Dr. William T. S. Thorp, now serving as Chief of the Laboratory Aids Branch, has been named dean and director of the School of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Minnesota. He will leave NIH August 6.

Dr. Thorp was born in Canada and spent his youth in Michigan. He received his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree in 1935 and his master's degree in animal pathology two years later. Both degrees were earned at Michigan State College, East Lansing, where he became instructor of animal pathology in 1937.

In 1938, Dr. Thorp joined the staff of Pennsylvania State College. There, in addition to carrying out his own research in animal diseases, he was responsible for developing the animal disease research program at the college experiment station.

In 1948, he was commissioned as a Veterinary Director in the Public Health Service. In addition to his duties as Chief of the Laboratory (See Dr. Thorp, Page 4)
Two substances that occur as intermediates in Nature's production of threonine—a nutrient essential to man—have been discovered by Dr. Simon Black and Mrs. Nancy G. Wright of NIAMD's Laboratory of Biochemistry.

They reported the findings at the April meeting of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology.

Threonine, although an essential constituent of body tissues, is not produced in the body but is synthesized by other organisms, particularly plants. The NIAMD scientists found that threonine, an amino acid, arises from another amino acid, aspartic acid, through a series of chemical reactions. In their studies, they incubated an extract of yeast with aspartic acid, and one of the new substances—beta aspartyl phosphate—was discovered as a product. In another experiment, incubation of radioactive aspartic acid with yeast extract yielded radioactive threonine.

Beta aspartyl phosphate was later found to be converted to a second new compound, aspartic beta-semialdehyde. The two new substances are also amino acids. Further study will be made to learn the role, if any, of beta aspartyl phosphate in protein formation in growing tissues and cells.

Beta aspartyl phosphate is of special interest to biochemists because it is one of the "high energy" compounds which are especially suited for use by the living cell in the synthesis of larger and more complex compounds. Very few amino acid derivatives of this type are known, although their existence is suspected and they are the subject of intensive scientific search.

In the step-by-step process by which threonine is synthesized in living cells, the newly discovered compounds appear as intermediates, as shown in the above chart, which the two NIAMD scientists were able to synthesize for the first time. The newly discovered substances are also precursors of homoserine, another amino acid. The latter is not known to occur in proteins but is an important intermediate in the biosynthesis of several amino acids other than threonine, such as methionine and isoleucine, which occur in body proteins.

When Dr. Black and Mrs. Wright began their studies of aspartic acid, one of the 20-odd amino acids that constitute the bulk of the body's proteins, they had no clue where the search would lead. They plan to continue studying the enzymatic reactions of these and other amino acids, seeking more knowledge of Nature's machinery for building proteins, probably the most important of the substances of which living matter is composed.
**SAFE HANDLING OF INFECTIOUS MATERIAL**

During intranasal inoculation of pathogenic agents, wear a face shield, or, if possible, work under a hood.

When handling infectious material, it is good practice to place the needle end of the syringe in an empty test tube.

**R & W NOTES**

The four tennis courts at the Glenbrook Club are ready for use by R & W tennis club members, their guests, and Clinical Center patients. Lessons will soon be arranged for club members.

Memberships in the club are still available. Call Peg Badger, ext. 3137, or Cal Baldwin, ext. 3545, for applications and further information.

If you are interested in taking golf instructions, call Bob Michelitch on ext. 2188. The lessons at Glenbrook Club have proved so popular that more evening classes are being planned.

The NIH softball team is leading both leagues in which it competes. The team is unbeaten in the D. C. Recreation League, and has only three losses in the Maryland League. If you would like to see the team in action, games are scheduled at NIH at 6:00 p.m. on July 20 and 22.

The R & W Association has purchased six new picnic tables for use by NIH employees who enjoy eating their lunches on the grounds. Two of the tables are at Top Cottage, two are near Building T-6, and the remaining two are near the woods adjoining Building 6.

**CONGRESS VOTES 1955 NIH BUDGET INCREASE**

The Senate and House gave their final approval June 30 to a budget exceeding $1-1/2 billion for the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare for fiscal year 1955. The total, as sent to the White House for the President's signature, is nearly eleven million more than the administration had requested. Nearly all of the increases voted involve medical programs.

Six Institutes figured prominently in the additional funds appropriated by Congress—NCI, $21,737,000, an increase of $2,007,000; NIMH, $14,147,500, an increase of $1,687,500; NHL, $16,668,000, an increase of $2,098,000; NIAMD, $8,270,000, an increase of $1,000,000; NMI, $6,180,000, an increase of $250,000; and NINDB, $7,600,500, an increase of $2,837,500.

**GENERATOR Cont’d**

The generator will be used at the Clinical Center primarily as a powerful and accurate instrument for research on the radio-chemical and biological effects of X-rays and electron energy. It can be modified for use in the production of short-lived, radioactive isotopes for a variety of medical research purposes.

It operates under high pressure inside a steel tank and is capable of delivering more than 12 kilowatts of electrical energy, thus enabling scientists to study the effects of radiation delivered at dose rates not heretofore achieved in the laboratory.

The Van de Graaff was accepted for the Federal Government on March 16, by Secretary Oveta Culp Hobby of DHEW.

**LOST AND FOUND**

The following items have been found at NIH:

- Fountain pen
- Tobacco pouch
- Screwdriver
- Lady's gloves
- Notebook
- Sweat shirt
- Thermos bottle
- Boy's jacket

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ADDITIONAL OUTLET FOR SCIENTIFIC WRITINGS

The dissemination of scientific information is equally as important as the conduct of research. Scientists are frequently faced with the problem of finding outlets for their writings. The problem is magnified sometimes by the volume of illustrations and charts that are necessary to document the research. In many instances, however, journal editors are able to publish only an extract of the paper.

A partial solution to this problem is offered by the American Documentation Institute, through its auxiliary publication service, which is administered by the Library of Congress. The Institute accepts deposits of material supplementing and documenting published papers in journals. Copies of such material, in either photostat or microfilm form, are furnished at nominal cost to any one ordering them. A footnote is placed in the published article stating that the material has been deposited and giving the accession number and price for ordering. The material, in microfilm form, is kept permanently on deposit.

Additional information on this service may be obtained from Mr. Scott Adams, NIH Librarian.

NMI STUDY Cont’d

Since 1947, the Laboratory of Tropi­cal Diseases has screened more than 2,000 chemicals in search of a satisfactory molluscicide. One of the compounds, sodium pentachloro­phenate, has been demonstrated to be particularly effective in destroying both snails and snail eggs.

The region selected for the first large-scale testing of sodium pentachlorophenate is Waraq El-Arab, situated in a farm district about ten kilometers northwest of Cairo. It contains six villages with a total population of about 33,000. Field tests made by LTD scientists in December, 1953 and January, 1954, have shown that approximately 80 to 85 percent of the population has schistosomiasis.

The project will run for one year. The investigators will remain an additional year to observe the results.

DR. THORP Cont’d

Aids Branch, which includes the animal hospital and production sections, he has been in charge of the Comparative Pathology and Hematology Section of NIAMD.

SURGICAL NURSING TEAM ASSISTS CC SURGEONS

Surgical nursing in the Clinical Center presents a challenge to the operating room nurse. She must be able to handle specially designed equipment, to assist with the elaborate surgical procedures necessary in research medicine, and she must learn to work with a number of surgical teams from the various Institutes.

The surgical nurse works closely with the surgeon. She confers with him before the operation so that she may give him expert assistance during the procedure. She visits the patient before he is brought to the operating room. She answers his questions, explains the operating room procedure to him, and tells him what he may expect. She attempts to allay any fears he may have. She remains with the patient during the operation and visits him afterwards.

Before surgery, proper instruments are selected, equipment is assembled and sterilized, complicated devices are tested for accuracy and working order, and sutures are prepared. During surgery, the nurse is responsible for anticipating the needs of the surgeon and keeping him supplied with the necessary instruments, sponges, ligatures, sutures, etc.

The Surgical Nursing Service occupies the west end of the 10th floor of the Center. Six spacious major operating rooms, each having adjacent scrub rooms and anesthesia rooms, are located on the north and south corridors of the surgical suite, while four minor operating rooms occupy the space in the rest of the north corridor. Recording rooms, equipped with intercommunicating speakers and receivers, are available for neurosurgery and cardiac surgery. High speed and standard sterilizers are located between each two rooms. All general instruments are kept in a central instrument room and special instruments are stored in or near the area where they are used. Inside each room are build-in wall cabinets, stop clocks, emergency call bells and lights, and central suction. The entire suite is planned and equipped for the most efficient functioning and safety for the patient.

The Surgical Nursing Service, under the direction of Miss Janet Fitzwater, has found that many of the problems encountered in operating room nursing can be solved through weekly staff conferences and intensive training in the Nursing Department. There are now ten people in the Surgical Nursing Service, including the chief nurse, a head nurse, staff nurses and attendants, and a secretary.