

Memorial to Grace Anne Stewart 1893–1970

EDMUND M. SPIEKER

The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio



Women in geology have always been few and far between, and socially versatile ladies even fewer, but Dr. Grace Anne Stewart, who died October 15, 1970, certainly qualified not only in these, but in other quarters of merit as well.

Grace Anne (her friends never addressed her or spoke of her in any other way) was born August 4, 1893, on a farm near Minnedosa, Manitoba. She came of study Scottish stock, hardy pioneers conferred as priceless benefice on North America by greedy and asocial aristocrats of their homeland. In 1831 Grace Anne's great-grandfather, James Stewart, and her grandfather, also James, came over to Canada from their home in the County of Perth, when rich

landowners took over the meadows small farmers had long been using for grazing of their cattle. This reduced many able and hard-working farmers to bankruptcy, and not only the Stewarts, but also the Crerars (Grace Anne's maternal stock) and others, decided to emigrate. They settled near Stratford, Ontario. (On the road between Stratford and Shakespeare, Ontario, there is an historical cairn commemorating the first James Stewart.) The second James was an educated man, and of his six sons only one, Grace Anne's father, went on into farming; three attained the M.D. at the University of Chicago, one became a lawyer, and the other a building contractor. Despite the fact, then, that Grace Anne grew up on a farm, she had abundant example before her in the careers of her uncles to draw her toward an intellectual career. Her father had persisted, however, in the family tradition of devotion to the soil; in 1881 he went out to Manitoba and established himself on a homestead near Minnedosa. Here Grace Anne's immediate family grew up. She had two brothers, both of whom predeceased her, and two sisters, one of whom, Jessie Stewart (Mrs. G. H. Clark) of Edmonton, survives, as do four nieces and three nephews.

After extended preparatory education Miss Stewart entered the University of Alberta, where she reached the B.A. in 1918, the first woman to do so there with a major in geology. She served as Assistant in the Department of Geology from 1918 to 1920, and was granted the M.A. in 1920. Her ability was beginning to be recognized, and she won a fellowship at the University of Chicago, where she worked in paleontology under Stuart Weller and came out with the Ph.D. *cum laude* in 1922.

During the summers of 1919 and 1920 she worked for the Research Council of Alberta, and she spent those of 1921 and 1922 with the Geological Survey of Canada, working at the National Museum. In those days prejudice against women as geologists

was strong in the Canadian Survey, and it took a brave young lady to withstand the unpleasantness provided by her male superiors and counterparts. I don't recall ever discussing this specifically with Grace Anne, but I feel sure she was attracted by the haven of the United States, and especially the Department of Geology at Ohio State, whose head, Dr. John A. Bownocker, took pride in his favorable disposition toward women. And yet, later on (about 1928) she spent another summer with the Geological Survey of Canada, and at that time, I have been assured by her former colleagues, courage was still of the essence.

At all events, upon the recommendation of her teachers at Chicago, in 1923 she was invited by Dr. Bownocker to join his staff as Instructor, and thenceforth her entire professional career was associated with, bound up in, indeed wholeheartedly devoted to the Ohio State University, from the time of her first appointment to that of her retirement in 1954 as Professor (which rank she had attained in 1946). Throughout these 31 years she always wanted to be, and effectively was a part of the University. Not only was she constantly devoted to her various duties in the Department; she was also active in the Faculty Women's Group (of which she was Chairman for one year) where she cherished a large number of devoted friends, and was influential in many ways on the careers of some of these friends—and all this beyond the warmest of relations with faculty families in general.

Her years in Edmonton, correlated with my own work in northwestern Alberta and northeastern British Columbia in 1919 and 1920, brought us together the moment I arrived at Ohio State, just one year after her own initiation there, and served as one of many bonds between us that never dissolved; we spent many fascinating hours comparing notes on all aspects of western Canada. I had become very fond of Canadians in general, and my friendship with Grace Anne was one of several strong stimuli to that affection.

As Dr. Stewart, she held her own at research in the field, laboratory, and museum as well as at her duties as teacher. Never in any way flashy or spectacular in the classroom, she was nonetheless respected by and beloved of her students, and in her quiet, charming way she was an effective teacher, always careful and methodical, painstaking, and unusually able at stimulating students to work on individual problems, which they attacked with great enthusiasm.

After her dissertation, Dr. Stewart's research was centered almost exclusively on the medial Paleozoic faunas of Ohio, especially the Silurian and Devonian microfossils and the Devonian corals, ostracodes, and crinoids. Here she was just as meticulous, painstaking, and thorough as in the classroom, and her knowledge of the Devonian faunas in the North American interior was not surpassed by that of any contemporaries. She presented papers before the Paleontological Society, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the Ohio Academy of Science. In 1937 she was Chairman of the Geology Section of the Ohio Academy. The soundness of her work was widely appreciated by her colleagues, and she became a Fellow of The Geological Society of America, of the Paleontological Society, and of the Ohio Academy of Science, a member of Sigma Xi, and was listed in *Who's*

Who—Women of America.

Throughout her tenure at Ohio State she put in much time at work in the Geological Museum at Orton Hall, and contributed a good deal to order and effectiveness in the collections and displays there for which she did not get much overt recognition.

During World War II she did special work in geography at the Office of Strategic Services, and for this she did get recognition; at the end of the war she was highly commended by the administration in Washington.

It should not be overlooked, either, that she worked just as hard and effectively in the field as in the office, laboratory, museum, and classroom, assuming boldly a role then generally accepted as an exclusively male prerogative.

In 1948 our department badly needed a faculty member in physical and economic geology, but I was unable to find an acceptable candidate before leaving Columbus for work at our field station in Utah. I placed the matter in the hands of Dr. Stewart, and about midsummer it was her recommendation (over and above the data I had down on paper) upon which I relied mainly when I invited Dr. Robert L. Bates to join our faculty. The quality of Dr. Stewart's judgment will be evident at once to all who read this memorial.

Miss Stewart's energy at professional work was not devoted exclusively to the Department of Geology. She took full part in general faculty affairs, was a member of several important committees in the College of Arts and Sciences, and performed various services of communal value such as the preparation of the section on geology for the Illustrated Booklet on Science Offerings in the College.

Socially Grace Anne was a delightful person. She was not only gracious in a warm but dignified manner, but was also hospitable; several were the women on the faculty who were made at once to feel at home on arrival at the University when Grace Anne would have them in for dinner—and she entertained widely otherwise. She was the perfect hostess in all the demanding categories of that art; among other features of her genius as a friend and social being, she always showed much more interest in what her guests (or friends generally) were doing than in her own affairs. All in all she was a lovable lady.

About the time she turned sixty she began to show signs of weariness in her work, and, for reasons that to my knowledge never came out into the open, discouraged. In 1954 she decided to retire, long before the normal time for such withdrawal (not required at Ohio State until *aet.* 70) and when she retired she did it just as finally and effectively as she had done other things—she pulled up roots completely, shook the dust of rocks and fossils off her feet, and moved to the genial climate of Tucson, Arizona (she hated cold weather), where she spent happily most of the last sixteen years of her life.

Shortly after her arrival in Arizona, however, she had the offer of a very good position in Calgary, and she decided to have another go at professional work. Her special task here was to correlate the fossils found in oil well cores from different areas, to provide a more complete picture of the whole field. This did not last long, however, for she could not stand the Alberta winter, and was soon back in Tucson.

She loved Arizona. She kept in touch with friends in Columbus, through Christmas cards at least, and with a few on occasional visits (I missed these because I was always away in summertime) and she was thoughtful and generous enough to send me a fine painting of a desert-mountain landscape (of the kind she knew I loved) on the occasion of my own retirement in 1965.

Further, in 1959 Dr. Stewart prepared a 2,400 word survey article on the Devonian period for the geology section of the then forthcoming McGraw-Hill *Encyclopedia of Science and Technology*. Her contribution included the physical and historical aspects of the period, rock types and their economic significance, and certain outstanding evolutionary features in life development. Her article also included the findings of other experts in this field throughout the world, so as to give a complete picture of the period.

In March 1969 Grace Anne suffered a stroke and had to be placed in a nursing home. Here she was in excellent hands, lacking nothing of expert care, and fortunately she never seemed to be suffering in any way; but she gradually failed in mind and body, and her death came as a blessing, a release for an unusually fine woman whose day of effectiveness had irrevocably passed and whose justification for further life no longer existed. Her friends who remain, however, can well sustain a glow of satisfaction over her memory, that such a woman did live and make life more pleasant and valuable for so many hundreds of people by her presence among them.

I must not close this memorial without acknowledging gratefully the help of Judge Robert S. Tullar of Tucson for information about Grace Anne's last days in Arizona and communication with her sister, Mrs. G. H. Clark, who supplied important facts concerning her forebears, family in general, her last work in Canada, and her contribution to the McGraw-Hill encyclopedia. I am also indebted to Professor Aurèle LaRocque for confirmation of facts concerning her professional work and her bibliography.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF GRACE ANNE STEWART

- 1924 The fauna of the Little Salina limestone in Ste. Genevieve County: Missouri Bur. Geol. and Mines, 2d ser., v. 17, p. 213-269, 15 pls.
- 1927 Fauna of the Silica shale of Lucas County: Ohio Div. Geol. Survey Bull. 32, 4th ser., 76 p., 1 fig., 5 pls.
- 1928 Fauna of the Silica shale of Lucas County, Ohio (abs.): Geol. Soc. America Bull., v. 39, no. 1, p. 297.
- 1929 A study of some Devonian coral genera (abs.): Ohio Jour. Sci., v. 29, no. 4, p. 169; Ohio Acad. Sci. Proc., v. 8, pt. 6, p. 306.
- 1930 Additional species from the Silica shale of Lucas County, Ohio: Ohio Jour. Sci., v. 30, no. 1, p. 52-58, 1 pl.
- Supplement to catalogue of type fossils in the geological museum at the Ohio State University: Ohio Jour. Sci., v. 30, no. 4, p. 275.
- 1931 The Devonian corals of Ohio (abs.): Ohio Jour. Sci., v. 31, no. 4, p. 275.

- 1933 A new pelecypod from the Silica shale, Devonian, of Ohio: *Jour. Paleontology*, v. 7, no. 2, p. 178-180.
- A new phyllocarid Crustacean from the Devonian rocks of Ohio: *Am. Midland Naturalist*, v. 14, no. 4, p. 363-366, 2 figs.
- 1935 Corals of the family Cyathophyllidae from the Middle Devonian of Ohio (abs.): *Geol. Soc. America Proc.* 1934, p. 360.
- 1936 A new coral from the Olentangy shale of Ontario: *Am. Midland Naturalist*, v. 17, no. 5, p. 878-880, 4 figs.
- Ostracodes of the Silica shale, Middle Devonian, of Ohio: *Jour. Paleontology*, v. 10, no. 8, p. 737-763, 3 pls.
- 1937 *Aechmina crenulata*, new name for *Aechmina serrata* Stewart, not Coryell and Cuskey: *Jour. Paleontology*, v. 11, no. 4, p. 368.
- 1938 Middle Devonian corals of Ohio: *Geol. Soc. America Spec. Paper* 8, 120 p., 20 pls., 2 figs. incl. index and geol. sketch maps.
- 1939 (and Hendrix, W. Edwin) Ostracodes as a possible aid in the Olentangy shale problem (abs.): *Geol. Soc. America Bull.*, v. 50, no. 12, pt. 2, p. 1988-1989.
- 1940 Crinoids from the Silica shale, Devonian, of Ohio: *Ohio Jour. Sci.*, v. 40, no. 2, p. 53-60, illustr.
- 1941 (and Priddy, Richard Randall) Arenaceous Foraminifera from the Niagaran rocks of Ohio and Indiana: *Jour. Paleontology*, v. 15, no. 4, p. 366-375, illustr.
- 1945 (and Hendrix, W. Edwin) Ostracoda of the Plum Brook shale, Erie County, Ohio: *Jour. Paleontology*, v. 19, no. 2, p. 87-95, illustr.
- (and Hendrix, W. Edwin) Ostracoda of the Olentangy shale, Franklin and Delaware Counties, Ohio: *Jour. Paleontology*, v. 19, no. 2, p. 96-115, illustr.
- 1947 (and Lampe, Lois) Foraminifera from the Middle Devonian bone beds of Ohio: *Jour. Paleontology*, v. 21, no. 6, p. 529-536, illustr.
- 1950 Ostracoda from Middle Devonian bone beds in central Ohio: *Jour. Paleontology*, v. 24, no. 6, p. 652-666, illustr.
- 1954 Who was who in the Ice Age: *Ohio Div. Geol. Survey Educ. Leaflet Ser.* no. 2, 7 p., illustr.
- 1955 Age relations of the Middle Devonian limestones in Ohio: *Ohio Jour. Sci.*, v. 55, no. 3, p. 147-181, illustr.
- 1956 (and Sweet, Walter Clarence) Conodonts from the Middle Devonian bone beds of central and west-central Ohio: *Jour. Paleontology*, v. 30, no. 2, p. 261-273, illustr.
- 1959 The Devonian, in *Encyclopedia of science and technology*: McGraw-Hill, v. 4, p. 85-90, illustr.
- 1966 (with Bally, A. W., and Gordy, P. L.) Structure, seismic data, and orogenic evolution of southern Canadian Rocky Mountains: *Bull. Canadian Petroleum Geology*, v. 14, no. 3, p. 337-381, illustr.