

Previous reports relating tooth decay to the amount of calcium and phosphorus in the saliva, he asserted, were based on examinations of too few persons to give a correct answer.

Science News Letter, November 8, 1941

For Infected Jaws

GOOD results with sulfathiazole treatment in 53 cases of infected jaws were reported by Dr. George C. Albright, of Greenville, South Carolina.

"In the short time sulfathiazole has been in existence, I am fully convinced that it is to play a major role in the treatment of jaw infections, especially the acute type infections—namely, the sore and infected lower third molar which is so prevalent, inflammation of the bone marrow in the upper and lower jaws, and in acute abscesses," Dr. Albright said.

He regularly applies the drug locally to sockets immediately after tooth extraction, and declared that in 300 cases healing was accompanied by less after-pain than in his previous experience.

Science News Letter, November 8, 1941

ZOOLOGY

Pink-Eyed Opossum Found in Oklahoma

AQUEER-LOOKING, ghost-like animal was seen up a tree near Cushing, Oklahoma. Captured, it was quickly recognized as being nothing but an albino opossum, half-grown. Its eyes were pink, with apparently no pupils. It was named "Pinkie."

"Pinkie" has won brief fame in *The Journal of Heredity* not because of its over-laundered, bleached-out appearance—albinism appears among many animals, from man to lobster—but on account of the nature of its coat, which is fine and lacks bristles.

The covering of the ordinary opossum is made up of a mixture of long bristle-like hairs and a fine under-fur. A. Lindsay, Oklahoma fur dealer, told Dorothy Mae Smith of the Oklahoma State College for Women, Chickasha, that the albino opossums he has handled never had any true fur at all: that it was all hair.

Albinism has an heredity basis in the opossum as in other vertebrates. True albinism is always a recessive. "Pinkie" is unique because of the hair-like condition of his fur. At any rate, it seems this feature of an albino opossum has never been noted before. That's why "Pinkie" gets into print.

Science News Letter, November 8, 1941

MEDICINE

Gray Hair Must Be Endured: Cure a TNT Ingredient

Para-Aminobenzoic Acid, Which Ordinarily Sold for A Few Dollars a Pound, Is Now Almost Unobtainable

AMONG trials that must be endured for the duration is gray hair.

Countless men and women are probably turning gray from worry and nervous stress in these days of national emergency. Maybe success in curing their gray hair would heighten morale, perhaps even lead to victory. Scientists have discovered a medicine, para-aminobenzoic acid, that cures the gray hair, but—

The medicine that blasts gray hair is made from the same stuff, toluene, that goes into TNT.

First questions asked when success of the gray hair cure was announced were: Where can you get the medicine? How much does it cost?

Experimenters at first believed that the chemical could be obtained for about 10 cents a pound. Digging for more exact information among the people who make it, not for medical use but for research and industrial purposes, it was learned that national defense has interfered with production and for the present the chemical is practically unobtain-

able, at any price, for the cure of gray hair.

Specifically, du Pont makes a technical grade of para-aminobenzoic acid, has sold it for \$1.40 per pound in 150-pound barrels, but their production "is quite limited under present conditions; we have been unable to fill all of the orders offered to us by our regular customers and consequently are unable to currently make any new commitments on this product."

A purified grade of para-aminobenzoic acid for use in research and experimental work (the technical grade is used as an intermediate in dye manufacture) has been supplied by the Eastman Kodak Company at \$8 for 500 grams (about one pound). Their present supply is exhausted, and they cannot make any more because the starting material, toluene, is needed for national defense. They believe the toluene shortage is temporary and, like du Pont, hope within a few months to be able to furnish the anti-gray hair chemical.

Science News Letter, November 8, 1941



UNIQUE ALBINO

This photograph from the *Journal of Heredity* shows a pink-eyed Albino opossum, unique because of his hair-like fur.