

Astronomical Society of South Africa (Cape Centre)

Twenty-seventh Session.

Minutes of Seventh Ordinary Meeting of the Session, held at the Royal Observatory at 8.15 P.M. on Wednesday the 14th May 1941. Dr. Jackson presided. The attendance was poor.

The Minutes of Ordinary Meeting held on the 16th April 1941 were read and confirmed.

Mr. J. Weinberg of 2 Warren Court, Waverneville Terrace, Cape Town, was proposed by Mr. Menzies and sec. by Mr. Sinenhoff, whose name had been considered by the Committee and passed for election, was ^{unanimously} elected a Member of the Society.

Mr. Houghton read a most interesting paper on "London and Astronomy". Mr. Houghton said that Geoffrey Chaucer's name was closely linked with astronomy. He was famous for his description of the Astrolabe. Gilbert of Colchester was another name famous for his investigation of the Earth's magnetism. He said in the year 1600, that longitude on the Earth's surface could not be deduced from the magnetic declination. Henry Cavendish in the 18th Century determined the ^{mean} density of the Earth. Later in the 18th Century Dr. Wollaston discovered the dark lines in the solar spectrum. Newton's discovery of the dispersion of light led to the manufacture of the achromatic ~~eye~~ ^{piece} object glass.

Greenwich ^{Observatory} was founded by Charles II. Mr. Houghton gave a short history of the work done at Greenwich by the successive Astronomers Royal, up to the present day.

Other observatories near or in London, both professional and amateur, were mentioned.

Dr. Jackson said that a total eclipse of the Sun had been seen in London as long ago

as the year 1140. The only observation made at this eclipse was that candles had to be lighted to illuminate the dining tables during totality. London saw another total eclipse in 1715.

Dr. Jackson said that members were indebted to Mr Houghton for the trouble he had taken to prepare his interesting paper. A vote of thanks to the lecturer was passed with those present showing their appreciation in the usual manner.

This concluded the business for the evening.

J Jackson

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