

JENNIE MUSTAPHA
September 29, 1898 - May 13, 1992

Jennie Mustapha was born in New York City to Osman and Jane Sumpter Mustapha just before the turn of the twentieth century. Later, her family moved to Stratford, Connecticut, where she attended school from grade four through high school. She graduated from Howard University in 1919, followed by a master's degree from Columbia University. Her other studies included a summer at Oxford University and a Great Books seminar elsewhere in Europe.

Following her formal education, Jennie served as a YWCA secretary in Columbus, Ohio and in Camden, New Jersey. Then she came to Washington to teach English at Dunbar High School and later at Cardozo High School, where she later became vice principal. Altogether she gave forty years of fine teaching and administration to the District of Columbia public schools. As assistant principal at Cardozo she was known for her gentle, sensitive but pointed guidance to younger, inexperienced teachers.

After retiring from the District of Columbia School system, her adventuresome spirit led her to teach, on a Friends United Mission Commission, at the American Collegiate Institute, a school for girls in Izmir, Turkey.

Jennie's family religion was the Episcopal Church. She attended Christ Church in Stratford, Connecticut and after moving to Washington, became a member of St. Luke's Episcopal Church on Fifteenth Street, Northwest. Her spiritual life which was moving toward the more contemplative, was marked significantly by a course she took on the psychology of the unconscious, taught by someone she considered to be an inspired teacher. He taught her the value of the inward focus, and under his guidance, she began a course of study that gave her a new direction.

Subsequently, during a lengthy illness, she returned to Connecticut, on leave of absence from her work at Cardozo. It was during this time that she became increasingly aware, through long hours of reading and meditation, that the guidance she sought was in herself. Also, during this time, Jennie became acquainted with a great storehouse of spiritual literature. She looked back on that year and a half as a wonderful time of inner growth and development.

This was a period in which her interest in Quakerism increased. She learned about the high school programs of the American Friends Service Committee and got her students interested in AFSC seminars and workcamps. Jennie appreciated Pendle Hill pamphlets and "Inward Light" essays published by Friends Conference on Religion and Psychology.

In 1960, after Jennie had become a frequent attender of Meetings for Worship at Friends Meeting of Washington, and had enjoyed an adult class that met on Sunday mornings, she decided to apply for membership in Friends Meeting of Washington. She became an outstanding and valuable member.

One of Jennie's important contributions was to chair the Sidwell Friends School Board of Trustees. She was very helpful in getting the school desegregated. Jennie also served as Chairperson for the Board of Trustees of Sandy Spring Friends House, a residential community

for the elderly. Both of these undertakings required wisdom in a wide area, plus an ability to get along with many different people with disparate interests.

Jennie served on various Meeting committees including Finance and Property and Social concerns. We will always remember Jennie as a person with wide interests and strong commitments. She was a remarkable woman. We are indeed fortunate that she found her way to Quakerism. We cherish her memory.