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DR. ARTHUR GIBSON, ENTOMOLOGIST

1875-1959

IN THE DEATH, on April 16, 1959, of Arthur Gibson, the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club has lost one of the last remaining links with its founders, and the Canada Department of Agriculture the last official whose work in federal entomology spanned the turn of the century. He came to Ottawa, from his native Toronto, in 1899 to assist James Fletcher and J. A. Guignard in the Division of Entomology and Botany at the Central Experimental Farm. His early work in Toronto as a lepidopterist had attracted Dr. Fletcher's attention and he was soon doing valuable life-history and other studies in his new position. When I came to the Farm in 1908, on Mr. Guignard's leaving, Gibson, a new stenographer, an old plotman and I were the entire staff of the Division, operating from the little office just inside the main entrance of the administration building of that day.

Dr. Fletcher's death late that fall left a heavy load of responsibility on Gibson's shoulders to be borne for nearly a year until new appointees to separate Divisions of Entomology and Botany arrived from England. The recent advent of the San Jose scale and of the brown-tail and gypsy moths were adding heavily to administrative duties. As fully as I could I relieved him of attention to botanical matters.

In the reorganization of the work in 1914 under Dr. C. Gordon Hewitt, Gibson was appointed chief of the Division of Field Crops and Garden Insects, Entomological Branch. On the sudden death of Dr. Hewitt in 1920 he succeeded him as Dominion entomologist, for which position experience, without the usual full academic training, had well prepared him. His promotion proved to be well merited and under his guidance the phenomenal growth continued. On his retirement in 1942 the still-expanding service was carried on from headquarters in Ottawa with its various units, from numerous regional laboratories and from temporary and inspection stations across Canada.

Recognition of distinguished achievements came from Queen's University with the conferring of the honorary degree of LL.D., by election to high office in many scientific societies, by fellowships in the Royal Society of Canada, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Royal Entomological Society, London, England, as well as by many other memberships of distinction.

Dr. Gibson kept in close touch with the leading entomologists of the world. He ably represented Canada at various international conferences on entomology: at Wageningen, Holland, in 1923, at London in 1925 and 1930, and at the international congresses of entomology at Ithaca, N.Y., in 1928, at Paris in 1932, at Madrid in 1935 and at Berlin in 1938.

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Among other appointments, more or less incumbent on the position, were Dr. Gibson's chairmanship of the Canada Destructive Insect and Pest Act Advisory Board and later a membership on the Canada Agricultural Pests Control Act Advisory Board, the Dominion Interdepartmental Advisory Board on Wild Life Protection, and the Management Committee of the Imperial Institute of Entomology, London. He was honorary curator of entomology, National Museum of Canada and, at various times, president of the Entomological Society of Ontario, the Entomological Society of America and the American Association of Economic Entomologists.

Retirement from the department was suitably marked by presentation of a silver tea service, made on behalf of the large staff by the deputy minister, Dr. G. S. H. Barton.

Dr. Gibson's association with the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club has been as notable in its way as everything else he did. I knew him first as its treasurer and took over from him in 1910 to release him for the editorship of the *Ottawa Naturalist* in succession to James M. Macoun. His tenure in this post was the longest among the journal's editors, ending in 1920; and during this period he was also president for 1914 and 1915. As recently as 1949 he was still on the council of the club as a member of the Reserve Fund Committee. He was made an honorary member of the club, as few could merit it more. For half a century he zealously served the organization, and was a frequent contributor of clearly written, informative articles to its journal.

For some time after his retirement Dr. Gibson applied himself to writing the story of entomology in the Canada Department of Agriculture, a subject which none could know as he did. Then impaired health and winters spent in the South intervened. A severe stroke six years ago kept him more closely at home, latterly at Brockville, with his devoted wife and daughter, Elaine. Another daughter, Mrs. Charles Palm, lives in Ithaca, N.Y. Interment was at Beechwood Cemetery, Ottawa.

Happy personal memories of Arthur Gibson crowd upon the mind, as they must for all who knew him. It was good to have enjoyed his friendship.

HERBERT GROH

The Editorial Committee regrets the unavoidable delay in the publication of this issue.



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