OBITUARY

ALEXANDER LOWY
1889-1941

DR. ALEXANDER LOWY, professor of organic chemistry in the University of Pittsburgh, died in The Western Pennsylvania Hospital on December 25, 1941, after an illness of about four months.

Dr. Lowy was born in New York City on March 31, 1889, the son of David and Fanny (Weiss) Lowy. He obtained his bachelor of science degree from Columbia University in 1911, the master of arts in 1912 and the doctor of philosophy degree in 1915. His major work was in the field of organic chemistry under Columbia's Professor Marston T. Bogert, leader in the field of organic chemistry and president of the International Union of Chemistry. On December 23, 1915, he married Dora Landberg of Brooklyn.

Dr. Lowy was assistant in electrochemistry in Columbia University from 1912–1915. He taught in the high schools of New York City from 1915–1918 when he became professor of organic chemistry in the University of Pittsburgh with which he was associated until the time of his death. During the past summer he was exchange professor in the University of Southern California. Dr. Lowy was the holder of numerous United States patents. He was a recognized authority in the field of protective chemicals, having invented methods for the safeguarding of banks and vaults. He also made important contributions in the field of dyestuffs and was a pioneer in electro-organic chemistry, to which he contributed numerous researches. Dr. Lowy, with Dr. Benjamin Harrow, of the College of the City of New York, was the author of *A Textbook of Organic Chemistry,* which is in use in over 125 colleges and universities in America. This textbook has gone through many revisions. Each revision included the latest developments in the field of organic chemistry and the most modern charts and devices. This tendency was characteristic of the senior author. A companion volume to the text-book is *A Laboratory Manual of Organic Chemistry* with Dr. Wilmer E. Baldwin, assistant professor of chemistry in the University of Pittsburgh. This also has had extensive adoptions. Dr. Lowy contributed the chapter on organic chemistry to Rogers's *Manual of Industrial Chemistry.* Alone and with his research students he was the author of over seventy research reports and scientific papers which have appeared in technical journals since 1919. Dr. Lowy was a member of the American Chemical Society and a past chairman of the Pittsburgh section. He was a member of the American Electrochemical Society and its vice-president from 1930–1933 and again from 1939–1941. He was chairman of the committee on publications of this society from 1931 to 1941. He belonged to the honorary science societies, Sigma Xi and Phi Lambda Upsilon. He was an honorary member of Sigma Alpha Mu fraternity.

In the summer of 1929, Dr. and Mrs. Lowy visited England and continental Europe, where Dr. Lowy made a study of the universities and industrial establishments. He lectured extensively and addressed many of the sections of the American Chemical Society. It was as a teacher that Dr. Lowy reached his pinnacle. No effort was too great to provide what was best for the student. The painstaking care with which material was presented left no question regarding accuracy. He was exacting in the student's performance, but at the same time tolerant of the individual's difficulties and ever willing to lend the student a hand and help him, not only in his studies but in his private problems. Dr. Lowy had no hobbies. His only pleasure was his work except during recent years when he enjoyed his small farm in Gibsonia, Pennsylvania, where he and his family spent the summers. In the University of Pittsburgh he was a member of important committees and was faculty chairman of registration.

ALEXANDER SILVERMAN
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

ORIN F. STAFFORD

ORIN F. STAFFORD, chairman of the Chemistry Department of the University of Oregon and dean of science and of the Lower Division, died at Eugene, Oregon, on September 17, 1941, after a painful illness of two months.

Professor Stafford was born at Hillsboro, Ohio, on February 7, 1873. He moved with his parents to Kansas in 1885, and in 1900 received the A.B. degree from the University of Kansas and in 1902 the A.M. degree. In 1900 he was appointed instructor in chemistry at the University of Oregon. In 1902 he became assistant professor and in 1906 was promoted to full professor and head of the department. He became dean of science in 1934.

While at Kansas Stafford was assistant to Dr. E. C. Franklin and participated in the pioneer work on solutions in liquid ammonia. Thus began an intimate friendship between the two men which continued throughout subsequent years.

Professor and Mrs. Stafford spent the year 1908–09 in Europe, where he did graduate work at the University of Berlin under Dr. Walter Nernst. During the four years from 1918 to 1922 he was on leave of absence in Boston and Kingsport, Tenn., developing his invention for the autogenous distillation of wood.

This invention and subsequent work on the subject of wood waste brought him wide recognition as an authority on wood distillation and waste wood utilization and, up to the time of his illness, he carried on an extensive correspondence concerning the problems involved in this interesting field.

He was active as a member of scientific organizations. He rarely missed meetings of the local chapter of the American Chemical Society. He served as president of the Oregon section and as its representative as councilor of the national society. He was president of the Oregon chapter of the Sigma Xi and was prominent in the councils of the local chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. He was a member of the program committee of the Pacific Coast Division of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. At the time of his death he was one of the inspectors for the committee of the American Chemical Society for accrediting institutions for the training of chemists. He was also the chemistry representative on the basic science examining committee for licensing physicians in the State of Oregon. Locally he was president of the Eugene Rotary Club, a member of the Round Table Club, a member of the Eugene School Board and one-time president of the Boy Scout Council.

Though he was not formally trained as an engineer he possessed the instincts of one and was always interested in chemical engineering problems. The practical more than the purely theoretical implications of chemical discovery always intrigued him. However, in spite of his scientific, academic and community activities his primary concern was always the interest of his students. He was a patient, thorough and painstaking teacher. He would lay aside any task to answer the appeal for help from any struggling student. In return he was accorded not only the respect of his students but their lifelong friendship as well. Professor Stafford's contributions to the literature of chemistry, while not particularly voluminous, were valuable and substantial and reflect the breadth of his interests, ranging as they did from the mineral resources of Oregon and the composition of the saline lake deposits to the molecular weight of sulfur and solubilities in acetamide.

He held memberships in the following societies: American Association of University Professors, Phi Beta Kappa, Sigma Xi, American Institute of Chemical Engineers, American Chemical Society, and he was a fellow in the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

His hobby was flowers and shrubs. He spent early morning and evening hours in his garden. After the onset of his last illness he officially retired from active duties and was looking forward to recovery and freedom to more fully enjoy his outdoor activities.

Professor Stafford leaves his wife, Mary Elizabeth Stafford, daughter of the late Dean John Straub; his two sons, both of whom are married and reside in Eugene, Howard Straub Stafford and John Edward Stafford; one daughter, Miriam Stafford Hamilton, of Wenonah, N. J., and one grandson, Robert Stafford Hamilton.

F. L. SHINN

EUGENE, OREGON

RECENT DEATHS

DR. HEBER DOUST CURTIS, head of the department of astronomy at the University of Michigan and director of the observatory, died on January 8 at the age of sixty-nine years.

STEWART PATON, consultant in mental hygiene and lecturer in psychiatry at the Johns Hopkins University, died on January 7 at the age of seventy-six years.

Nature records the death of Dr. H. Ettringham, president of the Royal Entomological Society in 1931–1932, on November 26, at the age of sixty-eight years; of Dr. Walcot Gibson, formerly director for Scotland of the Geological Survey of Great Britain, on November 28 at the age of seventy-seven years; and of Dr. F. Stang, from 1921 to 1927 rector of the University of Oslo and president of the Nobel Committee of the Storting, who was known for pioneer work in comparative research in human culture, at the age of seventy-four years.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

WAR WORK OF THE CANADIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL

ACCORDING to the official report, scientific research in Canada since the war began has been directed almost wholly to the solution of new and urgent problems arising out of the war. Dr. C. J. Mackenzie, acting president of the National Research Council, points out that the council, the universities, members of the scientific and engineering professions and the technical staffs of industrial firms are pulling together towards the common goal, united as never before in the single purpose of winning the war.

In the National Research laboratories at Ottawa work has been expanded in several directions because of the war. In the chemistry and biology divisions especially the selection and testing of suitable materials for the use of the armed forces has been a major problem. Specifications for materials normally bought