

All Routine 'Lab' Tests Handled Here

By PATRICIA CAIN
Laboratory Technician,
St. Anthony's Hospital

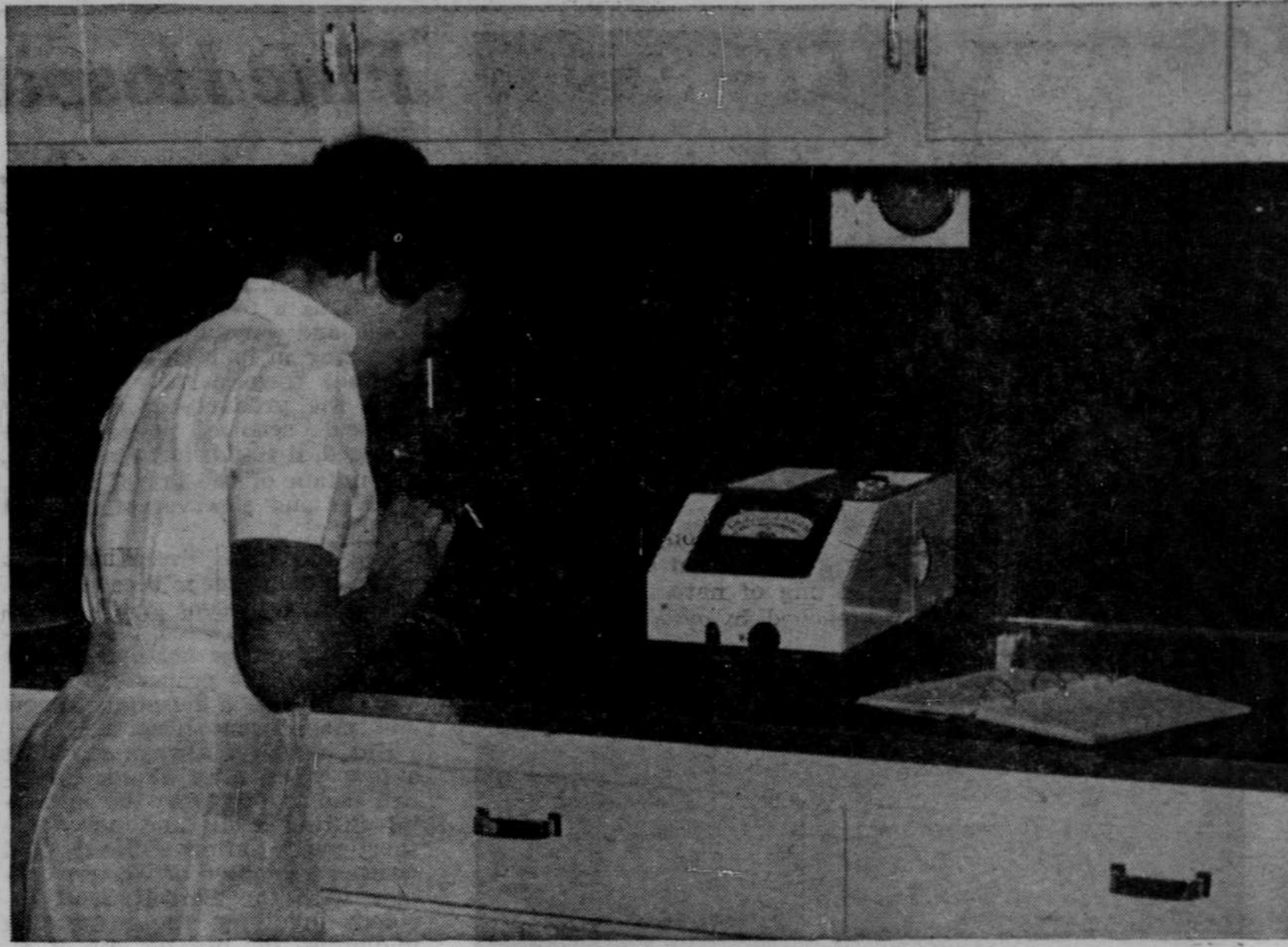
"A medical technologist? Well, isn't that nice! But what do you do?"

That question is put to the "lab tech" more often than not. True, a laboratory is a room filled with intricate-looking apparatus, delicate glassware, dozens of bottles of solutions and strange odors. But more than that, it is the place in which tests are performed to help the doctor make a quick and accurate diagnosis.

For example, if you go to the doctor with a pain in your abdomen and he isn't sure whether you have appendicitis or have eaten too many green apples, he might order the technician to do a "white count." An infection such as appendicitis causes an increase in the number of white blood cells circulating in the blood. But that is only one phase of laboratory work.

Other departments include clinical chemistry, bacteriology, histology, serology, hematology, urology and blood typing. The technician also takes the electrocardiograms and basal metabolism tests. Her job is to perform the tests carefully and accurately. The doctor then interprets the results as related to the rest of the clinical picture.

The laboratory at St. Anthony's is equipped to do any routine laboratory tests. Unusual tests, and those which a small hospital is not equipped to do, will be sent to the state laboratory in Lincoln. Items which will catch the eye of the visiting public are a hot-air oven for drying and sterilizing glassware, an incubator for culturing bacteria, bunsen burners, an electric hotplate for cooking inflammable materials, such as ether and chloroform, a small icebox in which volatile reagents, typing sera and febrile



Miss Cain . . . "lab tech" they call her.

agglutinins are kept, and an electric hot water bath which can be set to keep water the same temperature for long periods of time.

Life Strenuous for Pioneer Doctors

By JAMES C. OLSON
Supt. State Historical Society
The story of pioneering in old Nebraska is filled with accounts of the ravages of disease. Lewis and Clark, the first American explorers in this country, reported the toll taken by smallpox among the various Indian

tribes. The overland trails were lined with the rude graves of thousands of emigrants who had died from cholera. The early settlements were in constant danger of being wiped out by epidemics.

Doctors were few and far between. After 11 years of settlement, for example, Antelope county had five lawyers and three preachers, but only one doctor. To complicate the problem further, many who were practicing as physicians in the early days had only the most rudimentary qualifications. It is reported that one early Nebraska doctor prescribed only one remedy, whether the disease was a cold, the flu, mumps, or measles, and that one concoction

was known as "August Flower Bitters."

The practice of medicine in the early days was a strenuous one. It called for long rides in the saddle, day and night, summer and winter, in all kinds of weather.

Many a pioneer doctor literally gave his life in service to his patients. It is not uncommon to hear stories of pioneer doctors who rose from their own sick best to ride out over the prairie in the depth of winter to minister to the needs of their ailing fellow men.

The early settlers almost universally complained that the fees charged by the doctors were too

high. A customary charge in the early sixties appears to have been a dollar for the call, plus 50 cents a mile for the ride. In addition, of course, the patient had to pay what were considered exorbitant prices for the medicines prescribed by his physician.

Despite this charge, many early physicians found that they had to eke out their incomes by other types of activity. Some of them took homesteads and farmed. Others went into the newspaper business. Still others entered politics.

Indeed, some of the most significant contributions to the development of Nebraska were made by physicians who entered other spheres of activity. A notable case is that of Dr. George L. Miller. Doctor Miller came to Omaha in 1854, the year the territory was organized, as a young medical practitioner.

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BELOW is a picture of our new business establishment now under construction but nearly completed. O'Neill moves forward and we are privileged to be a part of this progressive community.



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