

**John B. Gibson** 



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# OBITUARIES

**Erwin Schrödinger**, Nobel laureate and professor of physics at the University of Vienna, died in Vienna on January 4 at the age of 73. A native of that city, he received his PhD in 1910 from the University of Vienna and became a lecturer there in 1914. During the next decade, he also lectured at Jena, Breslau, and Zurich. In 1920 he was made professor extraordinarius of the Technische Hochschule at Stuttgart, and seven years later he took charge of the Department of Technical Physics at the University of Berlin, succeeding Max Planck, who had retired.

In 1933, because of the rise of Nazism, Schrödinger accepted an invitation to be guest professor at Magdalen College, Oxford. In the same year he received the Nobel Prize in physics, which he shared with P. A. M. Dirac, for his formulation of wave mechanics. In 1936 he returned to Austria as professor at the University of Graz. After the Nazis annexed that country, he was again obliged to move abroad, coming temporarily to the United States, and finally settling in Ireland, where he became professor at the Royal Irish Academy in 1940 and senior professor at the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies. In 1956 he returned to the University of Vienna. For a time he represented Austria in the International Atomic Energy Agency.

He was a member of the Academies of Sciences of Berlin, Brussels, Lima, Madrid, Rome, the USSR, and Vatican City. He was a foreign member of the Royal Society and an honorary member of the Royal Irish Academy, and for a number of years was a member of the American Physical Society. He received honorary

doctoral degrees from the University of Ghent and from Trinity College, Dublin, and the National University of Ireland.

Prof. Schrödinger is best remembered for his formulation of wave mechanics, which reconciled the corpuscular and undulatory phenomena observed in the behavior of light and subatomic particles. In addition to his papers on wave mechanics, published during the 1920's, he was also the author of works on space and time, statistical thermodynamics, and science and the human temperament, as well as of a collection of poems and a treatise on the physical aspects of the living cell.

**John B. Gibson**, 33-year-old associate physicist at the Brookhaven National Laboratory at Upton, Long Island, was killed on November 15 when a truck (carrying used atomic reactor fuel from Brookhaven to Oak Ridge, Tenn., for chemical separation) skidded on wet pavement and struck his car three miles from the entrance road to the laboratory.

Dr. Gibson was born in Cleveland, Ohio, and graduated from Case Institute of Technology in 1949. During the period from 1951 to 1953 he was an Atomic Energy Commission fellow at Iowa State University, and for the following two years he was an assistant in solid-state physics at Iowa State, receiving his PhD there in 1955. In the same year he became an associate physicist at Brookhaven, where he was concerned primarily with the study of crystal structure and the mechanical properties of solids. He was a member of the American Physical Society.

The following comments are those of one of his colleagues at Brookhaven:

"Gibson worked in theoretical solid-state physics. He made important contributions to the theoretical understanding of electrical conduction in metals and alloys. Recently his research had centered around the dynamics of radiation damage and the use of high-speed computers in solid-state physics. His physical intuition and his ability to uncover quickly the important elements of a problem were outstanding. In addition, his interests outside of physics were many and refined.

"He is survived by his wife, Emily, a son, William, and a daughter, Susan. The tragic accident which claimed his life occurred through no fault of his. His many colleagues and acquaintances have lost a valued friend, and the world of physics has lost one of its most talented younger members."

**Norman Bauer**, professor of chemistry at Utah State University, died on September 9 at the age of 45. Born in Alta Vista, Calif., Dr. Bauer graduated from the University of California in 1937 and received his PhD from the University of Michigan in 1941. After a year spent at Michigan as a university research associate fellow, he went to the University of New



Erwin Schrödinger (Meitner-Graf photo)