

IN MEMORIAM PROFESSOR J. WALLACE BOYES

J.M. VAN BRINK

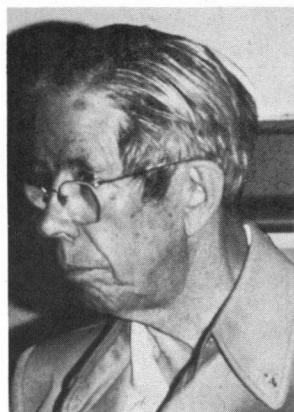
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A short biography of J.W. BOYES (born: January 27, 1907, Sundridge, Ontario, Canada; deceased: January 12, 1980, London, Ontario), geneticist, cytologist, entomologist, former Molson Professor of Genetics at McGill University, Montreal, Canada, is followed by a list of his odonatological publications.

The S.I.O. Business Meeting, held during the 5th International Symposium of Odonatology in Ste Thérèse, Montreal, Quebec, on August 9, 1979, was to be the last of many scientific meetings of which Professor J.W. Boyes has been Chairman. On January 12, 1980 he suddenly passed away at his home in London, Ontario.

JOHN WALLACE BOYES was born January 27, 1907 in Sundridge, Ontario, Canada. After his graduation from Nutana Collegiate in Saskatoon, in 1926, his teachers diploma, obtained from Saskatoon Normal School in 1926 (confirmed as Permanent First Class Teaching Certificate in 1928) enabled him to teach primary and secondary schools in Saskatchewan, 1926-1930. He then became engaged in research on insect control and worked as a part time pest investigator for the Government of Canada. While doing this he followed university courses and in 1933 took his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Saskatchewan, with high honours in Biology. As a graduate student he participated in research on wheat cytogenetics with



W.P. Thompson of the University of Saskatchewan, and obtained a M.Sc. in this area in 1936. In 1939 his research on plant embryology earned him a Ph. D. degree from the University of Wisconsin and from 1939 he worked as a Junior Research Assistant (National Research Council) at the Department of Applied Biology. From 1940-1942 he was an Assistant Professor at the Department of Genetics and Plant Breeding of the University of Alberta.



Fig. 2. Dr. J.W. Boyes, front row, second from right, received by the Queen of the Netherlands at the Royal Palace, Soestdijk, with a delegation from the XIth International Congress of Genetics, September, 1963.

After a short interruption of his scientific career during the war, Dr Boyes was appointed an Assistant Professor at McGill University, Montreal; from 1945 to 1947 he was here also Acting Chairman, from 1947 to 1969 Chairman of the Department of Genetics. From 1955 until his retirement in 1972 he occupied the John & Anne Molson Chair of Genetics at McGill University.

Not prepared to sit down after his retirement, Dr Boyes engaged in a project of the Canadian International Development Agency in Southern Africa and became Dean of Science of the University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. During four years he sustained this heavy task. In 1977, having retired for good, he settled down in London, Ontario, to enjoy the company of his daughter Barbara and her two children and, now at last, to work full time on his world-wide research project on the cytology of Diptera, especially Syrphidae, launched in the early fifties and on which I have had the privilege to cooperate with him and his wife, Bea, for many years.

Apart from his great scientific gifts, Wally Boyes had many personal characteristics that qualified him for high-level communication. He combined modesty and gentleness with great efficiency, sincerity and a strong need for justice; he also had a marvellous sense of humour. These qualities found their expression in his various administrative functions in his own country as well as on an international scale. At many national and international scientific meetings he was the official representative of his university, of the Genetics Society of Canada, of his country. To many such meetings he gave invited lectures. Among the important offices he has held was the Presidency of the Organizing Committee of the Xth International Congress of Genetics (Montreal, 1958). Following this he became President of the Genetics Section of the International Union of Biological Sciences and started activities in connection with the foundation of the International Genetics Federation, of which he was the Secretary from 1968 to 1973. In 1959 he was the first Canadian ever to be elected Vice-President of the Genetics Society of America. In 1967 he was elected Vice-President of the Genetics Society of Canada, of which he was President from 1968 to 1969.

But it was at his many travels abroad, in the period from 1953 to 1978, that his qualities as an "ambassador" flourished most and won him innumerable valuable personal contacts and friendships between himself, his wife, who often was his companion on trips, and all who happened to be near him. In 1960 he was the first Canadian Representative in the scientific exchange programme with the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. He spent two months in the Soviet Union and visited over 30 genetical institutes and laboratories in the declining years of Lysenkoism. A visiting professorship, 1962, at the University of Utrecht, The Netherlands, allowed the Dutch Organizing Committee of the XIth International Congress of Genetics to benefit from Wally's great experience in this field. In 1968 he was awarded a National



Fig. 3. Ready for dragonfly hunting, Institute of Genetics, Utrecht, The Netherlands, with Mrs Beatrice C. Boyes (right) and J.M. van Brink (left), summer, 1970.

Research Council Senior Research Travelling Fellowship. During a seven months' world trip he visited many former students and collected over 13000 dipterans and dragonflies, 3000 of which were dissected for cytological research. These formed the core of his scientific work, consisting of over 80 papers and a number of monographs. Many other travels made in his various capacities were combined in the most ingenious and efficient way with excursions to interesting places, resulting in a large collection of cytological slides, that were analyzed by students and technicians in his department and in Holland, and led to a long series of publications on dipteran and odonate chromosomes.



Fig. 4. At the S.I.O. Business Meeting during the Fifth International Symposium of Odonatology, Montreal, with K.J. Tennessen (right) and B. Kiauta (left), August 9, 1979.

Wally Boyes was an excellent tennis player and his famous forehand stroke infallibly caught syrphids and dragonflies. In this way odonate cytotaxonomy has greatly benefitted from his travels around the world, though he himself did not publish much in this field.

All these activities have now suddenly come to an end. Wally Boyes will be sadly missed by all his good friends, near and far, not in the last place by the International Society of Odonatology, of which he was a member from the very first hour, and which often received his balanced advice in organizational and other matters. As a token of thanks the Society dedicates the Proceedings of its latest international meeting to the memory of this respected and beloved colleague.

ODONATOLOGICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF DR. J.W. BOYES

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Portrait on p. 1 dated August 9, 1979.