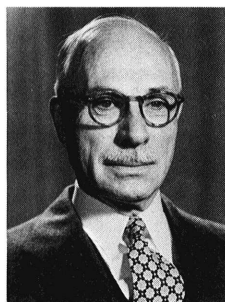


Frank Dunn Kern, 1883-1973

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Frank D. Kern, 90, Professor emeritus of Botany and Dean emeritus of the Graduate School at The Pennsylvania State University, died 28 September 1973, in State College, Pennsylvania. He had retired in 1950.

In recognition of his thirty-seven years of service to students and to the University, Penn State in 1971 named its new graduate center the Kern Graduate Building.

Dr. Kern became a charter member of The American Phytopathological Society at the organization's founding in 1908 and his study "The Rusts of White and Red Clover" was the first manuscript published in "Phytopathology" in 1911.

He was born June 29, 1883, in Reinbeck, Iowa, received a bachelor's degree at the University of Iowa in 1904, and a master of science degree from Purdue in 1907. During the period 1904-1910, he was a special agent of and then collaborator with the United States Department of Agriculture and associate botanist of the Purdue Agricultural Experiment Station, in these latter two capacities as assistant to J. C. Arthur. During this period he issued his first publications on plant diseases, and embarked on what was to be his lifetime field of scholarship, the plant rusts. From 1906-1910, he served four short periods as a research scholar at the New York Botanical Garden and, in 1910, as fellow in Botany at Columbia University. During his work with Arthur at Purdue, his attention was attracted to the genus *Gymnosporangium*. There had been few, if any, American studies of this genus after a series of papers by Farlow and by Thaxter issued from 1880 to 1891. This task, assumed in 1906, was culminated by the publication of his 1911 Columbia Ph.D. thesis "A Biologic and Taxonomic Study of the Genus *Gymnosporangium*."

Dr. Kern returned to Purdue in 1910 as instructor in cryptogamic botany, and in 1913 came to the (then) Pennsylvania State College. As head of the Botany Department he succeeded W. A. Buckhout who, in his forty-year tenure, had developed a high standard of botanical instruction, with eleven courses including two in plant pathology taught by a faculty of seven. Dr. Kern made staff additions, increased the fundamental and practical work of the department, and so increased the importance of the group that a new building named for Dr. Buckhout was built in 1930 and enlarged shortly after Kern's retirement in 1950. The department program under his leadership came to include research and teaching in pathology, mycology, anatomy, taxonomy, genetics, physiology, and mushroom culture.

In 1922, Penn State formally organized a Graduate School and Dr. Kern became the first Dean, a position held concurrently with the department headship until his retirement. This designation was, in Dr. Kern's mind, a local recognition of the role played by the botany department (including plant pathologists) in developing graduate work at Penn State.

Dr. Kern published over eighty papers from 1906 until his death, some twenty during his very active retirement years; at least two papers will appear posthumously. He was intensely proud of what he considered a unique record: in 1973, The Pennsylvania State University Press published his completely reworked *magnum opus* of 1911 as "A Revised Taxonomic Account of the Genus *Gymnosporangium*."

Through H. H. Whetzel, Dean Kern became acquainted with Carlos Chardon, a brilliant Ph.D. student from Puerto Rico at Cornell, and together they visited Puerto Rico in 1924. Through Chardon, Kern and Whetzel became actively involved in the mycology of Latin America, publishing together on the rusts and smuts of Puerto Rico (1926); on the Uredinales of Colombia (1930, 1933, the latter with H. W. Thurston, Jr.); rusts of Venezuela (with Thurston, 1934). In addition, Dr. Kern published on problems of rust terminology (with J. C. Arthur, 1926) rusts of Colombia (with Chardon, 1927); rusts of Santo Domingo (with R. Ciferri, 1930, and Ciferri and Thurston, 1933); and with Thurston alone on rusts of Colombia (1940) and of Venezuela (1943 and 1944).

Dr. Kern was active in many organizations, particularly The American Phytopathological Society (vice president, 1914); Mycological Society of America (president, 1945), AAAS (vice president and chairman for botanical sciences, 1945), and Phi Kappa Phi, the general scholastic honor society (national president, 1947-1951). He was a member of the Botanical Society of America, Sigma Xi, Gamma Sigma Delta, and the Pennsylvania Academy of Sciences, of which he was "convener chairman" of the first meeting in 1924 and president in 1929. Dr. Kern served as Acting Dean of the Colleges of Agriculture and Engineering of the University of Puerto Rico in 1925-1926, and again in 1933-1934. He was honored by the University of Puerto Rico with a D.Sc. degree in 1926.

In addition to his extensive administrative duties and his active research, Dr. Kern followed his own policy of requiring senior scholars to teach elementary courses by teaching some 51 semesters of elementary courses himself, as well as supervising graduate theses and teaching a graduate course on rusts and smuts. He published an introductory text on plant biology in 1947.

He is survived by two daughters, five grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren.