

## NECROLOGY

**GEORGE WILLIAM JEFFERS****1897 - 1990**

Dr. George W. Jeffers, retired Professor of Biology at Longwood College and former Chairman of its Department of Natural Sciences, died on August 12, 1990.

Born in Freshwater, Carbonear, Newfoundland, Dr. Jeffers became a naturalized U.S. citizen in 1938. He received an associate degree from Newfoundland Methodist College and held the bachelors and masters degree from Boston University. He received his doctorate in 1931 from the University of Toronto, having joined the Longwood (formerly Farmville State Teachers College) in 1926.

Jeff, or "Doctor Jeff", as he was affectionately known by colleagues and students, began his teaching career in the "common" schools of Newfoundland where he served for five years. He held laboratory assistantships at Boston and Harvard University, was a demonstrator at the University of Toronto and an Instructor of Physiology at Miami University (Ohio). He conducted research at biological stations in Halifax, Nova Scotia; St. Andrews, New Brunswick; and Solomons Island, Md. In the mid-forties he was on leave of absence from Farmville serving as the Director of the Chesapeake Bay Fisheries Survey.

He was a charter member of the NSTA and a board member; one of the 18 founders of the National Association of Biology Teachers, which he later served as President and then as Secretary-Treasurer; Fellow of the AAAS and council member for 15 years; and founder and first president of the Longwood Chapter of AAUP.

In 1938 Dr. Jeffers promoted the concept of science supervisors for Virginia. Shortly thereafter he led the Academy to establish the VJAS and during his presidency in 1941-42 the first meeting of the VJAS was held. He was a member of a commission appointed by the Governor in the mid-forties to study the creation of a science museum for Virginia, an activity interrupted by World War II. As one of the Academy's respected and revered senior scientists, he again contributed his time and energies for the benefit of the 1968 commission which brought the Science Museum of Virginia into being.

Dr. Jeffers had received some of the highest honors the Academy can bestow including election as an Honorary Life Member and as a Fellow. He was a recipient of the Ivey F. Lewis Distinguished Service Award and was one of two to receive the first VJAS Distinguished Service Award. The other VJAS awardee that year was one of Jeff's former students, Susie F. Floyd, a teacher of high school biology in Tidewater.

Jeff was a longtime contributor to such publications as *Canadian Biology*, the *American Biology Teacher*, the *VEA Journal*, *Science*, and *Scientific Monthly*. Many of these papers were related to improving science education. His latest publication was *The Bastards' Book*, Driftwood Publications, Denver (1982), a collection of over 100 entries with an introduction by the President of The Bar-sinister Society. His keen sense of humor permeated his writing, his teaching, and his conversation.

But, as with most great teachers, his greatest contribution, and one in which he could take great pride, was his influence on his students. A man of sincerity and vivacity, one known for his sympathetic understanding, his infectious enthusiasm for biology, especially marine biology and zoology, was conveyed to student and colleague alike. Many of these students have received advanced degrees and many have become outstanding teachers of biology. Many of those students were impressed by his deep appreciation of literature - poems used to point up biological facts - and his attitude toward religion - demonstrated by a conviction that science and religion could be reconciled.

He is survived by his wife, Anne, a son, Jack, of Radford University, and a daughter, Mrs. Patricia Ray Lafoon, of Richmond.

The VAS Council voted in November to establish the George W. Jeffers Memorial Lecture for the annual meeting of the VJAS.