

McCall, Adeline Denham ^[1]

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by [William S. Powell](#) ^[2], 1991

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Adeline Denham McCall, music teacher, was born in Denver, Colo., the daughter of Frank S. and Helene Hanigan Denham. She spent part of her youth in California and in England. When Adeline was twelve, her mother, a professional singer, died, and she went to Grand Forks, N.D., to live with her aunt, Jean Hanigan Koch, and uncle, Professor [Frederick Koch](#) ^[3]. In 1918 they all moved to Chapel Hill when Koch joined the faculty of [The University of North Carolina](#) ^[4]. Adeline attended the University of Denver in 1918–19 and was graduated with honors from The University of North Carolina in 1922. She went to Baltimore to study piano at the Peabody Institute, then returned to Chapel Hill and worked for a time with the Extension Division.

Giving up her ambition to become a concert pianist, Adeline chose instead to teach music and to compose for the symphony. She continued her education at the Seymour School in New York, the Juilliard School of Music, and L'École Normale in Paris; she also was a student of Johanna Gjerulff in Dalcroze eurythmics and improvisation. She was music supervisor in the public schools of Chapel Hill and Carrboro for thirty years and was on the faculty of [Duke University](#) ^[5] for seventeen years; at Duke she taught music education and music history. She also held music workshops throughout the United States and pioneered in creative techniques for music education. While working with day-care centers and kindergartens in Connecticut and New York, she produced children's radio programs for the WJZ Blue network.

Mrs. McCall was one of the founders of the [North Carolina Symphony](#) ^[6] in the early 1930s and helped establish the symphony's education program. For many years she also played the timpani in the University Symphony Orchestra. In 1949 she received an M.A. degree in musicology from The University of North Carolina. She was the author of an extensive series of booklets used by teachers to prepare children for the arrival of the symphony in their towns. Her *Symphony Stories* (1945–49) were eagerly used by young people across the state as they learned the instruments and to appreciate and enjoy good music. Mrs. McCall composed some of the music for [Paul Green's](#) ^[7] outdoor dramas, notably *The Lost Colony* (1938) and *The Common Glory* (1951). Among her other published works were *Adventures with Music and Musicians* (1935), *Adventures with the Opera* (1940), and *Music in America* (1944).

In 1980 Adeline McCall received the North Carolina Distinguished Service Award for Women from the Chi Omega sorority and in 1981 she was the recipient of the [North Carolina Award](#) ^[8] in Fine Arts; she also received other tokens of appreciation from the people of the state. She was married to [Frederick B. McCall](#), ^[9] professor of law at The University of North Carolina; they had no children.

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Additional Resources:

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