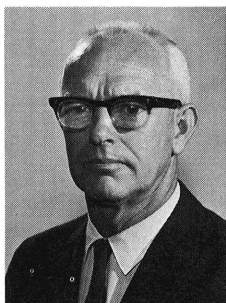


Arthur Watson Dimock, 1908-1972

D. F. Bateman



The death of Arthur Watson Dimock in his sixty-third year on April 22, 1972, brought to an end the career of one of Cornell's most distinguished plant pathologists. He was born June 20, 1908, in Middleboro, Massachusetts, and soon moved with his family to Richmond, California. He earned the

B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees from the University of California at Berkeley. Immediately after completing the doctoral program in 1936, he served as Assistant Plant Pathologist for the Division of Forest Pathology, U.S. Department of Agriculture, in San Francisco. He joined the Cornell faculty in 1938 as an Assistant Professor and was promoted to Associate Professor in 1943 and to Professor in 1947.

When Dr. Dimock came to Cornell he was assigned the responsibility for research and extension on diseases of ornamental plants. He had developed an enduring interest in this area of plant pathology as a graduate student at Berkeley. Dimock brought to his new position a broad range of skills and abilities coupled with an intense curiosity. He became a respected scientist in several areas — plant pathology, botany, genetics, and mycology; he was also a talented engineer, in part the result of undergraduate training in this discipline. His breadth of understanding together with his ability to communicate effectively with the laity and scientists in diverse disciplines enabled him to develop one of the most effective and comprehensive programs of research and extension on diseases of ornamental plants in the United States. His research included both the applied and basic approaches to problems. The ultimate goal of his work, the solution of practical problems, was always in focus.

He pioneered critical work on rust diseases of ornamentals, on *Ascochyta* ray blight and virus diseases of chrysanthemums, and on *Verticillium* wilt of roses and other crops. The culture index procedure for establishing disease-free plants, which was developed in Dimock's laboratory in the early 1950's, is recognized as an important contribution to saving the chrysanthemum industry. This technique, and modifications of it, were the basis for the development of the chrysanthemum, carnation, and geranium industries as we know them today. Because of his breadth of experience in biology and his expertise in engineering, Dr. Dimock was asked by his administration in the early 1960's to undertake a research program on design and development of controlled environment facilities for plant growth. He attacked this problem with zeal and imagination, and his efforts culminated in the development of equipment and designs that were accepted by

industry and can be seen in most of the plant growth chambers on the market today.

Dr. Dimock was never responsible for formal class instruction, but he was noted for formal and informal conferences with students and colleagues which were normally held on a weekly basis. These sessions, concerned with diseases of ornamentals and related matters, also attracted students and colleagues from outside of the discipline of plant pathology. While being demanding of his graduate students, he always had them work side by side with him in his research and extension programs where he imparted to them the basics of research and extension in plant pathology. All of his students recall, I'm sure with great appreciation, the Saturday morning sessions where research problems and diseased specimens were subjected to thorough analysis and practical solutions formulated. He demanded from his students and himself quality work based on an interdisciplinary understanding of problems. He emphasized the practical aspects of research without neglecting the basics, and encouraged his students to do the same.

The many contributions of Dr. Dimock were recognized by the many awards he was accorded by the scientific community and industry. In 1969, he received a special award for his contributions to the ornamentals industry which was presented jointly by the New York Flower Growers, Inc., The New York Florists' Club, the Long Island Flower Growers' Association, and the Kenneth Post Foundation. His research and extension efforts won him, in 1970, the Foundation for Floriculture Research-Education Award, one of the florists industry's highest awards, given by the Society of American Florists. He was elected a Fellow of The American Phytopathological Society in 1971 in recognition of his contributions to the Society and the science of plant pathology. Also in 1971, he was presented with the Award of Merit from the Northeast Division of the Society.

Dr. Dimock willingly served The American Phytopathological Society in many capacities. He was an Associate Editor of *Phytopathology* (1952-1954), Treasurer-Business Manager of the Society (1958-1964), Vice President (1967), President Elect (1968), President (1969), and Past President (1970). He was active in the planning and organization of the First International Congress for Plant Pathology in 1969, and in the organization of the International Society for Plant Pathology; he served as Councilor of ISPP from 1968 until his death. He was a member of AAAS, AIBS, and Sigma Xi.

Dr. Dimock took great pride in his profession, in Cornell and its Department of Plant Pathology, and in the community in which he lived. He did much for the development of all; his contributions will not only be remembered but will continue to influence in a positive manner their future course. He is survived by his widow, Edith; a daughter, Anne; and three sons, Douglas, Thomas, and Bradford.