Professor Bates was an excellent researcher
but, more importantly, a superlative writer who
said “scientists can and ought to write in a way
capable of reaching a wide and influential
audience.” This is certainly the case for his
book “The Natural History of Mosquitoes”
which was published in 1949. This book is a
must for all students of tropical medicine as it
is a factual review of present-day knowledge
that includes life cycles, distribution and even a
section on fossil mosquitoes. One reviewer
stated that it is written in a lucid, easygoing
style which is all too rare in such works.

Professor Marston Bates was born July 23,
1906 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The family
soon moved to Fort Lauderdale, FL, where he
attended local public schools. He majored in
biology at the University of Florida where he
graduated in 1927. He then became a research
assistant with the United Fruit Company in
Honduras and Guatemala in 1928 but re-
turned to Harvard in 1931 to continue his
studies in zoology, obtaining his M.A. degree in
1933 and his Ph.D. in 1934. He became a
research assistant at the Harvard Museum of
Comparative Zoology in 1935 but soon was
given a leave of absence to join a Rockefeller
project to investigate mosquito biology in
Albania. He resigned from the museum staff in
1937 to join the staff of the International
Health Division of the Rockefeller Foundation.
Then in 1939 he was sent to Egypt to set up a
laboratory for malaria research. With the
advent of World War II, the project was
abandoned and he was transferred by the
Rockefeller Foundation to Villavicencio, Colombia,
to direct a laboratory for yellow fever
research. There he and his research team were
able to identify the Haemagogus mosquito as the
vector of yellow fever in Colombia. He re-
turned to the U.S. in 1948 and in 1952 became
a Professor of Zoology at the University of
Michigan.