

Charles Glenwood Rickard

May 4, 1922 — October 20, 1993

Professor Emeritus Charles G. Rickard, 71, of 1234 Ellis Hollow Road, died Wednesday, October 20, 1993 at his home.

He was born on May 4, 1922 on a farm near Cairo, Hall County, Nebraska, where he spent his early years in farming activities. His family moved several times, eventually settling in Ithaca, New York. On June 10, 1943 he married Florence Mae Gates of Hamilton, New York.

After having completed the pre-veterinary collegiate requirements at Franklin and Marshall College, he matriculated in the New York State College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University, and was awarded a D.V.M. (Doctor of Veterinary Medicine) degree in 1943. He practiced veterinary medicine for two years at Catskill, New York. Then, after having been admitted to study in the Graduate School at Cornell, he was awarded a M.S. degree in Microbiology in 1946. At that time, he was appointed as Assistant Professor in the Department of Pathology of the College of Veterinary Medicine where he established the first Clinical Pathology Laboratory at that institution.

After four years as Assistant Professor and then as Associate Professor of Clinical Pathology, he was appointed Professor of Pathology, a title he held until his retirement in 1985.

His first sabbatic leave (1952-53) contributed to his meeting the requirements for a Ph.D. degree, which he received in 1957. It was spent at the Medical College, University of Michigan, studying pathological aspects of liver disease under Dr. C.V. Weller, a preeminent pathologist. The title of his thesis was "Liver Cell Dissociation". He was elected a Diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Pathologists in 1953.

His second sabbatic leave (1960-61) was spent in Tubingen, West Germany, at the Federal Research Institute for Virus Diseases of Animals, where he studied electron microscopy of virus-induced diseases in collaboration with Dr. Eva Reczko, an internationally recognized scientist.

Dr. Rickard was involved in diverse activities at the College of Veterinary Medicine. He served as Chairman of the Pathology Department from 1965 to 1973, as Acting Chairman of the Department of Microbiology, as Associate Dean for 15 years (1969-84), and as Acting Dean for one year immediately prior to his retirement.

He was Professor of Aquatic Animal Medicine from 1980 to 1984, and co-founder with Dr. Donald A. Abt of the University of Pennsylvania of “Aquavet”, a teaching program in aquatic animal medicine. The program involved collaboration with scientists at the Woods Hole Marine Biological Laboratory in Massachusetts. This initial venture predated the expansion of the Department of Avian Diseases and its re-naming as the Department of Avian and Aquatic Animal Medicine in the College of Veterinary Medicine.

In 1962, Dr. Rickard established the Oncology Laboratory for Cancer Research. From 1965 to 1976 he was Principal Investigator for research projects on feline and canine leukemia, largely supported by federal grants and contracts. One contract, supported entirely by funding from the National Cancer Institute, called for the design, construction, staffing and operation of a splendid, biohazard-safe laboratory building on off-campus land opposite the P. Philip Levine Laboratory for Poultry Disease Research on Hungerford Hill. His research involved viral induction of leukemias and sarcomas, characterization of tumor-producing viruses, and chemicals that interact to produce cancer.

He served during 1981-87 as the College’s veterinary representative in a U.S. consortium which assisted in establishing a modern veterinary college at the King Faisal University in Saudi Arabia.

He had extensive involvement in the Veterinary College’s capital projects during his last fifteen years there, including the Veterinary Research Tower and the master plan for the present building program.

Dr. Rickard was actively involved in the design and operation of a biohazard-controlled facility for the study of equine infectious anemia, a disease of enormous importance to the horse racing sport, and two other major research programs involving horses. One, a program to study equine bone and joint diseases in collaboration with the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, required readaption of the Warren Farm to construct a model harness racing track for experimental physiological studies. The other required a specialized staff of pharmacologists and facilities for research and monitoring of drug interventions in race horses.

The New York State Veterinary Medical Society awarded him the status of Distinguished Member, and in 1989 named him Veterinary Educator of the Year. He enjoyed membership in a large number of scientific societies and professional organizations, including the Societies of Sigma Xi and Phi Kappa Phi. In addition, he was elected to membership in the Society of Phi Zeta, the “Phi Beta Kappa” of veterinary medicine.

A careful and positive thinker, always sensitive to another point of view, never condescending and consistently optimistic, Dr. Rickard had a low-key and confidence-inspiring manner. His eloquent speech, his sterling integrity,

and his calmly persuasive manner were qualities that, along with his tall, strong physique made him a giant, indeed, among visionary, scholarly academic leaders. He was considered a genius by some, and admired for being a most patient teacher. He was a magnificent Cornellian whose impact upon the institution and the students he served will remain with them always.

An important avocational interest in Dr. Rickard's life was sailing his sloop, "Cricket". His sailboat, in turn, spawned his interest in and commitment to the United States Power Squadron (U.S.P.S.), an organization committed to teaching boating and boating safety, which consumed much of his retirement before and even after he became ill. He joined the U.S.P.S. in April 1976 and quickly rose through the ranks to become the Commander of the Ithaca Power Squadron for two years before he went on to become a Lieutenant Commander in New York's District 6. He was next in line to become the District Commander when his illness interrupted his boating career. All during his career in the U.S.P.S., he taught several courses every year and won the District Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1990 for his devotion to and active participation in more than 10 years of teaching boating. He is one of the few locally to have attained the designation of N, which signifies that he not only attained the highest possible rank in the U.S.P.S., but also that he took all of the courses available. He was rightfully proud of his "Full Certificate" classification.

Dr. Rickard is survived by his wife of fifty years; sisters, Mrs. Shirley Caplan and Mrs. Janice Stahr, both of Seattle; sons, Charles G. Rickard III of San Diego, David B. Rickard of Minneapolis, and Andrew W. Rickard of Burlington, Vermont; daughters, Jean (Mrs. Kenneth Sill) of Mendon, New York, and Claire (Mrs. George Whitcomb) of Orlando, Florida; and six grandchildren.

John M. King, Robert W. Kirk, George C. Poppensiek