

James Cedric Carter, 1905-1981

E. B. Himelick



J. C. Carter, Plant Pathologist and Head Emeritus of the Section of Botany and Plant Pathology at the Illinois Natural History Survey and Professor Emeritus of Plant Pathology at the University of Illinois, died September 27, 1981, at the age of 75 years.

Dr. Carter was born October 25, 1905, at Wingate, Indiana, a son of Emma Lucinda (Bittle) Carter and Robert Nelson Carter. He spent early boyhood on a farm and graduated from the Jackson Township High School, West Point, Indiana, in 1924. He received the B.S. degree from Purdue University in 1928, was a vocational agriculture teacher from 1928 to 1930, and received the M.S. degree in 1932 and the Ph.D. degree in 1934 from Purdue University.

He served as an assistant in plant pathology at Purdue University from 1931 to 1934 and as a technical research assistant on fungicide studies at the University of Delaware during the summers of 1931 and 1932. On May 14, 1934, he joined the Section of Applied Botany and Plant Pathology of the Illinois Natural History Survey in the post of Assistant Botanist. His later advancements were to Associate Botanist (1946), Plant Pathologist (1947), and Head of the Applied Botany and Plant Pathology Section from January 1, 1955, until his retirement in 1974. He received a joint appointment to the faculty of the University of Illinois as Professor of Plant Pathology in 1955.

After 40 years of outstanding service and devotion as a researcher, educator, and administrator, he retired on June 1, 1974, and moved to Crawfordsville, Indiana, near the place where he was born. He continued part-time teaching at Wabash College in Crawfordsville during his retirement years.

Dr. Carter was a member of the American Phytopathological Society for over 40 years and was an authority on shade and ornamental tree diseases. Over the years, he worked on numerous diseases of trees and shrubs and was a primary influence in the early development of modern urban arboriculture in the United States. Some of the major tree diseases on which he worked were Verticillium wilt, wetwood of elm, anthracnose of oak and sycamore, elm phloem necrosis, Dutch elm disease, and several canker diseases of trees and shrubs. For over 25 years he was considered the foremost authority in the Midwest in the diagnosis of infectious and noninfectious diseases of trees and shrubs. His extensive knowledge and experience in observing disease symptoms, sectioning of fungal fruiting bodies, and identification of cultured organisms from infected plant material made him a highly valued resource person for the accurate diagnosing of tree diseases. His book "Diseases of Midwest Trees" (first published in an earlier form in 1964 as "Illinois Trees: Their Diseases"), remains

an important reference on the subject. In 1970, he published a companion manual on the selection, planting, and care of trees that is widely used by professionals in the fields of horticulture and arboriculture.

For several years Dr. Carter taught a course at the University of Illinois on diseases of ornamental plants. His students still remember him both for the practical approach used in field diagnosis of plant diseases and for his hundreds of diseased plant specimens and colored slides that he presented to illustrate the various stages of symptom development.

He was the author or coauthor of over 140 scientific publications. His research associates and graduate students while at the Illinois Natural History Survey were numerous. Those who started their professional careers under Dr. Carter's direction or were in his department during their professional careers were: Ralph Ames, James D. Bilbruck, William M. Black, G. H. Boewe, Gerald L. Born, Richard J. Campana, J. Leland Crane, Don B. Creager, E. A. Curl, Arthur W. Engelhard, Robert A. Evers, John M. Ferris, Junius L. Forsberg, Walter Hartstirn, E. B. Himelick, Paul F. Hoffman, Bruce L. Johnson, W. L. Klarman, Dan Neely, Robert S. Perry, Stephen R. Ricketts, Richard D. Schein, Norman C. Schenck, Irving R. Schneider, Donald F. Schoeneweiss, James Schuster, Robert J. Slattery, George J. Stessel, L. R. Tehon, and Bert M. Zuckerman.

Dr. Carter received many awards and honors during his career. Among them were a special award from the National Arborist Association for his research on the wetwood disease of elm; the Outstanding Service and Past Presidents awards from the Midwestern Chapter, International Society of Arboriculture; and the Author's Citation, Past Presidents, and Honorary Life Member awards from the International Society of Arboriculture. He was an honorary member of the Indiana Arborist Association and the Illinois Commercial Arborist Association. For several years, he served as chairman of the Illinois Tree Experts Examining Board and on many Natural History Survey and University of Illinois committees.

Dr. Carter contributed significantly to the professional field of arboriculture through his personal research and his many years of association with the International Society of Arboriculture. He was a gracious person who freely shared his knowledge and experiences and inspired his professional associates. His friendly and kindly disposition was his constant personal trait. Dr. Carter is still with us in the form of the personal inspiration he gave to those who worked with him and the many professional contributions he made for the improvement of the urban environment through the protection and maintenance of shade trees.

Dr. Carter married Margaret Lucile (Rogers) Carter, also originally from Indiana, on August 18, 1934, at Crown Point, Indiana. They always graciously loved and cared for each other throughout their 47 years of marriage. He is survived by his wife and one son.