

Leonard P. Adams

October 8, 1906 — March 12, 2000

Leonard P. Adams was born October 8, 1906, in Angelica, New York. His parents were Frederick Adams and Ada Palmer Adams. Both his parents and his two sisters died before Leonard's 10th birthday. Leonard was raised by relatives and earned a Bachelor's degree in Music at Alfred University.

After working his way through Alfred College, he went on to get his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Economics from Cornell, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. From 1929-34, he was an Instructor in Economics at Cornell, then spent a half-year on the faculty of Colgate. In 1935, he went to Washington as an Associate Research Assistant on the U.S. Government Central Statistical Board. From 1936-42, he was Associate Economist for the New York State Department of Labor. From 1942-46, he assumed the positions of Principal Economist of the State and Federal Employment Service in Albany and New York City and Director of the Bureau of Business Research in the State Department of Commerce.

In 1947, he joined the ILR School where he was a Professor of Labor Economics. He also served as the Director of Research and Publications for 20 years until his retirement in 1967. Under Leonard's administration, Research and Publications became a full-fledged unit of the ILR School program. He was also chair of the Editorial Board of *The ILR Review* for approximately the same period of time. Both of these were major contributions to the identity of ILR as a scholarly institution.

Leonard's own publications included, *Workers and Industrial Change*, with Robert Aronson (1957), *Commuting Patterns of Industrial Workers*, with Thomas Mackesey (1955), *Wartime Manpower Mobilization*, (1951), and *Agricultural Depression and Farm Relief in England 1813-1852*, published in England. All of these represented his continuing interest in the employment problems of workers, reflecting in part also his practical contact prior to joining the ILR faculty.

Following his retirement, Professor Adams continued an active professional life including a book, *The Public Employment Service in Transition, 1933-1968* (1968), as well as several articles and bulletins.

He retired to North Fort Myers, Florida and spent his last few years with his son, Leonard II, in Davenport, Iowa. He is also survived by a son, Samuel.

Although he had no apparent interest in organized sports, Leonard was physically vigorous. He enjoyed gardening and the tasks of maintaining a home against normal wear and tear. At the second of the residences in which he lived in Ithaca, he started a Christmas tree farm. Much of his nonprofessional life, however, was devoted to the care and raising of his two sons. Given the circumstances of his own early life, his compassion for those in need was unmistakable. Most notable in this regard, was his assistance to his Cornell graduate mentor during Professor Royal Montgomery's difficult last years.

Leonard had a good sense of humor, marked by jokes that addressed absurd situations rather than the expense of an individual or a group. Perhaps more than any other facet of his character was Leonard's fortitude in the face of adversity. He coped successfully twice with widowhood, drawing in both cases of remarriage on relationships from earlier periods of his life.

One remembers Leonard Adams as a gentle, soft-spoken, amiable and congenial colleague and friend.

George Hildebrand, Milton Konvitz, Lawrence Williams

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