

AUGUST CARL MAHR
(1886-1970)

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August Carl Mahr, Professor Emeritus of German language and literature at The Ohio State University, died January 21, 1970, in Sandusky, Ohio, following a prolonged illness.

Born at Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany, in 1886, he attended the Lessing-Gymnasium in Frankfurt and then studied at the University of Caen, France, the University of London, and the University of Frankfurt. In 1911 he was awarded the doctor of philosophy degree by the University of Heidelberg; further work in the following year at the University of Freiburg qualified him for a high school teacher's diploma.

Dr. Mahr dedicated his life and considerable talents to the classroom and to scholarship. He began his long teaching career as an instructor in German at the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale University in 1912. From 1921 to 1923 he taught English, German, and the history of art at the Bergschule Hochwaldhausen in his native country. Coming to the United States permanently in 1924, Dr. Mahr joined the faculty of Stanford University as a member of the German Department. He left that institution as an Associate Professor in 1930 to assume a professorship in German language and literature at The Ohio State University. His retirement from the classroom came in 1956.

In World War I, Dr. Mahr served in the German armed forces. In World War II, he was a research analyst in the morale division of the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey in the European Theatre of Operations.

Dr. Mahr held the directorship of the municipal office for cultural affairs in Ruestringen, Germany, from 1918 to 1921. At the same time, he was editor-in-chief of the monthly magazine, *Die Tide*.

A long and distinguished teaching career was complemented by productive scholarship covering Dr. Mahr's wide range of interests. He was the author of numerous articles, poems, and books, in both German and English. Authorship of *Dramatische Situationbilder und Bildtypen* (1926); *Agnes, Traverspiel von Ludwig Braumfels* (1928); *The Origin of the Greek Tragic Form* (1938); *Relations of Passion Plays to St. Ephrem the Syrean* (1942); and *The Cyprus Passion Cycle* (1947) attest to his keen interest in the history of drama and the theater.

After 1947, he focused his considerable linguistic talents and skills on the early American Moravian missionary activities with the Indians. In special research assignments with the state historical society in Ohio and in cooperation with Moravian authorities, Dr. Mahr transcribed and translated significant sections of otherwise difficult Moravian mission manuscripts from the church archival headquarters in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. He increased the usefulness of these translations by meticulous editing, thus rescuing much of their significance and meaning from obscurity. Not only did these efforts result in monographic and article publications, and also in as-yet unpublished products, but he rendered valuable services to the archeological investigations and the restoration project of the original Schoenbrunn Village, founded by the Rev. David Zeisbarger near New Philadelphia, Ohio, in 1772.

Dr. Mahr earned wide respect for his studies on Indian languages and was recognized as an authority in his own right. With a small group of scholars from other disciplines, he was one of the founders of the Ohio Valley Historic Indian Conference. It was his firm belief that linguists, anthropologists, historians, archeologists, and others should compare notes on data and interpretations about the native peoples of the New World. Widespread acceptance of the organization was reflected in the establishment of a learned journal, *Ethnohistory*, and the expansion of the organization into the American Indian Ethnohistoric Conference, with a world-wide membership.

Dr. Mahr's busy career included professional participation in the Mediaeval Academy of America, the Modern Language Association of America, and the American Council of College Studies in Switzerland, and a position as Correspondent to the Society for the History of the Germans in Maryland. The Ohio Historical Society accorded him the distinction of an honorary life membership. He was also elected to the Catholic Commission on Intellectual and Cultural Affairs, Washington, D.C.

Dr. Mahr affiliated with The Ohio Academy of Science in 1942 and was elected a Fellow in the same year, indicating how well established was his professional reputation. He was a charter member of the Anthropology and Sociology Section of the Academy, and served as its vice-president in 1954. Members may recall that his widow, Elizabeth Transeau Mahr, is the daughter-in-law of an early prominent member of the Academy.

Dr. Mahr will be remembered by generations of students as a kind and stimulating teacher. They had a warm affection for him as a person and a deep respect for his learning. On occasion, students accorded him the unusual accolade of asking him to repeat a lecture they had just heard. His genuine human concern and his warmth and sincerity were infectious. Those who were privileged to know him, whether as an intimate friend or a casual acquaintance, cherish memories of this dedicated man.