

Sophia Mumford, 97, Editor And Wife of the Social Historian

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Sophia Wittenberg Mumford, the wife and sometime editor of the critic and historian Lewis Mumford, died on April 22 at her home in Amenia, N.Y. She was 97.

At her death she was writing a book on her life and the work she undertook with her husband, who died in 1990.

After her marriage in 1922, Mrs. Mumford gave up a budding career as an editor of the literary periodical *The Dial* to help further her husband's literary and academic aspirations.

While running a household and raising two children, she served as a sounding board and occasional editor and adviser to a man who took neither advice nor editing easily.

She turned to social causes once again with the rise of Fascism in the 1930's and was active in a group that called for an early American declaration of war against the Axis powers. In 1944, the Mumfords' first-born, Geddes, was killed in action in Italy.

As Lewis Mumford grew more reclusive in old age, her tasks as an editor grew. The dedication of later editions of his autobiography, "My Works and Days," read, "To Sophia. Still the best of my Findings/The most enduring of my Keepings," an echo of his 1975 memoir, "Findings and Keepings."

Sophia Wittenberg, went to work after high school as a secretary and then became an editor at *The Dial*, where she met Lewis Mumford.

She remained his constant companion in his final years, when, she said, his mind was slipping but "his essential characteristics" remained. Studs Terkel devoted a chapter to her in his 1996 book "Coming of Age."

She is survived by a grandson, James Geddes Morss of Manhattan; a granddaughter, Elizabeth Mumford Morss of Kinderhook, N.Y., and a great-grandson. The Mumfords' daughter, Alison Mumford Morss, died in 1993.