

# Ralph Norton Campbell

*March 7, 1910 — July 25, 1971*

Ralph Norton Campbell died unexpectedly in Phoenix, Arizona, less than a month after he retired from the Cornell faculty and but a few days after he was elected professor of industrial and labor relations, emeritus, by the Board of Trustees. He was 61 years old.

Born in Minotola, New Jersey, Ralph attended Rutgers University, where he became editor of the college newspaper and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. Upon graduation from Rutgers in 1931 with the Bachelor of Arts degree, he worked a year as reporter for the New Brunswick *Daily Home News* and *Sunday Times*. He returned to Rutgers for the academic year 1932-33 as a graduate student in history, after which he began a seven-year stint on the staff of the university as, variously, assistant director, public and alumni relations; associate alumni secretary; and director of personnel and placement.

During World War II he rose from first lieutenant to colonel. He was chief of the Officers' Division of the Adjutant General's Section, Headquarters Eastern Defense Command and First Army (1940-43); chief of Personnel Division, Headquarters First Army (1943-45); and Adjutant General, Advanced Echelon, Headquarters First Army (1945). He served in both the European and Pacific theaters of action and was awarded the French Croix de Guerre, the Bronze Star, and the Army Commendation Ribbon.

The field of labor relations in 1948 was the focus of often intense, and not altogether rational, debate. Cornell's School of Industrial and Labor Relations in its fourth year was still suspect in some quarters within the state, and the extension activities of the School, because of their greater visibility, were especially subject to hostile criticism. It was in this climate that Ralph Campbell, who had received the M.B.A. degree with distinction the year before from the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration, joined the Cornell faculty and became director of extension in the ILR School. The full range of Ralph's considerable talents as an administrator and mediator were employed in developing a program which, by the time he relinquished his post in 1956, had assumed the basic form that it has today.

As the administrator of what became a large and growing educational enterprise, Ralph Campbell exhibited a style natural to him, one of gentle determination. He encouraged, he prodded, and at times he was obstinate. But throughout it all, he was kind, gentle, and supportive in his relations with others.

In 1956 Ralph gave up the duties of extension director (he was to return for another tour from 1960 to 1963) in order to devote more time to teaching and research in management organization and development and in the social role of American business. In the classroom his methods were Socratic as he sought to expose error by persistent questioning and challenging of his students. During this period he coauthored with Elizabeth Knowlton the monograph *Business Leadership in Air Transportation*, which grew out of his experience in organizing and directing an innovative training program for the management leadership of American Airlines. In 1956 he became a member of the faculty of the School of Education at Cornell and served actively with that School until 1966. Ralph did not completely fore-swear administration, however. He became the director of University Summer Sessions in 1956 and retained the post for the next two years. Also from 1958 to 1960 he was head of the ILR School's Department of Human Resources and Administration.

Ralph Campbell's interests in and contributions to the field of adult education were manifold. In addition to his achievements through the ILR Extension Division, he was a prime mover in the establishment of the National Institute of Labor Education and as its president functioned as a creative force in labor education. In the National University Extension Association he served as chairman of the Industrial and Labor Relations Committee. Closer to home, he was a cofounder and the first executive director of the Ithaca Festival of Classics.

The breadth of his interests and abilities is further reflected in some of Ralph's other activities. He was impartial chairman of the New York State Advisory Council on Minimum Farm Wages and an active labor arbitrator as a member of the national panels of the American Arbitration Association and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. Shortly before his death, Ralph completed a study for the Episcopal Diocese of Central New York on organization, structure, and decision making within the church.

He is survived by his wife, Marian McCauley Campbell; a son Peter; a daughter Patricia; two stepdaughters, Patricia McCauley and Nancy McCauley; a stepson, Philip McCauley; and two brothers, Clarence and Edward.

*Alice H. Cook, Felician F. Foltman, Ronald Donovan*