

A Letter to the Secretary

*From Major Duncan E. Longworth, Sn.C., 1421 SW 8th Court, Fort Lauderdale,
Florida, August 20, 1945*

Dear Tom:

I have just returned from Africa and I think you had better change my address back to 75 Lee Avenue, Rockville Centre, N. Y. It can be forwarded to me from there, wherever I may be.

I had intended to write something for the "Mosquito News" but just never got around to it. I was quite busy the whole time at the Gold Coast. It is a delightful country and really the nicest place I have ever been stationed, the states included. There is plenty of work there for a malariologist, as well as most tropical diseases.

I was appointed malariologist for the African-Middle East Theatre about a month before I left. However, the Pacific intrigued me more and I succeeded in coming on with my unit, the 212th Malaria Survey Det. We are now enjoying our thirty day leaves, and were supposed to go the Pacific at the end thereof. However, we can hope that will be changed with the recent Pacific war news.

We did have a rather unusual steep at Accra,

Gold Coast. An official Inter-allied Malaria Committee was set up with the American, RAF, British Army, and Civilian government as members. We operated as a separate organization and with officers and soldiers from the several outfits working together. My detachment performed all the malaria survey activities for an area of 80 square miles and were in charge of the Laboratory for the Committee. We had upwards of 300 natives on survey work and some 3000 on all activities. The natives are quite intelligent and we trained several as entomological and parasitological technicians, as well as draftsmen, clerks, etc.

Our work included almost everything in the book. We had three cub planes, one Stearman and a C-47 for airplane spraying and observation. We sprayed an average of 25,000 native and European homes a month with DDT. That's just a sample of the amount of work involved.

Please give my best regards to everyone and to yourself.

DUNCAN E. LONGWORTH.

DDT Conference and Demonstration in New York City—A conference and demonstration on DDT was held in New York, N. Y. on September 18 and 19, 1945 under the direction of the U. S. Public Health Service, Office of Malaria Control in War Areas. The conference was attended by 51 persons representing public health and allied departments of the City of New York and the States of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

It was the purpose of this conference to supply these public health workers with reliable and practical information concerning the proper use of this insecticide in the control of insects of public health importance in this area. The agenda for the first day included lectures on the following phases of the problem:

1. Basic principles of DDT Application—Major H. L. Felton.
2. Insects of Public Health Importance—Capt. R. C. Barnes.
3. Preparing DDT mixtures, Solutions and Emulsions—Lt. H. M. Giges.
4. Application of DDT—Major H. L. Felton.

5. Precautions in Handling and Applying DDT—Capt. R. C. Barnes.

All of the lectures were accompanied by appropriate illustrative material including demonstrations of materials and equipment, film strips, and movies.

On the second day, demonstrations of the preparation and application of DDT were presented. Specific demonstrations showed application of the residual spray for control of flies, mosquitoes, bed bugs, and cockroaches, and application of the dust for control of cockroaches. Following these demonstrations each member of the group was given the opportunity to practice the application of the sprays and dusts.

The meetings concluded with a round-table discussion and review.

R. C. BARNES

National Audubon Society Symposium on DDT and its Relation to Wildlife—Scientists from the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine, Fish and Wildlife Service, U. S. Public Health Service, U. S. Navy, State Experiment Stations and others discussed experimental work that

has been done on DDT, especially in relation to wildlife. This symposium was a part of the 41st Annual Convention of the National Audubon Society and was held in the auditorium of the New York Historical Society in New York City on October 22, 1945.

The program consisted of a series of short talks by the various specialists, after which a brief question and answer period was held. Dr. P. N. Annand, Chief, Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine, U. S. Department of Agriculture emphasized the responsibility of his Bureau in preserving the wildlife, mammals and forests, and that DDT is a tool to prevent destruction of our forests. He pointed out that DDT is no more toxic to the higher animals than the fluorides and the arsenicals which are now in common use as insecticides. He discussed briefly the experimental work which had been done by the Bureau in cooperation with other interested agencies, to determine the effect of large dosages of DDT on wildlife when sprayed on extensive areas of forest land. On the basis of present knowledge, the Bureau recommends a maximum of one pound of DDT per acre, which will not be harmful to wildlife, except to fish, where lakes are sprayed directly.

Dr. Annand emphasized that much more research work is necessary to determine the minimum lethal dosage and the effects of DDT on soil bacteria.

Further information on the experiments conducted with DDT on 14 forest areas throughout the United States was given by Dr. Clarence Cottam, Chief, Division of Wildlife Research, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, and Mr. Richard H. Pough, Research Associate of the Audubon Society.

Dr. Cottam stated that two pounds of DDT per acre seemed to have no appreciable effect on bird life, while almost all surface feeding fish were killed and the bottom feeders were left unharmed. Mr. Pough reported that forty-eight hours after a five-pound per acre dosage of DDT was sprayed on a wooded area by airplane, the woods were silent, and all birds were

believed killed except hermit thrushes, hawks and some towhees. However, twelve days later many birds were back in the same experimental plot. Dr. Cottam noted that the one-pound per acre dosage of DDT had no harmful effects on the bird-life of the forest.

Dr. S. W. Simmons, Director, Carter Memorial Laboratory, U. S. Public Health Service, Savannah, Georgia, pointed out that DDT as it is being used by the Service will have no effect on bird life. The Public Health Service is using it mostly as a residual spray in buildings for control of insects of medical importance.

Dr. Robert D. Glasgow, New York State Entomologist, pointed out that the main reasons for alarm over the use of DDT are its residual effect, its power in small quantities to kill some forms of life, and a possible trend toward its application over extensive areas for insect control. He called for a balanced, scientific attitude in evaluating the results of its use.

The session was presided over by Mr. John Baker, President of the Audubon Society. Other persons who spoke, in addition to the ones previously mentioned, were as follows: Dr. Hopper, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, U. S. Navy; Mr. L. W. Swift, U. S. Forest Service; Dr. E. F. Phillips, Professor of Entomology, Cornell University; Dr. C. H. Curran, Entomologist, American Museum of Natural History; Mr. Henry Reppa, Long Island State Park Commission; Mr. R. L. Vannote, Superintendent, Morris County, N. J. Mosquito Commission; Mr. F. P. Freeman, Mayor, Island Beach, New Jersey; Mr. L. G. McNamara, N. J. State Department of Conservation; and Dr. V. K. LaMer, Columbia University.

An evaluation of the data presented at the meeting pointed to the fact that DDT, if used with discretion and at recommended dosages would result in no harmful effects to bird life. However, DDT is somewhat more toxic to fish life. Many speakers stressed the need for further research on the subject of DDT and its effects on wildlife.

C. A. WILSON