

CHEMICAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION

A. J. MEADOWS

Transcript of an Interview
Conducted by

W. Boyd Rayward

at

Loughborough University
United Kingdom

on

29 June 2000

(With Subsequent Corrections and Additions)

CHEMICAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION
Oral History Program
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A. J. MEADOWS

1934 Born in Sheffield, Yorkshire on 24 January

Education

1957 B.S., physics, Oxford University
1959 M.S., physics, Oxford University
1959 Ph.D., astronomy, Oxford University
1965 M.Sc., history and philosophy of science, University College London

Professional Experience

1965-1986 University of Leicester
1971-1986 Professor, history of science and astronomy

Loughborough University
1986-2001 Professor, information science department

Honors

1996 Hon. D.Sc., City University London
1996 Permanent Vice-President, Library Association

ABSTRACT

A. J. Meadows begins the interview with a discussion of his early employment at the University of Illinois. He reveals why he studied both astronomy and the history of science, and how, through his knowledge of both those subjects, he was appointed to those departments simultaneously at the University of Leicester. Next, Meadows discusses his initial interest in information science, which led him to establish two centers for communication studies. Further, he details particular studies undertaken at those centers, and the results. Then, Meadows discusses his various relationships with the Institute for Information Scientists [IIS], the Library Association [LA], and Aslib. He details the merger between the IIS and the LA, and the significance of Aslib's research department. Subsequently, Meadows discusses online communication's impact on information science, and *vice versa*. As examples, he explains the creation and growth of BioMedNet and the e-print system. Also, Meadows describes his relationship with Donald J. Urquhart. In conclusion, Meadows talks about the various peaks of information science, and ponders the definition of the words "information," "documentation," and "library."

INTERVIEWER

W. Boyd Rayward is a research professor in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. He turned to librarianship after graduating in English literature from the University of Sydney. He received his Ph.D. from the Graduate Library School at the University of Chicago in 1973. He has held positions in the University of Chicago (where he became Dean of the Graduate Library School). He served as Professor and Head of the School of Information Library and Archive Studies and Dean of the University's Faculty of Professional Studies at the University of New South Wales in Sydney where he is now professor emeritus. He has published two books related to Paul Otlet, Belgian documentalist and internationalist, and a great many articles on history of national and international schemes for the organization and dissemination of information.

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