

# THE ALUMNÆ NEWS

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No. 5

## THE INAUGURAL LUNCHEON FOR PRESIDENT COLLIGAN

At a special meeting of the Board of Directors held on April 9th, at the Alumnae Rooms, it was decided that the Associate Alumnae participate in the inauguration celebration of Dr. Eugene A. Colligan.

Your President appointed Miss Marguerite E. Jones to act as chairman to arrange a luncheon for the delegates and invited guests of the occasion. We feel that it is but fitting that we do a small part in honoring the new President of Hunter.

IRENE B. GRAFF,  
President, Associate Alumnae.

Just as the Associate Alumnae had the pleasure and the privilege of entertaining President Kieran and distinguished guests at a luncheon following President Kieran's Inauguration, so this year the Alumnae have again asked a similar privilege and will hold an informal luncheon on Friday, May the fourth, at Town Hall Club, immediately following the Inauguration of President Colligan and preceding the College Sing. The guests will be transported in busses from Hunter College to Town Hall and from Town Hall to the Metropolitan Opera House where the Sing will take place.

The Alumnae are giving the luncheon in the belief that an Alumnae Association should be an integral part of the life of a college, binding the past to the present and both to the future. On a day as important as the inauguration of a president, it is fitting that we should play a part. We shall entertain men and women of note in the educational world who will do honor to President Colligan and to Hunter College by their presence at the inaugural ceremonies. The Officers and the Board of Directors of the Associate Alumnae will act as hostesses.

The members of the Committee in Charge of Arrangements are as follows:

Mrs. Leslie Graff, ex officio; Mrs. William C. Popper, Mrs. James A. Crotty, Miss Marie K. Gallagher, Miss Anna W. Michels, Miss Mina S. Rees, Miss Marguerite E. Jones, Chairman.

M. E. J.

## CALENDAR, 1934

Wed., May 2—Officers and Directors.  
Fri., May 4—Inauguration; Sing.  
Sat., May 5—Dance of Thirties.  
Wed., May 9—Executive Council.  
Sat., May 12—Luncheon of Class of '78.  
Sat., May 19—Spring Reunion.  
Wed., June 13—Commencement Day.

## THE SPRING REUNION

The Annual Spring Reunion of the Associate Alumnae of Hunter College will be held on Saturday afternoon, May 19, at 2:30 P. M., in the Music Room of the Biltmore Hotel. The committee has made every effort to make this reunion an unusually entertaining one. We have succeeded in obtaining the talented Dorothy Sands, who will give an extraordinary program entitled *Styles in Acting*. During her entertainment, Miss Sands will portray scenes from "The Conquest of Granada" by John Dryden, "Candida" by George Bernard Shaw, "Anna Christie" by Eugene O'Neill, and other famous plays. We trust that you will show your appreciation and support of the Association by coming to the Reunion in full force to enjoy this unusual program.

We shall have the honor of hearing Dr. Eugene A. Colligan, President of Hunter College, and Mrs. Leslie Graff, President of the Associate Alumnae of Hunter College. Miss Alice Wachtell will contribute a musical program. Miss Anna W. Michels will take charge of the installation of the officers of the Association. In short, a very pleasant and entertaining reunion is being planned, and we hope that a large number of the Alumnae will participate in it.

NETTIE A. JUDELS,

Chairman of Spring Reunion

Committee:

MISS ALMA ERICSON  
MISS HENRIETTE E. JUDELS  
PROFESSOR ELSIE KENGLA  
MISS IONA M. LOGIE  
MRS. LESLIE GRAFF (ex officio)

## AMENDMENTS

The following Amendments to the Constitution will be voted on at the May Reunion:

Amendment to make Article I, Section 3, read as follows: "A member who has been dropped for non-payment of dues may be reinstated by the payment of the dues for the current year."

Amendment to be added to Article II, Section 3: "Any graduate may become a Life Member who has been a member of the Associate Alumnae for fifty years."

## INSPECTORS AND TELLERS

The President of the Alumnae has appointed the following to serve as Inspectors and Tellers at the 1934 Election of the Associate Alumnae:—Miss Mary E. Gollow, Chief Inspector; Miss Ida Ikelheimer, Miss Carrie Taylor, Miss Adele Langenbahn.

## TO HELEN GRAY CONE

Helen Gray Cone, was it because your enthusiasms were genuine,  
Your love for your fellows deep and self-effacing,

That, in assembly, your voice rang out to the far corners of the hall,

Bearing its valiant and high-purposed message?

Was it despite the smallness of your stature  
That your heart was great?

Was it because the masters of English prose and poetry were your friends

That your students were admitted into the fellowship of letters?

Was it because you gave your entire self to whatever you undertook

That to-day we gather here in love of your abiding spirit?

Your place is not empty,  
Your purposes not at an end,  
Your high ambitions to be fulfilled.

We shall turn to you again and again,  
We who love you, for your counsel and your courage.

We shall strive to preserve for the daughters of Alma Mater

The disciplines and the beauties which you believed essential

If our young people were to be, as the prophet said,

Cornerstones—polished after the similitude of a palace.

We shall always hold ourselves members  
Of the Fellowship of Goodwill which you founded,

A small company of that greater Fellowship which in God's good time

Shall bring peace on earth, and to all men  
The Coat without a Seam, of which you sang.

We come together to-day, grieving that we cannot touch your hand,

But deeply grateful to you,  
Rejoicing in you and in one another

Because we are bound together in the priceless knowledge

Of your abiding love and friendship.

HENRIETTA PRENTISS.

THE HELEN GRAY CONE  
MEMORIAL MEETING

*"Sail on through sunny waters; with more than lips can tell*

*Of sorrow at our parting, we speak the last farewell."*

On March 8, 1934, the day on which she would have been seventy-five years old had she been spared to us just a little longer, the Hunter College Auditorium was filled with those who had come together to pay tribute to our Helen Gray Cone.

On the platform sat Mrs. Leslie Graff, President of the Associate Alumnae; with her were those who were to speak or recite—Professor Vida Scudder, formerly of the English Department of Wellesley, Professor Blanche Colton Williams of our own English Department, Professors Henrietta Prentiss and Marguerite E. Jones of our Department of Speech and Dramatics; also Miss Anna Michels of the English Department, who had served as Chairman in the preparations for the Memorial Meeting. Above them all looked down at them and out at us the painting of Helen Gray Cone, President Davis's precious gift to her Alma Mater.

It was a sad occasion; yet as Mrs. Graff in opening the meeting reminded us, "We must not be over-sad; we must rejoice in the privilege of knowing her and calling her friend." The fact that Professor Cone, as Mrs. Graff truly said, to each meant something different, to all a spiritual influence that we can never forget, was brought out by the unity in diversity of the tributes offered to her.

Because Helen Gray Cone loved music, the program began with music. Miss Geraldine Marwick, accompanied by Mr. C. Oberbrunner, sang the *Morning Hymn*, which with its triumphant outburst "Let there be light!" seemed truly appropriate, in view of Helen Gray Cone's fondness (already pointed out elsewhere by Blanche Colton Williams) for the word *light*. Later Miss Marwick sang again—songs from Shakespeare this time. And Miss Alice Wachtell played the cello.

After the reading by Mrs. Graff of a sonnet by Lillian Bermann Schmeidler (printed elsewhere in this issue), the first speaker was introduced. This was Miss Scudder, close friend of Helen Gray Cone. And to at least one member of that audience who had never seen her before, she seemed already known. For among that member's dearly beloved possessions, prized now for nearly twenty years, is one of her Commencement gifts, a daintily printed copy of "The Accolade", bearing on its cover the words "Wellesley College, 1913", on its fly-leaf in Helen Gray Cone's own flowing hand the inscription "Godspeed from your friend, Helen Gray Cone. June 24, 1915", and within a printed fore-word by Vida D. Scudder dedicating to the Wellesley Class of 1913 the poem that Helen Gray Cone had written at Vida D. Scudder's request for the Smith College Class of 1884. What a thrill the owner of that copy felt when Miss Scudder's first words dealt with the genesis of that very poem—when she told of how, as a committee of one to represent her class, she had come to New York to tell Helen Gray Cone that the Smith College girls of 1884 had chosen her out of all the woman-poets of the day to be *their* poet and to read if she would a poem on their Commencement Day. From that first meeting of two young women each

of whom was destined in later days to be Professor and then Professor Emeritus of English Literature at a great woman's college, began a friendship that was to endure. They had not spent, Miss Scudder said, more than fifty days in all together; yet in spirit they were never divided.

Miss Scudder paid tribute to Miss Cone both as poet and as teacher—as one who was “capable of carrying poetry into pedagogy”. She spoke of her spirit tender, gay—“delicate as a butterfly, swift as a lance”. She expressed admiration for the five precious volumes culminating in *Harvest Home*—for the charm of their cadences and for their authentic magic; and she pronounced as her verdict, this discerning and distinguished critic who has introduced many generations to the great store-house of English and American poetry, that in her belief Helen Gray Cone's poetry would survive.

The second speaker was Professor Cone's successor in the headship of the English Department, Professor Blanche Colton Williams. She prefaced her words with an upward glance at Professor Cone's painting—as it were a little silent salute to a well-loved chief. And at the beginning of her speech she referred to another portrait—that of Lincoln that hung over Professor Cone's desk. She spoke of Professor Cone as one “fired as Lincoln was fired by the ideal of freedom for all men”—as she showed in her poem on Lincoln written in 1909. Then from the thought of the Civil War that Professor Cone had known in her childhood, the speaker passed to the thought of the World War as “another war of liberation”, and of one special poem that grew out of that war, “one of the truly great poems”, the famous *Chant of Love for England*.

Turning then from historical to literary influences, Professor Williams spoke of Professor Cone's literary loves, and in part of the poems that were inspired by these:—above all of Shakespeare, the tercentenary of whose birth she must have known as a child of five, and the tercentenary of whose death she paid tribute to by the poem published in the Memorial Issue of the *Bulletin*; of Dickens and Trollope and Galsworthy; of Wordsworth and Keats; of Chaucer; of Emerson and Longfellow and Walt Whitman (she shared Whitman's love of liberty, though she laughed at his egotism); of Arnold and Browning and Tennyson.

In conclusion Professor Williams stressed Professor Cone's many accomplishments in many fields—as woman, teacher, friend, patriot, and poet.

Then another who had known the proud privilege of serving under Professor Cone—Professor Prentiss, now head of the department that had been an outgrowth of Professor Cone's own—addressed the spirit of Helen Gray Cone in moved and moving lines that appear elsewhere in the News.

And finally Helen Gray Cone seemed to speak again herself through her own poems,

as rendered by Marguerite E. Jones, who unfalteringly, with voice of ringing resonance, passed from one to another, forming an aptly-woven garland of the fairest flowers culled with loving care from the garden of her works.

Then finally Mrs. Graff, with a word of announcement concerning the Memorial Issue of the *Bulletin*, and a word of thanks to Miss Michels for the Memorial Meeting arrangements, brought to a close a meeting that had been, we think, what Helen Gray Cone herself would have wished, a meeting that was loving and simple and dignified and not too sorrowful, a meeting in which we tried to tell her that we were indeed “grateful for the past” as we gave her all God-speed.

E. ADELAIDE HAHN.

#### HELEN GRAY CONE'S BOOKS

The Office of the Department of English has for sale a few copies of the late Emeritus Professor Helen Gray Cone's *Harvest Home* and *The Coat without a Seam*. Proceeds from the sale of these books will be applied to the Helen Gray Cone Fellowship. If purchasers will call between 10 and 12 or between 2 and 4 o'clock, Miss Hensel, the Department Secretary, will be happy to serve them.

BLANCHE COLTON WILLIAMS.

#### THE HELEN GRAY CONE FELLOWSHIP

Miss Margaret Rose Grennan, '33, is the winner of the fourth award of the Helen Gray Cone Fellowship of Hunter College, according to an announcement by Professor Blanche Colton Williams, Chairman of the Committee of Award. The Fellowship, established in 1927 in honor of Helen Gray Cone, is granted for exceptional ability in English and is designed to help the winner carry on graduate study in English. Lily Gunderson, '32, was named as alternate.

K. M. L.

#### HELEN GRAY CONE.

HER BIRTHDAY, 1934.

But yesteryear she welcomed as of old  
The wild March wind, hoarse herald of the  
"Spring,

The raucous showman whose awakening  
Is prologue to the pomp of green and gold.  
Herself a child of March she loved full well  
Its lusty days, renewing hope of life,  
Distilling April's tears, mid violets rife  
Coining gold daffodils in fields to dwell.  
Into the unknown, loving beauty so,  
The way cannot be dark. Beneath her feet  
The vernal pastures, flower-spangled, glow  
In unimagined splendor, perfumed, sweet.  
Elysian meadows wear a tenderer green  
Than mortal eyes, e'en hers, have ever seen.

LILLIAN BERMAN SCHMEIDLER,  
Class of '98.