

GASPÉ OF YESTERDAY

GEOLOGISTS REMEMBERED

IN THE SHORT SPACE OF TIME FROM 1970
TO 1973 THERE CAME TO AN END THE LIVES
OF TWO EMINENT GEOLOGISTS WHO WERE WELL
KNOWN FOR THEIR DEDICATED WORK IN GASPÉ.

BOTH WERE MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY
OF CANADA. IT IS FROM THE PROCEEDINGS OF
THAT EMINENT SOCIETY THAT "GASPÉ OF
YESTERDAY" HAS DRAWN THE FOLLOWING
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF INTEREST TO
THE GASPESIANS THAT THEY SERVED SO
WELL.

KEN ANNETT

I. W. JONES

Harold William McGerrigle
1904-1970



HAROLD WILLIAM MCGERRIGLE, a Fellow of the Society since 1947, died in Quebec City on 9 November 1970. He had been one of Quebec's outstanding geologists.

McGerrigle was born in Ormstown, Quebec, 22 November 1904 and attended schools in that town before entering McGill University. He graduated in 1926 and obtained his PH.D. degree at Princeton in 1930.

From 1930 to 1936 he taught geology at Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire. Although urged to remain at Dartmouth, he preferred to return to Canada, and in 1936 he joined the Quebec Department of Mines. Even during his years at Dartmouth College he had a considerable influence on Canadian geology, partly through his Canadian students, and partly because he worked during the summers in Quebec.

McGerrigle's earlier work in the province included the study of gold placer deposits in the Eastern Townships, and of sand and gravel deposits. In 1937 he began detailed investigations in the Gaspé Peninsula; these were to form one of the major contributions of his life's work. The interior of the Gaspé was at that time almost as untouched as when Sir William Logan traversed it in 1844. McGerrigle's studies were carried out by the same methods: foot traverses and back-packing, and only a man with his love for the outdoors and physical activity could have pursued them.

In 1957 he became chief of the Geological Surveys Branch of the Quebec Department of Mines, in which position he was responsible for regional geological exploration over the entire province. He continued his own work in the Gaspé whenever he could leave his office. The recent re-naming of the Tabletop Mountains in central Gaspé as the McGerrigle Mountains pays tribute to his long studies in that area.

In 1965, McGerrigle resigned as chief of the Branch, but remained as technical adviser to the Department. After his retirement, he prepared a popular guidebook to the Gaspé region.

As a person, Harold McGerrigle was humble and unassuming: one of the most self-effacing of men. He never sought positions of authority, but did not lack scientific honours. In addition to his Fellowship in the Royal Society of Canada, he was a Fellow of the Geological Association of Canada and of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and a Member of the Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy.

He is survived by his second wife, the former Hazel Sinclair of Quebec City, and by three children of his first marriage.

B. T. DENIS

Islwyn W. Jones
1902-1973



ON 1 MAY 1973 ISLWYN W. JONES was stricken moments after he had completed routine gardening chores around his home in Sillery, Quebec. In his seventy-first year, the former director of Geological Services, Department of Natural Resources of the province of Quebec, had been busily enjoying his retirement since 1965.

Born in Dowlais, Glamorganshire, Wales, in 1902, Islwyn Jones came to Canada in 1909, when his parents settled in Edmonton, Alberta. He attended school in Edmonton and then enrolled at the University of Alberta, where he obtained the degrees of B.A. in 1922 and B.Sc. in mining in 1924. Post-graduate studies followed at the University of Toronto, which conferred upon him his PH.D. in geology, majoring in economic geology, in 1928.

Summer vacations during his student years (1918-27) were passed as a miner in Albertan collieries and as assistant on field parties of the Geological Survey of Canada in Alberta and British Columbia.

In 1928 he was engaged as a temporary geologist by the Geological Survey of Canada, and put in charge of a geological investigation in the Springhill district of the Nova Scotia coalfields.

In 1929, the government of the province of Quebec decided to initiate a program of systematic geological mapping and research as an aid to prospecting. To put this policy into effect a Geology Division was set up in the Quebec Bureau of Mines.

Jones was one of the very first to join the newly created Geology Division. He therefore started from scratch, and on retirement from the Department of Natural Resources of the Province of Quebec, thirty-six years later, he handed over to his successor responsibility for the activities of a well-coordinated group of geological services with a permanent staff of 40 geologists or engineers backed up by an office and technical staff of 64 employees, plus temporary personnel numbering 180 geologists, students, and helpers, engaged for the field season.

From 1929 to 1939, Dr Jones' geological explorations were concentrated on the Gaspé peninsula. The heavily wooded, very rough topography, the rarity of outcrop even on the slopes of the steepest valleys, the difficulty of access, the sketchiness of base-maps, and the scarcity of surveyed tie-points, presented challenges that few could have accepted. After five years of experience in the mountains of western Canada, Jones could state with authority: "Compared to the interior of Gaspé, the Rockies are pie!" Nevertheless, with aneroid and pace-counter, he produced a succession of topographical and geological maps of extraordinary quality.

The oil seepages of Eastern Gaspé quite naturally awakened Dr Jones' special interest. He therefore closely studied all aspects of the exploration for oil and natural gas and although he well recognized the risky nature of such ventures, he never abandoned his conviction that geologically favour-

able areas of Quebec offered acceptable odds in favour of further exploration. His expertise led to his appointment, from 1940 to 1959, as lecturer on the economics of petroleum exploration at Laval University. On his retirement in 1965, he consented to act as geological consultant and director of SOQUIP – the government-sponsored Société Québécoise d'Initiatives Pétrolières.

As the mining industry of Quebec expanded, the Quebec Bureau of Mines was succeeded by a Department of Mines and eventually by the Department of Natural Resources. This sequence entailed increasing supervisory and administrative effort. Never one to refuse a challenge, Dr Jones accepted the switch from active field exploration to planning and direction, a role which was to last until his retirement twenty-six years later.

A leader and counsellor rather than a driver, Dr Jones maintained quiet insistence on quality, both in the personnel that he recruited for his staff and in the work that he expected them to produce. His impatiences were reserved for the "powers that be," who restricted budgets and spun webs of red tape.

One of Dr Jones' most significant contributions to the advancement of geological research in Quebec does not show in any list of publications. For over twenty years he screened the applications of students seeking summer employment on Quebec's geological field parties. In countless interviews connected with this phase of his duties, he displayed firmness, compassion, and sound judgment which were gratefully acknowledged by many of those who chose to stay with geology, as well as by others who decided not to.

Dr Jones was Fellow of the Geological Association of America and of the Geological Association of Canada, Member of the Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, of the American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical and Petroleum Engineers, and of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists. A familiar figure at the meetings of these societies, he thoroughly enjoyed the exchanges of information and the friendships that resulted; in turn he contributed generously in time and effort to the activities of the groups.

A membership that he particularly appreciated was that of an Advisory Committee to the Board of Overseers of Harvard University.

In 1931, he married Nora Devlin of Quebec City. In addition to his widow, two sons and two daughters mourn his loss. A host of friends will miss him.