

## MEMORIAL TO ERWIN C. STUMM 1908–1969

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Erwin C. Stumm, Professor of Geology and Curator of Paleozoic Invertebrates at the University of Michigan, died in an Ann Arbor hospital on the twenty-fourth of April, 1969. He had been in failing health for some time, but his hospital stay had been brief. Win, as he was known to his intimates, left behind his wife, Betty; daughters, Virginia (Mrs. Roy H. Christensen) of Cincinnati, and Diana of Menlo Park, California; a son, Ernest, at home; two grandchildren; a sister, Mrs. Waldo Schmitt of Washington, D.C.; and many friends.

Win was born in Berkeley, California, on September 15, 1908, the son of Ernest and Augusta Stumm. He completed his public schooling in California and continued his education in the east at George Washington University (A.B., 1932; M.A., 1933) and at Princeton (Ph.D., 1936). He was employed as a scientific assistant in Washington, D.C., first for the U.S. Department of Agriculture and then for the U.S. Geological Survey, during much of his residence on the eastern seaboard.

Dr. Stumm was married in 1936 to Elizabeth Coon, and a year later the young couple moved to Oberlin College in Ohio where Win started both his ascension up the academic chairs as a teacher of geology and his long and fruitful career as a scientific researcher and writer. During World War II Win was "drafted" into the naval officers training program at Oberlin to teach navigation. In 1947 he joined the staffs of the Department of Geology and the Museum of Paleontology at the University of Michigan where he completed his climb to full professorship and curatorship.

The 22 years at the University of Michigan were also years of maximum attainment and recognition as an authority on Paleozoic corals in the United States and Canada. He served the Paleontological Society across the years as Editor, Vice-President, and President. Other affiliations included Fellowship in The Geological Society of America; the American Association of Petroleum Geologists; the Michigan Academy of Arts, Science and Letters; the Ohio Academy of Science; Sigma Xi; and Theta Delta Chi.

Win Stumm also had several interesting experiences in industrial geology, including one summer with a large oil company. However, his greatest contribution to industry was to plan and supervise a core drilling limestone exploration program for a major cement company; a new, large cement plant in southeastern Michigan testifies to the success of this remunerated research.

The accompanying bibliography indicates the quality and volume of Win's scientific research. His *magnum opus* is a description and discussion of the Silurian and Devonian corals of the Falls of the Ohio, published by The Geological Society of America as *Memoir 93* in 1964. A major objective of this monograph was to bring order to the chaotic taxonomy which had resulted from the earlier publication of multitudinous descriptions of these corals by other researchers, some of whom had ignored the work of predecessors. Stumm revised earlier descriptions, straightened out the synonymy, and illustrated all available type specimens.

I have purposefully left to the last the Stumm whom I (definitely not a paleontologist) knew best: the man and the teacher.

As a man, Win was a gentleman in the original sense of the word, gentle, gracious, and kindly. I never saw him in anger, or even heard him raise his voice in vexation. A colleague (J. A. Dorr) recalls that in moments of frustration Win would exclaim: "*Sic transit gloria mundi*" in lieu of more earthy language. He never spoke ill of others. Behind his quiet demeanor was a delicious sense of humor (he collected limericks). Win loved the sound and rhythm of words.

Obviously, with these attributes, Professor Stumm was an unusually successful teacher. He taught undergraduates and graduates of all ages and interests, and inspired many with his love for the organic relics of the past and their place in deciphering biologic and geologic history.

We miss him.

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