

OBITUARIES

HANS THOMAS LANGE SCHAANNING, Corresponding Fellow of the A.O.U. since 1923, died in Kragerø, Norway, March 5, 1956, three days after his 78th birthday.

Schaanning was born in Oslo March 2, 1878. When only 22 years old he went to the Pasvik Valley in east Finnmark, close to the Russian border. He always longed to return to the sub-arctic wilderness of this remote and little-known country. His stay of 12 years was interrupted by excursions to parts of northern Russia and to Novaya Zemlya, where he wintered in 1902-1903.

In 1918, Schaanning was appointed curator and head of the natural history department of the museum in Stavanger, a position which he held until he retired in 1948 at the age of 70.

Schaanning was the first to introduce into Norway (1914) the method of banding birds for the study of migration. At the Stavanger Museum he developed the marking method that gradually became the major one of the two schemes in existence in Norway. His interest in migration also resulted in the erection of a bird-banding station on the shore of the North Sea some 20 miles from Stavanger. This station has had unrivaled success in the trapping and marking of arctic waders (see *Bird-Banding*, 24: 147-153, 1953).

Schaanning published a number of short notes and papers, mainly on Norwegian faunistic features. His most important works deal with arctic material from various Norwegian expeditions to Jan Mayen, East Greenland, Arctic North America (Northwest Passage, "Gjøa"-Expedition 1903-07; "Fram"-Expedition 1898-1902), Siberia, and the Siberian part of the Arctic Ocean.

His last paper, issued in Oslo (1954) is "A Contribution to the Ornithology of Eastern Siberia" (*Nytt Mag. f. Zoologi* Vol. 2). It is based upon collections made by his friend Johan Koren and includes a color plate of the only known egg-clutch in the world of *Calidris tenuirostris*, found at the Kolym Estuary, 1917 (preliminary note in 'The Ibis,' 1929).

Schaanning was keenly interested in the problems of bird protection and had been a member of the International Committee for Bird Protection since 1922.—
HOLGER HOLGERSEN.

ROBERT PONCY, a Corresponding Member of the American Ornithologists' Union since 1932, died at Geneva, Switzerland, December 7, 1955, at the age of 81. He spent a good part of 60 years observing the birds of Lake Geneva. In the course of this period, he managed to increase considerably the knowledge of their food habits, movements, and behavior. His influence on the study of birds in French Switzerland has been considerable. He published a great many notes in French and Swiss magazines.—J. DELACOUR.