

OBITUARIES



LESLIE ROWSELL MOORE

Leslie Moore died in Edgbaston, Birmingham, on 13th November 2003 at the age of 91. He was born in Somerset, the son of a miner, spending the early part of his life in the small market and mining town of Midsomer Norton before winning a scholarship to the University of Bristol. There he chose to read geology for his BSc, subsequently carrying out research for his PhD on the structure, stratigraphy and economic geology of the eastern part of the Bristol – Somerset Coalfield, under the supervision of Professor A. E. Trueman. He was later awarded a DSc by the same University.

On completion of his PhD, Leslie spent a short time teaching in Ipswich, Suffolk, before being appointed to an Assistant Lectureship in the Department of Geology, University College Cardiff. There he extended his interest in the Coal Measures to the eastern part of the South Wales Coalfield. He spent a short time in more senior positions at the University of Glasgow and again at Bristol before accepting the invitation to become Sorby Professor of Geology at the

University of Sheffield in 1949. On accepting the appointment, Leslie was charged with the task of promoting the growth of the science in Sheffield. The task was to occupy most of his working life in Sheffield, during which he saw the honours school grow from single figures in the 1950s to one of the largest in the country, with an annual intake of more than 40, by the early 1970s.

An excellent teacher, he always taught the major part of the first year course, frequently lecturing to classes of more than 100, arousing interest and enthusiasm for geology among many students studying the subject for the first time. Within the University, he served for many years as Dean of the Faculty of Pure Science and the Staff Student Treasurer of the Students Union, and he was the first Warden of Earnshaw Hall of Residence.

Outside the University, Leslie belonged to many geological societies. He joined the Yorkshire Geological Society in 1949, and served on Council before becoming President in 1971–1972. He was elected an Honorary Member of the Society in 1992. He was also a founding member of the Palaeontological Association and was instrumental in the establishment of the British Micropalaeontological Society and the Association of Teachers of Geology. He extended a warm welcome to all these societies whenever they met in Sheffield.

The administrative burden of running an expanding department limited the time available to Leslie for personal research. His early work had been concerned with the coalfield geology of SW Britain, and he was later to be called as a specialist witness in the Government Enquiry following the Aberfan disaster in 1966. In 1946, he published a landmark paper on the development of spores within the fructifications of Coal Measure plants, which had far reaching implications in the development of palynology as a separate branch of palaeontology. The pioneering significance of this work was recognized with the award of the Lyell Fund by the Geological Society in 1947 and led to the establishment of an internationally important research school in palynology and micropalaeontology in Sheffield. Leslie successfully encouraged and supervised the PhD research of several students who were later to be responsible for the academic and industrial development of the science. In the later part of his career in Sheffield, he turned his interests to micro-palaeobiology with particular reference to seeking evidence of fungal and bacterial attack on organic matter in sedimentary rocks. Unfortunately little of this work was completed and published before his retirement, but his account of these phenomena in the Precambrian Nonesuch Shale from the USA, published in the Society's *Proceedings* in 1969, provided a vital stimulus for other research elsewhere.

In 1977, after 28 years as Sorby Professor and Head of the Department of Geology at Sheffield, Leslie retired with his wife Peggy to the village of Curbar in the Peak District, some miles to the west of the city, where they enjoyed their garden, set in beautiful Millstone Grit scenery. Visitors were always

welcome and if the weather was inclement, he would delight in entertaining his guests with jazz renditions on the organ. Unfortunately, Peggy developed a terminal illness and died shortly afterwards. Deeply hurt by his loss, and with increasing mobility problems, Leslie decided to leave Curbar to be nearer his son John, in Birmingham. He suffered a fall in the early part of 2003 that required surgery to the hip, and although he came through the operation well, he never regained his mobility. He died peacefully on 13th November 2003.

Following the death of Peggy, a number of former students expressed a wish to acknowledge formally the influence that Leslie and Peggy had had during their student days and career development. After much discussion, it was agreed that an award in the form of a medal should be developed. Because of Leslie Moore's long association with the Yorkshire Geological Society, it was agreed that the administration of the medal should be entrusted to the Society. It was most pleasing for Leslie to be able to make the first presentation of the Moore Medal in 1988 to Stephen Vincent for his final year undergraduate mapping project in the Mendip Hills, an area where Leslie worked himself as a student in earlier days.

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DOROTHY HELEN RAYNER (1912–2003)

Dorothy Rayner, the second of three children, was raised in Teddington, Middlesex. After attending Bedales School, she matriculated in 1931 to read Natural Sciences at Girton College, Cambridge, where she distinguished herself as both an undergraduate and postgraduate student. In those pre-war years, Cambridge University had not yet begun to admit women as full graduates, so her First Class BA was awarded by Girton College in 1935. In the same year, Dorothy was a University Harkness Scholar and recipient of the G. G. B. Crewdson Memorial Prize. From 1936 to 1938, she was a Hertha Ayrton By-Fellow at Girton College, carrying out research in vertebrate palaeontology, primarily at Cambridge but also at University College, London. The University of Cambridge awarded her a doctorate in 1938. A Cambridge MA followed.

In 1939, at the outbreak of World War II, Dorothy took up a lecturing post in the Department of Geology, University of Leeds. Those exceptional times were to influence her profoundly throughout her career, since it was then that she developed her wonderful expertise in several different styles of teaching. In her first professional post, Dorothy suddenly found herself one of a staff of only three, shouldering one third of the entire teaching for an undergraduate course in Geology. Throughout this time, and indeed up to the 1960s, she taught all the stratigraphy and palaeontology, whilst also taking responsibility for her proportion of the field teaching. Dorothy's contribution to the Leeds department, during the early years of her career, cannot be understated.

The typically small groups of honours geology students benefited enormously from the tutorial style of teaching that Dorothy developed. She was affable and approachable, with a love of art, music and literature, as well as being exceptionally widely read on scientific matters. Her students still reminisce affectionately about those days. When confronted by a large audience, however, Dorothy took on a different

persona. She had a remarkable stentorian voice that could be raised to prodigious levels, and which, when combined with her rapid, non-repetitive, highly organized, authoritative style of delivery, left her students enthralled and sometimes just a little exhausted. For them, re-organizing lecture notes in the evenings was the order of the day. The fact that several of 'her' students returned to take up teaching appointments during the post-war years of expansion bears witness to the strong influence that she exerted on a generation of Leeds students. She was promoted to Senior Lecturer in the early 1960s and retired from full time employment in 1977, having spent her entire career at one institution.

Dorothy never considered herself a 'committee person', but she was nevertheless frequently called upon to serve in this capacity. Under these circumstances, she was a woman of few words, but those words were always brilliantly chosen to bring any long, tortuous discussion to a satisfactory close. She could give the impression of being brusque, but to those who knew her Dorothy was supportive, warm and friendly with a well-developed sense of humour, whilst at the same time being perhaps a little shy.

Dorothy's long association with the Yorkshire Geological Society was of great importance to her. She joined during her first year in Leeds and remained a member up to her death. She became Principal Editor of the *Proceedings* in 1958, a post that she held for ten years, and was President during 1969–1970. She was elected to Honorary Membership in 1974, in recognition of the exceptional service she had bestowed upon the Society, and was awarded the Society's Sorby Medal in 1977, in acknowledgement of her contribution to the geological knowledge of Yorkshire and the north of England. As an editor, she was extremely effective, with a critical eye for detail and a reputation for being firm but fair. Her love of and ability with the English language was obvious, and after some gentle persuasion from her colleagues she committed to print her 'English Language and Usage in Geology: a personal compilation' (1982), published by the Leeds Geological Association, which became essential reading for geologists writing theses and research papers. Typically, all profits arising from this publication were donated to the LGA.

Following the publication in 1971 of her textbook, 'The Stratigraphy of the British Isles', Dorothy was recognized as a major authority in this field and was widely consulted on matters of stratigraphical procedure. Together with J. E. Hemingway, she co-edited the Society's 'The Geology and Mineral Resources of Yorkshire' in 1974. She also attracted several prestigious awards in acknowledgement of her high standing in the international scientific community and the exceptionally broad base of her knowledge. In addition to the Society's Sorby Medal, she received the Clough Medal from the Geological Society of Edinburgh in 1973, followed by the award of the Lyell Medal from the Geological Society of London in 1975. These honours were a fitting tribute to Dorothy around the time of her retirement.

In later years, Dorothy was able to pursue other passions in addition to her geology. One of her first 'retirement projects', during the late 1970s and early 1980s, combined her love of botany with her skills as a surveyor to prepare beautiful plant distribution maps for the Royal Horticultural Society of their large Harlow Carr Gardens site, near Harrogate.

W. John Varker