

**GLASGOW, Josephine (Burns).** July 22, 1887–January 22, 1969.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS (BA 1909, MA 1911, PhD 1913).

Josephine Elizabeth Burns was born in Greenville, Illinois, the daughter of Ida Jane (Carey) (1856–1929) of Ohio and James Clinton Burns (1850–1930) of Pennsylvania. Her father graduated in 1875 from Monmouth College, had a master's degree, and was later a professor of history at the Western Illinois State Normal School (now Western Illinois University) at Macomb. Her parents, who were college classmates, were married in 1878, and there were four children in the family: Clinton (1880–1939); Deane, born March 1884; Josephine; and Ruth, born August 1890. Deane and Ruth received bachelor's degrees from Illinois in 1907 and 1911, respectively. Deane Burns became a chemical engineer, and Clinton Burns was a retired executive of Standard Oil Company in China at the time of his death.

Josephine Burns prepared in the Monmouth and Macomb high schools and attended Western Illinois State Normal School 1904–06, shortly after it was established at the turn of the century and before it granted degrees. As an undergraduate at the University of Illinois she was a member of the Illiola Literary Society for women and the education honor society Kappa Delta Pi. Burns graduated in 1909, having earned Final Honors.

Josephine Burns remained at Illinois as a graduate student and held a mathematics scholarship in 1910–11. After earning her master's degree in 1911, she held a fellowship in mathematics at the University of Wisconsin 1911–12 and at the University of Illinois 1912–13. She received her PhD from Illinois in 1913. Her work in group theory for her master's thesis and her doctoral dissertation at Illinois resulted in a historical paper in the *Monthly* and a paper in the *American Journal of Mathematics*. For several years after its publication, her paper in the *Monthly* was among those listed when the editors publicized the historical papers they had published. Her PhD dissertation was directed by G. A. Miller, and it is likely that Miller, who had come to Illinois in 1906, also directed her master's thesis. Her critical reading of the page proofs of Miller's contribution to Miller, Blichfeldt, and Dickson's 1916 *Theory and Applications of Finite Groups* was acknowledged in the preface of that book.

Burns remained at Illinois as instructor 1913–15, 1918–20, first semester 1924–25, and 1925–26. On June 15, 1916, in Macomb, she married Robert Douglass Glasgow. Glasgow, born in Tennessee, Illinois, on April 3, 1879, had earned a BA in 1908 and a PhD in 1913 in entomology at the University of Illinois. He also remained at Illinois after obtaining his doctorate: as instructor 1913–24 and as associate 1924–28. While a student he served as a first lieutenant and a captain in the University Regiment and later served as a brevet (temporary) captain in the Illinois National Guard.

While the Glasgows were still at Illinois, Josephine B. Glasgow and [Mary Gertrude Haseman](#), who was instructor there 1920–28, prepared a mimeographed freshman mathematics text. This work is likely to have formed the basis for the paper they read in 1926 to the Illinois Section of the MAA.

In 1928 Robert D. Glasgow took a position as state entomologist for New York, so they moved to Albany where they remained. In this position he was involved with pest control and later was particularly active in the Mosquito Control Association. Also in 1928, Josephine Burns Glasgow served as national secretary of Sigma

Delta Epsilon and represented that society in the council of the AAAS. While in Albany, she was active in the AAUW and in 1932 represented the state AAUW when the state Women's Joint Legislative Forum was organized. She became secretary-treasurer of the state AAUW in 1940, vice president of the North Atlantic region in 1947, and was appointed to the national board of directors as vice president in 1952. In 1951 the Albany branch named a fellowship in her honor.

The Glasgows had no children. They were particularly knowledgeable about ferns and mushrooms, and in the summer of 1954 Josephine Glasgow led one day of a six-day field trip organized by the American Fern Society.

Robert Glasgow retired in 1949, having reached the mandatory retirement age of seventy. He then served as a consultant to a firm in the Philippines. He died in Albany on July 15, 1964.

Josephine B. Glasgow died in or near Albany, New York, at age eighty-one in January 1969. Memorial contributions were to be given to the AAUW scholarship fund.

**Organizational affiliations:** AMS, AAAS, Sigma Delta Epsilon, AAUW, Sigma Xi.

**Thesis and dissertation:**

**1911** [Burns, J. E.] The foundation period in the history of group theory. MA thesis, University of Illinois. Typescript. See also **1913b**.

**1913** [Burns, J. E.] The abstract definitions of the groups of degree 8. PhD dissertation, University of Illinois, 1913, directed by George Abram Miller. Printed version, 1915, reprinted from *Amer. J. Math.* 37:195–214.

**Publications:**

**1913a** [Burns, J. E.] Daniel P. Cook. *J. Illinois State Hist. Soc.* 6:425–44.

**1913b** [Burns, J. E.] The foundation period in the history of group theory. *Amer. Math. Monthly* 20:141–48. Published version of MA thesis. Reviews: *JFM* 44.0060.04 (E. Lampe); *Rev. semestr. publ. math.* 22, pt. 1: 4 (E. Kasner).

**1915** [Burns, J. E.] The abstract definitions of groups of degree 8. *Amer. J. Math.* 37:195–214. Published version of PhD dissertation. Reviews: *JFM* 45.0251.01 (L. Bieberbach); *Rev. semestr. publ. math.* 24, pt. 2: 3 (Ph. E. B. Jourdain).

**Abstracts not listed above:**

**1913** [Burns, J. E.] The abstract definitions of the groups of degree eight. *Bull. Amer. Math. Soc.* 20:62 #3. Presented by title to the AMS, Madison, WI, 13 Sep 1913.

**1926** with M. G. Haseman. Freshman mathematics for students with one year of high school algebra. *Amer. Math. Monthly* 33:394 #8. Presented to a meeting of the MAA, Decatur, IL, 7–8 May 1926.

**References to:** [BioWMath](#).

“Josephine Glasgow.” (Death notice) *Albany (NY) Times-Union*, 25 Jan 1969.

**Other sources:** PhD dissertation vita 1913; communications with the University of Illinois Alumni Association and with Helen Pond Burns, widow of Josephine Burns Glasgow's nephew; “James C. Burns 1850–1930,” *J. Illinois State Hist. Soc.* 24 (1931): 350–51; AmMSc 9B (Glasgow, Robert Douglass); “Entomologist to Retire,” *New York Times*, 29 Aug 1949; “Ferns Afield,” *New York Times*, 8 Aug 1954; EncAB-A 36 (Glasgow, Robert Douglass, Ph.D.); “Clinton Burns,” (Obituary) *New York Times*, 4 Feb 1939; US Census 1900, 1910, 1920 IL, 1930 NY.