

ANDERSON, R. Lucile. October 22, 1900–February 18, 1999.

MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE (BA 1922), BRYN MAWR COLLEGE (PHD 1930).

Rose Lucile Anderson was born in Jamestown, New York, the second of three children of Anna (Ebel), born in Germany in 1870, and Charles J. Anderson, born in Sweden in 1867. Her father immigrated to the United States in 1868, her mother in 1873. Both were later naturalized. Her father was the proprietor of a machine shop. Her older sister, Ethel Louise (1897–1983), graduated from Mount Holyoke College in 1919, received a master's degree from Cornell University in 1920, and taught zoology at the University of Kentucky for about two years before her marriage to Lester S. O'Bannon of the mechanical engineering department. She was living in Texas at the time of her death. A younger brother, Charles J. Jr., was born in about 1906, attended Cornell, and died in his thirties.

R. Lucile Anderson attended Jamestown public schools including the Jamestown high school from which she graduated in 1918. She immediately entered Mount Holyoke College and graduated in 1922 with senior honors in mathematics. Anderson went directly to Bryn Mawr College for graduate work in mathematics. She was a graduate scholar in mathematics 1922–23, a resident fellow 1923–24, and a fellow by courtesy and holder of the '86 fellowship from Mount Holyoke 1924–25. In the spring of 1924 she was awarded the Mary E. Garrett European fellowship from Bryn Mawr, which she used for study at Cambridge University in England in 1925–26.

When Anderson returned from England she was hired as instructor of mathematics at the University of Rochester, where she remained for two years, 1926–28. In 1928 she began her long association with Hunter College. The following year, 1929–30, she was a graduate student and part-time instructor at Bryn Mawr College, where she completed her work for the PhD with a dissertation in analysis written under the direction of [Anna Pell Wheeler](#) and with a minor in physics.

In 1930 Anderson returned to Hunter, again as instructor until 1936, as assistant professor 1936–56, and as associate professor 1956–71. Starting in the mid-1950s she taught graduate courses and from 1964 served as advisor in the teacher education program. In a letter written in 1972 for the 50th reunion booklet of the Mount Holyoke Class of 1922 Anderson reported, "I retired in 1971 after teaching mathematics at Hunter College of the City of New York for more years than I care to admit. The years have been spiced with some travel – Mexico, Alaska, Europe; some sports – golf, hiking, figure skating; some theater when tickets can be obtained without too much effort. For the present, I still have an apartment in New York and no immediate plans for moving into a 'retirement community'" (Mount Holyoke College Archives).

Anderson was still living in her apartment on East 54th Street in New York City when she died at age ninety-eight in 1999. She was survived by five nieces and nephews and eighteen great-nieces and great-nephews. She was cremated and her ashes returned to her hometown of Jamestown, New York, where she had spent many of her summers.

Organizational affiliations: AMS, MAA, AAUP.

Dissertation:

1930 A problem in the simultaneous reduction of two quadratic forms in infinitely many variables. PhD dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, directed by Anna Pell Wheeler. Printed version, 1932, reprinted from *Ann. of Math.* 2nd ser., 33:229–60.

Publication:

1932 A problem in the simultaneous reduction of two quadratic forms in infinitely many variables. *Ann. of Math.* 2nd ser., 33:229–60. Published version of PhD dissertation. Reviews: *JFM* 58.0424.03 (F. Rellich); *Zbl* 004.25903 (T. H. Hildebrandt).

References to: AmMSc 6–7.

“Anderson, R. Lucile.” (Death notice) *New York Times*, 20 Feb 1999.

Other sources: PhD dissertation vita 1932; Owens questionnaire 1937; communications with Ellen Cleveland (niece) and William B. O’Bannon (nephew); Mount Holyoke College Archives; US Census 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930 NY; SSDI.

Last modified: December 15, 2008.