

Memorial of D. Jerome Fisher June 14, 1896–January 18, 1988

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Daniel Jerome Fisher, professor emeritus at the University of Chicago and a life fellow and former president (1957) of the Mineralogical Society of America, passed away on January 18, 1988, in Phoenix, Arizona, after a period of declining health.

Jerry, as he was known throughout the world community of mineralogists, was born June 14, 1896, to Lewis B. and Fanny (Shaw) Fisher in Canton, New York, where his father was head of the Divinity School at St. Lawrence University. His ancestry traces back ten generations to Anthony Fisher of Syleham, County Suffolk, England, and to Anthony's son, also named Anthony, who emigrated to Dedham, Massachusetts, in 1637. Young Jerry came to Chicago in 1912 where his father, president of Lombard College and Ryder Divinity School in Galesburg, Illinois (1905–1912), served as Dean of Ryder Divinity School when it became affiliated with the University of Chicago's Divinity School complex.

Jerry obtained his B.S. (1917), M.S. (1920), and Ph.D. magna cum laude in geology (1922) at the University of Chicago. Well over six feet tall, Jerry was a magnificent athlete who played center on the university's football team under the legendary Amos Alonzo Stagg, later helping coach the team. He won the Big Ten championship in high jumping and pole vaulting and, at the 1916 Big Ten meet in Urbana, won the all-around track and field championship.

After receiving his bachelor's degree in geology in 1917, Jerry's education was interrupted by eighteen months of military service of which eleven were served in France as Sgt. 1st class in the Medical Corps and as Brevet Lt. in the Field Artillery. Upon returning, he married Dorothy Dorsett on July 27, 1919. Dorothy, his life-long companion and loving wife, along with his elder son David Lewis Fisher, survives him. Two children, Jerome Dorsett Fisher (1926–1948) and Donis (Mrs. Marvin Shapiro) (1923–1986) preceded him in death.

Djerfisherite, a mineral first discovered in enstatite chondrite meteorites but later in terrestrial deposits in the Soviet Union, was named in Jerry's honor by Louis H. Fuchs (*Science*, 1966, vol. 153, p. 166–167).

Jerry's long career in teaching began unexpectedly while he was yet in graduate school when, during the fall of 1920, the instructor in mineralogy left rather precipitously. Jerry took over and, for forty years, taught the classes in mineralogy at the University of Chicago as Instructor (1921–1926), assistant professor (1926–1928),



associate professor (1928–1957), and professor (1957–1961). After becoming professor emeritus (1961–1988), he served at Arizona State University as Visiting Professor of Geology (1969–1970) and Professor of Geology (1970–1974). Until late in life he maintained a high level of physical activity, frequently climbing Squaw Peak and rafting through the Grand Canyon with Arizona State students.

During summers Jerry served as a geologist with the Illinois Geological Survey, the U.S. Geological Survey, or the South Dakota Geological Survey. As such he had opportunity to study the mineralogy and genesis of pegmatites in South Dakota and Nevada as well as the Book Cliffs coal field of Utah. He published crystallographic data on numerous mineral species, but with emphasis on the phosphates. From 1938 to 1957 he served as a contributing editor to the *Journal of Geology* and from 1958 to 1960 was an associate editor of the *American Miner-*

alogist. Only a small fraction of his over 100 publications are cited in the selected bibliography included herewith. His book *The Seventy Years of the Department of Geology, University of Chicago, 1892–1961* (University of Chicago Press, 1963) provides a fascinating insight into the development of a world-class department from scratch. One can only admire William Rainey Harper's persuasiveness in convincing T. C. Chamberlin to leave the presidency of the University of Wisconsin and head a department whose classes sometimes met in store buildings.

Jerry Fisher was a life member of the Geological Society of America and of the Mineralogical Society of Great Britain as well as an honorary member of the Mineralogical Society of India. He was a member of the Geochemical Society and of the Mineralogical Association of Canada. He was one of the founders of the International Mineralogical Association and served as its treasurer (1958–1960) and president (1960–1964).

No one ever said Jerry's courses were easy. They were not. They were rigorous and demanding. At the same time, however, they were extremely well organized. While taking these courses, and while later assisting him in his mineralogy courses over a period of several years, I never knew him to come to a lecture ill-prepared.

Jerry always had a fascination for new equipment and for devices to improve existing equipment. It perhaps culminated in his new Universal-type microscope (Fisher, 1960a). In the late forties, it also caused my fellow

graduate students to call me the Sorcerer's Apprentice. The association was a warm one and I benefited much from it. And, when a smile lit up Jerry's face, it was beautiful, like brilliant sunlight on a rocky cliff. I'll remember that.

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