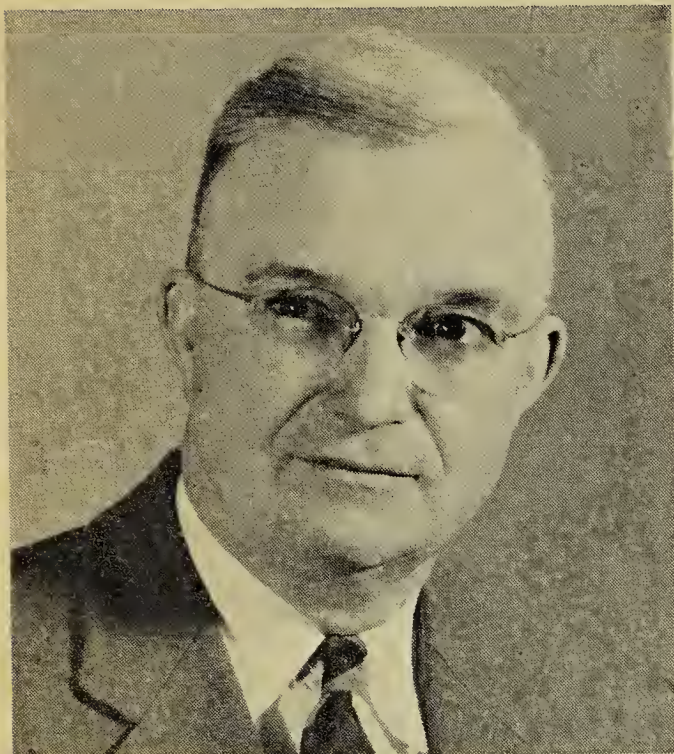


IN MEMORIAM

Donald Strathearne Rawson, 1905-1961

by J. G. Rempel, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon



Our Society lost a valued member, and the University of Saskatchewan lost a popular Head of the Department of Biology when Dr. D. S. Rawson died suddenly on February 16, 1961.

Donald S. Rawson was born in Claremont, Ontario, on May 19, 1905. He graduated with a doctorate in limnology from the University of Toronto when he was only 24 years old. He joined the Biology Department of the University of Saskatchewan soon after graduation and became Head of the Department in 1949. The new W. P. Thomson Biology Building was to a large extent his creation, and those who joined with him in celebrating its opening last fall — fellow workers and students he trained — will long remember this friendly and learned man.

Dr. Rawson was married to Hildred Patton, B.A. (Toronto) in 1932 and is survived by his widow, by two sons (Bruce, with NFCUS in Ottawa, and Eric in the Department of Physics at Toronto), and one daughter Mary (Mrs. E. A. Tollefson of Saskatoon).

Dr. Rawson's studies in limnology fall into distinct periods. From 1928 to 1934 his interest was concentrated on the lakes of the newly established Prince Albert National

Park. This work involved physico-chemical, biological and fisheries studies, and specific experiments in fisheries management. In the period 1935-41 he carried on extensive research in the national parks of the Canadian Rockies and at Riding Mountain National Park in Manitoba. Although all these investigations had as their primary aim the collection of limnological information to be applied in fisheries-management problems, contributions of fundamental significance also resulted. It can be said of him that as a scientist he spanned the gap between the theoretical and the applied in a way that is most important today when gaps are tending to grow wider and wider.

In 1942 he began his work on the large northern lakes — Reindeer, Athabasca and Great Slave — work that brought him fame far beyond the confines of his native Canada. After 1947 he devoted most of his attention to investigations in the Lac la Ronge and Amisk Lake areas. Through all these studies, reported in some sixty publications, the northern Canadian lakes have become as familiar to freshwater biologists all over the world as any of the "classic" lakes of limnology.

Practical aspects of research attracted his attention. Thus, following his extensive limnological investigations in the province, he was instrumental in setting up a sound fisheries program in Saskatchewan under the jurisdiction of the Department of Natural Resources. He also played an important part in the founding of the Canadian Society of Wildlife Fishery Biologists.

Members of our Society will recall Dr. Rawson being our guest speaker at the annual meeting in Yorkton in October, 1954, when he gave us an illustrated talk on the methods used by his students in studying the lakes and the fish of Saskatchewan. He was made a director of our society in 1954 and served in that capacity for six years. His death represents a real loss to natural history as well as to limnology in Saskatchewan.