

Louis Monroe Dennis

Professor of Inorganic Chemistry

— *Dec. 9, 1936*

The death of Louis Monroe Dennis, on December 9th, 1936, marked the passing of another of that small group whose long services to Cornell, beginning in the earlier years of the institution, have been constructive forces in the development of the University.

Coming to the Department of Chemistry in the Fall of 1887 as Instructor, he was advanced to an Assistant Professorship in 1891, and to an Associate Professorship in 1893. In 1900, he became Professor of Inorganic Chemistry, and he served as Head of the Department of Chemistry from 1903 until his retirement in 1931: forty-five strenuous years of active service.

These years saw the work in Chemistry transferred to Morse Hall from Franklin Hall which had previously been shared with the Department of Physics; the extension and additions to Morse Hall; and the disastrous fire which well nigh destroyed that building in the Spring of 1916.

The laying of the cornerstone of Baker Laboratory was a memorable day for Professor Dennis. It marked the beginning of an adequate home for the Department of Chemistry, and to the planning and building and equipment of this Laboratory, he devoted years of intensive study and expert knowledge. The Baker Laboratory of Chemistry is a monument and a memorial to the wisdom, the vision, the resourcefulness, the energy, and the inspiration of Louis Monroe Dennis.

During these years and under his able guidance, the department showed steady progress, not only in material things, but also in academic work and in productive scholarship and research. The establishment of the "George Fisher Baker Non-Resident Lectureship in Chemistry" is the direct outgrowth of the plan, conceived and executed by Professor Dennis, of bringing to America each semester one of Europe's leading scientists.

The wide studies of his undergraduate days in literature, languages, and music were developed and enriched by a highly sensitive and refined taste in artistic values.

Blessed with rugged strength and a love of sport, he was no mean antagonist in competition with those who were many years his juniors. This joy of a life that was clean, and fair and generous, led to his long and devoted service

to athletics at Cornell, to the inception of the annual musical festivals at the University, and to the support of other causes for the welfare of his fellows to which he gave himself persistently and unselfishly.

To those whose chief contacts with Professor Dennis were along professional lines he will be remembered as the accurate, painstaking investigator, exacting and rigorous in his demands upon himself, and equally insistent that all who were under his direction should exhibit the same high standards and ideals. It is a source of gratification to his colleagues that, during the period of his retirement, he was able, with unimpaired vigor and industry, to continue the high quality of the scientific research in his chosen field which had brought him great distinction both at home and abroad.

To those who were privileged to know him in more intimate ways, Professor Dennis was the gracious host, the welcome friend, the fair and generous sportsman, the tasteful connoisseur and gifted performer in various forms of art, the patron and supporter of many a fine endeavor, the ardent advocate of freedom in all its phases, loyal to the institution which he had served so long, devoted to the welfare of the community in which he moved. The world is finer and fairer because he lived.

Source: Faculty Records p. 1971 Resolutions of the Trustees and Faculty of Cornell University, April, Nineteen Hundred And Thirty-Seven

Retired: 1932 Faculty Records, p. 1737, 1754