MEMORIAL RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

ON THE DEATH OF EMERITUS PROFESSOR WALTER H. JAESCHKE

Walter H. Jaeschke, a Milwaukee native, born November 25, 1909 and died September 18, 2001, received both his B.S. and M.D. degrees from the University of Wisconsin, and spent his entire professional career on the faculty of the U.W. Medical School. After completing his medical studies in 1934, he interned at the Medical College of Virginia, returning in 1935 to pursue a residency in Medicine at Wisconsin General Hospital (now University Hospital). From 1937 to 1942, he was an instructor in Pathology and Clinical Pathology. Jaeschke joined the faculty in 1942 and served as professor of Pathology from 1950 until his retirement in 1980, with appointments at the Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene and the University Hospital.

The career of Walter Jaeschke spanned the years in which the disciplines of anatomic and clinical pathology were emerging as complex scientific specialties in medicine. Although his initial intention was to enter the private practice of Internal Medicine, the first professor of Pathology, Dr. Charles Bunting, convinced him to enrich his background as an instructor in Anatomic Pathology for two years. In 1941, Dean William S. Middleton encouraged him to join Dr. William D. Stovall's laboratory division, which included both the hospital clinical laboratories and the State Laboratory of Hygiene. It was in this challenging environment that Jaeschke acquired his passion for laboratory medicine, which became his lifelong pursuit. At the State Laboratory, new techniques were being introduced for the isolation and identification of microorganisms. The field of diagnostic immunology was incorporating more sophisticated methodology. Jaeschke was particularly involved in the fields of clinical chemistry and hematology, with the introduction of liver and kidney function tests, the prothrombin test, and others. He was the first clinician to perform bone marrow biopsies at the hospital, and with Dr. Stovall, helped establish the hospital's blood bank.

Dr. Jaeschke combined the talents of a superb diagnostician and outstanding teacher. For many years, he was Medical Director of the School of Medical Technology, one of the first university-based programs. He also directed the Second-Year Medical School course in Laboratory Medicine. The latter provided medical students hands-on experience in performing a number of laboratory procedures that they would encounter in general medical practice. For his teaching prowess and enthusiasm, Jaeschke received the Medical School's Basic Science Teaching Award twice, the Clinician of the Year Award, and the Independent Study Program Teacher of the Year Award several times. The Medical Alumni Association later awarded him their Emeritus Faculty Award.

Perhaps Dr. Jaeschke's greatest contributions to academia came from his uncanny diagnostic abilities, combined with one-on-one teaching. The Surgical Pathology Laboratory in the University Hospital was remarkable for its open, inviting atmosphere. Jaeschke promoted discussion and interaction between surgeons, other specialists, and the Pathology staff. Throughout the day, staff physicians would bring their residents and students to consult on cases with Dr. Jaeschke. He was always available to discuss diagnoses at the microscope and to provide supporting illustrations and reference material. His patience and easy-going personality endeared him to scores of students and house staff. Not only did many Pathology residents acquire their skills under his tutelage, but also dozens of residents from other specialties elected to spend months of training in his laboratory.

As the field of surgical pathology expanded scientifically, Walter Jaeschke was at the forefront. With the expansion of pathology residency programs, more and more pathologists located to smaller hospitals in Wisconsin. Jaeschke then became a resource to these younger colleagues, who would often refer cases to (continued)
him for a second opinion. By the same token, his clinical correlation conferences were always well attended by community pathologists. The presence of high quality medical laboratory services in Wisconsin can be regarded as one of the important legacies of Walter Jaeschke.

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