ASPB Pioneer Member

Richard Harry Hageman

Richard "Dick" Harry Hageman, professor emeritus, was born April 14, 1917, in Powell, Wyoming, a son of Frank and Creda Wright Hageman. He died December 4, 2002, in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan. He married Margaret Elizabeth Catlett on August 14, 1941, in Waleetka, Oklahoma. He graduated from Kansas State University in 1938 with a B.S. in chemistry and received his M.S. in chemistry from Oklahoma A&M College in 1940. After working for two years as an assistant chemist at the Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station, he served in the Army Chemical Corps from 1942 to 1946, training troops in protective tactics against chemical warfare agents. He continued to serve in the Army Reserve until 1968, when he retired with the rank of colonel. Following his active-duty military service, he resumed physiological research in the chemistry section of USDA in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. He returned to graduate studies in 1950 with Professor Daniel Arnon and received his Ph.D. in plant physiology at the University of California at Berkeley in 1953. Dr. Hageman then joined the Department of Agronomy at the University of Illinois in 1954 as an assistant professor of plant physiology, advancing to associate professor in 1957 and to professor in 1961.

He avidly pursued a research/teaching career at the University of Illinois and broadened his horizons with sabbatical leaves to the Long Ashton Research Station, Bristol, En- gland (1960–1961), as a Rockefeller fellow; to the Department of Biochemistry, Michigan State University (1967–1968) as a visiting professor; and to the University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia (1975–1976), on a senior research scholar award from the Australian– American Educational Foundation. He retired froM the University of Illinois in 1984 after an illustrious 30-year research/teaching career.

Professor Hageman's distinguished career at the University of Illinois involved pioneering research on the application of plant biochemical and physiological techniques to improve crop productivity. He was the first to isolate and characterize leaf nitrite reductase from plants. This research, together with his work on determining the intracellular localization of nitrate and nitrite reductase and on the identification of the primary source of reductant for nitrate reductase, played a major role in establishing the metabolic pathway and limitations of nitrate assimilation in leaves. He enthusiastically pursued the concept that rate-limiting enzymes—exemplified by his research on nitrate reductase—served as physiological control points limiting crop productivity.

This fertile research area was the subject of many of the graduate and postdoctoral students who studied under Dr. Hageman. He was one of only six plant scientists (among 1,000 scientists in all disciplines) whose publications were cited most frequently by their peers during the period of 1965–1978. Indeed, he published extensively, with more than 25 book chapters and 140 technical papers detailing his research.

In addition to his research, Professor Hageman exerted a major influence on the direction of plant physiology as a science through his guidance of students, associates, and junior faculty. The upper-level graduate course, Enzymes and Metabolic Pathways of Plants, which he taught for many years, attracted students from various disciplines. Because of the rigor, it was widely appreciated by students who were seeking information on how specific biochemical processes were integrated in whole plant function. Many of the more than 50 students and postdocs who undertook research projects in his laboratory are today widely known for their work and in many cases

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carry on the Hageman tradition of approaching plant productivity through the identification and characterization of rate-limiting enzymes.

Professor Hageman served in many capacities in professional societies, including membership in several and service on the executive committees of ASPB and the Crop Science Society of America; as vice president and president of the Midwest Section of ASPB; on the editorial boards of *Plant Physiology, Plant Biochemical Journal, Crop Science,* and *Agronomy Journal;* and on numerous grant panels and award committees.

He received several prestigious awards, including the Crop Science Achievement Award, Agronomic Research Award, Fellow of the Crop Science Society, Fellow of the American Society of Agronomy, Duggar Award, Funk Award for Research, Spencer Award for Outstanding Achievement in Agricultural Chemistry, Hoagland Award, and the Alumni Fellow Award from Kansas State University. The breadth of his awards attests to his broad array of scientific endeavors to improve crop productivity for the betterment of agriculture and mankind.

In addition to a sterling research/teaching career at the University of Illinois, Dr. Hageman was an inspiring mentor for many students, a strong family person, and a close friend to many of us. He enjoyed woodworking and was an avid gardener who did not spare the nitrogen and had a running battle with squirrels in the fruit trees. He is survived by his wife Elizabeth (Liz) of 61 years; one son, James, of Mount Pleasant; two daughters, Peggy Burke, of Mount Pleasant, and Janet Chrispeels of Santa Barbara; 12 grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

Jim Harper
Fred Below
Marlowe Thorne
John Hanson
University of Illinois