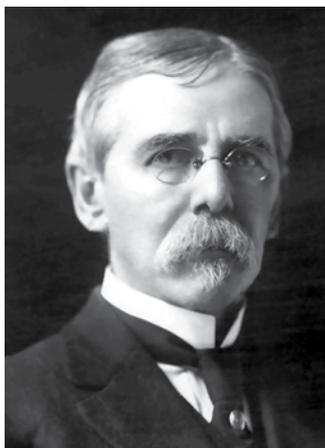

Eugene Allen Smith (*Alabama*)

Lewis Dean (*Alabama Geological Survey*)

Eugene Allen Smith was born at Washington, Autauga County, Alabama, on October 27, 1841. He attended school in nearby Prattville and graduated Central High School in Philadelphia, Pa., in 1859. In 1860 he entered the junior class at the University of Alabama, where he received the A.B. degree in 1862. Studying in Germany, he received the Ph.D., summa cum laude, from the University of Heidelberg in 1868. On his return to the states, Smith was appointed assistant professor of chemistry



at the University of Mississippi and also served as assistant with State Geologist Woldemar Hilgard of the Mississippi Geological Survey until 1871. In 1872, Smith married Jane Garland, the daughter of Landon C. Garland, a distinguished educator. There were five children, two of whom died in the teenage years.

Upon the reorganization of the University of Alabama in 1871 (the campus having been destroyed by federal forces in 1865), the school's board of trustees authorized the newly elected professor of geology, Dr. Eugene Allen Smith, to devote as much spare time as available in examining the geology of the state. The subject of state support for the geological survey was brought before the Alabama legislature, and in April of 1873, a legislative act was passed "to revive and complete the geological and agricultural survey of the state of Alabama." Smith was appointed Alabama's second state geologist, a position he would hold for the next 54 years. A modest appropriation of \$500 per year was authorized for expenses associated with the Survey.

During the next 10 years, Smith devoted the greater part of his 3-month summer vacation toward making geological excursions, forgoing any personal salary for the work. During this period, Smith published four annual reports and three biennial reports dealing chiefly with the economic geology of the state. Smith also published a comprehensive agricultural report on the state in 1883, and in 1887 co-authored with L.C. Johnson U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin 43, which was the first detailed study of Gulf Coastal Plain Cretaceous and Tertiary stratigraphy in Alabama.

The results of the first 10 years of Smith's work were more than sufficient to impress upon the Alabama legislature the value of the geological survey to the state, and legislators passed a bill in 1883 providing an annual appropriation of \$5,000 per year for the next decade. With these funds, Smith was able to enlist the aid of numerous assistant geologists, who completed several benchmark reports describing every geologic province of the state. Smith arranged for numerous reports and maps to be published for public distribution, the only cost to the public being a modest request for postage in filling the thousands of requests for information on the results of studies completed under the supervision of Smith. Cooperative studies with the federal geological survey were initiated by Smith and resulted in the first topographic map surveys of the state for use in undertaking detailed geologic mapping. Smith initiated collections for paleontology and natural history, which became the nucleus of the present Alabama Museum of Natural History.

In 1910, the University of Alabama dedicated the completion of the new Alabama Museum of Natural History building, appropriately named Smith Hall, which also housed the Geological Survey of Alabama for over half a century. Smith also served as president of the Geological Society of America in 1913.

In the 1920's, Smith lobbied for increased legislative support, which allowed him to mark the end of his career with the publication in 1926 of the exceptional report and map, produced jointly with the U.S. Geological Survey, on the geology of Alabama; it was one of the most comprehensive studies made in any state up until the 1920's. At the time of his death in Tuscaloosa on September 7, 1927, he had published over 120 titles on Alabama and southeastern geology, spanning the period from 1872 to 1927.

One of the lasting legacies of Smith's work is the recognition that his research is considered to be of the highest standards and, even today, his published reports are consulted on a variety of topics regarding the geology of Alabama.