

John H. Robertson (1923–2003)

John Robertson was brought up in China, where his parents were Christian missionaries. After gaining his BSc and PhD at the University of Edinburgh, he had a happy post-doctoral period with Dorothy Hodgkin.

In 1954 he joined E. G. Cox's group at the University of Leeds. He was a very skilful experimentalist and built an instrument to allow X-ray photographs to be taken of a crystal at the temperature of liquid hydrogen.

At Leeds he was promoted to Senior Lecturer. Apart from a period (*ca* 1964–1967) on secondment as the founding Professor of Chemistry at the University College of Dar-es-Salaam, he remained in Leeds for the rest of his life.

Various Heads of Department did not allow him to take early retirement because, being totally unselfish, he was much too useful. For example, he ran the Colvin Room, a common room and library for chemistry students.

Being a widely-read and civilised person, with a gentle sense of humour, he made an excellent Book Review Editor for the IUCr journals from 1975 to 1987. He then became Chairman of the IUCr–OUP Book Series Committee from its inception in 1987 until 1996, well after his fiscal retirement.

M. R. Truter

Chemistry Department, University College
London, 20 Gordon Street, London WC1H
0AJ, UK