

Memorial to Anna Jespersen 1895–1989

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Anna Jespersen passed away on July 15, 1989, after a long and rich life. She was born in Dubuque, Iowa, on December 14, 1895, to Oline and John Jespersen. She had two sisters and three brothers. Her education began when she was five years old, in a one-room school in Clinton, Iowa, and continued in another one-room school in Wheatland, Iowa; she finished secondary school in Webster, South Dakota.

At age 19, Anna proved her abilities as a school teacher in Retlaw, southern Alberta, Canada, and then proceeded to Day County, South Dakota, where she taught in a rural school. After World War I ended, Anna, at age 23, headed for Brookings, South Dakota, where she studied at South Dakota State College. After two more years of teaching following graduation, she returned to the college to work as assistant registrar.

Deciding that she wanted more worldly experience, Anna obtained a position with the U.S. Geological Survey in Washington, D.C. This was the beginning of a long and arduous climb that set the course for the remainder of her 45-year scientific career in geology and technical writing. She took night courses at George Washington University and obtained a master's degree in geology. She then moved to New York, and from 1941 to 1945 she was an editor with John Wiley & Sons publishing company. Although she found this work fulfilling, she missed Washington and decided to return there, to the USGS.

Her work and interests took on an international flavor. She attended many meetings of the International Geological Congress, including those in Algiers, Iceland, Montreal, Prague, and Copenhagen. After her retirement from the U.S. Geological Survey at age 70, she was a consultant to the government of Ghana for 15 months. She also worked for the Arctic Institute and the United Nations. As a finale, she took a grand tour around the world.

In 1982, to be close to her family, she moved to Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada, where she wrote her memoirs.

Anna was a member of the Washington Art Club and the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, as well as the Geological Society of America. In Lethbridge she was a member of the Senior Citizen's Organization.

Anna is survived by her sister-in-law, Muriel Jespersen, and by numerous nieces and nephews.