

# Wendell G. Earle

*June 16, 1923 — April 3, 1990*

The faculty in the Department of Agricultural Economics, the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the University, lost one of its strong contributors and supporters in the passing of Wendell Earle. He was an innovator in his teaching, a developer of new University programs, an effective fund raiser, and an active leader and worker in the University community. We have all learned from his timely counsel, his quick wit and his selfless commitment to higher education for students of all ages.

Wendell G. Earle was born June 16, 1923 in Hardwick, Vermont, son of Blanche Earle of East Hardwick and the late Sidney Earle. He received his B.S. degree from the University of Vermont in 1946, after having his college work interrupted by a tour of duty in the U.S. Air Force. He came immediately to Cornell, completing his masters degree in 1948 and his Ph.D. degree in 1950.

Professor Earle began his professional career in the Department of Agricultural Economics in 1950 when he was appointed assistant professor of marketing. At that time, he was given responsibility for developing an extension program in poultry marketing. In this capacity, he demonstrated his leadership ability in program development and his skill as a teacher. He published nearly 150 articles in the six years that he conducted the program. He was promoted to associate professor in 1953, and to professor in 1959.

Professor Earle spent the 1957-58 year on sabbatic leave directing a research project for the National Agricultural Extension Center at the University of Wisconsin. He studied problems of organizing and operating marketing programs with business firms.

When Professor Earle returned to Cornell, he began the phase of his professional career for which he is most recognized. At that time he assumed responsibility for developing a new program in food industry management within the department of agricultural economics. Because of his vision, leadership, and tireless efforts, this pioneer program has gained international recognition. The program developed by Earle was designed to train persons with food industry experience for management positions; to interest undergraduate students and prepare them for food industry careers; and to upgrade the skills of food industry employees. He recognized the benefits that would result from exposing promising young food industry personnel to an academic environment as well as the exposure of undergraduate students to experienced food industry leaders. Under Earle's tutelage, a Home Study Program was developed which offered more than 20 different courses reaching nearly 100,000 people.

More recently, he was instrumental in developing the Personal Enterprise and Small Business Management Program (PEP) at Cornell. Although many people from the business and university communities have made major contributions to the program, PEP would not exist today had it not been for the vision, wisdom, enthusiasm, patience, and tireless efforts of Wendell G. Earle. He played an important role in recruiting and counseling four visiting faculty who were key to the development of the program from 1987 to 1989. As one visiting faculty put it, "Wendell was always there to offer me steady support, never interfering, but always willing to answer my questions with insightful, patient answers." He was instrumental in raising funds that led to the endowment of the Personal Enterprise Program with the Bruce F. Failing Sr. Chair in Personal Enterprise as its major component.

He served as an academic advisor and taught more than 3,000 students during his 33 years at Cornell. He was a member of the Faculty Committee on Physical Education and a member of the Cornell University Athletic Board. He also served as faculty advisor to the men's hockey team from 1976 to 1988, and he and Fran housed hockey players for over 15 years. In 1975, more than 300 of his former students, together with representatives of the food industry, honored him at a testimonial dinner in New York City and endowed a scholarship in his name. In 1977, he was named Professor of Merit by students in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. In 1989 he received the Distinguished Alumni Award from both the University of Vermont and Cornell University. He was a member of the University of Vermont Fund Executive Committee and an alumni representative to the University of Vermont Board of Trustees. In January 1990, he received the National Grocers Association Industry Service Award for his lifetime of commitment to raising the academic and professional standards of the food industry.

He has served on the board of directors of P&C Food Markets, Syracuse, NY; Actmedia, Inc., West Hampton Beach, NY; Pet, Inc., St. Louis, MO; Fisher Foods, Inc., Cleveland, OH; Pneumo Inc., Boston, MA; Harrington's, Inc., Richmond, VT; and Hartstrings, Wayne, PA; and he was chairman of the Site Selection Committee for Wakefern Foods Corp. in Elizabeth, NJ.

His community service contributions include the presidency of the Tompkins County United Way and more than 36 years of service to scouting. He received the coveted Silver Beaver Award, and was president of the Louis Agassiz and Baden-Powell Boy Scout Councils.

He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Francelia Connor Earle; three sons: Brian and wife Jody of Freeville, NY; Bruce and wife Peggy of Devon, PA; Terry and wife Jean of Bernardsville, NJ; two daughters: Wendy and husband

Adam Brayshaw of Lake Clear, NY; Shelley and husband Michael Mitchell of Sapulpa, OK; two brothers: Ronald of East Hardwick, VT and Walton of St. Johnsbury, VT, and seven grandchildren.

*Robert Smith, Bernard Stanton, Gene A. German*