

WILLIAM M. MCGILL (1897-1962)

William M. McGill, State Geologist of Virginia from September 1947 until May 1957, passed away on August 15, 1962, after a prolonged illness.

Mr. McGill was born in Petersburg, Virginia January 1, 1897. He graduated in civil engineering in 1918 from Virginia Military Institute and after service in the Army during World War I, was honorably discharged on October 30, 1919, as a First Lieutenant. He entered the Colorado School of Mines where he received a degree in Mining Engineering (Class of 1922) and completed graduate courses in geology and mining engineering. He taught at "The Mines" for a few years and then engaged in geological consulting work in Canada and several of the Western states.

On January 1, 1929, he was appointed Assistant State Geologist of Virginia. While serving in that capacity, his most outstanding contribution was "Caverns of Virginia," published in 1933. There was a phenomenal demand for this bulletin, which has been out of print for many years.

In September 1947, Mr. McGill became State Geologist. His most outstanding accomplishment as State Geologist was obtaining appropriations from the General Assembly of Virginia for the construction of a building on McCormic Road at the University of Virginia, to house the Division of Mineral Resources. This building is now the west wing of the Natural Resources Building. His chief extra-professional interests were hunting, gardening, work as a Cub Scout leader, and vestryman for St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

Mr. McGill resigned as State Geologist, effective April 30, 1957, but suffered a slight stroke on April 20, which inactivated him for several months. After a partial recovery, he was able to do some consulting work and lead a reasonably active life until the fall of 1961, when he suffered a more severe stroke which left him completely paralyzed on one side and caused him to lose his speech. He was hospitalized from that time until his death.

Although completely helpless for nearly a year, he exhibited wonderful patience and a high degree of Christian fortitude. In fact, the manner in which he faced complete invalidism and separation from the professional and social contacts which had meant so much to him during his active years, was a revelation to the members of his family and the few close friends who were permitted to visit him during his final illness. To those who were fortunate enough to be numbered among his friends, he was a friend without peer.