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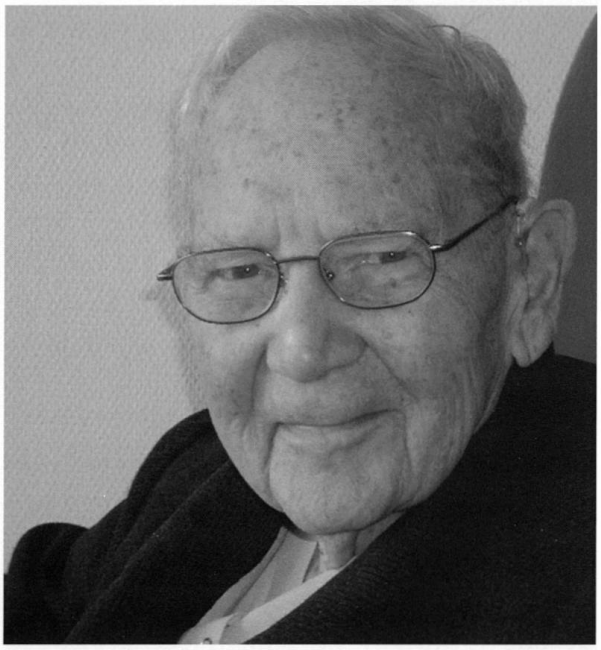
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Carl Eduard Burckhardt-Borruso

1914 – 2013



Carl Eduard Burckhardt-Borruso was born in Basel, 14th May 1914. He spent his childhood in his native town together with his two younger brothers and the many cousins. His father, a lawyer in Basel, had a great influence on the development of his personality, teaching him, by his example, honesty and fairness, qualities that Burckhardt would never neglect.

He attended primary school and the Humanities Senior School in Basel. After the Abitur, in spring 1933, he enrolled at the University of Basel, Scientific Faculty Philosophia II. He accomplished his studies in mineralogy and petrography «Summa cum Laude» with a thesis on the Basodino area. His curriculum was rich in courses held by professors such as Portmann, Buxdorf, Rittmann and many others, of which Burckhardt would always keep a respectful memory. With Prof. Rittmann he kept a life-long friendship.

From 1939 to 1941, his course of studies was often slowed down by the frequent calls to the military service, which he ended as first Infantry Lieutenant.

When free from University or Military service, he visited foreign countries to improve his language skill. He spoke perfect Italian, English and French, and had a fairly good knowledge of Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch and Swedish.

A turning point in both his professional and private life came in 1941, soon after his degree, when Prof. Rittmann offered him to be his University Assistant in Italy. From 1941 to 1944 he worked as first assistant at the «Centro Ricerche Geominerarie – I.R.I.» in Rome, searching the possibilities of finding hard coal in Mid-North Italy.

At the same time he worked at the «Istituto dei Giacimenti Minerari» in Rome, instructing future assistants on rising grounds and optical, microchemical and pyrognostic methods of minerals identification. He cooperated with Prof. Rittmann in his studies on general vulcanology and geophysics and in 1944 he followed him to Naples, where they both worked for the «Fondazione Politecnica del Mezzogiorno». In Naples he devoted himself once more to teaching, never forgetting the «work-in-the-field» on the Campi Flegrei, Ischia and the Isole Pontine. His tectonic and petrographic studies on the coastal mountain range in Calabria and on the Sila also belong to this period.

In February 1946, during an excursion organized by the University of Naples on the Camaldoli hills, Burckhardt met the lady that in the same year became his wife, Giulia; in 1948 came his only daughter, Jenny. Talking about his family, he always said he could not have been happier.

From 1948 to 1950 Burckhardt worked as assistant to Prof. Penta and Prof. Fabiani, carrying out geological and mineralogical

investigations for the «Società Generale Elettrica di Sicilia» and leading the geological works in a large part of the Peloritani Mountains. In 1951 he moved with his family to Sardinia, working in the mines of San Leone, Nurra, Sulcis, in the vicinity of Iglesias and Oristano, and in the north-west Sardinia.
In 1952 he was offered an appointment as lecturer at the University of Alexandria (Egypt), which he regretfully decided to refuse, due to the political and social uncertainties.

1954 saw another move of the whole family, this time to Lavagna, on the Ligurian Riviera di Levante, where Burckhardt collaborated, until 1959, with FERROMIN, conducting studies in Calabria, on the Argentario, on the mountains around Campiglia, in Gambatesa; as well as abroad, working in the deposits of limonite in Rustel (near Abt, France) and in Conjuro (Sierra Nevada, Spain). In the same years he also worked for several other societies.
In 1958 Burckhardt represented Italy at the CECA expert-Committee to analyse the proposals of partnership with the research-works in West- and Equatorial region of French Africa, put forward from the Bureau Minier de la France d'Outre-Mer (BUMIFOM).
After years of self-employment in Italy, Burckhardt moved with his family back to Switzerland and in 1971 accepted to work under contract for the «Société Financière Holderbank» (today Holcim), travelling mostly in South America to research and study materials suitable for the construction of new cement factories. They were years of long absences from home, full of letters from both sides, all of which Burckhardt saved, and that are now a sort of diary on work conditions in these countries (Perù, Chile, Brazil and expecially Mexico) at that time.

In 1985, to the joy of the whole family, came retirement, that Burckhardt, with the positive attitude that always characterized his personality, lived as a special opportunity to develop his many interests, till that moment suppressed by his professional duties.
Deep in his heart Burckhardt remained a geologist of the old school, with an alert interest on the scientific world and constant contact with his old colleagues.
In spite of his old age, he was still physically and mentally independent; in 2012 he spent four months of wandering in Italy, including a long stay in his beloved Naples, and in June 2013, just short before his death, he still enjoyed short trips in the Baselbiet area.
He died in his sleep, during the night between the 21st and 22nd August 2013. According to his last wishes, he is now buried in Naples, near his beloved wife, deceased in 2011.

Jenny Burckhardt