

vicar of Pebworth from 1904 to 1924. Upon retiring he and his wife took up residence at Blockley, Gloucestershire, where he remained until his death. In 1901 he had been elected a member of the Royal Irish Academy, and he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society on 1932 April 8.

He married in 1894, his wife being the daughter of the late Lieutenant-Colonel Hugh Rigg of Cronrigg Hall, Westmoreland.

HERBERT GERARD TOMKINS, C.I.E., was born on 1869 April 21 and died on 1934 July 17. He was the eldest son of the Rev. Gerard W. Tomkins, Vicar of Gorleston, near Yarmouth. His boyhood was spent in England, but at the age of fourteen he was taken by his parents to India, where he received his education, and where he was destined to spend the greater part of his life. When twenty two years old he entered the service of the Financial Department of the Indian Government, and served successively in the Punjab, the United Provinces and Bengal, holding the office of Accountant-General of the Province of Bengal at the time of his retirement on 1922 May 6. In recognition of his services he was awarded a Companionship of the Indian Empire at the Great Durbar of 1911. It may be noted that his three brothers also all achieved distinction in the Indian Services.

He became interested in astronomy at an early age, and followed its study with characteristic enthusiasm, an enthusiasm which may be judged from the fact that he founded and became first President of an Astronomical Society of India, which was in existence for a number of years, but unfortunately did not long survive the retirement of its founder. In astronomy he concentrated his attention on one line of research—the Moon, and in particular its physical features. This may have been because in the course of his official journeys in Northern India he observed that the crystalline deposits of saltpetre met with in that region bore some resemblance to the bright rays on the Moon's surface, and he put forward the suggestion that they might both have a similar origin. This and other ingenious theories are published in papers contributed to the *Monthly Notices* and the *Journal of the B.A.A.*

With the pursuit of his theories came the need to improve his instrumental equipment, and not having the necessary funds for the large telescope he desired, he applied his natural ingenuity and mechanical skill to the design and construction of a 24-inch reflecting telescope. The greater part of the work, including a grinding and polishing machine for the figuring of the mirror, was carried out in India. On his retirement he settled at Dedham, near Colchester, where he completed the work. It should be mentioned that his activities were severely hindered by the fact that twenty-two years ago, through an accident, he practically lost the use of his left arm, such use as remained being due only to his courage and will power; yet at the time of his death he was engaged on the grinding of a new 30-inch mirror to replace the 24-inch. Since the completion of the telescope he worked with it on every favourable occasion, securing a great number of excellent photographs, which his widow has presented to the Society for