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BENJAMIN ARTHUR BENSLEY

Benjamin Arthur Bensley, head of the Department of Biology, University of Toronto, and Director of the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology, died at his home in Toronto on January 20, 1934. Dr. Bensley was born in Hamilton on November 5, 1875, the youngest son of Robert Daniel Bensley and Caroline Vandeleur Bensley. He graduated from the University of Toronto in 1896, and took his Doctor's degree at Columbia University in 1902.

Bensley's contribution to the Royal Ontario Museum, like his work at the University, is much greater than might be supposed. His nature inhibited a general recognition that he was a leader in a public institution, but his conservative, sound judgment has played its part in fixing the type of the institution as a whole. He superintended the rapid growth of his own department, the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology, with sincere interest and safe policies, and permitted his younger colleagues to exercise their initiative in expanding the department's activities and influence.

His field of research was the comparative anatomy of vertebrates, and our knowledge of mammalian anatomy was especially enriched by his work. His great memoir on the Marsupialia probably is his best known contribution and, although this was published more than 30 years ago, it still is regarded not only as an authoritative work on the subject, but as a notable example of scientific ratiocination. A number of additional papers dealing with problems on the origin of the marsupials, and with the interrelationships of the mammalian subclasses, were published during the same period of his life. Subsequently several of his papers dealing with palaeontological subjects, mostly on mammals, appeared in the University of Toronto Studies, Biological Series.

Bensley's "Practical Anatomy of the Rabbit" is the standard text on this subject at the University of Toronto and elsewhere. It is a model of exactness for text books. At the time of his death he had all but completed a comprehensive work on comparative dental anatomy

L. L. Snyder