

### **William Francis Herschel Waterfield.**

Mr. Waterfield, who was born on 1886 June 1, was a son of one of the nine daughters of Sir J. F. W. Herschel, and was thus a great grandson of the discoverer of Uranus.

As in the case of our late member, Mr. J. A. Hardcastle, who was also of the same generation of Herschels, it is reasonable to suppose that family tradition, if not heredity, had something to do with the early interest which he displayed in astronomy. This interest was naturally encouraged by the members of his family, one of whom presented to him a fine 12-inch equatorial reflector while he was still at Oxford. For various reasons, including the outbreak of the War, he was not able to make full use of this instrument for several years; but in 1919 he had it sent out to him at his farm in British Columbia, and at once began to work with great enthusiasm on variable stars. His observations, which were communicated regularly to the Variable Star Section of our Association, were made with great care and accuracy, and were specially valuable in the case of stars with faint minima.

In 1926, following the tragic death of his wife in a boating accident, Waterfield joined the staff of the Harvard College Observatory, where he worked for two years. During this time his attention was directed more to the theoretical side of his subject, and he contributed several important papers to the publications of the Observatory.

In 1928 he was appointed chief assistant at the Harvard Astronomical Station at Mazelspoort, near Bloemfontein, South Africa. Here his work was once more chiefly of a practical nature, and, though it was mainly photographic, he managed to find time for some visual observations of southern variables. When he first went to Mazelspoort he had lodgings within a mile of the observatory, but latterly he had taken up his residence in Bloemfontein, about sixteen miles away, riding to and from his work on a motor cycle. It was while doing this, on May 16 last, that he met with the accident which resulted in his untimely death. He leaves three children, the eldest of whom had already begun to help his father in his observatory work.

He was elected a member of the Association on 1908 October 28.—W. H. S.