

Eugene Plumb Andrews

November 9, 1866 — September 21, 1957

Eugene Plumb Andrews, Emeritus Professor of Archeology, died September 21, 1957, a few weeks short of his ninety-first birthday and twenty-two years after his retirement from Cornell.

He was born in Oswego, New York, November 9, 1866. After graduating from the Osewgo Normal School in 1887, he taught for four years at Hoboken Academy and a boys military school before entering Cornell as a freshman in 1891. He found expression for varied interests in athletics, as a miler on the University team; in music, as chimes master; and in his studies, being heralded by his classmates as the “most brilliant professor in the class.”

It was the experience of studying under Benjamin Ide Wheeler and George Prentice Bristol that aroused in him that love of the ancient Greek world which animated his lifelong interests and activity. Upon his graduation in 1895, he received a travelling scholarship which permitted him to spend the next year in Greece. There a combination of scholarly curiosity, mechanical ingenuity and athletic ability enabled him to make impressions of the peg holes of an inscription of Roman date which had once been set upon the architrave of the Parthenon, and so to decipher the inscription. This feat brought him immediate recognition among students of Classical antiquity.

After the renewal of the fellowship for another year, he was called back to Cornell as Curator of the Museum of Casts. He was appointed Instructor in Archeology in 1900, Assistant Professor in 1911, Professor in 1919, and Emeritus Professor upon his retirement in 1935.

Not seeking to exercise his interests in archeological excavation in the field, Professor Andrews exploited his unusual talents for teaching Greek art and antiquities. The eminent success he attained was attested by the great popularity of his courses and of the public lectures he gave throughout his long service. The Museum of Casts in the basement of Goldwin Smith Hall, the display of which he arranged when the collection was moved from McGraw Hall, became a familiar spot not only to students but also to townspeople. He offered what must have been for years the only course in Greek numismatics given in the United States, and one whose thoroughness so impressed a visiting officer of the American Numismatic Society that Professor Andrews was elected as an Honorary Member for Life. During many summers he continued his lecturing and renewed his acquaintance with classical antiquity by visits to Greece, often serving with the Bureau of University Travel. On one of these trips he met Helen Putman of Chicago whom he married in 1919 and who survives him. The warm hospitality of their home is recalled gratefully by a host of students. Professor Andrews shared fully in the life of the Ithaca

community, and with special zeal in the activities of the Savage Club and the Town-and-Gown Club. For many years he was organist of the Baptist Church and of the Masonic Lodge, of which he was a member for half a century. Furthermore, he loved boating, which provided him with opportunities to enjoy the loveliness of this region; for all his life he was devoted to the beauty of nature.

Professor Andrews was one of those in whom the Hellenic culture inspired not only a strong historical interest but also a deep emotional attachment. The warmth which this love of things Greek lent to his teaching stirred generations of students to an interest which they would otherwise not have obtained and induced many of them to travel abroad to see for themselves what they had heard so fervently described. He saw our age in relation to the past. He treasured the best of the past, and taught how Greek art was the precious distillation of the human spirit in one of its finest forms. He was heir to the Greek spirit in that he loved the beautiful, and in his classes the beautiful became real.

Frederick Waage, Henry Caplan, James Hutton