

Mover and shaker

■ Winthrop grad found fame as journalist, spent later years in Lancaster.

The 1964-65 Who's Who of American Women has an entry for Mary Annette Stover Jaekel that begins, "author, journalist; b. Lancaster, S.C. Mar. 15, 1886 . . ." The daughter of Sion and Emma Stover,



Nearby history

LOUISE PETTUS

ver, she graduated from Winthrop College in 1909 with highest honors. Mary Annette Stover was the first recipient of the Leroy Springs scholarship for gifted Lancaster county students.

Stover had been president of the D.B. Johnson School Improvement Association while at Winthrop and, like many of her classmates, planned to implement the association's ideas and ideals in a rural school. She taught and was principal in a number of schools in the Carolinas until she met and married Louis E. Jaekel in 1924. She was 38 and he was 29.

Louis Jaekel, born in New York, was descended from New England seafarers on his mother's side, while his grandfather Jaekel had been a high ranking officer of the German imperial navy who made the mistake of criticizing the Hohenzollern regime and had to flee for his life.

Jaekel had had an adventure-some life. He had been hijacked by a Norwegian ship, served three years on American and Norwegian sailing ships, and when World War

I came along volunteered in the U.S. Army. Why the Army after all his navy experience? Jaekel said he wanted a change. He saw plenty of action.

Mrs. Jaekel wrote the Winthrop Alumnae Association head, Leila Russell, in 1940 about her husband: "He has almost one hundred decorations and medals won in the war which he has decided to will and bequeath to the museum at Winthrop College, among which is the coveted Victoria Cross of England and the Gold Cross of the Order of Phenix of Greece."

Jaekel's war wounds prevented full-time employment although he did become a licensed Baptist minister. Yet, he managed to write a syndicated column which The Charlotte Observer said was read by over 3 million readers daily. The Observer said Jaekel was "a walking encyclopedia."

About the time of her marriage, Jaekel began writing on her own and in 1932 became vice president and managing editor of the Dixie News Service. In 1934 she became a syndicated columnist and two years later became managing editor of the World Press Association.

From 1945-55, Jaekel was president of Christian Women United. She joined and was active in numerous organizations — the United Daughters of the Confederacy, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Winthrop College Alumnae Association, American Association of University Women and was in the women's auxiliary of her husband's many associations, including being made Honorary Commander, Navy

League.

Sometimes husband and wife served jointly on boards. In 1958 both were elected to the board of directors of the American Coalition. The group was made up of more than 100 patriotic and fraternal societies "dedicated to the preservation of the principals of the American way of life."

It was the McCarthy era, and the American Coalition was zealous in its dedication to hunting out communists and subversives.

Louis Jaekel became president of The Americans Inc. and vice president of the Grass Roots League, an organization for the preservation of state's rights. While his wife wrote for Baptist periodicals, Jaekel wrote editorials that twice won him the George Washington Honor Medal from Freedom's Foundation.

When the 1964 presidential campaign rolled around, the Democrats nominated Lyndon B. Johnson, the Republicans nominated Barry Goldwater, and the five "third parties" fielded candidates.

Louis Ellsworth Jaekel was the American Party candidate for president. The American Party, according to the New York Times, Nov. 1, 1964, was a "coalition of 160 patriotic and Christian organizations, including the John Birch Society and the Minutemen of America." The Times said Louis Jaekel's major platform plank was to start an "Oriental expeditionary force" of Japanese and Nationalist Chinese to "end the war in Vietnam." Even among the third parties, the American Party did poorly. It was too far on the extreme right.

During the 1940s and 1950s the Jaekels made Hendersonville, N.C., their home, but around 1958 or 1959 they moved to Lancaster, S.C., where they became active in the Baptist Church.

In 1976, Mary Stover Jaekel's sister, Perrine Stover Hayes of the Class of 1910, informed the Winthrop Alumni Association that Mary had died on Feb. 2, 1976 and was buried in the Beaver Creek Church Cemetery at Heath Springs, S.C.

□□□

Louise Pettus is a retired history professor from Winthrop University. Her column appears Saturdays.

YORK OBSERVER Saturday, January 28, 1995