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Previous volumes (2010-2018): 250 € / year (4 issues)
Acarologia, CBGP, CS 30016, 34988 MONTFERRIER-sur-LEZ Cedex, France
ISSN 0044-586X (print), ISSN 2107-7207 (electronic)

The digitalization of Acarologia papers prior to 2000 was supported by Agropolis Fondation under
the reference ID 1500-024 through the « Investissements d’avenir » programme
(Labex Agro: ANR-10-LABX-0001-01)

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DAVID CAMERON LEE
1933-1994

David LEE died of cancer on June 13th 1994. His terminal illness and his all too early death were a great shock and sorrow to his many friends and colleagues. All of us will retain fond memories of convivial times in his company and we shall continue to admire the quality of his scientific works, which are marked with a standard of clarity and excellence to be envied by those of us with more limited talents.

David came to acarology relatively late in his career. After graduating from the University of Bristol in 1955, he spent two years in Germany, fulfilling the requirements of National Service in an infantry battalion. He emerged with the rank of second lieutenant and in 1957 took up the post of Experimental Officer in the Honeybees Section of Rothamsted Experimental Station. His career with mites effectively began in 1964, when he became a consultant with Bayer Chemicals, identifying mites in soil samples from insecticide trials. In the same year he accepted a position as Curator of Arachnida and Helminths at the South Australian Museum. First he had to hone his skills as an arachnologist and this he did by spending some time at the Natural History Museum, London, under the tutelage of the several eminent acarologists there at the time. For the next 30 years he was based in Adelaide where he produced an imposing body of work, firstly on Parasitiformes (especially Rhodacaridae), and latterly on Oribatida. In 1971 he was awarded the M.Sc. degree of Adelaide University and in 1986 a Ph.D. from the University of Queensland.

David and I took up posts in Australasia in the same year. There were few of us working on the soil mites of the region in those days and David was a constant source of help and inspiration to me. He never refused a request and he never ignored a query. I have no doubt that he was similarly generous to others, both then and for all of his professional life. His curiosity and high intellect prevented him from becoming a mere collector and cataloguer of new genera and species, but took him into the realms of higher classification of, in particular, the Oribatida and also into the ecology and behaviour of soil mites in general. He embraced cladistic methodology, which led him to search for shared characters in trying to understand relationships, rather than establishing new taxa merely by focusing on differences. He also developed a modified notation for oribatid morphology from his work on Parasitiformes, which he demonstrated in several of his papers on the sarcopiform mites of South Australian soils. Unfortunately, he never pro-
duced a detailed paper devoted to a synopsis of his ideas on this matter, probably because of his innate modesty rather than lack of conviction, although he did recognize that other quests for homologies favoured a segmentally based system. In consequence, the new notation has not been widely followed, which is a pity since it resolves many of the confusions inherent in the earlier models.

All of us who were privileged to know David will miss this gentle man. Acarology has lost, too soon, a keen talent but, above all, our sympathies must be extended to his wife Elaine and his children Martin, Alison and Brian.

Malcolm LUXTON

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