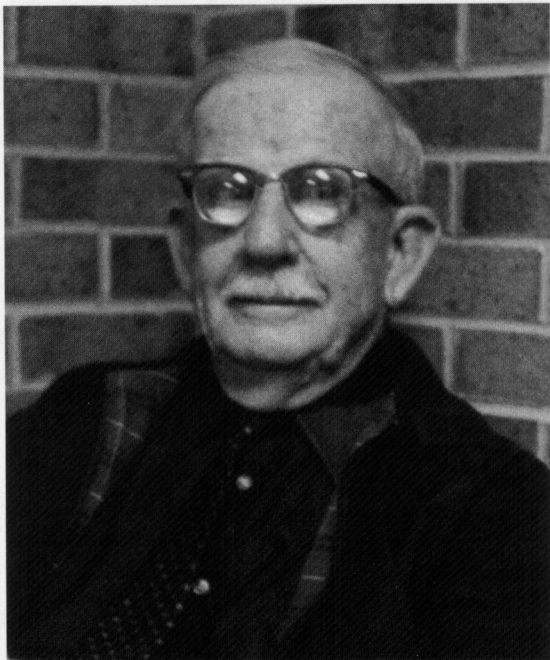


## OBITUARY

### PROFESSOR WILLIAM ROBERT HORSFALL 1908-1998



Dr. William R. Horsfall, Professor Emeritus of the Department of Entomology, University of Illinois, passed away at the age of 90 at his home at the Clark-Lindsey Village, Urbana, IL, on November 18, 1998. He is survived by his wife of 68 years, Annie Laurie Ellis Horsfall, and was preceded in death by a sister and two brothers.

Dr. Horsfall was born on January 11, 1908, in Mountain Grove, MO, but spent most of his formative years in southwestern Arkansas, where his father served as president of what has become the University of Arkansas at Monticello; his mother served as this institution's first dean of women. After receiving his Bachelor of Science degree in biology from the University of Arkansas in 1928 and his master's degree in agriculture from Kansas State University in 1929, Dr. Horsfall entered into study under Professor G. W. Herrick at Cornell University and earned his doctorate degree in entomology in 1933. He subsequently taught at Cornell for a time. Up until World War II, he held faculty positions at the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville and at South Dakota State University-Brookings, where he was also head of the Department of Biology.

During World War II, Dr. Horsfall served in the

Pacific Theatre as the Commander of the U.S. Army's 17th Malarial Unit. After 3 years of service, he was discharged as a lieutenant colonel and re-joined the entomology faculty at the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville. Dr. Horsfall remained active in the U.S. Army Reserves after his discharge and retired from this activity in 1965. In 1947, he joined the Department of Entomology at the University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign as an assistant professor in medical entomology, a position he held until his retirement as professor in 1976.

Most mosquito people will remember Dr. Horsfall as the scholarly master of the bionomics and management of mosquitoes, particularly floodwater varieties. He actually began to develop his basic philosophies about insects and their control while he was working on such insects as grapevine sawfly, *Erythrastipides pygmaeus* (Say), as a student at Cornell University. His conception of insect bionomics was strengthened and fine-tuned while working on meloid parasitoids of grasshoppers at South Dakota State University. Dr. Horsfall's favorite remark to his students stemming from that era of his career was, "Effective control measures are dictated by the bionomics of the insects." Unfortunately, this critical concept was lost to us during the chemical age of 1945 to 1965, but it is now considered a novel approach since the advent of the integrated pest management paradigm of the 1970s.

Many who knew Dr. Horsfall personally and professionally point to his military experience during World War II as the time when he began to see the potential for applying his basic philosophy to manage mosquitoes and mosquito-borne diseases. Armed with the bionomic information he had gathered on the mosquitoes of New Guinea, and with oil as his only larvicide, he was able to lead his malaria survey unit to accomplishing the near elimination of malaria as a problem on that island.

Dr. Horsfall's scholarly potential became fully realized when he joined the entomology faculty at the University of Illinois. In this atmosphere, he developed and taught a variety of courses focusing on insect bionomics, insect control, and medical entomology. His research efforts were centered on mosquitoes and mosquito-borne diseases and their control. In the process of accomplishing his teaching and research responsibilities, Dr. Horsfall also mentored some 21 doctoral degree and 20 master's degree students in the field of medical entomology.

Over his career, Dr. Horsfall published 5 books and more than 140 scientific papers and bulletins. An active member in the American Mosquito Control Association, the Entomological Society of America, and many other professional organizations, he also served as a consultant to several governmental and academic agencies worldwide—the World Health Organization, the National Science Foundation, the Department of Defense, the U.S. Public Health Service, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Tennessee Valley Authority, to name a few. Dr. Horsfall was also one of the founders of organized mosquito control in Illinois and was an organizer, charter member and first honorary member of the Illinois Mosquito and Vector Control Association.

Dr. Horsfall received many honors for his scholarly achievements and contributions to entomology and science in general. He was the first recipient (along with Maurice Provost) of the AMCA's Harold Gray Memorial Medal of Honor and received such other prestigious awards as AMCA's Distinguished Service Award, the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene's Harry Hoogstraal medal, the Finnish Zoological Society's Award of Merit, and the University of Illinois' Wakefield Award for Excellence in Teaching. Also, to express their appreciation for Dr. Horsfall's loyalty to the affairs of the University of Illinois, the institution that had provided him an academic home for so many years honored him with membership into the President's Council and the Centuria Circle, the University's highest donor recognition award. Dr. Horsfall and his wife, Annie Laurie, were also recognized by the University of Illinois for their generous support to the University Library and the Spurlock Museum of World Culture.

Despite all the awards and other forms of recognition Dr. Horsfall received for his scholarly achievements, he found his greatest sense of satisfaction and reward in the students his academic program produced. He took great pride in his en-

tomological pedigree, which began with Professors Comstock and Herrick and extended on through him to the students he mentored. As a mentor, Dr. Horsfall was a demanding taskmaster, and stories lovingly abound among his former students as to who had it the toughest. However, his gruff nature was only a veneer, for underneath the rough exterior, there was a true humanitarian who cherished his association with students. He understood that for a student to become a competent professional entomologist, he or she had to be tempered with hard work and discipline both in and out of the classroom. The Horsfall pedigree, known as the "Horsfall Mafia," now extends to the third and fourth generations. To a person, Dr. Horsfall's former students will agree that, while he was capable of detailed and erudite work as embryonic development of mosquitoes under thermal stress, at the same time, he kept a strong connection to the practical roots of entomology. Considering Dr. Horsfall's clear communication skills, acute scientific instinct, total honesty, curiosity, and warm humility, he was the ideal model of an entomologist for his students to have. He will be sorely missed, but his legend and legacy will continue to live on in his students and their memories of him as teacher, mentor, counselor, and friend. "Rework" no more! The Doc has laid down his red pen.

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