

Obituary Notice

Ernest Ewart Unwin, M.Sc.

(1881-1944)

Ernest E. Unwin was born at Folkstone, Kent, in 1881 and died at Hobart on 20th September, 1944. He was educated at the Quaker School, Saffron Waldon, and at the University of Leeds, where he was admitted to the degree of Master of Science in 1906. During his university career he studied under the distinguished biologist, Professor L. C. Miall and his own life-long interest in biology may be partly attributed to the influence of this eminent teacher.

After graduating Ernest Unwin returned to the University of Leeds as Lecturer in Biology. He also taught at the Quaker Schools of Ackworth and Bootham and for eleven years was Housemaster at Leighton Park, Reading.

Accompanied by his wife and two young children he came to Tasmania in October, 1923, to take up his appointment as Headmaster of the Friends' School. Soon after his arrival in the State he became associated with the Royal Society of Tasmania and was elected a Member of the Society on 17th December, 1923. From that date to the time of his death he took an active interest in the work of the Society. In 1926 he was elected President of the Educational Section. He served as a member of the Council from 1926 to 1942 and was Vice-President of the Society during the years 1933-34 and 1940-41. On three separate occasions he was elected a Trustee of the Tasmanian Museum and Botanical Gardens. An able botanist and talented artist he gave valuable help to his fellow Trustees.

Ernest Unwin was a lucid and gifted speaker and this Society often had the privilege of hearing him lecture. He usually spoke on some aspect of biology or education and never lost an opportunity of stressing the importance of biology as a school-subject. In 1928, when the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science met in Hobart, he wrote the article on Education in the 'Handbook to Tasmania' prepared for Members of the Association. He also read a paper, entitled 'Biology in Schools', before Section J (Education, Psychology, and Philosophy). One of the last lectures he delivered before the Royal Society of Tasmania was on the subject of 'Biology and Education'. In it he gave an interesting account of his personal experiences in the development of biology as a school-subject in England.

While at the University of Leeds he commenced a study of the respiratory organs of the Terrestrial Isopoda. This work was completed in Tasmania. An account of the research appeared in the Papers and Proceedings of this Society for the year 1931. In addition to the publications mentioned above he was also the author of three books, namely, 'Pond Problems', 'As a Man Thinketh', and 'Religion and Biology'.

No man has given greater service to the cultural life of this State than has Ernest Unwin. He was a past president of the Rotary Club; president of the Council of Churches on two occasions; Area Commissioner of Toc H in Tasmania;

a former member of the University Council; a past president of the Free Kindergarten Association; a founder and one-time chairman of the Executive of the Hobart Repertory Society; Vice-Patron and member of the Council of the Art Society; president of the New Education Fellowship; one-time member of the Tutors' Advisory Committee of the Workers' Educational Association; and a member of the State Advisory Council on Broadcasting.

His kindly and sympathetic personality, his sense of humour, and his readiness to give his time and talents in the service of others gained for him the esteem and goodwill, not only of the members of this Society, but of all those who were privileged to be associated with him.

V.V.H.

