On January 25, 1969, Edwin E. Osgood, M.D. attained his seventieth birthday and retired as Professor of Medicine at the University of Oregon Medical School, Portland, Oregon. This climaxed a distinguished career in Hematology and Experimental Medicine which spanned almost half a century of academic achievements.

Dr. Osgood served as an instructor in biochemistry at the University of Oregon Medical School from 1921-25, and was awarded his M.D. degree in 1924. After post-doctoral training at the University of Vienna he returned to this institution and acted as Director of Laboratories from 1928-36. Research studies initiated during this period of time were carried out in the Departments of Biochemistry and Medicine. In 1947 he was appointed Professor of Medicine and Head of the Division of Experimental Medicine.

From the early 1930’s until the present, Oz, as he is known by most of his colleagues and associates, has been an indefatigable investigator. The results of his labors have been presented in approximately two hundred publications covering almost all aspects of hematologic research. Two major textbooks serve as important landmarks, both in Dr. Osgood’s career and for the science of hematology. In 1937, in collaboration with Clarice Ashworth, Oz produced “An Atlas of Hematology.” The meticulous observations in this volume were of primary importance in removing mysticism from morphologic diagnosis and establishing firm criteria for all cell lines of the blood-forming organs. In
1940 Dr. Osgood published “A Textbook of Laboratory Diagnosis” which served for many years as the fundamental text of clinical pathological examination. Many present-day practitioners of hematology were weaned on this important work.

Dr. Osgood’s academic and investigational career has spanned an important period of time. During this interval hematology has become a quantitative scientific activity which has contributed important insights to molecular biology, immunology and oncology. Dr. Osgood was instrumental in this progress. His broad interests and catholic viewpoint contributed greatly to our current concepts of growth and development, neoplasia, and therapy of hematologic disease. Starting in the early 1920’s and extending through the 1930’s a series of his publications quantitated the various hematologic procedures and presented ranges for normal and pathological states in meticulous statistical terms. Such data still supply the background for most present-day hematologic investigations. This approach culminated in the formation of the Committee for Clarification of the Nomenclature of Cells and Diseases of the Blood and Blood-Forming Organs. Under the chairmanship of Dr. Osgood a recommended terminology was derived and promulgated to aid in the clarity of hematologic communications.

An important advance in understanding hematologic mechanisms was supplied by Young and Osgood who initiated studies on the then new procedure of bone marrow aspiration. Osgood, after corresponding with Brun, performed one of the first such analyses in the United States. It might be mentioned that the second aspiration carried out in the Oregon laboratory was done on Dr. Osgood. The normal values for bone marrow aspiration specimens were established for living subjects and cadavers and the first publication in this field presented in 1935. By the next year Osgood in collaboration with Brownlee had devised methods for the culture of human bone marrow. In 1939 Oz applied the procedure and concept of bone marrow aspiration to the therapy of aplastic anemia and attempted the first bone marrow transplantation.

The technic of tissue culture was employed to further understand the growth and development of normal and pathologic cells in the bloodforming organs. Through such culture methods the first studies on the life span of leukocytes were initiated. This led to the successful development of long-term cultures of human leukemic cells. A valuable tool was thereby made available for diverse investigations into the morphology, kinetics, biochemistry and pathology of the leukemic state.

Radiation biology has also benefited from the extensive investigational and clinical studies performed by Dr. Osgood and his associates. The use of body-wide spray irradiation and subsequently P-32 in the long-term continuous therapy of the chronic leukemias was noteworthy. Oz has firmly championed and popularized the use of P-32 in the therapy of polycythemia rubra vera. All of these studies have been extrapolated into theoretical concepts of growth and malignancy having fundamental importance.

The stimulating environment created by Dr. Osgood is reflected in the extensive contributions made by his students and associates at the University of Oregon Medical School. Almost all phases of hematologic subspecialties have been encompassed. A. J. Seaman documented many of the clinical fea-
tures of the leukemias, evaluated and placed in clear perspective the value of anticoagulant therapy and extensively contributed to studies of in vivo coagulation. H. Tivey introduced some of the most sophisticated statistical approaches for the analysis of survival data in disease processes, and particularly applied such concepts to the leukemias. J. G. Li initially discovered and prepared phytohemagglutinin. D. A. Rigas established the chemical procedures for the extraction of phytohemagglutinin, and subsequently purified and characterized the mitogenic and hemagglutinating components. R. D. Koler and D. A. Rigas discovered hemoglobin-H and biochemically and genetically established the critical role of this substance in the hemoglobinopathies. B. Pirofsky introduced the bromelin procedure for the demonstration of erythrocyte antibodies and has contributed clinical, serologic and theoretical data to the study of autoimmunization. J. Brook, D. P. Jenkins and R. K. Lawson presented the first methods and electron microscopic studies of the expanded and uncoiled chromosomes from human leukocytes. Dr. Osgood’s influence is apparent in the diversity of interests and range of investigational approaches.

Throughout the years many honors have been bestowed on Edwin E. Osgood. In 1938 he received the Certificate of Merit from the American Medical Association. He was elected a Fellow of the New York Academy of Sciences in 1955 and received an Oregon Academy of Science Citation in 1957. The Modern Medicine Distinguished Achievement Award was also granted to Oz in 1957. He served as vice president of the American Society of Hematology in 1958–59 and as a council member from 1960 to 1965. In 1962 and 1963 he received the “Governors’ Northwest Scientist Awards.” The Leukemia Society in 1963 presented Dr. Osgood the Robert Roesler de Villiers Award for Research in leukemia. In 1965 the American College of Physicians elected him as a Master of the College. The Tissue Culture Association appointed Oz the Honorary Chairman of their nineteenth Annual Meeting in 1968 in San Juan.

The career of Dr. Edwin E. Osgood has been characterized by a steadily proliferating set of investigations designed to delineate the nature of normal and pathologic growth. His intense academic activity has not decreased with the years. At age 70 and retirement Oz’s interests continue unabated and contributions are still forthcoming. At the most recent meeting of the International Society of Hematology, Dr. Osgood presented newer concepts of monocytic leukemia and ably served in the Polycythemia Study Section. His vast interest in radiation biology, genetics, immunologic processes and the entire broad spectrum of growth and development persists. The science of hematology and all practicing hematologists are indebted to Dr. Osgood for his past contributions. His retirement is well earned but is unlikely to be placid. His driving intellect continues unchanged. We respectfully wish him the best and await his new projects and accomplishments.

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Profile of Edwin E. Osgood, M.D

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