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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

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Louis Rosenfeld's excellent article, "Otto Folin and Donald D. Van Slyke: Pioneers of Clinical Chemistry" [*Bull. Hist. Chem.* **1999**, *24*, 40-47], did not include any mention of the pioneering electrophoretic method used by Drs. Van Slyke and Dole to study blood during World War II. Vincent P. Dole was the first person noted among those who had worked with Van Slyke and who later had achieved prominence. During 1943-1944, I was Dr. Dole's technical assistant at the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research.

Using electrophoresis apparatus to analyze blood supplied by Van Slyke from malaria patients (mostly military personnel attacked by the disease in the Pacific theater of war), we attempted to find out whether the blood of those with relapsing malaria was different from "normal" blood. Separation of proteins in the blood was achieved because of their different mobilities in an electric field. In evaluating the results, we concluded that the severity of the disease in patients with relapsing malaria might be reflected in measurements of the total protein concentration and the albumin:globulin ratio. These and other studies were published in the *Journal of Clinical Investigation*.

The Nobel Prize in Chemistry was awarded to Arne Tiselius in 1948 for his contributions to the development of the electrophoresis apparatus and its applications. Developed by 1937, it was first used in 1939 in the study of diseases. The early versions of the apparatus were very large; I recall they were about 3 meters x 1.5 meters x 1 meter. Each analysis required a day for completion. Today, 12-cm glass tubes can produce separation in 1 - 2 hours; capillary tubes in 10 minutes. *Esther B. Sparberg, Professor Emerita of Chemistry, Hofstra University, Hempstead, Long Island, NY 11550*