

Book Reviews

Structural Studies on Molecules of Biological Interest

A volume in honour of Professor Dorothy Hodgkin

Edited by Guy Dodson, Jenny P. Glusker and David Sayre

Clarendon Press; Oxford, 1981

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There can surely be no better loved scientist than Dorothy Hodgkin. Her Nobel prizewinning characteristics – the deep perception of biomolecular structure, the amazing three-dimensional powers of concentration and memory, the total mastery of crystallographic methods – are matched by qualities of human sympathy which grace the Order of Merit. A stranger is instantly made welcome and put at his ease, a shy colleague given confidence to express himself clearly. Her many collaborations, often overcoming problems of distant communication and political barriers, seem always to have been harmonious.

With wonderful insight, Guy Dodson, Jenny Glusker and David Sayre have constructed a collection which balances these two aspects of her character. An historical section, with contributions by a PhD colleague, by her first research student, her first Oxford Lab. technician and other well-known persons, is followed by a section on Structural Chemistry and Biochemistry which gives personal accounts of work in collaboration with Dorothy. The following sections on Crystallographic Methods, Protein Structure and Insulin consist of straightforward scientific contributions, but each article strikes another facet of Dorothy's sparkling crystallographic interests. Her international concerns are reflected by articles from leading Russian, Indian and Chinese scientists, as well as European, American, Japanese and Australasian collaborators.

About a year ago, Dorothy lost her closest companion. Though Thomas could not have shared all her scientific insights, it was very evident that they supported each other wonderfully. There is now, inevitably, an empty space in her life. This book is testimony to the friendship and admiration of her many colleagues.

D.M. Blow

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