

Henry Howard Hammond, M.B.E., F.R.A.S.

All Members who were frequent visitors to Burlington House received the news of Mr Hammond's death on the 19th November, 1953, with a personal sense of very real regret, for it was as a person rather than as an astronomer that he had won in the Association a position of esteem and affection. He was greeted with genuine pleasure by his many friends when he appeared at the October meeting, after the summer recess, and climbed the many stairs to the

Library with little sign of fatigue in spite of his 84 years. As he sat smoking his pipe in his customary armchair, listening with lively interest to the discussions around him, he was the embodiment of tranquillity, geniality, and good humour. A fortnight later he had a stroke while asleep and never recovered consciousness. He leaves a widow, a son, and two daughters.

Henry Howard Hammond was born in London on the 6th February, 1869, and passed the whole of his professional life as a civil servant in one of the departments of the Treasury. For his particular services in connection with the international settlement of the financial claims of aliens after the first world war he was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire. On his retirement he devoted himself wholeheartedly to his many hobbies, among which were pottery, Japanese art, model making (he was a fine craftsman), natural history and, of course, astronomy. He was one of the founders in 1909 of the Scout Troop in Wimbledon Park, where he lived until his death, and for his many years' work on behalf of the Movement he was awarded the gold medal of the Boy Scouts Association.

Mr Hammond became a member of the British Astronomical Association in 1934, and a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society in 1947. His interest in astronomy was very wide, and right up to a few days before his death he was observing with his $3\frac{1}{2}$ -inch equatorial telescope on the flat roof of his house. The mathematical side of astronomy appealed to him strongly, and he made several excellent instruments, including astrolabes, nocturnal dials, sun-dials and a most interesting armillary sphere with a 'floating' horizon.

He served on the Council from 1947 to 1950 and was Curator of Lantern Slides from 1948 to 1951. For many months he spent every Wednesday afternoon at Burlington House with Mr Patston, the previous Curator, examining and repairing the whole stock of slides and compiling a new catalogue. In addition to attending most conscientiously to the requests for slides, which were considerable in number and had nearly always to be dealt with by post, he gave much valuable help in the Library, particularly when the librarian was obliged to be absent.

Mr Hammond took upon himself to perform yet another service to the Association, that of seeking out lonely new Members at meetings and making them feel that they really were welcome. His personal charm, courtesy and great kindness enabled him to do this admirably. Perhaps the best tribute to his memory is that which was uttered spontaneously by many of his friends on hearing of his peaceful end—'He was such a dear old fellow'.—J.L.W.