

The news of the death of Mrs. Fiammetta Wilson on July 21st, 1920, came as a terrible shock to the large circle of her friends and relatives. The loss to astronomers is exceedingly great. She was not only such a fine observer herself, but she possessed the faculty of instilling the power and desire to observe in others.

Mrs. Wilson was the eldest daughter of the late Mr. F. S. Worthington of Lowestoft and Mrs. Worthington. On Feb. 23, 1910, she became a member of the British Astronomical Association and quickly proved herself a useful observer and valuable member of the Meteoric and Auroræ and Zodiacal Light Sections.

She, Mr. W. F. Denning, F.R.A.S., and myself were closely associated in meteor observing, and he and I know, perhaps better than anyone, what infinite pains she took and what exquisite accuracy she attained. The proof of this is in the number of meteoric accordances she and Mr. Denning obtained together, far exceeding anything of the kind ever achieved in meteoric history.

From February, 1916, to the spring of 1919, during the absence of the Director—the Rev. M. Davidson, as chaplain to the Forces—she took charge of the Meteor Section, and during all those strenuous, anxious years the observing never failed and the Meteor Section Interim Reports appeared regularly in the *Journal*. This meant an enormous amount of correspondence and aid to those who were beginners. These can best reward her by carrying on faithfully the work she taught them to begin.

By virtue of the Directorship, and later by election, she was on the Council of the B.A.A. till her death.

Previous to the Great War she made good use of a beautiful 3-inch refractor; later, this was lent to M. Felix de Roy of Antwerp, while he was in England. Her binoculars were in regular use, and she possessed a splendid knowledge of naked-eye and opera-glass stars.

At the November, 1916, B.A.A. Meeting she read her paper on "Clusters and Nebulæ visible with small Optical Means." This included a list of nebulæ and clusters, with notes of their observed magnitudes, as being useful for comparison with faint comets.

Mrs. Wilson exhibited and explained a sample Map of the sky prepared by Mr. T. W. Backhouse, F.R.A.S., at the May, 1913, B.A.A. Meeting. His "Catalogue of 9,842 Stars or all Stars very conspicuous to the naked eye" is in general use; but the War stopped the publication of the fourteen sheets comprising the large Meteor Atlas and it is only since Mr. Backhouse has passed away that his trustees are to complete and publish these star maps for tracing meteor paths which would have been such a delight to her to use.

Together with four other women, she obtained admittance to the Royal Astronomical Society on January 14th, 1916, and was

a regular attendant at the monthly meetings in London. She became a member of the Leeds Astronomical Society in 1919, and was closely connected with the little Chaldæan Society for naked-eye work.

She was also a Member of the Société Astronomique de France and of the Société d'Astronomie d'Anvers, and was also recently appointed a Member of the Commission des Étoiles Filantes. How pleased and encouraged Mrs. Wilson would have been to find she had been chosen as the Englishwoman to whom had been assigned by the Harvard College Observatory the "Edward C. Pickering Astronomical Fellowship for Women" for the College year 1920-21. It was a very courteous act to offer a year's tenure to our countrywoman, and it is sad to think the appointment came too late for her to know it.

Her passing is indeed a sad one to us, we can so ill spare her, for she lived for a great cause and gallantly strove to serve it to the utmost of her ability. Our comfort is that now she sees face to face those glories which here we only see in part.—A. GRACE COOK.