

Rodney Beecher Harvey

1890-1945

It is with keen regret that we announce the death of Dr. R. B. Harvey, professor of plant physiology, on November 4, 1945, of a heart attack. Dr. Harvey was born at Monroeville, Indiana May 26, 1890, and graduated from Purdue University as a pharmaceutical chemist. He received his B.S. from the University of Michigan in 1915 and Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1918. After two years as plant physiologist for the Bureau of Plant Industry in Washington, D.C. he came to the University of Minnesota in 1920 as assistant professor of plant physiology.

Dr. Harvey was internationally known for his discovery of the ethylene gas process of ripening and coloring fruits and vegetables. He was an outstanding authority on winter hardiness of plants. At the time of his death he was carrying out an investigation of the effectiveness of certain hormones as weed eradicators. He was author of three books and many scientific articles.

Among the many honors accorded him were presidency of the American Society of Plant Physiology, corresponding membership in the Botanical Society of Czechoslovakia, corresponding membership in the graduate faculty of the University of Madras, India, and the honorary degree of Doctor of Science from Purdue University.

The University has lost an outstanding scholar and teacher.

OLD TIMERS

From the other side of the world, in Tihwa in the far-western Chinese province of Sinkiang, Dr. Chih TU writes that he is in the Department of Reconstruction and is serving as Agricultural Adviser. Research has been impossible for the last few years, but TU has been training agricultural students. Part of his time has been spent putting into Chinese the published works of Vavilov and Lysenko. Old Timers of the 1920-30 decade will remember TU as winner of the gold medal for scholarship during his senior year in the College of Agriculture and as a Ph.D. in Plant Pathology in 1929. Since that time some of his students also have been graduate students at Minnesota.

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Ensnconced in the salubrious climate of British Columbia is Dr. Margaret NEWTON, who has retired from active duty in the Dominion Laboratory of Plant Pathology at Winnipeg

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News of the improvement of Mrs. Sackston, whose critical injuries were announced in our last issue, came on November 24 from Old Timer "Sax" of the Winnipeg lab:

"Aurora may be interested to learn that Lois is recovering splendidly. Several days ago the doctor removed her splint, the pin from her knee and the weights attached to it, and the superstructure from her bed. She is now just another patient, trying to get strength enough to sit up, and waiting for bones to finish their knitting and other things to heal over... With luck she may be home by Christmas, although hardly in shape to prepare the dinner!...

"Thank you for all the good wishes; they may have been instrumental in saving her, because at first it certainly seemed as if nothing else could!

"My best regards to those I know in P. erectus, and also to those I hope to meet at some future date.

Sincerely, Sax

Dr. Robert J. NOBLE visited Minnesota early in December for a few days, after completion of his duties as delegate to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in Quebec, and enroute homeward wrote as follows:

Dear Aurora:

December 11, 1945

Tomorrow San Francisco, then the formalities for the parting stranger, then Honolulu, Australia and home. How can one say just what one felt on visiting Minnesota once again?

To me it is all still an almost incredible experience. At one moment in a somewhat detached manner a bunch of us discussed at an Australian Agricultural Council meeting in Adelaide, South Australia, certain aspects of a United Nations meeting to establish the Food and Agriculture Organization. A few days later one is journeying through the substratesphere or thereabouts to the meeting itself at Quebec. Soon the conference is over and one is able to visit Minnesota again after the lapse of some 20 years.

I suppose one should be able to deal even with an emotional experience, dissect it, analyse it, record it and say at least to oneself--that is exactly how it was.

I can't do it, but I do hope that, even in the most indirect manner, I did convey some slight measure or indication of the intensity of my own feelings, of my delight at meeting and hearing from old friends and seeing the familiar landscape once again.

But above all, what I really wished to do was to acknowledge my very special indebtedness to Stek himself.

I know that I am not alone in this. All of us through the long vista of the years have known at least in a general way just how special a privilege it was to have worked with him.

Perhaps I should have mentioned also that he worked on us and we were often fairly crude, fairly resistant and not always responsive raw material. His secret is, of course, his own although one might venture a working hypothesis. But no working hypothesis could really explain why it is that he is as young as he was twenty years ago. Perhaps it is partly a climatic factor also!

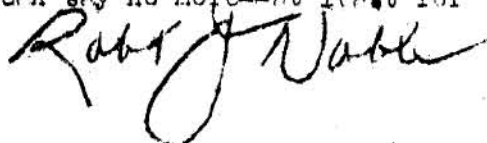
It was an inexpressibly delightful experience to see him in action in Seminar. No longer, of course, in the Tottering Tower but in a spacious, well equipped room in the new building. One had only to close the eyes for a moment and one was in the Tower again.

It has been said that there are plenty of words in the English language, words suitable for all occasions and all that sort of thing.

I always felt that I had lived every moment of the two years and the two months that I spent at Minnesota long ago. When I have thought of those years, and I have thought of them on many occasions, I have thought of them in terms of the superlative.

Now on this visit I feel that what I really wish to do is to extend the superlative. How does one do that? The heart strings are still vibrating! The best of all good wishes to you all. I can say no more--at least for the time being.

Sincerely,



From Himayatsagar, India, comes news of the promotion of Old Timer SYED Vaheeduddin, formerly Assistant Plant Pathologist, to the post of Plant Pathologist to H.E.H. the Nizam's Government and Head of the Department of Plant Pathology of the Hyderabad State Department of Agriculture. SYED has two daughters, Nusroth Fathema, who is two and a half, and one-year-old Moin Fathema. Congratulations to him on these professional and family attainments!

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The Mexican Phytomathological Society was officially organized on November 8 in Mexico City, with 17 charter members, and officers as follows:

- J. G. HARRAR President
- Ricardo Coronado Vice President
- José RODRIGUEZ Secretary and Treasurer

May the MPS flourish, wax strong and mighty, and accomplish!

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Dr. Jack WESTERN, of Manchester, England, reports Rachel, Jack, and young Richard Western all well. He also reports that Alan GEMMELL has been appointed Lecturer in Botany at Manchester and will be coming there at Christmas time. Says he saw Guy BISBY last week (November 26) and that "the war does not seem to have hurt him... he is still... (?) and full of good humour!" (Honestly, we couldn't read the writing; it's not because we hesitated to use the word!)

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Dr. Ellis F. (for Flock) DARLEY was previously last heard from on the shores of Brazil. On October 12, via Pan-American Clipper, he set his wings down on Fisherman's Lake, near Roberts Port, Liberia, and shook hands with Old-Timer K. G. McINDOE. Some time was then spent in discussing Minnesota. From Roberts they traveled to the Firestone plantations by amphibious plane, over a landscape dotted with native villages... Rubber-doctor Ellis shares a bungalow with a chemical researcher from M.I.T., with four native boys to cook, serve, wash, and do yard work. The site of the plantations is very attractive, according to Darley, with ground covering of a low-growing legume, trees covered with vari-colored lichens, and roads winding around the hills... "Span" has even penetrated into Liberia, but when the hunters go out they have deer in various forms, including deerburgers. ...Scientific problems confront him, since the tapping-panel disease--which he was assigned to study--appears to be prevalent.

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Dorothy deZEEUW proclaims she is still working in East Lansing, Michigan, and that Don is "still parked in Germany" without any idea as to when he will come home. "Say hello to everybody."

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Verdene GOTTLIEB, daughter of David and Betty, of New Jersey, has a brand new brother, Jan, born December 4--7 lbs. 6 oz., and 21 in. long!

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The former Rosemary MILTICH, now Mrs. Frederick Curran, of Virginia, Minnesota, is no longer separated from her husband because of the war, but because of the housing shortage: He is in Spokane, she in Virginia. It's a funny world, say we, as we telephone everybody we can think of and beg them for a room!

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