

# James Ernest Boyle

*November 22, 1873 — September 18, 1938*

James Ernest Boyle was born November 22, 1873, on a farm near Boyle, Jefferson County, northeastern Kansas, the son of John and Mary Ann (Searl) Boyle. His family were pioneers in that region and the nearest town was named after them. His early years until he entered the University of Nebraska were spent on the farm, and he received the degree of A.B. in 1900. The A.M. he received from the University of Kansas in 1902 and the Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin in 1904. From 1904 to 1916 he was professor of Economics and Political Science and head of the department in the University of North Dakota at Grand Forks. Here he was one of the founders and first president of the university co-operative store, the organizer and first president of the North Dakota Tax Association and State director for North Dakota at the National Conference on Marketing and Farm Credit. He was led more and more into the study of marketing and particularly of farm marketing problems. He was field agent in marketing for the North Dakota Experiment Station at Fargo during 1916-17, and the next year, 1917-18, he was a member of the Bureau of Markets of the United States Department of Agriculture. In 1918 he returned to teaching and came to Cornell as extension professor of Rural Economy and thus became the University's first teacher of marketing. Since 1923 he had been professor of Rural Economy, devoting all his time to teaching and study.

His early and continued contact with the marketing problems of agriculture made him a world authority, particularly on the produce exchanges, and resulted in such special publications as *Speculation and the Chicago Board of Trade*, 1920, and *Cotton and the New Orleans Cotton Exchange*, 1934. He had lately been commissioned by the Cuban government to study the Cuban sugar industry. He was chairman of a committee of the National Association of Manufacturers investigating the relation of chain stores to farmers. Another side of his teaching activities resulted in his *Agricultural Economics*, 1921. In late years the results of his studies have been presented to more popular audiences in the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Saturday Evening Post*, and other journals. In these and other articles he appears as a keen critic of the governmental agrarian policy in this country. His criticism brought on attacks and threats in both state and nation.

Among his activities at home was his presidency of the Research Club. In the town, during the existence of the National Recovery Administration, he was the permanent chairman of the Ithaca Compliance Board. For some years he was the presiding officer of the open forums conducted by the First Presbyterian Church.

His relation with students was of the closest and most intimate nature and particularly to foreign students, Chinese and other Orientals, he was a guide and mentor. Toward his colleagues he was generous, kindly, and unassuming. Though he had strong convictions he always sought the honest opinions of others. Where he saw intellectual dishonesty or chicanery he was a fearless and vigorous critic.

Professor Boyle died September 18, 1938, at his home, 115 Cayuga Heights Road, after a long illness. He had married Mary Effie Lytle of Topeka, Kansas, September 13, 1902. Surviving with the widow are two daughters, Elizabeth (Vassar, 1929), the wife of Arthur B. Rogers (Cornell, D.V.M., 1934) and Louise (Vassar, 1931).