

Memorial Minute for Elva Mendenhall Rockwell
(4/11/1913 -3/3/12)

Cecil Floyd Rockwell (3/31/1915 -11/10/2011) born in Whittier, IA and Elva Mendenhall Rockwell (4/11/1913 -3/3/12) born in Paullina, IA were life-long members of the Religious Society of Friends. They died within five months of each other in Hillsborough, North Carolina. Cecil and Elva moved to Fairhope, AL as children. They both attended Olney Friends School in Barnsville, Ohio. Elva also attended Scattergood School in West Branch IA for two years. They were married (under the care of the Fairhope, AL Meeting) on 2/8/1940. Cecil operated a small dairy and later raised broiler chickens while Elva cared for their four children, Ellen, Jeanette, Floyd and Paul.

During the early 1950's the question of the United States increasing militarism and mandatory conscription into the armed services raised many concerns with the Friends of Fairhope. Four of the members of Fairhope Friends were required to serve time in prison because of their refusal to respond to the draft. The community then began to think about living in a country where there was no military. This led to the decision for a group of 10 families to relocate to Monteverde, Costa Rica.

The story of the move to and finally settlement high in the mountains in a developing cloud forest had many adventures and challenges. Along with the other families a Quaker community was established with a meeting, school, farming and businesses. Cecil was responsible for the community store while Elva became involved as a midwife.

Cecil and Elva moved to Ohio in 1975 and became members of Wooster Friends Meeting on 2/8/1976. Their membership in Wooster Friends Meeting was active at the time of their deaths. While in Wooster Cecil and Elva were the caretakers of the Wayne County Historical Society for about five years; Cecil and his son Paul were owners of Rockwell Automotive for a period, then Cecil's final employment was in the print shop at OSU/ATI. Cecil retired from this position at the age of 80. From Wooster they moved to Goshen, OR and finally relocated to Hillsborough, NC.

Their devotion to each other, their families, and to their meetings was an example for younger attendees. Their genuine interest in others in the community and in the world were a positive force that continues to inspire those who were privileged to know them.