?
Young Feller from Omaha, Th'

Conkle's Published Full-Length Plays:

Bill and the Widowermaker
Clear Creek Saga
Delectable Judge, The
Dobey and Sons
Don't Lose Your Head
49 Dogs in the Meathouse
Good Night, Grandma
In The Shadow of a Rock
Johnny Appleseed
Loving, The
Mayor of Sherm Center
Mr. President
Oxygeneration
Paul and the Blue Ox
Prologue to Glory
They Die For Peace
Thirteen Sonnets Which Mention Time and Another Time
200 Were Chosen

Conkle's Plays Produced Professionally in the United States and England:

Afternoon Storm
Delectable Judge, The
Lavender Gloves
Prologue to Glory
Sparkin'
200 Were Chosen

Conkle's Plays Produced on Radio & Television

Honest Abe, 52 half-hour Lincoln shows, CBS
Prologue to Glory, NBC Radio, 1944, 1946, and NBC TV, 1956

Conkle's Anthologies:

<i>Arlie, the Bug Boy</i>	<i>Best Short Plays, 1952-53</i>
<i>Crick Bottom Plays — Selected One-Act Plays of E. P. Conkle</i>	
<i>Five Plays by E. P. Conkle</i>	
<i>Hawk a'Flyin'</i>	<i>Best One Act Plays of 1938</i>
<i>Incident at Eureka Bumps</i>	<i>One Act Plays for Stage & Study</i>
<i>Lavender Gloves</i>	<i>Canada On Stage, 1960</i>
<i>Least One, The</i>	<i>Best One Act Plays of 1951-52</i>
<i>Loolie & Other Plays by E. P. Conkle</i>	
<i>Minnie Field</i>	<i>American Scene</i>

<i>Minnie Field</i>	<i>25 Plays Of Modern American Theatre</i>
<i>Minnie Field</i>	<i>Yale Plays</i>
<i>Muletail Prime</i>	<i>Best One Act Plays of 1949-50</i>
<i>Owl and Two Young Men, The</i>	<i>Modern Short Plays, 1953</i>
<i>Prologue to Glory</i>	<i>Best Ten Plays of 1938-39</i>
<i>Prologue to Glory</i>	<i>Burns Mantle's Ten Best Plays in America</i>
<i>Prologue to Glory</i>	<i>Modern Plays, 1953</i>
<i>Prologue to Glory</i>	<i>Three Distinctive Plays About Abraham Lincoln</i>
<i>200 Were Chosen</i>	<i>Burns Mantle's Ten Best Plays in America</i>

In addition to his plays Dr. Conkle wrote a number of articles for professional journals.