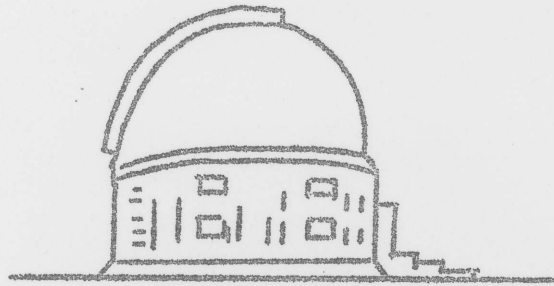


DAVID DUNLAP OBSERVATORY

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Editorial

The Quiet Life - II

When C. A. Chant had finished High School in 1883 he was unwilling to be a further financial burden to his father, so he did what many students then did - took a three-months' course in teacher training so he could teach primary school for a few years to save money for university. The York County "Model School" had just moved from the village (sic) of Yorkville to the village of Parkdale. A horse-drawn tram plied the $2\frac{1}{4}$ -mile route from Parkdale along Queen Street to Yonge St., taking 50 minutes. Chant says that he often walked to save time. The teachers course too seems to have been rather pedestrian: problems like reducing 201,562 inches to miles, furlongs, rods, yards, feet and inches!

On Jan. 1, 1884 Chant landed the job of teaching a one-room school in the pokey (still!) little village of Maxwell about 12 miles south-west of Collingwood. His predecessor, I was amazed to learn, was W. J. Patterson who later earned degrees in mathematics at Queen's and was my first professor of mathematics at U.W.O. - "Old Pat", we used to call him. The farming community was depressed at that time; Chant tells of farmers wishing for "another war" which would bring wheat back to the \$2.50 a bushel that it had brought during the American Civil War in the 1860's! Chant's salary was \$400 per year, rising to \$450, but he only paid the Minister's wife \$3.00 a week for board and room, so that by 1887 he had saved quite a few hundreds of dollars for university.

Chant entered U. of T. in October 1887 and enrolled in the Mathematics and Physics course in the Faculty of Arts - which faculty, that session, boasted a total enrolment in all years of 324. Like most students in those days, he threw himself wholeheartedly not only into his studies but also into the many student activities and societies.

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One of the burning questions of those years was that of "hazing", which, according to one of the senior student activists, was "senseless, cowardly, degrading --- a profane and despicable proceeding --- for coarseness of jokes, vileness of language, in-human conduct"... Perhaps this description wasn't as hyperbolic as it sounds: Chant tells of possessing "a blue birch bludgeon, as thick as your wrist which was picked up on the knoll east of the Main Building (now U.C.) after a student skirmish". (The "bludgeon" is one of the half-dozen walking sticks which Dr. Elizabeth Chant Robertson gave me after her father's death). Anyway, hazing was discontinued.

Chant did well in his years (three actually, because he had entered with senior matriculation which gave him credit for first year; this was the origin of grade 13 which is now being phased out). He describes the courses in physics as being no better than those offered in a good high school in the 1950's. He was essentially "straight A", and headed the course one year when A.T. Delury got aegrotat standing because of illness. "A.T.", a man of great erudition, classicist as well as mathematician, became a famous and durable Dean of Arts; he was an uncle of the present Prof. Dan Delury of the Department of Mathematics and of Dr. Ralph Delury formerly of the Dominion Observatory.

Chant was an eye-witness to the great fire of February 14, 1890 which gutted the "Main Building". Preparations were under way for a "Conversations" (in which Chant was to demonstrate some experiments), when a technician, carrying lighted oil lamps (no electric lighting yet), tripped and fell. Within minutes the wooden interior was a mass of flames and it was at first supposed that the building was a total loss. However, inspection revealed no great damage to the sturdy stone walls, and the decision was made to replace the interior at a cost of \$250,000, of which the insurance covered \$90,000, the balance of \$160,000 being voted by the Ontario Legislature. The result is the present U.C.

After the graduation banquet ("golden plover on toast") and commencement (address by Edward Blake, B.A. 1854, famous statesman and Chancellor of the University), Chant accepted a civil-service appointment in the Auditor-General's Department. The pay (\$2 per day, including Sundays and statutory holidays) wasn't bad, and the young graduate enjoyed life in the capital (canoing on the Rideau, listening to "John A." in the House of Commons), but the work was dull and the post held little future, so he applied for an appointment in Physics at the U. of T. and was awarded a teaching fellowship at \$500 p.a.

Chant was now 26. His devotion to the University, to physics teaching in the Province and to the promotion of Astronomy were to dominate the remaining 66 years of his life.

(to be concluded...)

OBSERVING

Las Campanasa

Dr. Nolan Walborn has returned from his observing run on the 24-inch telescope at Las Campanas and reports as follows:

"I spent an enjoyable and profitable month at the Toronto facilities at Las Campanas, between Sept. 17 and Oct. 17. Our house is now entirely operational and provides quite pleasant living and working quarters; and, photographic observing at the 24" telescope is now essentially routine. To these attractions must be added the spectacular scenery of this part of Chile, and of course, the incomparable southern night sky. The night-time wind-speeds were generally very low or zero during this period, except during a few days of cloudy weather. Many fine direct photographs were obtained, primarily of galaxies (for Yerkes morphological classification and for study of peculiar nuclei) and of clusters (for UBV photographic photometry, using Dr. Racine's tilted-plate calibration method)!"

COMINGS AND GOINGS

Drs. MacRae and Racine were at Laval University for the Symposium on "The Processing of Telescopic Images" and the opening of the new Laval Observatory. Dr. Racine chaired a meeting, gave an invited paper on "Detection et mesure d'étoiles faibles" and had the honour to cut the red ribbon to open the new Observatory.

Dr. van den Bergh is at the Hale Observatories for a short dark-of-the-moon observing run.

Dr. Hogg has been at her home in Massachusetts* for ten days and has left for Geneva to settle the estate of her late cousin. She will return before the CAS meeting on Nov. 11-12.

Dr. J. Percy attended the 1971 Regional Conference of the Science Teachers' Association of Ontario, at London on October 23rd, and spoke to a large and enthusiastic group of high school teachers on "Astronomy and 'Space and Man': Activities for Students".

SEMINARS

OCTOBER - As announced last month except for today's - Dr. Walborn's - which is being postponed until Nov. 2/71.

NOVEMBER -

Tues. Nov. 2 D.D.O.	Dr. N. R. Walborn, "I.A.U. Symposium No. 49" and "Quasi Wolf-Rayet Phenomena Among the OB Stars"
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* While in Massachusetts Dr. Hogg was the evening speaker at the Diamond Jubilee of the AAVSO at H.C.O. Oct. 15 on "Variable Stars in Globular Clusters - A Lifetime Fascination".

Tues. 23
D.D.O.

Dr. M.J. Clement, "Circulation in Stars"

Tues. 30
D.D.O.

Dr. R. W. Nicholls, CRESS, York University; "Recent Researches in Laboratory Astrophysics"

PAPERS SUBMITTED FOR PUBLICATION

C. Coutts

The Effect of Binary Motion on Period Changes in RR Lyrae Stars.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir:

I beg to correct your statement on page 2, Vol. 4, No. 9 of your valuable publication.

The next transit of Venus will occur in 2004, June 8 to be exact, (and the next following on June 6, 2012).

I remain, Gentleman,

Your devoted Reader,

Oct. 5/71

Helen Hogg

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DDD blushes. - Ed.

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Sir:

As an old southern hemisphere man from way back, I am sometimes entertained by our current enthusiasms for the southern skies. The many people who have worked there for many years have hardly left them (if I may adapt that memorable phrase) 'the virgin skies pregnant with great possibilities' we sometimes seem to believe. However, I find that wild enthusiasm for southern hemisphere astronomy is nothing new. Here is Sir John Herschel 143 years ago presenting the gold medal of the R.A.S. to James Dunlop for his work in Australia:

"The heavens visible to Europeans have been so thoroughly examined, and their contents so carefully registered, that there is not the slightest rational probability of any thing new or uncommon offering itself to instruments of moderate power in the ordinary course of observation." (M.N. 1, 61, 1828).

It is clearly high time we closed down operations up north here.

Yours sincerely,

J.D. Fernie

Dean J. E. Kennedy of the University of Saskatchewan has written to express his appreciation of the piece on the early life of Dr. Chant and wishes that copies of the MS of his autobiography could be made available to his and other western universities.

MISCELLANEOUS

Election

Dr. van den Bergh has been elected to the Division III Council of the School of Graduate Studies.

Bereaved

Bob Hawkins suffered the loss of his father in Montreal on Oct. 9. The Editor offers particular sympathy, having served under W/C "Wilf" Hawkins in the R.C.A.F. at Rivers, Mann. about the time Bob was born.

Staff

Sharon Fisher has left her position as secretarial assistant at the Observatory. She is being replaced by Mrs. Jenny Fabian.

Married

Debbie Munshaw of the secretarial staff was married on October 9 to Henry Beintema.

Visitors

Vicki Watt Sherwood (M.Sc. 1967) is home on a visit from Germany where husband Bill (M.Sc. 1967) has accepted a fellowship for two years with Dr. Theo Schmidt-Kaler of the University of Bonn at Bocchum. Our sympathy is offered to Vicki whose father was killed and whose mother was seriously injured in a recent motor accident.

80 members of local high school astronomy clubs visited the D.D.O. on Saturday evening, October 23, as part of the program of the first annual "High School Astronomy Club Day". (JRP)

N.R.C. Associate Committee and C.A.S.

The NRC Associate Committee on Astronomy and the newly-formed Canadian Astronomical Society will meet at the University Nov. 10-12. Secretary Racine of the C.A.S. urges student members to send in their attendance forms and invites other students to attend the scientific sessions. He reports that, as of Oct. 21, 60 visitors are expected and 24 papers have been accepted.

Ph.D. Generals

Recent successful candidates of Ph.D. General Examinations have been Ted Bednarek, Jack Winzer and Barry Madore.

M.Sc.'s Recommended

At the Dec. 3 Convocation six students will receive M.Sc.'s in astronomy: Jim Gillespie, Austin Gulliver, David Hanes, Kathy Madore, Francois Painchaud and Serge Pineault.

Talks

Dr. Heard spoke to the York Central Progress Club at the Observatory on Oct. 14 and to the Chant Astronomical Club of Don Mills Collegiate on Oct. 15.

Observatory Architect

The death occurred on Oct. 18 of Brigadier E. W. Haldenby, 78, member of the firm of Mathers and Haldenby who were the architects of the Administration Building in the early '30's.

Palindrome

Time has reported what may be the longest palindrome in the language: "Doc, note: I dissent. A fast never prevents a fatness. I diet on cod." Now do you know what a palindrome is???