

**WILSON, Hazel (Schoonmaker).** October 31, 1888–April 23, 1988.

WELLESLEY COLLEGE (BA 1911), RADCLIFFE COLLEGE (MA 1914), CORNELL UNIVERSITY (PhD 1927).

Hazel Edith Schoonmaker was the daughter of Christiana M. (Abele), born in 1859 in Pennsylvania, and Arthur Twing Schoonmaker, born in 1860 in Massachusetts. Her parents were married in about 1885; she was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the elder of two children. Her younger brother, Ernest (1894–1974), was also born in Philadelphia and later became a dentist. Her father graduated from the Hahnemann Medical College of Philadelphia in 1894; shortly thereafter the family was living in Westfield, Massachusetts, where her father was described variously as a homeopathist, a physician, and a surgeon with a specialty in diseases of women and children.

Hazel Schoonmaker graduated from high school in Westfield before she entered Wellesley College, from which she graduated in 1911 with a major in mathematics and a minor in German. She taught in high school in Massachusetts 1912–13 before entering Radcliffe College for graduate work. After receiving her master's degree from Radcliffe in 1914, Schoonmaker taught in high school in New York for a year and was acting associate professor at Denison University in Granville, Ohio, the following year, 1915–16. She taught in high schools in New York 1916–17 and in Pennsylvania 1917–19. During 1920 she was professor at McKendree College in Lebanon, Illinois; in 1920–21 she was acting professor at Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois; and in 1921–22 she was professor at Gulf Park College for Women, a two-year school that had recently opened in Long Beach, Mississippi. The summer of 1922 she studied at Columbia University and then spent three years as professor at Western College for Women in Oxford, Ohio.

Schoonmaker first attended Cornell University in the summer session of 1924; in her application for admission of July that year she reported that she had done four and a half years of college teaching. She began full-time study there in 1925 and remained at Cornell until 1928. She was appointed a scholar for 1926–27 and received her PhD in 1927 with a major geometry, first minor analysis, and second minor education. She remained at Cornell as resident doctor for a year after she received her doctorate, taking two mathematics courses and preparing typed notes for a course she had taken from Virgil Snyder on plane cubic curves. Those notes are now in the archives at Cornell.

After leaving Cornell, Wilson was an assistant professor 1928–31 at the New Jersey College for Women, the public coordinate college for women associated with Rutgers University in New Brunswick. While there she published three papers in algebraic geometry: her dissertation; a paper coauthored with H. C. Shaub, a fellow student of Snyder at Cornell; and a paper coauthored with Snyder that he mentioned in his 1934 article, "Some recent contributions to algebraic geometry," in the *Bulletin* of the AMS. She then joined the faculty at Hartwick College in Oneonta, New York, replacing [Roxana Vivian](#) as the professor of mathematics. She remained for seven years, 1931–38, and left after her marriage in the summer of 1938.

On July 14, 1938, Hazel Schoonmaker married Levi Thomas Wilson (1885–1975), who had a son and a daughter from a previous marriage. The marriage of these two mathematicians was announced in the August 1938 *Monthly*. L. T. Wilson had graduated from Washington and Lee University, received a PhD in mathematics from Harvard University in 1915, and in 1917 began his long career at the US Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

From 1942 until 1951 Hazel Wilson taught and was chairman of the mathematics department at Annapolis High School; she studied at Johns Hopkins during the summer of 1945. In 1951 L. T. Wilson retired from the Naval Academy and became professor of mathematics and physics and head of the department of physics at Jacksonville State Teachers College (now Jacksonville State University) in Alabama. At the same time, Hazel Wilson

retired from Annapolis High School and became associate professor of mathematics, also at Jacksonville State. In 1952 they both also became instructors at the University of Alabama, Gadsden Center. In 1956 L. T. Wilson went to Doane College in Crete, Nebraska, again as professor of mathematics and physics and head of the department. Hazel Wilson remained at Jacksonville and Gadsden Center for a year until 1957, when she joined her husband at Doane as professor.

They both remained at Doane until 1959 when they moved to Jacksonville, Florida, she as professor of mathematics and he as professor of physics and head of the department of physics and physical sciences at Jacksonville University. They both retired in 1964 as professors emeriti and later lived in Suncoast Manor, an Episcopal retirement community in St. Petersburg, Florida. Throughout many of her working years and for a few years after her retirement, Hazel Schoonmaker Wilson was a frequent contributor of solutions to the Problems and Solutions section of the *American Mathematical Monthly* and to the Problems and Questions section of *Mathematics Magazine*. In the *Monthly* her solutions, or mentions of solutions, averaged about one a year from 1923 to 1968, while those in *Mathematics Magazine* averaged two a year from 1954 to 1967.

Wilson was a member of the honor society Phi Kappa Phi and the education honor society Pi Lambda Theta in addition to those listed below. She was treasurer of the Maryland Congress of Parents and Teachers 1939–45. She was an Episcopalian and was treasurer of the Women's Auxiliary of Saint Luke's 1952–56, when they lived in Jacksonville, Alabama. She was also treasurer 1953–56 of the Faculty Wives Club there. She was a member of the Order of the Eastern Star and of the Florida Academy of Sciences.

In 1974, nearly fifty years after receiving her PhD, Hazel S. Wilson responded to a request for a donation to Cornell by honoring her advisor with a significant contribution to the Virgil Snyder Book Endowment. The income from this endowment fund, financed completely by Wilson, allows the mathematics library to purchase several dozen books every year.

Levi Wilson died in 1975. Hazel Wilson died in Humana Hospital Sunbay in St. Petersburg, Florida, at age ninety-nine in 1988.

**Organizational affiliations:** MAA, NCTM, Sigma Delta Epsilon, AAUW, Phi Beta Kappa.

**Dissertation:**

**1927** [Schoonmaker, H. E.] Non-monoidal involutions having a congruence of invariant conics. PhD dissertation, Cornell University, directed by Virgil Snyder. Typescript. Printed version, 1929, reprinted from *Amer. J. Math.* 51:439–64.

**Publications:**

**1928** [Schoonmaker, H. E.] The value of the Hotz algebra scales in sectioning college classes in freshman mathematics. *Sch. Sci. Math.* 28:880–84.

**1929** [Schoonmaker, H. E.] Non-monoidal involutions having a congruence of invariant conics. *Amer. J. Math.* 51:439–64. Published version of PhD dissertation. Review: *Rev. semestr. publ. math.* 35:2 (W. G. J. ten Pas). Presented to the AMS, New York City, 29 Oct 1927; abstract: *Bull. Amer. Math. Soc.* 34:11 #35.

**1931** [Schoonmaker, H. E.] with H. C. Shaub. The Hessian configuration and its relation to the group of order 216. *Amer. Math. Monthly* 38:388–93. Reviews: *JFM* 57.0828.01 (R. Weitzenböck); *Zbl* 002.34703 (E. A. Weiss).

**1932** [Schoonmaker, H. E.] with V. Snyder. Two involutorial transformations, of orders 11 and 9, associated with null reciprocities. *Amer. J. Math.* 54:299–304. Reviews: *JFM* 58.1221.02 (G. Feigl); *Zbl* 004.15905 (E. A. Weiss). Presented to the AMS, New Orleans, LA, 28 Dec 1931; abstract: *Bull. Amer. Math. Soc.* 37:834 #404.

**1955** Notes on a fraction problem in college algebra. *Math. Mag.* 28:281–82.

**1965** A note on age problems. *Math. Teacher* 49:26–27.

**Abstract not listed above:**

**1924** [Schoonmaker, H.] An experiment in sectionizing freshman mathematics. *Amer. Math. Monthly* 31:322 #7. Presented to the MAA, Columbus, OH, 4 Apr 1924.

**References to:** AmMSc 6–8, 9P–11P; WhoAmW 1–3.

**Related manuscript material:** Hazel E. Schoonmaker Papers. #37/5/1583. Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections. Carl A. Kroch Library. Cornell University Libraries.

**Other sources:** Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library; Former Members of the Department files, Cornell University Department of Mathematics; Westfield (MA) Athenaeum; communications with Cornell University mathematics librarian and with Hartwick College Archives; “Professors to retire,” *Washington Post*, 20 Jun 1951; US Census 1900, 1910, 1920 MA, 1930 NJ; Florida death certificate; SSDI.

Last modified: July 20, 2009.