

EMMA ODY POHL'S CONTRIBUTIONS IN DANCE
TO HIGHER EDUCATION IN MISSISSIPPI

A THESIS
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS
IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE
TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF HEALTH, PHYSICAL EDUCATION,
RECREATION, AND DANCE

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DENTON, TEXAS

AUGUST 1982

EMMA ODY POHL

1880 - 1966

Photo courtesy of Marcie Sanders,
The Pohl of Memories,
Columbus, Mississippi



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The investigator wishes to thank the members of the thesis committee, Dr. Aileene Lockhart, Chairperson of the thesis, Dr. Janice LaPointe, and Mrs. Gladys Keeton for their help and guidance.

Appreciation is extended to Mrs. Gloria Atkinson for her cooperation, time, and help in the development of this study.

To Mrs. Ruth Hart, the investigator wishes to extend a warm thank you for her encouragement and support during the last few years.

The investigator also wishes to extend thanks to Dr. Dorothy Burdeshaw and Miss Marie Charlotte Stark for their encouragement on this endeavor.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Dance in American higher education has not always possessed the respectability it does today. Recognition of dance required an abandonment of the old scholarly opinion which confined education to intellectual fields alone; this occurred with the subsequent acceptance of the idea that the development of the whole individual through intellectual, physical, and emotional activities is the broader function of higher education.¹ Luckily, sensitive individuals perceived education as a social and socializing as well as intellectualizing force. As a result of this perspective, dance found its way into higher education curricula because it calls into play all three activities with equal emphasis and unity of impulse.²

Many people fail to realize the struggle dance educators encountered in having dance accepted in our

¹John Martin, Introduction to the Dance (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1939; reprint ed., Brooklyn, New York: Dance Horizons, Inc., 1965), p. 289.

²Ibid., p. 290.

colleges and universities. Many educators who helped dance secure its present position in education still remain unrecognized.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to present information concerning the development of dance in American higher education through the contribution of Emma Ody Pohl, a dance educator.

Statement of the Problem

The investigator's problem was to determine Emma Ody Pohl's contributions in dance to American higher education at Mississippi Industrial Institute and College, later known as Mississippi State College for Women, the time span being 1907-1955. The investigator hypothesized that Emma Ody Pohl was influential in promoting dance in American higher education through her teachings and dance programs. In this investigation the various types of dance classes taught by Emma Ody Pohl, the dance programs presented under her directorship, and the professional dance performances, workshops, and master classes presented on the campus of Mississippi Industrial Institute and College, later changed to Mississippi State College for Women, during the years 1907-1955, were examined.

Limitations of the Study

The following limitations were placed on this study:

1. The most beneficial source of information for this study would have been the subject, Emma Ody Pohl. However, this primary source was not available to the investigator as Miss Pohl is deceased.
2. Performance programs were used as sources of data regarding dance performances at Mississippi State College for Women during Emma Ody Pohl's teaching career. The possibility exists that some of these performances may not have taken place as described in the programs or that alterations of performance material may have occurred.

Delimitations of the Study

The investigator placed the following delimitations on this study:

1. Emma Ody Pohl was a physical educator, but the investigator chose to delimit this study to Pohl's role as a dance educator.
2. The investigator delimited her search for information on the subject, Emma Ody Pohl,

to those materials available at Mississippi University for Women. The collection of data on the history of educational dance in the United States was delimited to the libraries of Louisiana State University and Texas Woman's University.

Procedures Followed in the Development of the Study

Certain procedures were used by the investigator to make this study practical in content and organization.

The first procedure was to examine the role of dance in American higher education from the 1700s through the year 1955. This examination gave the investigator an overview of the progression of educational dance in America and served as a point of reference to the development of dance in the state of Mississippi by Emma Ody Pohl.

Next, literature and research studies of a biographical nature were reviewed. This literature was restricted to dance personalities, since the subject of this study was a dance instructor. By examining these books, dissertations, and theses found in the libraries of Louisiana State University and Texas Woman's University,

the investigator was able to obtain information pertaining to the writing of biographies.

The third procedure followed was to collect data on the subject of this study, Emma Ody Pohl. Material sources about the subject of this study were located in books, newspapers, magazines, college catalogs, alumnae news bulletins, notebooks, letters, programs, and certificates. These materials were obtained from the Mississippi University for Women Archives and Museums Department and the Mississippi University for Women Library.

The information collected was then organized, analyzed, and verified for authenticity with the assistance of available local documentary and human sources. A chronological system was chosen to organize the material, and data not relevant to the purpose of this study were deleted.

Finally, the investigator compiled the information into a written report. The final report was organized into seven chapters with two appendices which included a list of the dance programs given on the campus of Mississippi State College for Women under the direction of Emma Ody Pohl and professional dance artists who appeared on the campus of Mississippi State College for Women between 1932 and 1955.

Organization of the Remainder
of the Study

Related studies and literature that provided direction and background information for this biographical study is reviewed in Chapter II. Chapter III traces the history of educational dance in the United States from the early 1700s to the year 1955. Emma Ody Pohl's early life, including her childhood, early dance training, and first teaching position, is presented in Chapter IV. Chapters V and VI describe Emma Ody Pohl's work in the field of dance at Mississippi Industrial Institute and College, which was changed to Mississippi State College for Women in 1920, from 1907 to 1955. Chapter VII involves the summarization of the study with conclusion and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The investigator reviewed a variety of biographical literature which included theses, dissertations, and books on dance educators in educational and professional settings. These sources proved helpful to the investigator in her organization and selection of topics for this study. Because no extended research has been conducted as of the present time on Emma Ody Pohl as a dance educator, it can be assumed that this study is unique.¹

Lauren Gossett Routon investigated Elizabeth Waters' contributions to dance in the state of New Mexico and showed how she helped to develop dance in the Southwest.² Similarly, in the present study it was hoped that Emma Ody Pohl's contributions to the development of dance in Mississippi could be established. Elizabeth Waters was

¹Gloria Atkinson, Director of Archives & Museums Department, interview, Mississippi University for Women, Columbus, Mississippi, July 23, 1980.

²Lauren Gossett Routon, "Elizabeth Hannah Waters: Dancer, Choreographer, Teacher, 1910-1977" (Master's thesis, Texas Woman's University, 1978).

a dance instructor at the University of New Mexico just as Pohl was a college dance instructor in Mississippi. Routon's presentation of Miss Waters' life from childhood through her professional career and specifically her work in New Mexico proved helpful to this investigator as she planned her study.

Another thesis which utilized this type of organizational structure was Kathleen Mary Wynne's "The Life and Contributions of José Limon."¹ This study followed Limon's life from birth to his association with the Humphrey-Weidman studio to the establishment and growth of his own dance company. Wynne provided a factual and chronological presentation of Limon's life as a dancer, teacher, and choreographer.

"The Work of Mary Wigman,"² a master's thesis by Kathrine M. Brown, also followed a chronological pattern which proved helpful to the investigator. Brown presented Mary Wigman's childhood and early dance training with Jacques Dalcroze and Rudolph von Laban, work which helped

¹Kathleen Mary Wynne, "The Life and Contributions of José Limon" (Master's thesis, Smith College, 1965).

²Kathrine M. Brown, "The Work of Mary Wigman" (Master's thesis, University of Utah, 1955).

Wigman establish her own dance form. An index of dance works, both solo and group, was included in this study and assisted the present researcher in structuring the appendices of dance programs directed by Emma Ody Pohl at Mississippi State College for Women.

One of the most beneficial dissertations relating to the present study was "Anne Schley Duggan: Portrait of a Dance Educator"² by Sandra Elizabeth Rivers Weeks. Anne Schley Duggan was a dance educator at Texas Woman's University from 1936 to 1973. Emma Ody Pohl was also a dance educator at a college for women during the first half of Duggan's career at Texas Woman's University and a similarity of each woman's contributions in dance to her respective institution can be observed. Both served in the capacities of teacher, choreographer, sponsor, and administrator for the dance programs in their schools. Weeks' presentation of these aspects of Anne Schley Duggan's career aided the investigator in her presentation of Emma Ody Pohl's contributions in these areas of dance. The investigator also found Weeks' survey of the history of educational dance helpful in locating sources which

²Sandra Elizabeth Rivers Weeks, "Anne Schley Duggan: Portrait of a Dance Educator" (Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Woman's University, 1980).

were utilized in this study's review of educational dance history.

Sylvia Pelt Richards' biographical dissertation deals with Charles Weidman's professional career as a dancer and his contributions both to the theater and educational dance.¹ Weidman grew up in Lincoln, Nebraska and later joined Denishawn where he met Doris Humphrey. Together, Charles and Doris left Denishawn to form their own company and school. After Humphrey and Weidman disbanded, Weidman established the Charles Weidman Theatre Dance Company and later the Expression of Two Arts Theatre. Again, the use of chronological organization in this dissertation helped the present investigator in her organization of materials.

Another dissertation about a dance educator was a study by Gloria Ann Bonali entitled "Harriette Ann Gray: Her Life and Her Career as a Dancer, Choreographer, and Teacher From 1913 Through 1968."² Bonali follows Gray's

¹Sylvia Pelt Richards, "A Biography of Charles Weidman with Emphasis Upon His Professional Career and His Contributions to the Field of Dance" (Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Woman's University, 1971).

²Gloria Ann Bonali, "Harriette Ann Gray: Her Life and Her Career as a Dancer, Choreographer, and Teacher From 1913 Through 1969" (Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Woman's University, 1970).

life in a chronological order from birth through her teaching years at Stephens College. During her performing career, Gray was a professional dancer with the Humphrey-Weidman Dance Company. While studying acting at the Perry-Mansfield School of Theatre and Dance, Gray met Barney Brown who later became her husband. Together they started a nine month dance program at Perry-Mansfield, and a dance company, The Harriette Ann Gray Dance Company, evolved from this program. In 1955 Gray went to Stephens College and was asked to direct that college's dance program which she did until 1969. Just as Harriette Ann Gray was a dance educator in higher education, so was the subject of this study, Emma Ody Pohl. Bonali used appendices to illustrate concert appearances of the various dance companies with which Gray was associated, including the Stephens College Dancers under her directorship. These appendices proved valuable to the present investigator in developing her data of dance performances by the Mississippi State College for Women Dancers under Pohl's directorship into appendices.

Betty Poindexter studied Ted Shawn's life, who was the first American male dancer to gain national recognition

and honor for his art.¹ Shawn originally gained prominence with Ruth St. Denis and together they created Denishawn, the most talked about dance company and school in the early decades of the 1900s. When their partnership dissolved, Shawn organized a troupe of men dancers and through it dance careers for men became acceptable in the United States. Another great contribution to the dance world was the conversion of Shawn's farmhouse in Massachusetts into the summer dance festival known as Jacob's Pillow. A chronological order of Shawn's life was used by Poindexter as an organizational tool in her study; she also presented various aspects of Shawn's career as a dance teacher, performer, choreographer, author, and speaker. Poindexter also discussed the influences Shawn had on the development of dance in the United States as well as influences of individuals on Ted Shawn. The present investigator found these aspects of Poindexter's study beneficial to her research endeavor.

Although not based on a dancer, teacher, or choreographer but rather on the dance critic Walter Terry, Lois

¹Betty Poindexter, "Ted Shawn: His Personal Life, His Professional Career, and His Contributions to the Development of Dance in the United States of America from 1891 to 1963" (Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Woman's University, 1963).

E. Andreasen's dissertation was valuable to the present investigator.¹ Andreasen made use of appendices illustrating points Terry supported through selected lectures, television, and radio appearances; this form aided in the formation of the appendices for this study. Although Terry studied dance, he knew he wanted to be a dance critic and became one of the first in this field. During Terry's association with the New York Herald Tribune, he established himself as an expert dance critic in this new area of journalism.

Several biographical books were also examined to help develop this study. Lester Horton: Modern Dance Pioneer² emphasizes Horton's creativity in choreographing, costuming, lighting, and make-up for his own dance company. Horton became interested in dance after seeing the Denishawn Dancers perform. His first opportunity to perform was in the pageant "Hiawatha" in 1926. When this production toured California, Horton decided to stay in the area and he became largely responsible for developing modern

¹Lois E. Andreasen, "A Biography of Walter Terry with Emphasis Upon His Professional Career and His Contributions to the Field of Dance" (Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Woman's University, 1971).

²Larry Warren, Lester Horton: Modern Dance Pioneer (New York: Marcel Dekker, Inc., 1977).

dance on the West Coast. Noted for his American Indian theme dances, propaganda dances, and his interracial dance group, Horton and his dance technique became extremely popular in the West and gained acclaim in New York. The author's chronology of Horton's choreographic works was helpful to the present investigator in developing chronologies of dance performances given at Mississippi State College for Women during Emma Ody Pohl's teaching career.

Another biography entitled Katherine Dunham: A Biography¹ explored the life of this ethnic dancer, choreographer, director, teacher, and author. Dunham developed her own dance technique and trained many professional dancers. She combined her interests in anthropology and dance when studying the dance forms of the West Indies. Upon returning to the United States, these dance forms were transformed into her own choreographic ideas. Her company grew to be so successful that it toured all over the world. This book is a good example of how biographical material can be related to readers in an interesting way. The author also used appendices to record Miss Dunham's choreography, which the investigator found useful.

¹Ruth Beckford, Katherine Dunham: A Biography, with a Foreword by Arthur Mitchell (New York: Marcel Dekker, Inc., 1979).

Walter Terry wrote a biography on one of his long-time associates, Ted Shawn.¹ Shawn began his dance career as a ballroom dance exhibitionist, but it was not until he joined Ruth St. Denis that he grew to national prominence. Together they formed Denishawn and trained some of the American modern dance pioneers such as Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, and Charles Weidman. Shawn and St. Denis parted, however, after an "on and off" relationship of seventeen years. Shawn then founded his troupe of men dancers, of which the author, Terry, was at one time asked to be a member. He visited Jacob's Pillow, Shawn's dance festival, on many occasions to critique dance performances and to visit his friend. Using a chronological sequence to present this biography, Terry was able to interject Mr. Shawn's personal views on many subjects because of their long friendship. The present investigator found Mr. Terry's writing enlightening as it presented Shawn's life in an interesting and factual manner.

These reference sources, consisting of theses, dissertations, and biographies were helpful to the present investigator in her preliminary research. It was found that the most commonly used method of organization is

¹Walter Terry, Ted Shawn: Father of American Dance (New York: The Dial Press, 1976).

chronological order. Several sources clarified the role of dance in higher education during the first half of the 1900s and provided a bibliography for the investigator's study of the history of dance in higher education.

CHAPTER III

HISTORY OF DANCE IN AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION

Historians indicate that man has danced since the earliest of times as a means of communication, but as man became more civilized and established new forms of communication, he restricted his dancing to special events, ceremonies, and worship services. Eventually man banned dance from some activities altogether and because some cultures in time grew to believe dance to be sinful and indecent, they outlawed dance in any form in their societies. Today dance is again accepted in most cultures and so has reemerged not only as a recreational but as a non-verbal, artistic form.

The pattern of first restricting and later accepting dance can be seen in our own American culture. Educators in American higher education, however, struggled to make dance acceptable as a fine art and as a discipline in our colleges and universities. Although interest in educational dance in the United States was not aroused until the nineteenth century, an understanding of the viewpoint of Americans on dance in the 1700s is necessary

in order to understand the opposition educators faced in persuading others to allow dance in our schools.

In this chapter dance in America's educational system from the 1700s through the year 1955 is reviewed. The latter year was chosen as the closing date for this presentation because it was during that year that the subject of this thesis retired from her teaching career.

Dance in America, 1700s

When the English colonists came to settle in America in the late 1600s and early 1700s, they brought with them English country dancing which was accepted in England as recreation at that time.¹ However, as the colonists became increasingly independent of England, dancing was banned in some localities because of its "sensuality."² The Puritans believed it was a sin to dance, so they established laws forbidding it. Nevertheless, many Puritans opposed these laws and danced "gyne-candrically" anyway.³

¹John Martin, America Dancing (New York: Dodge Publishing Co., 1936), p. 54.

²Ibid., p. 45.

³Ibid.

Dance in American Higher Education, 1800-1850

In the 1800s some Americans began to believe that schools should be responsible for the physical as well as the mental growth of their students.¹ This belief aided the development of dance in education. Where dance was questionable as an activity it was many times disguised and modified in schools by a variety of other names and forms including calisthenics and musical gymnastics.

Academies, seminaries, and colleges for women became popular during this time, and dance was usually taught in these schools. Public schools, however, accepted dance only as a form of exercise requiring no extra preparation or attention.² Thus a variety of rhythmic exercise programs accompanied by music were taught during the century.

Three women were prominent in promoting dance in women's education during the first half of the nineteenth century. They were Emma Willard, Mary Lyon, and Catherine Beecher. Their influence was reflected in the dance programs which began to emerge in women's educational programs.

¹Richard Kraus, History of the Dance in Art and Education (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969), p. 123.

²Joseph E. Marks III, America Learns to Dance (New York: Exposition Press, 1957), p. 91.

Emma Willard believed women should learn "the graces of motion" through the study of dance.¹ In 1821 Willard founded the Troy Female Seminary where country dances were taught to the students. Willard influenced her sister, Almira Hart Lincoln Phelps, who opened two schools for women at Rahway and Patapsco, New Jersey which included dance in their programs.²

During the 1830s, Catherine Beecher devised a system of calisthenics for girls which consisted of simple movements done to music. Her calisthenics became popular across the country and were used as a substitute for dance to develop grace, good carriage, and sound health.³ Beecher founded two female seminaries, Hartford Female Seminary in Connecticut and Western Female Institute in Cincinnati, Ohio, where her calisthenics programs were taught.⁴

Mary Lyon, founder of Mount Holyoke Seminary in Massachusetts, also used calisthenics which were based on dances of the period.⁵ She published a book of exercises

¹Ibid., p. 87.

²Ibid., p. 90-91.

³Emmett Rice, John Hutchinson, and Mabel Lee, A Brief History of Physical Education, 5th ed. (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1969), p. 149.

⁴Marks, p. 88.

⁵Ibid., p. 89-90.

which were done to music and singing in the mid-1800s; these resembled dance. Readers were told, however, that the exercises should not be done in dance-like fashion because they would receive opposition if done in that manner.¹ This warning was given probably because a ban on dancing in colleges came about in the 1830s, and it was not until after the Civil War that dance began to be seen again in American higher education.²

Although dancing was found mostly in programs for girls and women during this time, some men's programs also included dance. One prominent example was the West Point Military Academy. In 1817 dance was taught to cadets on a voluntary basis so that they would gain "poise and social competence" as a gentleman.³ In the summer of 1823 dancing became a required course and the school engaged Papanti, a Boston dancing master, as instructor.⁴ Other military schools followed West Point's example and began to offer dance courses as salutary exercise and as a way to achieve social acceptance.⁵

¹Kraus, p. 125.

²Marks, p. 94-95.

³Kraus, p. 124.

⁴Kraus, p. 124; and Marks, p. 84-85.

⁵Dorothy Adella O'Brien, "Theoretical Foundations of Dance in American Higher Education: 1885-1932" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Southern California, 1966), p. 213.

Dance in American Higher Education, 1850-1900

Many schools and colleges founded during the latter half of the 1800s were church-supported and because Puritanistic beliefs were still held, dancing was not allowed in these schools until the twentieth century.¹ Another factor that kept dance out of educational institutions during this time was the "Great Revival of 1858," a religious revival that took place after the financial Panic of 1857.² It was only in the last few decades of the nineteenth century, as more state colleges came into existence, that dance began to be offered as a course of instruction to any real extent in American higher education.³

The main reason dancing became accepted in American schools was because it was considered the most healthful indoor exercise.⁴ After the Civil War, dance grew in acceptance as part of physical education programs. Dio Lewis, who developed a gymnastics system of modified dance, stated in his book, The New Gymnastics, that dance develops flexibility, dexterity, and grace.⁵ Lewis' free gymnastics resembled a modified form of dance,

¹Rice et al, p. 176.

²Marks, p. 69.

³Ibid., p. 93.

⁴Ibid., p. 80-81.

⁵Kraus, p. 126.

particularly folk dance, and became extremely popular because the exercises required no extra equipment or space.¹ The Dio Lewis Gymnastics system was used by most of the women's colleges in the 1860s.²

In the early 1880s most schools switched to the Sargent system of dancing calisthenics. Dudley A. Sargent was a physical educator who taught at several colleges, including Yale, before becoming the assistant director of physical training and director of the gymnasium at Harvard University in 1879. Dr. Sargent organized the Sanatory Gymnasium in Boston in 1881 and later began his own school of physical education in which both students and teachers were trained. In 1887 he started the Harvard Summer School of Physical Training to prepare physical education teachers. Christian Eberhard was hired to teach dance at the school. Eberhard, however, used the term "fancy steps" instead of "dance" because dancing was still not accepted by religious groups.³ The importance of Dr. Sargent's dancing calisthenics was that this was the first time a definite system of dance was taught by physical educators in the schools. Teachers who studied with

¹Marks, p. 95-96.

²Rice et al, p. 213.

³Marks, p. 100.

Sargent at Harvard spread the system throughout the country.¹

During the 1890s, a new physical education program was developed by Francois Delsarte, a French dramatics teacher. His method, based on relaxation exercises and his "laws of expression," used statue-posing and tableau-making to demonstrate various emotions.² The Delsarte System of Exercise was introduced at the Chautauqua School of Physical Education in New York; the teachers attending the school went home and taught his method to their students.³

Delsarte's system led to the development of a new program called "aesthetic calisthenics" which was introduced at both the Harvard Summer School and the Sargent School in 1894 by Dr. Sargent. Later, this program was developed further by Melvin Ballou Gilbert who incorporated ballet steps and positions.⁴ Using the five positions of the feet and arms along with other dance movements, Gilbert's calisthenics eventually became known as "aesthetic dance."⁵ This dance form was especially

¹Ibid., p. 102.

²Ibid., p. 98.

³Kraus, p. 127.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

popular at women's colleges and spread across the country to many schools, including Vassar College and the Boston Normal School of Gymnastics.¹

Another contribution made by Gilbert was his publication, The Director, a magazine dealing with dance and physical education, published in 1897 and 1898. Other magazines also emerged during the end of the nineteenth century which dealt with these subjects. Thus the medium of publication also promoted dance and physical education across the country.²

Another major development which influenced the addition of dance to America's physical education programs came about in 1885. In this year the American Association for the Advancement of Physical Education was formed. This was the first professional organizational meeting of physical educators; it was attended by forty-nine people and was lead by a gymnastics instructor named Dr. William G. Anderson.³

Anderson taught at the Brooklyn Normal School of Gymnastics. He first introduced dance into his

¹Arthur Weston, The Making of American Physical Education, with a Foreword by Charles A. Bucher (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1962), P. 46.

²Marks, p. 82.

²O'Brien, p. 74-5.

educational program in 1887. Anderson later taught both at the Chautauqua Institute, an adult education camp in New York where many teachers trained, and at New York University. His dance program introduced Russian ballet, clogs, reels, and jigs as well as other dance styles to physical educators; he thus promoted national and folk dance which became extremely popular in education during the early part of the twentieth century.¹

Other educators also began to teach folk dance to their students during the very late 1800s and early 1900s. Two such people were Senda Berenson of Smith College and Anne Barr of the University of Nebraska and the Chautauqua School of Physical Education. These two women traveled to Sweden to study folk dance and upon their return to the United States taught Swedish dances to the students at their colleges.²

By the end of the nineteenth century, forward-looking educators realized the need to include dance in their physical education curriculums. To provide students with helpful exercise was a goal of physical educators during the 1885-1904 period and dance was one activity

¹Marks, p. 99.

²Rice et al, p. 177.

through which this goal could be achieved.¹ G. Stanley Hall, president of Clark University and a proponent of dance in education, stated that dance was needed because it gives "poise to the nerves, schooling to the emotions, strength to the will, and to harmonize the feelings and the intellect with the body which supports them."²

It was also at the end of this century that Isadora Duncan came upon the scene. Although Duncan's dance style was not widely accepted in the United States until after World War I, it formed the backbone of the modern dance which educators adopted in the 1930s.³

Dance in American Higher Education, 1900-1910

By the beginning of the twentieth century, dance was accepted as a form of physical education in many of the schools and colleges in the United States. Women physical educators received instruction in dance as a part of their training program, and the Gilbert method of

¹O'Brien, p. 228.

²Havelock Ellis, The Dance of Life (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1923), p. 64-5.

³Deobold Van Dalen, Elmer D. Mitchell, and Bruce L. Bennett, A World History of Physical Education (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1953), p. 464.

calisthenics continued to be used. Male physical educators, however, opposed the Gilbert system because it was considered to be too expressive, difficult, and graceful for men; it was felt that dance for men should be a vigorous and simple activity.¹ So, physical educators had to decide whether to base their programs on gymnastics and calisthenics, sports and dance, or a combination of the two. Gradually, sports and dance replaced the gymnastics and calisthenics programs.²

The dance forms that were most prevalent during the period were folk and national dance. Chief proponents of these dance forms were Louis Chalif, Mary Wood Hinman, and Elizabeth Burchenal.

Dr. Luther Halsey Gulick asked Louis Chalif to teach folk dance at New York University in 1904. Chalif taught folk and national dance to teachers and published five textbooks on dance which served as teachers' manuals. He also adapted ballet for use in schools and colleges.³ Through his teachings and that of his pupils, Chalif spread dance to the concert stage, schools, and college educational programs.⁴

Mary Wood Hinman taught folk, clog, and ballroom dancing to her pupils, among whom was Doris Humphrey who

¹Kraus, p. 129.

²Rice et al, p. 293.

³Van Dalen et al, p. 464.

⁴Weston, p. 64.

was to become one of the great modern dancers and choreographers of all times. John Martin wrote of Hinman:

Always alert to new ideas, tremendously alive to the best possibilities of the dance in all its departments, she has been for many years teacher, counselor, inspirer, organizer, peacemaker, and general enthusiast, often confining her most generous and effective activities to the side-lines but making nevertheless a deep impression on the character of the dance throughout its formative generation.¹

Hinman wrote five volumes on gymnastic and folk dance which were used by teachers throughout the country.

Elizabeth Burchenal introduced folk dance in 1905 to the girls' physical education program in New York. She also organized the Folk Dance Committee of the Playground and Recreation Association and served as its first chairman. Probably her greatest contribution to dance education was her publication of ten volumes on folk dance based on her own research in the United States and other countries.² Her books remained the basic reference books on folk dance in the English language for many years afterwards.³

Burchenal, Caroline Crawford, and C. Ward Crampton were important figures at the 1905 convention of the

¹Martin, p. 207. ²Van Dalen et al, p. 464.

³Michael Herman, "Recreational Ethnic Dance," in Twenty-five Years of American Dance, ed. Doris Hering (New York: Rudolph Orthwine, 1951), p. 172.

American Physical Education Association. It is possible that this was the first time educators sought to recognize the true importance of dance in education as dance was the theme of the convention.¹

Although folk dance and national dance were gaining popularity in educational systems in the United States, Gilbert's "aesthetic calisthenics" was still taught in many schools. Another type of gymnastics was also used in the United States during the first quarter of the twentieth century, Jacques Dalcroze's "eurhythmics," a very popular system in Europe. Dalcroze emphasized the rhythmic accuracy of body movements which were performed with music.² These two systems, however, slowly lost popularity in American education and were almost extinct by the 1930s.

Dance in American Higher Education, 1910-1920

During the second decade of the twentieth century, folk and national dance continued to be extremely popular. Gilbert's "aesthetic calisthenics" and Dalcroze's

¹Elizabeth R. Hayes, "Today We Honor Them," in Focus on Dance I, ed. Gertrude Lippincott (Washington, D.C.: American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, National Section on Dance, 1960), p. 1.

²Van Dalen et al, p. 465.

"eurhythmics" were taught throughout the decade although physical education objectives were changed to "natural dance" in 1918.¹ This helped open the way for modern dance in education, and the professional dancers of the time were responsible for stimulating educators' interest in this area, although it was almost twenty-five years before educators began to accept dance as an expressive medium.²

Isadora Duncan was a key figure in this opening with her expressive movement. She was the one who made it possible for modern dance, which later was adopted by America's educational system as its basic dance form, to develop as a means of personal expression.³ Duncan's philosophy emphasized creativeness and although she recognized gymnastic training as a way to develop body strength and suppleness and as the beginning of a dancer's education, she did not approve of either ballet or Swedish gymnastics. She chose to train her body as an emotional instrument and used movement as the medium to convey her ideas.⁴ America adopted Isadora's dance style because

¹O'Brien, p. 228.

²Alma Hawkins, Modern Dance in Higher Education (New York: Bureau of Publication, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1954), p. 4.

³Kraus, p. 145.

⁴Martin, p. 141.

the country had no dance of its own and because it broke traditions of other dance forms.¹ Isadora did not leave any codified dance technique or famous pupils, but she did leave the idea that dance could be life and religion and this idea inspired other professional dancers to explore this new dance form.²

Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn were two of these dancers who were influenced by Duncan's work. St. Denis began her dance career in 1904 with theater as her motivation. In 1914 Ted Shawn joined her and together they formed their own company, Denishawn, which presented dances based on Far Eastern, Spanish, and American Indian themes.³ The dance technique of Denishawn was influenced by the German modern dance of Mary Wigman and Dalcroze's eurhythmics.⁴ Denishawn toured extensively all over the United States and so exposed the American public to dance. St. Denis and Shawn opened schools where dance teachers could learn their techniques, and physical educators were among some of those people who attended the Denishawn

¹Ibid.

²Walter Sorell, The Dance Through the Ages (New York: Grossett & Dunlap, 1967), p. 177.

³Ibid., p. 181.

⁴Ibid.

schools.¹ Students at these schools could learn folk dance, Greek dance, Dalcroze's eurhythmics, and the Wigman modern dance technique. In addition, each student was free to develop his own style.² Several students of the Denishawn school did develop their own styles and become known in the next decade as the leaders of American modern dance. These students were Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, and Charles Weidman.

Duncan, St. Denis, and Shawn inspired dance educators to experiment with the new dance forms and develop a dance technique for America's schools and colleges based on these new ideas. The leading dance educators of the new dance were Gertrude Colby, Bird Larson, and Margaret H'Doubler.

Colby was a graduate of the Sargent School of Gymnastics and a teacher at the Speyer School of Teachers College at Columbia University in New York City. At the Speyer School Colby experimented with creative dance based on natural movements and with children's interests in an attempt to develop a physical education program that would permit free, natural, and self-expressive

¹Kraus, p. 147.

²Hawkins, p. 6.

movement.¹ Adapting her training in the Gilbert Calisthenics to meet her objectives, Colby developed her own technique called "natural dance."² Although Colby studied with a variety of teachers including Dalcroze, Dalsarte, and Chalif, it was Isadora Duncan's dance movement that gave her the inspiration to develop her technique.³

In 1916 Colby joined the staff at Teachers College and began to teach her "natural dance" to college students. Many of her students, most notably Martha Hill, Mary O'Donnell, Martha Deane, and Ruth Murray, became the modern dance educators in America's colleges during the 1930s. In addition to training a generation of dance educators, Colby published a book entitled Natural Rhythms and Dance in 1922 and promoted folk dance in education.⁴ She continued to teach at Teachers College until 1931.

Bird Larson, a friend of Colby, was also a pioneer of natural dance in education. She was the dance director at Barnard College for six years and in charge of corrective gymnastics at Teachers College for one year. Larson developed her dance technique from the

¹Kraus, p. 131.

²Hawkins, p. 7.

²Ibid.

⁴Weston, p. 64.

sciences of anatomy, kinesiology, and physics with the theory that the torso is the origin of all movement. Her students were encouraged to adapt the dance technique to their own needs, capabilities, and limitations.¹ Larson called her dance "natural rhythmic expression" and it combined music, technique, and composition.² Before she died tragically in 1927, Larson's influence on dance had carried natural dance to the concert stage and into religious events.³

Watching the work of Colby and Larson was Margaret H'Doubler. H'Doubler had left the University of Wisconsin to work on her master's degree at Teachers College, Columbia University in 1916. For the next two years she observed these women's work and was able to define educational principles underlying dance.⁴ However, instead of studying with Colby, H'Doubler chose to study music and dance in New York City and she developed her first important ideas about movement from one of her teachers, Alys Bentley.⁵ Bentley was a music teacher who taught his principles of music through movement.

¹Kraus, p. 132.

²Martin, p. 167.

³Weston, p. 64.

⁴Van Dalen et al, p. 465. ⁵Hawkins, p. 8.

Upon returning to the University of Wisconsin in 1918, H'Doubler developed a dance program combining physical movement with creative expression. She relied heavily on music for stimulation and used principles derived from kinesiology, anatomy, and physics in her teaching.¹ H'Doubler called her dance style "interpretive dance;" in some cases it was opposed to former techniques. H'Doubler developed fundamentals of dance as basic teaching forms.² Also in the year 1918 at the University of Wisconsin, H'Doubler founded the first student dance organization, "Orchesis," which was later adopted as a model by many other colleges and universities across the country.

Dance in American Higher Education, 1920-1930

The period from 1918 to 1932 stressed dance as an expressive and educational activity based on natural movement for the purpose of developing the body and increasing physical vigor.³ By the early 1920s, natural or interpretive dance had completely replaced aesthetic dance in education and became the predecessor of the educational modern dance of the 1930s.⁴ Folk dance continued to be popular in schools but, unlike natural dance, had

¹Ibid.

²Rice et al, p. 247.

³O'Brien, p. 225-6.

⁴Weston, p. 64.

no influence on the introduction of the modern educational dance movement of the next decade.¹ Square dancing was revived in the early 1920s and continued to be taught in the schools.²

Clog and tap dance were introduced in the schools during the 1920s by Mary Wood Hinman, Helen Frost, and Marjorie Hillas; they were later followed by Mary Jane Hungerford and Anne Schley Duggan. According to Hungerford, these dance forms were taught to develop balance and coordination.³ Folk, clog, and tap dances, along with dramatic dances, were available to physical education and dance educators via books and pamphlets and through these media, these forms were introduced in many colleges and universities.⁴

Colby, Larson, and H'Doubler continued their work in the field of natural and interpretive dance in this decade. Following the example of Orchesis at the University of Wisconsin which was established by H'Doubler, many college dance clubs were started across the country. H'Doubler's work in the field of dance in physical education lead to the establishment of the first dance major in 1926 at the University of Wisconsin.

¹Ruth Radir, Modern Dance for Youth in America (New York: A. S. Barnes & Co., 1944), p. 65.

²Rice et al, p. 348.

³Kraus, p. 134.

⁴Hayes, p. 1.

At the same time that natural and interpretive dance were being taught in American higher education, professional dance was changing and had a profound effect on educational dance in the next decade. The principal dancers of Denishawn--Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, and Charles Weidman--began revolting against the Denishawn system and eventually all three left the company to explore dance as a medium of expression as related to contemporary life.¹ Their dance training at Denishawn was inadequate to fulfill their goals so they began to explore new approaches to dance movement and "modern dance" began.²

Martha Graham was the first dancer to leave Denishawn. She developed a dance technique based on "contraction and release" which influenced a great many modern dancers and teachers. Graham became the best known modern dance choreographer and remains so to this day. Graham trained many other rebels of modern dance including Sophie Maslow, Pearl Lange, Anna Sokolow, and Jean Erdman at her school in New York City. Many teachers of dance in educational settings began to attend Graham's school and special short-term courses designed

¹Hawkins, p. 11.

²Ibid.

for teachers were offered which helped introduce this new dance form into education during the 1930s.¹ Graham also promoted modern dance outside of New York City by touring extensively in the United States, thus exposing the American public to modern dance.

Doris Humphrey was a former student of clog, ballroom, folk, and aesthetic dances proponent Mary Wood Hinman before joining Denishawn. She and Charles Weidman were partners in the Denishawn company, and they chose to leave Denishawn together in 1928 to explore dance as a means of expression. Humphrey developed her dance technique on the theory of "fall and recovery," whereas Weidman's greatest strength was in humor and pantomime in which he created comic and gently satirical compositions.² Of the two, Humphrey contributed the most to modern dance as both a dancer and a theorist.³ She wrote the book The Art of Making Dances to explain her theories of choreography and trained many of the best known modern dancers and choreographers including José Limon, Pauline Koner, Ruth Currier, Lucas Hoving, and Sybil Shearer.

¹Kraus, p. 154.

²Sorell, p. 199.

³Ibid., p. 198.

Americans were not the only ones who influenced the development of educational dance in the United States. A German dancer named Mary Wigman had experimented with dance in her own country and created a new language of gesture.¹ She created an exercise system which consisted of a series of basic, semi-acrobatic movements which were taught in her school. After the class had performed these movements, they improvised whatever Wigman asked for to the accompaniment of percussive instruments.² In 1925 Wigman toured the United States demonstrating her German dance and this helped change natural dance into modern dance in America.³

Further contributions of these professional dancers to educational modern dance in America were mostly made in the teaching profession, either directly or through their students, in the next decade.

Dance in American Higher Education, 1930-1940

The 1930s saw three different types of dance activity, namely folk and social dance; tap, clog, and

¹Lincoln Kirstein, Dance: A Short History of Classic Theatrical Dancing (New York: G. T. Putnam's Sons, 1935, reissued New York: Garden City Publishing Co., 1942 as The Book of the Dance; reprint ed. New York: Dance Horizons, 1969), p. 305.

²Ibid., p. 306.

³Weston, p. 92.

character dance; and modern dance.¹ At the beginning of the 1930s, Colby's natural dance and H'Doubler's interpretive dance were the bases of creative dance in the schools. However, many events during the decade caused a fusion of education's natural dance and interpretive dance with professional modern dance.

Many people teaching dance in physical education were not qualified to do so because they did not possess the knowledge or skill to teach dance adequately. They relied on summer workshop sessions and notes from books and pamphlets for guidance.² Educators began to see the need to establish their own criteria for dance in education instead of using the principles of professional dance. The interest in the teaching of dance in schools increased and much attention to the new educational medium was given at national and regional conventions of various physical education associations.³

This interest lead in 1932 to the founding of the National Section on Dance of the American Association

¹Kraus, p. 132.

²John Martin, Introduction to the Dance (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1939, reissued New York: Dance Horizons, 1965), p. 300.

³Martin, America Dancing, p. 12.

of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation. Its founders included Chairman Mary P. O'Donnell of Teachers College, Columbia University; Martha Hill of New York University; Ruth Murray of Detroit Teachers College, now known as Wayne State University; and Mary Jo Shelley of Teachers College, Columbia University. The purpose of the National Section of Dance was to meet the needs and problems of dance in education.¹ In 1937, a pre-convention workshop was added to the annual convention for teachers; during these workshops teachers took classes in theory and technique as well as watched dance demonstrations.²

Professional dancers began to become more involved in the educational scene. In 1932 a dance symposium, the first of its kind, was held at Barnard College under the direction of Agnes Wayman. Groups from five colleges attended, and Mary Wigman's school gave a demonstration to the group. This dance symposium led to other symposia in which other modern dance groups took part.³

Many professional dancers served on the faculty of the Bennington School of Dance which was established

¹Hayes, p. 1.

²Hawkins, p. 16.

³Ibid., p. 12-3.

in 1934 and was held annually in the summers until the year 1942. Held at Bennington College in Vermont and founded by Martha Hill of New York University and Mary Josephine Shelley of the University of Chicago, modern dance teachers and students from all over the country met to take classes and exchange ideas. The intention of the school was to bring the leaders and students interested in the important trends in dance together and to present a variety of modern dance styles. In this way the student could obtain a well-rounded point of view as to what modern dance was.¹ Professional dancers who served as instructors at Bennington at one time or another included Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman, and a new modern dance figure, Hanya Holm.

Holm was a pupil of Mary Wigman who came to the United States from Germany in 1931 to teach at the Wigman school in New York City. The school was later changed to the Hanya Holm School of Dance when Holm severed her relationship with Wigman.² In addition to teaching at her own school and at the Bennington School of Dance, Holm also taught at Mills College in Oakland, California

¹Martin, America Dancing, p. 176.

²Ibid., p. 181.

and State Teachers College in Greeley, Colorado. She "Americanized" Wigman's dance style by developing her own style using some of Wigman's theories and ideas.¹

Ted Shawn continued to contribute to both professional dance and educational dance. He and Ruth St. Denis had parted in 1932, and Shawn put his efforts into making the profession of dance for men an acceptable field. In addition to achieving this goal, he established a dance camp known as Jacob's Pillow in 1933 where dancers could study and perform together.² Shawn also contributed to the fields of dance and dance education by writing books and teaching at a number of colleges including Springfield College in Massachusetts and Peabody University in Nashville, Tennessee.

Doris Humphrey, like other professional dancers, also taught at various colleges and universities across the country. Greatly known for her skill in teaching choreography, Humphrey served on the faculty of the Connecticut College School of Dance and the Dance Department at the Julliard School of Music.

One of the main reasons that professional dancers were so supportive of educational dance was that the

¹Ibid.

²Sorell, p. 181.

professional artists needed educators and their students to provide them with classes, audiences, and places to experiment.¹ However, teachers in education did not always take into account the fact that the principles and techniques of professional dance might not be properly suited for education. Many ignored the philosophies and principles of education and accepted everything that the professional dancers taught.² As a result of copying the professional dancers' styles and teaching methods, creativity was stifled, and the anatomical differences of the pupils was not always taken into account, according to some sources.³

In spite of these educational limitations, many compositions were created in colleges and universities during this period.⁴ College dance concerts were popular, but the movement styles, compositional ideas, and costumes resembled those of the concert dancers.⁵ The educational principles of dance had to be established in the next decade.

Dance in American Higher Education, 1940-1950

By 1940 professional artists no longer needed educators and their students for audiences, so they began

¹Kraus, p. 136.

²Hawkins, p. 17.

³Martin, Introduction to the Dance, p. 301.

⁴Hawkins, p. 17.

⁵Ibid., p. 18.

to settle in New York City to work on their concert dance.¹ Modern dance by this time had become fully established in American colleges and universities. Natural and interpretive dance had fused into the modern dance; clog and tap dance rapidly declined in popularity.

Modern educational dance was still being taught from a professional dance standpoint. The establishment of principles for modern educational dance became the prime consideration of dance educators during this decade.² Educators expressed many different viewpoints on the subject, but most agreed that the primary objective should be the development of the person in dance rather than learning to be "carbon copies" of professional dancers, a point of view that had always been espoused by Margaret H'Doubler and many of her students at the University of Wisconsin.³ Educational values of dance established by educators included physical, social, mental, and cultural values.⁴ The physical values included development of the heart, lungs, and digestive as well as the muscular systems of the body, up to each

¹Ibid., p. 20.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 22.

⁴Frederick Rand Rogers, ed., Dance: A Basic Educational Technique (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1941), p. 37.

person's individual ability.¹ To help achieve this value, some educators hoped to remove teachers from the profession whose goals did not take into account the healthful and physical aspects of what they were teaching students regarding their physical well being.² Social values to be learned through educational dance included good manners, politeness, courtesy, cooperation, and generosity.³ Self-discipline and the development of a well rounded body through physical exercise and stimulation of the mind comprised the mental values.⁴ The cultural values to be gained in education included learning and understanding the universal language of the dance and developing an appreciation for other arts, religions, and cultures.⁵

The acceptance of dance in American higher education by this time was evident by the number of colleges and universities offering dance to their students.

¹Rogers, p. 38; Charles A. Bucher, Constance R. Koenig, and Milton Barnard, Methods and Materials for Secondary Physical Education (St. Louis: The C. V. Mosby Co., 1965), p. 39-43; and Kraus, p. 265.

²Rogers, p. 15.

³Rogers, p. 41-2; and Kraus, p. 258.

⁴Rogers, p. 43-4; and Kraus, p. 258.

⁵Rogers, p. 48; and Kraus, p. 258.

In a survey of dance in American colleges in 1947, 42 percent of the 526 schools questioned taught at least one course in modern dance. Taught in these schools at that time, in the order of frequency, were folk dance, tap dance, social dance, and square dance.¹ In addition, seventeen colleges and universities offered a major in dance in 1947.²

Also during this decade a new summer school for dance was founded at Connecticut College. The importance of the Connecticut College School of Dance was that it differed from the Bennington School of Dance in the types of courses offered. Students were required to learn more than just dance technique and repertory; they were also required to study dance history, composition, notation, and anatomy as well as the relationship between dance and the other arts.³

¹Phyllis Pier Valente, "The Dance in American Colleges," Journal of the American Association for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation 20 (May, 1949): 312-3.

²Rice et al, p. 378.

³Walter Terry, "The Dance in Education," in Twenty-five Years of American Dance, ed. Doris Hering (New York: Rudolph Orthwine, 1951), p. 171; and Sali Ann Kriegman, Modern Dance in America: The Bennington Years (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1981), p. 26.

Dance in American Higher Education, 1950-1955

Modern dance had become an American dance form acceptable in both the world of the arts and the American educational system by the 1950s.¹ However, modern dance was often called "contemporary dance" in colleges and universities.²

The emphasis on dance in education varied from university to university. In most educational institutions, dance was housed in the physical education department although some schools had placed dance in a performing arts department.³ Modern dance was the most customary form of dance taught. While some schools offered only elementary modern dance technique classes, other schools offered more advanced technique classes along with dance pedagogy, dance notation, dance history and criticism, and music for dance classes.⁴ In some schools, academic credit for dance classes was limited only to females. A course called "rhythmic gymnastics," which was usually modern dance, was offered to men for credit.⁵

¹Jack Anderson, The Dance (New York: Newsweek Books, 1974), p. 125.

²Rice et al, p. 334-5. ³Van Dalen et al, p. 217.

⁴Walter Terry, The Dance in America (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p. 216-7.

⁵Ibid., p. 217.

More schools began offering dance majors. By the end of the decade, degrees in dance included Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Educational Arts, Master of Science, Master of Arts, and Doctor of Philosophy.¹

Colleges and universities also began "artist-in-residence" programs in which professional dancers and choreographers taught college classes and choreographed new works as well as reconstructing choreography for college students. As a result of these programs, higher levels of dance performance in colleges and universities were achieved.²

In the professional dance world, modern dance and ballet found that each had something to offer to the other. Ballet needed the wider range of movement, the use of serious themes for dance as well as the American themes which modern dance possessed. Modern dance learned to make use of the spectacle, the virtuosity, the discipline, the costuming, and the concepts of movement and line of ballet.³ The importance of this exchange of

¹Helen Tamaris, "Present Problems and Possibilities," in The Dance Has Many Faces, ed. Walter Sorell, 2nd ed. (New York: The World Publishing Co., 1951, reissued New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), p. 203.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 201.

ideas between ballet and modern dance to education was that it eventually led to the acceptance of ballet as a discipline in educational institutions in the next two decades.

CHAPTER IV

EMMA ODY POHL'S EARLY LIFE

On December 17, 1880 in Greenville, Mississippi a girl was born into the Pohl family. Mr. Pohl, a Greenville school principal, and his wife named their child Emma Ody.¹ She was one of four children in the family. As a child, her interest in dance began when she took her first ballet lessons from a woman named Ferguson.² However, it is not known at what age Emma began her lessons with Mrs. Ferguson.

A tragic event happened to Emma when she was still in high school. Her father died, leaving the family to care for themselves. Soon afterwards, Emma graduated from Greenville High School at the age of sixteen and went to St. Louis, Missouri to study physical education with Helen Bender, a teacher at Washington University.³

¹Marcie Sanders, The Pohl of Memories (Columbus, Mississippi, n.d.).

²Nema Weathersby Colee, Mississippi Music and Musicians (Mississippi Federation of Music Clubs, 1948), p. 64.

³Sanders, p. 2; and Emma Ody Pohl, Memoir, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-81, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

In 1898 she returned to her hometown of Greenville at the request of E. E. Bass, Superintendent of the Greenville Schools. Mr. Bass was the first person in the state of Mississippi to recognize the need for the physical training of children in education. As a result, he organized the state's first physical education program and hired Emma Ody Pohl as its director.¹

Pohl taught gymnastics for the next five years in the Greenville Public Schools. During her summers she continued her own training by studying and teaching at other educational institutions. In July, 1899, she attended the Chicago Normal School.² She also attended the Chautauqua Institute of Physical Training summer school sessions from 1898-1901.³ During the 1901 session she studied physiology, anthropometry, hygiene, kinesiology, Swedish gymnastics, tactics and apparatus, methods,

¹"Who's Who," Mississippi Educational Advance 20 (October 1928): 22.

²Chicago Normal Summer School, Certificate of attendance, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-2, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

³Mississippi Industrial Institute and College, The Twenty-eighth Annual Catalogue of Mississippi Industrial Institute and College (Columbus, Mississippi: MII & C, 1912-13), p. 19; and Minnie F. Seaver, Registrar, The Chautauqua Summer Schools, Certificate of attendance, 17 July 1926, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-2, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

and folk dancing. Pohl's folk dance instructor was Anne Barr.¹ Pohl also studied aesthetic dance, national dance, character dance, and clog dance at Chautauqua.² For several summers she also served as the Director of Physical Culture at the University of Mississippi in Oxford where she instructed classes in physical training.³

In October, 1904, Pohl resigned from the Greenville Public Schools to pursue collegiate work at the University of Missouri.⁴ After staying there for one year, she went to the University of Illinois for a year on an assistantship in the women's gymnasium where she studied natural dance, clog dance, tap dance, folk dance, and national dance.⁵ She then returned to Greenville and

¹Seaver, Certificate of attendance.

²Colee, p. 64.

³E. E. Bass, Superintendent of City Schools, Greenville, Mississippi, Letter of Recommendation, 2 February 1905, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-3, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi; and R. B. Fulton, Chancellor, Letter of Certification, 21 February 1905, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-3, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

⁴E. E. Bass, 2 February 1905.

⁵Colee, p. 65.

resumed her position as head of the physical education department where she remained until 1908.¹

¹Helen Bender Norton to Mr. Claude J. Bell, 24 February 1906, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-3, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi; and Anna B. Clapp to Mr. Claude J. Bell, 13 February 1906, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-3, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

CHAPTER V

EMMA ODY POHL AND MISSISSIPPI INDUSTRIAL INSTITUTE AND COLLEGE, 1907-1920

On November 3, 1907 E. E. Bass, Superintendent of the Greenville, Mississippi Public Schools, granted Emma Ody Pohl leave of absence for two months to organize the physical education department at the Mississippi Industrial Institute and College (MII & C) in Columbus.¹ This marked the beginning of a forty-seven year association between Emma Ody Pohl and MII & C, whose name was changed to Mississippi State College for Women in 1920.

Pohl was hired part-time by the College's new president, Henry L. Whitfield, to organize the physical education department at the college. Believing that every student should take physical activity courses, Whitfield made it a requirement of all students.²

¹William B. Thompson, "A History of the Greenville, Mississippi Public Schools Under the Administration of E. E. Bass, 1884-1932" (Ph.D. dissertation, the University of Mississippi, 1968), p. 63.

²"The History of Physical Education at MSCW," Pohl Collection, 1-1103-5, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi, p. 1.

Pohl has been credited with establishing the first physical education department at MII & C in 1907,¹ but it appears that as early as 1898 a department for physical training was established at the school. However, the department was called "Health and Physical Culture," rather than physical education but it did serve the purpose of providing body training for the students.² The department name was changed to "Anatomy, Physiology, and Hygiene" in 1904 and because gymnastics and outdoor games did not appear to fall under this new department, the term physical culture continued to be used.³ In the next year "The Athletic League" was established and it was responsible for college athletics.⁴ It was probably because of these different department titles and the

¹Sanders, The Pohl of Memories, p. 2.

²Industrial Institute and College of Mississippi, Thirteenth Annual Catalogue of the Officers and Students of the Industrial Institute and College of Mississippi (Columbus, Mississippi: II & C of Mississippi, 1898), p. 39.

³Industrial Institute and College of Mississippi, Nineteenth Annual Catalogue of the Industrial Institute And College of Mississippi (Columbus, Mississippi: II & C of Mississippi, 1904), p. 67.

⁴Industrial Institute and College of Mississippi, Twentieth Annual Catalogue of the Industrial Institute and College of Mississippi (Columbus, Mississippi: II & C of Mississippi, 1905), p. 71.

establishment of The Athletic League that a department of physical education was not recognized until Pohl came to MII & C in 1907.

Pohl's establishment of the Department of Physical Education marked the first time physical education was formally organized into a body of study at MII & C.¹ The department's philosophy was that an educated woman who is to be a leader must not be physically weak; rather she must have a healthy, strong body "to support the mind and skilled hands of labor."² Courses of a dance-like nature offered to the students included corrective exercises, free gymnastics and apparatus work, marching, fancy steps, and maypole.³

After Pohl established the Department of Physical Education at Mississippi Industrial Institute and College she returned to her teaching duties in Greenville for the rest of the school year. An acting director was named to run the new department until Pohl was able to assume full duties as director the following year.⁴

¹Mississippi Industrial Institute and College, Twenty-third Annual Catalogue of the Mississippi Industrial Institute and College (Columbus, Mississippi: MII & C, 1908), p. 72.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., p. 11.

Emma's mother had died in March, 1907, leaving Emma no ties in Greenville, so in 1908 she moved permanently to Columbus and assumed full duties as director of the Department of Physical Education at MII & C.¹

Mississippi Industrial Institute & College -
1908 to 1920

In the fall of 1908 Emma Ody Pohl assumed her duties as active head of the Physical Education Department at Mississippi Industrial Institute and College. In addition to Pohl, the department also included two assistants, Blanche Gardner, who had served as acting director in Pohl's absence, and Adele Koch.² A new gymnasium to house the new department was also completed in this year.³

By the fall of 1909, activity course offerings in the department were expanded to include folk dances, gymnastic games, and military drills.⁴ Athletic courses

¹Marie Charlotte Stark, niece of Emma Ody Pohl, to Ann Severance, Columbus, 20 November 1980, Personal Files of Ann Severance, San Angelo, Texas.

²Mississippi Industrial Institute and College, Bulletin of the Mississippi Industrial Institute and College, vol. 1, no. 2 (June, 1909): p. 60 (hereafter cited as MII & C, Bulletin, vol. 1, no. 2).

³Mississippi Industrial Institute and College, Bulletin of the Mississippi Industrial Institute and College, vol. 1, no. 1 (March, 1909): p. 3.

⁴MII & C, Bulletin, vol. 1, no. 2, p. 60.

were also expanded to include more track and field activities.¹ The Physical Education Department's purposes, as listed in the June, 1909 bulletin of the college's course offerings, included helping students to learn good health and hygiene habits, to make the bodies of students strong and healthy as preparation for their future duties, and help students overcome faulty posture and other abnormal conditions.²

The next major advancement for the department occurred in the school year 1910-11 when theory courses were added to the department's offerings. Until this time, only activity courses were taught. A two year course in the practice and theory of gymnastics and allied studies was established under the supervision of Bertha A. Bennett. Students were required to become proficient in educational and aesthetic gymnastics, folk and classic dancing, games, track athletics, and field sports as well as to learn the theory and teaching of several of these activities.

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Mississippi Industrial Institute and College, Catalogue of the Mississippi Industrial Institute and College, 1910-11 (Columbus, Mississippi: MII & C, 1910-11), p. 76-7.

Pohl continued her own studies during the summers, and in 1911 went to a camp in Michigan where she learned a French military drill called the "Zouave Drill" from Count A. M. de Bauviere.¹ The next year she introduced the "Zouave Drill" to MII & C by teaching the drill to a company of sixty-four girls who performed the exercise for the school. The drill grew in popularity and soon became a school tradition, with every student participating. Pohl soon incorporated her own exercises into the drill using American nationalistic music such as "The Stars and Stripes Forever" and "The National Emblem March."² Done every three to four years until 1955, the Zouave Drill and Mississippi State College for Women (formerly MII & C) gained national recognition when Pathé News presented the drill on film on the International News presented at movie theatres across the country.³

Other events held at the college which were directed by Pohl included pageant plays. Her first large-scale pageant was "Joan of Arc," a dramatic play with no dance which was presented in 1912 and 1913 at

¹"'W' Zouave Drill Tradition to be Preserved for Future," Jackson (Miss.) Daily News, 3 December 1969, p. 7.

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

commencement.¹ Pohl later incorporated dance into other pageant plays she directed at the college which included "The Pageant of Columbus Within a Masque of I.I. & C.,"² and "The Clock and the Fountain" which celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the college.³

During the school year 1913-14, Pohl took sabbatical leave from her duties at MII & C to study dance in New York with Michael Fokine and Louise Chalif.⁴ In the summer of 1915 she studied natural dance, clog and tap dance, folk dance, and national dance at the School of Physical Education in Chicago.⁵

Throughout her teaching career, Emma Ody Pohl continued to study dance not only by taking classes but

¹"Joan of Arc," Programs, 31 May 1912, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-16, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi & 30 May 1913, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-16, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

²"The Pageant of Columbus Within a Masque of I. I. & C.," Program, 27 May 1915, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-18A, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

³"The Clock and the Fountain," Program, 1 June 1935, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-48, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

⁴Sanders, The Pohl of Memories, p. 2.

⁵Colee, Mississippi Music and Musicians, p. 65; and Emma Ody Pohl, Notebook, August 1915, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-139, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

also by reading books.¹ Some of the early dance books owned by Pohl which were used as references in her teaching included Melvin Ballou Gilbert's School Dances² and Swedish Song-Plays³, Mari Ruef Hofer's Children's Singing Games⁴, Gymnastic and Folk Dancing Volume IV⁵ by Mary Wood Hinman, and Nature Dancing: The Poetry of Motion⁶ by Sonia Serova.

It was during the summer of 1916 that Emma Ody Pohl began to teach at other southern universities during their summer sessions. In 1916 she taught folk and

¹Marie Charlotte Stark, niece of Emma Ody Pohl, to Ann Severance, Columbus, 1 August 1980, Personal Files of Ann Severance, San Angelo, Texas.

²Melvin Ballou Gilbert, School Dances (New York: G. Schirmer, Inc., 1913), Pohl Collection, 1-1103-135, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

³Melvin Ballou Gilbert, Swedish Song-Plays (University of Utah: Jacob Bolin, 1908), Pohl Collection, 1-1103-135, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

⁴Mari Ruef Hofer, Children's Singing Games (Chicago: A. Flanagan Company, 1901; revised edition, 1914), Pohl Collection, 1-1103-135, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

⁵Mary Wood Hinman, Gymnastic and Folk Dancing Volume IV (New York: A. S. Barnes and Company, 1916 & 1924), Pohl Collection, 1-1103-136, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

⁶Sonia Serova, Nature Dancing: The Poetry of Motion (New York, n.d.), Pohl Collection, 1-1103-40, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

classic dance at Peabody College in Nashville, of which the Dean of the Academic Faculty at Alabama Polytechnic Institute (later Auburn University) wrote, "I do not know where her equal in this line can be found."¹ In subsequent years Pohl taught dance during the summers at the University of Alabama,² the University of Georgia,³ and the University of Virginia.⁴

During the summer of 1917 a special school session was held at MII & C for teachers of the state to update their teaching knowledge. Physical education teachers were required to take classes in formal gymnastics, gymnastic games, folk plays, and athletic games under Pohl's

¹George Petrie, Dean of the Academic Faculty, Alabama Polytechnic Institute, Auburn, Alabama, Letter of recommendation, 5 December 1916, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-3, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

²James J. Dosten, Director of Summer School, University of Alabama, Letter of recommendation, 12 March 1919, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-3, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

³Roward W. Odum, Superintendent of Summer School for Teachers, University of Georgia, Letter of recommendation, n.d., Pohl Collection, 1-1103-3, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

⁴Charles G. Maphis, Director, University of Virginia Summer School, to Emma Ody Pohl, 25 July 1919, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-22, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

direction.¹ This teacher training program spread dance and dance-like activities into the public school programs throughout the state of Mississippi.

The physical education department at Mississippi Industrial Institute and College continued to offer various dance and dance related courses to its students throughout the 1910s. MII & C, through the teachings of Emma Ody Pohl, was part of the trend of dance expansion in education throughout the United States during this time. She continually studied with the leaders and proponents of educational dance, read the latest books written on dance, and through her teachings of this material, promoted dance at MII & C and other southern colleges where she taught.

¹Mississippi Industrial Institute and College, Summer School Bulletin, 5 June 1917 to 14 July 1917 (Columbus, Mississippi: MII & C, 1917), p. 20.

CHAPTER VI

EMMA ODY POHL AND MISSISSIPPI STATE COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, 1920-1955

In 1920 Mississippi Industrial Institute and College became Mississippi State College for Women. Therefore, throughout the remainder of this presentation the name Mississippi State College for Women, or MSCW, is used to denote the college where Emma Ody Pohl headed the physical education department and taught dance classes until 1955.

Pohl continued to teach during the summers at the University of Virginia and was granted a two month leave of absence in 1921 by the Mississippi Board of Trustees from her teaching duties at MSCW to direct the University of Virginia Centennial Celebration.¹ Dancers from MSCW, along with Pohl's teaching assistants, performed in the pageant and were highly complimented by the president of

¹Ambrose B. Schaubert, Secretary, State of Mississippi Board of Trustees of the University and Colleges of Mississippi, to Emma O. Pohl, 21 April 1921, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-26, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

the University of Virginia.¹ Pohl earned high recognition as a "trainer and director of classical and interpretive dancers" as a result of her twenty-five summers spent teaching and directing at the University of Virginia.²

During some of these summers, Pohl took her dancers with her to Virginia. During the 1920s and 1930s the dancers performed in other college towns while traveling to and from the University of Virginia. During the summer of 1927, for example, the MSCW Dancers performed at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a University of North Carolina official wrote that his university had never "had any group of college people to present a more beautiful or more artistic performance than did your [MSCW] girls."³ Praise such as this also came from other universities and towns where the MSCW Dancers performed, including the University of Alabama, the

¹Edwin A. Alderman, President, University of Virginia, to J. C. Fant, President, Mississippi State College for Women, 21 June 1921, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-3, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

²W. M. Forrest, University of Virginia, Letter of recommendation, n.d., Pohl Collection, 1-1103-3, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

³A. W. Walker, Director of Summer School, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, to Emma Ody Pohl, 1 August 1927, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-3, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

University of Georgia, and the Fourth Annual Convention of the American Legion in Charlottesville, Virginia.¹

Pohl's work in the field of dance was also recognized at home in Mississippi, although not all Mississippians approved of dancing. In a letter from some of the members of the Mississippi Legislature to the President of MSCW, Henry Whitfield, Pohl's teaching of "artistic dancing" was highly praised. These members of the legislature further stated ". . . we have learned that it is believed in some quarters that the Legislature disapproves of all dancing. We want to assure you that this belief is an erroneous one."²

Although the Mississippi Legislature and the administrators of the Mississippi State College for Women approved of Pohl's teaching of dance at MSCW, she received sharp opposition when she asked to change the

¹Emma Ody Pohl to Director of Duke Summer School, 27 May 1927, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-29, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi; Various letters to Emma Ody Pohl, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-3, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi; and J. A. Cutchins, Chairman, Committee of Resolutions, American Legion, to Emma Ody Pohl, 25 August 1922, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-27, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

²Samuel V. Anderson et al to Mr. H. L. Whitfield, President, Mississippi State College for Women, 27 February 1920, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-24, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

dress standards of dance costumes. At the time, navy blue flannel knickers with a navy blue shirt, black stockings, and white tennis shoes were worn for classwork, drills, and folk dances; while a Greek costume of cheese cloth with a fellcoat, both of which covered the knees, stockings, and ballet slippers were worn for natural and classical dancing.¹ Pohl asked the MSCW College Council in 1927 to approve a costume with bare limbs and feet for a commencement exhibition. The president of the college, J. C. Fant, stated that he felt the new costume would detract from the influence of the college and cause much criticism from both the public and the legislature. He went on to state that the Associated Press was criticizing bare feet and limbs on the stage.² The council voted unanimously not to have the students appear with bare limbs and feet.³ Pohl continued to fight for the new costume by threatening to curtail or eliminate the dance

¹Emma Ody Pohl to Mr. B. S. Steadwell, President, World's Purity Federation, n.d., Pohl Collection, 1-1103-37, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

²J. C. Fant, President, Mississippi State College for Women, to Emma Ody Pohl, 14 February 1927, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-37, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

³J. C. Fant, President, Mississippi State College for Women, to Emma Ody Pohl, 30 March 1927, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-37, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

entertainment at the commencement exercises; however, the administration won the fight and the dancers appeared in the commencement exercises with limbs and feet covered.¹

Later in the same year, Pohl was asked to respond to an inquiry about the dress standards of physical education at MSCW by the World's Purity Federation. This organization became interested in finding out if schools in the United States were encouraging nudity and the exposure of the body in physical education classes after the president attended a dance demonstration by a nationally known teacher's college. The physical education program included social dances which displayed, in the opinion of this president, "improper and immoral dancing."²

In her reply, Pohl stated that she would like to change the leg covering of the MSCW physical education uniforms from a stocking to a sock that came just below the knee. For a classical dancing costume, Pohl said she preferred a shorter costume with no petticoat, shoes, or stockings. However, because the college authorities did

¹J. C. Fant, President, Mississippi State College for Women, to Emma Ody Pohl, 23 May 1927, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-38, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

²B. S. Steadwell, President, World's Purity Federation, to Director, Physical Education, Mississippi State College for Women, 28 June 1927, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-37, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

not approve of these ideas, Pohl conformed to their likings in order to teach physical education in the college, and as long as the costume did not interfere with the work of the students, she would place work over costume. Pohl also stated that the program at MSCW did not include social dance or any kind of improper dancing although she did approve of social dancing when properly done in the right conditions.¹

When the article which reported the findings of the study were published, sixty prominent physical educators had responded on the nudity issue in physical education. Although the respondents names were not made public in the article, the president of the federation, B. S. Steadwell, cited Pohl's response, presented above, but incorrectly said she believed in both social dancing and nudity but that she did not have the opportunity to enjoy them at her college.²

It was not until the early 1930s that the dancers at MSCW were finally allowed to dance barefoot in two

¹Emma Ody Pohl to B. S. Steadwell.

²B. S. Steadwell, "Is Physical Education in Our Schools and Colleges Encouraging Nudity?," The Light 178 (Sept.-Oct., 1927): 6-11, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-37, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

dances, "Greek Maidens" and "Forest Spirits."¹ However, Pohl continually had to fight the MSCW administration on the dress standards for dance. One administrator even wanted the dancers to dress like southern belles.²

Keeping up with the latest trends in dance was always a priority of Miss Pohl. She continued to travel to New York to study. During the 1920s she studied with such noted dance teachers as Gertrude Colby at Columbia University, Sara Mildred Strauss at the Vestoff-Serova School, Ruth St. Denis, Ted Shawn, Doris Humphrey, and Louis Chalif.³ She always kept notebooks of choreography learned from these teachers, and her notebooks included compositions by Chalif, Serova, Colby, and Denishawn.⁴

¹Emma Ody Pohl to Mr. R. E. L. Sutherland, President, Mississippi State College for Women, 7 February 1955, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-43, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

²Marie Charlotte Stark to Ann Severance, 1 August 1980.

³Sanders, The Pohl of Memories, p. 2.

⁴Book II Notebook of Emma Ody Pohl, n.d., Pohl Collection, 1-1103-138, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi; Book IV Notebook of Emma Ody Pohl, n.d., Pohl Collection, 1-1103-154, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi; Notebook of Emma Ody Pohl, n.d., Pohl Collection, 1-1103-186, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi; and Notebook of Emma Ody Pohl, n.d., Pohl Collection, 1-1103-187, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

Pohl later restaged these dances for her dance concerts held at Mississippi State College for Women.¹

An important advancement for MSCW's physical education department occurred in 1922 when a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in physical education was offered for the first time. However, no dance was required in the physical education major although it was offered at the school.²

A new gymnasium, complete with a dance studio, was erected in 1927 to house the expanding physical education department. This gymnasium was later dedicated in honor of Miss Pohl on October 1, 1947.³ The dance offerings grew rapidly within the next few years. In 1928, clogging was added to the list of dance courses offered according to the college catalogue,⁴ and in the

¹Various MSCW Dance Concert Programs, Pohl Collection, 1-1103, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi; and MUW Library, Columbus, Mississippi.

²Mississippi State College for Women, The Thirty-fifth Annual Bulletin of the Mississippi State College for Women, 1920-21 (Columbus, Mississippi: MSCW, 1920), p. 103.

³Mississippi State College for Women, MSCW Alumnae News (Columbus, Mississippi: MSCW, October, 1947), Pohl Collection, 1-1103-69, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

⁴Mississippi State College for Women, The Forty-third Annual Bulletin of the Mississippi State College for Women, 1928-29 (Columbus, Mississippi: MSCW, 1928), p. 141.

next year, natural dance.¹ In 1929 it became a requirement for graduation from the college to pass two terms of natural dancing.² One of the requirements for passing natural dance was to perform the dance the "Three Graces."³ By 1930, natural dance, folk dance, clogging, and tap dance were offered.⁴

The 1933-34 catalogue of MSCW listed for the first time course descriptions of the different dance classes offered at the school. The following descriptions were given: elementary natural dancing was "to develop grace in simple rhythmic patterns" using such movements as walking, leaping, running, hopping, and gesturing;⁵ clog dancing was "based on rhythmic tap of the foot in response

¹Mississippi State College for Women, The Forty-fourth Annual Bulletin of the Mississippi State College for Women, 1929-30 (Columbus, Mississippi: MSCW, 1929), p. 144.

²Ibid., p. 145.

³Evelyn Atkinson Teasley to Marcie Sanders, 8 September 1966, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-107a, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

⁴Mississippi State College for Women, The Forty-fifth Annual Bulletin of the Mississippi State College for Women, 1930-31 (Columbus, Mississippi: MSCW, 1930), p. 151.

⁵Mississippi State College for Women, The Forty-eighth Annual Bulletin of the Mississippi State College for Women, 1933-34 (Columbus, Mississippi: MSCW, 1933), pp. 114-5.

to music, and includes the use of pantomime, relaxation, and balance;"¹ tap dancing was "concerned with rhythm rather than any elaborate technique" and the students had an opportunity to create tap steps and step combinations;² intermediate natural dance was a "further development of principles of rhythmic body control and dance movements in relation to music;"³ folk dancing involved both European and American dances suitable for teaching in a variety of settings;⁴ and advanced natural dancing involved "definite technical training to develop muscular and mental coordination, and an understanding of rhythmic expression of feeling and emotions, the fundamental technique of dance movements is studied as well as the modern versions of many dances based on the Classic Greek."⁵

Although college dance programs may have been presented on the campus of Mississippi State College for Women before 1931, it was in this year that the earliest dance program produced by Pohl and the MSCW Dancers is recorded through an available, formal printed program (See Appendix A). Dancing had appeared in the pageants

¹Ibid., p. 115. ²Ibid. ³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., p. 116. ⁵Ibid.

and gymnastic exercises, and the Zouave Drill was still being performed, but it appears that this was the first time a program totally devoted to dance was presented at the college.¹ The program was put on by Miss Pohl's "special dancing class," a group comprised of students Pohl felt had dancing talent and whom she invited to participate.²

In her dance programs, Pohl recreated and adapted works of choreography which she had learned in New York as well as choreographed works of her own; the majority of Pohl's works were choreographed in the 1930s.

A dance program might consist of works by Ted Shawn, Ruth St. Denis, Louis Chalif, Sonia Serova, and Gertrude Colby as well as Pohl's compositions such as "The Happy Prince" based on Oscar Wilde's book, or Franz Liszt's "Liebestraume."³ Compositional pieces were many times repeated in subsequent concerts; some compositions

¹J. C. Fant to Emma Ody Pohl, 25 May 1929, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-38, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

²Mississippi State College for Women, Bulletin of the Mississippi State College for Women, vol. 51, no. 2 (Columbus, Mississippi: MSCW, April, 1936), p. 130.

³Dance programs of Mississippi State College for Women Dancers, Pohl Collection, 1-1103, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

were such favorites they were repeated for many years. This practice of "copying" of professional dance artists was common practice and appears to have followed the trend of college dance concerts of the time throughout the country.¹ Dance concerts at Mississippi State College for Women were usually held three times a year: at fall homecoming, in the spring, and at spring commencement.²

The MSCW Dancers also performed throughout the state of Mississippi and at special events in nearby states. In a review of the MSCW Dancers performance in Tupelo, Mississippi, the reporter wrote that "this teacher [Pohl] has exhibited an unequalized ability to take untrained girls and make them into finished artists in a short span of a college course."³ Pohl provided the dance program for the Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration at Southwestern Louisiana Institute (now the University of Southwestern Louisiana) and the MSCW Dancers also gave a

¹Hawkins, Modern Dance in Higher Education, p. 18.

²See Appendix A; and "The History of Physical Education at MSCW."

³Tupelo (Miss.) Daily Journal, 7 May 1937, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-19, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

program of folk dances in New Orleans in 1934.¹ Performances such as these spread dance and promoted Emma Ody Pohl's work throughout the state of Mississippi as well as in other area states.

Pohl was also responsible for bringing professional dance artists to the campus of MSCW. The first professional artist to appear was Pohl's friend, Ted Shawn, in 1932 (See Appendix B). Not only did Shawn and his dancers perform, but he also gave a lecture to the student body on how he choreographed a dance.² Shawn and his male dancers returned to the campus again the next year to perform, and in a letter to Pohl several years later, wrote that the MSCW student body was "the most enthusiastic and intelligent student body in the country."³ In a letter to a MSCW student, Shawn described

¹Edwin Lewis Stephens, President, Southwestern Louisiana Institute to Emma Ody Pohl, 7 November 1934, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-23, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi; and "Program of Folk Dances Presented by Students of the Department of Physical Education," 30 March 1934, New Orleans, Louisiana, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-35, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

²The Spectator (Mississippi State College for Women, Columbus, Mississippi), 23 February 1932, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-46, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

³Ted Shawn to Emma Ody Pohl, 5 November 1938, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-46, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

Pohl as "a rare soul . . . to guide, inspire, and give you vision all these years." He went on to say that Pohl was a "real teacher whose very being imparts beauty and value to life."¹

In the dance program held for the commencement exercises at Mississippi State College for Women in 1936, Pohl introduced to the school Michael Fokine's "Les Sylphides," her favorite ballet.² Adapting her choreography from that of Fokine's, the ballet was so popular on the campus that it was repeated almost every year until Pohl's last dance concert in 1955 (See Appendix A). According to Pohl, the dancers performed the ballet on the half-toe because most of the girls lacked early ballet training and did not have the strength required for pointe work.³ Since the emphasis of educational dance in the 1930s was on modern dance and not ballet, Pohl

¹The Spectator (Mississippi State College for Women, Columbus, Mississippi), 9 January 1934, Ted Shawn to Miss Graham, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-46, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

²Emma Ody Pohl, Notes on Les Sylphides, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-116, MUW Archives, Columbus.

³Commerical Dispatch (Columbus, Mississippi), 1 June 1951, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-27, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi; and Marie Charlotte Stark to Ann Severance, 1 August 1980.

can be called a pioneer in promoting ballet in schools and colleges in the South. In addition, Pohl brought the Jooss European Ballet to perform on the MSCW campus in 1938, further promoting ballet at the college and in the Columbus community (See Appendix B).

Pohl's promotion of ballet is also evidenced by the appearance of The Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1940 on the school campus.¹ Maestro Di Ballo, Vincenzo Celli, ballet master of the company, after giving a ballet class to the advanced dancing class, commented that he had seen more ballet dancing at MSCW than at any other school. He also said the training the students were receiving under Miss Pohl was proper and the students should continue their work.² In a letter to Pohl after his departure from Columbus, Celli asked Pohl to send any girls interested in continuing dance training to him and he would help them in any way he could.³

¹See Appendix B; and "From Mississippi State College for Women," Dance Observer, June-July, 1940, p. 89.

²"Ballet Maestro Instructs Class," Columbus (Mississippi) Commercial Dispatch, 27 February 1940, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-45, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

³Vincenzo Celli to Miss Pohl, 29 April 1940, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-45, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

Although Pohl wrote very little published material, she continually wrote essays on dance and dance companies which she read to her classes in order to educate the students on what was going on in the dance world.¹ One article, called "Physical Education in Your College," was published in 1940.² The article dealt with what a student should do after college and what college gives to a student. Her philosophy of the relationship between dance and physical education was expressed when she wrote that dance was "the esthetic offspring of Physical Education--its entre into the Company of the Arts."³

Prominent professional dance companies continued to be seen on the campus of MSCW during the 1940s. In 1942, The Ballet Theatre performed and in both 1947-48 and 1948-49, the Royal Ballet performed.⁴ Other dance companies may have performed at MSCW, but no record is left to indicate that they did.

¹Notes of Emma Ody Pohl, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-133, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

²Emma Ody Pohl, "Physical Education in Your College," The Foil, December 1940, p. 32-3, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-53, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

³Ibid., p. 32.

⁴Personal notes of Emma Ody Pohl imply the Royal

No additional dance courses were offered in the physical education department at MSCW until 1949 when elementary and intermediate modern dance were introduced. Elementary modern dance was designed to "give basic materials in the fundamentals of rhythm and movement: Creative use of these materials through group work."¹ All other dance courses continued to be taught, including natural dance; the latter was not merged with modern dance until 1953.² Also in 1953, square dance was

Ballet appeared at MSCW in 1947-48 and 1948-49 as shown in Emma Ody Pohl, Notes, n.d., Pohl Collection, 1-1103-70, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi. This company, however, was known as the Sadler's Wells Ballet until the year 1956 when its name was changed to the Royal Ballet. Also, the Sadler's Wells Ballet did not tour the United States until 1949 as shown in Anatole Chujoy and P. W. Manchester, *The Dance Encyclopedia*, s.v. The Royal Ballet (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1967). This discrepancy may be due to the fact that Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin, guest artists of the Sadler's Wells Ballet, were touring the United States in 1947 with their own company, the Markova-Dolin Dance Ensemble, as shown in Karen Elizabeth Rallis, "Professional Dance Artists at Texas Woman's University, 1926-1977" (Master's thesis, Texas Woman's University, 1978), p. 111; possibly Pohl associated these dancers with the Royal Ballet. (Hereafter this company is referred to as the Royal Ballet.)

¹Mississippi State College for Women, *Bulletin of the Mississippi State College for Women*, vol. 63, no. 2 (Columbus, Mississippi: MSCW, July, 1948), p. 139.

²Mississippi State College for Women, *Bulletin of the Mississippi State College for Women, 1953-54* (Columbus, Mississippi: MSCW, 1953), p. 139-40.

offered for the first time.¹ The variety of dance courses offered at Mississippi State College for Women was the result of Emma Ody Pohl whose love and continual study of dance kept MSCW up to date with dance trends at major universities across the country.

On September 1, 1955, Emma Ody Pohl was granted "Emeritus" status by the Mississippi Board of Trustees after retiring from teaching at Mississippi State College for Women earlier that year.² Her contributions to MSCW and her influence on its students were reflected when the Class of 1913, in a tribute to Pohl, wrote, "She gave us appreciation of the dramatic, the love of the dance, the love of music, and the love of the beautiful which added riches to our lives since we left the Campus."³ Pohl had more college annuals dedicated to her than any other teacher in the history of the school, and many of her students, after leaving Pohl and MSCW, opened their own dance studios in the state of Mississippi.⁴

¹Ibid., p. 140.

²Charles P. Hogarth to Emma Ody Pohl, 17 December 1954, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-77, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

³The Panolian (Batesville, Miss.), 18 August 1966, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-102, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

⁴Ibid.; and The Choctaw (Miss.) Plaindealer, 14 July 1966, Pohl Collection, 1-1103-102, MUW Archives, Columbus, Mississippi.

Pohl continued her service to Mississippi State College for Women after her retirement by organizing many alumnae chapters throughout Mississippi until her death on June 23, 1966.¹

¹Ibid.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Summary

Dance educators had to struggle to get dance accepted in America's schools and colleges. However, because some educators in dance fought to change the public's view of dance in education, it was eventually accepted and has gained respect as an educational discipline. Homage is paid to many dance educators for their accomplishments, but some have remained unrecognized and will not be appropriately appreciated until their work is recorded in history.

The purpose of this study was to present information about one such dance educator, Emma Ody Pohl. The investigator hypothesized that Emma Ody Pohl promoted dance at Mississippi Industrial Institute and College, later known as Mississippi State College for Women, between 1907 and 1955, through her teachings and dance programs.

This thesis was limited to the availability of human and documentary sources, and only Pohl's role as a

dance educator was investigated even though Pohl was also a physical educator.

Certain procedures were followed in developing the present study. First the role of dance in American higher education from the 1700s through the year 1955 was examined. This helped the writer to understand how dance progressed from early colonial times into an acceptable educational medium. The second procedure involved a review of literature and research studies of a biographical nature which aided the investigator in her organization and selection of topics for this study. This literature included books, dissertations, and theses. Data on the subject of this study, Emma Ody Pohl, was then collected, most of the information being obtained from the Mississippi University for Women Archives and Museums Department and the Mississippi University for Women Library. The information gathered was then organized, analyzed, and verified; from this the investigator wrote her final report. The final report is presented herein in seven chapters with two appendices, one of which lists dance programs given on the campus of Mississippi State College for Women under Pohl's direction and the second which lists professional dance artists who were

recorded to have appeared on the campus of Mississippi State College for Women between 1932 and 1955.

Emma Ody Pohl was born on December 17, 1880 in Greenville, Mississippi. As a child she developed an interest in dance by taking ballet lessons from a Mrs. Ferguson in Greenville. After graduating from high school at the age of sixteen, Emma went to St. Louis to study physical education with Helen Bender, a teacher at Washington University. She returned to Greenville in 1898 at the request of E. E. Bass, Superintendent of the Greenville Public Schools to head the physical education program, the first of its kind in the state of Mississippi. Pohl taught in the Greenville Public Schools for the next five years, and during the summers continued her own training by studying and teaching at other educational institutions. She also served as the Director of Physical Culture at the University of Mississippi for several summers. In 1904 she resigned from her position in Greenville to study at the University of Missouri and later at the University of Illinois after which she returned to her position in Greenville.

Pohl went to Columbus, Mississippi in November of 1907 to establish the physical education department at Mississippi Industrial Institute and College (MII & C).

This was the first time physical education was put into an organized study at the college. In 1908 she moved permanently to Columbus to head the new department, and by 1909 folk dancing, gymnastic games, and military drills were being offered at MII & C. Theory courses in the practice and theory of gymnastics were added the next year, of which folk dance and classic dance were included. In the summer of 1911 Pohl went to a Michigan camp and learned a French military drill called the "Zouave Drill." She later taught this drill to a group of students at MII & C, and it soon became a school tradition.

Pohl took sabbatical leave in 1913-14 to study dance in New York with Michael Fokine and Louis Chalif. In the summer of 1915 she studied natural dance, clog, tap dance, folk dance, and national dance at the School of Physical Education in Chicago. Pohl not only took classes but also read books to keep up with the latest trends in dance.

During the summer of 1916 Pohl taught at Peabody College, and in subsequent summers at the University of Alabama, the University of Georgia, and the University of Virginia.

In 1920 Mississippi Industrial Institute and College became Mississippi State College for Women (MSCW). Pohl taught at MSCW until her retirement in 1955.

Pohl was granted a two month leave of absence from her teaching duties to direct the University of Virginia Centennial Celebration. She returned to the University of Virginia for twenty-five summers to teach dance classes and direct pageants and dance programs.

Emma Ody Pohl always taught the current dance techniques being taught across the country, and she always wanted her dancers to wear the latest styles in dance costumes. However, she received sharp opposition when she asked the MSCW College Council to approve a costume with bare limbs and feet in 1927. It was not until the early 1930s that the dancers were allowed to dance barefoot at MSCW.

During the 1920s Pohl studied with such noted teachers as Gertrude Colby, Sara Mildred Strauss, Ruth St. Denis, Ted Shawn, Doris Humphrey, and Louis Chalif. She took notes on the choreography she learned from these teachers and later reproduced these dances for MSCW dance concerts.

During Pohl's administration as head of the MSCW Physical Education Department, a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in physical education was introduced in 1922. A new gymnasium, complete with a dance studio, was erected in 1927; later it was dedicated to Miss Pohl.

The dance courses were expanded to include clogging, natural dance, folk dance, and tap dance.

On May 12, 1931 a dance concert was given by the MSCW Dancers at the college which marked the first recorded dance program totally devoted to dance given at Mississippi State College for Women. Dance performances were given every year thereafter and were usually held three times a year. The MSCW Dancers, under Pohl's directorship, also performed throughout the state of Mississippi and at special events in nearby states. Professional dance artists also began to perform on the campus of MSCW in 1932 as a result of Pohl's efforts.

In 1936 Pohl presented the ballet "Les Sylphides" in a dance program given at Mississippi State College for Women. Because of its popularity, the ballet was repeated almost every year until Pohl's retirement in 1955. Pohl was one of the first proponents of ballet in physical education as the emphasis of educational dance during the 1930s was on modern dance and not ballet.

In 1948 elementary and intermediate modern dance were offered in the physical education department; natural dance had been taught up to this time. In 1953 modern dance and natural dance were merged into one dance form and square dance was offered for the first time.

On September 1, 1955 Emma Ody Pohl was granted "Emeritus" status by the Mississippi Board of Trustees. She had retired from teaching earlier that year after having taught at Mississippi State College for Women for forty-seven years.

Findings

The following findings are based upon the material presented in this study:

1. Emma Ody Pohl organized the first Department of Physical Education at Mississippi Industrial Institute and College; dance was included in the department's course offerings.

2. Emma Ody Pohl studied ballet, folk dancing, aesthetic dance, natural dance, national dance, character dance, clogging, and tap dance with leading professional and educational dance teachers. She later taught these dance forms to students at Mississippi Industrial Institute and College, later known as Mississippi State College for Women, and at other southern educational institutions.

3. As a result of her teaching and direction of dance programs at other educational institutions, Emma Ody Pohl gained outstanding recognition in the South.

4. The Mississippi State College for Women Dancers, under Emma Ody Pohl's direction, presented dance concerts three times annually on their college campus. Performances were also given in other localities in Mississippi and nearby states.

5. Professional dance artists appeared on the campus of Mississippi State College for Women through the efforts of Emma Ody Pohl.

6. Because of her teaching and concert performances of ballet at Mississippi State College for Women in the 1930s, Emma Ody Pohl can be called a pioneer in promoting ballet in schools and colleges.

Conclusion

On the basis of the findings of this study, it was concluded that Emma Ody Pohl was influential in promoting dance in American higher education through her teaching and dance programs.

Recommendations for Further Studies

Following are suggestions for future studies which are related to the present one:

1. A detailed, descriptive, and analytical study of Emma Ody Pohl's contributions to Mississippi Industrial

Institute and College, later known as Mississippi State College for Women, in the role of physical educator.

2. A detailed and descriptive study of the history of physical education at Mississippi State College for Women.

3. A detailed, descriptive, and analytical study of the development of dance in the state of Mississippi.

4. A detailed, descriptive, and analytical study of the pageants directed at the University of Virginia by Emma Ody Pohl and her contributions to the development of dance at that university.

5. A detailed and descriptive study of the history of the Chautauqua Institute of Physical Education.

6. A study of the notebooks of Emma Ody Pohl to preserve the teachings and choreography of such noted teachers and choreographers as Gertrude Colby, Ruth St. Denis, Ted Shawn, Louis Chalif, and Sonia Serova as well as analyzing Pohl's own choreography.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF DANCE PROGRAMS GIVEN
AT MISSISSIPPI STATE COLLEGE FOR WOMEN
UNDER THE DIRECTION OF EMMA ODY POHL

CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF DANCE PROGRAMS GIVEN
AT MISSISSIPPI STATE COLLEGE FOR WOMEN
UNDER THE DIRECTION OF EMMA ODY POHL¹

<u>PROGRAM TITLE</u>	<u>DATE</u>
The Pageant of Columbus (Commencement Play Which Included Dance)	May 27, 1915
Gym Exercises	n.d., 1927
Gym Exercises	May 24, 1929
A Program of Dances and Sketches	May 12, 1931
A Program of Dances and Sketches for Forty-sixth Annual Commencement	May 23, 1931
A Program of Dances for Class Day	n.d., 1931
A Program of Dances and Drills Com- plimenting the Sixteenth District Conference Rotary International	May 9, 1932
A Program of Dances Honoring Home- coming Alumnae	November 24, 1932
A Program of Dances and Sketches for Forty-eighth Annual Commencement	June 3, 1933
A Program of Dances for Forty-ninth Annual Commencement	June 2, 1934
A Program of Dances for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Founding of the Mississippi State College for Women	October 22, 1934
The Clock and the Fountain (Fiftieth Annual Commencement Play Which Included Dance)	June 1, 1935
A Program of Dances for Fifty-first Annual Commencement	May 30, 1936

¹Compilation from the following sources (This list is probably incomplete but contains all titles available to the writer): Pohl Collection, 1-1103, Mississippi University for Women Archives and Museums Department, Columbus, Mississippi; and Mississippi University for Women Library, Columbus, Mississippi.

<u>PROGRAM TITLE</u>	<u>DATE</u>
A Program of Dances for 1936 Homecoming	November 19, 1936
A Program of Dances for Forty-second Annual Commencement	May 29, 1937
A Program of Dances for 1938 Homecoming	November 11, 1938
A Program of Dances	April 21, 1939
A Program of Dances for 1939 Homecoming	November 10, 1939
A Program of Dances	April 26, 1940
A Program of Dances for Fifty-fifth Annual Commencement	June 1, 1940
A Program of Dances	April 24, 1941
A Program of Dances for Fifty-sixth Annual Commencement	May 31, 1941
A Program of Dances for 1941 Homecoming	November 14, 1941
A Program of Dances for Fifty-seventh Annual Commencement	May 30, 1942
A Program of Dances for 1942 Homecoming	November 13, 1942
A Program of Dances	April 23, 1943
A Program of Dances	May 20, 1944
A Program of Dances for 1944 Homecoming	November 10, 1944
A Program of Dances	May 26, 1945
A Program of Dances for 1946 Homecoming	November 9, 1946
A Program of Dances	March 28, 1947
A Program of Dances for Sixty-third Annual Commencement	May 31, 1947
A Program of Dances for 1947 Homecoming	October 25, 1947
A Program of Dances	March 19, 1948
A Program of Dances for Sixty-fourth Annual Commencement	June 5, 1948
A Program of Dances and Music for 1948 Homecoming	October 23, 1948
A Program of Dances	April 8, 1949
A Program of Dances for Sixty-fifth Annual Commencement	May 28, 1949
A Program of Dances and Music for 1949 Homecoming	October 22, 1949
A Program of Dances for Sixty-sixth Annual Commencement	June 3, 1950

<u>PROGRAM TITLE</u>	<u>DATE</u>
A Program of Dances and Music for 1950 Homecoming	October 28, 1950
A Program of Dances	April 27, 1951
A Program of Dances for Sixty-seventh Annual Commencement	June 2, 1951
A Program of Dances and Music for 1951 Homecoming	October 27, 1951
A Program of Dances	March 28, 1952
A Program of Dances for Sixty-eighth Annual Commencement	May 31, 1952
A Program of Dances and Music for 1952 Homecoming	October 25, 1952
A Program of Dances for Sixty-ninth Annual Commencement	May 30, 1953
A Program of Dances and Music for 1953 Homecoming	October 31, 1953
A Program of Dances	March 26, 1954
A Program of Dances for Seventieth Annual Commencement	May 29, 1954
A Program of Dances and Music for 1954 Homecoming	October 30, 1954
A Program of Dances for Seventy-first Annual Commencement	June 4, 1955

APPENDIX B

CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF PROFESSIONAL DANCE

ARTISTS WHO APPEARED AT MISSISSIPPI

STATE COLLEGE FOR WOMEN

BETWEEN 1932 AND 1955

CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF PROFESSIONAL DANCE

ARTISTS WHO APPEARED AT MISSISSIPPI

STATE COLLEGE FOR WOMEN

BETWEEN 1932 AND 1955¹

<u>NAME</u>	<u>DATE</u>
Ted Shawn and His Dancers	February 18, 1932
Ted Shawn and His Dancers	December 11, 1933
Ruth Page and Harald Kreutzberg	March 11, n.d. ²
The Jooss European Ballet	February 3, 1938
The Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo	February 26, 1940
The Ballet Theatre	December 17, 1942
The Royal Ballet	n.d., 1947-48 ³
The Royal Ballet	n.d., 1948-49 ⁴

¹Compilation from the following sources (This list is probably incomplete but contains all titles available to the writer): Pohl Collection, 1-1103, Mississippi University for Women Archives and Museums Department, Columbus, Mississippi; and Mississippi University for Women Library, Columbus, Mississippi.

²Date not verified but probably between 1932-34 as this time period is when Page and Kreutzberg performed together as shown in Anatole Chujoy and P. W. Manchester, The Dance Encyclopedia, s.v. Ruth Page (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1967).

³See Chapter VI, pp. 81-2, footnote 4.

⁴Ibid.

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