EXTRACT FROM

A Personal History of the Royal Greenwich Observatory at Herstmonceux Castle 1948 – 1990

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APPENDIX G. REFERENCES ABOUT THE RGO

Note: The following lists are intended to give only a selection of the many post-1948 books and papers about the activities and staff of the Royal Greenwich Observatory.

G.1 General history of the Observatory

(including the Nautical Almanac Office, but excluding those concerned only with the NAO)

(excluding those relating primarily to the RGO at Herstmonceux Castle and Cambridge)

G.1.1 Books


Sir Harold Spencer Jones, 1943, rev. 1946. The Royal Observatory, Greenwich. London: Longmans Green. (The 1943 edition was published for the British Council as part of a series of pamphlets on Science in Britain.)


G.1.2 Papers

Derek Howse, 1993. Obituary of F. G. Carr. Quarterly Journal of the Royal Astronomical Society 34, 571-572, contains notes on his campaign with Spencer Jones to ensure that the Old RO buildings were added to the National Maritime Museum and on his idea of saving the South Building by converting the Thompson Dome into a planetarium.


Chas Parker, 1999. History of the Royal Greenwich Observatory. In 6 parts in Modern Astronomer.

G.1.3 Minor items and unpublished notes
See also a booklet for visitors to York Minster.
A. Hunter, E.G. Martin & P.S. Laurie, c. 1953 or 4. re testing of objective for Flamsteed’s well telescope. *Observatory*. Full reference to be found.
E. G. Martin, 1960. Letter re editors of *The Observatory* and the contributions of the RGO. *Observatory* 80, 238.
Adam J. Perkins, 1992, edited 2000 by GAW. The history of the Royal Greenwich Observatory. 19 pages. [With some references not yet given above]

G.2 The Astronomers Royal and Superintendents of NAO

G.2.1 Books
Margaret Wilson, 1951. *Ninth Astronomer Royal: the life of Sir Frank Dyson*. Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons Ltd.

G.2.2 Papers


Richard M. Sillitto, 1957. Maskelyne on Schiehallion or one man’s geophysical year. See http://www.sillittopages.co.uk/schie/schie57.html


**G.2.3 Articles in biographical dictionaries**

In the 2004 edition of the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*:

Flamsteed, John (1614-1719). 19, 984-991. by Frances Willmoth.

Halley, Edmond (1656-1742). 24, 689-694. by Alan Cook. (Only one paragraph about period as AR.)


Maskelyne, Nevil (1732-1811). 37, 155-158. by Derek Howse.

Pond, John (c1767-1836). 44, 795-796. by C. Andrew Murray.

Young, Thomas (1773-1829). 60, 945-949. by Geoffrey Cantor. (Only one paragraph relates to his period as Superintendent of the NAO.)


Airy, Sir George Biddell (1801-1892). 1, 521-524. by Allan Chapman.


Woolley, Sir Richard van der Riet (1906-1986). 60, 277-278. by William McCrea and Donald Lynden-Bell.

Sadler, Donald Harry (1908-1987). 48, 557-558. by G. A. Wilkins


*There are probably others relating to the ROG.*
Airy, 6-7; Bradley, 92; Dyson, 197; Eggen, 204; Flamsteed, 238-239;
Halley, 302-303; Jones, 372; Maskelyne, 464-465; Pond, 559-560;
Woolley, 734-735.

**G.3 Longitude and time**
(including H.M. Nautical Almanac Office, the Greenwich Time Service and related matters)

**G.3.1 Books**

**G.3.2 Papers**


### G.3.3 Articles in magazines

- BBC (assisted by H M Smith), 1958. Time in broadcasting. (For booklet on an exhibit at the centenary exhibition of the British Horological Institute. (*HMS*)
- C Booker, 1961 Oct. … have you the right time? *Hi-Fi News* 6, 298-302.
- H Heaton, with illus. by Emmet, 1952 Feb 27. Got the time, Mister. *Punch*.

See also articles in *Quest* (see G.12.1) and *SRC/SERC Bulletin* (see G.12.2).

### G.3.4 Minor items and unpublished notes

- H M Smith, 1990 (notes only). BBC time signals and the six pips.

### G.4 The RGO after 1948

#### G.4.1 Books


The following illustrated booklets were produced and published by the RGO for sale to visitors.

c.1966. *The Royal Greenwich Observatory Herstmonceux.* (brown and orange cover)

c.1974. *Royal Greenwich Observatory: Illustrated.* (orange cover)


**G.4.2 Papers**


???, 1958. *JBAA* 69, 103. Footnote on the improvement in the number of days per year suitable for solar observations.


**G.4.3 Leaflets and other ephemeral items**

I have the following items, but others may have been produced.

1950? The RGO produced a duplicated sheet as a *Guide for visitors to Herstmonceux Castle: The home of the Royal Greenwich Observatory* and this was issued free.

1950? onwards. The RGO Club produced a printed leaflet with the title *Herstmonceux Castle* for sale (price 4d) to visitors to the gardens. It included a few short paragraphs about the Observatory and these were updated from time to time. I have a copy that postdates the opening of the INT in 1967.

1953-12-15. RGO Information Bulletin 21, contains notes on archaeological discoveries.

1967. The RGO produced a leaflet about *The Isaac Newton Telescope* for visitors to the INT.

1975. Guests at the royal garden party to mark the Tercentenary of the Observatory were given a small programme that included brief historical notes and a sketch map of the site.

1975 onwards. At the time of the Tercentenary celebrations in August 1975, the RGO produced duplicated leaflets of one sheet each about different aspects of the work of the Observatory. In addition to a general *Guide* (on green paper) with
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A map and list of displays, there were the following sheets:

Astrometry; Astronomical spectroscopy, Chronometers, Computers, Electronography, Geomagnetism, Herstmonceux Castle, Meridian astronomy, Her Majesty’s Nautical Almanac Office, Photometry, Telescopes, Time, The Sun and the Earth, Sundials.

1980. A general leaflet (of 4 sheets) in French about the history of the RGO was made available. (It was written by N P J O’Hora.)


This booklet has no title page, no publisher’s imprint, no preface, no pagination (it is 24 pages with a thin card cover) and no price. It is illustrated by line drawings and map. The first page contains only the following:

“Acknowledgement
The Director wishes to express his thanks to Miss Jane Murray for the work she has undertaken in “blazing” the nature trail and compiling the text for each station.”

Advertising leaflets about the opening arrangements and the exhibition in the Castle were also distributed. [I have only a few.]

G.4.4 Articles in books, journals and magazines


In addition to the articles listed here, information about the activities and staff of the RGO may be found in the journals and magazines listed in section G.12.

The Civil Service Sports Journal contains articles about the building of the RGO Clubhouse in the following issues:


R. G. B., Short article about the opening in Roving Cub Reporter. 15 (6), 169.

Anon., The Concreting heroes. 15 (7), 218-221, with 2 illustrations and cover picture (see note on p. 215)

See also the booklet produced by the Club for the opening ceremony.

Astronomy and Geophysics, which replaced the Quarterly Journal of the RAS, has also included short news items about the RGO.

G.4.5 Unpublished articles

G. A. Wilkins, 1998. Review of Almanacs and Time Activities. Prepared for F G Smith for a talk at an RAS meeting. (See appendix A.2)


G. A. Wilkins, 2003. Recollections of the Royal Greenwich Observatory at
G.5 Isaac Newton Telescope and the Isaac Newton Group on La Palma

G.5.1 Books


G.5.2 Papers

P. Fellgett, 1994. (Comments re design of INT.) *QJRAS* 35, 352. See comments by W. McCrea in *QJRAS* 36, 69-72, and reply by PF on p. 73.


B. McInnes, 1981. (NHO site testing.) *QJRAS* 22, 266-


See also:


G.5.3 Unpublished notes

John Pope, 1999. Where on Earth shall we put our big telescope? Some of the events leading up to the establishment in the 1980s of Britain’s national telescopes on La Palma in the Canary Islands recalled by a Superintending Engineer at the RGO. Photocopy of typescript (14 pp) and illustrations (8 pp)


G.6 Royal Observatory at the Cape & other overseas observatories

This section is intended for references relating to work by RGO staff at overseas observatories, except La Palma.


B. Lovell, 1985. (Southern hemisphere facilities). *QJRAS* 26, 456-
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G.7 Obituaries and biographical articles about RGO staff
(excluding the Astronomers Royal and the early Superintendents of NAO in G.2)
See appendix C.12 for a list of deaths of RGO staff with references to articles and notes in RGO IBs etc.

G.7.1 Obituaries

Robert d’E. Atkinson (1898-1982)  

Richard E. Bingham (1940-2005)  
Observatory 125, 415, 2005.

Kenneth C. Blackwell (1911-1999)  

Michael P. Candy (1928-1994)  

Albert Edward Carter (1915-1989)  

Olin J. Eggen (1919-1998)  
A&G 41, 1.36, 2000.

Thomas Gold (1920-2004)  
A&G 46, 1.38, 2005; The Guardian, p. 21, 2004-06-24. See also the Press Release from Cornell University that was distributed by the RAS Librarian, Peter Hingley.

David S. Evans (1916-2004)  

George A. Harding (1920-1986)  

Alan Hunter (1912-1995): 1995-12-21  
QJRAS 37, 457-459, 1996; The Times, p.21,

Philip. S. Laurie (1913-1982)  

W. (Bill) L. Martin (1940-1999)  

The Observatory 127, 367-368, 2007; A&G ??.

Michael V. Penston (1943-1990)  

J. Guy Porter (1900-1981)  

Donald Sadler (1908-1987)  

Flora M. McBain Sadler  

Humphry M. Smith  

Patrick A. Wayman (1927-1998)  
A&G 40, 2.37, 1999; Observ. 119, 253-254, 1999.

Charles G. Wynne (1911-1999)  
A&G 41, 2.37, 2000.

G.7.2 Biographical articles


F. Graham Smith: congratulations on appointment as Astronomer Royal: by Janet Dudley, Gemini, no. 5, 9, January 1983.

Danny Elliot; a stonemason who worked on the Castle and carved the bust of Flamsteed for the Tercentenary celebrations: by anon., article with title ‘Turning to Stone’ in an English Heritage magazine. (Date not given on my photocopy.)
G.7.3 Autobiographical articles
John Pope, 2008. The Diary of a Telescope Engineer as recalled in the year 2008. 38 pp
G. A. Wilkins, 1990. Parts of the article in appendix A.3 are autobiographical in character, as are many paragraphs in the main text.

Articles by other former members of staff may be found on the website of the RGO Society.

G.8 Miscellaneous aspects of RGO history

G.8.1 References re Neptune
A. Chapman, 1988, Private research and public duty: George Biddell Airy and the search for Neptune, J. History Astronomy 19, 121-139.
D. Rawlins, 1999, British Neptune-disaster file recovered, DIO 9, 3-25.

G.8.2 References to the Magnetic Department
S. R. C. Malin, 1995. Article describes the moves of the magnetic observatory from Greenwich to Abinger and then to Hartland. QJRAS 36, 72-73.

G.9 The Civil Service and conditions of service
I have copies of various reports that are relevant to appendix C on Staff and conditions of service. They include:
An account of Whitley Councils in the United Kingdom Civil Service by Richard
Hayward is given in an orange booklet that was published by the Civil Service National Whitley Council (Staff Side) in about 1963.

An H.M. Treasury booklet on Staff relations in the Civil Service. HMSO, 1965.

Several other government and IPCS reports relating to conditions of service and organisational arrangements. [I cannot, however, find a copy of any booklet that was given to each new recruit to IPCS, nor of the later IPCS Handbook.]

Other government papers on such topics as research and development, computer policy, etc.

IPCS reports on policy matters, such as superannuation.

Booklets about management techniques, job evaluation, interviewing techniques, etc.

**G.10 Move of RGO to Cambridge and its closure**


**G.11 The Herstmonceux Science Centre**


See also the end chapters of Calvert and Martin, 1994, in G.4.1.

**G.12 Items about RGO in house magazines of research councils**

**G.12.1 Quest**

*Quest* was the SRC House Magazine from 1968 to the beginning of 1978. Most issues have some items of relevance to RGO. It includes articles and photographs about Club activities, especially for the SRC Sports Days, as well as about official RGO projects and activities. It is similarly a source of information about the SRC Chairman, Council and Central Office staff, as well as about the staff and projects of other establishments. (Only a few of these items are listed here.) It started with 4 issues per year, but dropped to three in 1973. The following list includes both official and Club items, but omits some short items that do not add to known information. The subject listed is usually not the title of the article.

Most articles have small photographs. FC = photograph on front cover (usually monochrome). P = photograph and short legend only.

**Quest 1968**

1,1 FC Queen at opening of INT
3 PSL: Bust of Isaac Newton
6-8 DHS: 200 years of NA
10-11 Inaug of INT
15 P – Castle floodlit
19 Alan Powell (RGO correspondent)
1,2 8-12 History of RSRS
1,3 6-10 MVP: Quasars; P- 26-inch
11-16 Atlas Computer Lab
23 P – Woolley and Saxton toss at cricket match
1,4 6-9 JBA: Cape Observatory; P – Victoria telescope (McClean)
10-11 RHT: Enquiries from public
22-24 Sports Day: Ps- GAW & RJD win men’s doubles

**Quest 1969**

2,1 FC Father Xmas in Staircase Hall
9-13 Birth of radar; inc. Pevensey site in 1938
2,2 1 Alec Spurway
7-8 Radcliffe Observatory
14-18 Smallest radio sources (but not 3C 273)
2,3 1 H A Brück
14-15 Norman Walker – motorcyclist
BC P – Woolley (at clockmakers’ garden party)
2,4 8-9 Sports Day; P – DVT & GAW

**Quest 1970**

3,1 10-11 AAT
12 K2 chronometer and Bligh
3,2 4-6 GALAXY at ROE
3,3 FC P – BDY, RJD, AP, ? in HC courtyard
1-2 Woolley
3-4 AP: 14th Herstmonceux Conference
12-13 ROE time gun
BC P – John Philcox about to bowl
3,4 4-5 GMH: 150 years at Cape
26 P – RGO supporters at Sports Day

**Quest 1971**

4,1 14-15 Time synchronization by plane over WB
4,2 20 P – Cape staff; GAH as OinC
21 P – Replica of original INT
4,3 FC P – 48-in at Mount Palomar
1 Jack Howlett
14-16 LVM: Occultations
4,4 1 Margaret Burbidge +P
2-3  Woolley +P
11  P- DEH & GAW receive MxD cup
15  P- BEJP (Special Merit)

**Quest 1972**

5,1  7-19  Astronomy from space
5,2  21-22  GAH: time gun at Cape
5,3  11-15  Site testing
      21  Henry Rishbeth
5,4  5-8   200 years of Radcliffe Observatory
         10-11  Sports day: Ps – GET, table tennis; MVP, Chess

**Quest 1973**

6,1  FC  P – Tycho Brahe
     1-3  150 years of ROE; P- Hewitt camera; Crawford Collection
     21  P – 48-inch Schmidt at factory (for Siding Spring)
6,2  16-17  Opening of SAAO at Sutherland; P- Thatcher and Woolley
      28  P – Mr Jeffries (tel op) receives MBE from Thatcher (in hat!)
6,3  19   Telex weather forecast for Herst (spelling errors)
      20  P – OBE for H M Smith

**Quest 1974**

7,1  FC  Daffodils at HC
     1-2  CJAP: 50 years of GMT
     5-6  JBA and CML: Comet Kohoutek
     13  MB leaves; AH as Director
7,2  6   P – Barry Martin
     8-10  NPJO: PZT
      12  P – GAW & IM with cup at Sports Day
      17  Centenary of Solar Department
7,3  3   FGS and V Reddish
     10-11 Opening of AAT by Charles
       15  Programme of events for RGO Tercentenary

**Quest 1975**

8,1  FC  P – Eta Carinae by AAT
8,2  FC  P – Queen and AH at 28-inch at Greenwich
      14-15 RGO Tercentenary
      16-17 ‘Herstmonceux’ addresses
8,3  8-10 Site testing
     20  P – Anne and AH by Flamsteed bust
**Quest 1976**

9,1 9-11 Dave Allen to Coonabarabran  
13 Board of Visitors dinner menu for 1889  
14-16 Brück, Howlett and Hunter retire

9,2 11 P – includes Maurice Message (Swindon) (relative of Jim Message)  
12 P – swimming pool at HC

9,3 13 P – IM and GAW playing tennis  
14 Menu for 20th Herstmonceux Conference; Folk Dance Group

**Quest 1977**

10,1 FC FGS, PM & Sam Edwards in RGO Exhibition  
13 CJAP retires; (J L Gowans, Sec to MRC)

10,2 11-12 Horner, Rishbeth, Saxton (App. Lab)  
13 HMS and PSL retire

10,3 ??? no copy

**Quest 1978**

11,1 FC P – Swindon Office group including Peter Davies  
9 Prof Allen (Ch) visits RGO (KFH, FGS, DJK)

No further issues were produced owing to difficulties in the Swindon Office of SRC!

**G.12.2 SRC/SERC Bulletin**

The *SRC Bulletin* eventually replaced *Quest* in October 1980 and became the *SERC Bulletin* when SRC became SERC on 1 April 1981.

[I do not have access to copies at present.]

**G.12.3 Frontiers**

*Frontiers* was published by PPARC (which took over the funding of RGO from SERC) from 1993? This contained illustrated articles about the many projects that were funded by PPARC, including articles about the Isaac Newton Group on La Palma after the closure of the RGO.

**G.12.4 Open Space**

*Open Space* was a bi-monthly newsletter by and for PPARC staff from late 1994 onwards. It included, for example, articles about long-service, retiring and deceased members of the RGO staff. The following list, which gives the issue number and the year, is not complete.

Peter Andrews, 9, 1996  
Alec Boksenberg, 8, 1996  
Michael Candy, 2, 1994  
Keith Tritton, 4, 1995  
Graham Appleby, 4, 1995  
Michael Buontempo, 7, 1995  
Alan Hunter, 8, 1996  
Bernard Yallop, 9, 1996