

EDITORIAL

OTTO STRUVE II

Within the past few months we have heard two students in countdown talks refer to Otto "Stroov" - a mispronunciation which indicates to me that this great man has now been dead long enough (six years) that he is no longer a personality among the young of our profession. So, from one of his old students, here are a few recollections of a great astronomer with a very warm personality.

We often hear of the Struve astronomical "dynasty". The founder was F.G.W. Struve (1793-1864), of German descent but then a Russian National, who worked first at Dorpat with the "great" 9.6-inch refractor on double stars and parallax, and who subsequently founded the Pulkova Observatory. His son, Otto Struve I (1819-1905), another famous double-star observer, succeeded his father at Pulkova. The latter's son, Ludwig, was professor of astronomy at Kharkov, when his son, Otto Struve II, was born in 1897. Two of OS II's uncles, Herman and Georg, were directors of Koningsberg and Berlin -Babelsberg.

During World War I young Otto Struve, trained as an astronomer in the family tradition, was an artillery officer in the White Russian army. I have heard him tell the fascinating story of what then happened to him. In 1920 when the remnants of the White Russian army were chased across Russia by the Reds, Struve eventually made it to Constantinople where he managed to survive on a pittance paid for carrying hods of bricks up a hill. One day, passing the Y.M.C.A. building, he was overcome with curiosity as to what this strange English word meant, and went in to ask the man at the desk. This man was an American "Y"-worker from Delavan, Wis., a few miles from the Yerkes Observatory, who knew Frost, the Director there, and who realized that he was talking to a member of a great astronomical family who was in danger of starving to death. He communicated with Frost who immediately sent money to bring Struve to Yerkes. Arriving in 1921, the young Struve immediately began to fulfill his destiny and in the course of 11 years became Frost's successor. It was there, and at the McDonald Observatory which he helped to found in 1939, that he did his greatest work in the field of the interpretation of stellar spectra.

Struve gave a first impression of great severity, but he was essentially kind and occasionally humorous. A more indefatigable observer probably never lived. I had an experience that must have been common with other graduate students. Late on one stormy winter night the sky cleared between my hourly alarm-clock settings. When I arrived at the dome, panting, there was Struve, in his ankle-length sheepskin coat (which his wife had made by sewing together two army-issue jackets), already observing.. Instead of blasting me, as I expected, he said he had just happened to look out his bedroom window, noticed it was clearing, knew I would be on my way, and hoped I didn't mind his opening up for me.

Struve had an eye defect in the form of a "cast" which they said resulted from staring through the measuring machine hour-after-hour, day-after-day. The students used to say to watch his eyes; if he ever brought them both to bear on you, you were really "for it". Yet he was devoted to his students (provided they worked hard enough), and he kept in touch with us later by occasional hand-written post-cards, and even brought himself to call us by our first names instead of the formal "Mr." by which he addressed nearly everyone, from the janitor to the most illustrious colleague.

Struve's papers and books (notably "Stellar Evolution") read strangely today. They ramble and digress. Yet they contain a wealth of accurate data, of wise interpretation and of uncanny insight which forms the groundwork of much of our present knowledge of stellar structure.

J.F.H.

Observing

A rather extraordinary run of 'good observing weather has been experienced within the past few weeks. The repainting of the telescope has been accomplished without interfering with the observing.

Funeral of Miss Northcott

Many colleagues, both professional and amateur, relatives, friends and old students filled the Trull Funeral Chapel on Aug. 1 for the funeral service for Miss Northcott. The casket was banked with about 40 floral tributes, including those of this and other Canadian Observatories, the R.A.S.C. and a number of its Centres, the University, the Faculty Club, the astronomygraduate students, and many relatives, colleagues and friends. Rev. Mr. Norman Green of the Planetarium staff, her former student and long-time colleague in the R.A.S.C., conducted the service and spoke feelingly of Miss Northcott's accomplishments and warm human qualities. The burial was at Brookline Cemetery, and those who went there were invited to the Oshawa home of Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Buck, favourite cousins of Miss Northcott, who some years ago shared her home on John St. in Hogg's Hollow. Mrs. Buck is now engaged in the sad task of clearing out that house and distributing her effects according to her wishes.

COMINGS AND GOINGS

Dr. and Mrs. Roberts left at mid-month to attend the URSSI meeting in Ottawa and then to take up residence at Aricibo, having bade farewell to their friends here at an "open house" on August 10.

Delegates at the Albany meeting of the AAS Aug. 11-14 included Drs. Anand, Clement, Fernie, Garrison, Percy, Tom Barnes, Dave DuFuy, Gretchen Hagen, Peter Martin, Mark Naylor. Papers were presented by Martin and Anand on "A Study of the Structure of Rapidly Rotating Close Binary Systems" and by Percy on "The Nature of the β Cephei Phenomenon".

Delegates at the URSSI meeting in Ottawa last week and this week included Drs. MacRae, Roberts, Seaquist, Yen, Iain Baines, Carl Bignell, Bob Hawkins, Dave Lindop, Hugh Ross.

Dr. Racine is at the Observatory now, having settled his family in a town house on Don Mills Road.

Anson Moorhouse is spending a week or more at Yerkes this month getting some pointers on new techniques from the Observatory photographer there.

Roslyn Shemilt has returned to Fredericton to enter 3rd year at U.N.B. Her family, however, will move to Hamilton where her father has accepted an appointment as Dean of Applied Science at McMaster.

SEMINARS

August Countdowns were as scheduled last month.

SEPTEMBER

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| Wed. 3rd, D.D.O. | Louis-Pierre Sauve, "Egyptian Astronomy"
Raymonde Chimonas, "The Luminosity-Volume Test". |
| Wed. 10th, Room 137
McLennan | Iain Baines "Fluctuation of Fluxes at 612 MHz". |
| *Tues, 23rd, D.D.O. | Jeff. Cyelinsten and Dieter Brückner |
| *Tues. 30th, D.D.O. | To be announced. |

*Note the change from long-standing Wednesday to Tuesday - necessitated by teaching time-table changes.

National I.A.U. Committee Meeting

The autumn meeting will be held at the University of Western Ontario on Sept. 5-6 following the official opening of the new U.W.O. observing station and 48-inch telescope on Sept. 4. Attendance at the scientific sessions is open to all staff and students.

Papers submitted in August

- S. van den Bergh Photometric and Spectroscopic Observations of Globular Clusters in the Andromeda Nebula has been accepted for publication as Ap.J. Supp. No. 171.
- S. van den Bergh The Extra-Galactic Distance Scale has been submitted as chapter 15 of "Galaxies and the Universe", Stars and Stellar Systems Vol. IX which is edited by A. and M. Sandage.

ALUMNI

Bob McClure (Ph.D. 1967) and Lynn visited the Observatory on Aug. 25. Bob is busy installing and testing photometers on the Yale telescope and preparing an undergraduate course which he will give in the coming session.

George Mitchell (Ph.D. 1967) was scheduled to be married on Aug. 23 and will arrive in Halifax on Sept. 1 to take up his post at St. Mary's University.

Bill Sherwood (M.Sc. 1967) has been in Italy this summer for observing with the Edinburgh telescope at Monterorgio, is staying with an Italian family, and is enjoying sightseeing walking tours in Rome. While Bill fiddles around this way, Vicki (M.Sc. 1967) burns back in Edinburgh on a geophysical research problem!

Doug Hube (Ph.D. 1968) and Joan quickly found an apartment in Edmonton. Doug is busy preparing courses in Astronomy and Modern Physics for the coming teaching session.

A clipping from a Colorado newspaper tells that Fred Hickok (M.Sc. 1969), Director of the Pensacola Junior College Planetarium, would give a show on "Color, a Key in Astronomy" in the Adams State College Planetarium on July 31.

MISCELLANEOUS

Visitor Expected from France

Melle. Annie Laval of the Observatory of Marseille is scheduled to arrive on Sept. 9 for a three-week visit to study and discuss our radial velocity techniques.

R.A.S.C. Handbook

Drs. Hogg and Heard, with valuable help from Dr. Percy and Roslyn Shemilt, finished preparing copy for the 1970 Observer's Handbook which Miss Northcott had well in hand before entering hospital. We were impressed with the magnitude of the effort which Miss Northcott had always put into this annual task.

World's Largest Sink

A 9-foot stainless steel sink has been received for installation in the Observatory darkroom, replacing the 35-year old lead trough.