



Mary Bell Decker

Portrayed on the top right side of the mural, looking towards the right and wearing a small hat

Mary Bell Decker was a renowned author and wife of UKC president, Dr. Clarence Decker. She graduated from the University of Illinois and was always involved active in her community, participating in the American Association of University Women, the League of Women Voters, and writing for *The Midwest Review* in Chicago. Mrs. Decker spent time overseas attending the Disarmament Convention at Geneva in 1932 and the League of Nations in 1931. In 1933, she was a delegate to the Illinois convention for the repeal of the eighteenth amendment. Additionally, she visited Southeast Asia with her husband as part of the Mutual Security Agency.

Mary Bell and President Decker married in 1937, a short time before Dr. Decker became UKC's President. She had been previously married to Dr. Edwin Plumer Sloan, a renowned physician and surgeon from Kansas City, who passed away in 1935. Mary Bell Decker co-authored with President Decker two books, *A Place of Light*, which details UKC's growth during her husband's presidency as well as a novel, *Wives of the Prophet*. Mary Bell Decker and her husband welcomed the university's artistic and political guests and hosted dinners for many of them in their home. She passed away in New York City in 1964.

Sources: *The Pentagraph*, 25 Oct. 1916; *The Daily Free Press*, Sept. 15 1935; *Kansas City Sar*, 3 Oct. 1950; *Kansas City Sar*, 7 Oct. 1950; *The Jacksonville Daily Journal*, 29 May 1942; *The New York Times*, Apr. 2 1964.