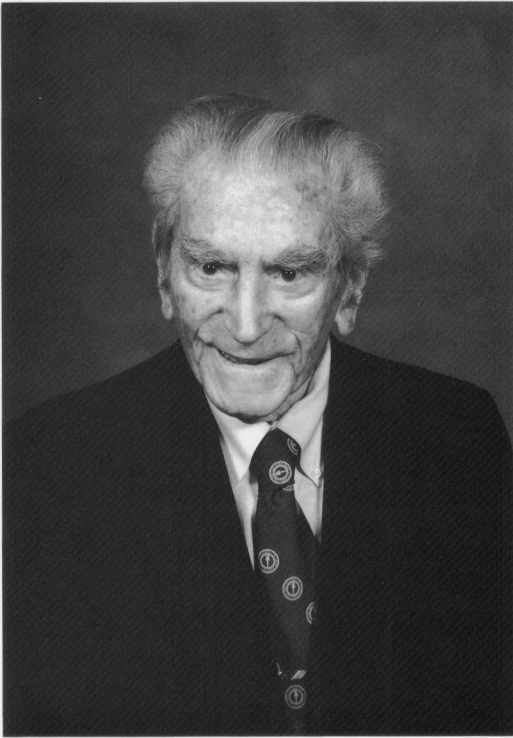


## OBITUARIES

### JESSE B. LESLIE

1891-1993



Jesse B. Leslie

Jesse B. Leslie, who may truly be described as the father of organized mosquito control, died on April 5, 1993, at the age of 101. Mr. Leslie began his career in mosquito control in 1913, shortly after the Mitchell Act (the enabling legislation for New Jersey Mosquito Control) was enacted. Shortly afterward, the director of the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station asked Mr. Leslie to organize a mosquito commission in Camden County. He served there as its first superintendent. By 1915, his work brought him from southern New Jersey to Bergen County in northern New Jersey. His career at the Bergen County Mosquito Commission continued there (as chief inspector, superintendent, and executive secretary) until his final appointment as honorary commissioner, a post that he held until his death.

Mr. Leslie's mosquito control work spanned much of the geography of the state. After his college graduation, he was a seasonal employee at the Union County Mosquito Commission. Some years later in acknowledgment of the benefits of source reduction, he was involved with drainage projects in Ocean County, and other state-contracted meadows drainage work.

In 1955, Jesse B. Leslie was a member of the New Jersey State Mosquito Study Commission, which was organized to consider the assembly of a state commission that would offer state aid to organized county mosquito commissions. The next year, the legislature acknowledged the study commission's recommendations, and formed the State Mosquito Control Commission, to which Mr. Leslie was appointed. He served the State Commission as chairman from 1964 to 1970. His input to the commission allowed it to coordinate and appropriate state funds in an efficient manner; some of the programs developed then, such as the Equipment Loan Program and state grants for water management projects, continue to function today. Mr. Leslie was also a member of the New Jersey Pesticide Council Advisory Commission in 1969.

From 1917 to 1919 Mr. Leslie served as an officer in the United States Army, where he was in command of antimosquito work in both Alabama and in New Jersey. An educated man, Mr. Leslie held degrees from Rutgers, in both engineering (cum laude, 1913; M.Sc., 1915), and in law (L.L.B. and J.D., 1917). Mr. Leslie was admitted to the New Jersey Bar in 1921, and practiced law in the state until he reached the age of 100.

Jesse B. Leslie was a member of the Borough of Leonia (Bergen County) Board of Health and the Board of Education. By appointment of the New Jersey Supreme Court, he served on the Bergen County Committee on Character and Fitness from 1955 to 1970; he was chairman for 10 years. In his honor, the Leonia Board of Education grants a high school scholarship in his name.

An author of countless numbers of presentations at the annual meetings of the New Jersey Mosquito Control Association, his papers appear in the *Proceedings*. It is also at that meeting that

the Associated Executives of Mosquito Control Work in New Jersey (a professional group) announce the winner of the J. B. Leslie Award, which is given to that single individual who performs an outstanding service to mosquito control in the state.

As a national figure, Mr. Leslie developed a plan for the first mosquito control project in Massachusetts sometime during the 1920s. This eventually was used to form the basis of that state's mosquito control laws. He consulted for mosquito control work in Connecticut, and conceived of a strategy for mosquito control for the 1938 World's Fair in Flushing Meadow, New York. Mr. Leslie was an invited speaker at the 1967 meeting of the American Mosquito Control Association in San Francisco. In 1980, he received the Presidential Citation of the A.M.C.A. at the Salt Lake City meeting. He was listed in *Who's Who in the East*.

Jesse B. Leslie's leadership qualities were exemplified by every task he pursued. As a varsity college quarterback, a municipal magistrate, and as the first superintendent of not one, but two, county mosquito commissions, he was successful. If New Jersey is recognized for its national leadership in organizing mosquito control, certainly Mr. Leslie led New Jersey.

A life member of the Lions Club, the American Legion, and the Leonia Presbyterian Church, Mr. Leslie was married to the former Elizabeth S. Thompson. They had two children, six grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

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