

obituary

William D. Coolidge, the developer of the modern X-ray tube and the ductile tungsten filament used in electric light bulbs, has died in Schenectady, New York. He was 101 years old.

Born in Hudson, Massachusetts, Dr Coolidge graduated from the Institute of Technology there in 1896, specialising in physical chemistry and electrical engineering. After obtaining his doctorate in 1899 at the University of Leipzig, he joined the research staff of General Electric. In 1908, he invented a method of working tungsten, one of the most brittle of metals, while it was hot, thus making it possible to draw out the metal into wires much thinner than human hair. The durable thin filaments made by this method led to a more durable light bulb for use in cars and trains, and to more powerful and more portable X-ray equipment. The X-ray tube invented in 1913, the 'Coolidge tube', is still the model on

which modern tubes are based. In this case, a hot tungsten filament replaced a cold aluminium cathode. Among many awards were an honorary MD from the University of Zurich, the Rumford Medal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the Howard N. Potts Medal of the Franklin Institute. Dr Coolidge will be honoured by the National Inventors Hall of Fame at the Patent and Trademark Office, from which he has received 83 patents. In 1932, he was appointed director of the General Electric Research Laboratory. Under his direction, many new discoveries were made, including the development of the sodium vapour lamp, high-quality magnetic steel, improved ventilating fans and the electric blanket. On the occasion of his 100th birthday, he was presented with a huge birthday cake lit with 100 ductile-tungsten lamps and topped with part of a large X-ray tube.

William Charles Osman-Hill, the primate anatomist, has died at the age of 74.

After graduating from Birmingham University in 1925 with an MD, Dr Osman-Hill became an assistant lecturer in zoology there and later lecturer in Anatomy from 1925-30. He was professor of anatomy in Ceylon University until 1944 and became a reader in physical anthropology in the University of Edinburgh from 1945-50. From 1950-62, he was Prosector to the Zoological Society of London and from 1962 until the time of his death he was one of the Trustees of the Hunterian Collection in the Royal College of Surgeons of England, of which he was also a Fellow. Dr Osman-Hill will be remembered particularly for his work on primate anatomy, about which he has published several books, and for many enlightening papers on primate evolution and anthropology.

announcements

Awards

Michel Crozon and **Peter Sonderegger** have been awarded the **Prix Scientifique** by the Fondation de France, for their work on 'Physics for the Man in the Street' at Aix-en-Provence in 1973.

John Miller Meek has been awarded the **Faraday Medal**, for research into electrical discharges in gases, and in particular the mechanism of the electric spark.

E. Kodicek has been awarded the **CIBA Medal and Prize** by the Biochemical Society for contributions to the study of metabolism and mode of action of cholecalciferol in animal tissues.

D. R. Trentham has been awarded the **Colworth Medal** by the Biochemical Society for his work on the kinetics of enzyme action and in particular his contribution to the transient kinetics of myosin-ATPase.

Appointment

Kenneth Dolder has been appointed to the chair of atomic physics at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne.

International meetings

March 13-14, **Chromosomal Proteins and their Role in Regulation of Gene Expression**, Florida (Florida Colloquium on Molecular Biology, Department of Biochemistry, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida 32610).

April 7-9, **Food from Waste**, Weybridge, Surrey (The Secretary, National College of Food Technology, Weybridge, Surrey, UK).

April 13-16, **Energy and Environment** California (Betty Peterson, Executive Director, Institute of Environmental Sciences, 940 East Northwest Highway, Mount Prospect, Illinois 60056).

April 14-17, **Magnetics**, London (Intermag 75, Institute of Physics, 47 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8QX, UK).

April 21-25, **Nuclear Energy**, Paris (P. Zaleski, CNE-Inscriptions, B.P. No. 27 92140 Clamart, France).

May 6-8, **Quantitative Magnetospheric Models**, Southern California (W. P. Olson (Chairman), McDonnell Douglas Astronautics Company, 5301 Bolsa Avenue, Huntington Beach, California 92647).

May 11-14, **Ozone for Water and Wastewater Treatment**, Montreal, Canada (The Symposium Chairman, 24 Central Avenue, Waterbury, Connecticut 06702).

May 11-16 **Calcium Transport in Contraction and Secretion**, Padova, Italy (F. Clementi, Istituto di Farmacologia, Università di Milano, 32 via Vanvitelli, 20129 Milan, Italy).

May 12-14, **Transplantation and Clinical Immunology**, Lyon (Secretariat, Docteur R. Triau, Fondation Mérieux, 17 rue Bourgelat, 69002 Lyon, France).

May 12-16, **Acid Precipitation and the Forest Ecosystem**, Columbus, Ohio (Dr Leon S. Dochinger, US Forest Service Laboratories, P.O. Box 365, Delaware, Ohio 43015).