

ADELAIDE UNDERHILL

1860 - 1936

The faculty of Vassar College desires to place on record a tribute to Adelaide Underhill, Librarian Emeritus, who died April 23, 1936.

Following her graduation from Vassar in 1888, Miss Underhill entered the first professional school for librarians at Columbia College. Called to Vassar in 1892 by the Librarian, Miss Frances A. Wood, to install a modern library system she recorded, classified and catalogued, almost single-handed, the collection of 15,000 volumes and showed a growing power of organization in carrying forward plans for developing the book collections and making them fully available. She served the library actively for thirty six years, retiring as Librarian Emeritus in 1928. Her gentle aspect might have suggested her love of books and learning but did not betray the zeal of the dauntless book collector, the ardor of the devoted friend, the passion for peace and justice, which inspired her loyalties.

Her vision and resourcefulness brought friends and books and funds to the library where her silent witness stand in every alcove. The lamps which light the path to the library were given by Miss Lucy M. Salmon in honor of Miss Underhill and the Class of 1888. They are inscribed with the same legend which appears on Miss Underhill's bookplate in her own books, her final gift to the library, "Light is given us to discover onward things."

Eloise Ellery

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