



**Dr. John Clinton Sherman (May 3, 1916 – October 21, 1996)**

## A Tribute

John Sherman was a leader who played a large role in helping academic cartography become a reality in the United States. He began his teaching career in 1942 when "cartography" was an obscure term rarely used even by those who knew its meaning. An English language textbook first appeared in 1938, when it is unlikely that there were more than a half-dozen mapmaking courses in colleges and universities, and most of those would today be labeled academically unacceptable. World War II changed that profoundly. While the field burgeoned, John insisted that it must have a sound scholarly base during its period of rapid growth and technological change.

Through his own teaching and the development of a well-rounded program of instruction he made the Department of Geography at the University of Washington one of the primary centers in the United States for the emerging discipline of cartography. His promotion of the field was wide-ranging, from active advisory work for the National Atlas, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the Office of Naval Research, to hosting an institute in advanced cartography for college teachers. He was an exemplary academic representative, working closely with state, municipal, and university departments on a wide variety of projects, from atlases to road maps, that required expertise in cartographic design and production. While being the cartographic expert he found time to serve as the chair of a large and active

geography department for ten years. John Sherman not only directed cartography and taught it, he practiced it. As a "freelance" cartographer he made scores of maps as illustrations in books. He was very concerned with the problem of representing the landform. However, his continuing major research interest, in which he published widely and made notable contributions, involved the design and production of maps for the partially-sighted and blind.

John was a good friend and professional colleague who was always ready to help advance the discipline. We are fortunate to have had him in our field, for he set a wonderful example in the critical years of cartography's development.

*Arthur H. Robinson*