

JOHN TERENCE COPPOCK
CBE, HonDLitt, HonDSc, FBA

Terry Coppock was one of the outstanding geographers of his generation, a major contributor to academic life in Scotland, an untiring advocate of the application of academic research to public policy, and a proponent of the use of information technology in research in many fields of the humanities and social sciences. Ogilvie Professor of Geography in the University of Edinburgh from 1966 to 1986, and Secretary and Treasurer of the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland from 1986 to 2000, he was born in Cardiff on 2nd June 1921 and died in Edinburgh on 28th June 2000. Educated at Penarth County School, he left school at 17 in 1938 and became a civil servant in the Lord Chancellor's Department. Shortly afterwards he joined a territorial battalion of the Welsh Regiment, went to camp in August 1939, and did not return to civil life for over seven years. He spent the first two and a half years of military service in various parts of the UK including Scotland and Northern Ireland, and the next four and a half in various parts of the Middle East which he reached via Cape Town and Aden. He had always enjoyed geography at school and his extensive travels in the Middle East awakened his interest in the differences between places. However, he returned to the Civil Service in 1946 and rapidly became in turn an executive officer in the Ministry of Works and an officer of Customs and Excise (his pre-War ambition). A year later, in 1949, he left to accept a place at Queen's College, Cambridge, where within two years he was awarded first class in both Parts I and II of the Geographical Tripos. After a year as a research student in Cambridge, reading widely and continuing his practice of sampling senior undergraduate courses in other disciplines, he was appointed to the staff of the Geography Department of University College, where he remained for fifteen years, as Assistant Lecturer (1950-52), Lecturer (1952-64) and Reader (1964-65).

By 1951 Terry had become involved in a land-use survey of the Chilterns and from this sprang his life-time involvement in studies of rural land use. The general problems raised by this early work were to remain key issues addressed throughout his career - the limitations of field survey, the qualitative nature of mapped information, the origin and quality of data sources, the representation and quantification of spatial data, and the comparability of data compiled from different sources and at different times, often using different spatial bases and different classifications. The sheer laboriousness of handling vast quantities of spatially referenced data on land use, involving literally hundreds of thousands of calculations, led to Terry's interest in the application of computers in mapping and subsequently in geographic information systems. He was among the first geographers to employ such techniques in the mapping of agricultural census data, the calculations for the Agricultural Atlas of England and Wales, published in 1964, being carried out by computer, although the maps themselves were drawn manually. His evaluation of the agricultural census and land-use data culminated in the volume on land-use data which he prepared for the series on British statistical sources sponsored by the Royal Statistical Society and the (then) Social Science Research Council. Collaboration with Robin Best led to their joint book in 1962 on *The Changing Use of Land in Britain*. This was the first of 24 books and monographs of which Terry was joint author, sole author, or editor. His first paper, on the Chilterns, had been published in 1954, after which appeared more than 140 papers and book chapters. This was a prodigious output, a tribute to Terry's tremendous energy, commitment and critical abilities, and a reflection of his belief in the importance of providing a public record of one's research.

In 1963-64 he spent a year as visiting senior lecturer in the Department of Geography in the University of Ibadan in Nigeria. During vacations he travelled widely, visiting most parts of Nigeria, primarily to see something of traditional agriculture and the many attempts to transform it. Travel elsewhere in tropical Africa gave him a valuable perspective on his Nigerian work and an enduring interest in the tropics and in the problems of the Third World. Returning to London he reverted to his work in the rural geography of the UK and began his direct involvement in public policies for rural land. He was invited to join a Land Data Subcommittee established by the newly formed Ministry of Land and Natural Resources. Initiatives to establish a Land Use Unit came to nothing as the sponsoring Ministry was abolished in 1966, but aspects of the work continued under the Research Grants and Training Awards Committee of the recently formed National Environment Research Council, a committee on which Terry served for the next six years. In 1965 he joined the Nature Conservancy's England and Wales Committee on which he again served for six years, during which time he also became Chairman of the Conservancy's Land Use Panel. These experiences widened and deepened his appreciation of the problems of rural land use and the conflicts, actual and potential, between increasingly intensive farming methods, conservation and recreation.

Terry's appointment as first Ogilvie Professor of Geography in the University of Edinburgh in 1965 provided him with considerable scope for developing his research interests and with opportunities for much closer liaison with government and its agencies in Scotland than had been possible in Whitehall. The preparation of an agricultural atlas of Scotland led to his increasing involvement with automated cartography and geographic information systems, as well as to a major research project on types of farming. At the same time a reconnaissance study of the impact of outdoor recreation on the countryside of central Scotland led in 1972 to the formation of the Tourism and Recreation Research Unit (TRRU) in Edinburgh. Directed by Terry this multi-disciplinary unit provided links with automated cartography and information systems through the development of the Tourism and Information Package (TRIP) system. TRRU expanded greatly through the 1970s and produced 47 major Reports which Terry had inspired, edited and often part-authored, before it was put on a care and maintenance basis after Terry suffered a heart attack in the early 1980s and its deputy director, another geographer, left to take up a senior academic post.

His interest in computer mapping of Census data led to his co-option to the Scottish Joint Committee on Information Systems for Planning, his membership of the Advisory Panel on the Population Census, and a research project with the

Director of the Program Library Unit. Through his membership of the British National Committee for Geography he was appointed to the Ordnance Survey Review Committee, the Subcommittee on Remote Sensing of the Royal Society's Committee on Space Research, and the Working Group on Digital Data Standards of the Royal Society's Ordnance Survey Scientific Committee. His academic research on tourism and recreation led to his membership of the Scottish Sports Council from 1976, the Sport and Recreation Studies Board of the Council for Academic Awards, the Executive Committee of the Leisure Studies Association and the Examination Board of the Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management. He served on the editorial boards of Leisure Sciences, Leisure Studies, and Tourism Management.

Terry's recreation and land use interests also led to his involvement in environmental education. A member of the Scottish Field Studies Association since 1966, he was appointed to its Executive Committee and became its Chairman. He played a major role in raising half a million pounds for a major development at the field centre at Kindrogan in Perthshire which was appropriately named the Coppock Building in May 1995 when opened by HRH The Princess Royal, Patron of the Association. He was also a member of the Scottish Education Department Committee on Education and the Countryside, and the Scottish Environment Education Committee, later Council.

Of the many departmental and other government committees with which he was involved in the 1960s and 1970s, particularly important was his role as Specialist Adviser to the Select Committee on Scottish Affairs in 1971 and 1972. His principal tasks were to provide briefs and advice for the subcommittee on rural affairs, and to collaborate with his fellow adviser on urban affairs and the committee clerks in drafting the Report on Land Resource Use. Experience in this context proved invaluable in Terry's subsequent involvement in research projects for the Department of the Environment on the feasibility of a national land-use stock survey, and for the Scottish Development Department on monitoring changes in land use and landscape.

However, not all Terry's work was confined to the UK. He acted as consultant to the Canadian Government on several occasions, and built up an extensive international network of contacts through his work in the International Geographical Union (IGU). He was Secretary and later Chairman of the IGU Commission on World Food Problems and Agricultural Productivity; represented IGU on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and was a corresponding member of the Commissions on the World Land Use Survey, on Geographical Data Handling and Processing, and on the Geography of Leisure and Tourism. In connection with these and other activities he visited and sometimes worked in a wide range of countries world-wide.

Alongside all these activities he made a major contribution to the Department of Geography in Edinburgh, teaching in a range of courses in economic geography, rural planning, agricultural geography and the regional geography of Scotland. He supervised numerous research students, and initiated the M Sc Course in Geographical Information Systems, the first of its kind in the world.

Retirement from the Ogilvie Chair in 1986 was followed immediately by his appointment as Secretary and Treasurer of the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland, which he served for over fourteen years until his death just two days before he was due to retire. This period was one of almost continuous change, both in higher education and in the work and policies of the Trust itself. There was a substantial increase in the number of Scottish Universities and students, and repeated alterations in the system of state support for universities and for students. Terry provided wise advice and patient management as the fundamentals of both student and university needs on which the Trust had been founded changed.

New forms of research support, such as the Carnegie Larger Grants, were introduced, and the approach of the Trust's Centenary led to a major new initiative, the Carnegie Centenary Visiting Chairs. Terry was involved in all these developments adapting the Trust and its procedures to changes of policy within, and to the changes of need and financing in the University community without. He was immensely patient in guiding applicants for grants or other support, providing encouragement and practical advice to applicants, not least by making available to them his own expertise in economical modes of travel and subsistence. The Trust benefited greatly from Terry's encyclopaedic acquaintance with the furthest-flung fields of the arts, humanities and sciences, a reflection of his wide interests dating back to his years in Cambridge, and from his quite remarkable range of senior academic contacts spanning every discipline. These strengths were accompanied and informed by an admirable clarity of mind and expression, and his steady practical common sense. Terry had set out to write a commemorative history of the Trust to mark its centenary but unfortunately did not live to carry this through.

In addition to his work with the Trust, Terry continued his geographical activities and his increasing involvement with the application of information technology to academic research. He was from 1986 the founding editor of the International Journal of Geographic Information Systems, and successfully established a truly international journal, using his wide network of contacts to search out contributors and reviewers from around the world. He emphasised the need for high quality academic research and its practical relevance, while acting diligently as editor in making the journal readable to a wide audience, for many of whom English was not their first language. He was generous of time and effort to contributors, as he always was to research students and colleagues throughout his long career.

His distinctive contributions to geography were recognised on many occasions. He was awarded the Murchison Grant by the Royal Geographical Society in 1967 for his agricultural studies. He was Vice-President of the Institute of British Geographers from 1971 to 1973 and President in 1973-4. Characteristically he chose 'Geography and Public Policy' as

the theme of his Presidential Address and of the annual conference at which it was delivered. This led to a book co-edited with WDR Sewell on *Spatial Dimensions of Public Policy* published in 1976. He was elected to the Council of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society on his arrival in Edinburgh, became a Vice-President in 1975, was awarded Honorary Fellowship of the Society in 1988 and the Scottish Geographical Medal in 1998. He generously donated his substantial collection of books, journals and reports to the Society Library, and his personal papers to the Society's archive collection.

He was appointed CBE in 1987 for services to geography, and awarded honorary degrees by the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow in 1999. He was elected FBA in 1975, only the second British Geographer to be so honoured, and was a Vice-President of the Academy from 1985 to 1987.

Elected FRSE in 1976 he served on Council from 1979 to 1982. Fittingly, the last two books Terry edited derived from symposia convened by him at the British Academy in 1996 and at the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1998, the latter supported by the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland. Both were published in 1999, respectively entitled *Information Technology and Scholarship: Applications in the Humanities and Social Sciences* and *Making Information Available in Digital Format: Perspectives from Practitioners*.

BRUCE PROUDFOOT