

THE P.E.O. OF "SPIRIT"

An inspirational reading about the author of "The Spirit of P.E.O."

Elva Robinson Adams is the author of one of the most inspirational and best-loved definitions of P.E.O. "The Spirit of P.E.O." which she wrote in 1948 to commemorate the 30th anniversary of Chapter AX, Chicago, has become one of the keepsakes of P.E.O., a beautiful expression of the ever-intangible in P.E.O. "The Spirit of P.E.O." has appeared several times in THE P.E.O. RECORD, has been reproduced for distribution, and has been read innumerable times in P.E.O. programs.

A P.E.O. since 1944, Elva was initiated into Chapter DR, Coffeyville, Kansas, and dimitted to Chapter AX, Chicago, a few years later. Here she wrote "The Spirit of P.E.O." In 1965 she helped to organize and was the first president of Chapter KR, Chicago, Illinois, where her membership remains.

Elva has given the "Spirit" at two conventions of Supreme Chapter. She has appeared on many state, reciprocity and organization programs, giving her "Spirit" or other messages. As a professional book reviewer for twenty years, Elva appeared on programs for chapters and clubs in the greater Chicago area, and more recently for Chapter A, Loveland, Ohio.

With her husband she was co-superintendent of a large Baptist Sunday School in Chicago for ten years, taught classes and directed vacation Bible schools for several years. She was a member and secretary of the executive board of a branch of the YMCA, Chicago.

Born in Iowa, educated at the University of Northern Iowa and the University of Iowa, Elva has also taken special education at Miami University, Ohio, and the University of Cincinnati. Elva worked in the editorial department of the Encyclopedia Britannica for five years before moving to Lebanon, Ohio, in 1966, where she became a member of DW. She is at present teaching special education at the junior high school level in Lebanon and is preparing an arithmetic program for special education for publication. She writes, I've done some interesting things in my life, but this is the most demanding, most challenging and most rewarding."

Elva's husband, Clovis H. Adams, was a research chemist and director of Technical Services with the Sherwin Williams Company. He passed away in 1969. They have two children, James, a graduate of Denison University and Northwestern University School of Law; is an attorney with a Cincinnati firm. He is married to the former Judith Hauser and they have three children.

George-Ann is a graduate of Denison University and holds a master's degree in speech pathology from the University of Illinois. She is married to James Lawrence, also an attorney in Cincinnati.

THE SPIRIT OF P.E.O.

I am the Spirit of P.E.O. I am an elusive, intangible quality but I am found in the heart of each one of you.

I came into being many years ago when seven girls believed so completely in me that they fashioned a star to wear as an emblem of their devotion to me. I am reborn each time an initiate takes my vows. Thousands of women have dedicated themselves to the task of preserving and developing me so that you and others like you might have the privilege of wearing my emblem and repeating my vows.

I am a vital force in the life of each one of you but if I were to ask you what I stand for, I would, I am sure, have many different answers. To some I mean friendships, warm and sincere; to others I am understanding. To one I would mean high ideals and to another, inspiration. To one who has worn my emblem for many years, I am, perhaps, a loving relationship; and to a new member I might be the sharing of joys and sorrows alike. I am precious to many of you because I demand the best from each one of you; I am Christian principles applied to every-day living. To some I have given confidence, to others ambition; I am a philosophy to be shared and a goal to work toward.

So perhaps I should not say that I am an indefinable quality for each one of you defines me and evaluates me and fashions a niche for me in your heart, and the depth of that niche depends upon the size of your heart. There I shall stay forever and ever. I shall not die; I shall live on and on as long as women like you believe in Faith, Love, Purity, Justice and Truth.

I am the Spirit of P.E.O.

By Elva Robinson Adams, KR, Illinois

*A quote for the December 1921 RECORD says..."If we lost the Spirit from P.E.O., we shall lose our most precious possession. We will have remaining a fine machine for doing altruistic work, a delightful social or literary society, but we shall have lost forever the P.E.O. of our Founders."