

IN MEMORIAM: LYNDS JONES

BY S. CHARLES KENDEIGH

BOTH parents of Lynds Jones, Publius Virgilius and Lavinia Burton, came from New England families, and Lynds was the eighth generation in this country. The father was first a millwright and later a farmer and pioneer. The son, Lynds, was born on January 5, 1865, at Jefferson, Ohio, but when he was only three months old, the family moved to a farm five miles northwest of Grinnell, Iowa. There were six sons and one daughter in the family. Death came to Lynds on February 11, 1951, at Oberlin, Ohio, at the age of 86 years. Arthritis of the lower spine made him more or less helpless during his last two years, and the development of arterio-sclerosis contributed to his passing. Lynds Jones will long be remembered as a teacher, an editor, a leading field scientist of his day, a valued citizen of his community, and a gentleman.

I wish to acknowledge my debt to a son, Dr. George T. Jones, for many details of information used in this article and to the biography of Lynds Jones by Mrs. H. J. Taylor, published in 'The Wilson Bulletin' (Vol. 50: 225-238, 1938) from which I have drawn freely. The photograph is an enlargement from a snapshot taken in his home at Christmas time, 1948, shortly before his 84th birthday and provided me by his son.

Lynds Jones developed an interest in birds and in the science of ecology early in life. Doubtless this was influenced by his early environment in Iowa where his home was nestled at the edge of a grove of trees with unbroken prairie stretching away to the west. He early began to speculate why different species of birds occurred in different habitats and to make a collection of eggs. He was encouraged in these interests by an older neighbor boy, who was an expert collector and taxidermist, and by his country school teacher, who incidentally later became his father-in-law. Coues' "Key to North American Birds" and Samuel's "Nests and Eggs of New England Birds" were two books that had an important influence in developing his interest and learning in ornithology. He attended Grinnell College for two years but then transferred to Oberlin College in Ohio because of the greater variety of science courses offered there. His A.B. degree was obtained in 1892, his M.S. degree also from Oberlin College in 1895, and his Ph.D. degree from the University of Chicago in 1905. While at Chicago he came under the influence of Henry C. Cowles and V. E. Shelford whose studies on the plant and animal ecology of the



Lynds Jones.

sand dunes at the south end of Lake Michigan may well have crystallized his own interest in ecology. His doctorate thesis, however, was concerned with the development of nestling feathers in birds.

Lynds Jones began his teaching career at Oberlin College as soon as he graduated in 1892, serving first as assistant and then as instructor in zoology and becoming associate professor in 1905. He was promoted to the rank of full professor in 1922 and professor emeritus in 1930. In addition to teaching, he also served Oberlin College first as assistant curator and then as curator of the natural history museum.

In 1895, the college permitted Lynds Jones to offer a course in ornithology, the first such course to be offered in any American college or university. The course involved learning how to recognize species of birds from museum specimens, from unlabeled pictures that were shown on the classroom screen by means of a carbon arc balopticon, and from field trips. The early morning bird walks, involving a peak enrollment of 120 students and conducted by the instructor and his assistants, became a well known feature during the spring in the community life of the Oberlin village.

In the summer of 1910 Professor Jones offered for the first time a field course entitled "Ecology," with all the work to be done on Pelee Island in Lake Erie. A year's course in ecology was introduced in 1913 in which plant ecology was stressed almost as much as animal ecology, and an undergraduate major was offered in 1915. In 1926, advanced animal ecology and research were given and a master's degree in ecology was made available to those who continued for a full year of graduate training in this field. These offerings in ecology stimulated several of his students to continue their training at other universities and to make the teaching and study of ecology their life-careers.

An interesting incident in the pioneering work that Dr. Jones did for the teaching of ornithology and ecology in schools of higher education pertains to the difficulty he encountered with the head of the Department of Zoology. This gentleman considered these subjects unworthy of serious attention at the college level and tried to eliminate the courses from the curriculum. This opinion, however, was not shared by the rest of the college faculty. The result of the conflict was that in 1908 Dr. Jones' title was changed to Associate Professor of Animal Ecology, and he was given an autonomous subdepartment of animal ecology freed from the control of the Department of Zoology. In 1922, an entirely independent Department of Animal Ecology was recognized by the college, the only such department in the country. When Dr. Jones retired, the department was discontinued; courses in animal ecology and ornithology were abandoned.

Much of Dr. Jones' teaching was conducted during the summer months when bird activity was greatest, and ecological distinctions most conspicuous. Much of this instruction was away from the Oberlin campus and included field studies at the Ohio State University Lake Laboratory at Cedar Point, on Pelee Island in Ontario, and at Marblehead, Ohio. In 1915, he conducted the first of 13 class trips to the Pacific Coast to study birds and ecology. On the first two trips the group went by train to Seattle and then by Indian launch and canoe from camp to camp along the west coast of Washington. Many stops were made to inspect island nesting-colonies of sea birds. After an interruption due to the war, the trips were started again in 1919 but this time by automobile in order to visit en route as great a variety as possible of different habitats. Everyone slept out in the open each night for a period of six or eight weeks. Because of the many unique adventures and experiences encountered, these trips remain an outstanding memory to all who were privileged to go on them. It is unfortunate that the story of these trips has never been written. Many persons considered that the course work, field trips, and personal contacts with Professor Jones were the most important and most pleasantly remembered experiences of their college life.

Dr. Jones was one of the founders and 36 original members of the Wilson Ornithological Club in 1888, and throughout his active life he was one of the mainstays and promoters of this organization. He held the presidency for 13 years, was secretary for 2 years, treasurer for 8 years, and editor for 36 years or from 1888 to 1900 and from 1902 to 1924, inclusive. The Wilson Ornithological Club actually did not formally recognize the office of editor until 1914, although the "Bulletin" had carried on its cover page, "Edited by Lynds Jones," since 1896. The name, *The Wilson Bulletin*, was first used in 1894. Beginning in 1888 the official organs of the Club were 'The Curlew,' 'The Ornithologists' and Oologists' Semi-Annual,' 'The Wilson Quarterly,' and 'The Journal.' Lynds Jones had the chief responsibility of gathering and editing the material that went into these various journals from club members, although he was simultaneously serving also as secretary from December 1888 to 1890, president from 1891 to 1893, treasurer from 1894 to 1901, president again from 1902 to 1908, and on the executive council for several following years. He served a final term as president from 1927 to 1929. From 1896, when 'The Wilson Bulletin' first began to publish regular contributions of a varied sort, through 1909, by which time it had become well established, Dr. Jones averaged seven signed articles per year besides numerous editorials and literature reviews. This nurturing and coddling

of 'The Wilson Bulletin' through its early years of growth made possible the development of this periodical to the full maturity that it shows today.

Jones became a Member of the American Ornithologists' Union in 1888 and a Fellow in 1905. He was also a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Ecological Society of America, and the Ohio Academy of Science.

One of Dr. Jones' main scientific interests concerned the migration of birds, and he continued collecting data on the arrival and departure dates for all species, even after his retirement from teaching. A summary, published about 1935, includes records for 40 years. In this connection, he was a regular contributor for the Oberlin region to "The Season," published by 'Bird-Lore,' first in 1900 and 1901, then again later, when this department was revived, from 1917 to 1922.

In 1903, Dr. Jones published "A Revised Catalogue of the Birds of Ohio." This major contribution included the scientific and popular names of each species as well as synonyms, the status and migration of each species, and citations to literature. During the same year he appeared as joint author with a former student, William L. Dawson, of "Birds of Ohio" which was a more pretentious and popular volume.

Through the medium of his editorship of 'The Wilson Bulletin,' Dr. Jones early promoted the taking of daily bird counts as well as actual censuses over unit areas. Perhaps this early encouragement of field studies from 1898 to 1900 may have had something to do with the initiation of the Christmas bird "census" annually conducted by 'Bird-Lore' (now 'Audubon Magazine') and with the more recent development of breeding-bird censuses that have become so popular. Other scientific interests and contributions of Dr. Jones dealt with the roosting habits of grackles, life-history studies, and with local faunal lists (Lorain County, Ohio; Cedar Point and vicinity, Ohio; Lake Erie islands; and the coast of Washington state). There are, altogether, 142 articles listed in his bibliography, although many are short.

Lynds Jones had many interests besides birds. One of these was sports. He helped to organize the first football team at Oberlin College and was an outstanding player on the teams of 1891 and 1892. In later years he excelled at golf and tennis and regularly attended all sports events of the college.

Dr. Jones assumed his share of duties in the community life of Oberlin. He served on the village council and various special committees. He was chairman for some years of the Oberlin School Board and a trustee of a tuberculosis sanitarium. During the second World War he was chairman of the local draft board. He was honored

with life membership in the Oberlin Chamber of Commerce. He served as treasurer and deacon of the Congregational Church at Oberlin.

Lynds Jones married Clara Mabelle Tallmon in 1892 and the two had a long and happy life together. Dr. and Mrs. Jones had five children: Lynds Leo, now an electrical contractor; Theodore Burton, deceased; George Tallmon, Associate Professor of Botany at Oberlin College; Beth, whose husband, Max W. de Laubenfels, is Professor of Zoology at Oregon State University; and Harold Charles, Professor of Biology, East Carolina Teachers College.

This memorial may be closed with what a former student wrote some years ago: "Dr. Jones is a very quiet, modest, retiring, but effective man; a teacher who places the world of nature before you, and with a few guiding remarks expects you to make the discoveries for yourself—his teaching has lasting and ever increasing value. It has contributed to the joy of living"

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