

Professional Biography of Norman DeWitt

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DEWITT, Norman Wentworth

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Details

Date of Birth: September 18, 1876

Born City :Tweedside

Born State/Country: ON

Parents: Hiram & Margaret Conland D.

Date of Death: September 20, 1958

Death City: Lincoln

Death State/Country: IL

Married: Katherine Ida Johnston, 26 Sept. 1906.

EDUCATION: B.A. Victoria College, U. Toronto, 1899; Ph.D. U. Chicago, 1906; additional study at Jena & ASCSR.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE: Prof, class. Lincoln Coll. (Lincoln, IL), 1904-5; instr. class. Washington U. (St. Louis), 1905-7; prof, class. Miami (Oxford, OH), 1907-8; prof. Lat. Victoria Coll., U. Toronto, 1908-45; dean arts Victoria Coll., U. Toronto, 1924-8; actng. prof. Cornell, 1928-9; corr. fell. Royal Acad. Mantua; fell. Royal Soc. Can., 1925; pres. CAMWS, 1938-9; pres. APA, 1946-7.

DISSERTATION: "The Dido Episode in *the Aeneid* of Virgil" (Chicago, 1907); printed (Toronto, 1907).

PUBLICATIONS: "The Campaign of Epigram against M. Antonius in the *Catalepton*," *AJP* 33 (1912) 317-23; "The Arrow of Acestes," *AJP* 41 (1920) 369-78; "Virgil's Copyright," *CP* 16 (1921) 338-44; "Virgil at Naples," *CP* 17 (1922) 104-18; *Virgil's Biographia Litteraria* (Toronto, London & New York, 1923); "Aeneid IV, *More Feriae*," *AJP* 45 (1924) 176-8; "Litigation in the Forum in

Cicero's Time," *CP* 21 (1926) 218-24; *Ancient History for High Schools* (Toronto, 1927; rev. ed., 1933); *A Brief World History* (Toronto, 1934); "Parresiastic Poems of Horace," *CP* 30 (1935) 312-8; "The Epicurean Doctrine of Gratitude," *AJP* 58 (1937) 320-8; "Epicurean Kinetics," *CP* 36 (1941) 365-70; Demosthenes. *Funeral Speech, Erotic Essay, Exordia and Letters*, trans. with Norman Johnston DeWitt, LCL (Cambridge & London, 1949); *Epicurus and His Philosophy* (Minneapolis, 1954); *St. Paul and Epicurus* (Minneapolis & Toronto, 1954); "Vesta Unveiled," *Studies Ullman* (1960) 48-54.

NOTES: DeWitt was for many years a mainstay of classical education in Canada. His reputation as a Vergilian was founded on his dissertation and secured by his later book; the treatment of the *Appendix* in the latter earned him the sobriquet "the Verrall of American scholars," as well as election to the Royal Academy of Mantua. His lifelong attachment to Epicurus is revealed in his last two books, in which he defended Epicurus from the charge of vulgar hedonism and sought to demonstrate the affinities of his thought with that of St. Paul. The extent of De Witt's influence as a teacher is attested by several generations of students and by his books for Ontario schools; in the second of these he strongly stressed the need for an internationalist perspective in history and current affairs, and in the former he developed his aphoristic definition of history as "the evolution of the unintended."

SOURCES

CanWW 7:287; *Globe and Mail* (22 Sept. 1958) 35; *MacDCB* 189; *NYTimes* (22 Sept. 1958) 31; H. Bennett, *Phoenix* 12 (1958) 139-40; *PRSCAA* (1963) 79-81; *WhNAA* 427.

AUTHOR

Robert L. Fowler