

TRIBUTE TO MRS. MARY PEACOCK DOUGLAS

By

EUNICE QUERY



I'd like to thank the executive board of the North Carolina Library Association for giving me a great privilege — the privilege of bestowing tribute upon one who has meant so much to so many of us professionally and just as much to some of us personally.

When we honor Mrs. Mary Peacock Douglas, we honor ourselves. It is not really necessary to recapitulate her many accomplishments and contributions to school libraries, not only to school libraries in North Carolina but to school libraries of the world, because the youngest librarian in this room has heard of

Mrs. Douglas and feels the great debt to her. There are some very interesting things that have happened to young people, I think, in regard to Mrs. Douglas. Louise Plybon says that a young man in one of her library science classes at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill a couple of years ago crossed himself everytime Mrs. Douglas' name was mentioned. Several young people in our institute at Appalachian State University this past summer said it was wonderful to see a legend come alive. It isn't many people who become legends in their lifetime, and of course, we don't feel that this is any indication that the person has lived too long; it is just an indication that the person has lived well. And so we look forward to many more years of inspiration and leadership from Mrs. Douglas.

However, in case someone might need reminding, Mrs. Douglas was a teacher before she became a librarian. She received her professional library education at Columbia University and The University of North Carolina. She was the first state School Library Adviser in North Carolina, a post in which she served for 17 years and blazed the trail which all of us have followed since so gladly and proudly.

She has just retired from her position as Supervisor of the School Libraries of Raleigh, North Carolina, an experience which was crowned by having a school named for her.

Outside North Carolina Mrs. Douglas' influence has extended far through her extensive writings, through her teaching at many colleges and universities, the numerous workshops, and lately her assistance in library institutes.

In 1958 this association nominated Mrs. Douglas for the Grolier Award and was gratified but not at all surprised that it was given to her in recognition of her contribution to the stimulation and guidance of the reading of children and young people.

The citation reads in part:

Mary Peacock Douglas' contributions to the school library profesison have influenced, directly or indirectly, the lives of many boys and girls throughout the nation; moreover, her signal devotion to the profession has benefitted each of us. Such dedication deserves recognition, and to this end the school and children's librarians of North Carolina nominate Mrs. Douglas to receive the 1958 Grolier Society Award.

Mrs. Douglas has contributed beyond measure to the stimulation and guidance of reading among children and young people, by



- Devoting a lifetime to realizing the vision of school library service for all children
- Enriching the school curriculum by judicious selection of worthwhile books and other materials
- Preparing book reviews and selective bibliographies for local and national publication
- Promoting a planned, continuous read-aloud program in the elementary grades, to insure a literary heritage of good books for all children
- Helping children to develop appreciation for artistic illustrations, through a developmental program of presenting and interpreting outstanding picture books and well-illustrated editions
- Sharing favorite stories and poems with boys and girls of her community, in storyhours at special seasons of the year
- Interpreting the needs of children to publishers
- Working with librarians, teachers, and administrators to develop and improve techniques for reading guidance, in areas such as storytelling, book talks, reading records, guiding book selection, and many others
- Working with Parent-Teacher Associations and other civic groups, by means of talks, articles, and bibliographies relating to children's literature and reading in the home
- Participating in programs, conferences, and study groups of schools, colleges, and professional organizations
- Writing books, pamphlets, and articles concerning many areas of library service



- Serving as a leader to state, regional, and national organizations working to develop and implement school library standards
- Helping to develop a basic course of study in library education for school librarians
- Teaching courses and workshops at colleges and universities in many states
- Encouraging the establishment of library schools at Appalachian State Teachers College and at North Carolina College.

It will be no surprise to you to know that in response to the question suggested by the U. S. Office of Education for our library institute participants, "What is the most significant thing that happened to you during this institute?" the almost unanimous answer was "Mrs. Douglas." This was because she is one who walks with her head in the clouds but with her feet on the ground — a gymnastic feat possible only through sheer genius.

So, on behalf of the members of the N.C.A.S.L., it is my privilege to present to you, Mrs. Douglas, the *first* Mary Peacock Douglas Award for outstanding contributions to North Carolina School Libraries.

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Even though she may be retiring from her position with a regular salary, Mary P. Douglas will never be retired from the profession of school librarianship nor from the hearts of school librarians throughout these United States and even farther in the world. Her pioneer leadership in a state school library supervisory position gave to the nation and, in particular to North Carolina, high standards of excellence that have continued for many years and have kept her own state in a leadership role. Above all she will be remembered by thousands of librarians as a workshop leader who was easily able to combine practicality with inspiration and good fun. There are few states that have not felt her influence nor enjoyed her personal warmth and humor. On behalf of hundreds of school librarians in Washington State who have known her I send our greetings for her future happiness.

ELEANOR E. AHLERS, *Associate Professor,*
School of Librarianship, University of Washington

In the early 1930's when, as a very raw neophyte, I first began my career as a school librarian, the name of Mary Peacock was the very first I heard of as a leader in the field. Later when I undertook advanced study at Columbia University's School of Library Service, she was the first state supervisor of school libraries whom I interviewed for my own study of state supervision. Her generosity in sharing her experience and wisdom with a very presumptuous "youngster" undertaking to evaluate the work of her colleagues in state leadership was evidenced during that hot summer and later as I had to besiege her for further help.



Later, when our paths were geographically a bit more distant, I continued to admire Mary Peacock Douglas' contributions to the literature of librarianship — her *Teacher-Librarian's Handbook* as well as the UNESCO booklet on *The Primary School Library and its Services* and, of course, *The Pupil Assistant in the School Library*, each of them filling a serious gap at the time of publication.

Always in her career, Mary Peacock has forged ahead in what she felt was right, has been outspoken in stating her opinions, generous to newcomers and to her students in many states, and a leader, especially in the development of that educational innovation the elementary school library. And of course it was highly fitting and peculiarly gratifying that a new school in Raleigh should be named for her.

For all these reasons, and for many little personal kindnesses, I am gratified to be able to add my word of salute to Mary Peacock Douglas. Long may she reign!

MARY VIRGINIA GAVER, *Professor,*
Rutgers Graduate School of Library Service and,
Past President, American Library Association and
American Association of School Librarians.

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In trying to pinpoint the unique quality that accounts for Mary Peacock Douglas' vibrant personality, the thought struck me that it is her tremendous capacity for anticipation.

At the outset of her retirement, she looks forward to new ventures and opportunities with an excitement seldom met in anyone except small children. The brilliance and sophistication of her zeal is hardly matched today except in our crusading young adults. However, she is not vulnerable like a child nor condemning like a youth. Rather, she combines with her zeal and enthusiasm a grace and elegance derived from rich cumulative experience.



This capacity for anticipation stems partly from rare sensitivity to persons and ideas; from well established habits of preparing rigorously for coming experiences; and from a fine sense of the dramatic. She has learned to see the relevance of persons and ideas, to engage in plans for the future with skill and fervor, and to use each bit of action as an instrument to achieve a satisfying effect. Perhaps, the crucial factor, however, is a fine set of values which enables her to decide what effect is desired.

Because of her talents, skills, and values and her intrigue with creative living, we can all anticipate with her a grand adventure in her retirement.

DORIS COX, *Chairman*,
Department of Library Science
Appalachian State University.

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Mary Peacock Douglas: Leader, Teacher, Friend.

My most satisfactory pictures are those in my mind; I have several such pictures of Mary Peacock Douglas. The first one is dated October 13, 1944. She is standing before a fiery session of the ALA Council, asking approval of the new standards for school library programs. Objections raised ranged from frivolous to ignorant. She incisively disposed of each, approval was voted, and *School Libraries for Today and Tomorrow* became a reality. It is reasonable to believe that the 1969 *Standards for School Media Programs* would not have been possible if Mary had been a less vigorous advocate twenty-four years ago.

Another picture is a kaleidoscope made up of teachers, librarians, school administrators, students; group size varies from one to a thousand, but Mary is teaching them what they need to know about school libraries, and teaching with the enthusiasm and expertise that promote understanding and acceptance.

My favorite picture, however, is of her as my personal friend. giving me an encouraging wink across a crowded room.

MAE GRAHAM, *Assistant Director*,
Division of Library Extension,
Maryland State Department of Education.

Through long years of professional association and friendship with Mary Peacock Douglas I have admired and loved her for many qualities. Her vision and creativity have been expressed in school library programs and buildings as she has used the best of the present to project a better future. Service with a flair has been the result of her planning.

A master at spotting leadership potentialities in young librarians, she has encouraged them to make the most of their abilities. She has inspired and informed thousands through college classes, workshops and institutes, and through her *Teacher-Librarian's Handbook*, other contributions to professional literature, and addresses to hundreds of groups.

Always she has maintained the personal touch with administrator, teacher, fellow librarian, and especially the boys and girls. The gleam in her eyes is sharpest when she is sharing with them a favorite story or poem. A lifetime of sharing her knowledge, her skills, her dreams has been the real source of her wonderful contributions to school libraries throughout the world.

NANCY BURGE, *Chairman*
Library Science, School of Education,
University of South Carolina.

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For more than a generation, Mary Peacock Douglas has inspired and guided the development of school libraries in this country and abroad. There has been no phase of the school library program in which she has not played an important part: in the formulation of standards; in the interpretation and implementation of standards; in the improvement of school library facilities; and, perhaps most important of all, in the encouragement and guidance of administrators and librarians working for quality school library programs. Through her work in North Carolina, through her writing, and through her participation in meetings and workshops all over the country, Mrs. Douglas had defined the role of the library in the school and has provided inspiration and practical help in the achievement of excellent programs.

So, it is with pleasure that I join hundreds of others in wishing Mrs. Douglas — far-sighted professional, wise counselor, generous friend, gracious lady — a happy and interesting retirement.

ELIZABETH HODGES, *Supervisor*,
Library Services, Retired,
Board of Education, Baltimore County, Maryland.





Mary Peacock Douglas is a legend in her own time. She has been a forthright, energetic, and imaginative leader in the school library field on the state, regional and national levels. School librarians in the South will be forever grateful to her for work with Dr. J. Henry Highsmith in their successful efforts to establish and improve the school library standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. She was editor of *School Libraries for Today and Tomorrow*, the 1945 school library standards of the American Library Association. The philosophy and general principles on which these standards were based are still valid.

She has never been too busy to extend a helping hand to the new, the timid, or the experienced librarian. She has shared generously her wisdom, her ideas, her enthusiasm, her knowhow, and the many materials she has produced. As one who has been the recipient of this kindness and help I welcome the opportunity to say again, "Thank you, Mary Peacock Douglas."

SARAH JONES, *formerly Chief Library Consultant,*
Georgia State Department of Education.

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How does one characterize that human dynamo, Mary Peacock Douglas, so long one of our most effective spokesmen for school libraries and school librarians? The words tumble over and sometimes seem to belie one another when one tries to describe this many faceted personality, and assess her many contributions to the library profession. She has been both practical and idealistic in setting her goals and striving to realize them. She is always delightfully feminine and yet professionally aggressive in the pursuit of her objectives. She is ever tactful and charming yet totally honest and frank in the expression of her beliefs and objectives. She is strong in leadership qualities, yet always a superb team member. She is innovative and forward looking, yet appreciative of past achievements and keen in historical perspective.

Standing out above all her many fine attributes which have made possible her significant contribution is her ability to communicate with the leadership of the educational community with which she has served as liaison for the library profession.

FLORRINELL F. MORTON, *Director,*
Library School,
Louisiana State University.

There is no one who through the years has made a greater contribution to school librarianship than Mrs. Mary Peacock Douglas. Her writings have helped not only librarians to do a better job but also laymen to realize what good library service means and to make a beginning of such service in their own schools. *The Librarian's Handbook* has made it possible for teachers or PTA members with no education in librarianship to start a school library collection and to demonstrate what such a collection can mean to the educational program of the school and what could be accomplished if a fully qualified person were available to give real library service. This same publication has been valuable to school library supervisors attempting to give inservice education to people trying to run elementary school libraries without the necessary educational background. Many of Mrs. Douglas' writings have also helped many teachers in library schools to enhance their own programs.



Mrs. Douglas also deserves our sincere appreciation for her sizable contributions through the years to ALA and AASL. She's always been very willing to play whatever professional part needed to be played and her performance was always above and beyond the call of duty.

I'm sure that Mrs. Douglas will still be making contributions to librarianship in her retirement. I hope the years to come will be as interesting for her as the years past must have been.

DOROTHY A. MCGINNIS, *Associate Professor*
School of Library Science,
Syracuse University.

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One of the most rewarding professional experiences I have ever had was becoming acquainted with Mary Peacock Douglas while we were attending a workshop for prospective workshop directors at Florida State University in 1947. As her writings had inspired and helped me in performing my work as a school librarian, I was delighted to have the opportunity to know Mrs. Douglas personally. During the ensuing years I have treasured her friendship, respected her advice which has been graciously given, and admired her leadership in the development of school library services throughout the nation.

ELENORA C. ALEXANDER, *Director*,
Instructional Materials Services,
Houston Independent School District,
Houston, Texas.



I am very glad to add my words of appreciation to Mrs. Mary Peacock Douglas for all that she has contributed over the years to the development of school libraries in her state, in the nation, and through her writings that are found throughout the world. Her leadership has been evident in the pioneer work she did as a state school library supervisor in establishing and strengthening school libraries in North Carolina; in her role in the development of our national standards for school libraries in 1945; and in her continued activities in AASL. Her vision and far sightedness have gone hand in hand with practical commonsense. She has helped to keep our profession on an even keel as well

as to chart a course for future progress.

I personally cherish the many years of friendship with Mary P. Douglas and wish her many years of happiness in her retirement.

ALICE LOHRER, *Professor,*
Graduate School of Library Science,
University of Illinois.

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Will Mary Peacock Douglas retire? Never!

My first glimpse of her was at the 1931 ALA conference in New Haven. She was in action then; and in the ensuing years she has never been far from the scene, whenever the cause of good school library service was being championed. We at the grass roots have developed better programs because of her *Handbook*, her qualitative standards of 1945, and her wise counseling. For two weeks in 1950, Mary and I worked side by side at a USC workshop and I remember well the pace she set for me.

No, I do not believe that Mary Peacock Douglas is retiring. Her thousands of friends, her many professional contributions, and her own enthusiasm and vision will never permit her to be idle. But just because she *thinks* she is, I congratulate her, I salute her, and say a heart-felt "thank you" for many, many things.

ALICE BROOKS MCGUIRE, *Professor,*
Graduate School of Library Science,
The University of Texas.

The name Mary Peacock Douglas brings vivid memories to those who have been privileged to know and work with her through the years.

She has been a strong leader, yet one who enjoys creating opportunities for others. She is intellectual by nature, yet she can talk effectively about school librarianship to the uninitiated as well as to the very learned. She is known for her fine publications, yet she has a fine reputation as a stimulating and interesting lecturer. She has spoken courageously for school librarianship within the library profession, yet she has noted ability to help teachers, administrators and parents appreciate the significance of the school library.



When I became a State library supervisor, it was Mary Peacock Douglas who was well on the way to demonstrating how effective state school library supervision could be. I know from experience that she was demanding of those she worked with, as she was of herself, but that she was kind and helpful to all who sought her aid.

Those who saw and visited with Mary Peacock Douglas at the ALA conference in Kansas City are quick to testify that her mind is keen, her sense of humor intact, her interests broad, and her enthusiasm high for school library development. Retired she may be, but we have reason to believe — and hope — that in the years ahead she will continue to contribute to school librarianship through her writing and speaking and by just being Mary Peacock Douglas!

SARA KRENTZMAN,
Professor of Library Science,
Florida State University.

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I am certain that I speak for an untold number of librarians and the children with whom they have worked when I say, "Thank you, Mary Peacock, for the inspiration you have given us."

Your life as a librarian, teacher and administrator has been a labor of love. If we have captured a little of your spirit we are among the privileged.

We are grateful to you for all you have contributed but mostly for what you are.

God love you,

LEILA A. DOYLE, *Library Consultant,*
Gary, Indiana, Public Schools.



Retiring? Says who?

They tell me Mary Peacock Douglas has retired. I have known her since 1937 when we met at a conference on school library work in the South sponsored by the General Education Board. Later I was often in conferences in which she participated. One of a sizable group who had entered school library work on a wave of activity resulting in standards for high school libraries of the Southern Association (1927), she was already known outside the region.

Her career has been a busy one: teaching, doing and later supervising school library work, directing workshops and conferences, teaching summer school

classes, writing, holding offices in educational and library organizations on the state and national levels. She dominated any group with her enthusiasm, was always eager to share what she had learned, and offered practical suggestions for school library problems — sorely needed in the early days.

She may have retired but I doubt that she ever slows down!

AZILE WOFFORD, *Associate Professor Emerita*,
Department of Library Science,
The University of Kentucky.

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Mrs. Mary Peacock Douglas, the first State Director of School Libraries in the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, had the vision, the drive, and the know-how to instill in the minds of the school superintendents, the PTA's and the general public the concept that school libraries are essential to good teaching and learning. She traveled across the state interpreting school library service and encouraging schools to establish libraries. She gave leadership to the development of state and national standards; to the publication of handbooks, planning guides, recommended lists of library books; and to the library education programs for training school librarians. The climate for school library development created by Mrs. Douglas during the seventeen years (1930-1947) she was on the staff of the Department of Public Instruction set the stage for the accelerated growth of school libraries which began to blossom in the 1950's and has continued in the 1960's.

CORA PAUL BOMAR, *Director*,
Division of Educational Media,
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

Mary Peacock Douglas, noted practicing school librarian as well as respected author, consultant, and lecturer, is a loved friend of school librarians in many parts of the country. Her practical, helpful approaches combined with words of inspiration have always given encouragement, direction, and vision to the many persons working in school libraries. With her special qualities and abilities, Mrs. Douglas has contributed to the building of a growing professional organization, the American Association of School Librarians.



The membership of the American Association of School Librarians joins me in expressing appreciation of Mrs. Douglas' years of service and in extending best wishes to her in the years ahead.

PHYLLIS HOCHSTETTLER, *President*,
American Association of School Librarians.

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To have had the privilege of working with and knowing Mary Peacock Douglas is one of the highlights in my professional career. Those of us who were introduced to her *Teacher-Librarian's Handbook* early in our efforts are grateful. Those of us who had the privilege of working with her in AASL committees and boards, have experienced a professional strength and enthusiasm which is all too often a rarity in the field. The breadth of interest in school library development — national and international — the concern for all from the youngest student to the most erudite patron, have made Mary Peacock Douglas a giant in the profession and a warm friend of all.

JEAN E. LOWRIE, *Head*,
Department of Librarianship,
Western Michigan University.

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Mary Peacock Douglas made a great contribution to the development of school libraries in the United States. Her enthusiasm, wise judgment and good will made her very effective both in her work and in her association with professional colleagues. I wish her happiness in her retirement.

MARY HELEN MAHAR, Chief, Western Program Operations Branch,
Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education.

Webster has the word for Mrs. Douglas: charisma, "a personal magic of leadership arousing special popular loyalty or enthusiasm" (*Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary*). Mary Peacock Douglas' personal magic of leadership has been a guiding force in school library development, extending in space from North Carolina throughout the South, the nation, and the world, and in time from the 1920's on. No terminal date can be fixed, for she has made her mark on all of us who follow her. Her warm concern, her practical judgment, her positive approach, her total commitment are indelible impressions. We are indeed blessed to have had such a leader when we needed her most.

FRANCES K. JOHNSON, *Chairman*,
Library Education Program, School of Education,
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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It was my good fortune to know Mary Peacock Douglas by reputation and through her writings and to meet her once in person before I came to North Carolina. How seldom the reality of an individual fits the picture one has formed, sight unseen. In this case, reality and ideal coincided smoothly. When I came to Chapel Hill, Mrs. Douglas had just become Supervisor of School Libraries for the Raleigh Public Schools. Looking back, the things I remember best are her practical, incisive comments which could cut through the fogs of half-formed, imprecise ideas; her sense of humor, dry yet kindly; her love of youth and the joy she found in bringing good books to them; her loyalty to her friends and her work; the way she always kept her "cool" under pressure. We all owe her much, and she has set a high standard for each of us.

MARGARET E. KALP, *Associate Professor*,
School of Library Science,
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

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The influence of Mary Peacock Douglas on the development of school libraries is immeasurable. Not only has she laid a foundation on which we could build, but she has continued to give invaluable advice and inspiration. She has a rare combination of vision, determination, and practicality in planning and carrying forward a program both in the school and in the education of librarians.

Her appreciation of literature, her ability to analyze a situation or problem, to weigh the possibilities and come up with sound recommendations, and her genuine interest in librarians as individuals have meant much to us.

Rarely do we find in a single individual so many varied abilities used so successfully over an extended period, in combination with the inspiration and challenge to keep us moving forward.

Truly, Mary Peacock Douglas is a remarkable leader who has won the love and respect of us all.

LOUISE MOORE PLYBON, *Librarian*,
Eastover School Library, Charlotte, N. C.,
and former *Chairman*, Department of Library Science,
Appalachian State University.