

MEMORIAL OF LEWIS GARDNER WESTGATE

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Lewis Gardner Westgate was born October 8, 1868, in Phenix, Rhode Island. His father, a liberal and scholarly man, attended Wesleyan University, standing second in his class, spent two years at Union Theological Seminary, and served as a Methodist minister until 1880 when he became professor of history at "Old" Wesleyan. The elder Westgate died in 1885 when Lewis was sixteen years old.

In high school young Westgate was active in a boy's scientific society, a chapter of the Agassiz Association. The collecting of plants and minerals was carried on and the reading of papers was encouraged. That this society was above the average is attested by the fact that from this small town group five men went on to professional careers in the sciences.

From 1886 to 1890 Westgate was an undergraduate at Wesleyan University. Evidently at first he was thinking seriously of following his father's footsteps into the ministry. For three months of his freshman year he was a local preacher in the Methodist Church. In his junior year, however, one of the required subjects was a course in geology taught by William North Rice. From then on geology was the main interest of his life. Accordingly, the remainder of his work at Wesleyan was devoted to geology and related sciences. However, he tells of being strongly influenced by Woodrow Wilson, then professor of history, and by Caleb T. Winchester, professor of English literature, from whom he acquired a respect for the English language and a love of English literature. He received his A. B. degree in 1890. In 1940 Wesleyan honored him with an honorary Sc.D.

Following his graduation from Wesleyan, Westgate took three years of graduate work in geology at Harvard where he became more or less a disciple of William Morris Davis. From Harvard he received the A.B. degree in 1891, the M. A. degree in 1892, and the Ph.D. degree in 1896. He was a graduate assistant at Harvard from 1891 to 1892, and at Wesleyan from 1892 to 1893.

In 1893 Westgate accepted a teaching position in the Evanston Township (Ill.) schools and continued there until 1900. On Sept. 5, 1893, he married Martha Josephine Beach. Dr. Edward L. Rice, a lifelong friend, has written, "A childhood acquaintance and a college friendship led to a married life which spanned more than fifty-five years. It was an ideal partnership to which each contributed in full measure with enough di-

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versity of talent and temperament to add interest, enough of community to assure the finest teamwork. Admission to the esthetic beauty and spiritual culture of their home was in itself a liberal education. He was denied the joy of fatherhood; but to scores, perhaps hundreds, of his students and younger colleagues he became 'Uncle Lewie' and note that Mrs. Westgate is no less 'Aunt Jo,' for the adopted nephews and nieces passed from the laboratory to the home."

In 1900 Dr. Westgate came to Ohio Wesleyan University as professor of geology and there he served for the remainder of his life. He retired with the title of emeritus professor of geology in 1939 but when younger men were called away during the early days of World War II he again took up his old duties. Failing eyesight finally forced him from the classroom in 1944 after over half a century of teaching.

Dr. Westgate spent many summers on work of the United States Geological Survey in both the western states and in Alaska. With this organization he was assistant geologist 1912-1919 and associate geologist 1919-1935. He also carried on work for the Geological Survey of Ohio, completing his "Geology of Delaware County" in 1926 and leaving an almost completed report on Adams County.

He was a fellow of The Mineralogical Society of America and The Geological Society of America (Vice-President in 1926). He was a member of the Ohio Academy of Science (President in 1910-11), Sigma Xi, Phi Beta Kappa, Omicron Delta Kappa, and Psi Upsilon.

Throughout his long professional career Dr. Westgate was a practicing "field geologist" to quote him, and that his contributions have been substantial is attested by the appended bibliography. Of even greater importance perhaps, has been his influence as an educator and as an inspirer of younger people. His periodic chapel talks before the entire college were looked forward to by student body and faculty alike. Nor were either disappointed for Lewie's thought-provoking addresses led to reflection and self-examination by those in all walks of life. His educational and philosophical writings had a similar effect. In his teaching too, humor, philosophy, and clarity of description combined to make each lecture an enjoyable experience. He was interested in more than geology; he strove to teach his students to think for themselves and in the end to be truly educated men and women. In this he was exceptionally successful.

Dr. Westgate had many other interests. His paintings, his iris garden, his block print Christmas cards, his excellent library, and his activities in sponsoring good government for his community all testify to his many abilities.

In philosophy he found his greatest satisfaction. In 1944 glaucoma

caused complete loss of sight. Sometime later in a paper titled "My Road To Evolutionary Naturalism" he set down the philosophy which he had developed during a long lifetime of careful observation and honest thinking, a philosophy which he believed to be held by many men of science, one which he believed to be expressed in the lines from Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey.

I have felt

A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

Dr. Lewis G. Westgate died on March 30, 1948, at Delaware Ohio. He is survived by his wife, and by countless adopted "nieces" and "nephews," his contribution to man's fight for a better world.

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