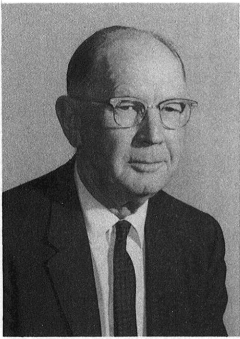


Kenneth Gardner Parker, 1906-1981

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Kenneth G. Parker, Professor Emeritus of Plant Pathology, died suddenly on October 1, 1981, thus ending more than a half-century of association with Cornell University.

Dr. Parker was born in Little York, IN, on March 22, 1906. After graduating from high school in Little York, he entered DePauw University and received the AB degree in 1928. His first association with Cornell was in 1927, when he enrolled in Elementary Mycology and General Plant Pathology in summer school. In

September, 1928, he began graduate study in the Plant Pathology Department but took a leave of absence beginning October 1, 1931, to serve as graduate assistant to Dr. T. E. Rawlins at the University of California, Berkeley, where he worked on the "buckskin" disease of sweet cherry and continued his Cornell thesis research on the fire blight disease of pear and apple. He resumed graduate study at Cornell in September, 1933, and was awarded the Ph.D. degree in January, 1934. Soon thereafter he accepted a position as extension fruit pathologist at Pennsylvania State University, but resigned when he was appointed Assistant Professor of Plant Pathology at Cornell in July, 1934. Dr. Parker was stationed at the Boyce Thompson Institute for Plant Research in Yonkers, New York, where, together with other Cornell faculty, he conducted studies of the Dutch elm disease. The results from this research were a major contribution to the understanding of this important disease and its causal organism. Shortly after the beginning of World War II the elm disease project was terminated and Dr. Parker returned to Ithaca to continue studies on diseases of fruit crops. He was appointed Associate Professor in 1947, Professor in 1951, and Professor Emeritus when he retired in 1970.

Professor Parker made many contributions to fruit tree pathology. He spent several years helping develop, perfect, and test spraying and dusting equipment for use in commercial orchards. He was instrumental in establishing the effectiveness of streptomycin blossom sprays for controlling fire blight. He was also responsible for perfecting the gibberellic acid treatment of "yellows"-affected sour cherry trees, which decreased crop losses from this disease. His detailed analyses of virus diseases under

orchard conditions yielded some of our best information on the dissemination of viruses of perennial plants. In cooperation with others he initiated studies on the relation of nematodes to root disease problems affecting orchard trees.

Professor Parker served as fruit tree extension pathologist from 1967 until his retirement. He was recognized as a leading world authority in the diagnosis of disease complexes and other disorders of fruit trees. Dr. Parker was especially helpful to graduate students, young faculty, and to others concerned with tree fruit production in New York.

Professor Parker persistently broadened his knowledge. In the early 1940s he spent a sabbatic leave studying soil phenomena at the University of Wisconsin. To become better acquainted with the numerous virus-caused diseases of stone fruits he divided a leave in 1951 between Riverside, CA, and Wenatchee, WA. In 1957-1958, he did bibliographical work on *Verticillium* wilt of fruit trees for the USDA, in Washington, DC, which became the basis for a definitive review of the topic.

Through his fundamental research on diseases of tree fruits Dr. Parker gained an international reputation. The students he trained, now located in various regions of the United States and in other parts of the world, are currently continuing and expanding this high level of research.

Professor Parker's contributions were recognized in 1961, when he received a citation from the New York State Horticultural Society for his contributions to the fruit industry. The citation expressly commended his work on virus diseases, on the development of disease-free planting stock, on fire blight, on nematodes and associated organisms, his cooperation in the development of spray machinery, and also his patience and cooperative efforts to help fruit growers and extension agents to diagnose, interpret, and control fruit disease problems. In 1970, a similar citation was presented by the National Apple Institute.

Professor Parker held memberships in the American Phytopathological Society, American Association for the Advancement of Science (Fellow), American Institute of Biological Sciences, Sigma Xi, and Phi Kappa Phi.

He is survived by his wife, Elinor Barnes Parker of Trumansburg; a niece, Donna Morgan Smith of Louisville, Kentucky; an uncle and several grand- and great-grand nieces and nephews.