IN MEMORIAM

MRS. ANNIE SOWELL IRVINE

Mrs. Annie Sowell Irvine (October 10, 1887--January 14, 1972) devoted most of her life to the service of The University of Texas. In June of 1904 she finished high school in Denison, Texas and entered the University in the fall of that year. At The University of Texas Mrs. Irvine took the B.A. degree in 1908, the M.A. in 1924, and the Ph.D. in 1929. In graduate work her major subjects were English Literature, Germanic Languages, and Latin. During her undergraduate study she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, and during her graduate years she belonged to an honory education fraternity and Delta Kappa Gamma.

For the first decade of her professional life Mrs. Irvine taught Latin, history, mathematics, and English in the high schools of Uvalde and Hubbard, Texas, and served as principal of the Russell, North Dakota, High School. In the English Department of The University of Texas she served as a tutor, 1922-24, an instructor, 1924-29, an assistant and then associate professor, 1929-61, and a member of the Graduate Faculty from 1943 until her retirement in January, 1961.

A member of the Modern Language Association of America, The Shakespeare Association of America, The American Dialect Society, The American Association of University Professors, and The Renaissance Society of America, Mrs. Irvine was also active in such regional professional groups as The Texas College Conference of Teachers of English, The South-Central Modern Language Association, and The Texas State Teachers' Association. She was listed in Who's Who in America and The Directory of American Scholars.

In three editions and in the illustrations of Holinshed's Chronicles, in Reginald Wolfe (1542-1573), London printer, and in other sixteenth-century English printers and their publications she pursued her scholarly interests at home and abroad, visiting the New York Public Library, the Huntington Library, the Folger Shakespeare Library, the British Museum, the Bodleian, and the University of Cambridge Library. Her scholarly publications include "The Participle in Wycliffe with Especial Reference to His Original English Works," The University of Texas Studies in English, No. 9 (July, 1929), pp. 5-68; "The 'To Comyng(e)' Construction in Wycliffe," Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, XLV, No. 2 (June, 1930), pp. 486-500; "Freshman English at The University of Texas," The University of Texas English Bulletin, No. 14 (July, 1932), pp. 7-15; and "A Manuscript copy of the Plowman's Tale," Studies in English, No. 12 (July, 1932), pp. 27-56.

Apart from her scholarly achievements, Mrs. Irvine devoted a large part of her energies to students. One of the most popular of the Plan II teachers, for years she enthralled classes in freshman English and also in the junior Shakespeare courses designed especially for students in the Plan II curriculum. She was a leading faculty sponsor of the Scribblers' Club for aspiring writers. Some of those

who profited from her critiques and encouragement went on to successful careers as professional writers, among them Charles Ramsdell and John Canaday, the distinguished art critic of the New York Times.

Though she was a specialist in Shakespeare's history plays, the grim doings of the houses of Lancaster and York never affected her good cheer and wit. Before she retired, she confessed that she was going to repudiate part of her parents' counsel--specifically, their insistence on thrift. "Here I am in my sixties," she said, "with my hard-earned savings intact, but not having any special fun. I am therefore going to invade those savings and go with Sarah Dodson [a colleague in the English Department] to Europe this summer. What is more, if my health and savings hold out, I am going next summer, too." And she did.

Mrs. Irvine was frail and bedridden for several years before her death but suffered no frailty in her mind. Her son-in-law, Dr. Truman Blocker, President of The University of Texas medical school in Galveston, recently remarked that she persisted in reading half a dozen books a day, virtually exhausting the resources of the Galveston libraries, new acquisitions and all. In a word, she kept her intellectual curiosity and vigor till the last.

Mrs. Irvine is survived by a son, Stanley Irvine presently living in California, and a daughter, Virginia Irvine Blocker of Galveston, Texas.

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