

## W. B. HARLAND

Brian Harland became an editor of the *Geological Magazine* with O. M. B. Bulman and S. R. Nockolds in 1956 for volume 93; in 1975, he became senior editor with C. P. Hughes and G. A. Chinner joining him. He instituted the post of Assistant Editor in 1967, and was involved in the change to Cambridge University Press as publisher in 1970, the introduction of a larger format in 1977 and later of the current A4 size and new style in 1984. He retired as editor in 1988 with volume 125, after more than thirty years' service to the geological public from contributors through to subscribers. His service has been characterized by his total commitment to raising standards of scientific clarity and precision, but always by means of polite pressure towards a consensus of views. As may be seen from his own bibliography below, his mastery of a very wide range of geological topics matched his sympathy for both varied and controversial contributions to the journal.

Although it is not possible to present as perceptive a survey of Brian Harland's activities as he could do himself, one can record impressions of his impact on the many fields he has chosen to enter as indicated by the list below of his publications. He has blazed trails of originality in diverse fields but has always been concerned with exploration of new areas and particularly with the training of young geologists by example, most of whom will remember his great stamina and persistence and probably also his impressive artistry in the profitable use of a hammer. In the 'laboratory' he has pursued new ideas, logical presentation and improved precision. He has always enjoyed arguing the niceties of a topic and has been very generous in shared publications.

His original studies were in structural geology through to the widest consideration of tectonics. He was always interested in 'continental drift', through the days when it was locally a forbidden topic, in rheology with ideas compared with observations of ice movement, and in palaeomagnetism before it became fashionable and widely used. Thus his appreciation has moved on and flowered in the eventual age of plate tectonics with an early recognition of strike-slip movements and of terranes in the Arctic.

Brian Harland has been continuously involved with Arctic geological exploration, as recognized by the award of the Gold Medal of the Royal Geographical Society in 1968 and of the Polar Medal in 1980. He visited Spitsbergen before the 1939–45 war and has, since 1949, personally led or directed expeditions there in almost every summer up to and including 1988; he has also visited several other Arctic areas. This broadly based geological activity, particularly with all strata of the widespread Svalbard archipelago,

has resulted in a unique collection of specimens, field-books, photographs and maps stored by him in Cambridge and used as a highly organized database for the present Cambridge Arctic Shelf Programme (CASP). His development of CASP has now extended far beyond the whole Arctic including the Soviet Union and Canada, to China and to Antarctica, and from all these areas in the form of his own system of 'Georecords'.

Having spent most of the period of the Second World War serving in China, he has since then, through many difficulties, maintained close contact with Chinese geology and with the Chinese language. After numerous visits to China he is now involved in a cooperative Georecords project.

In Britain he has become particularly associated with the geology of the Isle of Arran. He has led the University first-year geology field-courses to that most rewarding training ground from 1952 through to the year of his retirement from teaching and has continued to assist subsequently. Although it is not usually possible to engage in research whilst actively leading parties of undergraduates, he has made time in Arran to produce penetrating papers with colleagues on some of the problems of the local geology.

In the field of historical geology Brian Harland has maintained the necessity for clarity in stratigraphic practice and for precision in correlation as bases for successful tectonic interpretations. He was the first Secretary of the International Geological Correlation Programme (IGCP), and a very successful Chairman of the Stratigraphy Committee of the Geological Society of London (GSSC) 1969–1973. He has served for many years on the Precambrian–Cambrian Boundary Committee; as a member of the International Sub-commission for Stratigraphy Classification (ISSC); and as a member of the Working Group on Terminal Precambrian systems which with their tillites have been his prime stratigraphic interest. He has headed the authors of *A Geologic Time Scale* (Cambridge University Press, 1982) and of a further successor edition now in press.

Walter Brian Harland was born on 23 March 1917 in Scarborough, Yorkshire, and educated at Bootham School, York. He was a Scholar of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge from 1936, and took firsts in Part I (1937) and Part II (Geology) (1938) of the Natural Sciences Tripos and also the Harkness Scholarship in 1938. He became a Research Student, but was in effect prevented from proceeding to a Ph.D. degree by the consequences of the war and by his appointment in 1946 as a University Demonstrator in Geology and later as University Lecturer. He served the Department of Geology as Secretary

(administrator) for twenty years, and as Librarian for ten. He became a Fellow of his College in 1950, and later a Reader in the University in 1966. He was Secretary of the Geological Society of London from 1963 to 1970; he was awarded the Society's Wollaston Fund in 1956 and Lyell Medal in 1976.

In 1989, Brian Harland shows every sign of continuing his long and very active career as a geologist with scarcely diminished vigour.

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