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IN MEMORIAM: WALTER EDMOND CLYDE TODD

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WALTER Edmond Clyde Todd, Curator Emeritus of Birds at Carnegie Museum and Fellow Emeritus of the American Ornithologists' Union, died on June 25, 1969, in his ninety-fifth year.

Once that simple statement has been made, a memorialist is faced with an almost unbelievable wealth of Toddiana from which to choose, to fill the allotted few pages in *The Auk*. Some comprise the expected straightforward recitation of genealogy, education, employment, and scientific attainments. In Mr. Todd's case we can add to this a cascade of statistics: he commuted daily to his office for 23 years *after his retirement*; his lifetime railroad travel in commuting alone totalled more than three-quarters of a million miles; he had been the oldest living member of the A.O.U. since the death of R. M. Strong in 1964; he was married for 20 years and a widower for 42. And, finally, there are the anecdotes. None of Mr. Todd's friends and colleagues has ever been able to resist the telling and retelling of incidents illustrative of some aspect of his unique personality; there should be space enough for at least a few of these in any memorial that purports to reflect the real W. E. Clyde Todd.

The eldest of three children, Mr. Todd was born on September 6, 1874, in Smithfield, Ohio, about 45 miles southwest of Pittsburgh. His father, William Todd, had been a teacher since his graduation from Allegheny College (Meadville, Pennsylvania) in 1868. At the time of his son's birth he was Principal of Public Schools in Smithfield, but within a few months he moved his family to Clarion, Pennsylvania, where he took up his duties as principal of Carrier Seminary (now Clarion State College). In 1877 he joined the faculty of Beaver College, which is now in Glenside (near Philadelphia), but was then in the Ohio River town of Beaver, Pennsylvania, and Beaver was the family home from that time on.

Todd was a common name among the Scotch-Irish and English settlers in eastern Ohio and western Pennsylvania, and even in the small town of Beaver there were several unrelated Todd families. Then as now, certain

W. E. CLYDE TODD, 1874–1969
(From a photograph taken in 1950 by Clyde Hare)

given names were much in vogue. Thus when Isabella Todd wanted her son to come to supper, she could not call to the boys in the street for either "Wally Todd" or "Eddie Todd" and be sure of getting the right boy. She settled on "Clyde," as none of the other Todd parents in Beaver had happened to hit upon this name, and as W. E. Clyde Todd he was known thereafter. This eventually led to bibliographic complications, as certain British authors tended to believe that "Clyde Todd" was a compound family name in the British tradition (some even added a gratuitous hyphen), and thus an occasional bibliography lists Mr. Todd among the C's.

With the exception of attendance for a couple of months at Geneva College in Beaver Falls, Mr. Todd's formal education ended with his graduation from Beaver High School in 1891. But a high school education in 1891 had a far different emphasis from its counterpart today. Mr. Todd's grounding in Latin and Greek was so thorough that he served as classical advisor to his Carnegie Museum colleagues throughout his scientific career. On at least two occasions, institutions of higher learning in the Pittsburgh area sought to confer honorary doctorates upon Mr. Todd, but he refused them, saying that he was not an educated man. Most people outside Carnegie Museum, not knowing his preference, persisted in addressing him as "Doctor Todd," which always made him uncomfortable.

In his great "Birds of western Pennsylvania" (1940), Mr. Todd, in the chapter on the Magnolia Warbler (p. 507), wrote: "I published an account of the taking of a set of eggs (now in the Carnegie Museum) in the Buffalo Creek region of southeastern Butler County, in June 1889 (my outstanding ornithological achievement up to that time)." "Up to that time," indeed! He was fourteen years old when he thus extended the known breeding range of the Magnolia Warbler, and sixteen when his discovery was published in *The Auk*. His publishing career had in fact begun when he was *thirteen*, with a note in *The Oölogist* on Beaver County birds. But Mr. Todd obviously did not consider his first five "titles" to be "outstanding." These first five were almost his last five. He knew, at fourteen, the importance of preserving a specimen as proof of his discovery, so he collected the parent Magnolia Warbler. He did not then know the art of preparing bird skins, so he packed the warbler in a tin box to mail (the service was faster in those happy days) to a friend whose grandmother knew something of taxidermy. As his uncle was driving him to the post office, the horses panicked and ran away, the wagon hit a tree, rolled over, and was demolished, and young Clyde escaped with his life through a combination of fast thinking and what he always believed to be the intervention of a merciful Providence that was to watch over him for eighty more years.

Badly shaken up, Clyde did not get around to mailing the now crushed

warbler corpse to his friend until the next day. By the time it had arrived, it was too badly spoiled to preserve. Todd was regretfully able thus to send only a description of his find, without specimen, to Dr. C. Hart Merriam in Washington, but to his immense satisfaction, Dr. Merriam accepted the record. For some months young Todd had been sending bird migration reports from Beaver to Merriam's Division of Economic Ornithology and Mammalogy of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and two years later began to collect and send in bird stomachs (for which he was paid ten cents apiece to cover the cost of ammunition). After having received a gentle warning from the State Game Warden from Pittsburgh, who had received complaints about a boy shooting songbirds (prohibited by law only two years earlier), Clyde continued his collecting but more circumspectly. He felt that he easily fulfilled all of the requirements for a collecting permit except one, and it was hardly his fault that he lacked two years of the minimum age of eighteen!

Even before his graduation from high school, Todd had written to Dr. Merriam, and also to Dr. J. A. Allen of the American Museum of Natural History (then editor of *The Auk*), asking if there were any present or prospective opening in ornithology "for one of my youth and inexperience." Both replied negatively but sympathetically, promising to keep the boy in mind if anything opened up. Captain Charles Bendire, on the other hand, replied in quite a different vein. In a long and frank letter Bendire told young Todd "You could not possibly if you tried pick out a *worse profession* to gain even the plainest sort of living than this. To the best of my knowledge there are not over five ornithologists in the country that draw a salary [he then mentioned Allen, Robert Ridgway, and Frank Chapman] . . . Brewster, Cory, Sennett, Elliot and others I could mention are all men of means and can afford to please themselves in their tastes, and not one of them, I presume, ever made a dollar for every ten they spent in pursuit of this subject."

Mr. Todd was a little hurt that Captain Bendire would think he wanted to make money out of ornithology, but he was nevertheless much impressed by this letter. As he wrote long afterward in his old age (in a handwritten memoir of the first 33 years of his life, on file at Carnegie Museum): "I never dreamed that a time might come when I too would be writing letters in a similar vein to a younger generation of worthy aspirants. But like some of them I never entirely gave up hope that something might happen. Call it a presentiment, a 'hunch,' if you will."

Meanwhile he decided to take advantage of the offer of a scholarship, made by the authorities at Geneva College to the top student of the graduating class of each high school in the Beaver Valley. After college he intended to seek a position, with good prospects for advancement, with the

Pennsylvania Railroad; his boyhood ambition had not stopped at the job of locomotive-driver, the goal of so many youths of his generation, but went on to an interest in directing train operations. He never lost his interest in railroading, and was to speak of it many times in future years as his only alternative career choice; needless to say, the expression of his opinion of the mid-Twentieth Century deterioration of railroad passenger service was held within decent bounds only by his adherence to Victorian standards of vocabulary.

Shortly after the college year had begun, Todd's "presentiment" materialized in the form of a letter from Professor Walter Barrows, inquiring at Dr. Merriam's request as to whether the young man would be interested in a probationary three-month appointment as a "messenger" in Merriam's division, his duties to be primarily clerical, at a salary of $50 per month. Todd wrote his acceptance immediately, of course. His impatience to receive confirmation of his appointment was reflected years later in his memoirs; he states "I did not then realize how slowly the Government is accustomed to act." The original letter from Dr. Barrows had arrived "shortly after the middle of October," but by the last few days of October Todd had about given up hope. To write a letter, await a governmental action and a letter of appointment, and then give up hope, all within a period of about two weeks, surely bespoke an era of faster mail service and less tangled bureaucracy than we know today!

But on the afternoon of Friday October 30 a telegram from Dr. Merriam announced that Mr. Todd was to begin work in Washington on Monday. Somehow the boy managed to buy and pack new clothes, say goodbye to family and friends, send word of his decision to the Geneva College faculty through a fellow student, and still make the train leaving Pittsburgh (some 25 or 30 miles from Beaver by wagon) at 2 AM. His memoirs state: "It never occurred to me to travel on Sunday; on that point I had conscientious scruples." He never lost those scruples; the field catalogues of his expeditions are notable for never showing more than six consecutive days of collecting. Arriving in Washington at 2 on Saturday afternoon, he reported prematurely to Dr Merriam at the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Merriam was a little taken aback at the youthful appearance of his new messenger, but invited him to attend the meeting of the Biological Society of Washington to be held that night at the Cosmos Club. There he met, among other notables, Captain Bendire, of whom Todd later wrote: "Of all the scientific men whom I met in Washington during my stay, he was one who never had any use for me, even when I was assigned to work for a time in his office. . . . Just why I never knew, but I suspect that he was peeved because I had disregarded his earlier proffered advice. He never knew how nearly I had really come to acting upon it."

Todd's first job was the sorting, labeling, and cataloguing of the division's burgeoning collection of bird stomachs in alcohol. He found the records in such chaotic condition that it is easy to imagine this assignment to be the genesis of his lifetime of devotion to scrupulous accuracy and painstaking care in curatorial work.

Early in Todd's Washington career, Dr. A. K. Fisher took him over to the Smithsonian Institution to introduce him to several scientists there. The first of these was Frederic A. Lucas, later to be Director of the American Museum of Natural History, but then Curator of Comparative Anatomy with a laboratory on the upper floor of the Smithsonian's stable. But the highlight of this day was his first meeting with Robert Ridgway, already Todd's idol, who endeared himself to the boy immediately by treating him as an esteemed colleague. Mr. Todd's admiration for Ridgway grew with the years; "indeed, insofar as scientific work was concerned, he stood as my exemplar." I never heard Mr. Todd refer to Ridgway other than as *Mister* Ridgway, with the utmost of respect in his voice; perhaps a part of this feeling, and the adoption of Ridgway as "exemplar," may have been based on Todd's sharing with Ridgway the lack of a doctorate, both young men having embarked on their scientific apprenticeships in their teens.

Todd's interest in the birds of his boyhood home continued, and, with Dr. Merriam's reluctant permission, he took a few days' leave of absence during his first Christmas season in Washington to participate in the founding, in Allegheny (now part of Pittsburgh), of the Western Pennsylvania Ornithological Society. Then January 1892 passed, and the three-months' "probationary period" had come and gone without comment. Todd discovered long afterward that there was, officially, no such period, but that it had been invented by Dr. Merriam as a convenient excuse to discharge Todd had his services been unsatisfactory. Todd's memoirs of this period are filled with his impressions of such contemporaries as Merriam, Barrows, Fisher, William Palmer, F. E. L. Beal, and his friend and roommate Edward A. Preble, who taught him to skin birds. Although Mr. Todd always complained that he had never mastered the art of *rapid* preparation of bird skins, his specimens are well made and (needless to say) the accuracy of their data is impeccable.

For some time Todd had wanted to get back into the field, and it was natural that he thought at once of making a more thorough survey of the breeding birds of western Pennsylvania than he had been able to accomplish as an untutored boy. He studied maps carefully, and selected a series of potential collecting localities (dependent, in those days, on accessibility to a railroad stop). Being entitled as a government employee to thirty days' leave in each calendar year, Todd was confident that Dr.

Merriam would look favorably upon a proposition that three weeks of his 1892 vacation be spent in June carrying out ornithological field work. To his great annoyance, he was told that he could not be spared at that time—perhaps later. Determined to return to Pennsylvania at the height of the nesting season, Todd then proposed that he hire, at his own expense, a substitute to carry on his duties in Washington while he was away. Merriam and Barrows eventually accepted this highly irregular arrangement. The three-week collecting trip was a great success; Todd found several species that neither he nor anyone else had realized bred in western Pennsylvania. This trip was the first of the many that were to culminate, 48 years later, in "Birds of western Pennsylvania," one of the classics among regional avifaunas.

For Todd the highlight of 1892 was his first attendance at an A.O.U. meeting—he had been elected an Associate Member (the category now called Member) in November 1890. He presented a paper based on his Pennsylvania field work (later published in *The Auk*), and had the honor of being second on the program, preceded only by the great Elliott Coues. Dr. Coues, who was elected to the presidency of the A.O.U. at that meeting, is described by Todd in his memoirs as "an upstanding, fine-looking figure of a man, with a full beard, piercing blue eyes, and a wonderful command of English." This emphasis on language skill was to find its counterpart 72 years later when O. L. Austin, Jr. chose to climax his review of Todd's "Birds of the Labrador Peninsula" by praising the author's writing style and command of English syntax.

Through most of the remaining years of the last decade of the nineteenth century, Todd continued to live in Washington and to make periodical collecting trips to western Pennsylvania. In 1895 he planned two itineraries, one for himself, and one for a newly-hired assistant, "a young Harvard graduate, William Henry Phelps." Note the use of the adjective "young"—Mr. Phelps was Todd's junior by one year. They became lifelong friends, and long afterward Mr. Phelps' annual visits to Carnegie Museum to study Venezuelan birds were among the year's highlights for Mr. Todd.

The A.O.U. met in Washington again in 1895, and for the first time Mr. Todd appears in a group picture, reproduced in *The Nidiologist* (3: 41, 1895). He was now all of 21 years old, and his receding hairline is already apparent. Compared with the magnificent beards of Coues, Brewster, and D. G. Elliott, or the fine soup-strainers of Merriam, Sennett, and Mearns, Mr. Todd's well-trimmed (and soon abandoned) moustache appears modest indeed.

1896 was a bad year. Todd seriously considered borrowing the funds, estimated at $200 a year, necessary to resume his college education, this time at his father's alma mater, Allegheny (all of his savings had been spent

on his ornithological expeditions). But the senior Todd discouraged his son, as the family, caught in the business depression of that time, needed Clyde's financial assistance. Shortly afterward William Todd developed a cold, which progressed through "La Grippe" to "Galloping Consumption," and he died on May 18. Clyde returned to Washington after the funeral, but sent his surplus earnings home to his mother instead of spending them on field work. That summer, after long urging by Dr. Merriam, Congress authorized the transformation of Merriam's division into the U. S. Biological Survey. Todd was required to take his first Civil Service examination, and was the only one in his group of 17 young government men who did not "bone up" in advance, as he really didn't care much just then whether he passed or not. To his amazement, he alone passed, and was given a $5 per month raise.

In September 1896, Todd contracted a severe case of malaria. He was permitted to go home to Beaver under a new government provision for extended sick leave. Not until after Christmas did he begin to regain his strength. During his illness and in his absence, what proved to be the last meeting of the Western Pennsylvania Ornithological Society was held at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, the first time that Todd had ever heard of this institution. Although he continued his work in Washington through 1897, interrupted by the usual summer field work in Pennsylvania, he was becoming more and more discontented. He was fed up with government work in general, and felt that both his salary and his prospects were inadequate. And, stimulated by his visits to Beaver, he was just plain homesick. Learning that the Carnegie Library in Pittsburgh was forming a "Museum Department," he took advantage of his Christmas week visit home to look over the new institution. The poor quality of most of the ornithological exhibits suggested to his ambitious young mind that the fledgling Carnegie Museum had an obvious need for a staff member with his own brand of expertise. Through an influential uncle he obtained interviews with several of the trustees, but left for Washington with matters still unsettled pending the appointment of a director for the new museum. This post went to Dr. W. J. Holland (later the author of well-known manuals of Lepidoptera), and, to Todd's intense disappointment, the post he sought for himself was given to his friend Samuel Rhoads. Nevertheless, Todd wrote to Holland and offered his services as a freelance collector of birds and mammals for the 1898 field season in western Pennsylvania. This offer was accepted, and Todd subcontracted the mammals to Thaddeus Surber.

The highlight of that collecting season was Todd's arrest for shooting birds without a permit; the fee had been raised from $1 to $5, which Todd

thought was unreasonable. Fortunately a telegram from the influential Dr. Holland satisfied the Justice of the Peace, and Todd was able to leave town by promising to send fee money to the arresting constable after he got back to Washington.

Rhoads was unable to tolerate what he called Holland's dictatorial ways, and resigned. Todd therefore reapplied for a position at Carnegie Museum, and was appointed as Assistant, at $50 per month, in April 1899. His association with the museum lasted the rest of his long and productive life. In retrospect, he thought he should have had some misgivings about Holland after the experiences of his friend Rhoads, but he then believed that he had weathered enough unpleasantness of various kinds in Washington to be able to endure anything Carnegie Museum had to offer. Alas, Todd had sadly underestimated Dr. Holland, and their feuding has become solidly entrenched in Carnegie Museum legend. Todd always believed that whatever he accomplished had been done, not only without Dr. Holland's help, but in spite of his interferences. It is certainly true that many or most of the long series of expeditions to northern Canada that were to begin in 1901 would not have been possible without Mr. Todd's own independent fund-raising efforts.

Field work in Pennsylvania continued, and Todd was already referring in letters to his "forthcoming" book on the birds of the western part of the state. Gradually, however, the emphasis shifted to field work in the Labrador peninsula and other parts of Canada, while the Pennsylvania work turned to writing and compiling. These chronologically overlapping interests culminated in the two great books, "Birds of western Pennsylvania" (1940) and "Birds of the Labrador peninsula and adjacent areas" (1963), that were based in large part on his own field experience. This part of Todd's life will barely be touched on here, simply because so much of it is described in the books themselves. For additional background, the reader is referred to Robert Cushman Murphy's review of the first book (*Cardinal*, 5: 73–83, 1940) and O. L. Austin, Jr.'s review of the second (*Auk*, 81: 461–464, 1964).

A few years after Todd's appointment to the Carnegie Museum staff, collections of neotropical birds began to arrive from professional collectors and others. Over the years the material obtained from such men as Carriker, Worthington, Klages, and the Steinbachs, and Carnegie Museum employees such as Link, Blake, and Clement, accumulated to make this institution outstanding among repositories of tropical American birds. Todd managed to intersperse his Pennsylvania and Labrador work with the production of an amazing number of papers, long and short, based on these collections. He always regretted that he had never visited the tropics himself; I learned only recently that he had been warned by a physician,

shortly after his bout with malaria, to avoid hot climates, and he faithfully followed this advice without realizing that modern medicine would probably have made a trip to South or Central America perfectly safe for him.

At first Todd's approach to the neotropical collections was largely faunal. He prepared papers on the birds of the Bahamas and the Isle of Pines, and finally, with Carriker, "The birds of the Santa Marta region of Colombia" (1922), for which the authors were awarded the A.O.U.'s Brewster Medal. While working on these, Todd also wrote a number of taxonomic papers. Some of the latter were appallingly brief "preliminary diagnoses" of new genera, species, and subspecies, so far beneath what I came to know as his standards of thoroughness that they had always puzzled me. Mr. Todd explained to me that he himself regretted these papers, which he had "rushed into print" at the urging of Dr. H. C. Oberholser. After the publication of the Santa Marta book, Todd turned exclusively to taxonomic papers in his neotropical work. Although he continued to describe new taxa, his diagnoses were much more thorough and painstaking, and his best, and best-known, papers were complete revisions of genera (*Cyanocompsa, Arremonops, Spinus, Basileuterus,* etc.) and polytypic species. He also began a program of studying the Carnegie Museum's neotropical holdings family by family, and publishing "critical notes on . . ." or "list of . . ." or "catalogue of . . ." papers on each of these.

Mr. Todd belonged to an era with so few active workers on avian distribution that it was perfectly feasible to divide up the world on a "gentlemen's agreement" basis. Dr. Chapman would take Ecuador, Dr. Zimmer Peru, Dr. Chapin the Congo, Dr. Grinnell Pacific North America, etc. Each ornithologist was expected to, and prepared to, turn over any pertinent data to the appropriate specialist. Mr. Todd outlived this era, and was never able to understand that younger men might not respect, or even understand, his prior claim to all of northern Canada from Hudson Bay eastward. His correspondence file from the 1930s through the 1950s is filled with carbon copies of Todd's letters requesting reprints of faunal papers published in *The Canadian Field-Naturalist* and elsewhere, and admonishing the authors that it would have been better had they made their notes available for Mr. Todd for incorporation into his "forthcoming" comprehensive work on Labrador birds. He even went so far as to guard possessively some of the specimen data from his northern expeditions. Storer (*Univ. California Publ. Zool.*, 52: 213, 1952) had to add an explanatory footnote to his list of examined alcid specimens: "Because of his forthcoming work on the birds of the Ungava Peninsula, Mr. W. E. C. Todd has requested me not to publish the exact localities of birds in the Carnegie Museum from that region."

The actual writing of the Labrador book began in 1953, the year I

joined the staff of Carnegie Museum. Mr. Todd by then had become inured to, if not happy with, the continual publication of records by other people intruding on "his" area, but he was such a completist that his manuscript had to be revised each time another paper appeared. It was only with the greatest difficulty that I persuaded him to set a definite literature cutoff date for his book. This, in turn, led to the episode concerning Francis Harper's publication, described in Austin's review cited earlier.

As was perhaps characteristic of those of his generation who lived on into ours, Mr. Todd tended to equate "things-as-they-ought-to-be" with "things-as-they-were." It was this feeling that led him to omit introduced species completely from "Birds of western Pennsylvania." Even though he had never known a Pennsylvania devoid of the House Sparrow, still this ubiquitous pest (as it was considered by Todd's mentors, Merriam and Barrows), together with the Starling and the Ring-necked Pheasant, did not *belong* in Pennsylvania and were therefore ignored, both in his book and in his collecting activities. Later he either mellowed to some extent or realized that his attitude was not truly scientific, so both the Starling and the House Sparrow are discussed in "Birds of the Labrador peninsula." His special distaste for the sparrow still manifested itself, however, in the use of several pejorative adjectives and in the printing of the species' account in the small type otherwise reserved for dubious or erroneous records.

Among his colleagues, Mr. Todd was famous for his almost fanatical meticulousness with curatorial detail. Birds were to be placed in perfect alignment in trays; on my first visit to Carnegie Museum in 1952, when Mr. Todd was showing me his series of Long-billed Marsh Wrens, I inadvertently returned a bird to its tray about three millimeters out of line. As we continued to talk, I noticed his hand snaking down, almost as a reflex, to nudge the specimen back into place. For much of his long tenure at the museum, Mr. Todd had little or no help, either curatorial or secretarial. I never fail to wonder at his scientific productivity in view of his devotion to paperwork. I once calculated that if I were to follow all of Mr. Todd's procedures scrupulously, the exchange of a single bird skin with another museum would necessitate written entries in eleven different places. Although some of these procedures did eventually seem to me not worth the time and effort involved and were abandoned, others combined to make the Carnegie Museum bird collection in some respects the best curated and most accessible that I had ever seen, and these traditions, hopefully, are being maintained.

Mr. Todd was always chary with his confidences about what he considered his private affairs. He was married in 1907 to Leila E. Eason of Beaver, but failed to inform his Carnegie Museum colleagues of this fact. Some years later Mrs. Todd, a spirited woman who was rather more

socially inclined than her husband, tired of hinting that she would like to meet his Pittsburgh friends. She waited until Mr. Todd had left for the office, then boarded a later train and appeared at the museum, demanding to be taken to lunch with her husband and his colleagues. This incident was the first intimation than any of them had had of Todd's marriage. Mrs. Todd died in 1927.

Todd's personality was a strange mixture of seemingly irreconcilable components. He collected birds and their eggs for seventy years, but considered the huge series of eggs in certain private collections as "a great waste of bird life." A bold Boreal Chickadee once alighted on his shotgun barrel; that particular chickadee was thereafter immune from being collected. Todd was devoutly religious, superimposing a strong belief in spiritualism on a straight-laced Methodism. As mentioned above, he rigidly observed the Sabbath, and would not permit any periodical into his home that contained advertisements for alcoholic beverages. He abhorred smoking, and would call to the attention of the motorman any miscreant who lit a cigarette on a streetcar. Knowing that Todd never touched coffee, a colleague asked him (when he was about 80) why this was—religious scruples, health reasons, or just distaste. Mr. Todd explained simply that his mother had told the children not to drink coffee or tea, and he had never seen fit to disobey this parental dictum. He went on to say that *she* drank coffee all the time; one had the distinct impression that if his mother had remembered to tell Clyde at 21 that it was all right to drink coffee now, he might have taken up the habit. On one occasion he did, however, drink a cup of tea, the only time a stimulant ever passed between his lips. The Eighth International Ornithological Congress at Oxford in 1934 included several social events, duly attended by Mr. Todd. At an outdoor reception, he passed along a receiving line dutifully pumping every outstretched hand. His reflexes were not quick enough to avoid the last hand in the line, which, to his surprise, thrust a cup of tea into *his* hand. Mr. Todd explained to us many years afterward that he felt ethically obliged to consume the tea, having accepted the cup. At the age of 60, then, he had his first and his last cup of tea.

Those who did not know Mr. Todd well had the impression of him as a prissy, overfussy, somewhat cantankerous relic of the Victorian age. It is certainly true that he lost no opportunity of expressing his opinion about those things about which he felt negatively, notably alcohol, tobacco, inflation, the decline of the railroads, and W. J. Holland. On the other hand, he had a gentle and puckish sense of humor, and had a special talent for writing amusing doggerel. During a brief hospitalization for minor surgery in the mid-1950s, he was the darling of the nurses, for each of whom he wrote a poem. Although he had strong opinions, he was not argumentative.

I soon learned that it was fruitless to try to present a well-reasoned case for a taxonomic opinion contrary to that held by Mr. Todd. He would look over the evidence, murmur "I dare say you are perfectly right," and then go ahead and do it his way anyway. But it would be a mistake to think that his taxonomic conservatism was dogmatic. He carefully considered each case on its merits, and then drew generic and specific lines where he really believed they should be. Although he continued to hold out, for example, for recognition of the profusion of genera of dabbling ducks now usually combined into *Anas*, he found Dilger's work on the forest thrushes wholly convincing, and (rather to my surprise, I must admit) used the generic name *Catharus* in his Labrador book. Most of Todd's ornithological writings were, in a broad sense, descriptive, but he had nothing but admiration for those who were able to go beyond this into interpretation and theory. He told me several times that he wished he were capable of writing a book like Mayr's "Systematics and the origin of species."

Probably half the anecdotes told about Mr. Todd deal with that characteristic of his personality that can only truthfully be described as his parsimony. Everything was saved to be reused: string, wrapping paper, envelopes. He was rather proud of the fact that he never bought newspapers or pencils; the former he could always find discarded on a seat of his commuter train, and the latter he picked up in the street. One of my favorite stories concerns the occasion, not long after I came to Carnegie Museum, when an attractive and popular young lady then working for the Section of Mammals sent invitations to the staff for her wedding, to take place in the chapel of the University of Pittsburgh right across the street from the museum. Mr. Todd, invitation in hand, walked over to the mammalogy lab and thanked the girl for thinking of him. He then explained that, much as he would like to go to the wedding, his monthly cut-rate commutation ticket was not valid on Saturdays, and he would therefore be unable to attend.

As many taxonomists know, Carnegie Museum's bird collection is unique in that its type specimens are identified as such with *blue* rather than red labels. A story has circulated for many years to the effect that Mr. Todd made this choice because blue paper was cheaper than red paper. I can report to my fellow ornithologists that this story is a base canard. Mr. Todd himself explained to me that when the time came to have type labels printed, he *already had* a stock of excellent blue paper on hand, and saw no need for a further investment in a supply of red paper just to conform to tradition.

Todd abhorred flying, although I am told that he did have to undergo flights once or twice when it was necessary to evacuate a far northern field camp in a hurry. Once when he was muttering about an airline that had

the effrontery to suggest by mail that he might like to fly with them to the next A.O.U. meeting, I reminded him that there had been several recent serious train wrecks, and that the victims of these were just as dead as those who died in plane crashes. Mr. Todd refused to be baited and took the conversation quite seriously, saying that he took every precaution to avoid being in a train wreck. Fascinated, I asked him how he managed this. He told me that on his daily train rides, he inevitably sat in the last coach, in the last-but-one seat (the last being traditionally reserved for the trainmen). I pointed out that many of the worst wrecks occurred when one train overtook another on the same track, and thus his seat selection did not appear to me to be a guarantee of safety. He went on to explain that he had ridden that route for so many years that his subconscious mind knew every foot of the way. Even if he slept during the trip (as he did increasingly in his later years), should the train slow down or stop in an unaccustomed place he was instantly awake. If it stopped, Todd climbed down the steps and stood outside by the door of the coach until the train started up again.

Perhaps nothing in Mr. Todd's secular life was as important to him as his association with the American Ornithologists' Union. He became a Fellow in 1916, and by action of the Council was elected Fellow Emeritus in 1968. His interest in the Union may well have prolonged his life. In 1964 a near-fatal illness resulted in a long and tedious convalescence in hospital. Several times we despaired of his recovery, as he seemed to have little will to live. Then, early in 1965, he began to ask us to bring him certain books and journals. His week-to-week improvement was almost dramatic, and we wondered what had brought it about. Finally he confided that he had hit upon a goal. He remembered that in 1890, the year he had joined the Union, President J. A. Allen had opened the papers session with an address entitled "The American Ornithologists' Union—a seven years' retrospect." Mr. Todd decided that he would recover his strength in time to attend the 1965 A.O.U. meeting in Columbus, and would offer for the consideration of the Program Committee a paper entitled "The American Ornithologists' Union—a *seventy* years' retrospect." As work on the manuscript for his proposed talk progressed, it became obvious to me that it would be out of place in the regular papers session; for one thing, too many people that might otherwise like to hear it would undoubtedly be engaged in the usual corridor discussions rather than seated in the auditorium. Through the cooperation of Dean Amadon, then President of the A.O.U., and the members of the Columbus local committee, we quietly arranged for a period of time at the annual dinner, unannounced on the program, to be set aside for Mr. Todd if he did indeed succeed in recovering sufficiently to attend the meeting.

Probably none of us who were at that banquet will ever forget it. Mr. Todd did attend, and presented half an hour of reminiscences of the early days of the A.O.U. and of the Biological Survey, read without eyeglasses from his handwritten manuscript. He received a thundering standing ovation.

So strongly did Mr. Todd feel about the A.O.U. that one sensed that he didn't really consider his great lifelong Labrador project completed until the book had been evaluated in an Auk review, even though several favorable notices had already appeared. It somehow seemed the perfect climax to this long life truly devoted to ornithology when in Toronto in 1967, at the last A.O.U. meeting he ever attended, Mr Todd became the first recipient in A.O.U. history of a second Brewster Medal, this time for the Labrador book.

I have mentioned that Mr. Todd's first A.O.U. meeting was the Union's Tenth Congress, in Washington in 1893. In preparing this memorial, I felt an almost superstitious awe in discovering in the published proceedings of that meeting (*Auk*, 10: 64, 1893) just above the listing of Mr. Todd's first appearance on an A.O.U. program, the wording of a resolution on which he undoubtedly voted: "on the decease of any Active Member of the Union, the President shall appoint a committee of one to prepare a suitable memorial of the life and work of the deceased member, to be read at the first stated meeting of the Union, and to be published in 'The Auk' as an expression of the sense of the Union." I do not doubt that my fellow members of the Union will sense, with me, that a last door to a great era of American ornithology has closed with the passing of W. E. Clyde Todd.

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