High *A* frequencies, resembling those of Scandinavia, have been found in the Gower Peninsula of Pembrokeshire and near the mouth of the River Dee, where there is other evidence of Viking settlement; and there is genetical evidence of a similar component in Anglesey and near the mouths of the Rivers Clwyd and Conway. Near the English border interesting patterns of interpenetration can be traced between the Welsh with a high *O* frequency and the Anglo-Saxons with relatively high *A*.

Dr. A. E. Mourant then described "Recent Advances in Serological Anthropology", expressing his intention of summarizing the distribution of the blood groups in those parts of Europe and the world not covered by previous speakers. He exhibited new *ABO*- and *Rh*-gene frequency maps of Europe, of which the former can readily be interpreted in terms of a succession of waves of population moving from east to west, mentioned by Drs. Darlington and Watkin.

The distribution of the *Rh* chromosomes, or gene triplets, he said, is remarkably uniform over the whole of northern and central Europe, with about 40 per cent of *cde*, the main *Rh*-negative combination. The Basques, with more than 50 per cent of *cde*, possibly represent the original source of most of the chromosomes of this type. In the Mediterranean area, *cde* is much less common, while *CDe* rises to about 60 per cent. At the same time, the *Rh*-blood groups enable one to trace many details of mixing of a basic Mediterranean population with northern, Basque and Negro components. Recent unpublished discoveries of Dr. D. Messerlin suggest that the Berbers of the Great Atlas Mountains are closely related to the Basques.

In tropical Africa, we again find a very uniform *Rh* distribution, with about 60 per cent of *CDe* and 20 per cent of *cde*. The distribution of the *ABO*- and *Rh*-groups and of the congenital blood anomaly characterized by sickle-shaped red cells all point to the Pygmies of central Africa as representing one of the two or three major components which enter into the composition of the peoples of Africa as a whole.

Throughout eastern Asia, the Pacific Islands and among the aborigines of Australia and America, the *CDe* chromosome is dominant, with rather a high frequency of *CDe* in Maoris and American Indians.

The *MN*-groups have, on the whole, yielded less information of anthropological value than the *ABO*- and *Rh*-groups. The most striking feature which they show is a sudden drop from a high to a low *M* frequency in passing from Java to the rest of Indonesia, the division approximately following Wallace's line.

The blood-group antigen Duffy, recently discovered by Miss M. Cutbush, Dr. P. L. Mollison and Dr. D. M. Parkin, shows the widest possible variations in frequency and will be of great anthropological value when sufficient serum becomes available. The even more recent discovery of the Kidd antigen, by Dr. F. Allen, of Boston, Mass., also promises to be of use in anthropology, as Miss E. W. Ikin has just found it to be much commoner in Negroes than in Europeans.

The American Indians and Eskimos show a general resemblance in their *Rh*-groups to the peoples of eastern Asia and the Pacific region, but the Americans have much higher *M* frequencies and, apart from the Alaskan Eskimos, were probably originally completely lacking in *B*, which is common in eastern

Asia and present in most Pacific island peoples. Dr. Mourant said that it is hoped that detailed blood-group research in eastern Siberia will one day be possible, for it may throw important light on the origin of the Pre-Columbian Americans.

A series of diagrams illustrating blood-group genetics was exhibited by Drs. R. R. Race and Ruth Sanger.

The afternoon meeting, with Miss M. L. Tildesley in the chair, took the form of a discussion on the organization of investigations in blood-group anthropology. Prof. H. J. Fleure suggested the formation of a co-ordinating centre for such work, under the aegis of the Royal Anthropological Institute. Prof. R. A. Fisher pointed out the value of such a centre for the reception of unpublished results and of the details of observations where these were too extensive for full publication. He stressed the importance of starting such a centre as soon as possible. Dr. A. Allison suggested that the centre should actively initiate or suggest new researches, and considered that field-work should to a large extent be decentralized.

Several speakers pointed out the difficulty of the techniques and the rarity of many of the necessary testing sera, both of which factors would for some years to come make it necessary for much of the work to continue to be done in a few central laboratories, the specimens being sent to them by air in most cases. Dr. G. Discombe considered that the stages of any decentralization should be under close control by workers who themselves understood the tests and their difficulties.

The use of existing and future transfusion service records was next considered, and Dr. W. d'A. Maycock described the nature of the records of the National Blood Transfusion Service of England and Wales, and their anthropological value, pointing out the need for guarding against certain statistical errors which might arise if great care were not exercised in using the records for anthropological purposes.

The final topic was the systematization and use of existing published records. Dr. A. E. Mourant pointed to the rapid rate at which material is being published, scattered in very numerous journals, many of which are not readily accessible. He considered that this material, especially that published since Dr. W. C. Boyd's compilation of 1939, should be collected, tabulated and published with uniform statistical treatment. This would occupy the whole time of at least one worker.

Prof. H. J. Fleure then proposed that the Council of the Royal Anthropological Institute should be asked to set up a committee to consider and make recommendations on the use of blood groups in anthropology. This proposition was accepted unanimously.

OBITUARIES

Mr. William Williamson

It is in the tradition of British natural history that the only monograph on the water-mites of this country—the Ray Society's three volumes on "The British Hydracarina"—should have been written by two amateur naturalists, C. D. Soar and William Williamson. Williamson, born in Leith in June 1869, was during practically the whole of his working life a clerk, and latterly chief clerk, in the Scottish American Mortgage Company in Edinburgh. His interest in natural history began fortuitously, on

account of his discovery, in the course of miscellaneous reading, of a series of articles describing British water-mites which appeared in *Science Gossip* in 1899 and 1900. The author was C. D. Soar, and Williamson, finding that he could easily identify from the detailed descriptions the water-mites he began to collect, got in touch with Soar, so commencing a friendship which lasted until Soar's death, almost forty years later. The contact was in a way a turning-point in his life, for the enthusiasm of one amateur stimulated the other, and Williamson's spare time now became devoted to collecting, identifying and recording hydrachnids.

Williamson published a series of papers, generally in Scottish scientific journals, on his own collecting in various parts of Scotland, identified the collections made during Murray and Pullar's "Survey of Scottish Fresh-water Lochs", revised the early Berwickshire list of Johnston and Dalrymple's "Scottish Hydrachnids", and described several new or rare species. But his greatest accomplishment was his joint authorship with Soar of the Ray Society's "British Hydracarina", the three volumes of which appeared in 1925, 1927 and 1928, and the synonymy and detailed descriptions in which were mainly the responsibility of Williamson, while Soar was entirely responsible for the skilled and beautiful illustrations.

Like Soar, Williamson was "an ardent field worker and an accomplished microscopist", a shy and modest man, who, although ill-health clouded his latter years, remained interested in his books—for he was an omnivorous reader—and in his water-mites until his last illness. He died in Edinburgh on December 19, 1950, at the age of eighty-one, his wife having predeceased him by a few months.

JAMES RITCHIE

Mr. H. Y. Oldham

HENRY YULE OLDHAM was the son of Thomas Oldham, F.R.S., sometime director of the Geological Survey of India, and was educated at Rugby and at Jesus College, Oxford. After taking his degree he was for a time tutor to the Duc d'Orleans, and was always proud of the memory. He studied for a time in Paris, and, after some years of experience as an assistant master, first at the Hulme Grammar School in Manchester, then at Harrow (where Mr. Winston Churchill had been among his pupils), he spent a year of advanced study in geography in the University of Berlin.

In 1892 Mr. Oldham became a lecturer at Owens College, Manchester, and in the following year took up the lectureship created by the Royal Geographical Society for the encouragement of geographical studies at Cambridge. This he held with success for five years, after which he was promoted to the readership, which he held for ten years, from 1898 until 1908.

Mr. Oldham's death on March 14, at the ripe age of eighty-eight, breaks a link with the days when geography was not regarded generally as a scientific study, and when very little was done in schools or at the universities to foster interest. There are probably very few now living who remember Oldham in his prime, the pioneer whose enthusiasm drew large audiences, not so much at Cambridge as in the great manufacturing towns of the north of England, where his discourse—racy, anecdotal, scarcely perhaps by modern standards systematic enough to pass as academic—kindled an interest in such mysteries as the measurement of the curvature of the earth, and

still keener interest in the story of the sailors and explorers who opened up the New World by their curiosity and courage. Oldham loved those tales, and had the natural and infectious eloquence which kindled the imagination of his hearers. This pioneer work, more than the papers he contributed occasionally to a learned journal, gave him his best title to remembrance as a geographer.

At Cambridge, Oldham is best remembered as the founder and for many years the 'Commodore' of a highly successful undergraduate cruising club. Many young men owed to him their love of sailing and of ships, and he was happy in the thought that in the First World War so many young men in the Navy did good service as the representatives of the cruising club which had been his and their delight in peacetime. There was no guile in Oldham. His was a gentle, friendly nature, and many of the younger generation at King's College, where he resided as a member of the High Table for just half a century, though they know little or nothing of his pioneer work for geography, will long remember him with warm affection.

J. T. SHEPPARD

Dr. Helmuth Lissner

DR. H. LISSNER died at Haifa on February 15 of heart disease, and his passing came as a profound shock to his many friends in Great Britain, who admired his work as a fishery scientist and who loved him as a companion.

Lissner was born at Thorn in Prussia in December 1895. In 1916 he entered the University of Leipzig to study biology and natural history, and in 1920 he was employed at the biological station at Heligoland. In the following year he became assistant to Prof. Meisenheimer at Leipzig, and in 1922 he took the degree of doctor of philosophy and then joined Prof. Ehrenbaum, as assistant, in the Deutsche Wissenschaftliche Kommission für Meeresforschung in Hamburg.

There Lissner began his real fishery work, most of which was concerned with the study of the great German herring fishery, both from the biological and commercial points of view. Between 1922 and 1933 he published many papers on his subject, and he was rapidly becoming an accepted expert in fishery science when the upheavals of the Third Reich forced him to leave Germany and go to England.

From February to November 1934 he worked at the Laboratory of the Marine Biological Association at Plymouth; then he took up an appointment with the Turkish Government in Istanbul. On the termination of this contract he went to the Institute of Marine Biology at Rovigno, but again left just before Italy entered the War. His next move was to the Philippines, where his brother was living, and once again he began work at a fisheries institute there, but he did not wish to stay after the War when he was offered a permanent post in fisheries.

Lissner finally settled in Palestine, where he succeeded, amid countless difficulties, in establishing a new Fisheries Institute with several departments, but he did not live to see the programme completed. His last wish was to be buried at Caesarea near the site of the new Institute.

W. C. HODGSON

WE regret to announce the death of Prof. A. Sommerfeld, For.Mem.R.S., sometime professor of theoretical physics in the University of Munich, which occurred on April 26.