

Introduction

Somewhere in the continuum of doctoral theses dealing with the lives of people who have acted in a meaningful way on the educational stage, there is a space for Adelle Henrietta Land.

Her name is not a household word but it is known and remembered by hundreds of people. Some knew her only in the more remote role of audience to her lectures, but an impressive number had the far richer experience of working under her guidance as students or as colleagues in the teaching of educational studies at the University of Buffalo (now the State University of New York at Buffalo).

The University of Buffalo itself, although chartered in 1847, for a long time consisted only of a Medical School. Through the intervening years other professional schools were added. A professional School of Pedagogy established in 1895 failed after three years due to lack of funds but in general, the University flourished.

The year 1913 saw the introduction of Arts and Science curriculum as a response to Abraham Flexner's criticisms of the education of physicians. Before long this department grew to be a college, thus rounding out the University's

offerings. This in turn pointed to the necessity of having an experienced educator as the head of the University. In 1922 Samuel P. Capen, a person well known as Director of the American Council on Education, was appointed as the eighth Chancellor of the University of Buffalo. His profound influence on the University was felt even after his retirement in 1950.

Dr. Land's attachment to the University was unbroken, from the time she was an undergraduate, class of '22, until her death in 1969. This included her studies for a Master's degree, appointment as instructor (1923-31), assistant professor (1932-39), associate professor (1940-46) and finally, full professor (awarded in 1947). The grand total of years as a teacher is forty-six.

Born in 1901, she experienced many significant changes in the country's style and pace of life. As a member of one of the earliest graduating classes of the College of Arts and Science, her association with the University of Buffalo spans all of the significant events in the history of teaching of education at that institution. She taught courses in education beginning with the time when they were offered through the Department of Psychology. She was part of the process of change that included the establishment of a Department of Education later to become a School of Education, and after affiliation with the State

University system, reorganization into a Faculty of Educational Studies with its subsequent growth into a major division of the University.

It is appropriate that the work of such a person-- a person whose life is interwoven so thoroughly with the life of the University--be recorded as part of the legacy offered to future students.

On a personal level as well, Adelle Land's life deserves a portion of recognition. The excellence of her mind, the discipline that governed her work, and her continuing vigor and enthusiasm for teaching won her a position shared by too few women in this country. She was an independent woman who was able to balance professional achievement (under what could not have been the most favorable circumstances) with a full development of a broad range of other interests.

Her accomplishments are numerous and she participated in many professional activities. There are, however, two clusters of undertakings that stand out and mark her most important contributions to the University. The first of these and the greatest in magnitude is the program known as the "Professional Unit in Education" and the second, the Graduate Program in Higher Education.

Later chapters will describe the Unit in greater detail, but for the moment it can be described as embodying a

comprehensive approach to teacher education. In the senior year of those students intending to teach, a large block of classroom hours was set aside for this core of professional courses. These hours were to be spent looking for answers to problems that arose from, or were related to, the student teaching experience. Student teaching and academic work in education had to be experienced together for either experience to be truly productive. The members of the Education faculty constituted a team available to the students in the Unit, but it was Dr. Land who not only originated this approach to teacher education at the University of Buffalo, but also coordinated it for many years.

The job of coordinator was two-fold. She was responsible for the academic work of the Unit; seeing that group and individual needs were given adequate attention. The interweaving of content and experience was part of this aspect. In addition, the coordinator acted as director of student teaching. This involved arranging placements and observing students in the field.

The Professional Unit was, by its nature, an extremely flexible design; one that could accommodate itself to changes in student body, staff, and curriculum. The design proved durable. It was in use at the University of Buffalo for thirty-three years.

It is not uncommon for the originator of a successful new idea to rest content with that achievement and thereafter to base activities on minor variations on the theme. This was not the case with Adelle Land. She had, indeed, found something that could be used over and over again; but it was something dynamic whose very nature would always lead to new outcomes. It was a process approach to education; one in which theory and practice had to co-exist, to interact and provide impetus for further exploration, further growth, further questions.

It was this process that she used in graduate education as productively as she had in undergraduate education. She was among those who saw the need for a focus on preparation for college teaching and ultimately for a doctoral program in Higher Education. It was in this program that she utilized, so effectively, the blending of the theoretical and the experiential aspects of the subject matter. Her recognition of this need lent impetus to the growth of a Department of Higher Education.

It is the intention of the author to describe, in this volume, the course of Adelle Land's life as an educator. In order to do this it will be necessary to tell something of her origins, something of the significant experiences in her early life, and quite a good deal about the University in which she lived her professional life. She

would have had it no other way than that all this be set in the context of what was happening in the world outside the University, and so it will be.

There are essentially three sections to this study, each roughly corresponding to a chronological period, although the reader will find that there is overlapping, stepping back in time, and jumping ahead in places where the content so demands.

The first section touches on Land's youth, her college days, and her first years of teaching. Graduate study at Teachers College, Columbia University, also fits into this section and marks, as well, a transition to the next aspect of her career.

The following section deals with her great work, the Professional Unit in Education. The beginning steps are described in some detail but the description of later years is more general, mention being made only of the more noteworthy events. This section carries the narrative through the first few post World War II years. It includes also some description of her participation in University-wide activities.

The third and last section deals with Land's work in her later years, when her interest shifted to the field of Higher Education. This was a time of growth and turbulence in the University. She participated with interest and vigor, both in the School of Education and the University at large.

The story of a person's work holds interest primarily for the few who knew the person or the few who share an interest in the field. For these few, an attempt has been made to flavor the content with some picture of the person Land was, what colleagues and students saw when they saw this interesting, devoted teacher.