

# Helen Monsch

*January 28, 1881 — July 31, 1959*

Helen Monsch came to Cornell University in 1918 and was a teacher of food and nutrition throughout the period when home economics progressed from a department to a school in the New York State College of Agriculture, and then to the New York State College of Home Economics in Cornell University. Professor Monsch was appointed head of the Department of Food and Nutrition in 1925 when the Board of Trustees of Cornell University officially recognized the departments which had been in operation since home economics became a school; she served in this capacity for twenty years. Under her leadership the program of the department was expanded to include, in addition to undergraduate teaching and the Cooperative Extension work in the state, graduate teaching and research. The department's Faculty increased from five members in 1918 to twenty members in 1947; at this date there were also fifteen graduate assistants.

Helen Monsch was born in Louisville, Kentucky, January 28, 1881. She received the Bachelor of Science degree from the Kansas Agricultural College in 1904 and from the University of Chicago in 1909, the latter degree in chemistry and physics. In 1916 she was awarded the Master of Arts degree in nutrition by Columbia University. Professor Monsch also studied at the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station, Rush Medical College, and the Illinois College of Medicine, specializing in infant and child nutrition. She was head of food and nutrition instruction in the public schools of Gary, Indiana, from 1909 to 1913; an instructor at Simmons College, Boston, Massachusetts, in 1913-1914; head of the food and nutrition department at Iowa State College from 1914 to 1918 when she came to the then Department of Home Economics in the College of Agriculture at Cornell University. She retired as Professor Emeritus of Food and Nutrition at Cornell University in 1947.

In addition to the administration of the Department of Food and Nutrition and her classroom teaching, Miss Monsch supervised the nutrition of the children in the College nursery school and of the infants who were cared for by the students in the home management houses of the College. She also had a unique relation with mothers and babies in many homes in the community. These homes, the nursery school, and the home management houses were all used as laboratories for the teaching of child nutrition in practical situations.

Professor Monsch was co-author with Marguerite K. Harper of the book, *Feeding Babies and Mothers of Babies*. With the late Miriam Birdseye of the Federal Extension Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, she organized

and directed the movie *For Health and Happiness*. She was the author of several Cornell Extension Bulletins and of articles on the feeding of infants and preschool children.

Miss Monsch was a member of the American Home Economics Association, the American Dietetic Association, and of Phi Kappa Phi, Omicron Nu, and Pi Lambda Theta. Locally she was affiliated with the Bethel Grove Home Bureau and the Family Welfare Society of Ithaca having served as an officer of the latter organization.

A friendly person, Helen Monsch will long be remembered for her genial smile and quick cordial greeting. Her friendly concern for people was characteristically expressed in action as well as in words. Her enjoyment of colleagues and friends, students, the children with whom she worked and their families, her neighbors, and her own immediate family was made evident by her hospitality, her generosity, and her helpfulness in many thoughtful ways. These qualities endeared her to her associates. Her great love of the outdoors, especially of her flower gardens, was continued during her retirement years in Florida. Her death occurred at her home in Winter Park July 31, 1959.

Professor Monsch was an outstanding, dynamic, and effective teacher. Students remember her strong personality, her great sense of humor, her integrity and vision. She was respected by all with whom she worked for her accomplishments and success in the area of child care and nutrition. Many students acknowledge her inspiration and guidance in their professional careers.

*Catherine Personius, Beulah Blackmore, Lillian Shaben*