

A Notable Woman – Mary Shorey Samter



Mary Shorey Samter, an alumna and faculty member, was never lost for words to describe the high calling of her profession.

A teacher of teachers specializing in reading, she emphasized that, “reading is the most precious gift our culture has to offer its youngsters.”

When Samter died in Green Bay at age 84, former students and colleagues remembered the

commitment she had for her work.

“People speculate on ways of improving the world,” she once observed. “I contend that providing good reading skills to children will ultimately make them more happy, productive and stable members of society.”

A native of Coloma who received a two-year diploma from UWSP in 1927, when it was Central State Teachers College, she was destined for a life in the classroom. Both of her parents and all of her five siblings became teachers. Samter earned degrees from Western Illinois State Teachers College and the State University of Iowa.

She served on the UWSP faculty from 1943 until her retirement in 1973 as a first grade teacher in the “Campus Laboratory School” and a student- teacher supervisor and professor of reading, language arts and children’s literature. All told, she was a teacher 46 years.