

OBITUARY NOTICE.

WILLIAM GODDEN.

1884—1954.

WILLIAM GODDEN was born in Canterbury on December 31st, 1884, and died in Aberdeen on September 3rd, 1954. He was educated at the Simon Langton School, Canterbury, and at the Royal College of Science, graduating in 1907 with the degree of B.Sc.

His first appointment was as clinical analyst to the late Dr. F. W. Pavy, F.R.S., who specialised in the dietary treatment of diabetes. Godden assisted him in his research in carbohydrate metabolism at the South Kensington Physiological Laboratory of the University of London.

After Pavy's death, Godden joined the staff of the Department of Agricultural Chemistry at the University of Leeds in 1912 and was Senior Assistant to Professor Charles Crowther. His interest in animal nutrition, already aroused by his work in London, now developed fully and continued to be his chief interest for the rest of his life.

In 1922, Godden joined the staff of the then recently created Rowett Research Institute, as head of the Biochemistry Department in succession to Dr. R. H. A. Plimmer, who had moved to the Chair of Biochemistry at St. Thomas's Hospital, London. During the first years Godden spent at the Institute, he was primarily engaged in research on mineral metabolism and this henceforward became the branch of nutrition that held his special interest. His scientific contributions were many and important and they covered a wide range of problems. At first, he gave his attention to determining the variation in the mineral content of feedingstuffs, mainly herbage; to studying some of the causes of this variation; and to measuring the influence of dietary changes and the physiological state of the animal on its ability to absorb and retain minerals. Later, his interests broadened to include studies of the blood changes provoked by diets badly balanced in their mineral content and of the depletion and replenishment of skeletal reserves of minerals.

The scope of the work he directed in his department went well beyond the bounds of mineral metabolism, embracing research in proteins and vitamins and the utilisation of dietary energy. Throughout his own work and in his direction of the work of others, he remained primarily a chemist, with unremitting emphasis on the supreme importance of accuracy in all analytical work.

From 1930, when the first of the long series of dietary surveys undertaken by the Rowett Research Institute was made, Godden was almost continuously active with help and advice. He had foods, of which the composition was not known, analysed in his laboratory; he organised and helped to make analyses of the field data. In particular, he helped both in the original planning of the field work and in the interim and final analyses of the material accumulated over years in the major survey sponsored by the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, the report of which was issued early in 1955. During the war he bore many heavy responsibilities that fell on him in the *ad hoc* projects which arose from the need for more efficient livestock production. Largely as a result of this and his insistence on taking a share of civil defence duties, his health began to fail and continued indifferent until the time of his death.

After the war, his responsibilities grew no lighter for, as Deputy Director of the Institute, he had an important part to play in the great expansion of the Institute's work and staff, laboratory facilities and building programme. To this he devoted his full energy and skill. After retiring in 1949, he joined the staff of the Commonwealth Bureau of Animal Nutrition and continued to give part-time, but most highly valued, scientific assistance up to his death.

William Godden's many friends here and abroad felt the deepest regret at his passing, but they could draw consolation from the knowledge that his lifelong interest in the science of animal nutrition, the activity of his mind, and his phenomenal memory of the scientific literature continued unimpaired to the last day he spent with his colleagues. He gave fully of his time and energy and our knowledge of animal nutrition is the richer thereby. He is survived by his son, Dr. W. J. Godden, of Dumfries. His wife, Emily Berrie, died on June 29th, 1955.

D. P. CUTHBERTSON.