

IN MEMORIAM

Frances N. Clark
1894–1987

With the death of Frances Clark a few months after her ninety-second birthday, the fellowship of CalCOFI old-timers lost one of its stalwarts. Although small in physical size, she stood out among her colleagues because of her achievements in the fields of science and conservation. Already well known in the early 1920s, she can be counted among the first generation of marine biologists.

Frances Clark was not only one of the pioneers in the field, but also the first woman fishery researcher to receive worldwide respect and acclaim. For most of her career she was alone in a field dominated by men. However, much to her pleasure (and ours) she lived long enough to see a great many seagoing women scientists follow in her footsteps.

Clark retired from the California Department of Fish and Game in 1956, after 32 years of outstanding work with that agency, including 17 years as director of the California State Fisheries Laboratory. Through her many publications, beginning with a doctoral thesis on the life history of the grunion, she became well known to fisheries workers everywhere. Most of her reports deal with the sardine and the California Current system.

Perhaps the finest testimonial to Clark's leadership as a scientist and administrator is the roster of well-known fisheries workers who received their training under her guidance and who have served the public through the Department of Fish and Game and other agencies. In fact, many of the people she trained have long since retired. Many of them were originally attracted to the laboratory for the opportunity to work with her.

Clark was in on the early planning phases of CalCOFI—in fact, she participated in the first exploratory meetings in 1947. She was a member of



the technical committee for the California Marine Research Committee from its inception to her retirement. Long after retiring she continued her interest in CalCOFI, attending many annual meetings and providing counsel to her successors. Those of us who attended the 1981 conference will never forget her recollections of the early days. Significantly, there was more than a sprinkling of women scientists from both sides of the U.S.-Mexican border in the audience, and during the sessions several women presented papers. We can be sure that Frances Clark approved.

Richard Croker