

MEMORIAL OF JOHN TIPTON LONSDALE

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John T. Lonsdale died suddenly and unexpectedly of a heart attack on October 5, 1960 at 1:30 A.M. at his home in Austin, Texas. To those who never knew him this can be read as a simple statement of fact. For those of us who knew him and thus loved him no amount of repetition will ever convince us that it is completely true.

Who can portray a man by parading the sequence of his life events? John Tipton Lonsdale, born November 8, 1895 at Dale, Iowa was the oldest son of John Dye Lonsdale and Eva Mary Lonsdale, nee Connor. After an elementary school education at Dale and high school training at Guthrie Center, he was awarded his B.A. (1917) and M.S. (1921) at the University of Iowa. His studies were interrupted from 1917 to 1919 when he served as First Lieutenant in the Army of the United States during which time he was cited for bravery by both the United States and Italian governments.

Upon his return from war he married Edna Gertrude Von Arnam on August 13, 1921. Mrs. Lonsdale recalls a long personal debate in deciding whether to resume with geology or to continue as a professional military man; he had received a commission as a first lieutenant in the post-war army. Geology won and he began his professional career as Assistant Professor of Geology at the University of Virginia and Assistant Geologist with the Geological Survey of Virginia (1921-1924). The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Geology was awarded him by the University of Virginia in 1924.

At the University of Oklahoma he served as Assistant Professor of Geology in 1924 and continued as field geologist for the Oklahoma Geological Survey in the summers of 1924 and 1925. His career with the Texas Bureau of Economic Geology began in 1925 when he became associate geologist, rising to geologist in 1927. From 1928 to 1935 he was Professor of Geology and chairman of the geology department at Texas A. and M. College, a combination of posts he also held from 1935 to 1942 at Iowa State College. While at College Station, Texas, he was also geologist for the Missouri Pacific Railroad. He returned to military service from 1942 to 1945 as Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel, General Staff Corps and continued as a colonel in the U. S. Army Reserve until 1953.

In 1945 he was recalled to become Director of the Texas Bureau of Economic Geology and Professor of Geology with graduate rank, positions he held at the time of his death. To the complex duties of this demanding situations he brought devotion, energy, intelligence and good judgement, efforts that rapidly placed the Bureau into the foremost



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ranks of state geological surveys. His own geological interests centered around petrology, ground water, and economic geology. Special mention should be made of his initiation of a comprehensive investigation of the mineral resources of the State of Texas and of his painstaking and original studies of the igneous rocks of the Big Bend National Park, the Terlingua-Solitario region and the Balcones fault region. His geological interests were catholic, his strivings devoted, his achievements valid.

The scientific and honorary societies which he faithfully served were many: Sigma Gamma Epsilon, Sigma Xi, Society of Economic Geologists, Geological Society of America (fellow), Mineralogical Society of America (fellow), American Association for the Advancement of Science, American Association of Petroleum Geologists, American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical and Petroleum Engineers and Society of Economic Paleontologists and Mineralogists. Numerous committees of many of these and other organizations obtained his services, and in 1959 he was vice-president of the Association of American State Geologists and was president-elect of this organization at the time of his death.

His manifold interests were also manifest in his non-professional activities. He was active in the Austin Rotary Club, collected guns and loved to hunt on a deer lease held with a group of friends for over 15 years. Humble in demeanor, modest in word, and true in thought he was a devoted friend and a delightful companion. In recognition of his services to his country, his ashes have been interred at Arlington National Cemetery.

As these words are written at the desk in his study in the house that to him was home, in view of his books, guns and other belongings that, now upon his passing have reverted to inanimate matter, it is clear that this outline is but that. It remains for the memories of his friends to complete the picture. John Lonsdale is survived by a great sense of loss, by his wife, a sister and a brother and, though he had no sons, we, his students, also remain.

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