

Ruby Green Smith

January 6, 1878 — May 13, 1960

News of the death on May 13, 1960, of Ruby Green Smith, Professor Emeritus of Home Economics, the widow of Albert W. Smith, was received with profound regret and a source of great personal loss by her host of friends and former associates on campus and in many parts of the United States. All who knew her remember her as a gracious, personable, and kindly person who made an outstanding contribution to home and community life. She was able to instill confidence in those with whom she worked. She was known affectionately by many of the homemakers and her associates as "Aunt Ruby." Mrs. Smith was born January 6, 1878, on an Indiana farm, the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Alpheus W. Green. She is survived by a son, Alpheus W. Smith; a daughter, Ruth (Mrs. Robert P. Ludlum); and five grandchildren. Another daughter, Dorothy (Mrs. Harold Reynolds), died in 1938.

Mrs. Smith was associated with the Cooperative Extension Service for nearly thirty years. She began her association with it in 1917 as a member of the staff of the States Relations Service of the United States Department of Agriculture. This staff, at that time, was engaged principally in work designed to aid the government in winning World War I. Mrs. Smith was the leader in organizing food bureaus, later called Home Bureaus, and establishing home demonstration agents in many cities of the United States. The chief purpose of these bureaus and agents was to aid the Federal Food Administration in conserving and processing essential food products.

In 1918, Mrs. Smith was appointed Deputy Food Commissioner for New York State. About two years later, she became State Leader of Home Demonstration Agents at Cornell University, a position she held with only a slight interruption until her retirement in 1946. As State Leader, she served at a time when a gracious personality was needed to develop the urban phases of the program and to cement good relations between the rural and urban Home Bureau membership.

Her work as State Leader brought her into contact with many organizations, and she was in great demand as a speaker and consultant with many of them. She addressed audiences in some of the outstanding colleges and universities. She was a speaker at many national organization meetings, particularly those of the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities and the Associated Women of the American Farm Bureau Federation. The latter group was organized through her effort. She initiated the idea and, later, at the request of the officers of the American Farm Bureau Federation, drafted the constitution and by-laws. Her advice and guidance helped that

Association to perform many useful services for the homemaker and greatly increased the prestige of the parent organization.

Mrs. Smith was one of the organizers of the New York State Federation of Home Bureaus and served as its counselor during her entire period as State Leader. She had relationships with many other organizations, including the Playground and Recreation Association of America, the New York State Library Association, the Parent-Teachers Association, the State Grange, and cooperatives such as the Dairymen's League and the G.L.F.

She was a prolific writer. She was best known for the "Home Bureau Creed" and the book entitled *The People's Colleges*, primarily a history of the Extension Service of the New York State Colleges of Agriculture and Home Economics at Cornell University. She also edited *The Comstocks of Cornell*.

Mrs. Smith received the B.A. and M.A. degrees from Stanford University in 1902 and 1904 respectively, and the Doctor of Philosophy degree from Cornell University in 1914. She was a member of the American Home Economics Association, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Sigma Xi, Phi Beta Kappa, Kappa Alpha Theta, and Epsilon Sigma Phi.

When Ruby Green Smith retired in 1946, many tributes were paid to her. Among these was one by Sarah Gibson Blanding, then Dean of the New York State College of Home Economics, who said, "Mrs. Ruby Green Smith has brought real distinction to her work as State Leader of Home Demonstration Agents. Her genuine interest in people, the ability to bring out the best in them, combined with her scholarly attainments, administrative ability, and foresight, have contributed materially to the strength of the extension movement in the United States, of which she has been a part since the first World War."

At the time of Mrs. Smith's death, the present Dean, Helen G. Canoyer, said, "Dr. Ruby Green Smith combined in her professional career the qualities of scholar, humanitarian, writer, and teacher. Through her vision, initiative and organizational ability, she provided leadership to her colleagues in the College, the state, the nation, and the world. Her warm and lovable qualities, even more than her administrative ability, made possible her great contributions to the home life of New York State. Such contributions do not die—they live on in others."

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