

OBITUARY NOTICE

E. J. HAMLIN

With the death of Mr. E. J. Hamlin of Bridgwater on 3rd March 1966 at the age of 88, the Natural History Section has lost a faithful member and most competent botanist — one who had belonged to the old "Botanical Section" from its earliest days.

His courtesy and helpfulness in botanical matters will be remembered by all who sought his aid; on field meetings his advice on identification was highly valued and often in demand. Until very recently his energy and single-mindedness in the field were remarkable; for instance, he would waste no time in waiting idly for the rest of the party at the appointed rendezvous, but would busily browse around, discovering botanical interest in the most unpromising places. Contemptuous of obstacles, he would push through thickets, climb scree, or plunge into bogs that would daunt many younger folk. At the end of the day he would show little signs of fatigue.

His wide knowledge of Somerset botany extended over more than seventy years, as was proved by some of his beautifully mounted specimens bearing dates in the nineties of the last century. He had seen growing in their natural habitats plants, such as the Marsh Andromeda, which are now probably extinct in the County. On the mention of some unusual plant his frequent comment was "I have some of that in my garden". His garden was indeed a home for all sorts of interesting wild plants, and he was adept at raising rare species from seed collected in the field.

A botanist of the old school reared on "Bentham and Hooker", Mr. Hamlin did not despair when confronted late in life with the changed nomenclature and greater complexities of the modern floras, and showed patience in adapting himself to them, merely passing occasionally some wistful remark, such as "I believe they divide that one up now".

We shall sadly miss Mr. Hamlin at our future meetings; but we are glad to have known him and shall always remember him with respect and affection. To Mrs. Hamlin we would like to extend our sincerest sympathy. Our thanks are also due to her for the gift of her husband's Somerset specimens which make a valuable addition to the Herbarium at Taunton Castle.

H.W.B.