



Emeritus Professor Jeremy Elston

Colleagues will be sorry to learn of the death, on 18 September 2021, of Emeritus Professor Jeremy Elston. The following tribute has been produced by drawing on the appreciation by Dr David Bartley, published in The University of Leeds Review, on the occasion of Professor Elston's retirement.

Born in Hong Kong and schooled in Australia and England, Jeremy gained a First in Agricultural Botany and a PhD from Reading. He was associated with the Universities of Reading, Nottingham and Ahmadu Bello before coming to Leeds as Professor of Crop Sciences in 1978.

Jeremy published many papers on a wide range of subjects but mostly in the field of agricultural botany and particularly agrometeorology. The topics included the water relations of crops and grass on chalk; the growth of groundnut, sugar beet and faba beans; leaf growth; rainfall; evaporation and water balances in the tropics; the growth of crops in relation to climate; and tropical agrometeorology. In his later career he worked on barley, on climate and crop yield including climate modelling in conjunction with the Meteorological Office, aided by his wife, Gill.

Conferences and committees took Jeremy to a great many countries including Ghana, India, Israel, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Sudan and Uganda. His expertise led to appointments as a Government representative to Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO) meetings and as a consultant to the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN.

He was Head of Department between 1980 and 1985 and was always concerned with the well-being of its members, successfully predicting the best way forward. He acted as Farm Manager for the University Field Station and its smooth running was one of his priorities. His tact, diplomacy and firmness – as well as astute judgement and insight – proved invaluable as Deputy Chair of University appointing committees and as Chair of the Scholarships Committee. He was Chair of the School of Biological Sciences until his retirement in 1991, at which time the status of Emeritus Professor was bestowed upon him. In retirement he and Gill moved to Somerset where they immersed themselves fully in village life.