Reported Deaths

FRANCIS C. STARK, JR., professor emeritus, University of Maryland, died 17 Sept. 2003 of cancer at age 84. Born and raised in Oklahoma, he earned a BS at Oklahoma A & M (now Oklahoma State University) in 1940 and a MS at the University of Maryland in 1941. His graduate study was interrupted by military service in 1942, when he was inducted into the Army Air Force where he became a B-52 pilot. He served as an instructor on this huge aircraft at his Tennessee base for the rest of the war. He returned to Maryland as an extension professor in vegetable crops in 1946 and completed PhD requirements in 1948.

In his professional career at the University of Maryland, Stark was continually involved in extension, teaching, and research. He was an innovative teacher and especially enjoyed presiding for years at undergraduate seminar. His scope in research was unusually broad in that he was active in breeding tomatoes and cantaloupes while working extensively in physiology and vegetable crop nutrition, this to include much work on foliar feeding. He introduced the Chesapeake tomato and built up germplasm, which led to later introduction of the Dorchester and Caroline tomatoes.

In 1964, Stark was appointed chair of the Department of Horticulture. In his 10 years in that position, he demonstrated outstanding administrative talent. In 1974 he was chosen as the first provost of the then newly organized Division of Agriculture and Life Sciences, a position he held until his retirement in 1980. In retirement he was called back in 1981 and 1982 to serve as acting vice chancellor of academic affairs. In 1983, he served for several months as special assistant to the vice chancellor–vice president of the university.

Stark was a leader in all societies in which he walked. Significant in his extensive off-campus service was 13 years as chair of the Governor's Commission for the Study of Regulation of Migratory Labor, his 32 years on the Capital Area Association of Christian Churches Board, and his 9 years on the Lynchburg College Board of Trustees.

A member of ASHS since 1940, Stark was active throughout his 63 years of membership. He was an active participant at all annual meetings, served in an array of committees and groups, and was elected fellow in 1972. Retirement did not end his service to ASHS, for in 1999 he became the society's second archivist–historian. It was he who proposed interviewing past presidents to build a videotape collection. When he began this work, the idea quickly expanded to include long-time active members. At the time of his death, he had completed about 75 interviews and had appointments for more at the centennial conference in Rhode Island.

Stark is survived by his wife of 62 years, Dorothy Lucille, a son, F.C. Stark, III, a brother, Roger, four grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. His daughter, Carolyn Reich, survived her father but died 28 Feb. 2004 in Dallas.

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