

OBITUARIES

James P. C. Southall, professor emeritus of physics at Columbia University and a charter member and former president of the Optical Society of America, died in Bronxville, N. Y., on August 23 at the age of 91.

A native of Norfolk, Va., he graduated from the University of Virginia and earned his master's degree there in 1893. In succeeding years, he taught at the Miller Manual Training School in Albemarle, Va., at Hobart College in Geneva, N. Y., and at the Alabama Polytechnic Institute in Auburn. In 1914, he joined the faculty of Columbia University as an assistant professor of physics, becoming full professor in 1922 and retiring in 1940.

A specialist in optics, Prof. Southall was elected president of the Optical Society for 1921 and served for a time as an associate editor of the Society's *Journal*. He was also editor of the American edition of Helmholtz's *Physiological Optics*. Prof. Southall was a fellow of the American Physical Society.

James Fisher, emeritus professor and for many years head of the Department of Mathematics and Physics at the Michigan College of Mining and Technology, died on July 16 at the age of 89.

A native of Hancock, Mich., he received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the Michigan College of Mining and Technology and was appointed to the faculty as an instructor in mathematics and physics in 1895. Three years later, he was named head of the Department, and he continued to serve in that capacity until 1934, when he was appointed dean of the College. He retired in 1946. Prof. Fisher was a member of the American Physical Society.

Walter F. Grasse, senior staff scientist at the Electronics Systems Division of the Fairchild Stratos Corporation, died on August 17 at his home in Northport, L. I. He was 52 years old.

Born in Berlin, Germany, Dr. Grasse received his PhD in physics and mathematics from the University of Berlin in 1934 and performed experimental work in infrared spectroscopy at the University's Technical Institute. He joined Rheinmetall-Borsig in 1935 and served as a physicist there until the end of World War II. He subsequently came to the United States to work as a ballistics specialist at the Naval Air Development Center in Pennsylvania, and in 1952 was appointed supervisor of general ordnance at the Naval Aviation Ordnance Test Station in Virginia. In 1957, after two years as a partner in a technical consulting firm, he joined the Astrionics Division of Fairchild as chief of the Physics Division.



W. W. Coblentz

William W. Coblentz, former National Bureau of Standards physicist and one of the pioneers of infrared spectroscopy, died in Washington, D. C., on September 15. He was 88 years old.

A native of North Lima, Ohio, Dr. Coblentz received his bachelor's degree from the Case School of Applied Science in 1900. Cornell University awarded him an MS in 1901 and a PhD in 1903, and he continued at Cornell as a Carnegie research associate for two succeeding years. It was as a graduate student at Cornell that Dr. Coblentz undertook his monumental investigations of emission, absorption, and reflectance spectra which culminated in 1905 in the publication of his "Investigations of Infrared Spectra" and paved the way for present-day infrared spectroscopy.

That same year, Dr. Coblentz joined NBS, where he remained until his retirement in 1945, publishing almost 500 papers in such areas as stellar radiometry, radiation constants, ice formation on plants, bioluminescence, and phototherapy. He is also well known for his work in astrophysics, having made the first determinations of the actual temperatures of celestial bodies by spectroscopic means.

The recipient of many honors and awards, including the Rumford Gold Medal and the Ives Medal, Dr. Coblentz belonged to the American Physical Society, the Astronomical Society of America, and the Optical Society of America.

Fred F. Householder, retired professor of physics at the University of Akron, died in Akron on July 22. Born in 1885 in Bloom City, Wisc., he attended Milwaukee State Teachers College and the University of Wisconsin, graduating from the latter institution in 1913. Three years later, he received his MA degree from the University of Wisconsin. Early in his career he served as a secondary-school teacher and taught at the Oshkosh Normal School and Iowa State College. In 1918 he was appointed professor of physics at the University of Akron, and he remained in that post until his retirement in 1950.