

## NECROLOGY

WILL E. EDINGTON, DePauw University

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### HOMER FRANCIS BLACK

Peru, Indiana  
August 23, 1874

Valparaiso, Indiana  
April 14, 1942

Probably one of the greatest rewards that can come to a teacher after long years of association with a college is to become so identified with the college that its alumni hold him in the greatest affection and immediately seek him out on their return. Such a teacher was Homer F. Black, who on his retirement in 1941 from Chicago Technical College, after twenty-two years of service, was greatly beloved by the Graduates of that college. He had won this respect and admiration through his unselfish interest in his students and his unusual ability to impart knowledge.

Professor Black was born near Peru, Indiana, but received his elementary and high school education at LaFontaine in Wabash county. He began teaching at the age of nineteen and taught in the public schools at Lincolnville, LaFontaine, Urbana and Roann, spending his vacations in attendance at the Indiana State Normal School at Terre Haute from which he graduated in 1901. He then attended Purdue University and in 1902 took charge of the manual training at Valparaiso University, remaining there until 1918. During this time he attended several summer sessions at Bradley Polytechnic Institute and the University of Chicago, and received his A.B. degree from Valparaiso in 1916. He left Valparaiso to become a draftsman in the tin mills at Gary and to teach mathematics in the evening schools, but the following year he began his work with Chicago Technical College where he remained until his retirement, teaching mathematics, physics and engineering courses.

Deeply interested in astronomy he possessed his own telescope which he shared with his friends and students and he derived great pleasure in pointing out celestial objects and explaining their nature and motions. He was also a devotee of chess. While his chief interest was in science he nevertheless read widely which enabled him to make his teaching more effective and interesting.

Professor Black joined the Indiana Academy of Science in 1916 but was seldom able to attend its meetings. He passed away less than a year after his retirement after having completed almost a half century of teaching.

## WILLIAM MARTIN BLANCHARD

Hertford, North Carolina  
August 24, 1874

Greencastle, Indiana  
December 21, 1942

It is difficult to realize when one sees whole buildings in the large universities of our state devoted entirely to chemistry that the history of chemistry as a major subject in Indiana is contemporaneous with the history of our Academy. Moreover some of the greatest names associated with chemistry in the United States were members of our Academy: Harvey W. Wiley, J. U. Nef, T. C. Van Nuys, William A. Noyes, Robert Warder, Alexander Smith, W. E. Stone. Three of these were the first full-time professors of chemistry at Purdue, Indiana University and Rose Polytechnic. Philip S. Baker was the first full-time professor of chemistry at DePauw University, and his successor was William Martin Blanchard, who came to DePauw in 1901 and devoted the next forty years to teaching and research in chemistry.

Dr. Blanchard received his early education in North Carolina and then entered Randolph Macon College from which he graduated in 1894. He spent the next three years in teaching in the Academy and College at Randolph Macon, and then entered Johns Hopkins University where he received the A.M. and Ph.D. degrees, the latter in 1900. He worked under Remsen, whose greatness and personality was a constant source of inspiration to Dr. Blanchard. Following the completion of his doctorate he immediately accepted a position at the Rose Polytechnic Institute, and a year later came to DePauw as successor to Philip S. Baker.

During the next forty years William M. Blanchard became a powerful force for good in state and civic affairs. He served on the DePauw Athletic Committee for thirty-five years and was secretary of the Indiana College Conference for many years. From 1913 to 1927 he was secretary of the DePauw Faculty and became Dean of the College of Liberal Arts in 1927, which position he held until his retirement in 1941. Possessing an unusual and forceful personality he gathered about him many of the keenest minded students in the college and inspired them to such an extent that a survey made several years ago covering several hundreds of his former chemistry major students showed that ninety per cent of them were still active in the field of chemistry and among them were several outstanding American chemists.

He was the author of a college textbook, "Introduction to General Chemistry," and he published a number of research and expository papers which appeared in the various chemical journals and the *Proceedings of the Academy*. He was a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American Geographic Society, and he held memberships in the American Chemical Society and the National Economic League. He was also a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Sigma Xi. Simpson College conferred an honorary Sc.D. degree on him in 1937. Dr. Blanchard was active in civic affairs and was one of the charter members and a past president of the Greencastle Rotary Club.

For thirty years Dr. Blanchard was one of the most active and influential members of the Academy of Science. He frequently appeared on its programs and influenced many of his undergraduate students to present papers. He served as Treasurer of the Academy for eleven years and was its President in 1926. At its Spring Meeting in 1941 the Academy elected him to Honorary Fellowship.

Dr. Blanchard was a firm believer in sound educational methods and he constantly insisted on high standards and scholastic integrity. He was a scientist in the truest sense and he made a great contribution to the state and nation through his profound influence on hundreds of students who are pursuing successful scientific careers.

#### FREDERICK JOHN BREEZE

Welshpool, Wales  
August 10, 1873

Lafayette, Indiana  
October 24, 1943

Frederick John Breeze, for forty-five years a most faithful and active member of the Academy, was born in Welshpool, Wales, and came to America in 1880 with his parents, who settled first in Flora, Indiana, and then a little later at Delphi. His early education was received in Delphi and he graduated from that high school in 1892. He began his teaching work in 1892 in Indiana and later attended Indiana State Normal School, from which he graduated in 1899. The next two years were spent as a science teacher in the Phoenix, Arizona, high school, after which he returned to Delphi and taught science in that high school until 1905. During the next four years he was superintendent of the Remington, Indiana, schools. He then entered Purdue University as a graduate student and instructor in forestry. He received the B.S. degree from Purdue in 1910 and the M.S. degree in 1912. He served as a spring assistant in geography at the Indiana State Normal School in 1908.

Following his graduation from Purdue he was Science Editor for the American Book Company until 1916. He then entered Indiana University for some graduate study and a little later became acting assistant professor of geography at the Indiana State Teachers College. In 1918 he was elected Professor of Geography and Geology at Ball State Teachers College and was made Dean of Science in 1922. In 1930 he went to Fort Wayne as an extension lecturer for Indiana University and instructor of geography in North Side High School, where he remained until his retirement in 1941. He then returned to Delphi and remained there until he was stricken with a heart attack and was taken to a Lafayette hospital where he passed away.

Professor Breeze was a strong advocate of conservation and was ever on the alert to protect bird life and the rarer plants. Previous to 1930 he had set aside twenty-four acres of land along the Tippecanoe River near Delphi as a plant and bird sanctuary, which he named Powys Gardens after the Welsh name of his birthplace and early boyhood home. He was active in the work of the Indiana Audubon Society and had served at its president.

On his return to Delphi he became active in the civic life of that city. He was a member of the Board of Stewards of the Methodist Church and of the Rotary Club. For many years he had been active in St. David's Society, an organization for natives of Wales.

Professor Breeze was a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Sigma Xi and Phi Delta Kappa. He regularly attended the meetings of the Academy, occasionally presented papers, and was sponsor for many of the present members of the Academy. He served on the Archaeological Survey Committee for several years and he was active in the Junior Academy, being a member of its Council from 1935 to 1940. The Academy elected him a Fellow in 1910.

Fred J. Breeze was a fine and useful citizen of Indiana, an earnest student of science, and an excellent educator whose influence will continue in the lives of those whom he taught and with whom he worked.

#### STANLEY COULTER

Ningpo, China  
June 2, 1853

Lafayette, Indiana  
June 26, 1943

During the past fifty years the influence of Stanley Coulter has been felt in the State of Indiana in three ways, first, as "the Grand Old Man of Purdue," second, as a powerful advocate and leader of the state



conservation program, and third, as an inspiration to the scientists of the state, both young and old, through his leadership in the Academy of Science. Probably no other scientist in the state was more widely known

nor more universally loved and respected, and his death brought to a close a long life of unselfish service.

Stanley Coulter was born in China of missionary parents and shortly after his birth he and his older brother, John M. Coulter, were brought to this country by his mother on account of his father's death. His maternal grandfather was John Finley Crowe, founder of Hanover College, and the Coulter boys grew up around Hanover and received their public school and college education there. Following his graduation from Hanover College at the age of eighteen, he taught school for a few years, studied law and practiced it at Logansport from 1880 to 1885, after which he taught in Coates College in Terre Haute. He received the A.M. degree from Hanover in 1877 and the Ph.D. in 1889. In 1887 he was invited to come to Purdue as Professor of Zoology, and from that time on until his retirement in 1926 at the age of seventy-three, his life was devoted to the welfare and betterment of Purdue University and the State of Indiana. Shortly after going to Purdue he became Professor of Biology and Director of the Biological Laboratories. In 1907 he became the first Dean of Science at Purdue, and in 1919 Dean of Men. Following the tragic death of President W. E. Stone in 1921 he was Chairman of the Faculty until the arrival of President Elliott in 1922. Upon his retirement in 1926 as Emeritus Dean of Men and Emeritus Dean of the School of Science, he became associated with the Eli Lilly & Company as editorial consultant where he remained until impaired health forced his retirement.

Dr. Coulter possessed that rare ability to get people to cooperate. He loved and understood youth and sympathized with their problems. Cultured, wise and witty, and possessed of an unusual memory, he secured and held the confidence, friendship and admiration of young and old who frequently sought his advice and counsel. For many years he taught a student Bible class in the Lafayette Presbyterian Church in which the attendance was so large it was necessary to hold the class in the main auditorium.

Dr. Coulter was one of the Founders of the Indiana Academy of Science and he was active in its work for fifty-five years. The Academy early worked for the conservation of the State's natural resources and for the preservation of wild animal and plant life. One of the first of his many contributions to conservation was a pamphlet "The Forest Trees of Indiana," in 1892, followed by "The Flora of Indiana," in 1899. Through the efforts of Amos W. Butler, Carl H. Eigenmann, Stanley Coulter, and others, conservation work was begun. Dr. Coulter was appointed to the State Board of Forestry in 1902. When the State Conservation Commission was created in 1916 he was made a member and was chairman from 1926 to 1933. He served the state conservation program for thirty-one years. He was the author of eleven pamphlets on nature study written in the furtherance of this work.

He was interested in many welfare enterprises. For many years he was active in the programs for the prevention of tuberculosis and was one time president of Indiana Society for the Prevention of Tuberculosis, and for a number of years after his retirement from Purdue he was

chairman of the State Christmas Seal Sale. He was a member and one time chairman of the Indiana World Peace Committee. Long a member of the Indiana Audubon Society, he was its president for four years.

Dr. Coulter's principal scientific interest was in botany and he wrote forty-five pamphlets on science studies and reports. His most important work was "A Catalogue of the Flowering Plants and of the Ferns and Their Allies Indigenous to Indiana." As Editorial Consultant of Eli Lilly & Company he revised, enlarged and published a work, "A Pharmacology of Remedies in Common Use." He was also the author of about seventy other articles, book reviews and biographical studies.

Many honors came to Dr. Coulter. Purdue University, Hanover and Wabash Colleges conferred honorary degrees on him. The building devoted to the biological sciences at Purdue was named Stanley Coulter Hall. He was cited in 1939 by the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce for his outstanding achievements. The Academy of Science devoted its general meeting at Purdue in 1938 to honoring him and his long time colleague, Joseph Charles Arthur, and he was elected to Honorary Fellowship in the Academy some years previously. He was president of the Academy in 1896.

Dr. Coulter was a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Western Society of Naturalists, the Botanical Society of America, the American Genetic Society and the Central States Forest Research Council.

With the death of Stanley Coulter the Academy has lost its last active charter member who remained in the State. He knew all the great scientists of the past who have been associated with the Academy, and when the history of science in Indiana is written the name of Stanley Coulter will take its place with the names of the other giants of those days.

#### MARTIN LUTHER FISHER

Murray, Indiana  
October 24, 1871

Lafayette, Indiana  
December 1, 1942

When Dr. Stanley Coulter retired as Dean of Men at Purdue in 1926, his successor was Martin Luther Fisher. To follow Dean Coulter, whose hold on the student body and alumni was tremendous, was no easy task. However, Dean Fisher, whose connection with Purdue began in 1894 as a student and who in 1926 was Assistant Dean of the School of Agriculture, possessed those traits of calmness, fairness, sympathy and wisdom that soon secured for him the confidence and respect of the student body and endeared him to both students and alumni.

Martin L. Fisher was born on a farm in Wells County Indiana. After completing his public school education he taught in the rural schools of his county. He entered Purdue University in 1894 and remained two years, after which he returned to teaching in the rural schools and then the Bluffton public schools. Re-entering Purdue in 1901 he graduated in 1903 from the School of Agriculture, and immediately joined the

teaching and research staff of the School of Agriculture. He was made Professor of Agronomy in 1910 and Assistant Chief of the Soils and Crops Department of the Agricultural Experiment Station, and in 1921 he became Assistant Dean of the School of Agriculture. During this period he received the M.S. degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1911.

Dean Fisher was an excellent teacher as well as a most successful executive. His teaching was direct and forceful, and he left a lasting impression on his students through his integrity and sincerity. For many years in the School of Agriculture he had charge of the class schedules and attended to the curriculum revisions. As Dean of Men, students soon realized that they were dealing with a sincere, honest and just man who was their friend even under most trying circumstances. Like his colleague and predecessor, Dean Coulter, he taught a student Bible class in the West Lafayette Methodist Church for over twenty years.

While actively associated with the School of Agriculture Dean Fisher wrote a number of Agricultural School bulletins and pamphlets and numerous articles for farm papers. He was also a joint author of a text, "Agriculture for the Common School," widely used in Indiana. He pioneered in the establishment of vocational agriculture in the State and frequently spoke at farmers' institutes and short courses. As a student of the soil he naturally was much interested in botany and bird study. He enjoyed botany and bird hikes and had considerable skill in plant identification. He conducted bird study tours during the annual Purdue 4-H Club Roundup, and also at other times with university student groups. Long a member of the Indiana Audubon Society, he was its president in 1919.

Dean Fisher was a member of the American Society of Agronomy, and the Association for the Advancement of Agriculture. He had been a member of the Indiana Academy for more than a third of a century and was made a Fellow in 1919. He frequently made reports on plant or bird study, and appeared for the last time on an Academy program in 1940 when he gave a paper before the Psychology Division on "A Study of the Scholastic Trends of Fraternity Men." Dean Fisher was vice-president of the Academy in 1934 at the semi-centennial meeting. The Academy has cause to be proud that men like Martin L. Fisher and Stanley Coulter, whose influence for good in the State has been so great, also valued their Academy association so highly as to maintain an active interest in its work to the end.

#### ROBERT HESSLER

Cincinnati, Ohio  
June 7, 1861

Indianapolis, Indiana  
December 17, 1942

With the death of Dr. Robert Hessler on December 17, 1942, in Indianapolis, the Academy lost another of its few remaining charter members. Born in Cincinnati, he went at an early age with his parents to Batesville, Indiana, where he completed his public school education. In 1880 he became a resident of Connersville. He was a nature lover,

deeply interested in botany and geology, and spent most of his spare time roaming the fields and woods collecting plants, fossils and geological specimens. When the Brookville Society of Natural History was formed in 1881 by the Reverend David R. Moore, Amos Butler and Edgar R. Quick, young Hessler was asked to join, and when the Brookville Society sponsored the organization of the Academy in 1885, he became a charter member of the new organization.



His membership in the new organization and his contacts with David Starr Jordan, John C. Branner and others evidently influenced him into entering Indiana University in 1886 from which he graduated in 1890. He then entered the Medical College of Indiana, graduated in 1892, served an internship in the Indianapolis City Hospital, and practiced medicine in Indianapolis until he was appointed in 1894 House Physician for Men at the Northern Indiana Hospital for the Insane at Logansport. In 1897 he was transferred as pathologist to the Central Hospital in Indianapolis. The following year he went to Europe for study and travel. In 1900 he located in Logansport, where he practiced medicine for the next twenty-one years, after which he returned to Indianapolis, where he practiced some but devoted most of his time to research work.

Dr. Hessler's association with the State Hospitals deeply affected his future study. He became intensely interested in the influence of heredity and environment, particularly as that environment had to do with health conditions. The study of ill health and its causes became a major interest with him, and he constantly advocated and worked for sanitary improvements and other measures that would prevent or lessen disease. To him most cities were the "graveyard of man," on account of their dust, smoke,

filthy streets, crowded conditions, and the artificial climate of the homes and business houses in which so much of the city dweller's life is spent. He wrote numerous papers on various phases of this subject which were published in the journals of the American Medical Society and the Indiana Medical Society and the *Proceedings of the Indiana Academy of Science*.

He also wrote a number of papers on bacteriological and pathological subjects. He did some good work in botany, but he did not publish a great deal. He was the author of one book, "Dusty Air and Ill Health," which appeared in 1912.

Dr. Hessler was elected a Fellow of the Academy in 1899 and was chosen president in 1906. His presidential address was on "The Evolution of Medicine in Indiana." He maintained a deep interest in the Academy throughout his entire life and appeared frequently on its programs. He was a man of deep convictions and had the courage to stand for what he believed was good. A number of the proposals which he made years ago for health improvement, though unpopular at the time he made them, are now recognized as sound sanitary measures. There is a certain satisfaction in knowing that Dr. Hessler was privileged to live long enough to see the enlightenment in public opinion that has led to some fulfillment of his hopes.

#### LILLIEN JANE MARTIN

Olean, New York  
July 7, 1851

San Francisco, California  
March 26, 1943

Lillian Jane Martin was the only woman among the Founders of the Indiana Academy of Science. This unique distinction was more or less characteristic of Miss Martin's whole life, for she was a pioneer in much of what she did and accomplished. And she remained professionally active almost up to the day of her death and most of her humanitarian work was done after she had passed the age usually assumed for retirement.

She was born in Olean, New York, on July 7, 1851, and received her early education in that state. She graduated in 1880 from Vassar College and immediately came to Indianapolis as a science teacher in the Indianapolis high school, now known as Shortridge High School. She taught botany, physics and chemistry. In 1889 she resigned to accept a position as vice-principal and head of the department of science of the Girls' High School in San Francisco. She remained there until 1894 when, at the age of forty-three, she decided to give up high school teaching and begin the study in the new science of psychology. Accordingly she went to the University of Göttingen, in Germany, where she worked under the psychologist, G. E. Mueller, for the next four years. Returning to America in 1899 she was called to Stanford University as Assistant Professor of Psychology where she remained until she was retired in 1916, at the age of sixty-five, as Emeritus Professor of Psychology. During her time at Stanford she returned to Germany for further brief

periods of study at Würzburg in 1907, Bonn, 1908 and 1912, and Munich, 1914. The University of Bonn conferred the honorary Ph.D. on her in 1913. She worked in the general fields of psychology and also in the special fields of aesthetics, the subconscious, and the psychology of humor. She was the author of eleven books, both in English and German, and of numerous articles in psychological and other journals.



Immediately following her retirement from Stanford she set up clinical offices in San Francisco. She became active in the California Society for Hygiene, and in 1920 she established a clinic for normal children of pre-school age. Her clinical experience in child guidance was broad. About 1930 she set up her Old Age Center for the rehabilitation of aged people, and during the next twelve years she handled over one thousand cases. She was a pioneer in clinical psychology.

Miss Martin was a remarkable woman of indomitable will, keen mind and an iron constitution. She learned to handle a typewriter at the age of sixty-five, and to drive an automobile at the age of seventy-eight. She drove across the continent twice in her car and also made an extensive trip into Mexico. She made a tour around the world when she was seventy-four, and traveled alone to Russia when she was seventy-six. At the age of eighty-eight she spent a year in travel in South America, crossed the Andes by airplane, and took a boat trip up the Amazon. At the age of seventy-nine she collaborated with her assistant in the authorship of a book "Salvaging Old Age," and of a second book "Sweeping the Cobwebs," when she was eighty-two.

She was a most cultured and charming woman, deeply interested in the welfare of the human race. She held membership in a number of

scientific societies and was at one time vice-president of the Psychology Section of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. She was also active in the California League of Women Voters, and other women's organizations.

Dr. Martin had not been active in the Academy for many years, but she numbered among her friends many of the older members of the Academy. She was unable to be present at the Semi-Centennial Meeting of the Academy in 1934 but she sent her greetings. The Academy is indeed fortunate to have had this remarkable pioneering scientist as one of its Founders.

#### LOUIS AGASSIZ TEST

Dundee, Illinois  
June 18, 1874

Ann Arbor, Michigan  
April 23, 1943

Louis Agassiz Test, Emeritus Professor of Chemistry at Purdue, was the son of Dr. Erastus Test, Professor of Mathematics at Purdue from 1889 to 1910, and a great deal of his life was spent at that University. He and his twin brother, Charles D. Test, were born at Dundee, Illinois, on June 18, 1874. Both boys entered Purdue and graduated in 1894. Dr. Louis A. Test graduated as a mechanical engineer, but later took up chemistry which became his life's work. In order to prepare himself thoroughly for this work he entered the University of Chicago where he received the Ph.D. degree in 1907. He immediately accepted a position at Occidental College, in California, as Professor of Chemistry, and two years later began teaching in the Missouri School of Mines. In 1913 he accepted a position in the chemistry department of Iowa State College, remaining five years, and then coming to Purdue as Professor of General Chemistry. He retired in 1940 as Emeritus Professor of Chemistry and went to Lindsay, California, where some years before he had purchased a fruit ranch.

Dr. Test was primarily an educator and he was deeply interested in the problems of youth, particularly college freshmen. For many years he had charge of the freshman chemistry courses and laboratory at Purdue. In 1932 he was chairman of a symposium on The Teaching of Freshman College Chemistry, held at Notre Dame as part of the Academy program. A deeply sincere man of Quaker ancestry, he was superintendent of the Presbyterian Church School for a number of years.

While he wrote a number of chemical research papers that appeared in the various chemical journals and the *Proceedings of the Academy of Science*, he was best known in the Academy for his bird studies. He established the first bird banding station in West Lafayette in 1924 and for the next fifteen years reported regularly on his results. He early made a pal of his son, Frederick H. Test, now on the staff at the University of Michigan, and father and son tramped the woods and explored the State Parks together, studying birds, plants and rocks. They made and published many joint reports on the progress of their studies. Dr. Test was a past president of the Indiana Audubon Society.

Dr. Test was a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American Chemical Society. He was a Fellow of the Indiana Academy of Science and served as its secretary for two years and as its vice-president in 1939, when he actively assumed charge of the Winter Meeting due to the absence of the elected president.

He was stricken with a heart attack in Chicago while on his way to Ann Arbor to visit his son, and after spending several weeks in the hospital had apparently recovered sufficiently to go on to Ann Arbor, but he succumbed the day following his arrival in Ann Arbor.

BROTHER RAPHAEL (VALENTINE MARCZYNSKI)

Chicago, Illinois  
February 2, 1907

South Bend, Indiana  
February 11, 1943

It is with deep regret that one records the passing of a young man whose scientific future seemed assured. Brother Raphael, one of the most brilliant younger members of the Congregation at Notre Dame, died at the age of thirty-six following a baffling illness that began a few days after he had appeared for the first time on an Academy program at the meeting held in Notre Dame in November, 1942.

Brother Raphael entered the Congregation in 1923, while a youth, and completed his preliminary education in the Congregation's high school at South Bend, and then entered Notre Dame University. He had the unique distinction of receiving four degrees from the University, B.S., 1930; M.A., 1936; M.S., 1939, and Ph.D. in December, 1942. He had taught in several of the Congregation's high schools in Chicago before returning to Notre Dame to work for his doctorate. For the last four years of his life he was connected with the Department of Biology at Notre Dame and was appointed a regular member of the Faculty in September, 1942.

Brother Raphael joined the Academy in 1942 and was known to only a few members of the Academy. However, his able presentation of some research in botany at the meeting of that section in 1942 made a very favorable impression and one can but feel that the Academy and Notre Dame University have suffered a distinct loss.

MOTHER MARY VERDA (MARGARET DORSCH)

Baltimore, Maryland  
September 20, 1887

Ann Arbor, Michigan  
September 20, 1942

Mother Mary Verda, Mother Provincial of the Midwest Province of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, passed away in the University Hospital at Ann Arbor, on her fifty-fifth birthday, bringing to a close a life of good works and beneficent service. She was born Margaret Dorsch in Baltimore, Maryland, where she received her early education, and graduated in 1907 from Saint Catherine's Normal Institute. She entered the novitiate at Saint Mary's at Notre Dame that summer, and received the Holy Habit and became Sister Mary Verda in December, 1907. Follow-

ing a year's novitiate she was sent on a mission to Saint Mary's Academy, Salt Lake City, and the following year to Saint Cecelia's Academy, Washington, D. C., where she remained until 1921. During her years in the East she studied at Catholic University and Johns Hopkins University, philosophy and education being her major fields of interest.

She returned to Saint Mary's, Notre Dame, in 1921 to become Head of the Department of Philosophy. During the next eighteen years practically every philosophy class was under her supervision and virtually every student and Sister of the college came under her influence during that period. While doing this work she continued her studies and received the Ph.D. degree in 1925 from the University of Notre Dame. Following the completion of her study for the doctorate she focused her attention on the philosophy of Saint Thomas Aquinas. She spent the summer of 1935 in Europe, in Italy, France and England, doing some study at Cambridge, and before her death had become recognized as an authority on American new realism.

In 1939 she was chosen Mother Provincial of the Midwest Province of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, and she left the class room to take up this work of community service which she continued until her untimely death. Sister Mary Verda was an inspiring teacher and much of her work was directed toward character building.

Mother Mary Verda held membership in the American Philosophical Association, American Psychological Association, Mediaeval Academy of America, Pi Gamma Mu, and the American Catholic Philosophical Association, and she served as an executive councilor in the latter organization from 1925 to 1929. She became a member of the Indiana Academy of Science in 1935 and presented a paper before the Psychology Division in which she stated that she hoped that meetings of the natural scientists and psychologists, like those of the Academy, would help to bring about a rapprochement between philosophy and science. It is to be regretted that the opportunity to become more active in the Academy was denied Mother Mary Verda, for the Academy has need for the active participation of more scholarly women who are sincerely interested in the development and improvement of science.