

## OBITUARIES

ANASTASIO ALFARO (GONZÁLEZ), a Corresponding Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union since 1888, was born February 16, 1865, in Alajuela, Costa Rica, and died on January 20, 1951. He attended the University of Santo Tomas and then located in the capital, San José. He devoted his long life to the study of natural history and taught several branches of this field in several institutions of higher education in his country. His studies embraced birds, reptiles, mammals, fish, insects, and plants. He collected in all these fields from boyhood, and many species, including a hummingbird and an ant tanager, were named after him.

In 1886, by special appointment of his government, he became a member of the Committee to Prepare a National Exposition. The Exposition was so successful, especially the ornithological exhibition, that he was sent to Washington to study administration in the Smithsonian Institution. The following year (1887) the National Museum of Costa Rica was founded and he became the Director, a post he held continuously until 1930 except for the years 1898-1903, when he was one of the administrators of the National Archives. He was delegate to the Exposition in Madrid in 1892, to the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893, and to the Central American Exposition in Guatemala in 1897. Among honors bestowed on him were the Royal Order of Isabel the Catholic in Spain, Knight of Sweden, and life membership in the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia. He began publishing in 1887 in Vol. I of the *Anales del Museo Nacional* and published many studies in this journal later. Among his major works are *Etnología centro-americana*, Madrid, 1893; *Antigüedades de Costa Rica*, San José, 1894; *Arqueología criminal americana*, San José, 1906; and *Mamíferos de Costa Rica*. In 1917 he published *Petaquilla*, a series of literary essays and poems based on observation of Nature. At the age of seventy-five he visited the countryside with the same enthusiasm for nature that he had shown in his youth and published an article on applied entomology each month in the *Revista del Café*.

I am indebted to Professors Juvenal Valerio R. and James Homer Herriott for assistance in the preparation of this notice.—A. W. SCHORGER.

HERBERT WILLIAM BRANDT, a Member of the American Ornithologists' Union since 1915, and a Life Elective Member since 1947, died at Homestead, Florida, March 8, 1955. He was born in Cleveland, Ohio, October 28, 1884. The degree of Mining Engineer was obtained from the Case Institute of Technology in 1907, followed by a Master's degree. While attending school, he was an outstanding athlete. His fondness for ornithology induced him to select mining engineering in order that he could be out of doors. After leaving Case, he followed his profession in Nevada and New Mexico for two years, then worked as a reporter for a time on the Goldfield Nugget.

He returned to Cleveland on the death of his father, to take over the family business of wholesale provision dealers, The Brandt Company, of which he soon became President. Possessed of ample means, he organized and led 42 field expeditions, four of which were in the Arctic. In 1954, with the aid of the Royal Canadian Air Force, he studied the Coral Harbor area on Southampton Island. Southward his activities carried him to Panama and Chile. These expeditions resulted in three notable ornithological contributions: *Texas Bird Adventures* (1940), *Alaska Bird Trails* (1943), and *Arizona and Its Bird Life* (1951). By the time of his death he had assembled a considerable amount of material for a fourth publication, *Birding Down and Up America*. This work was to cover his experiences with nesting birds

from the Florida Keys due north to the High Arctic. In all he studied the life histories of 710 forms of North American birds, of which 485 were full species. Few ornithologists approach these numbers even in a "life list."

His work in Alaska was rewarded in 1946, by an honorary doctorate from the University of Alaska, the first to be awarded to a nonresident of the Territory. In recognition of his interest in conservation, he received in 1953, the Nash Certificate of Merit.—A. W. SCHORGER.

JOHN MILTON EDSON, Honorary Life Associate of the American Ornithologists' Union, died in Seattle, Washington, June 13, 1954. He was born in Sinclairville, N. Y., September 29, 1861, and his formal education was obtained at Fredonia Institute and at Chamberlain Institute, Buffalo, N. Y. In 1885, he read a paper, 'Birds of Chautauqua County,' before the Chautauqua Society of History and Natural Science, that was published privately as a brochure of 14 pages the following year. George B. Sennett, likewise born in Sinclairville, was sufficiently impressed by the young man's ability that he nominated him for Associate Membership. On his election in 1886, Sennett wrote to him as though this was equivalent to a Christmas present, showing how much honor was attached to membership at that time.

He went to Seattle, Washington, in 1888, and shortly thereafter to Bellingham where he engaged in the newspaper and job printing business. In 1894, at the A.O.U. meeting in New York, he became acquainted with Elliott Coues. Immediately thereafter he supplied himself with sufficient books and equipment to permit serious work in ornithology through extensive collecting. Eventually, he was instrumental in founding the Bellingham Public Museum that was opened to the public in 1941. He served as director until 1945, when he retired and moved to Seattle. The thirteen cases in the Museum hold 317 birds and 21 mammals that he mounted, and in many instances he painted appropriate backgrounds. In addition, Western Washington College of Education is indebted to him for 54 specimens, and the Museum of the University of Washington for 700 skins of birds and 275 of mammals.

Several of his field trips are noteworthy. Leaving New Whatcom on July 20, 1892, with three companions, the top of Mount Baker was reached on July 31. Extensive notes were taken on birds and mammals. In 1905 he accompanied W. L. Dawson on an ornithological exploration of the San Juan Islands, when on occasion, gull eggs were used as a substitute for fresh water. His most memorable trip took place in 1920, when under the auspices of the Biological Survey, he accompanied Walter P. Taylor, George G. Cantwell, and William T. Shaw into the Cascade Mountains.

He was a member of the Cooper Ornithological Society and the Pacific Northwest Bird and Mammal Society. His ornithological papers comprise some 55 titles most of which appeared in 'The Murrelet,' and the remainder in 'The Condor,' and 'The Auk.' Aside from being a recognized authority on the birds of Whatcom County, he made exhaustive studies of the nesting of the Violet-green Swallow. One of them, 'Recession in weight of nesting birds' (Condor, 1930), received the Maillard prize of \$100. He also furnished A. C. Bent some original observations on the White-winged Scoter.

In 1889, he married Alma B. Green who died in 1930. He is survived by a daughter Emily H. (Mrs. H. R. Mattox), and a son, Arthur A.—A. W. SCHORGER.

HARRY HARRIS, a Life Member of the American Ornithologists' Union, died at Eagle Rock, Los Angeles, California, June 11, 1954, at the age of 76. He was born in Moberly, Missouri, April 17, 1878, and was educated at the University of Michigan and Washington College, St. Louis, Mo. From 1897 to 1902, he was occupied with his work as a commercial artist, and from 1902 to 1921, he served as cashier in the Kansas City Post Office during which time his father was City Postmaster. Later he moved to California and was curator of the library of vertebrate zoology in the California Institute of Technology at Pasadena.

Harris was interested in birds from an early age. He was elected an Associate of the Union in 1911 and a full Member in 1919. He was also a member of the Wilson Ornithological Club and the St. Louis Academy of Science; and after he moved to California, he became active in the Cooper Ornithological Society, serving as President of the Southern Division and as Business Manager. He was energetic, blessed with unbounded enthusiasm, and never afraid of work. Having acquired a set of 'The Ibis,' he made a complete index of the biographical material in the various volumes, a careful but laborious work, which unfortunately is still only in manuscript. He was a careful, accurate, and interesting writer. His best-known publications are his 'Birds of the Kansas City Region,' 1919, his Memorial of Robert Ridgway, with a bibliography, published in 'The Condor' in 1928, and 'The Annals of *Gymnogyphs* to 1900' published in 'The Condor' in 1941.—T. S. PALMER.

DR. LUDWIG SCHUSTER, vice president of the German Ornithologists' Union (Deutsche Ornith. Ges.), Corresponding Fellow of the A.O.U. elected in 1953, died on September 7, 1954. He was the founder and editor of the Beitr. Fortpflanzungsbiologie der Vögel (1925-1944) and, lately, editor of the "Vogelwelt." Throughout his life he devoted himself to the study of the breeding biology of birds, in Africa and Central Europe, and contributed much to the growing interest in this field. A special issue of the Journ. für Ornith. (vol. 94, no. 1/2) was dedicated to him on the occasion of his 70th birthday (January 30, 1953).—E. MAYR

ALICE HALL WALTER, an Associate of the American Ornithologists' Union since 1938, died at Providence, Rhode Island, December 1, 1953. Alice E. Hall was born at Lyndon, Vermont, on February 3, 1869. On August 25, 1896, she married Herbert E. Walter, then a high school teacher in Chicago. They had been high school sweethearts at Lyndon Institute. In 1906, after obtaining his higher degree at Harvard, Dr. Walter was appointed to the faculty of Brown University, and Providence became their home. He had been an Associate of the Union since 1901, and died in 1945. For some summers while he taught field zoology at the Long Island Biological Association Laboratory, Cold Spring Harbor, she taught small classes in bird-study there.

I first knew Mrs. Walter prior to 1920, when she was contributing articles of a more or less editorial nature to the Audubon Society department of Bird-Lore magazine. Popularizing bird-study may be considered to have been her life work. To her bird-study was a part of Science, and in Science, the steady progress of which one may trace through centuries of peace and of war to the present, she had faith. In the September-October, 1916, issue of Bird-Lore, she makes the point that bird-study should conform to scientific standards and not be allowed to become just a plaything of persons superficially interested. Both this editorial, and Witmer Stone's Comment on it in the following January Auk (p. 117), are well worth rereading today.

I knew her best around 1928, when she was compiling data from years of intimate study of the bird life at Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island. There is an old letter from her dated August 5 of that year regarding my impending visit to the laboratory, which would give us opportunity of going over together plans for its publication. It was probably on that visit that I was presented with a copy of the Twelfth (1926) edition of her and her husband's "Wild Birds in City Parks," first published in 1901, for its fly-leaf is inscribed with both their names, and dated August 7, 1928. Though he always retained an interest in ornithology, hers was latterly the more active. One usually thinks of them together. They observed an Arkansas King-bird together on Nantucket Island, September 13, 1933, which she mentions in a letter that lies before me, and she also recorded it in the *Auk*.

Both Dr. and Mrs. Walter had a long and active service in the Audubon Society of Rhode Island. Both were officers, he a president and later vice-president; she chairman of the education committee for years and years, during which she engineered, with her co-workers, a useful and most varied program for adults and for schools.—JOHN T. NICHOLS.

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THE SOUTHWESTERN RESEARCH STATION

OF

THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

The American Museum of Natural History has announced the establishment of The Southwestern Research Station. It is located on the eastern slope of the Chiricahua Mountains, near Portal, Cochise County, in southeastern Arizona. The property is within the limits of the Coronado National Forest at an elevation of 5400 feet.

The station was established for the purpose of making available research facilities for scientists and students in all branches of science, who have problems that can be investigated through the utilization of the faunal, floral, and geological features of the area. It will be open during the entire year.

It is operated by the American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street, New York 24, New York and under the direction of Dr. Mont A. Cazier, Chairman and Curator of the Department of Insects and Spiders, to whom all inquiries should be addressed. Anyone interested in the station should write to the above named individual for the booklet which gives the details of the operation and a general description of the area.