

G. C. I. Rawlings (1913-1993)

Gerard Cecil Inui Rawlings was born of missionary parents in Osaka, Japan, the influence of that country being evident in the name 'Inui', roughly translatable as 'the north-west corner of the house where the devils come in'. He was educated at Rossall School, Lancashire, where his interest in astronomy - initially aroused by the sight of a meteor - developed because of his desire to escape games. He frequently visited the school observatory without permission, and was eventually caught while dismantling the telescope, although he was excused games until it was reassembled.

After leaving Rossall he obtained his degree at Cambridge and then returned to Japan to teach English. On the outbreak of World War II he and his family evacuated to Malaya, but after the fall of Singapore he was arrested and sent to Changri prison camp. Here he spent more than three years, his survival being chiefly due to his familiarity with Japanese food and his fluency in

several languages, as he was the only person in the camp who spoke all the languages used there.

Gerard Rawlings applied his expertise in several fields, including wood-turning, bee-keeping, languages and, of course, astronomy. He spent many years studying transient lunar phenomena, and from 1965 until 1993 used the Association's 6-inch short-focus modified Cassegrain reflector (the prototype Dall-Kirkham) designed and made by Horace Dall in 1931. In the 1967 August issue of the *Journal* he published an extensive paper in which he discussed possible causes of TLP, a theory which he hoped to see proved or refuted, although this was not to be. He died on 1993 August 16, leaving a son Ben - who kindly supplied personal notes for this obituary - a daughter and four granddaughters.

R. A. Marriott

