

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION ON THE DEATH OF RICHARD L. WEBB

Richard L. Webb, Professor of Anatomy and former chairman of the Department of Anatomy, died at his home on Friday, November 10, at the age of 59. As colleagues and friends we keenly feel his loss.

He was born in Farmer City, Illinois and attended Moore Township High School. After receiving the A.B. degree in 1924 and the M.S. in 1925 from the University of Illinois, he entered the College of Medicine and received the Ph.D. degree from that university in 1931. He remained there on the teaching staff, rising to the rank of Professor in 1945. After a year as a Visiting Professor at Washington University, St. Louis, he came to Indiana in 1946 and in 1948 was made head of the Department of Anatomy, which post he held until the creation of the combined department of Anatomy and Physiology in 1958.

Dr. Webb was widely known among anatomists and physiologists for his studies of the circulation of blood in the minute vessels. The principal object of his study was the vascular bed in the wing of the bat, which is particularly well suited because of its transparency, and because of the ready availability of bats in the many caves of southern Indiana. The excellent moving pictures he made of the blood flow in these vessels have been widely viewed and admired. But his most absorbing interest was in the lymphatic vessels; here lay his greatest competence and major contribution. These studies, begun at the University of Illinois in his early years, continued throughout his scientific career. His intense interest, special skills and extensive knowledge of the literature culminated in a scholarly review of the field appearing in the Annual Review of Physiology of 1952. Unfortunately, failing health prevented a vigorous pursuit of this interest, although he continued his work and teaching until shortly before his death.

As a teacher he was thorough in preparation and logical in presentation. He always welcomed comment from his students and was generous with his time for advice and consultation. They in turn admired and respected him. As chairman he acted efficiently and fairly. Those of us who worked under him always felt that our interests and those of the department were in good hands. One of his principal teaching interests was in the anatomy of the nervous system, and it is ironic that it was a disease of the nervous system which resulted in his death. It is a measure of his courage, his devotion to his family and loyalty to his profession, that he chose to undergo a new and hazardous operation in the hope of regaining his capabilities, rather than continue as he might have through many years of gradually failing strength.

Dr. Webb was a member of Kappa Delta Rho social fraternity, Phi Beta Pi medical fraternity and past president of the University of Illinois chapter of the honorary scientific fraternity Sigma Xi. He was a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and an especially loyal member of the American Association of Anatomists, faithfully attending meetings, presenting papers and encouraging the members of his department to do likewise.

In recognition of his devotion to the University and to his profession, be it resolved that the faculty extend its sympathy to his wife, Pauline, to his daughter Mrs. Don Hanna, and her three children, and to his sisters Mrs. Grover Watson and Mrs. Clarence E. Simpson, and that copies of this resolution be sent to them.

Paul Nicoll
Stanley Rafalko
Martha Strong
Raymond Murray, Chairman