

MEMORIAL OF JAMES DABNEY BURFOOT, JR.

October 18, 1896–February 27, 1966

WILLIAM T. HOLSER, *Chevron Oil Field Research Co.,  
La Habra, California 90631.*

Dan Burfoot's career is best summed as a lifetime of sincere service to Cornell University and to its students. He came to Cornell in 1925, after receiving his B.S. and M.S. degrees from the University of Virginia under T. L. Watson, the well-known economic geologist. At Cornell, he worked both with Prof. Heinrich Ries in economic geology and A. C. Gill in mineralogy. His summer work with the Virginia Geological Survey led to a Ph.D. thesis on Virginia soapstone deposits. After a year as Assistant Professor at Washington and Lee University, he returned to Cornell, where he served until his retirement as Professor Emeritus in 1964.

In terms of ideas, Professor Burfoot was not an originator. As the merchant of other's ideas—as a teacher—he did a creditable job. For nearly 20 years he carried the full load of courses in mineralogy and petrology at Cornell, but in helping with the ideas of others Dan Burfoot found his true vocation. Generations of undergraduates, graduate students, and associates on the faculty at Cornell are indebted to him for advice and encouragement. And this help, although friendly, was never superficial or hypocritical. Professor Burfoot was an expert petrographer, and he spent many hours working over the details of thin sections with thesis students, often when he had responsibility only as a minor advisor. By debate and meticulous editing, he brought out the best in projects that must have seemed sometimes not worth such conscientious midwifery. Fundamentally, this attitude must have been governed by his commitment to the student as a person. In the late 1940's, he gradually became more involved in work with students, until in 1953 he became Assistant Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, where he devoted full time to counseling of upperclass students until his retirement.

Professor Burfoot's manner was that of a true Southern Gentleman, and although his courses were in the same tradition, he was more than helpful when he found that change was necessary. When I arrived at Cornell in 1948 as a young Assistant Professor just finishing my Ph.D., to take over the courses in mineralogy, Dan proudly toured me through the hallowed halls of McGraw. We started in the musty basement "Blowpipe Lab" with its special vault for crystal growing. Then, upstairs to admire the display of the Benjamin Silliman, Jr. Collection, which included a jealously guarded safe of Gold Rush specimens. The dusty two-circle goniometer and the venerated diploma that Professor



*James Dabney Burfoot, Jr.*

Gill had received under Professor Groth at Munich in 1896 reflected time present in time past. And so, as in due course, crystal structure models dangled from the ceiling and the clank of hydrothermal plumbing resounded in the back rooms of the basement, Dan Burfoot was with it all the way. In retrospect, I should never have expected anything better than grudging aloofness in such a situation, but Dan Burfoot was as pleased to help me as he had always been with the students.

It is not possible to think of Dan without his wife, Marion, whom he married in 1924 while a graduate student at Virginia. For long before I was at Cornell, and years afterward, she was secretary of the Department of Geology, where she reigned with a warm smile and a firm hand. She is now living in Charlottesville, Virginia.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF JAMES DABNEY BURFOOT, JR.

1930

The origin of the talc and soapstone deposits of Virginia. *Econ. Geol.* **25**, 805-826. [Also Ph.D. Thesis, Cornell Univ., 1929.]

1938

Comparative study of origin of talc and soapstone deposits of Virginia [abstr.] *Geol. Soc. Amer. Bull.* **49**, 1946.

1941

A. C. Gill's development of the concept of unique diameters in crystallography. *Amer. Mineral.* **26**, 617-626.

THE AMERICAN MINERALOGIST, VOL. 54, MARCH-APRIL, 1969

MEMORIAL OF CHARLES FINDLAY DAVIDSON

July 16, 1911–November 1, 1967

P. A. SABINE, *Institute of Geological Sciences, London.*

Charles Findlay Davidson, Professor of Geology in the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, since 1955, and formerly Chief Geologist of the Atomic Energy Division of the Geological Survey of Great Britain, died of a heart attack in his home in Cupar, Fife, on November 1, 1967. He was a prolific and lucid author, and he died while his output of work was still in full spate. A vigorous and forceful speaker, he had a zest for discussion and for stimulating lively yet friendly controversy which will be widely missed in Britain and abroad.

Davidson was born at Monifieth, Angus, on July 16, 1911, and was