Memorial to Curt Teichert
1905–1996

JOHN A. REINEMUND
P.O. Box 890, Leesburg, Virginia 22075

Curt Teichert passed away at his home in Arlington, Virginia, the evening of May 10, 1996, two days after his 91st birthday, ending a career of remarkable length, scope, diversity, and achievement. Few geologists have endured more difficult early-life circumstances, collaborated in more international studies, or contributed more to the geologic literature. His achievements in research, teaching, consulting, and government service, which are documented in over 325 publications, constitute a record of dedication, persistence, and innovation consistently directed toward the advancement of the geological sciences.

Born in Königsberg, East Prussia, on May 8, 1905, Curt Teichert studied at universities in Munich, Freiberg, and Königsberg. In the 64 years after receiving his Ph.D. degree from Albertus University in Königsberg in 1928, Curt held faculty positions with seven universities on three continents and had government assignments in Denmark, Australia, and the United States. He also had many important professional responsibilities, including editor and co-editor of the Treatise on Invertebrate Paleontology (1964–1979), president of the Paleontological Society (1971–1972), president of the International Paleontological Association (1976–1980), and appointment to a number of international commissions and delegations.

Curt's life was divided by economic circumstances and career opportunities into segments on three continents. Each of these segments or career episodes, which have been described by Ellis Yochelson as the "lives" of Curt Teichert in the *Curt Teichert Festschrift* (Wolfgang Struve, editor, Senckenbergiana Lethaea, v. 69, 628 p., 1988/1989), resulted in significant professional contributions and achievements. His early career, based in Europe, ended in 1937 when he moved to Australia, and his career there ended in 1952, when he moved to the United States. Thereafter, his career was segmented by work with the U.S. Geological Survey (1954–1964), the University of Kansas (1964–1975), and the University of Rochester (1975–1993). He left Rochester, New York, in 1995 and moved to Arlington, Virginia, to be near many of his friends and former associates in the national capital area.

During the years prior to 1937, Curt's efforts to build a professional career were unavoidably complicated by the turbulent political and economic conditions in Europe. After completing his university studies and an assistantship at Freiberg, Curt received a Rockefeller Foundation award in 1930 for paleontologic studies in Washington, D.C., New York City, and Albany. This one-year experience brought Curt international recognition for his research on cephalopods and led to a position as geologist on a Danish expedition to Greenland in 1931–1932.

In 1928 Curt married Gertrud Kaufmann, daughter of a physics professor in Königsberg, who became his inspiration, companion, and helper until her death in 1993. After he returned from Greenland, Curt found political conditions in Germany so unfavorable that the Teicherts moved to Copenhagen, where Curt received a small stipend in a temporary position as a research paleontologist.

The opportunity for more permanent employment came in 1937 when Curt received a grant from the Carnegie Foundation which made it possible for him to obtain a faculty position at the University of Western Australia in Perth. This was the beginning of the Australian segment of Curt's career, which included positions as research lecturer at Perth, 1937–1945, assistant chief geologist in the Mines Department of Victoria, 1945–1947, and senior lecturer at the University of Melbourne, 1947–1952. During this period Curt traveled widely in Australia, investigated sedimentary basins and Cambrian to Holocene stratigraphic units in western Australia, studied Indian Ocean coral reefs and the Great Barrier Reef, served as consultant to the Australian Bureau of Mineral Resources, and was a founder of the Geological Society of Australia.

In 1949 Curt was invited by Raymond C. Moore to organize the volume on cephalopods for the Treatise on Invertebrate Paleontology, which was facilitated by a Fulbright fellowship and a 50-lecture tour of the United States in 1951–1952. This provided an opportunity for consultations and work with North American paleontologists in the preparation of the Treatise volume, and was an introduction to the United States segment of Curt's career. In December 1952 Curt began his career in North America as professor of geology at the New Mexico School of Mines in Socorro, and also used the opportunity to undertake field studies of the Devonian sequence in Arizona, results of which were published later as a U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Professional Paper. In 1954 he accepted a position with the USGS to organize and direct a Fuels Geology Laboratory in the Survey's regional center in Denver, Colorado. This initiated a 10-year period of employment with the USGS—a period in which it was my good fortune to become closely associated with Curt and his wife, an association that continued until Curt left the USGS a decade later and a friendship that continued until his death.

Curt first arrived in Denver on February 10, 1954, for a week of consultations concerning his new position, after which he returned to Socorro to complete his affairs, then moved to Denver with his wife Trude, on April 21, 1954. The new Fuels Geology Laboratory was intended to be both a research facility for studies that would augment and enhance the USGS national energy resources assessment program, and a service facility that would undertake or arrange laboratory investigations needed by the USGS Fuels Branch field offices and projects. Characteristically, Curt was eager to begin developing a program for the laboratory and insisted that he could leave Trude to set up accommodations in Denver. Thus, on April 22 Curt and I, along with Charles B. Read, deputy chief of the Fuels Branch, set out on six weeks of almost continuous travel to visit Branch field offices, projects, and geologists in 16 states, and also the USGS headquarters in Washington, D.C. As a follow-up of these discussions and field inspections, during which Curt provided many helpful interpretations and recommendations, Curt prepared a 62-page report and recommendations covering the potential role, contributions, facilities requirements, and suggested projects of the laboratory. His recommendations were accepted, and the laboratory became fully operational early in 1955.

The scientific community in general regarded Curt Teichert as an exceptionally dedicated, productive, and innovative geologist; our close association in Denver revealed that he was also exceptionally effective in developing a geologic research and service facility, and the Teicherts were a most congenial addition to our USGS staff. Curt's success in this effort in Denver led to a recommendation in 1961 that he should join our USGS team in Quetta, Pakistan, where we had a technical assistance project sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development to help organize a national mineral exploration and development program and expand the Geological Survey of Pakistan. The project, which grew to a staff of 30 U.S. geologists and engineers, needed intensified and organized stratigraphic and paleontologic studies as a basis for geologic mapping and resource assessment. Curt proved to be outstandingly effective in training Pakistani geologists and developing a stratigraphic program, which included establishing a National Stratigraphic Committee and stratigraphic code. Curt also found time to undertake field studies,

including an inch-by-inch analysis of the Permian-Triassic sequence in the Salt Range, in collaboration with Bernhard Kummel and with participation of Pakistan counterparts. In addition, he helped organize a program of stratigraphic correlation among Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey as part of a Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) Working Group on regional geological and mineral cooperation, cosponsored by the United States, United Kingdom, and CENTO member countries.

At the end of his assignment in Pakistan in 1964, Curt left the USGS and accepted a position as Regents Distinguished Professor at the University of Kansas, thereby returning to an academic life. He resumed his efforts as an editor of the Treatise on Invertebrate Paleontology, traveled extensively in South America, Europe, and around the world, and served as vice president of the International Paleontologic Union and president of the Paleontological Society while based in Kansas. In 1977 he retired from active teaching at the University of Kansas and was made an adjunct professor of geological sciences at the University of Rochester, New York, where he remained until 1995, when he moved to Arlington, Virginia. In his final years in Arlington, Curt was able to visit with many friends and associates, and organize the historical records of his career, with the help of Margrit Faggart, who had been his secretary and confidant from the years in Rochester. It is fortunate that his voluminous records are so well organized and preserved for future reference.

During his remarkable career over six decades Curt served as an editor or co-editor of 13 books. These included seven volumes of the Treatise on Invertebrate Paleontology, symposium and commission volumes from the International Geological Congresses in 1940, 1952, and 1958, a 1967 R. C. Moore commemorative volume of essays in paleontology and stratigraphy, and a 1981 Geological Society of America volume on Paleontology in China. Curt was a member or associate of 19 scientific or cultural societies in eight countries. He received the David Syme Prize from the University of Melbourne in 1949 for scientific research in Australia, the Raymond C. Moore Medal from the Society of Economic Paleontologists and Mineralogists in 1982 for excellence in paleontology, and the Paleontological Society Medal in 1984.

When Curt Teichert retired from active teaching at the University of Kansas in 1975 he received over 50 letters of commendation from former associates and collaborators around the world. Among the many expressions of appreciation in those letters, the following excerpt in the letter from Robert J. Weimer of the Colorado School of Mines, who was a visiting professor in Bandung, Indonesia, at that time, is an especially appropriate expression of the breadth, significance, and impact of Curt's career:

> You will certainly face this moment with mixed emotions, but I hope that satisfaction from the accomplishments and contributions of your long and distinguished career will override all other thoughts. Besides sharing the enormous results of your research efforts, you have given to students of stratigraphy the classic summary papers on geosynclines, biostratigraphic concepts, facies and others. By these efforts you have influenced stratigraphy and paleontology as few other men in the modern history of the science.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF C. TEICHERT

1928 Stratigraphische und paläontologische Untersuchungen im unteren Gotlandium (Tamsal-Stufe) des westlichen Estland und der Insel Dagö: Neues Jahrbuch für Mineralogie, Geologie und Paläontologie, Beilage-Bd. 60, Abt. B, p. 1–112.

1933 Untersuchungen zum Bau des kaledonischen Gebirges in Ostgrönland: Meddelelser om Grønland, v. 95, no. 1, p. 1–121.

1937 Ordovician and Silurian faunas from Arctic Canada: Report of the Fifth Thule Expedition 1921–1924, v. 1, no. 5, p. 1–169.

1940 Actinosiphonate cephalopods (Cyrtoceroida) from the Devonian of Australia: Royal Society of Western Australia Journal, v. 26, no. 2, p. 59–75.

—— (with Glaessner, M. F.) Geosynclines: A fundamental concept in geology: American Journal of Science, v. 245, pt. 1, p. 465–482.
1947 Stratigraphy of Western Australia: American Association of Petroleum Geologists Bulletin, v. 31, no. 1, p. 1–70.
1953 (and Glenister, B. F.) Ordovician and Silurian cephalopods from Tasmania, Australia: Bulletin of American Paleontology, v. 34, no. 144, p. 187–248.
—— Cold and deep-water coral banks: American Association of Petroleum Geologists Bulletin, v. 42, no. 5, p. 1064–1082.
1958 Some biostratigraphical concepts: Geological Society of America Bulletin, v. 69, no. 1, p. 99–119.
1959 Australia and Gondwanaland: Geologische Rundschau, v. 47, no. 2, p. 562–590.
1963 (with Dunkel, D. H., and Rahman, H.) Stratigraphic research as applied to mineral resources development and exploration in Pakistan: U.S. Papers prepared for U.N. Conference on Application of Science and Technology for the Benefit of Less Developed Areas, v. 2, Natural Resources, p. 173–182.
1964 Mollusca 3: New York, and Lawrence, Kansas, Geological Society of America and University of Kansas Press, Treatise on Invertebrate Paleontology, Part K.
1965 Devonian rocks and paleogeography of central Arizona: U.S. Geological Survey Professional Paper 464, 181 p.
1966 Nomenclature and correlation of the Permian "Productus Limestone," Salt Range, West Pakistan: Geological Survey of Pakistan Records, v. 15, 20 p.
1970 (with Kummel, B.) Stratigraphy and paleontology of the Permian-Triassic boundary beds, Salt Range and Trans-Indus ranges, West Pakistan: Earth's pre-Pleistocene glacial record, *in* Kummel, B., and Teichert, C., eds., Stratigraphic boundary problems: Permian and Triassic of West Pakistan: Lawrence, University of Kansas, Department of Geology, Special Publications, no. 4, p. 1–110.
1971 (with Meyerhoff, A. A.) Continental drift, III: Late Paleozoic glacial centers, and Devonian-Eocene coal distribution: Journal of Geology, v. 79, no. 3, p. 285–321.
1976 From Karpinsky to Schindewolf—Memories of some great paleontologists: Journal of Paleontology, v. 50, no. 1, p. 1–12.
1978 (with Saunders, W. B., Spinosa, C., and Banks, R. C.) The jaw apparatus of Recent *Nautilus* and its palaeontological implications: Palaeontology, v. 21, part 1, p. 129–141.
1981 Permian glaciation in the Salt Range, Pakistan, *in* Harland, W. B., and Hambrey, M. J., eds., Earth's Pre-Pleistocene glacial record: Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, p. 278–286.
—— (with Chen, Jun-yuan) Cambrian Cephalopoda of China: Palaeontographica, v. 181, Abt. A, 102 p.
1983 (with Chen Yun-yuan, Zhou Zhi-yi, Lin Yao Kun, Wang Zhi-hao, and Xu Jun-tao) Faunal sequence across the Cambrian-Ordovician boundary in Northern China and its international correlation: Geologica et Palaeontologica, v. 17, p. 1–15.
1986 (and Yochelson, E. L.) The International Palaeontological Association: Historical perspective: Episodes, v. 8, no. 4, p. 252–256.
1988 Main features of cephalopod evolution, *in* Clarke, M. R., and Trueman, E. R., eds., The Mollusca, Volume 12: New York, Academic Press, p. 11–79.
1990 The Permian-Triassic boundary revisited, *in* Kauffman E.G., and Walliser O.H., eds., Extinction events in Earth history: Lecture Notes in Earth Sciences, v. 30, p. 199–238.
1991 A geological expedition to East Greenland 1931–1932: Earth Sciences History, v. 10, no. 2, p. 259–273.

The Geological Society of America
3300 Penrose Place • P.O. Box 9140 • Boulder, CO 80301-9140 Printed in U.S.A. on Recycled Paper 11/97