

The same site also yielded the remains of a burial which gives every indication of having been that of an important person. An articulated skeleton of a middle-aged woman resting on the scapula of a whale was supported by a circle of female skulls. Within the circle was a pile of loose bones, the remains of several skeletons.

Interferometric Comparator

The National Bureau of Standards has developed an interferometric comparator that makes routine comparisons of length to the nearest ten-millionth of an inch. Designed by T. R. Young and J. B. Saunders of the engineering metrology laboratory, the instrument will be used to check lengths of industry's master gage blocks, which control the tolerances of mass-produced machine parts.

An instrument of this accuracy has been greatly needed because of the extremely small dimensional tolerances now required for parts used in the guided-missile, jet-aircraft, machine-tool, and other industries. At present the bureau calibrates master gage blocks to an accuracy of 1 part in 1 million—that is, to the nearest millionth of an inch for inch-long blocks.

Malaria Eradication in Mexico

Some 3 million houses in the malarious areas of Mexico will be sprayed starting 1 Jan. 1957 in the largest undertaking of its kind ever attempted in this hemisphere. This enormous enterprise is aimed at wiping out the mosquitoes that transmit malaria, thus effecting the eradication of this disease in Mexico. The Pan-American Sanitary Bureau, Regional Office of the World Health Organization, which has stimulated the eradication program, is collaborating by furnishing technical assistance in this campaign. The United Nations Children's Fund is providing large quantities of insecticides, trucks, and other essential materials, but the Mexican Government will furnish most of the funds and direct the program.

PASB has also set up a Coordination Office of its Malaria Eradication Program in Mexico City to coordinate the national malaria eradication programs now under way or in preparation throughout this hemisphere. The present status of these national programs is as follows: of the 20 countries originally infected, two (United States and Chile) have completed eradication; ten of the 18 still infected have begun eradication campaigns (Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Dominican Republic, and

Venezuela); three have completed plans for converting control programs to eradication campaigns (Nicaragua, Panama, and Paraguay); and five are either surveying for, or are considering converting to, eradication campaigns (Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, and Peru). Canada and Uruguay have no malaria problem.

In the Caribbean territories, a similar situation prevails: five of the 16 originally infected have eradicated malaria (Antigua, Barbados, French Guiana, Martinique, and Puerto Rico); four are well advanced in eradication campaigns (British Guiana, Canal Zone, Saint Lucia, and Tobago); and seven have plans for converting control programs to eradication (Belice, Dominica, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Jamaica, Surinam, Trinidad).

New ARDC Agency for Small Business

The Air Research and Development Command, Baltimore, Md., has established a new procurement agency, the Executive for Small Business. The agency has been designed to increase utilization of small businesses possessing a technical capability in research and development areas. Located in ARDC Headquarters, the Executive for Small Business will have Air Force field development offices at each of the ARDC centers.

The new agency will provide an efficient counseling service for representatives of small business. In addition, ARDC will have greater access to source information concerning organizations with potential research and development procurement possibilities. John C. Eiden, former administrative officer in the Office of the Director of Research and Development, Headquarters, USAF, has been named head of ARDC's new program.

Cancer Society on Smoking

A summary review of information on the relation of cigarettes to lung cancer has been published by the American Cancer Society. The pamphlet, drawing on the 4-year ACS study of the smoking habits of 188,000 men, was written in response to many requests for a concise, factual statement for the public on lung cancer and cigarettes. "This booklet," the pamphlet says, "seeks to provide a summary of a problem whose elements are changing and developing each year. It is tentative and incomplete. . . ."

In an eight-page section of questions and answers dealing mainly with findings of the ACS statistical study, the booklet points out that field work on the

study "has been almost entirely completed: a final report will be made covering the study and analyzing about 12,000 deaths. The study was originally planned for three to five years and four annual follow-ups have provided necessary data. Statisticians estimated that they would need 200,000 person-years of experience for accurate conclusions. The final analysis will cover more than 700,000 person-years of experience."

In answer to the question "Shall I give up smoking?" the booklet says: "The American Cancer Society feels that this must be a personal decision based on evidence available today. The evidence suggests that cigarettes are a health hazard. The specific effect of cigarette smoking on a particular individual cannot be predicted."

Earlier, the pamphlet says, "The American Cancer Society has no plans for a campaign against cigarette smoking. . . . The final decision on whether to smoke cigarettes rests with the individual, who will probably make up his mind in consultation with his doctor. Physicians will surely be prime movers in shaping attitudes toward cigarettes."

Control of Cholesterol Production

A way has been found to control, in laboratory animals, the natural production of cholesterol, the fatty substance that accumulates in human arteries and is implicated in atherosclerosis and coronary disease. Atherosclerosis is the chief cause of death in the United States, leading to 370,000 deaths a year. By feeding a cholesterol-free diet containing 1 percent delta-4-cholestenone, a synthetic compound related chemically to cholesterol, Daniel Steinberg and Donald S. Frederickson of the National Heart Institute have been able to depress the cholesterol in blood serum of rats to as much as 44 percent below that of control animals on a similar diet lacking the delta-4-cholestenone.

Injections of labeled (radioactive) acetate demonstrated that the delta-4-cholestenone was interfering with the normal mechanism for manufacturing cholesterol. Acetate is taken up by the liver to make cholesterol, and in normal animals radioactive acetate can be found in the liver cholesterol with a Geiger counter shortly after injection. The investigators measured only 5 percent as much labeled acetate in the liver cholesterol of the rats that were fed 1 percent delta-4-cholestenone as in the normal rats 2 hours after injection.

Steinberg and Frederickson caution that delta-4-cholestenone itself should not be considered as a practical drug for the treatment of high blood cholesterol in human beings. Its use is definitely haz-

ardous at this stage of knowledge. Steinberg discussed the findings recently in Washington, D.C., during the annual convention of the Association of Military Surgeons of the United States. A report of the research is scheduled for publication in the *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*.

New ACE Information and Research Division

The American Council on Education has established a new Office on Statistical Information and Research, with Coleman R. Griffith, former provost of the University of Illinois as director. The office, which will be operated in Washington, D.C., as part of the council's central program, has a 5-year grant of \$375,000 from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Among the objectives of the new unit will be the analysis of data relating to higher education, encouragement of existing research agencies to fill gaps in present knowledge, improvement in methods of gathering statistical information, and correlation and interpretation of facts from various sources having special value for educational policy-making. Griffith, who will be on leave from the University of Illinois, will direct the office on a part-time basis until 1 Feb. 1957, when he will assume full-time duties in Washington.

Elmer D. West, educational specialist on the staff of the National Security Agency, has been appointed assistant director of the new office. He recently completed a special 6-month research project for the council which resulted in a book entitled *Background for a National Scholarship Policy*. West is on full-time duty setting up the facilities for the Washington headquarters. The office will operate under a policy committee, of which Frederick L. Hovde of Purdue University is chairman.

News Briefs

■ A set of 32 photographs of Russian doctors and scientists has been received by the National Library of Medicine's art section; in exchange, the library has sent a shipment of duplicate portraits of American physicians and surgeons.

■ To confirm the report about Russian nuclear physicist Peter Kapitsa's refusal to work on the Soviet atomic bomb project for conscientious reasons [*Science* 124, 361 (24 Aug. 1956)], a staff member of the British publication *Peace News* tried the improbable procedure of calling Kapitsa by international telephone. The call went through without difficulty, and

Kapitsa confirmed that he had refused, and still refuses, to participate in the development of nuclear energy for military purposes.

■ The eighth annual report of the Australian Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization for the year ending 30 June 1956 has been made available. This report deals with a great variety of research in such diverse fields as entomology, plant industry, animal health, forest products, industrial chemistry, and radiophysics. It may be obtained from CSIRO, 314 Albert St., East Melbourne, Australia.

Scientists in the News

LAWRENCE G. DERTHICK, superintendent of schools in Chattanooga, Tenn., has been named United States Commissioner of Education by President Eisenhower.

Exceptional Service awards have been given by the Air Force to JOHN W. GARDNER, president of the Carnegie Corporation, DONALD W. HASTINGS, professor of psychiatry and neurology at the University of Minnesota, GEORGE E. VALLEY, professor of physics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and HARRY WEXLER, chief of the science services division of the U.S. Weather Bureau. The Exceptional Service award consists of a medal and formal citation and is the highest civilian award given by the Air Force. The medals were presented by Donald A. Quarles, Secretary of the Air Force, on 30 Nov. All four of the recipients were honored for their service as members and chairmen of panels of the Air Force Scientific Advisory Board.

The following Russell L. Cecil awards for science writing about the rheumatic diseases were presented by the Arthritis and Rheumatism Foundation during its recent annual meeting in New York: to PETE COUTROS, newspaper article *New York Daily News*; LAWRENCE GALTON, magazine article, *Better Homes and Gardens*; and JAY E. RAEBEN, television script, American Broadcasting Company. The three men were cited for writing "which during 1956 has contributed most to strengthen man's efforts to conquer arthritis and rheumatism, the nation's foremost chronic and crippling diseases."

ROBERT R. MARSHAK of Springfield, Vt., has been appointed professor of veterinary medicine and chairman of the department at the School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Pennsylvania.

ISIDOR I. RABI, Higgins professor of physics at Columbia University and a Nobel prize winner, is visiting institute professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology during the current fall term. The institute professorship was established especially to permit men of highest achievement to study and teach at M.I.T. in fields of their own interest, without the restrictions of traditional departmental boundaries.

BERNARD S. SCHWEIGERT has been appointed director of research and education of the American Meat Institute Foundation at the University of Chicago, and DELBERT M. DOTY and CHARLES F. NIVEN, JR., have been named associate directors. The foundation maintains laboratories on the university campus and has a staff of more than 50 scientists engaged in research related to the production of livestock and the processing and utilization of products derived from livestock.

Reorganization of the foundation's administrative staff was made necessary on 30 Sept. by the death of HENRY R. KRAYBILL, scientist and educator who had aided in the creation of the foundation and had served as its director since 1947 when it first began operations. All three of the new administrative officers have held positions of research and administrative responsibility at the foundation for 8 or more years, all served with Kraybill as assistant directors in charge of specific areas of research, and all hold professorial appointments at the University of Chicago.

CHALMER G. KIRKBRIDE, former president and chairman of the board of directors of Houdry Process Corporation, Philadelphia, Pa., joined the Sun Oil Company, Philadelphia, on 1 Dec., as executive director of the research, patent, and engineering departments.

Also at Sun, CHARLES L. THOMAS, formerly associate director of the research and development department, has been named director. He succeeds J. BENNETT HILL, who retired on 30 Nov.

WILFRED BLOOMBERG has been chosen to head the Southern Regional Education Board's program in mental health training and research. Bloomberg is chief of the psychiatry and neurology service, Veterans Administration Hospital, Boston, Mass. He will assume his new post on 1 Jan. The regional health program was initiated at the Southern Governors Conference in 1953, when the governors of 16 southern and border states requested the Regional Education Board to study the South's resources and potentials for training and research on problems of mental health.