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## Roy W. Miner, Naturalist and Marine Biologist

The thin and thinning ranks of invertebrate zoologists were further depleted by the death on 13 December 1955, of Roy Waldo Miner, curator emeritus of marine biology at the American Museum of Natural History and editor of the publications of the New York Academy of Sciences.

Dr. Miner's background and training provided the basis for the accomplishments of his mature years. Endowed with stamina derived from pioneer New England ancestors, he was born at North Adams, Massachusetts, 24 February 1875. A studious and diligent boy, he was graduated from the Drury Academy in 1893 and from Williams College in 1897. As an undergraduate he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, and 30 years later his alma mater awarded him the degree of doctor of science *honoris causa*. Meanwhile, he had completed the requirements for the degree of doctor of philosophy, which he received from Columbia University in 1923.

On graduation from college, he entered the General Theological Seminary in New York, from which he was graduated in 1900. At that time he chose to be a teacher rather than a clergyman, but his classical education and training in homiletics were to prove of inestimable value throughout his life. He taught Latin and biology at the Berkeley School in New York from 1900 to 1904, when he became instructor and associate headmaster at the Kelvin School in New York.

An ardent student of nature, his interest in biology led to association with members of the American Museum of Natural History, and, in 1905, at the in-

stitution of the director, the late Herman C. Bumpus, he joined the staff of the museum as assistant curator of invertebrate zoology. For the next 38 years, his talents were devoted to research and to the preparation of educational exhibits, which both instructed and delighted the multitudes that thronged the halls of the museum. He was associate curator, 1917-21; curator of living invertebrates, 1922-43; and curator emeritus since 1943.

To obtain ideas and material for the realistic, accurate, and artistic reconstructions that he designed for the museum, Dr. Miner made repeated trips to the Bay of Fundy, the wharves and tidepools of New England, and the coral reefs of the Caribbean and the South Pacific. His careful and detailed notations, both written and photographic, provided the information for precise and colorful reproductions of marine life as viewed through the eyes of a trained observer. Forty tons of coral from the West Indies was built into the framework of the Hall of Ocean Life, and smaller but equally charming and accurate exhibits portrayed the plants and animals in the tidepools and on the wharf piles of New England. He designed and supervised the construction of many invertebrate groups, aided by the loyal and enthusiastic cooperation of talented workmen who made models of many kinds, from individual protozoans to gargantuan reproductions of the life of a coral reef.

On his retirement from the staff of the American Museum of Natural History, Dr. Miner began to edit the publications of the New York Academy of Sciences. For 12 years his careful supervision and critical judgment have stamped the is-

ssues of the *Annals* and *Transactions* of the academy and the parts of the *Scientific Survey of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands*, published since 1943. He did this work as an unpaid officer of the academy, the welfare of which was one of his dearest concerns.

In addition to his contributions as curator of marine life at the American Museum of Natural History and editor of the publications of the New York Academy of Sciences, Dr. Miner published many magazine and journal articles, reports of expeditions, and books on natural history. Among the more important may be listed: *Animals of the Wharf Piles* (1912), his dissertation on *The Pectoral Limbs of Eryops and Other Primitive Tetrapods* (1925), *Diving in Coral Gardens* (1933), *The Kingdom of the Tides* (1934), *Exhibition Halls of the American Museum of Natural History* (1939), and his beautifully illustrated *Field Book of Seashore Life* (1950), which depicts the invertebrates of the Atlantic Coast of North America.

The central theme of his writing and of his designs for groups in the American Museum was the idea of evolution in nature; this was expressed particularly in the arrangements for Darwin Hall. For him, the interrelations of plants and animals were not haphazard associations but the meaningful result of the ecological factors whose operation had determined the development and character of each biotic area. His concept of unity in nature, his belief in the virtue of goodness and the triumph of right, his simple and straightforward honesty, integrity, kindness, generosity and fine sense of humor were significant manifestations of his character and personality.

Dr. Miner was a member of Sigma Xi, and fellow of the New York Academy of Sciences, the New York Zoological Society, and the Consular Law Society. He was a friendly man, who enjoyed the company of his associates and the conviviality of social affairs. His passing has removed a meticulous scholar, a fine gentleman, and a loyal friend. The world is richer because of his contributions.

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