

Preface

Nick Petford, Steve Sparks and Donny Hutton

This special edition is dedicated to the life and work of Wallace Spencer Pitcher. As pointed out by Bernard Leake in his eponymous eulogy, although Wally did not set out to work on granites, this is where he made his mark. According to Pitcher, the word granite is derived from the ancient Welsh *gwenith faen*, meaning 'wheatstone'. This is apt, for over his long career, Wally did much to grind down the labyrinth of ideas surrounding granite geology and help construct a simpler perspective on their origin.

Much has changed in the granite world over the last 50 years and Wally himself, in the preface to his 1993 book *The Nature and Origin of Granite*, drew attention to the 'thicket' of granite literature now prevailing, and the challenge of keeping abreast of latest developments. In the spirit of Wally's book, we hope this special issue will 'intrigue the specialist, stimulate the student and interest the general reader'. Indeed, more by chance than clever planning, the papers contained in this volume echo many of the themes laid out in Pitcher's celebrated 1977 Presidential address to the Geological Society, *The Anatomy of a Batholith*. Although 30 years have passed, the key issues that taxed Wally then – fracture-controlled emplacement, magma channelling, episodic assembly, partial melting, the volcanic-plutonic link and the physical nature of the magmas – not only feature prominently in this celebratory

issue, but continue to drive research effort across much of the granite community.

The eleven research papers fall broadly into four thematic sections comprising source processes, geochemistry, structure and regional studies. A complementary paper by Donald McIntyre on James Hutton and the igneous origin of granite is also included for historical reference.

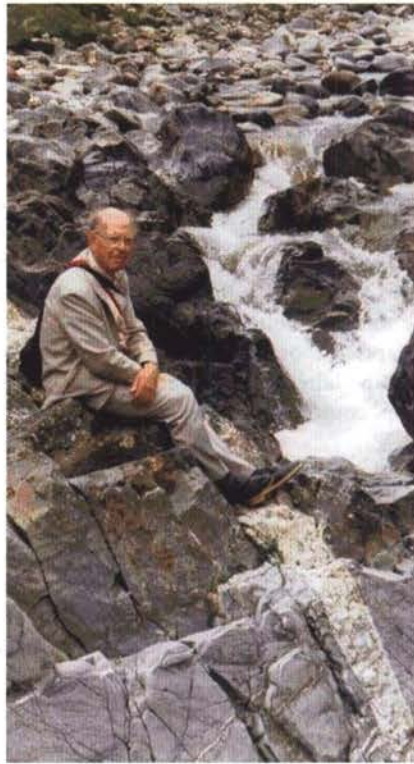
In brief, Annen *et al.*, Vigneresse and Rushmer & Jackson focus on thermal conditions in the source region and implications for magma composition and evolution; Kemp *et al.* and Davidson *et al.* present novel and exciting advances in mineral isotope geochemistry; whilst Vernon & Paterson, Bartley *et al.* and Paterson & Farris address magma emplacement and pluton structure. Finally, Grunder *et al.*, Ghani & Atherton and Stevenson *et al.* all break new ground with ideas that champion the regional significance of granitic rocks. The field areas in question are South America, where Wally worked for many years, and his beloved Donegal.

References

- Pitcher, W. S. 1978. The anatomy of a Batholith. *Journal of the Geological Society* **135**, 157–82.
Pitcher, W. S. 1993. *The Nature and Origin of Granite*. London: Blackie Academic Professional, 321 pp.



Sergeant, Royal Medical Corps (1943)



At Glen Tilt, Perthshire (1997)



Wally and Donny Hutton on WP's last visit to Donegal in 2002



Wally and wife Stella, 50th Wedding Anniversary, Wirral, 1997



Outside the salubrious Hotel Grau, Sayan, Peru, 1987



Head of Department, University of Liverpool (1980)