

Walter Edward Tremlett PhD



Ted was born in Winchester in 1926, where he won a place at Peter Symonds Grammar School. He was awarded a county senior scholarship for a place at university in 1944 but was conscripted that year and selected for officer training. By the time he completed this, the war was over, and he was sent to India, becoming a 2nd lieutenant in the Bengal Sappers and Miners, with postings in India and Malaya. Once he had completed his service, in 1947, he went to University College Southampton, graduating in 1950 with a first-class honour in geology (through the University of London as the University College of Southampton only received its royal charter to become a full university in 1952). He was the first honours geology student at Southampton and published on several new species of Eocene and Oligocene bivalves whilst still an undergraduate. He remained at Southampton to carry out research for a PhD, supplementing his income as an assistant lecturer in the department. His thesis was entitled “A Contribution to the Geology of South-eastern Co. Wicklow, Ireland”. He married Sheila Davison, who was secretary to the zoology department at Southampton, in 1954.

Ted moved to Glasgow in 1954 to take up a post as lecturer before completing his thesis. Despite his early interest in palaeontology, Ted was more interested in the structural side of geology and published widely on the Lower Palaeozoic rocks of Wales and Ireland. The time when Ted was lecturing on structural geology was an exciting time during which plate tectonics was becoming more accepted as a theory of how the Earth worked. Ted embraced the new concepts and included them in his teaching. He became a senior lecturer in the geology department at the University of Glasgow (now the School of Geographical and Earth Sciences) and retired in 1984, continuing to work part-time for three further years.

Ted was president of the Geological Society of Glasgow from 1982 to 1985. He delivered his presidential address on his beloved geology of North Wales, presenting a reinterpretation of this classic area of British geology using plate tectonics. He was elected as an honorary member of the society in 2005.

After retiring to Knutsford, Ted enjoyed regular trips to the theatre and concerts in Manchester and became involved with the Knutsford Historical Society. He enjoyed gardening and lots of foreign holidays, including a trip to Australia and New Zealand when he was in his 80s. Ted died on 25 February 2019.