

JACK MILLER

On 15 June 1958 Jack Miller passed away in his sleep after a very short illness.

Jack Miller was born in a village 200 miles north of Odessa in November 1890, his actual name being Pinchas Mogihsky. In 1904, at the age of fourteen, he travelled across Europe to join a sister living in the east-end of

London, and there attended the Central Foundation School where, among other studies, he had to learn English.

After serving an apprenticeship with an electrical engineering firm in Manchester, he returned to London to work for a short time with the Post Office Engineering Department on the repair of telephone-exchange equipment. Lack of opportunity in this direction made him move to Cubitt & Co., where he filled a post as draughtsman and designer and was, according to a reference, 'a steady and industrious man, thoroughly reliable, and a designer of ingenious devices.'

In 1913 he had married Edith Emilie Draphin. His father-in-law was engaged in the tobacco trade and Miller, entering the firm on the export side, eventually became the director of the company. Later he started up on his own in the retail side of the business, opening a kiosk in Covent Garden. This, and another, failed, but a third was a success, and finally he built up one of the largest chains of retail tobacco shops in the country.

His interest in astronomy was mainly on the theoretical side and resulted in a series of papers in the *Journal* round about 1939. 'Gravitational Theory of Planetary Rotation' (Vol. 52, Nos. 5 and 6); 'Newton and the Inverse Square Law' (Vol. 50, No. 2). These papers gave rise to some lively discussion at the meetings. He was working on a paper dealing with solar phenomena at the time of his death.

In recent years he had mounted the Association's coude telescope in an excellent observatory and had used the instrument for solar observation and photography.

Music was one of his interests, although he did not himself play an instrument. His wife, an accomplished pianist, and her nephew, Yehudi Menuhin, no doubt drew him to the appreciation of music. His keen enjoyment of a concert at the Royal Festival Hall last year is one of my many pleasant memories of him.

Jack Miller's quiet voice, his deceptively casual manner, his sense of humour, and his generous nature, endeared him to all his friends. His active interest in the Association resulted in many benefits for which he insisted on remaining anonymous. He accompanied the solar eclipse party to Sweden in 1954 and helped in organizing the arrangements; he brought back a fine colour film of the event. Each social function arranged by the Association saw him working quietly behind the scenes in the interest of members. His generosity has benefited both our own Association and the Royal Astronomical Society.

He was for twenty-five years a member of the National Liberal Club, and for twenty years of the Eccentric Club. In both these organizations he was an active member of committees dealing with charitable activities. One of his characteristics was keeping his friends. He mentioned once, apropos the kindness they had shown him in his youth, that he still kept in touch with the family he had lodged with when he first went to Manchester to serve his apprenticeship.

His passing has left a sad gap in the Council and the Association. His friends mourn him, but count it a privilege to have known him.

He leaves a son, Jon, and a daughter, Sonia. Mrs Miller pre-deceased him in 1951.—D. A. CAMPBELL