

Wilford Murry Wilson

January 24, 1860 — January 23, 1943

Of Wilford Murry Wilson, Professor of Meteorology, Emeritus, much may be said in honor of his long, loyal and distinguished service at Cornell University. Of forty years in the Weather Service, nineteen were at the station in Roberts Hall of the College of Agriculture.

Dr. Wilson was born in Espyville, Pennsylvania, on January 24, 1860. He attended Allegheny College at Meadville, Pennsylvania, from 1881 to 1885 and then was appointed as assistant observer of the Signal Corps of the United States Army, before its meteorological work was transferred to the Weather Bureau of the Department of Agriculture.

After five years at various stations he was put in charge of the station at Memphis, Tennessee, where in the six years of his assignment, he studied at and was graduated from the Memphis Hospital Medical College with the degree of Doctor of Medicine.

From Memphis, Dr. Wilson went to Detroit, Michigan, and was in charge of the Weather Bureau Station there for ten years. In 1906 he was transferred to the Station at Ithaca. Almost immediately he began to expand his services to include lecturing on meteorology to the undergraduates in the College of Agriculture. Within five years he became Cornell's first Professor of Meteorology, and had organized the first department of meteorology in any land-grant college.

His teaching service covered eighteen years of undergraduate instruction; during seven of those years graduate students also worked under his direction. In his years at Cornell he aided the agricultural extension program with special forecasts aimed directly at farm operations, such as successful haying, spraying, and harvesting, that depend upon a fore-knowledge of the weather. His development and maintenance of these specialized services through radio, and immediate telephone messages relayed from farm to farm, constituted a pioneer service.

Genial and kindly in all personal relations, he endeared himself to his colleagues in the College of Agriculture and Cornell University.