

Field, Ada Martitia ^[1]

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By B. Russell Branson, 1986

30 Oct. 1887–30 May 1972



A photograph of Ada Martitia Field from the 1911 Guilford College yearbook, *The Quaker*. Image from Digital NC / Guilford College.

^[2]Ada Martitia Field, teacher and researcher in nutrition, was born near Climax, N.C., the daughter of Christopher and Louise Emily Wilson Field. Because of a heart defect she was forced to live a circumscribed life, yet it was filled with activity. She was graduated from [Guilford College](#) ^[3] with a B.S. in chemistry in 1898 and attended Bryn Mawr for three years. From 1908 to 1909 she was employed as an instructor in chemistry at [Washington University, Seattle](#) ^[4], which awarded her an M.A. degree in science in 1909. Returning to North Carolina, she was professor of chemistry at [Guilford College](#) ^[3] from 1910 to 1912. Because of her deep interest in nutrition, she accepted an invitation to be a lecturer on nutrition at Woman's College of New York from 1913 to 1914, at the same time serving as an instructor at Teachers College, [Columbia University](#) ^[5]. From 1914 to 1925 she was assistant and associate professor of home economics at [George Peabody College, Nashville](#) ^[6], [Tenn](#) ^[6]. These, she said, were the happiest years of her life and the ones that produced her most fruitful teaching. Afterwards she returned to [Columbia University](#) ^[5] for the doctorate in organic chemistry, which she received in 1928 at the age of fifty-one. From 1929 to 1931 she was a lecturer at the [University of California](#) ^[7].

In 1931 she retired from teaching to do private research in nutrition. Having built a flour mill near [Guilford College](#) ^[8], she succeeded in discovering how to mill wheat and preserve the heart bud so that flour could be stored indefinitely. Her product was a true whole wheat flour called "Good Wheat," a name registered by her and manufactured and marketed by the Lexington Roller Mills, Inc., in Kentucky.

Ada Field was a devoted teacher, a disciplined scientist, a researcher and humanitarian, and a believer in peace through education. She was a sincere worker for peace through the [Society of Friends \(Quakers\)](#) ^[9] of which she was a member. She died in [Greensboro](#) ^[10].

References:

Greensboro Daily News, 1 June 1972

Memorial to Ada Field (Quaker Collection, Library, Guilford College, Greensboro)

Raleigh News and Observer, 18 May 1941

Image Credits:

"Miss Field." Photograph. *The Quaker*. Guilford College, N.C.: Senoir Class of Guilford College. 1911. 10. DigitalNC. <http://library.digitalnc.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/yearbooks/id/1250/rec/1> ^[11]

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