

of Liverpool in 1901 and after holding resident posts at Liverpool Royal Infirmary he was awarded the Alexander fellowship in pathology and worked at the Thompson Yates laboratory. Later he joined as an investigator the Royal Commission on Tuberculosis at Stansted where his brother, the late A. Stanley Griffith, was also working. In 1910 Griffith joined the staff of the Local Government Board under Dr. Arthur Eastwood and began work at Cardinal Manning's old house in Carlisle Place, and like Scott he moved to Dudley House when the Ministry of Health took over the service. Since the outbreak of this war he had been working for the Ministry and the Medical Research Council on investigating streptococci isolated from war wounds and other sources.

Like his brother he was a recluse, known to few. To these, however, his quiet, kindly manner and his devotion to his life job, made him a lovable personality. Outside his work he found his pleasure in his winter skiing holiday in the Alps, in walks with his dog on the Sussex downs, and in the cottage he had built there. He was a member of the honourable society of Gray's Inn.

For over thirty years of his working life, writes L. C. Fred Griffith followed a single star. He believed that progress in the epidemiology of infectious diseases would come—and only come—with more precise knowledge about the micro-organisms responsible for those diseases. It was idle to speculate about the sources of infection in tuberculosis or streptococcal infection while there were manifest differences among the strains of tubercle bacilli and of streptococci. Better differentiation of the organisms must come first, and to that task he devoted his life, content quietly to amass observations year after year in the sure hope that some pattern would gradually emerge. Some of us wondered—I certainly often did—whether such complete preoccupation with this one aspect of the problem was worth while. But Griffith was right, as events have proved. His differentiation of the hæmolytic streptococci into types by the agglutination reaction, and that of Mrs. Lancefield into larger groups by the precipitin reaction, have enabled workers all over the world to dig out the essential facts about the sources of infection in scarlet fever, puerperal fever, epidemic sore-throat, surgical sepsis and wound infections. These facts are providing the foundation for far-reaching preventive measures. Griffith knew well that the task was by no means completed but his work had carried it farther than that of any other single individual. A fine achievement, carried through without thought of personal ambition or of gain. He also worked alone at the differentiation of the meningococci and the pneumococci and staphylococci, and here two pieces of work stand out: that on the profound biological changes induced in a virulent pneumococcus, by contact with an immune serum, and that on the transformation of pneumococcal types under certain circumstances. It was characteristic that he hesitated longer than most workers would have done before publishing these observations. He always took the line "Almighty God is in no hurry—why should I be?"



FREDERICK GRIFFITH

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Dr. F. Griffith, who was Scott's fellow at the Ministry and met his death with him, was born at Hale in Cheshire some sixty years ago. He graduated from the University