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ADA YOST HATCH - 1900-1984

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Ada Yost Hatch was a member of the original faculty of Boise Junior College, chosen by Bishop Middleton Barnwell to teach English and German at the new school when it opened its doors on September 6, 1932 at St. Margaret's Hall. Hatch devoted her thirty-five-year career at Boise Junior College to teaching students and improving higher education in Idaho. Hatch was successful in the development of her own teaching systems and appreciated the diversity of student thought.

Yost was born on April 29, 1900 in Sutton, South Dakota. When she was thirteen, she moved with her parents, Henry and Magdalena Yost, to Blackfoot, Idaho where they homesteaded a farm. Yost grew up in Blackfoot with her nine brothers and sisters and graduated from high school. She received a Bachelor's degree from the University of Idaho, and went on to teach high school in Arco, Idaho.

Yost did post graduate work at the University of Chicago, the University of California at Los Angeles, the University of California at Berkeley, and Seattle University. Yost returned to the University of Idaho for her Master's degree, and graduated in 1932, just prior to coming to Boise Junior College. In an oral history interview, Hatch remembers her first year at Boise Junior College: "I lived on the second floor of St. Margaret's Hall. My contract included board and room and laundry." In June 1933 Yost married Clark Hatch, a teacher and building contractor.

For the first few years at Boise Junior College she was both sole professor and head of the English Department. By 1941 she supervised the English, journalism, and modern languages departments. From 1947 to 1966 Hatch was Chairman of Humanities, a job similar to that of Dean of Arts and Sciences.

During her next twenty years at Boise Junior College she served on the President's Advisory Board which was responsible for setting salaries and recruiting faculty. When President Eugene Chaffee returned from World War II, he made Hatch the Chairman of the Board. She states in her oral history that "It wasn't a time of women's rights, but the men were wonderful to me."

She also advised the first women's activities group, the Valkyries, which organized entertainment, boosted school morale, and raised money for charitable organizations. She also worked closely with the men's group, the Vigilantes. Hatch stated that she "thought we [the Valkyries] did a lot of good, boosting ideas

and scholarship." She took advantage of the first sabbatical offered by Boise Junior College in 1950, studying at Oxford for three months. She states in her oral history that the "European trip helped expand and broaden my methods of teaching. I spent time at Oxford and saw Shakespeare done at the Old Vic."

Her former students often say that Ada Hatch was the best teacher they ever had. It was with regret that Ada Yost Hatch was forced to retire from teaching after a heart attack in 1967.

She continued to support students through regular contributions to the department of English scholarship program. Hatch died after a car accident on May 9, 1984. However, her legacy continues at Boise State University in the form of a scholarship given in her name to upper division female students majoring in art, English, or music.

By Guila Ford and Elizabeth Jacox

(This information has not been edited.)