

Memorial to Robert Glenn Bates 1923-1972

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Robert Glenn Bates died of a heart attack April 28, 1972, at his home in Arlington, Virginia. Bob's death came as a great shock to his family and friends because he had been active to the end, and there was no previous history of heart trouble.

Robert Bates was born November 21, 1923, at Belvidere, Illinois, the son of Ernest E. and Ruth C. Bates; he was their only child. Bob attended the Belvidere, Illinois, elementary and high schools and graduated in 1941. After graduation he enlisted in the Army Air Force and served throughout the South Pacific theater in World War II, attaining the rank of first lieutenant. He served as bombardier on B-24s until the end of the war. Although he was never

wounded in combat, some of the narrow escapes of the planes and crews to which he was assigned were, on very special occasions, vividly recalled by him.

Following the war he attended Beloit College, Beloit, Wisconsin, and received his B.S. degree in geology, June 1950. While in college he met Joanne Lee Sanger of Maywood, Illinois; they were married June 12, 1948, in the Plymouth Congregational Church in Maywood.

His keen interest in geology was due to his love of an outdoor life and to the influence of the outstanding geology teacher and administrator, Dr. Carey Croneis, who was then president of Beloit College. Bob often spoke of the advice and guidance that he had received from Dr. Croneis and from Dr. Monta Wing, professor of geology and head of the department of geology.

Bob extended his geologic training in the graduate school of Dartmouth College and received his M.A. degree in 1951. During the summer of 1950, he and his wife Joanne were in the Wind River Mountains of Wyoming where he was working on his master's thesis, which dealt with an interesting stratigraphic problem. One day in the field he happened to meet a certain "rockhound" named Wasson. Being an "enthusiastic, budding young geologist," Bob proceeded to explain the rocks in his area to Mr. Wasson. He later found out that the Mr. Wasson that he had been talking to was Theron Wasson, chief geologist of the Pure Oil Company.

After receiving his master's degree he joined the Alaskan branch of the U.S. Geological Survey. One of his first assignments was running traverses in an area near the mouth of Lost River, Seward Peninsula, where heavy fog banks commonly roll in from the Bering Sea. The first day out on traverse, a thick "pea soup" fog rolled in and rapidly blanketed the area. Bob found the going rough; however, he made it safely

back to camp, only two hours late. Thus began an interesting and productive survey career which included three years in the Alaskan branch, thirteen years in the Regional Geophysics Branch, and five years with the Geologic Names Committee.

Because of his outstanding competence in organizing scientific data he was placed in charge of the Lexicon Unit of the Geologic Names Committee, where he demonstrated excellent administrative ability in directing the work being carried on. He was the author or co-author of 26 reports and maps on geophysical surveys for radioactive minerals in many parts of the United States, and he was the author of several administrative reports and published abstracts.

Bob was active in many civic organizations, including the Boy Scouts; the Parent Teachers Association of Arlington, in which he held all offices including president; and the Masonic Lodge in which he had achieved the 32d degree. His strong interest in Boy Scout training undoubtedly inspired his twin sons, Gregory R. and Geoffrey A., to attain the rank of Eagle Scout. I recall his great pride on that recent occasion.

His leadership, thoroughness, and organizing abilities were outstanding qualities, which, combined with his ready willingness to assist wherever needed, made him an excellent scoutmaster and organizer of civic and other activities. I recall the extraordinary job that he did as chairman of the Exhibits Committee for the 1971 Annual Meeting of The Geological Society of America in Washington. The various estimates that he made prior to the meeting on the number of exhibits, income from the exhibits, attendance, and so forth, were phenomenally close, although they were based upon many variables. On various occasions he was assigned to or served as chairman of special survey committees such as field equipment, radio research, and geologic staffing, all of which called upon his organizing abilities.

His spare time was largely absorbed in civic activities, but he found time to devote to photography, which was one of his principal hobbies. He was an enthusiastic member of the group of camera buffs that regularly visited Charlie Scheers' camera shop after lunch on Fridays. Bob enjoyed taking pictures of his family and friends but neglected to have his own picture taken. Much searching failed to turn up a recent picture of him for this memorial, and we had to resort to one taken several years ago.

Bob will be remembered for his fairness, good judgment, clear thinking, sincerity, and constant helpfulness to his many friends.