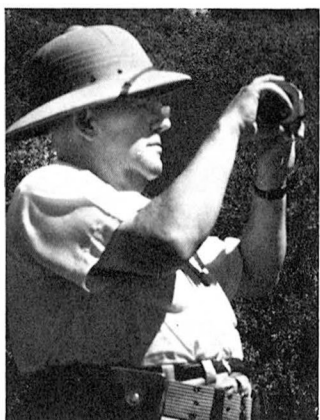


Memorial to Ray Everett Marsell 1893—1971

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Professor Emeritus Ray Marsell died suddenly on Monday, October 11, 1971. He is survived by his widow, Mable McCleery Marsell, by his two daughters, Carol Rae Huffman and LouJeanne Meik, and by ten grandchildren.

To his family and close friends Ray's sudden death came as a complete shock. Ten days earlier he had been the principal leader on a field trip of the Utah Geological Association. During the next week he had made final reservations for a vacation trip to California that was to begin on October 15. On Sunday, October 10, he had worked on a map, and on Monday he left home at about 9 o'clock to deliver some typing to his secretary. As he was explaining the material to

her he complained that he felt a bit dizzy, and she had him lie down. He did so and in a few minutes he had stopped breathing. The quickly summoned physician said that his heart had simply failed, and that no one could have done anything about it.

Ray Marsell was born in Denver, Colorado on December 22, 1893. A couple of years later his family moved to Salt Lake City, where he attended the public schools and the University of Utah. Ray and Mable were married on January 6, 1915, when Ray was working as manager for Arrow Press, dealers in office equipment.

Although Ray never attended high school, he had a great thirst for knowledge, which he first attempted to quench by taking correspondence courses while he worked at a full-time job. But by the time he reached the age of 30 he decided that these courses were not enough, and in 1924 he persuaded the university to accept him as a full-time student. It must have been in those days that he began his long love affair with teaching, a manifestation of his great desire to put his knowledge to use in the service of his fellow man. The Geology Department early recognized Ray's teaching ability for, although he did not earn his bachelor's degree until 1929 and his master's degree until 1931, he was allowed to teach as a substitute instructor as early as 1926.

Ray Marsell dedicated his life to service, and he used his teaching ability to discharge his self-appointed task. For Ray, teaching was a way of life, not only in the classroom, where he kept students enthralled by his obvious love of landscape, but in all his contacts with his fellows. He delighted in passing on his knowledge of earthquakes, landslides, and mudflows, and he tried to help others appreciate the joys of knowledge.

To him knowledge was to be used to help others. During his years at the university he gave hundreds of lectures before church, civic, and school groups. He lectured because he enjoyed being helpful, for he was seldom paid for those chores. During those same years he acted as a consultant on water problems for Salt Lake City and for the state of Utah. Here Ray used his knowledge of geology and ground water to help solve many problems for the city and state. At the same time he took every opportunity to inform governmental officials of the hazards to dams, aqueducts, and buildings that are constructed in earthquake zones. He made and distributed maps that show the many places where the Salt Lake City aqueduct crosses the active Wasatch fault zone. He worked hard to promote ordinances that would require earthquake-resistant construction in new public buildings.

Professor Marsell's teaching career at the University of Utah spanned 36 years, from 1926 to 1962. At the university he filled positions of all ranks from assistant instructor to full professor. He taught courses in ground water, geomorphology, general geology, physical and historical geology, and rocks and minerals.

He took particular delight in teaching beginning geology, the courses we call general education courses today, for these classes gave him an opportunity to talk about geology and to instill a love of landscape in students who would major in many other fields. He was happiest when he could get these students into the field to show them how glaciers had carved canyons and cirques in the Wasatch Mountains. He tried by every means at his command to liven up the teaching of geology. One of his popular lectures he called "The Romance of Mud."

To a degree Professor Marsell was a showman, but he was a showman whose purpose was to inspire the love of knowledge. For his great pride was his students. Their accomplishments meant more to him than his own. Many times he was heard to say, referring to a prominent individual, local or national, "He was one of my students." For Ray, the accomplishments of his former students, regardless of their field, brought him honor.

Professor Marsell's bibliography is modest by many standards, but the ideas that he imparted to thousands of students and to the general public, and the many papers that he presented before professional audiences, attest that this man communicated with people. From these accomplishments and from his dedication to service we get some small measure of the man. He was a hard worker, always busy. Yet he always found time to help those who came to him for help. For many, his almost unlimited knowledge of geology and ground water in Utah provided information that could be obtained nowhere else.

Ray Marsell was short in stature but he had a big heart that he put to the use of others. His short legs took tremendously giant steps to lead us. And even though he was blind in one eye for many of his later years, he could see more with the one that was at least partly useful than most of us who have the use of two eyes.

When Professor Marsell retired from the University of Utah in 1962 he gave his extensive library and his mineral collection to Westminster College in Salt Lake City. The books have been very useful to the students of the college but the mineral collection has been kept in storage because there have been no cases for its proper display. Since Ray passed away, the Ray E. Marsell Memorial Fund has been set up at

Westminster College to buy cases so that the mineral collection can be put on permanent display.

Professor Marsell was a charter member of the Utah Geological Society and its president in 1954. He was awarded the degree of Professional Geologic Engineer by the University of Utah in 1957. He was a licensed professional engineer and was a member of the National Society of Professional Engineers and of the National Association of Engineering Geologists. He became a Fellow of The Geological Society of America in 1953, and was awarded a lifetime membership in the National Society of Professional Engineers in 1969.

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