

George Henry Howe

February 9, 1888 — April 13, 1955

George Henry Howe, Associate Professor of Pomology of the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station at Geneva, died in the Geneva General Hospital on April 13, 1955. He was born February 9, 1888, at Jericho, Vermont. When four years of age, upon the death of his father, he went to Pittsford, VT, to reside on the farm of an uncle where he spent his boyhood. He attended high school in Pittsford and received the B.S. degree from the University of Vermont in 1910.

From July to November, 1910, he was employed jointly by the Vermont Agricultural Experiment Station and the United States Department of Agriculture on potato investigations. William Stuart, who became world famous for his work on potatoes, was the leader in these investigations; and he rated Howe highly for his work and loyalty. On November 11, 1910, he was appointed Assistant Horticulturist at the Experiment Station at Geneva where he served faithfully, with the exception of a leave of absence during World War I, until his death. He enlisted in the Army as a private in March 1918 and was honorably discharged in May 1919. At that time he was in charge of an agricultural reconstruction program of occupational therapy for disabled soldiers at the Walter Reed General Army Hospital. Although he was in the service for a brief period he made several deep friendships that continued during his life. In 1919 he was made Associate in Research and in 1946 Assistant Professor of Pomology.

Howe was a valuable man for the Experiment Station, for he carried out every assignment to the last letter. No one was ever more meticulous, painstaking, faithful, and helpful. He arrived at the Station at the time the fruit monographs were being prepared and published. Their preparation entailed a vast amount of work, for the horticultural literature had to be searched for the history of the various varieties and detailed descriptions made of the plant and its fruit. These studies aided Howe in becoming a well-known authority on tree fruits, especially the cherry, pear, and apple. He was unexcelled as a field man as he kept accurate records on the blooming and ripening dates of the various fruits, and described and evaluated many thousands of varieties and seedlings. This experience gave him excellent judgment in selecting fruits that offered possibilities for commercial and amateur growers.

In addition to these main tasks, Howe worked and assisted on many other problems, such as the ringing of fruit trees to induce earlier bearing, breeding roses, testing the behavior of tree fruits on different rootstocks, and

exhibiting fruits at various horticultural meetings and the State Fair. One of his roses, which unfortunately has been lost, was named in honor of the wife of Director Whitman H. Jordan.

He was a Fellow in the American Association for the Advancement of Science and a member of the American Society for Horticultural Science and of Alpha Zeta. In addition to aiding in the preparation of the monographs on cherries, peaches, pears, and small fruits, he was the author of numerous bulletins, circulars, and articles for the press.

He was married on September 3, 1927, to Lenore L. Treat of Spring Valley, New York. He is survived by his wife, a daughter, Mrs. John H. Horan of Honeoye Falls, and two grandchildren, Patricia Mary and David John.

Professor Howe had a retiring personality and liked to remain in the background. He was always faithful and nothing pleased him more than to be of service to others. Unfortunately, his health failed him during the last few years of his life and he was much disturbed that he had to restrict his activities. His knowledge of fruits was vast and he helped to identify many fruits for growers and the county agents. He will be missed by friends and many growers who were benefitted by his information and council.

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