



## In Memoriam

GEORGE JOHNSTON SPENCER

Jan. 16, 1888; July 24, 1966

This valiant soldier, this scholar, this leader and inspirer of men who became a legend in his own time, ever ready for a jest, mocked at his own infirmity even as death beckoned. Defying the inevitable, he continued his scholarly work so that posterity might be richer for his having come this way. It is with deep regret that we record his passing.

Professor Spencer was born in South India January 16, 1888. After receiving his early education in Bangalore, he attended the Regent Street Polytechnic Institute in London, and the University of Manchester. Coming to Canada in 1908 he obtained the B.S.A. degree from the Ontario Agricultural College in 1914. As an officer with the Canadian Expeditionary Force in World War I he was cited for valour. Returning to studies, he obtained the M.S. degree from the University of Illinois in 1924. The same year he was appointed to the faculty of the University of British Columbia where he taught general zoology, histology and entomology until his retirement in 1956. Reappointed as a special lecturer in 1957 he gradually phased out his teaching duties while devoting more time to research and professional consulting.

Professor Spencer was renowned as a teacher who infused his students with some of his own special kind of enthusiasm. His lectures were memorable for his vivid word pictures, his dramatization with pantomime and his amusing allegories. His well-judged humour occasionally burst forth in startling contrast to his quiet, though audible, delivery. Testimony of his inspiration to disciples is to be found in the success achieved by numerous former students.

As a public lecturer he was always in popular demand. With an appearance and manner which at once com-

manded attention and respect, he gradually brought listeners to the edge of their seats, waiting for the next revelation of the wonders of nature or the next rib-tickling Spencerism.

As a scientist he directed much of his energy to assembling a representative collection of the insect fauna of British Columbia. In recognition of this work he was honoured by his former students who sponsored the equipping of a room to be known as the Spencer Entomological Museum. On the basis of many years of research among the sun-drenched hills of Kamloops, Professor Spencer published a significant work on ecology of grasshoppers. He devoted much time to the study of external parasites of birds and mammals of British Columbia. Publication of his main works, interrupted by his death, will be brought to completion for him by Dr. G. G. E. Scudder. He contributed many papers on diverse insect pests of man, of man's clothing, his dwellings, and his domestic pets. He was also knowledgeable on "mental insect attacks," a condition otherwise known as entomophobia.

Professor Spencer was, in the words of Dr. H. R. MacCarthy, "a source of strength to the (Entomological) Society (of B.C.), and one of its most ardent supporters. His colourful presentation of papers was a highlight of the annual meeting." His eminence was recognized by his being invited as the keynote speaker at the Centennial celebrations in Ottawa in 1963. The British Columbia and Canadian Entomological Societies awarded him honorary membership, and the American Society bestowed a Fellowship on him.

With skill, patience, tact and good humour, he served the public with his counselling on insect problems. Most of his service was *gratis*, as he dealt with all manner of problems, both real and imaginary, brought to him by all manner of people from the most humble to the most haughty,

and from the unwashed to the over-scrubbed.

He was a kindly, generous-hearted man who liked people, adored children and was fond of animals. He was a devoted husband to his wife Alice, loving father to his daughter Ann, and proud grandfather to his three grandchildren, and all respond-

ed with warm affection. Throughout his hours of greatest trial, Mrs. Spencer remained steadfastly and reassuringly by his side.

Professor Spencer will long be remembered.

K. GRAHAM  
October 11, 1966

### GEORGE AUSTIN HARDY (1888-1966)

The all-round naturalist of a generation ago was a very special type of person. He was one who was well-versed in all phases of the out-of-doors and at the same time was an authority in one or two special fields. He could name almost every tree, shrub or flower in the area that he roamed and could identify every bird and insect that came to notice. At the same time he could interpret the patterns of life that flowed by in terms of rocks, soil and climate that made up the physical world around him.

Such a person was George Austin Hardy. Stimulated by direct contact with a countryside rich in living things he developed a keen interest in nature as a youth in the Glasgow area where he was brought up. In those days, more than 60 years ago, formal training in natural science was not easy to come by but this lack was offset by living in an area relatively unspoiled by settlement and by association with naturalists who were willing to offer help and encouragement.

After receiving some training as a taxidermist and having taken some courses in biology at Glasgow Technical School Hardy emigrated to Canada where he maintained his interest in natural history while homesteading in Alberta. In time he returned to Britain and worked for a period as a taxidermist, first in London and then at the Essex Museum. But Canada still had an appeal so he returned to the old homestead in Alberta where he made extensive collections of plants, birds and mammals for the

Essex Museum.

Eventually he moved to the Coast and after trying his hand at several jobs he joined the staff of the Provincial Museum in 1924 as Assistant Biologist, a post he occupied for 4 years. After an interlude spent partly in Alberta and partly on Vancouver Island he rejoined the Museum staff in 1941 as Botanist. There followed his most productive period until his retirement in 1953.

No matter where he was located George was fascinated by the whole gamut of nature. The plant association characteristic of the various biotic areas of the province were a constant source of delight and a topic of study, and the communities of living creatures along the sea-shore regularly intrigued him.

He was particularly interested in insects and a great part of his life was devoted to their study. For many years he assiduously collected and worked over the Cerambycidae of the province and eventually became an authority on this particular group of wood-boring beetles. They remained his first love and continued to interest him through the years.

While most of his time at the Museum was taken up with herbarium work he also took care of the entomological needs of the institution and devoted most of his spare time to collecting and studying insects around his home in Saanich.

Field work in various parts of the province gave him opportunity to widen his scope and his lanky frame clad in short pants and armed with a butterfly net and a vasculum star-