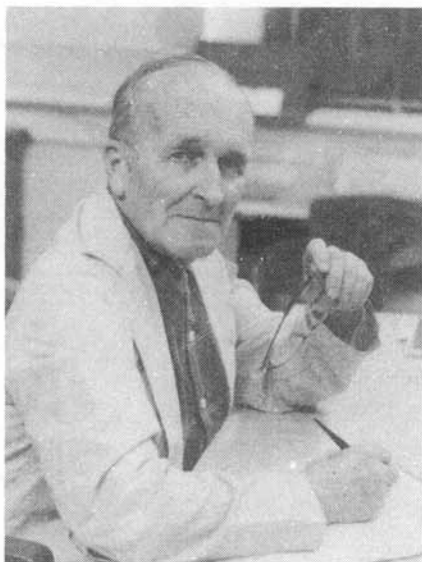


**Dr. Stanisław Franciszek Śnieszko (1902–1984). In Memoriam**

Stanisław Franciszek Śnieszko was born on 28 January 1902 in Krzyż, Poland. In 1924, he completed his bacteriological studies at the Jagiellonian University, Cracow with a Master's degree and in 1926 he obtained his doctorate in the same field from the same university. As a Polish Government's scholar he studied in 1926 in Leipzig; the Rockefeller Foundation gave him a grant to support his further studies, in 1930–1931, in Wisconsin, USA. As of 1923, he was simultaneously employed by the Jagiellonian University's Department of Bacteriology where he passed through a sequence of academic positions up to his appointment as a professor in 1937. He held this position until the World War II.



Shortly before the war, accompanied by his wife, he travelled on board MS „Batory” to New York to attend an international bacteriological conference; he never returned back. At first (1939–1941) he worked in the US as a research assistant at the Department of Bacteriology, State University of Maine. However, he was soon involved in bacteriological work as a civilian employee of the American armed forces. Within 1944–1946 he was in the service, holding a tentative captain's rank. Prior to that period, he had worked exclusively in agricultura bacteriology, paying a particular attention to bacteria of potatoes and related produce.

Following his discharge from the Army, Dr. Śnieszko found employment in the US Fish and Wildlife Service as a bacteriologist working on fish diseases. It was in this capacity that he became renowned internationally. He was frequently called „the father of American ichthyopathology”. As the director of a Fish research station at Leetown,

West Virginia, founded mainly through his efforts and successes, he was known all over the States. His numerous papers published in many international journals include the widely known „Symposia” on diseases of fish and shellfish; the last volume of the series appeared in 1970. He was also one of the editors of a book series „Fish Diseases”, six volumes of which were published within 1970–1980.

Dr. Snieszko belonged to several scientific and professional societies and frequently appeared on the international scene. He was famous not only as a referee for professional publications, but also as a teacher. Against the governmental regulations, he began teaching courses, affiliated to his station, on fish diseases which soon started to attract students from all over the world, particularly from the so-called „third world”. The Department tolerated these „unlawful” undertakings. There was nothing they could do, as even the Emperor of Japan, when officially visiting the United States, expressed his wish to call on Dr. Snieszko’s laboratory and courses.

Dr. Snieszko received numerous awards from his Department, various scientific societies, and universities. When he was about to retire, the West Virginia University conferred the honoris causa doctorate upon him.

For all who were privileged to know him personally, Stan (as called by Americans) was, most of all, a 24-carat-gold man. He could not speak ill about those whom he did not respect. For his subordinates he was just like father. For us Poles, he was a home island in a strange country. Polish problems were always close to his heart. He maintained a permanent contact with his colleagues in Poland and corresponded regularly with many of them. Evenings spent with him and his charming wife Julia were a real feast for his compatriots, the writer of these words included. His home was always open for Polish visitors.

Stan died suddenly of heart attack in January 1984. For all who knew and respected him, his demise opened an emptiness that was not to be filled again. We lost an outstanding scientist, a sincere Pole, an impeccable human being, and a true friend.

May the American soil be light for him.

*Zbigniew Kabata*

Translated: Dr. Teresa Radziejewska