

DAKOTA IMAGES

Adeline Miriam Jenney, writer, editor, and teacher, drew on her broad life experiences to create the works that made her South Dakota's second poet laureate.

Jenney's parents, Reverend Elisha W. and Catherine Thrall Jenney, were missionaries in Monastir, Macedonia, when Adeline was born on 10 November 1874. The family returned to the United States in 1883, and Adeline attended school in Illinois and Wisconsin before graduating from high school in Boscobel, Wisconsin, in 1893. She earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1899 and gained recognition as the "Ivy Day" poet for her class, the highest honor given to an English major at the university. She then spent a year abroad, studying at the University of Munich and Oxford University.

Upon returning to the United States, Jenney entered and won the *Century* magazine short-story contest, qualifying her for a fellowship in English at the University of Illinois. She graduated with her master's degree in 1906 and did postgraduate work at the University of Wisconsin. Jenney went on to hold numerous positions in the literary and educational fields. She was an editor in the manuscript department of *Good Housekeeping* magazine and a writer for the *Milwaukee News*, the *Congregationalist*, and Pilgrim Press in Boston. She taught English at Yankton College, where she served as departmental head, and was a teacher and assistant principal at Valley Springs, South Dakota, where her family had settled in 1917. Following in her father's footsteps, she also became an ordained Congregational minister. Jenney is best known to South Dakotans as editor of the poetry journal *Pasque Petals*, a post she held for more than thirty years beginning in 1937. She also edited three anthologies of poetry published by the South Dakota Poetry Society and wrote a historical novel in 1942.

Governor Joe Foss named Jenney Poet Laureate of South Dakota on 29 November 1958, following the death of the state's first poet laureate, Badger Clark. In 1965, she received an honorary degree of Doctorate of Humane Letters from Yankton College.

Adeline Jenney died in Valley Springs on 11 May 1973 at the age of ninety-eight and is buried in the Valley Springs cemetery.

—Matthew T. Reitzel



Adeline M. Jenney

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