

OBITUARY

WILLIAM HENRY JULIAN

William Henry Julian died on Sunday February 24 at the age of 80 after a brief illness.

He was born in 1893 at Northwich, Cheshire, of Lincolnshire parents, and after schooling there attended Manchester University, from which he graduated B.Sc. in 1915. He also took a B.Sc. (external) with honours in physics at London University in 1924.

He was in the Manchester University OTC when war broke out and intended to join the Public Schools' Battalion, but joined up as a private in the Royal Fusiliers immediately after graduation. Later he became a sergeant and served until demobilization in the autumn of 1919. He was recalled to England for a period in 1917 to become a works chemist at West Gorton, Manchester, but was back in France for the final stages of the war, being wounded on the Somme. After the armistice he was with the army of occupation with an educational unit, where he acted as interpreter in French and German. He then taught science at Earls Colne Grammar School, Essex, from 1920 January until 1925 August, and at Perins Grammar School, Alresford, Hampshire, until 1930 August, before going to the County Grammar School, St Austell, Cornwall, where he was senior science master until his retirement in 1956 December.

He was married in 1920 to Ivy Hughes of New Cross, London, and they have one son, Walter Henry Julian, who is a lecturer in quarrying and surveying at the Mid-Cornwall College of Further Education, and a granddaughter, Linda, who is studying French and German at Southampton University.

Mr Julian joined the Association in 1946 February and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society in the same year. Almost immediately he began helping Dr J. G. Porter by preparing several of the tables in the *Handbook*, and in the issue of 1950 his name appears for the first time among those who were making predictions of the returns of periodic comets, his predictions appearing regularly there and in the *Quarterly Journal of the Royal Astronomical Society* over the next dozen years.

In 1952 he was appointed Assistant Director of the Computing Section. His duties involved him in preparing much of the routine *Handbook* material, and from time to time he carried out additional work such as the calculation of the mutual phenomena of the satellites of Jupiter and Saturn. In 1959 Dr Porter gave up the Directorship of the Section, but Mr Julian continued as Assistant Director with me. As the *Handbook* continued to increase in size, so did the amount of work for which he was responsible. The number of members of the Section was also growing larger and eventually Mr Julian took over all the training of them. Not only did he give them a thorough grounding in the methods of computing used in our work, but he would examine every mistake

they made and correct it, explaining in detail where and why they had gone wrong.

Apart from his professional duties and his interest in astronomy, Mr Julian had many other accomplishments. He was a keen gardener and orchid grower, and an amateur actor of no mean ability. He was a fine linguist with a fluent knowledge of French, German, Spanish, Welsh, Cornish, and Esperanto. He could speak the ancient Cornish tongue, and in 1938, after examination, was elected a Bard of the Cornish Gorsedd. He was also fairly fluent in Dutch, Italian, Latin, and Greek, and had studied half a dozen other languages. He and I once discussed grammatical points in the original tongues of the Old and New Testaments and exchanged greetings in classical Hebrew. As a young man he was a keen footballer and cricketer and a good tennis player, and he could also play chess. All his life he was interested in classical music, opera, and the ballet, and was a competent pianist and cellist. As one of his friends put it: "He was interested in everything good and worth while".

There are many members of the Association who will never forget his skill and care in training and instructing them in mathematical astronomy and computing. Those of us who knew him personally or came to share his friendship through correspondence will long remember him with affection and love. We all share the same sense of loss, and our sympathy goes out to his family in their bereavement.

CAMERON DINWOODIE