

Robert Stanley Breed

October 17, 1877 — February 10, 1956

Robert Stanley Breed, Professor of Bacteriology Emeritus, died unexpectedly at his home in Geneva February 10, 1956.

Professor Breed entered upon his career in 1902 when he was named Professor and Head of the Department of Biology at Allegheny College. He served in this capacity until 1913, when he became Head of the Department of Bacteriology at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station at Geneva. In 1945, the Departments of Bacteriology and Chemistry at the Experiment Station were merged into the present Department of Food Science and Technology. At that time and at his own request, Professor Breed was relieved of administrative responsibilities and devoted his full time to research. He retired October 31, 1947, and was made Professor of Bacteriology Emeritus in Cornell University November 1, 1947.

Professor Breed was graduated from Amherst College in 1898. He received the M. S. degree from the University of Colorado in 1899 and the Ph.D. degree from Harvard University in 1902. He also studied at the University of Göttingen in 1910, at the University of Kiel in 1911, and at the Pasteur Institute in 1923.

Early in his career Professor Breed focused attention on dairy bacteriology, with emphasis on problems of dairy sanitation. He was also interested almost from the beginning of his professional life in bacteriological nomenclature. This led to his appointment as Permanent Secretary of the International Commission on Bacteriological Nomenclature. He also played a prominent part in World Dairy Congresses in Washington, London, Berne, and Rome.

Professor Breed held membership in the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Society of American Bacteriologists of which he was President in 1927, the American Public Health Association, the American Dairy Science Association, the Society of Applied Microbiology, the International Association of Milk Sanitarians, and the International Society of Microbiology. He was also a member of Sigma Xi, Phi Beta Kappa, and Phi Gamma Delta.

Author of numerous technical articles in Experiment Station publications and scientific journals, Professor Breed also made notable editorial contributions. Chief among these was his service since 1937 as Editor of *Bergey's Manual of Determinative Bacteriology*, a revision of which he had just about completed and upon which he did some work on the morning of his death.

Professor Breed also served as Associate Editor of the *Journal of Bacteriology*. For many years he was chairman of the Editorial Committee of the American Public Health Association having to do with the *Manual of Standard Methods for Dairy Products*. This manual passed through nine English editions and was translated into French and Spanish.

The milk supply of the City of Geneva afforded Professor Breed a fertile field of research close at home. Here it was that he perfected the technique which came to be known around the world as the "Breed Method" for the direct counting of bacteria in milk and cream. He also demonstrated, in close cooperation with the Geneva Board of Health of which he was long a member, the benefits to be derived by producers, distributors, and consumers of dairy products of a city-administered quality control laboratory operating under the supervision of one of his wide knowledge of public health matters. For more than 25 years the City of Geneva held a unique place for communities of its size in the State and nation for the high standards of its milk supply.

With all of his varied professional activity, Professor Breed still found time for many civic duties as well. He was a former President and moving spirit of the Geneva Historical Society. He was a former President of the University Club of Geneva. He was a member of the Geneva Rotary Club for more than 25 years. He was an elder in the First Presbyterian Church of Geneva. For many years he also assisted Mrs. Breed in Girl Scout work and delighted in citing as his reward the privilege of chaperoning girls who won trips to the circus for meritorious work in Scouting.

In 1941 he was singled out by the Geneva Kiwanis Club for its award for outstanding service to the community.

Professor Breed married Louise Miller Heim of Binghamton, N. Y., in 1899. She died in 1905. He later married Emma Margaret Edson of Meadville, Pa., who survives him, together with a daughter Alice, now Mrs. Girard Laviano of Woodside, Long Island.

Many notable achievements of lasting value stand as monuments to Professor Breed's memory in his chosen field of science. Probably nothing would have pleased him as much, however, as the many expressions of indebtedness for inspired leadership and helpful direction voiced at the time of his passing by those who were associated with him as students and co-workers. In mourning his loss, we rejoice that he was given the rare privilege of pursuing to the very end of his days the constructive work in which he found such profound satisfaction.

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