

## EDITORIAL STATEMENT

**Half life of C<sup>14</sup>.** New determinations of this fundamental constant of C<sup>14</sup> dating continue to be published, and it is hoped that interlaboratory agreement can be reached at the Cambridge conference scheduled for July 1962 or soon thereafter. Until such agreement can be announced, we consider that premature recalculation of published dates would be disastrous, and at our insistence **all dates published in this volume (Volume 4) are based on the Libby value, 5570 ± 30 yr.** Exception has been made for dates in Louvain I, because some of these measurements, previously published elsewhere, had been based on the NBS value, 5760 yr.

**A.D./B.C. dates.** As has been pointed out in several publications, the use of B.P. ("before present"), though convenient in the calculation of time rates, is becoming increasingly ambiguous and confusing now that C<sup>14</sup> dating is more than a decade old. Although for the present we continue to use B.P., we have suggested, and the laboratories represented in this volume have agreed, **that A.D. 1950 be accepted as the standard reference year**, i.e. B.P. now means "Before Physics." Hence B.P. dates can now be converted to the A.D./B.C. scale without ambiguity arising from the year of measurement or of publication or of citation or from the decay of C<sup>14</sup> in the NBS oxalic acid. No statistically significant difference is made in any date by adding or subtracting five or ten years from it, and republication is considered unnecessary for the present. When agreement on the correct half life is attained, a comprehensive index to all dates, now being planned, can include recalculations made for any reason. Adoption of A.D. 1950 as the year of reference appropriately honors W. F. Libby, and is arithmetically more convenient than A.D. 1955 or A.D. 1962, but it is a compromise; historians and others who may find it unacceptable are urged to communicate directly with us or with the conferees at Cambridge, rather than to write plaintive letters to the editors of other professional journals.

**Russian laboratories.** In our efforts to insure completeness of coverage and centralized publication of all C<sup>14</sup> dates, we have of course communicated with the Russian laboratories known to us, and we expect to publish Russian date lists in future volumes. Meanwhile we note for our readers the publication, in English translation, of two Russian date lists chiefly concerned with geology:

Vinogradov, A. P., and others, 1956, C<sup>14</sup> age determinations: *Geokhimiya*, no. 8, p. 729-736,

————— 1959, Determination of absolute age by the carbon<sup>14</sup> method (Part II): *Geokhimiya*, no. 8, p. 815-823.

We also note one archaeological date list:

Artemev, V. V., S. V. Butomo, V. M. Drzhzhin, and E. N. Romanova, 1961, Rezultaty Opredeleniya Absolyutnogo Vozrasta Ryada Archeologicheskii, I Geologicheskie Obraztsov Po Radiouglerodu ( $C^{14}$ ): Sovetskaia Archeologiia, no. 2.

An unpublished partial translation of the last-cited paper, made at the Museum of Anthropology, University of Michigan, is on file in the RADIO-CARBON office, and we shall be pleased to learn of the existence of other papers, and especially of other translations.

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