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### GORDON WINSTON DILLON—1912-1982

#### AN APPRECIATION

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The Botanical Museum, botany and especially orchidology lost a friend, a colleague and an innovator when, on August 22, 1982, Gordon Winston Dillon died at his home in East Orleans on Cape Cod, Massachusetts. He is survived by his wife, Mary, who devotedly helped him in his long struggle with illness, and his son David.

Gordon was born in Reading, Pennsylvania, on October 17, 1912. He was graduated from the Muhlenberg Township High School in 1934 and came to work as botanical illustrator at the Orchid Herbarium of Oakes Ames in the Botanical Museum in the same year. While his specialty was the orchid family, his versatility was such that he illustrated technical articles which demanded understanding of other plant families. In the academic year 1947-1948, Prof. Paul Mangelsdorf, Director of the Museum, appointed him as botanical illustrator in the Museum.

At that time, the then young American Orchid Society had its headquarters in the Orchid Herbarium in the Museum, and its *Bulletin* was edited in this location. When the editor Dr. Louis O. Williams was called to government work connected with the war in January 1943, Gordon assumed the editorship, a position which he carried out with exceptional distinction from 1943 to 1966 and from 1970 to 1973, when he retired from that position. In addition to his editorship, he fulfilled other functions as well in the Orchid Society. He was the Executive Secretary from 1950 to

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1976 and its Executive Director from 1976 to 1977. Partly as a result of his close association with the scientific work in the Ames Orchid Herbarium, he was ever cognizant of the importance of basic research in horticulture, which cognizance was instrumental in setting up in 1966 the American Orchid Society's Fund for Education and Research to foster botanical research, education and publication in orchidology. With deep interest in taxonomic and nomenclatorial matters, Gordon was innovative in setting up the International Orchid Commission on Classification, Nomenclature and Registration. He organized the First World Orchid Congress in 1954 and was active as programme chairman for all successive congresses through the seventh.

Perhaps no other fact more clearly illustrates the results of Gordon's organizational abilities than the incredible growth of the membership in the American Orchid Society under his stewardship, due in great part to his dedication and efforts.

Gordon's publications are many and spanned the field of orchidology from articles and the *Beginner's Handbook* for incipient orchidophiles to mature taxonomic papers. At the time of his death, he was hoping to write his *History of Orchids in the United States*. One of his most successful publications was the book *Orchids — A Golden Nature Guide* which he coauthored with F.S. Shuttleworth and H.S. Zim and which was superbly illustrated in colour by the late Mr. Elmer W. Smith, botanical artist to the Botanical Museum.

Upon his retirement, Gordon accepted an honorary appointment in the Museum as Archivist and initiated a study of the archives for the preparation of a history of the Botanical Museum. It was to be published in 1983 as part of the celebration of the 125th anniversary of the Museum's founding.

But Gordon was stricken with cancer shortly after he began this project and was able to research only the material covering the earliest years. His valiant struggle was, unfortunately, not successful in giving him the strength to carry out this labour of love which he had so long hoped to be able to do.

Gordon's passing has created a void which in many fields of activity will be hard to fill. His life, however, has left many individuals and institutions richer—the measure of a real life of dedication.





GORDON WINSTON DILLON  
1912-1982



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