
In Memoriam

Harold B. Allen (1902–1988)

Harold B. Allen, most of whose long career was spent at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, led the kind of life that many of us, in and out of Academia, would be fortunate to be able to equal. I met Harold at Ann Arbor in 1933 when he and his wife Elizabeth came for him to do his doctorate. He got a part-time job, like mine, on the staff of the *Early Modern English Dictionary*, being edited by Charles C. Fries. His area was English linguistics, as was mine, so we shared many experiences.

Harold had an essentially positive approach to life – basically cheerful, but not patient with stupidity or dishonesty. (I remember his once dealing with an unreasonable pushy book agent by addressing him as *Mephitis mephitis*.) Harold was full of ideas, mostly practical, always helpful, and had the energy and good sense that led to success in the several organizations which he had a part in founding or fostering – especially NCTE and CCCC. But apart from these he was productive as a speaker for linguistics and the English language, especially to academic groups and the general public, working toward sounder attitudes and practices with regard to language usage. He also undertook and carried through *The Linguistic Atlas of the Upper Midwest*, the only American linguistic atlas produced west of the Mississippi River – a virtually one-man job, admirably achieved, a summation of his scholarship. Harold came to the vineyard early, worked his full time, and earned his pay. I think he would have accepted this scriptural language as sincerely as it is meant.

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