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MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

Helen Cherington Farnsworth

1903–1974

Helen Cherington Farnsworth, emeritus professor in the Food Research Institute, died at Stanford Hospital on February 23, 1974, at the age of 71. She came to Stanford in 1926, having earned a Master's degree at Ohio State University in her home town of Columbus, Ohio. She earned the Ph.D. degree in economics at Stanford in 1930. She had been a research and teaching assistant at Ohio State, was a teaching assistant and University Fellow in economics at Stanford, and in 1929 joined the Food Research Institute, from which she retired while still at the height of her analytical powers in 1968. She remained active after retirement, extending her long list of published papers, until ill health forced surcease.

The Food Research Institute had undertaken, as early as 1924, to monitor and analyze the world wheat situation on a continuing basis. When Professor Farnsworth joined the staff in 1929, she promptly enrolled in this effort which was to become the focal point of her work for twelve years, during which time she authored or co-authored forty issues of the surveys, which were ternary within the year and included an annual review. Out of this remarkable enterprise grew her reputation as the foremost authority on world wheat data; her penchant for challenging, reconciling, and revising these data; and her capacity for enlightening policy discussions from the factual base so painstakingly assembled.

Her subsequent professional career comprised three major stems, each firmly rooted in the prior experience. She continued to analyze national and international grains policies, and in the period following World War II these studies came to focus upon the International Wheat Agreement and subsequent Grains Arrangement, the policies of the major exporting nations, and more recently the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Economic Community, leading to special studies of French and German farming. A second stem consisted of analyses of food supply and consumption data, which she now began to apply to the emergent and hungry nations in an effort to bring the dispassionate factual perspective of her earlier Wheat Studies to a problem that aroused her deepest concerns. Finally, her increasing interest in the problem of hunger in the world led her to study its nutritional and medical aspects. She developed a competence in this area that earned widespread respect among professional nutritionists.

Apart from a host of publications bearing the imprimatur of the Food Research Institute, Professor Farnsworth's writings were published in virtually every major economic journal, and in the proceedings of major conferences. She served in an advisory capacity to state, national, and international agencies. She was an outstanding citizen in the university community, serving on several committees, working within the undergraduate residence program, and advising students—meanwhile carrying more than her share of departmental burdens including administration of the library, editing of the journal, and serving for a time as Associate Director. She undertook nothing to which she was unwilling to devote time, effort, and study. Her reviews of student papers, doctoral disser-

tations, or colleagues' manuscripts invariably elicited astonishment over the thoroughness of the examination. One came to know the meaning of "acid test" by submitting his paper to "Cherry."

Professor Farnsworth had written a Master's thesis on "The Adaptability of Women to Industry" and had subsequently written, referring to the birth of her son in 1929 while her application for employment at the Institute was pending, "While I should, of course, like to believe that society is at present so constituted that the knowledge of this fact would in no way influence the consideration of my application . . . , I am aware that many people are of the opinion that a woman who has a family is not capable of performing professional duties efficiently." With bounteous love for her husband and children, with unfaltering dedication to the quest for answers, and with prodigious effort, she demonstrated as no Master's thesis ever could how a woman adapts to industry, family, and society.

Dr. Farnsworth is survived by her husband, Dr. Paul Farnsworth, emeritus professor of psychology at Stanford, her son Elliott, her daughter Susan Caron, and six grandchildren. To them we of the Academic Council express our gratitude for having shared her with us and our immense pride in her achievements.

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