



# "One Day in May"

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## One Day in Other Years

As part of our preparations for "One Day in May" 2021, I looked for a story about a May 15 from the past, to give a sense of the kind of thing future historians might want to know.

Below is how one student might have experienced life on campus on May 15, 1918.

- smv

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### May 1918

The weather on campus was lovely on May 15, 1918 – cool in the morning and warming up to 79 degrees by afternoon. Anna Voris probably had plenty to do that Wednesday. We know she took her studies seriously because she'd been on the honor roll the previous term. And with graduation less than a month away, there was planning to do for that. She was on the cabinet of Hanover's YWCA branch, which was going to be holding a fundraiser over commencement weekend,<sup>1</sup> so perhaps she had a committee meeting or other organizational work to do. Possibly she was writing job application letters or otherwise pondering her future. I hope she was able to enjoy her friends and the beauties of spring.

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She did find a job after graduation, teaching high school math in Mayfield, Kentucky. Sadly, she had only a few weeks to get to know her students. The Great Influenza Epidemic of 1918 was at its worst the summer and fall after she graduated, and she caught it in late September. Someone called in a doctor on Sept. 28, and she died a little more than a week later.<sup>2</sup>

We can appreciate the way Anna Voris shaped the fabric of the communities she belonged to, even in her short life – she supported soldiers serving overseas, fostered bonds of friendship among Hanoverians, and educated the youth of Kentucky. But I wish we knew more about her – how often she wrote home to her parents and what she told them about her new job, or even what her classroom was like and or where she had her meals.

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<sup>1</sup>"Weather Forecast," *Madison (Indiana) Courier*, 15 May 1918, p. 6; "Ada Colgate Leads for Winter Term," 30 Mar. 1918, *Triangle*, p. 1; "President Millis, of Hanover College, Has Announced," 10 May 1918, *Indianapolis News*, p. 9; Hanover College, *Revonah* (1917 yearbook), 37. (Photo from 1917 *Revonah*.)

<sup>2</sup>Anna Voris, death certificate, 7 Oct. 1918, Commonwealth of Kentucky; "Teacher is Dead," *Paducah (Kentucky) Sun-Democrat*, 9 Oct. 1918, 6, available at Newspapers.com.