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THE SCHOOL OF THEORETICAL PHYSICS (continued)



Erwin Schrödinger, senior professor 1940–56.

ERWIN SCHRÖDINGER 1887–1961
Physicist

Born: Vienna, 12 August 1887

Died: Vienna, 4 January 1961

Family: Son of Rudolf and Georgine Emilia
Brenda (née Bauer) Schrödinger
Married: Annemarie Bertel 1920

Distinctions:

Membership of the following scientific
academies:

Vienna 1928, Prussian 1929, Royal Irish
1931, Madrid 1935, Pontifical 1936, USSR
1940, Lima 1944, Lincei 1947, Royal
Society of London 1949

Honorary doctorates of University of Ghent
1939, Dublin University 1940, National
University of Ireland 1940

Medals: Medaglia Matteucci 1929, Nobel
prize for physics 1933, Max Planck 1937

Addresses:

1940–1956 26 Kincora Road, Clontarf, Dublin
1956–1961 Pasteurgasse 4, Vienna

Erwin Schrödinger was a member of a cultured Viennese family. As a child he derived from his father an interest in botany, philosophy and painting and from his mother a proficiency in the English language, his maternal grandmother having been born at Leamington. His early formal education was chiefly in the ancient classics, and this helped him to become well acquainted with Greek philosophy. From 1906 to 1910 he studied at the University of Vienna, where he obtained an excellent training in theoretical and experimental physics from Fritz Hasenöhl and Franz Exner.

Before coming to Dublin, Schrödinger had held University posts at Vienna, Jena, Stuttgart, Breslau, Zürich, Berlin and Graz. During his stay in Zürich (1921–27) he proposed what became known as the 'Schrödinger equation', which provided a means of applying the quantum theory of Max Planck to physics, chemistry and biology. In spite of his immense influence in spreading the knowledge of quantum theory, Schrödinger appears to have remained at heart a classical, that is pre-quantum, physicist.

Schrödinger's publications include sixteen books and about one hundred and sixty papers, many of which were translated into foreign languages. The range of his scientific publications embraces quantum theory, statistical mechanics, Brownian motion, dielectric theory, general relativity, optics. He wrote on interdisciplinary topics; in particular he investigated how physics and chemistry might be applied to biological problems. He was also very much concerned with the cultural value of the natural sciences.

Erwin and Annemarie Schrödinger became Irish citizens in 1948. Schrödinger left Ireland in 1956 to take up a personal chair in the University of Vienna.