

# Obituary.

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## Sub-Lieut. John Earle Maxwell, R.N.A.S.

We regret to record the death on active service of Sub-Lieut. John Earle Maxwell, R.N.A.S., which occurred on March 30 of the present year. Lieutenant Maxwell was the elder son of Mr. John A. Maxwell, solicitor, of 52, Bishopsgate, and was born on 1892, June 24. He was educated at Haileybury, and on leaving school took up law. Two years later, in 1913, January, he began to study medicine at Guy's Hospital. In 1916, January, he was given a commission in the R.N.V.R. and was attached to the R.N.A.S. He was ordered to the Eastern Mediterranean in the following November. On 1917, March 30, he set out with a pilot on a reconnaissance over enemy territory, but failed to return. He was at first reported missing, but some weeks later came the sad news that both he and the pilot had been shot down and killed.

Lieutenant Maxwell will be remembered as one of the younger members of our Association, being only 24 years of age at the time of his death. He took up astronomy as a hobby in 1908, while still at Haileybury. At the same time he began observing with a 3-in. telescope of his own, and also used the 6-in. refractor belonging to the school. By the time he left the latter he had a good working knowledge of astronomy, which he still further developed during the all too few remaining years of his life. He was keenly interested in many branches of physical astronomy, but most particularly in the question of the reality or otherwise of the Martian "canals." He lectured on this subject while still at school, and later did so again at the Hampstead

Scientific Society. In addition he wrote an article and several letters on the subject in *Knowledge*. In his ideas he identified himself to a great extent with the Lowellian school, but at the same time his views were not narrow, and he was one of those who consider that the last word on this controversial subject has yet to be said. He was a constant attendant at the meetings of the Association, of which he was elected a member on 1913, November 26, and took a keen and vigorous part in the discussions. He was an able observer, and latterly did a good deal of planetary work with Mr. Worthington's 10-in. refractor. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society on 1915, January 8.