

REPORT OF SECTION MEETING

Held on Saturday 1974 December 7
at the Orwell Park School, Ipswich

COMMANDER HATFIELD AND MR CHEESMAN, *Chairmen*

THE DIRECTOR opened the Meeting by saying that so far as he knew, this was the first time that the BAA had ever held a meeting in Ipswich; he was glad to see so many members present, and he expressed his appreciation of the excellent organization by MR CHEESMAN and other members of the Orwell Astronomical Society. He then said that since he had to act as Meeting Recorder, he would ask COMMANDER HATFIELD to take the Chair for the first session.

COMMANDER HATFIELD, on assuming the chair, invited Mr Cheesman to speak about the history of the Orwell 254 mm refractor which was now used by the members of the Society. MR CHEESMAN said that the telescope had a Merz objective and a Troughton & Simms mount; it had been set up, a hundred years ago, by Colonel Tomlin, a wealthy eccentric who served as MP for many years and who had obtained the Observatory plans from no less a person than Sir George Airy. On Tomlin's death the telescope was little used; Mr Collinson used it from 1930 to 1936, after which there were even plans to sell it. During the war the Army requisitioned the School, and inevitably the buildings and the Observatory suffered badly. After the war the now-defunct Ipswich Astronomical Society used the telescope for some time, but found the task of renovating it too daunting, and it was only with the arrival of the present Orwell Society, in 1968, that things were really put under way. The outlook was now bright, and the telescope was in good order; it was being regularly used, and Mr Cheesman expressed the gratitude of everyone to the Headmaster of Orwell Park School for his unfailing help and courtesy.

COMMANDER HATFIELD thanked Mr Cheesman, and called upon Mr Good to speak about his method of preparing outline charts from the Orthographic Lunar Atlas. MR GOOD explained the principles of his method, with illustrations, and said that he was busy in preparing further charts for use by members of the Section—the TLP network, for instance. Opening a discussion, COMMANDER HATFIELD said that this work was most valuable—and Mr Good, as an architect, was highly qualified to do it! Answering MR CHEESMAN, Mr Good said that he had kept to a consistent scale, but of course once prepared the charts could be reproduced to any scale needed.

MR MALCOLM ELLIS then gave his paper upon a device for measuring the brilliances of various areas on the Moon. (This will be published separately.)

Mr Ellis had referred to the prototype built by Mr D. Jewitt, and at THE DIRECTOR'S request MR JEWITT showed the device, explaining how it functioned. THE DIRECTOR wondered whether a rotating wheel, with a graduated filter and a pointer, would be practicable; Mr Jewitt said that this was certainly one possibility. Negative filters, however, had their drawbacks, as had been pointed out recently by Mr Fitton. COMMANDER HATFIELD said that he thought it at least possible that the device would show up temporary local brightenings which could be classed as TLPs, but which might otherwise well pass undetected; Mr Ellis agreed with this. Replying to another comment from Commander Hatfield, he said that there was no need to have the whole of the Moon in view at one time, but all methods needed to be employed. Mr Jewitt said that in view it was possible to be accurate to within one "step" of his device. Summing up, THE DIRECTOR said that in his view this was a most important programme which the Section should follow up with all possible energy.

COMMANDER HATFIELD said that before the tea interval there was just time for Mr Good's second, short paper. MR GOOD described a binocular observation of the full Moon in which he had noted a patch, west (classical) of the crater Hell, which seemed to be as bright as Aristarchus. THE DIRECTOR agreed that this was indeed a brilliant point, but it showed up to its full brightness for only a brief period around full Moon. Mr Good felt that the consistent brilliancy of Aristarchus was due in part to the slopes of its interior walls; COMMANDER HATFIELD said that the 'glassy marbles' might well be concerned, since internal reflection in them would send the sunlight straight back to the observer—the weakness of this idea being that Aristarchus was so prominent when illuminated only by earthshine.

THE DIRECTOR thanked Commander Hatfield for taking the chair, and said that after the tea interval Mr Cheesman would act as Chairman. On reassembling, COMMANDER HATFIELD spoke about his method of lunar photography, showing many of the photographs of the Moon he had taken recently with his 305 mm reflector at Sevenoaks. Opening a discussion, MR ELLIS asked whether there had been any trouble with shutter-shake on the Pentax camera; Commander Hatfield said that there had not—though he had heard of other workers who had had difficulty in this respect. THE DIRECTOR said that he was surprised to find that Commander Hatfield often had difficulty in seeing the Birt Cleft visually, since he had always found it easy; and he commented that many of the wrinkle-ridges (such as that in the Mare Serenitatis) were made up largely of the walls of ghost craters. MR GOOD referred to the very low-walled ghost crater near Fracastorius, and Commander Hatfield said that there were further elusive but very interesting features in the dome area near Copernicus. MR ANDREW GANNON referred to the last eclipse, and said that he had obtained a picture of the umbra with a half-minute exposure at $f/7$.

MR CHEESMAN thanked Commander Hatfield and those who had taken part in the discussion, and invited MR F. R. SPRY to speak about his observatory, which he had himself built. Mr Spry described the building and operation of the observatory and its 216 mm reflector, illustrating his talk with slides, and

wing examples of other designs, ranging from run-off sheds to domes with flat roofs; he said that his own observatory was a 'total rotator', so that at least one could go through the door without crouching down!

CHEESMAN thanked Mr Spry for his very useful paper. Unfortunately it had now run out; and in conclusion THE DIRECTOR again thanked all the members who had gone to such trouble to make the Meeting the most successful success that it had been.

PATRICK MOORE, *Director*