OBITUARY

MERTON B. WAITE

DR. MERTON B. WAITE, plant pathologist, retired from the Bureau of Plant Industry, U. S. Department of Agriculture, died at Garfield Memorial Hospital, Washington, D. C., on June 5, 1945. He had been in good health up to the time of his death.

He was born in Oregon, Illinois, on January 23, 1865. He graduated from the University of Illinois in 1887. He was assistant to Dr. Burrill for a year and went to the U. S. Department of Agriculture in 1888 as assistant pathologist in the Division of Vegetable Pathology, the forerunner of what is now the Fruit and Vegetable Disease Investigation Unit of the Bureau of Plant Industry.

He was in charge of this type of work up to the time of his retirement in 1935. His researches in this field are of outstanding importance to horticulture.

He was the first (1891) to prove the insect transmission of any plant disease, in this case the bacteria causing fire blight of pomaceous fruits. His paper describing the work was presented to the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1891. This was about the same time that Theobald Smith and associates, 1891, proved the transmission of tick fever of cattle. These were the first demonstrations of insect or tick transmission of plant and animal diseases. These two pioneer demonstrations led to the work which proved that malaria and yellow fever were carried by mosquitoes and to the beginning of control of these and similar diseases. His work on cross pollination of fruit varieties led to the successful production of orchard crops of apple, pear, sweet cherry and other fruits.

Dr. Waite was lecturer on plant diseases in the Graduate School of the Department of Agriculture from 1930 to 1938 and lecturer on plant ecology from 1932 to 1938.

He was awarded the honorary degree of doctor of agriculture by the University of Maryland in 1919. He was a charter member and twice president of the Botanical Society of Washington, fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, charter member of the American Phytopathological Society and a member of the Washington Academy of Sciences. He is starred in plant pathology in "American Men of Science." He was one of the oldest living members of the Cosmos Club.

Dr. Waite is survived by his wife, Mrs. Elizabeth Hurdle Waite, and by two sons, Captain Malden Waite, tank and small arms instructor for the Army, and Captain Merton Waite, Army Medical Corps.

A. F. WOODS

RECENT DEATHS

DR. CHARLES WILLIAM DABNEY, president of the University of Cincinnati from 1904 to 1920, formerly state chemist of Tennessee, later state chemist of North Carolina and director of the Agricultural Experiment Station, died on June 15 at the age of ninety years. Dr. Dabney was Assistant Secretary of Agriculture in the administration of President Cleveland.

DR. L. H. LEONIAN, professor of mycology at West Virginia University, died on June 7 at the age of fifty-seven years.

RICHARD S. MCCAFFERY, mining engineer, who was professor of mining and metallurgy at the University of Wisconsin from 1914 to 1941, died in New York City on June 13 at the age of seventy-one years.

CHARLES ERNEST PELLEW, Viscount of Exmouth and assistant professor of chemistry at Columbia University, died on June 7 at the age of eighty-two years.

THE death on June 2 at the age of seventy-nine years is announced of Dr. Shim Shirayama, professor emeritus of astronomy of Tokyo Imperial University, a member of the Imperial Academy.

IN the announcement sent to SCIENCE of the death in Yugoslavia of Lieutenant Wheeler, formerly of Harvard University, it was stated that he was assistant professor. This is incorrect. His title should have been given as associate professor.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

PLANS OF THE GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY FOR A NEW RESEARCH LABORATORY

A NEW building for the General Electric Company's Research Laboratory, which will afford some fifty per cent. more space than present facilities provide, will be erected at a cost of $8,000,000 near Schenectady, N. Y. Construction will begin as soon as WPB approval can be obtained.

The site has been a private estate known as "The Knolls," and includes 219 acres. It is in suburban Niskayuna, about four and a half miles from the main plant and offices in Schenectady. Overlooking the Mohawk River, it is on a rocky cliff which will afford an excellent and solid foundation for the laboratory buildings. The river at this point forms part of the New York State Barge Canal, and the Troy branch of the New York Central runs along the bank,

so that there will be ample water and rail transportation available. In addition the river will afford a good supply of water for laboratory use.

The new building, in the general shape of the letter T, will vary from two to five stories in height and will include 200,000 square feet of laboratory working space in addition to an auditorium seating 300, a dining room, conference rooms, etc. One third of the laboratory space will be devoted to service facilities, machine shops and specialty shops such as glass blowers, all in a convenient central location.

Walls between rooms will be movable, capable of being placed at 18-inch intervals so that rooms may easily be made large or small as desired. Benches and all furnishings will be standardized so that they can easily be shifted from place to place as the need arises. The building will be air-conditioned throughout. Wires and pipes carrying various kinds and voltages of electricity, compressed air, suction, illuminating gas, hydrogen, oxygen, etc., will interlace the building whence they can be brought into any room.

The high elevation of the site above the river will afford many advantages, for example, in experiments with radar and high frequency jet engines. The rocky cliff foundation will be useful in conducting experiments with x-rays. These are being produced at a hundred million volts in the present laboratory, and further increases are expected.

THE BIOMETRIC BULLETIN

THE Biometrics Section of the American Statistical Association has issued the first number of the *Biometric Bulletin,* which it is planned to issue monthly. According to the official statement, the *Bulletin* will be developed to meet the needs of the membership of the association. Many features have been planned primarily for the novice. There will be a column of queries to which members are invited to submit questions which can be answered briefly. Questions concerning statistics, for example, can be answered here authoritatively.

Larger problems will be covered by short expository articles written on invitation by qualified professional biometricians. Review articles will emphasize the applications of statistics in substantive fields such as ecology, entomology, forestry, plant breeding, bacteriology and many others. The first of these, on uses of statistics in medicine, appears in the first issue. Although few of the papers read at the meetings of the section can be published in full, abstracts of them, usually in advance of their final publication, will appear.

The section will continue to hold joint meetings with biological as well as with statistical societies, and the *Bulletin* will carry notices of these programs. News items will enable the reader to follow the activities of the members as well as topics of biometric interest. Short articles will report on American educational institutions which offer courses or conferences on biometrics, both at the amateur and at the professional level. Many professional biometricians have been drawn actively into war projects. As soon as possible the war contributions of this group will be reported.

THE AMERICAN GEOPHYSICAL UNION

THE twenty-sixth annual meeting of the American Geophysical Union was held in the Hall of Government, George Washington University, on May 31 and June 1.

The Section of Hydrology held four sessions, including a round table on the afternoon of June 1. The Section of Meteorology held two sessions on May 31, morning and afternoon; the afternoon session was held jointly with the District of Columbia Branch of the American Meteorological Society. Each of the other sections held one session, either on the morning or the afternoon of the two dates indicated. The total registration was about five hundred and all sessions were very well attended.

The session of the Section of Terrestrial Magnetism and Electricity attracted especially large attendance on the morning of May 31. On the afternoon of May 31 the session of the Section of Volcanology attracted a large group. Among the interesting features of this meeting was the showing of the moving picture of the Volcano Parícutin. Some of the other papers presented at this same session bore on the same subject and included a number of interesting slides. At all the sessions eighty-seven papers and twelve Research Committee reports were given or read by title.

The business session was held on the afternoon of June 1, at which seven resolutions were passed. The seventh award of the William Bowie Medal was made in absentia to Dr. Jacob A. B. Bjerknes, chairman of the department of meteorology, University of California at Los Angeles.

Leonard M. Murphy, of the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, was elected secretary of the Section of Seismology. No other elections were held.

Announcement was made concerning the last will and testament of the late Dr. Robert E. Horton, of Voorheesville, New York. Under this will, much of the residual estate will ultimately be given to the National Research Council for use by the American Geophysical Union in the furtherance of research in hydrology.

The executive committee of the union held a meeting on the afternoon of June 1, immediately following the business meeting of the union.