

Biographical Note



A. C. Downes

"Arthur C. Downes, Chairman, Board of Editors" has been appearing month after month for 11 years in this *Journal*: no more propitious words could appear on the *Journal's* masthead.

We do not apologize for thus introducing a man who has retired from a long and successful career as chemist, engineer and research leader. Those who have known him over some years will agree that in speaking of him it is in order to treat the immediate immediately — while not slighting what is more distant.

The quality of the recent Volumes of this *Journal* has been the direct result of a great deal of constant attention by Mr. Downes, who reviews every paper, assesses the evaluations made by those he chooses from the Board of Editors to study each paper, and prepares the verdicts and often extensive advice for authors. This service is not a casual part-time hobby. It is a job of carefully winnowing each year at least a couple of solid bushels of papers — to find some completely acceptable for publication, some satisfactory in part and others which must be rejected. The Chair-

man of the Society's Board of Editors is responsible for assessing them all.

(We should note here that these extensive activities of the Chairman of the Board of Editors for today's *Journal* are made possible by efficient secretarial service given by the staff of National Carbon.)

Arthur Caldwell Downes was born in Ipswich, Mass., in 1882. (This and a few other milestones are here recorded, chiefly from *American Men of Science*, 8th ed., 1949): B.S. from Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1904; chemist at Hartford Laboratory Co., 1904-05; National Carbon Co., Cleveland and Fostoria, Ohio, 1905-17; Assistant Superintendent of National Carbon's Fostoria Works in 1918-21, Cleveland Works in 1921-22 and Niagara Works in 1922; directing work on illuminating carbons, electrical brushes and new carbon products, he was head of the Works Laboratories in Cleveland in 1922-25 and the Development and Research Laboratory from 1925 until his retirement in 1947.

He has been a member of this Society since 1927 and a Fellow since 1934. He served as Editorial Vice-President in years very critical for the *Journal* and for Conventions and Papers Programs — 1941-46. During these six years he also served as Chairman of the Board of Editors.

In 1947 Mr. Downes was made a Fellow of the Illuminating Engineering Society which then cited his 40 years as an illuminating engineer, his IES committee work and his many contributions to *IES Transactions*, principally with reference to spectral characteristics of sunshine and its substitutes. In 1928 he received the award of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for his illumination research. He is also a member of the American Chemical Society and the American Institute of Chemical Engineers.

A. C. Downes did a good deal of work in Hollywood beginning in 1935 when high-level illumination was being developed by Mole-Richardson Co. for the studios to use with the new Technicolor process. It is, some think, farther than

the map shows from Arthur Downes' birthplace in Ipswich, Mass., to Hollywood. In between, it is true, is Cleveland, where one of his associates reports, "He has always been known simply as 'A. C.' and his long-time and expert knowledge of carbon formation procedures and of the light-emitting properties of illuminating carbons has been continually respected and put to good use by his co-workers."

Though long known as A. C., he is also known as one who uses direct current methods to get things done — forthrightly, efficiently and with understanding. And this is how he got on in Hollywood, according to a note from Elmer Richardson:

"Here in Hollywood we probably go overboard with our informality. No one works in the Hollywood technical group

long before he is better known by his first name than his surname. Right from the start among ourselves, we always referred to A. C. Downes as Arthur, but at first we did not want to offend him so we all stuck with 'Mr.' One day when we were all together, some one said: 'Let's have some fun,' so Pete (Peter Mole) was nominated to start addressing our good friend, Mr. Downes, as 'Arthur'; and so Pete, in his quiet way, with a twinkle in his eye 'broke the ice.' I think Arthur was a bit flabbergasted at first but after he got accustomed to it, I think he was as happy as we were to drop the 'Mr.'

"Arthur Downes to me is a friend, a man with that combination of intelligence, experience and knowledge that is best defined as wisdom, and with human qualities that make cooperation with him a delight to all concerned."

71st Semiannual Convention

The **Advance Notice** listing the sessions and abbreviated titles of papers went to members in the Western Hemisphere on March 10. That was the mailer which includes the tear-off postal card for conveniently arranging hotel accommodations at The Drake in Chicago during the Convention. If you have mislaid yours, please refer to p. 173 of the February *Journal*, which has the information you need.

Here is the schedule of 11 sessions in which Program Chairman George Colburn had some 52 papers arranged at press time:

April 21-25

Monday afternoon and evening

Television

Tuesday morning

Screens and control of brightness

Tuesday afternoon

Armed Forces production

Tuesday evening

Magnetic projection; Film inspecting;
Future use of educational film

Wednesday morning and afternoon

High-speed photography

Thursday morning

Open

Thursday afternoon

Color; Laboratory

Thursday evening

General Session

Friday morning

Sound and editing

Friday afternoon

New equipments

There will be demonstrations of equipment, guaranteeing lively and concrete interest, and we can be sure that Bill Kunzmann's arrangements are auspicious for the Get-Together Luncheon, the Cocktail Hour and the 71st Semiannual Banquet and Dance.

Bill and all the Chicago folks responsible for making the many Convention wheels turn are meeting in Chicago on March 13 for a planning session for which all the signs are good. The roster of chairmen, which was completed at an early date, was published in the February *Journal*.