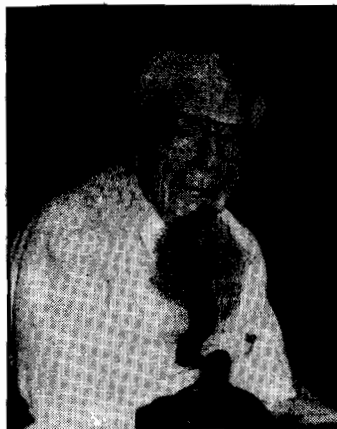


Shahid Mahmood

## OBITUARY



**DR. R.R. STEWART**  
(1890-1993)

Dr. Ralph Randles Stewart died on 6th November, 1993 at the age of 103 years at Duarte, Calif., USA. May God Almighty shower His blessings upon the departed soul and may his soul rest in peace in heaven. Amen.

Dr. Ralph Randles Stewart was born on 15th April 1890 and grew up at Manhattan Island, New York city, USA. He obtained his Ph.D. degree (1916) from Columbia University, New York; D.Sc. Honorary (1953) from the University of the Punjab, Lahore and LLD Honorary (1963) from Alma College, Michigan, USA.

On a call from the UP Church, India, Dr. Stewart joined the Gordon College, Rawalpindi in 1911 to teach elementary Botany and Zoology to pre-medical students. He served as Professor in Botany (1917-1960) and Principal Gordon College, Rawalpindi (1934-1954). Since at that time the flora of India and Western Himalayas was not well known, Dr. Stewart therefore embarked on collection trips, often going on his pushbike, and went as far as the capital of Kashmir and then crossed into Western Tibet on foot. He continued to collect plants every summer (1912-1959) without any financial support from anyone. In 1960, when Dr. Stewart retired at the age of 70 years, he gave his collection of over 50 thousand plant specimens, now called the *Stewart Collection*, to Professor E. Nasir at Gordon College, Rawalpindi. The *Stewart Collection* has now been deposited in the National Herbarium of the Government of Pakistan at Islamabad thus leaving a very rich heritage for the students of plant sciences. Dr. Stewart moved to USA and worked as Research Associate (1960-1982) at the Herbarium of the Michigan University with over 30,000 plant specimens collected from India, Kashmir, Iran etc.

Dr. Stewart is one of the few persons who has served Pakistan throughout his active life. In recognition of his services to educational and botanical work, Dr. Stewart was awarded Kaiser-e-Hind (Emperor of India) gold medal 1938, Sitara-e-Imtiaz (Star of Distinction) 1961, Member American Association for Advancement of Sciences 1984, foreign member Pakistan Academy of Sciences 1983.

Dr. Stewart has remained as the real stalwart of systematic botany in Pakistan having spent more than 50 years in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent. Dr. Stewart has

made comprehensive reports on the Flora of N.W. Himalayas, Western Tibet, Kashmir, Kurram Valley, Flora of Balochistan and the Grasses of West Pakistan. Apart from collecting flowering plants, Dr. Stewart also made a significant contribution in the collection of mosses, plant disease specimens like rusts, smuts and fleshy fungi which have since been published in Mycologia by Dr. Arthur and Dr. Cummins of Purdue University. One of his most important contributions "An Annotated Catalogue of Vascular Plants of Pakistan and Kashmir (1972)" served as the basis of writing the Flora of Pakistan edited by E. Nasir & S.I. Ali (1970-1988), S.I. Ali & Y.J. Nasir (1989-1991) and S.I. Ali & M. Qaiser (1992-).

Dr. Stewart again came to Pakistan in 1990 to attend and make a presentation at the International Symposium on Plant Life of South Asia. The symposium was organized at the Department of Botany, University of Karachi, to commemorate the Centenary of Dr. Stewart. The participation of Dr. Stewart at the symposium is indicative of his interest to plant sciences and specially his love for Pakistan.

Dr. Stewart had two daughters Jean Macmillan Stewart Andrews (1919-1970) born at Sialkot and Ellen Reid Stewart Daniels (1921-) born at Jhelum, 6 grand children and 6 great grand children. Besides, Dr. Stewart has left behind a large number of Plant Taxonomists in different parts of the world to mourn the loss.

(S. I. ALI AND A. GHAFAR)

(Received for Publication 5 May 1994)