IN MEMORIAM

WILLIAM FRANCIS GIDLEY

In the death of William Francis Gidley on May 18, 1965, the profession of pharmacy lost one of its most beloved, devoted and respected teachers. To those who knew him personally, either in the classroom or by association with one of his many activities within the profession, in his church and in civic life, his memory is a treasured possession. This soft-spoken, gracious and well-humored gentleman was in every sense, a dedicated educator beloved by his students, co-workers and associates.

He was married in 1910 to Mamie Belford of Holly, Michigan, who survives him together with three daughters, Mrs. Wayne Bales of Orange, Texas; Mrs. James D. Burnham; and Mrs. William H. Brydson both of Austin; 11 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren.

Dean Gidley was born in Holly, Michigan, on November 5, 1882. He began his career as a drug clerk while attending high school in Holly. He attended the College of Pharmacy at the University of Michigan and received the Pharmaceutical Chemist (PhC.) and the B.S. degree in 1908. Seeking to broaden his education he also took courses in the School of Medicine and because of his achievements in bacteriology was selected as a special assistant to work on bacterial proteins in the food and drug laboratory; he also served as tutor in the Medical School.
In the Fall of 1909, Mr. Gidley accepted the deanship of the College of Pharmacy at Mercer University at the age of 26; he also served as chemist and bacteriologist for the Board of Health of the City of Macon, Georgia. Three years later (1912), he was appointed to a professorship in materia medica in the College of Pharmacy at Purdue University.

Professor Gidley remained at Purdue for 12 years save for one year's leave of absence in 1918, during which he served as assistant chief of the Medical Staff of E. R. Squibb and Sons of New York; from 1920-24, he served as professor of pharmacy. During the period at Purdue University he utilized every opportunity to broaden and strengthen his education in order to fit him the better for his profession of teaching. His medical education began at the University of Michigan and was continued during the summer months at the University of Chicago (Rush) Medical School. He completed all of the course work in the medical curriculum except the clinical requirements. This medical education he used to good advantage in the classroom.

In the summer of 1924, he was offered a professorship in and Head of the Department of Pharmacy at the University of Texas Medical School in Galveston. In 1926 when the Department became a College, Professor Gidley assumed the Deanship of the new College.
He promoted the move of the College to the Main University in Austin in order that students might enroll in courses which became necessary in the three-year course in pharmacy and for the forthcoming four-year curriculum leading to the B.S. degree. He also saw the College grow from a student body of 100 in 1924 to more than 700 in 1948.

After almost 40 years of teaching and administrative work and a failing health he relinquished the deanship in 1947 to devote full time to his favorite vocation—teaching. He also found time to refresh his education by reading and auditing courses offered in the University—this enabled him to excell in the classroom. His thirst for knowledge was equaled only by his concern for the students and he devoted himself unselfishly to their welfares. He became Emeritus Professor of Pharmacy in 1957.

Dean Gidley was active in national professional and scientific organizations and a member of several national honorary societies. These included the American Pharmaceutical Association (life member), the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Association of University Professors, Texas Pharmaceutical Association, American Association of Bacteriologists, Indiana and Texas Academies of Science. He was nationally recognized by being elected a member of the Revision Committee of the Pharmacopeia of the United State of America (1930-40) and appointments to committees and sections devoted to national pharmaceutical activities. He was a member of the Methodist Church, a Mason, a member of the Scottish Rite, and a Shriner and a member of the Kiwanis.
He will be remembered by many of his fellowmen as one who was a member of male quartets and church choirs, where his clear tenor voice stood out as an expression of his love of music and song.

Dean Gidley is also remembered by his former students for his gentle, modest dignity, patience and encouragement to them. In 1959 the Alumni Association of the College of Pharmacy established the W. F. Gidley Appreciation Fund with this tribute to him:

"It is impossible to speak of Dean Gidley other than in superlatives. Loveable, gentlemanly, scholarly, kindly—he has always been a man in the very best sense of that meaningful term. Those who have known him love him; the better they have known him, the more they have loved him. His sterling qualities and resplendent spirit have inspired many pharmacy students throughout their college careers and left indelible impressions that still remain to comfort them as pharmacy alumni. The love and respect he enjoys from his former students were earned by his fairness and sympathetic attention to their problems. We have never known a man, whatever his job in life, to perform his duties more honorably or with greater humility."

His publications include the following:


"History of the University of Texas College of Pharmacy." Texas Druggist. September, 1931.

"Laboratory Guide for Advanced Pharmacy." 1931.


"Pharmaceutical and Medical Latin." (with Joseph R. Moreno), September, 1959.

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Henry R. Henze
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