

Clarence Stuart Francis, 1903-1961

by Maurice G. Street, Nipawin, and Elwin Baines, Tisdale



On January 29 death came to Clarence Stuart Francis of Torch River, Saskatchewan, well-known naturalist, conservationist and tree farmer.

Stuart, as he was known, was born July 17, 1903, in Sussex County, England, and came to Canada when he was eleven. He attended Crescent Lake and Peachview Schools in the Saltcoats district. As a young man he homesteaded in the Torch River district, clearing away the native white and balsam poplar by hand axe since this was before the day of the bulldozer and scrub cutter. He pioneered in growing strawberries and later became the first tree farmer in Saskatchewan; he was so certified in October, 1955. Many will recall his talk on Tree Farming given at the annual meeting in Yorkton, 1954. Stuart kept a small bird sanctuary on his farm and for some years held a bird banding permit. Animals and flowers were also of interest. His favorite sport was fishing in northern lakes.

The members of the S.N.H.S. extend sympathy to Mrs. Emma Francis, to his sons Stuart and Stanley, and to his mother, Mrs. Ethel Maddaford. He was a director of our Society for six

years and his contributions to the Society will be greatly missed. Naturalist friends of Stuart Francis are paying tribute to him by placing in all schools in the Nipawin Larger School Unit copies of **The Birds of the Saskatchewan River** inscribed as follows: "Presented to School, in memory of the late C. Stuart Francis, naturalist, conservationist, tree farmer, of Torch River, Saskatchewan."

A gracious tribute is also paid to Stuart Francis in the memorial poem written by his friend Eric A. Dowson of Nanaimo, B.C.:

HE LOVED ALL BEAUTY

He found joy in life's common things,
Birdsong and sunset skies,
In groves of spruce and spreading
fields
Where vagrant beauty lies.

He loved life in his country home
Where parkland vistas roll.
He loved all things that nature made,
A gentle, quiet soul.

The groves of trees he planted out
While trunk and limb shall grow
Shall be his fair memorial
Reflecting beauty's glow.