

Allan Cameron Fraser

June 4, 1890 — September 17, 1941

Allan Cameron Fraser, Professor of Plant Breeding, died on Wednesday, September 17th, after 27 years of distinguished service in the College of Agriculture. In his death the College has lost a teacher and scientist of outstanding loyalty and ability.

Born on June 4, 1890, at Brockport, New York, he attended the grade schools of that city. His family moved to Buffalo during his youth, and he completed his preparatory school training at the Buffalo Central High School, being graduated from that institution in June, 1909. In the fall of the same year he registered in the College of Agriculture at Cornell University and in 1913 received the Bachelor of Science degree. During the year 1913-1914 he studied and instructed at Columbia University and was also an assistant at the New York Botanical Gardens. In the fall of 1914 he returned to Cornell for graduate study and in 1918 received the degree Doctor of Philosophy.

Serving continuously in the College of Agriculture, he held an instructorship during the years 1914 to 1919, an assistant professorship from 1919 to 1934, and a professorship from 1934 to the time of his death.

On September 5, 1917, he was married to Helen Parker Myers, of Buffalo, New York. Miss Myers was graduated with the class of 1916 from the College of Arts and Sciences at Cornell. Two daughters were born, Helen Margaret, on June 4, 1922, and Janet Louise, on June 18, 1926. During the period August, 1918, to February, 1919, he served with the military forces of the country as Regimental Sergeant Major of the 36th Field Artillery at Camp McClellan.

In 1928-1929 he was granted a sabbatical leave of absence and spent fifteen months in Scotland and England and on the Continent, having been awarded a Fellowship by the International Education Board. During this period he studied for eleven months at the University of Edinburgh in the field of animal genetics and physiology, the balance of his time being spent in visiting research institutions and in general travel.

A second sabbatical leave during the period July, 1936, to February, 1937, was spent in a trip around the world. His particular interests during this trip were in the study of experimental work in pineapple and sugar growing and in the production of crops native to Hawaii, Japan, China, and other countries visited.

Professor Fraser was a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a member of Sigma Xi and Gamma Alpha, of the Genetics Society of America, and of other professional associations. Primarily interested in teaching and research in the field of plant genetics, he also found time for additional scientific efforts. For years

he systematically banded birds and kept records for the United States Biological Survey. His investigative work in the field of genetics dealt primarily with corn and roses.

Professor Fraser was uniquely successful as a teacher of genetics. The basic reason for this was his exact and thoroughgoing knowledge of his subject matter as a science and of its application as an art. Coupled with this was high facility in devising apt and attractive methods of presentation. He was able accurately to estimate student capacities as well as limitations. Graduate students sought him not only as a teacher of courses in advanced genetics but as an adviser in the solution of research problems. Many of his students who later became teachers in other colleges and universities still sought his counsel and to many he supplied laboratory outlines and teaching materials. By all of them he was held in the highest respect and esteem. Letters received from former students of Dr. Fraser, as news of his passing spread, bear eloquent testimony to the high regard and to the sense of shock and personal loss sustained by them. The apparently universal feeling seems to be well expressed by one who wrote as follows: "Professor Fraser's brilliant and enthusiastic teaching undoubtedly inspired many of his students to make the study and teaching of genetics their life work."

It is by his colleagues and fellow associates that the sense of loss and sorrow at his passing is most keenly felt. It is they who knew him best, the keenly humorous and always generously cooperative person, the quiet, efficient scholar. Their affectionate regard and the respect of his many friends in near and far places throughout the world are for him a living and enduring monument.