

A. E. Dimond, 1914-1972

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Albert E. Dimond died on February 4, 1972. On behalf of our colleagues here and everywhere we record our profound shock and sadness at his sudden passing.

Born in Spokane, Washington, on May 11, 1914, he began in 1932 his study of plant pathology under F. D. Heald at Washington State College,

Pullman. He transferred to the University of Wisconsin in 1935 where he majored in plant physiology under B. M. Duggar investigating the effects of ultraviolet light on spores. He received a B.A. in 1936, an M.A. in 1937, and the Ph.D. in 1939.

His first position after graduation was at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, New Haven. While on this job, he and his colleagues first reported the fungicidal effectiveness of the ethylenebisdithiocarbamates.

In 1942 he moved to the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. During his stay at Nebraska, he took leave to work under S. A. Waksman for the wartime Office of Scientific Research and Development at the University of Pennsylvania. In 1946 he returned to the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station to pioneer in the chemotherapy of Dutch elm disease and other wilts. In 1949 he was appointed chief of the Department of Plant Pathology and Botany.

His continued interest in chemotherapy and the careful development of principles and screening methods under his leadership kept alive the search for systemic fungicides in other laboratories throughout the world. This unflagging stimulation was partially responsible for the perseverance of the search by industrial laboratories for systemic fungicides that eventually led to the discovery of the highly successful materials so widely used in recent years.

He brought to all his research problems a thorough grounding in plant physiology and an analytical, mathematical approach that offered unusual insights. His publications soon came to be highly regarded by his peers as sources of original thought. Although he was actively engaged in laboratory investigations of the effect of ionizing radiations on diseased plants, the toxins produced by wilt fungi, and the water movement in plants wilted by fungi, he went into the field to fight the battle against Dutch elm disease and solve such problems as the poisoning of greenhouse roses by mercury vapors.

As his fame grew, so did the number of scientists from overseas who came to learn from him. They all became his firm and life-long friends. He had an unusual ability to communicate with these visitors, to

put them at ease, and to work productively with them in the short time they were in his laboratory. They, in turn, were eager to have him bring his experience and counsel to their own lands. As a result, he made almost yearly visits abroad, giving a series of lectures in Argentina, and participating in meetings and lecturing in England, Italy, India, and Japan. For his lectures in Argentina, he reviewed and practiced his Spanish so he could lecture in the language of the country. In 1971, he and his wife were able to travel around the world visiting with friends everywhere. It was a great source of satisfaction to him.

His careful, analytical approach to basic problems was widely known and highly regarded not only in science but also in the scientific organizations to which he belonged. He served as treasurer and business manager of The American Phytopathological Society from 1950 to 1952, and became President of the Society in 1964. He was made a Fellow in 1966. He was active in the management of the XI International Botanical Congress, and the Congress awarded him a bronze medal in 1970 for his excellent managerial advice. At his death, he was a member of the finance committee of the American Institute of Biological Sciences and a councilor of the International Society of Plant Pathologists. He was a member of the American Botanical Society and the American Society of Plant Physiologists, and a fellow of AAAS. He was a lecturer on the staff of the Yale Forestry School for many years, and was a member of the Regulatory Biology Panel of the National Science Foundation from 1961 to 1965.

In 1969, the Station recognized his broad services to the citizens of Connecticut by appointing him one of the first three Samuel W. Johnson Distinguished Scientists. Just a month before his death, he became Vice-director of The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station.

He was author or joint author of 207 publications and served as joint editor of "Plant Pathology, An Advanced Treatise".

Dr. Dimond is survived by his wife Louise W. Dimond, his brother John Dimond, his daughter Susan D. Block, and two grandchildren.

We have only recorded some of the events that marked his life. Bruce B. Miner, editor of the Station, described him more perceptively:

"An uncommon man, he worked quietly, effectively, and considerately as a scientist, counselor, and administrator—all in the finest tradition of science and the Station he was proud to represent.

Of any decent man it may be said, we shall not see his like again. Of Albert Dimond we can also truly say, how fortunate are we, to have known this kindly man."