JOHN DARROW HALE
(1913-1981)

By Willis I. Wright
Calgary, Alberta

John D. Hale, well-known consulting geologist, died in Calgary, Alberta, April 17, 1981. John was born in Bakersfield, California, January 4, 1913, and lived there throughout his formative years. He attended the University of California, Berkeley, and graduated in December 1938, with a bachelor’s degree in economic geology and petroleum engineering. He continued geologic studies in graduate school at Berkeley until May 1939, when he accepted employment with Superior Oil Co. of California as petroleum geologist, western division (California). In November 1947, he joined Seaboard Oil Co. of Delaware as district geologist, Bakersfield, California. His responsibilities covered all of California north of the Los Angeles basin, and he was associated with oil and gas discoveries and development in the San Joaquin Valley, Cuyama Valley, and Sacramento Valley.

In 1952, John was appointed exploration manager, western Canada, by Seaboard, and he moved to Calgary to manage the extensive exploration program of Canadian Seaboard Oil Co. (Seaboard, Honolulu, Merrill Group). In June 1958, Seaboard Oil Co. of Delaware was merged into Texaco Inc., and John became a member of the managerial staff of Texaco Exploration Co., Calgary. He resigned from Texaco in February 1959, to form McPherson-Hale Consultants Ltd., in association with W. J. McPherson. In October 1964, McPherson resigned and the name of the company was changed to John D. Hale Consulting Ltd. and continued as such.

John was a keen and dedicated practicing geologist who took great pride in the professional quality of his work. He joined AAPG in 1938, and was a member of several other professional societies to which he contributed his time and energy, both as a working member and in executive capacities. He was particularly interested in working with young people. He was a director of the Calgary branch of the Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy. As chairman of the Education Committee he worked closely with students of geology and engineering at the University of Calgary. His dedication and concern for the welfare of young people extended into his personal activities, and in recognition of this he was elected to membership in the Legion of Honor of De Molay.

John is survived by his widow, Virginia, of Calgary. He will be missed by a host of friends who respected him for his professional capability and integrity. Everyone enjoyed his droll sense of humor and positive approach to living that made him such congenial company even through the adversity of his illness.