Dr. Norman H. Topping, Associate Director, will leave NIH around November 1, to become vice president of the University of Pennsylvania in charge of medical affairs.

Effective November 1, Dr. Topping will be the principal administrative officer of the University's whole medical program—the School of Medicine, Graduate School of Medicine, School of Dentistry, School of Veterinary Medicine, School of Nursing Education, School of Auxiliary Medical Services and the related hospitals and laboratories.

President Harold E. Stassen of the University of Pennsylvania, commenting on the appointment, said, "We are most gratified by Dr. Topping's acceptance. He is one of the nation's ablest young medical administrators. With his background of research and public service, he is singularly equipped for the task ahead."

Dr. Topping came to NIH in 1937 soon after serving his internship in PHS hospitals on the West Coast and receiving his commission.

His first research for NIH involved field studies in Bolivia of the effectiveness of typhus vaccine. He is noted, among other things, for the development of an immune serum which was the first effective treatment for Rocky Mountain spotted fever and for epidemiological studies which proved the Eastern and Western forms of the disease identical. He also conducted numerous studies of typhus, Q fever, and other viral and rickettsial diseases.

During World War II, Dr. Topping was a consultant to the Army as a member of the United States of America Typhus Commission, a work that earned him the Typhus Commission Medal. From 1946 to 1948, he was assistant chief of NIH's division of infectious diseases.

In 1948 he was appointed Associate Director of NIH and Assistant Surgeon General of the Public Health Service. Since then he has devoted most of his time to the administration of NIH's broad program of intramural research. He has been a key figure in planning the expansion program, particularly with respect to the laboratory aspects of the Clinical Center.

In 1949 he was president of the American Society of Tropical Medicine. He is chairman of the advisory commission on the World Health Organization's influenza program and an advisor to the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis.

Dr. W. H. Sebrell, Jr., NIH Director, said of Dr. Topping: "Those of us who are his colleagues regret Dr. Topping's departure from the Government. We all know, however, that through his affiliation with one of the nation's great centers of medical education and research, Dr. Topping will be in a position to continue his very real contributions to the advancement of American medicine."

GERONTOLOGISTS ARE NIH GUESTS

On September 5, NIH played host to members of the Gerontological Society, Inc., who were attending their Fifth Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C.

After a welcome extended by Dr. Sebrell, the visitors were addressed by Dr. Murray C. Brown, Chief of the Office of Clinical and Professional Education, who discussed the Clinical Center concept and layout. A brief question and answer period followed.

The group was then given a choice of a tour through the Clinical Center conducted by Mr. Donald L. Snow, Chief of the Research Facilities Planning Branch, or a visit through some of the laboratories. Those electing the latter tour saw NIH's Laboratory of Technical Development, and the Hematologic Pathology Unit of NCI.
For two decades Dr. M. J. Shear and his associates have been investigating the effect of chemical agents on animal tumors. When the Laboratory of Chemical Pharmacology was organized, more extensive investigation of the biochemical effects of such agents was vested in the Biochemistry Section, headed by Dr. Joseph Leiter. Associated with Dr. Leiter are Dr. Margaret G. Kelly, Dr. V. S. Waravdekar, Ira Kline, Josephine Kahler, Anita Domingue, Cecille Chagnon, Mary Howes, and Ellis Sheets.

At the start, there were few chemicals known to affect tumors. Screening was successful in providing a large number of chemicals found to damage tumors. This made possible the study of the biochemical mechanisms of their action.

To date, Dr. Leiter's Section has examined over 3000 chemicals, synthesized or acquired by the Organic Chemistry Section. About 500 of them can damage tumors at near lethal-dose levels. A few compounds, potent well below such levels, are being studied further with a variety of tumors; their pharmacologic effects in several animal species are being studied in collaboration with the Pharmacology Section. Clinical studies with one of these compounds, alpha-peltatlin, indicate that it is too toxic to be useful clinically. Development of other drugs for extension to clinical investigation is being continued.

Correlations between chemical structure and tumor-damaging potency have been drawn for these agents. Several colchicine derivatives, for example, were found as effective as colchicine against tumors but far less toxic. Whether this decreased toxicity in animals will make these derivatives more useful in humans remains to be determined.

Also under way are the investigation of biochemical changes by which these agents produce damage in tumors and the effects these compounds have on host metabolism.

Dr. Margaret Kelly has investigated the fate of podophyllotoxin injected into animals. She developed a technique which makes use of the high lethality of this compound for chick embryos. As little as 1 microgram injected into an egg will kill the embryo. By this method, she demonstrated that the body detoxifies the drug as soon as 4 hours after injection.

Dr. Vaman Waravdekar, a Visiting Scientist from Bombay, has found that the level of respiratory enzymes in tumor tissue drops sharply within six hours after a single injection of potent compounds.
If you have lost any of the following items, come to Mr. May’s office, Room 18, Building 1.

- 1 white enamel earring with gold design
- 1 round gold brooch with varicolored stones
- 1 pipe
- 1 tobacco pouch

All articles not claimed by October 12 will be returned to the finder. If you find something around the NIH grounds, turn it in to the guard office or to Mr. May’s office.

---

**DR. BENGSTON, FORMER NIH SCIENTIST, DIES**

Dr. Ida A. Bengston, first woman scientist on the Hygienic Laboratory staff, died September 6 at the PHS Hospital in Baltimore.

Dr. Bengston, nationally known for her research contributions in the field of rickettsial diseases, retired in 1946 after 30 years with PHS. She had delayed her retirement for several years because of scientific manpower shortages during World War II.

For 10 years prior to her retirement, Dr. Bengston conducted investigations of rickettsial diseases, including typhus fever, Q fever, scrub typhus, and Rocky Mountain spotted fever. During the course of her studies on endemic typhus, she contracted the disease while administering inoculations.

Dr. Bengston's work in developing the complement fixation test for typhus fever won her the Typhus Medal of the United States of America Typhus Commission, awarded after her retirement. She was also well known for her earlier work on trachoma and antitoxins for tetanus and gangrene.

Dr. Bengston was a member of numerous scientific organizations, including the Washington Academy of Science and the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine.

---

**NIH Spotlight**

Josephine G. Shannon

A sympathetic ear and a helping hand are prime requisites for the job Mrs. Josephine G. Shannon holds down so capably in the Health Unit of Building T-6. Years of experience in public health nursing have made her quite adept in relieving the assorted ills of the 500-odd employees in the building.

They come to her for relief from a sore throat, cough, or other minor disturbance so they will not lose time from their jobs. Mrs. Shannon also sees many on-the-job injuries such as minor lacerations, sprains, burns, contact dermatitis, etc.

Many employees take advantage of Mrs. Shannon's friendly, helpful interest in their health problems. She estimates that nearly half of the people come to her for advice on various health problems such as diet, prenatal care, etc.

If his problem is of a serious nature, the individual may be advised to see his own doctor, and at his request the nurse often arranges to have a blood count or urinalysis made for the employee.

Born and raised in Cumberland, Md., Mrs. Shannon was one of eleven children. After graduating from high school, she took her nurse training at the Glens Falls Hospital, Glens Falls, New York. Following brief experience with the Visiting Nurse Society, she joined the Nurse Corps of the Public Health Service. She was chief nurse at one of the marine hospitals when she resigned from the service to be married.

Mrs. Shannon was reinstated in PHS in 1939, after taking a refresher course in anaesthæsia. She served at hospitals in New York and Baltimore. During World War II, she was assigned first to the Coast Guard outpatient department and later to the sick bay at Spar barracks. In 1946, Mrs. Shannon came to NIH.

She has a son and a daughter, both of whom are in college. The Shannon home is in Georgetown. Mrs. Shannon says she would love to have a beautiful flower garden if she could ever get one step ahead of the insects.

She claims reading detective stories is her one vice, but many doctors would claim it is good therapy after a busy day listening to other people's troubles.
While forcing air bubbles from cylinder of infectious material, hold damp cotton over needle to prevent formation of hazardous aerosols.

Guard against flying glass. Apparatus under vacuum should be as well shielded as the one above, with gas cylinder clamped to bench.

Here's the right way to pipette an acid. Never use your mouth.

This is the correct procedure for preparing a dilution of radioiodine when the amount is 50 microcuries or less. The double containers are behind lead bricks.

NEVER touch equipment others use if handling infectious materials.