



VIGNETTES OF COASTAL PLAIN GEOLOGY

TRUMAN HEMINWAY ALDRICH

1848-1932

T. H. Aldrich may be considered the last of the great pioneers of American Tertiary paleontology. Born in Palmyra, New York, in 1849 he graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute as a mining engineer. After school he went to work in Alabama and it was his discovery of the large coking coal deposits of northern Alabama that were largely responsible for the development of the steel industry of Birmingham. Not only was he active in the coal fields of Alabama, but an ardent amateur paleontologist. In 1886 he published his first major work, Alabama Geological Survey Bulletin 1, in which he described over 50 new species of Eocene Mollusca. For the next forty years he contributed numerous short works on the fossil species that he had collected. On the occasion of his 80th birthday the University of Alabama gave him an honorary Doctor of Science degree, in recognition of his great service to the industrial and intellectual development of the state. (From Julia Gardner, 1933, Geological Society of America, Bulletin, v. 44)