

## **MEMORIAL RESOLUTION**

### **WILLIS HORTON RICH (1885 – 1972)**

Willis Horton Rich was born in Galesburg, Illinois, on March 15, 1885. He died in Menlo Park, California, October 20, 1972, age 87.

Willis Rich attended schools in Galesburg and graduated from Lombard College, of which his father was President, with an A.B. degree in 1905. He received an A.B. from Stanford in 1909, an A.M. in 1918 and a Ph.D. in 1924. He served briefly as an instructor in biology at the University of Southern California and in zoology and physiology at Stanford. From 1910 to 1913 he was a fish culture worker with the California Fish and Game Commission. From 1914 to 1930 he held a variety of positions with the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries. He was field assistant 1918 to 1922, Chief of the Division of Inquiry, which he organized, 1922 to 1926, Chief Investigator for Salmon Fisheries 1926 to 1930, in charge of Pacific Fisheries Investigations 1929 to 1930. From 1930 to 1950 he was Professor of Biology at Stanford. He became emeritus in 1950. During his tenure at Stanford he held, simultaneously, many consultant positions varying in time from one month to three years. He was a member of the International Committee for Marine Fisheries Investigations and consultant to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation on problems of fisheries conservation at dams on the Columbia and Sacramento Rivers. He organized the Department of Research of the Oregon State Fish Commission and headed it from 1938 to 1945. He was in charge of North Pacific Fisheries Investigation U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1943 to 1944 and Consultant Salmon Fisheries 1944 to 1950. In 1950 he visited Japan as natural resources consultant, Supreme Command Allied Powers. After retiring from Stanford he continued to do consulting and advising work, notably in India 1951 and 1952, Indonesia and Taiwan 1953, and again in India 1954. He was consultant to the Army Corps of Engineers from 1953 to 1961, studying problems at dams in the Columbia River Basin.

Willis Rich will always be known as the foremost authority of his time on the life history and conservation of Pacific salmon. In 1919 he published a paper titled, "Marked Salmon; Announcement Regarding Fish Expected to Return in 1919 and Subsequent Years." This was followed by a series of classical papers, some by Rich himself and others which he coauthored with various people, which led to the prediction method upon which all present-day fishery biology is based. He made important contributions in the areas of fish tagging, aging by scale analysis, and especially in the interpretation of catch data. He is credited with the development of fish ladders to detour fish over and around high dams across rivers. He also published a few papers on the fisheries of New England.

Willis Rich is remembered by his students and colleagues as a warm, outgoing, compassionate, kindly gentleman with a delightful sense of humor. He was close to his students, many of whom occupy important positions in fishery biology today. He was always ready to help with a problem or to offer friendly advice. He was active in numerous professional societies.

In 1910 Willis Rich married Harriett Hunt. After her death he married Dr. Dorothy Starks in 1934. She died in 1969. He is survived by two sons, Robert, of Newport Beach, California, and Richard, of Menlo Park, California, and a daughter, Jean Davidson, of Ashland, Oregon, a sister, Elita Keeler, of Marysville, California, and six grandchildren.

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