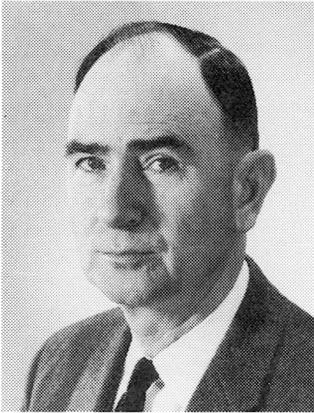


Memorial to Julian Devereaux Barksdale

1904–1983

ERIC S. CHENEY

Department of Geological Sciences, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington 98195



Julian Devereaux Barksdale died of a heart attack on 20 December 1983. "Barky," as he was known by all, will be remembered for his service of more than four decades to the University of Washington and his simultaneous geological research in the Methow Valley on the eastern flank of the Cascade Range of Washington. More important, he will be remembered as a man who befriended and remembered everybody, both geologist and non-geologist, the young and the old, the chiefs and the Indians. Any people-oriented cause would have him pulling like a Clydesdale. Barky considered himself a historian of rocks, geological science, and people. His history *Geology at the University of Washington, 1895–1973* (1974) is a masterpiece, especially for those who can read between the lines.

Barky graduated from high school in Beaumont, Texas, in 1920, the same year that his father died. He spent most of the next six years as a roustabout in the local oil fields. From 1926 to 1928 he attended the University of Texas. Then began his love affair with Stanford University, from which he received an A.B. degree in 1930, as well as a special interest in sedimentary rocks. After working for Cities Service in Mexico, New York, and Pennsylvania, he returned to Stanford in 1932 and began doctorate work on the Shonkin Sag laccolith of Montana. Between 1933 and 1937 he rose from camp cook to director of the Stanford Geological Survey, the university's summer field mapping course. Here he formed friendships with S. W. Muller, W. C. Smith, and W. C. Putnam. In 1934, however, Aaron Waters, his advisor at Stanford, shipped him off to Yale to complete his Ph.D. under Adolph Knopf.

Barky arrived at the University of Washington in 1936. This was the beginning of the Yale-Stanford geoscience cadre at U.W. Barky published on the petrology of the Shonkin Sag (1937), but taught the history of geology, nonmetallic resources, structure, field methods, and seismology. George E. Goodspeed, the first of the American granitizers, was beginning his 16-year term as chairman of the Department of Geology. Perhaps this soft-spoken Bostonian was the one who taught Barky that the oilcan is mightier than the sword. In any event, Barky greatly admired him (1976).

In Barky's own words, "In 1938 I took on two great encumbrances. . . ." In June he married Marajane Burns Warren. At the end of the field season, Waters invited his mentors, Professor and Mrs. Knopf, and the Barksdales on a geological tour of the Chelan, Okanogan, and Methow valleys of north-central Washington. The upper part of the Methow was almost geologically unknown, but the thick Mesozoic units seemed to go forever. Barky recalled (1974, p. 38–39):

As the party stood at Harts Pass and marvelled at the beautifully displayed arkoses, Mrs. Knopf took Marajane Barksdale aside and exhorted her not to let Barksdale begin on so vast an area in which there were no maps. . . . The advice was sound, but the temptation was too great.

He could not have managed the Methow without the other "encumbrance." For years Marajane drove him to the end of logging roads, and while waiting for him to finish traverses, she patiently read thick volumes or gathered bark and flowers for the art classes she taught at elementary schools. At times, she and son Tucker would accompany Barky and the pack train of horses into wilderness along the Canadian border. Sometimes Barky's only field assistant was his dog of mixed ancestry, Migma. Their summer camp in the Methow always seemed to be abuzz with impromptu visitors (with their geologic maps or histories flapping). Unlike the other city folk "from the Coast," the Barksdales were almost accepted as Methow natives.

One paper on the Methow did emerge before World War II. Much to the surprise of a later generation of Pleistocene geologists, Barky noted that Canadian continental ice had overridden Harts Pass and had extended far down the Methow Valley. His mapping of the extent of erratics indicated that only the peaks above 7,200 feet had been spared (1941). Of course Barky learned much about the petrology, stratigraphy, and structure of the bedrock of the Methow, but World War II intervened, and after the war just one short paper (1948) and half a dozen abstracts appeared. As Elenora Knopf had predicted, it would take at least a lifetime to map the rugged 2,000 square miles of Okanogan County that friends and colleagues know as Barksdalia.

Although he was old enough to avoid military service when World War II came, Barky was among the first to go. Having volunteered to work on the naval petroleum reserves, he found himself a lieutenant commander without wings in naval aviation. While a supply officer in the South Pacific, he found that a well-placed bottle of bourbon was even mightier than the oilcan. His interest in sedimentary geology was enhanced by the military problems with coral reefs. His real reward, however, was the ability to relate to GIs returning to the University of Washington after World War II and the Korean and Vietnam wars.

Before and after World War II, other interests competed with the Methow. He taught seismology and with H. A. Coombs published (1942, 1946) on the two largest earthquakes in Puget Sound. He revisited and revised his work on the Shonkin Sag (1950, 1952). Ever the utility infielder, he handled introductory geology, physical stratigraphy, sedimentary geology, and geology in world affairs for non-science majors. Incidentally, his teaching and conversation were richly embellished with anecdotes, history, and the latest news on each geologic subject; students and colleagues were either delighted or exasperated as he threaded his way back to the original topic.

The real reason that the geology of the Methow advanced slowly was that Barky devoted his talents to the University of Washington. He was noted for his mnemonic aptitude; he never forgot a name or a face, whether faculty, student, or staff. He could recognize the face of a brother whose sister he had in class several years before. After a second meeting with you, Barky could practically recite your genealogy. This great interest in people served the University of Washington and the geologic profession well. He was chairman of the Faculty Senate in the late 1950s. In the early 1970s at the height of the black students' "unreconcilable" dissatisfaction with the university's athletic program, the quiet man from Beaumont was a major force in solving the problem. Usually it was impossible to walk across the campus with him, for he would stop to chat with everybody; after lunch, he would frequently visit the offices of the secretaries in the Administration Building, charming information out of them. From 1964 to 1970 he was the director of the Honors Program for undergraduates in the College of Arts and Sciences; of course he knew every student. From 1970 until his retirement in 1973, Barky was the undergraduate advisor for the Department of Geological Sciences; he was one of

the reasons that the number of majors soared to two hundred. As Grand Marshall and bearer of the university mace at commencement and other official ceremonies, he was for many years the virtual symbol of the university.

Until the early 1960s the geology department was small and tightly knit, so the Barksdales became close friends with H. E. Wheeler, V. S. Mallory, H. A. Coombs, J. H. Mackin, E. B. McKee, and their respective wives. Mallory and McKee cooperated by holding summer field camps in the Methow. Most of the faculty members hired in the 1960s were not from the Pacific Northwest. Barky and Marajane became the surrogate grandparents of at least four families, participating in birthdays, graduations, and even some vacations. The youngsters (and their parents) received the good advice that only grandparents can offer.

Barky's love for the university cost him dearly. The student unrest and disorders of the late 1960s that struck so many universities were an attack on his university. Fully a tenth of the pages of his history of geology at the University of Washington (1974) described these confrontations, and "Somehow the fun seemed to go out of teaching. . . ." This anxiety was partially responsible for his first serious heart attack in 1969.

Geologic friends shuddered at the prospect of Barky's knowledge of the geology of the Methow going to the grave with him. One evening while returning from Harts Pass, Barky was admonishing a young colleague about "publish or perish." By the time the party returned to the Barksdale's camp, Barky was convinced that he might perish before he published. By forsaking the detail that he had cherished, he thwarted his greatest fear that his report on the Methow (1975) would be published posthumously. Barky also lived to see his other two fondest hopes realized: Tucker married and eventually produced a granddaughter.

Despite his fragile health in recent years, Barky had the patience of Job. Soon he knew doctors and hospitals the way he did geologists and the university. In 1980 he announced, "Hooray, I have another tax deduction." When asked why, he admitted that he had just been declared legally blind. Thereafter, his great frustration was that he could only distinguish his many acquaintances by their voices. Marajane became his eyes. With "three typewriter educated fingers," he wrote a popularized version of the geology of the Methow (1983). He also worked diligently to raise funds from the alumni for the Goodspeed and other departmental scholarships, and spent considerable time cataloging the mineral specimens of the university's museum. At a Geological Society of America symposium on the geology of Washington at the Cordilleran Section Meeting of 1982, he was called upon to give the biographies of those who had recently retired from the University of Washington. When he left virtually no time for his autobiography, J. T. Whetten filled the gap: the standing ovation for the extraordinary man brought tears to the most ductless of eyes.

Barky is survived by Marajane who continues to live in Seattle, by Tucker and his family who have become stalwarts of the Methow Valley, and by many students and extended families everywhere.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF J. D. BARKSDALE

- 1930 (and Cushman, J. A.) Eocene Foraminifera from Martinez, California: Stanford University Contributions Department of Geology, v. 1, no. 2, p. 55-73.
1937 The Shonkin Sag laccolith: American Journal of Science, 5th ser., v. 33, p. 321-359.
1939 Silicified wood in dolomite: American Mineralogist, v. 24, p. 699-704.
1941 Glaciation of the Methow Valley: Journal of Geology, v. 49, p. 721-737.

- 1942 (and Coombs, H. A.) The Olympic earthquake of November 13, 1939: *Seismological Society of America Bulletin*, v. 32, p. 1–6.
- 1943 (and Ingerson, Earl) Iridescent garnet from the Adelaide mining district, Nevada: *American Mineralogist*, v. 28, p. 303–312.
- 1946 (and Coombs, H. A.) The Puget Sound earthquake of February 14, 1946: *Seismological Society of America Bulletin*, v. 36, p. 349–354.
- 1948 Stratigraphy in the Methow quadrangle, Washington: *Northwest Science*, v. 22, p. 164–176.
- 1950 Shonkin Sag laccolith revisited [abs.]: *Geological Society of America Bulletin*, v. 61, p. 1442.
- 1951 Cretaceous glassy welded tuffs, Lewis and Clark County, Montana: *American Journal of Science*, v. 249, p. 439–443.
- 1952 Pegmatite layer in the Shonkin Sag laccolith, Montana: *American Journal of Science*, v. 250, p. 705–720.
- 1974 *Geology at the University of Washington, 1895–1973*: Seattle, University of Washington, *Publications in Geological Sciences*, no. 4, 109 p.
- 1975 *Geology of the Methow Valley, Okanogan County, Washington*: Washington Division of Geology and Earth Resources *Bulletin* 68, 72 p.
- 1977 Memorial to George Edward Goodspeed, 1895–1973: *Geological Society of America Memorials Volume VI*, 5 p.
- 1983 Memorial to Elliot Bates McKee, Jr., 1934–1982: *Geological Society of America Memorials Volume XIV*, 3 p.
- 1983 A strange love affair, or the geologic history of western Okanogan County, Washington: *Okanogan Historical Society, Heritage*, v. 21, no. 3, p. 3–32.