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# The Canadian Field-Naturalist

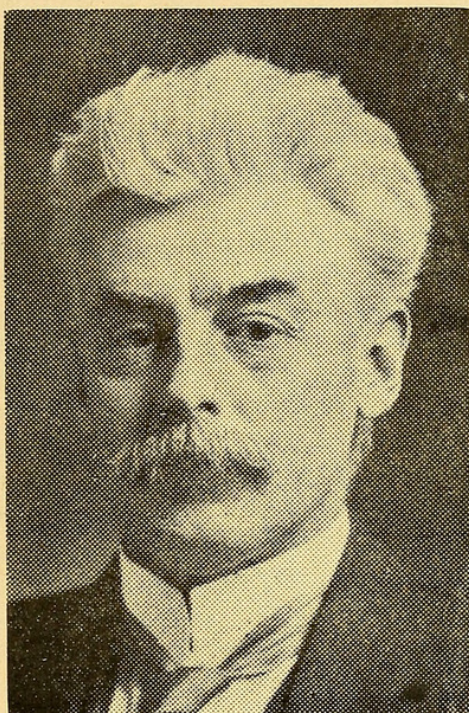
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MARK G. McELHINNEY

1867 - 1938



*Mark G. McElhinney*

## THE MEADOW LARK

'Mongst all the little choristers  
Of hill and plain and dale,  
I love the little meadow lark  
Who cheers the prairie trail.

Up from the sod where bluebells nod  
And the blood lilies flame,  
He seeks the nearest perch to trill  
His welcoming acclaim.

He fain would burst his little throat  
To tell his joy to me,  
For life for him from dawn to dark  
Seems one sweet ecstasy.

*Morning in the Marsh.*

In the death of Mark G. McElhinney, which occurred at Ottawa in October, 1938, the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club lost not only a valued member of its Council but one who had for many years been a keen student of nature with a great love for the out-of-doors. I knew him first over 35 years ago, having been introduced to him by the late Dr. James Fletcher, soon after I came to Ottawa to join the Dominion Entomological Service. A few years later I got to know him better while residing during the summer months at Britannia on Lake Deschenes, at which place he also lived.



Mark McElhinney met his death in the waters of Dow's Lake, near the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, the body being found in about five feet of water near the house-boat *Summer-time*, on which he lived with his brother, Dr. George McElhinney. At the time of his death he was 71 years of age. He was always fond of boats; and undoubtedly his greatest pleasures were those experienced while travelling over water in a boat the engine of which had been built, improved, or made over by him.

In an interesting letter dated February 26, 1938, which he addressed to Douglas Leechman of the National Museum of Canada, he stated that when less than a year old he was taken on board the barque *Avondale* which made voyages to various European ports. When about four years old, his father "took over the ship known as the *City of Halifax*" which plied between Halifax and Liverpool. His memory of this voyage was very pleasant, as also the time he spent in Liverpool. Thus, in early life he developed a love for the water. From the above letter the following quotation is taken: "You may have noticed that we had a storm last night and even now (one p.m.) it is blowing hard. In a house in town it would not mean anything out of the way but we had everything for the setting of a ship frozen in, in the Arctic, except the danger. Howling wind, driving snow, rattling rigging and the drumming of the deck tent in which is stowed summer equipment. I enjoyed it immensely especially as we were warm and comfortable on board."

Mark McElhinney was born in Truro, N. S. on July 19, 1867, but most of his life was spent

in Ottawa. After attending public school and the Lisgar Collegiate Institute he entered the University of Toronto Dental College and following graduation set up a practice in Ottawa, which he continued until his untimely death. For years members of my family received professional assistance from him. Always he had a fund of interesting talk which directed attention away from the operation in hand. At one time, he was president of the Eastern Ontario Dental Association. He also served in the same capacity, in 1915, with the Ottawa Dental Society.

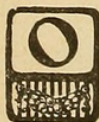
In the early days of the motor car in Ottawa Mark McElhinney took a keen interest in this mode of transportation and was in fact one of the original founders of the Ottawa Automobile Association and president in 1929. Anything in the way of machinery attracted his attention. He spent many happy hours in a well-equipped machine laboratory which he, himself, developed.

One other hobby he had was that of writing poetry. In 1927 he published a book of poems under the general title of *Morning in the Marsh*. The volume was dedicated to his son, "who fell in France." These poems, "redolent with the tang of the outdoors", indicated a very wide interest. They were read with pleasure by many of his friends as well as others who had not the pleasure of his acquaintance.

He was a kindly man. Those who knew him will miss his cheery disposition. The Field-Naturalists' Club, in which of late years he took a keen interest, will no longer receive help from him, but the service he rendered will be remembered for many a day by his fellow councillors. —ARTHUR GIBSON.

## NYMPHAEA TETRAGONA GEORGI IN CANADA\*

By A. E. PORSILD



ONE OF our rarest Canadian plants is the diminutive waterlily *Nymphaea tetragona* which, in North America as elsewhere, has a rather peculiar and disrupted range being known from but 14 stations, from Eastern Quebec, south to Rhode Island, west to Great Slave Lake and Northern British Columbia and south to Idaho. Of the 11 Canadian stations known to the writer, 9 are north and west of Lake Superior, near the edge of the Laurentian

shield with one station on nearby Isle Royale, Michigan.

Because of its small size *Nymphaea tetragona* lends itself well to cultivation and is very suitable for fish ponds or even for small aquaria. It is widely cultivated in China and Japan where the seed and the unopened flower buds are eaten when pickled.

Superficially *Nymphaea tetragona* resembles the slightly larger flowered *N. odorata* var. *minor*, a variety of the scented white waterlily. Because in the past *N. tetragona* has been confused

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