Harvard lost one of its most respected and versatile physicists with the death of Frank M. Pipkin on January 5, after a short illness. With very broad interests, he worked in the 'big science' of experimental particle physics at major accelerator centres, while his large Harvard student group maintained a major in-house programme of table-top experiments in atomic physics, lasers and atomic and molecular beams.

An infantryman in World War II, he was awarded the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star Medal for valour. He came to Harvard in 1954 as a Junior Fellow and joined the faculty in 1957. He was active in the planning, construction and operation of the Cambridge Electron Accelerator in the 60s and early 70s. He also worked at Fermilab and most recently at Cornell. From 1985-88 he was Chairman of Harvard's Physics Department.

He was a gifted mentor and many of his more than fifty students have gone on to make their mark in atomic and experimental particle physics.