DR. SPENCER TO LEAVE NIH JANUARY 31

Dr. Roscoe R. Spencer of the National Cancer Institute will retire from Federal service January 31 after 37 years in the Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service.

Dr. Spencer will assume new duties as Special Lecturer in Cancer, sponsored by the Virginia State Medical Society, the Old Dominion Medical Society, the Virginia Division of the American Cancer Society, and the University of Virginia. His main assignment will be to conduct seminars on cancer for physicians throughout Virginia.

The career of Dr. Spencer has been marked by many achievements. Following his graduation from Johns Hopkins Medical School, Dr. Spencer entered the Public Health Service. During World War I, he served as sanitary advisor to the Navy Department and from 1919 to 1921, he was in Pensacola, Florida, where he supervised measures to prevent bubonic plague.

Among the most notable of his accomplishments was his participation in the development of the first vaccine effective against Rocky Mountain spotted fever. The year was 1922 and at that time "tick fever" was almost always fatal. Therefore the development of a successful vaccine was a great step forward in the control of infectious diseases and a boon to the populations of tick-infested areas.

The story of his work is told in the chapter "Spencer in the Happy Valley" which appears in Man Against Death by Paul de Kruif. In 1930 an exhibit on Dr. Spencer's Rocky Mountain spotted fever work won him the Gold Medal of the American Medical Association.

When the National Cancer Institute was created in 1937, Dr. Spencer was assigned to assist in its organization. In 1939 he was appointed Assistant Chief of the Institute, and in 1943 he was appointed Chief. Dr. Spencer resigned as Chief of NCI in 1947, to devote full time to research activities and administration of NCI's Professional Training Program. Since that time, Dr. Spencer's research has centered on studies of the process of cell survival and adaptation, and the relation of this process to cancer.

In addition to his many scientific papers, Dr. Spencer has written numerous articles in which scientific information is presented in terms understandable to the layman. In 1944 he was awarded the Clement Cleveland Medal for his work in cancer health education.

Dr. Spencer's latest article, "Staying Alive," was recently printed in the Saturday Review of Literature and is now being translated by the State Department for publication in foreign magazines and newspapers.

Dr. Spencer was born in King William County, Virginia, in 1888. He received his A.B. degree from Richmond College (now the University of Richmond) in 1909. In 1943

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The first clinical unit to be staffed for the Clinical Center is NHI's Clinic of General Medicine and Experimental Therapeutics. Now in its second year of operation at the Baltimore PHS Hospital, the unit was established by Dr. James A. Shannon, NHI's Associate Director in Charge of Research. It represents a joint operation between the Division of Hospitals and the National Institutes of Health. Dr. Luther L. Terry, Clinic director, is also serving as Chief of Medical Service at the Baltimore Hospital.

The core of this research unit is a group of clinicians who were conducting studies in cardiovascular disease with support from NHL. The unit has been molded into a research team well-versed in clinical research, medical care, and teaching. It will continue operation in Baltimore until the Clinical Center is ready for occupancy.

The team is composed of workers who are especially interested in the application of research methods at the patient level. The clinical observation of new drugs and new techniques as they come from the laboratory is one of its principal functions. However, fundamental studies of the physiological aspects of heart disease are receiving considerable attention.

Experiments in cardio-respiratory relations, renal function studies, and endocrine interrelations in normal and altered states of circulation are some of the projects under study at the present time.

The group is also conducting detailed electrolyte balance studies on cardiac patients receiving some of the new cation-exchange resins. Cratageus Macrantha, an old drug long-used in European and American medicine, has been studied for its effects on hypertension. Interestingly enough, no favorable effects on hypertension have been demonstrated, but there is a suggestion that the drug may have some usefulness in the treatment of cardiac arrhythmias. This point is being pursued in clinical experiments at this time.

The Clinic has well-equipped laboratories for the study of related cardiovascular problems in lower animals. Cross-circulation experiments and work with an artificial heart-pump are being performed with a view to attaining a method of shunting the blood around all or a part of the heart while operative procedures are performed within the heart. Animal experiments are also being performed testing various methods of blood vessel graft preservation.
CREDIT UNION VOTES 4 PERCENT DIVIDEND

Members of the NIH Credit Union voted a four percent dividend on 1951 savings, at their 11th annual meeting on January 8.

Captain Laurence Johnson, Treasurer, announced that assets of the Credit Union now amount to over a quarter of a million dollars and that 60 percent of NIH employees are members. He urged, however, that more employees join the Credit Union. Interest rates on loans are low, and dividends on savings are high.

At the meeting, members were elected to the three committees that guide the Credit Union. Elected to the Board of Directors were Captain Johnson; Amy Nifong, OD; John Reed, NCI; Frances Shelley, HU; and Neil Wood, OD. New members of the Credit Committee are Dorothy Amos, OD; Lloyd Bankard, OD; Kenneth Painter, NMI; and Francis Taylor, OD. Charles Barley, DRG, Gilbert Frey, DRG, and Mary Lou York, NMI, were chosen for the Supervisory Committee.

A $25 war bond was given as a door prize at the meeting. Lucky winner was Mrs. Ruby Peters, OD.

BRITISH VIRUS EXPERT VISITS NIH

Dr. C. H. Andrewes of the National Institute for Medical Research, London, and Director of WHO Influenza Center, spoke at NIH on January 9. His subject was tumor viruses and their relation to cancer. Dr. Andrewes is internationally known for his accomplishments in the virus field. Shown with Dr. Andrewes (center) are Dr. L. A. Scheele, Surgeon General (left), and Dr. W. H. Sebrell, Jr., NIH Director.

HAMSTERS STIR--AND THE PLOT THICKENS

On January 16 the Hamsters held tryouts for their 1952 production. From Wilson Hall came strange guttural sounds as if the budding thespians were rehearsing in an ancient tongue.

To add to the mystery, Jack Beecher, Hamster Director, asked to borrow some unusual props. Among them were one-half dozen dinosaurs, assorted; 3 caves, medium, limestone; 1 kit, demolition, Clinical Center; assorted skins, tiger, bear, lion; and 4 robes and mortar boards, academic.

The annual December play of the Hamsters, scheduled for February, will be presented in March.

PHOTOSYNTHESIS TO BE SHOWN ON TELEVISION

The work of Dr. Dean Burk on photosynthesis will be featured on the Johns Hopkins Science Review program over the Dumont television network, Monday, February 11, at 8:30 p.m.

Dr. Burk will appear on the program with Mr. Vernon Riley, also of NCI’s Laboratory of Biochemistry, and Dr. Victor Shockey, of George Washington University Medical School.

TAX REMINDER

Maryland’s State Controller Millard J. Tawes advises taxpayers to delay filing their Maryland returns until the legislature has acted on a bill to reduce taxes on 1951 income by 15 percent. Deadline for filing 1951 Maryland income tax returns is April 15.

NIH Record

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One of the most exacting jobs at NIH belongs to the Medical Arts Section of the Scientific Reports Branch.

Inez Demonet and a staff of eight are responsible for nearly all artistic endeavors at NIH. This includes illustrating pathological specimens and microscopic material for medical publications, making technical and mechanical drawings of scientific apparatus, designing and making exhibits, and drawing thousands of statistical graphs, charts, and maps for papers published by NIH scientists. Preparing graphic illustrations for published by NIH scientists. Preparing graphic illustrations for film strips or designing pamphlets is all in a day's work.

Walt Disney has nothing on Medical Arts. "B. W.," a cartoon character representing biological warfare, was recently created for a series of slide lectures.

Several years ago a plastics unit was set up in the Section. Here, pathological and entomological specimens are embedded in clear plastic. These specimens are used in exhibits and demonstrations. In fact, a series of plastic-embedded specimens was sent to Liberia and South America to illustrate to natives the life cycles of various insects which transmit diseases in their regions.

Inez Demonet, head of the shop, has been with Medical Arts since 1926. She recalls working on the exhibition, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, with which Dr. R. R. Spencer of NCI won the Gold Medal of the American Medical Association.

The latest exhibit to win acclaim was one on fluoridation which Medical Arts sent to the American Dental Association meeting last fall. It was part of a Public Health Service group which won first prize.

In preparation for the opening of the Clinical Center, the section is developing the nucleus of a unit which will utilize the art of moulage with the embedding of pathological material in clear plastics. This technique is still in the experimental category, but results thus far are very encouraging.

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