

CORA JIPSON BECKWITH

1875 – 1955

Members of the college community were saddened to learn of the death of Cora Jipson Beckwith, professor emeritus of Zoology. Following a number of years of frail health she died in Washington on January 9, 1955, in her eightieth year.

Miss Beckwith joined the Zoology Department as an assistant in 1900, upon her graduation from the University of Michigan. With the aid of leaves she completed her graduate study while serving at Vassar College, receiving the doctorate of philosophy from Columbia University in 1914. She was chairman of the department at the time of her retirement in 1940. Throughout her career Cora Beckwith was an outstanding teacher and member of the college community. She was quiet, dignified and unassuming. She was interested in people. Her lifelong tenure at Vassar was devoted to the well-being of the college in all its aspects. She expected, and obtained, precise thoughtful work from her students; she herself was capable of careful detail, prodigious amounts of work, and withal showed nice qualities of judgment. She contributed much to important committees, notably those on the curriculum and research. In addition, for three years in her earlier days she served as an associate warden in Strong House.

The teaching of histology, embryology and cytology, which she carried on over a long period of years, calls for the training of students in precise and delicate techniques, and at the same time for the development of difficult concepts. »Her natural qualities of dexterity, easiness of movement, and clarity of thought contributed to her success as a teacher. Her own shining example was frequently the light which illuminated difficulties for the students. Her research was along cytological lines, especially associated with the lateral line organs of *Amia calva* and the cytology of the germ cells of the hydroids. She was elected to many scientific societies, and was a life member of the corporation of the Marine Biological Laboratory at Woods Hole, where in her younger days she

CORA JIPSON BECKWITH (Continued)

spent many summers. While in her later years research and visits to Woods Hole were not feasible, she always retained her interest. She encouraged and aided members of her department to share these interests.

After her retirement from teaching in 1940 she continued to live in Williams Hall, and during this

period was deeply concerned with the welfare and interests of her friends and associates. Later, in 1950, she moved to Washington to be with her two sisters who had retired also. Those who were able to visit her there sensed her solicitude for her sisters, and realized that this was another manifestation of a principle which had guided her throughout her life. The people with whom she came in contact, the college and the department of zoology particularly, owe her a deep debt of gratitude.

Edith Fahnestock

Mary Landon Sague

Rudolf T. Kempton

XIV - 31