

ARCHIBALD MENZIES, FIRST COLLECTOR OF CALIFORNIA BIRDS

By JOSEPH GRINNELL

To the student of distribution what happens in course of time comes to loom as of almost as great importance for one's understanding as what happens in space. Indeed, facts of time-change and of space-change are impossible to dissociate without injury to the significance of each category; we simply must delve into history as well as into geography in order to get the fullest possible picture of species-behavior before us.

These common-place but important considerations have led me of late to search back through certain easily accessible records for such indications as they might afford as to condition of the bird life in California prior to the time when relatively full accounts began to be put on record, in the early 1850's. Needless to say, the accounts of most non-scientific travellers when they touch upon natural history at all prove well-nigh useless: they are vague, inexact, often rather obviously manufactured to fill out a literarily "full" narrative.

It is gratifying, therefore, to find an account, of relatively early date, that was written by a man of, for that day, high scientific training, a man of attested veracity. Even though the records he left us as regards bird life are fragmentary, since his prime interest was in another field, we can take what he does say with full confidence in its truth.

Archibald Menzies (*cf.* Forsyth, Archives of British Columbia, Memoir No. v, 1923, pp. vii - xii, 4 pls.), Scottish botanist, traveller and explorer, was born in Perthshire; it is recorded that he was baptized there March 15, 1754. He was one of a long line of Menzies, dating back to the year 1057 when the Barony of Menzies was founded by King Malcolm Canmore. It is remarkable, says biographer Forsyth, that nearly all the Menzies in the vicinity for generations were either gardeners or botanists; and it was in the garden of his ancestral home that Archibald Menzies received his first lessons in botany. It was here, too, that he later brought and reared many then new kinds of trees and other plants which he discovered during his travels.

Menzies studied botany and surgery in Edinburgh, then entered the Royal Navy as assistant surgeon on the ship "Nonsuch" which took part in a French engagement in 1782. He later went to Halifax, Nova Scotia, practicing surgery and botany. Returning to England, he embarked on the private trading vessel "Prince of Wales" which made a three-year voyage to the Pacific, ending in 1789. There is no detailed history extant, of this voyage, and it is not certain just where the vessel went (at least there is no evidence that it touched anywhere on the coast of California). However, it is known that Menzies brought home from it a "consignment of plants" and, furthermore, that he "brought back the ship's company in perfect health", save for one man who had died.

By 1790, Menzies had attained some fame as a botanist, and as a result the British Government at the instance of Sir Joseph Banks appointed him Naturalist as well as Surgeon, to accompany Captain Vancouver in the voyage of the ship "Discovery" around the world. Again Menzies was highly successful, this time not only as a surgeon but also in his capacity as Naturalist. He is stated by Vancouver, and by numbers of men who worked over his materials in later years, to have been indefatigable in carrying out the instructions given him at the outset of the voyage. These instructions were extensive; the phrases of interest to us in the present connection are as follows: He was to investigate the whole of the natural history of the countries visited, paying attention to the nature of the soil, to the prospects of growing

European grains, fruits, etc.; he was to dry specimens of all native trees, shrubs, plants, grasses and ferns, that he should think worthy of being brought home, and he was also to bring home either seeds or living plants of as many kinds as possible; furthermore he was to search for ores, metals and minerals, and give attention to beasts, birds and fishes; inquiries were to be made into the manners, customs, language and religion of the natives. Finally, he was to keep a regular journal of all occurrences, which journal, together with a complete collection of specimens, was to be delivered upon the return of the expedition to His Majesty's Secretary of State.

This was a pretty large commission, but it was carried out in remarkably ample measure, perhaps partly due to the sympathetic help afforded by his fellow officers on the "Discovery", as attested to by Menzies himself here and there in his records. Fortunately, the original journal kept by Menzies on this voyage is preserved in the British Museum. From a photostat copy of this journal, the portions relating to California have recently been published—by Miss Alice Eastwood, botanist at the California Academy of Sciences (Calif. Hist. Soc. Quart., 2, 1924, pp. 265-340). Now for a brief indication of Menzies' itinerary on the California coast, and then extracts relating to the bird-life he encountered and to the conditions under which he found it. I am grateful to Miss Eastwood for permission to quote these extracts in the *Condor*.

The ship "Discovery", as stated by Miss Eastwood, arrived first in the harbor of San Francisco on the evening of November 14, 1792, and anchored about where most shipping now docks. Anchorage was soon changed to a place near the present Marina, and ten days were spent in the vicinity. Then the vessel proceeded to Monterey where it remained at anchor from November 26, 1792, to January 14, 1793, a period of 50 days, very much more time than was spent at any other point on the California coast. Then the "Discovery" went out into the Pacific, to the Hawaiian Islands, returning to California on the first of May. May 2 to 5, 1793, the ship was at Port Trinidad, but it then proceeded north of California; returning in October, it was in Tomales Bay on October 20, again in San Francisco Bay, October 21 to 24, and at Monterey, November 1 to 6; then at Santa Barbara, November 10 to 18, and at San Diego November 27 to December 9, 1793. Vancouver then sailed west across the Pacific.

A total of close to 96 days, or a little over three months, was thus spent by the "Discovery" at anchor on the coast of California, giving more or less opportunity for Menzies and his helpful fellow officers to be ashore. But close reading of his journal shows that conditions were nowhere else so favorable for collecting as at Monterey. Of his two visits at San Francisco, Menzies says (p. 307) that during the second visit, owing to the unfriendly attitude of the Commandante at that port, he himself was not allowed ashore at all; "consequently", he says, "I had no opportunity while we remained here of collecting either plants or seeds for his Majesty's Gardens, which I the more regretted as my state of health when here last year [on his first visit] precluded me" from "examining the shores of this Harbour with the minuteness I could wish." It is thus unlikely that specimens of any sort, such as birds, other than botanical were preserved from San Francisco.

Concerning his impressions of Monterey and what he did there during his main stay from November 26 to January 14, I present the following excerpts from Menzies' diary, with some comment of my own. Spelling, punctuation and capitalization are retained as according to Miss Eastwood's rendering.

"My late indisposition [while at San Francisco] rendered me so exceedingly weak that I was not able to go on shore for some days, and when I did go my excursions

were very limited, indeed the Country in general was at this time so exceedingly dry and parchd that there were but few Plants to be met with in a state for investigation.

"The Proesidio [of Monterey] appear to be nearly a Mile from our Anchorage in a Southerly direction, and scarcely presented any thing else to our view than a dead wall, but the land about it and on the western side of the Bay under which we were shelterd, presented beautifull Lawns and rising eminences of clear pasturage diversified with Clumps of Trees and scattering Pines, and enliven'd with Horses and Cattle grazing in numerous Herds. Behind the Proesidio the land rose into a naked hilly ridge of a moderate hieght, which gradually diminish'd as it ran round the western side of the Bay between us and the Ocean towards the outer Point, where it was coverd with a Forest of Pines, from which it had obtain'd the name of *Punta de Pinos*. This Point is low and rocky and was about three miles to the North West ward of our Anchorage and the whole intervening shore is very rocky/ and indented with scarcely a place for landing from a boat except in very fine weather and smooth sea [p. 283]."

"It [the Presidio of Monterey] is pleasantly situated on a low Plain and just before it between it and the Anchorage there is a Salt Water Lagoon which at this time swarm'd with a great variety of wild aquatic fowls that afforded much diversion to our Sportsmen. [Contrasted now on this exact site is the built-up town of Monterey.] This Lagoon was only filled at Spring Tides, and near it in going to the Proesidio we pass'd over some low moist or Marshy ground where good Water/may be got by digging Wells, at any season, and it is only in this manner that the Garrison is supplied with this necessary article, for there is no constant Spring or good run of water within some Miles of it.

"As Sr Quadra liv'd on shore at the Proesidio, the Governor and him kept an open table for the Officers of the Shipping in the Bay, at which large parties of us din'd almost daily, and partook of the indulgence of their hospitality without reserve, and it is but justice to add that they were equally ready to contribute to our amusements, by providing horses and guides in the most liberal manner for those who chose to take the recreation of riding through the Country; and those who were fond of shooting and sporting were suffer'd to indulge in their favourite pursuits without the least restraint, so that parties were out daily traversing the Country in almost every direction for ten or twelve miles round." [This indicates the extent of opportunity Menzies had for collecting at this point.]

Going on, he says: "On the fifth [of December, 1792] I went on shore with Mr. Broughton and Mr. Puget. We stroll'd towards *Punta de Pinos* by a pleasant walk along the sea side, sometimes passing through Woods, the Trees of which were chiefly Pines and a species I had not met before on the Coast the *Pinus Toeda*;⁹ these were so far apart on the lower ground as not to obstruct our penetrating the Wood in every direction, but higher up the ridge they appear'd to be closer set and a continued Forest. Here and there we met clear spots of Pasture and Thickets of Brushwood, consisting of various Shrubs/ many of which were new to me, and which I much lamented were not in a condition to be ascertained. Among them I observ'd the common Southern wood and several other species of the Genus *Artimesia*¹⁰ These with a number of others diffus'd in this dry Country an aromatic fragrance which was exceeding pleasant. The Thickets every where were inhabited by great variety of the feather'd Tribe, many of which were also new, among these was a

⁹ *Pinus radiata* Don.

¹⁰ *Artemisia californica* Less. *Artemisia heterophylla* Nutt.

species of Quail of a dark lead colour beautifully speckled with black white and ferrugeneous colours with a Crest of reverted black feathers on the crown of its head, these were also met with at Port San Francisco and are common over this Country, they are equal to the common Partridge in delicacy of flavour and afforded a pleasing variety to the other luxuries with which at this time our Table abounded. [This bird was, of course, none other than the California Quail, whose type locality thus is made known.]

"We found the Land about the Point low and bleaky with a number of white sand hills, particularly on the western side where it is exposed to the Oceanic gales. We returned through the Wood by a different path and shot a number of small Birds, a new species of Hawk [likely the California Condor] and several Quails, but the Country was so exceeding dry and parched that we found but few plants in Flower in our whole excursion. The Cattle were supplied with Water from standing pools that remained here and there in hollows, or in places dug on purpose for them by the Inhabitants, for we did not meet with a spring or constant run of Water in our whole circuit.

[Now comes an important statement as showing that it was at Monterey that Menzies saved actual specimens.] "The two following days I remained on board examining drawing and describing my little collection and such other objects of natural/history as were brought me by the different parties who traversed the Country, and who were in general extremely liberal in presenting me with every thing rare or curious they met with. The sporting parties were particularly successful in killing a vast variety of Game with which the Country abounded and which were now in full perfection. On the latter day a number of Officers who din'd at the Proesidio were entertained in the evening with a Ball at the Governor's House said to be given by Sr Quadra's Steward."

Continuing: "I accompanied a sporting party that took horse at the Proesidio on the morning of the 8th and rode along shore to the Eastward for about four or five Miles to visit some Lagoons that lay in that direction that swarmed with Geese Ducks and other Aquatic Fowls, but from our being on Horseback we were not very successful and returned in the evening not much burthend with Game. The day being fine we however enjoyed our ride as a pleasant recreation and din'd on what provision we had carried with us at a small House near a Garden about a league to the Eastward of the Proesidio. This we were told was the only Garden belonging to the Garrison, it was not well stocked with Vegetables, and if it had, it was scarcely of a size to supply one fourth of the Inhabitants; Nothing more conspicuously shewed the indolence of the Spaniards, than their not rearing in a country like this where the Soil is so very productive, a/sufficient quantity of Vegetables for their own consumption, one would have supposed that a small Garden would afford to the Soldiers when off duty a most pleasant amusement and recreation, setting aside the advantages it would yield to his Family, but they live entirely on Garrison provision, and indulge in their native indolence.

"A large high Bank of loose land ran along shore reard by stormy weather, as far as we went, and the Country behind it is low with Clumps of Trees thinly scattered of the Holly-leaved Oak *Quercus*¹¹ *Coccifera*, and extensive fields of Pasture, but the greatest part of the Country here was covered with stiff low Shrubs, many of them Evergreens and entirely new to me, but I was this day equally unfortunate in finding but very few plants in flower, many of these shrubby Plants appeared to be of the Class *Lyngenesia* and were of a fragrant quality.

¹¹ *Quercus agrifolia* Neé.

"On the ninth in the forenoon Captain Vancouver Mr. Broughton and a large party of Officers from both Vessels, joined the former party of Spaniards at the Proesidio and having mounted horses rode out to the Eastward and din'd under an Arbour erected for the purpose in the Garden we had seen on the preceeding day. While the dinner was getting ready the Governor set off with a party to amuse themselves with *Bear hunting*, but after traversing a good deal of ground where they were expected to be met with they returned without having started any. Foxes Hares and Rabbits were frequently seen/in these excursions and a large variegated Squirrel which burrowd in dry sandy grounds were very abundant particularly about the Proesidio. [This was, of course, the California Ground Squirrel, not formally described until more than thirty years later.]

"Whenever we went out in this manner Sr Quadra's Plate and Cooking Equipage etc. travelld along with us, so that we had always the luxury of dining in those retreats off Silver, and on the best of every thing he could afford [pp. 285-288]."

"The 13th [of December] was consecrated to devotional exercise and kept as a holiday at the Proesidio, it was usherd in by firing of Guns and Volleys of small Arms which was continued at intervals throughout the day in commemoration we were told of the Lady of Lorette the Patroness of New Spain, a Saint highly esteemd and reverd throughout this Country.

"I this day traversd the woods and hilly ridge on the Western side of the Bay in Botanical researches and returned in the evening with several Plants and Birds I had not before/seen, which occupied my time in examining and describing for the two following days [p. 288]."

"I went on shore on the 18th [of December] and ranged the Country to the Eastward of the Proesidio for Plants. In the sandy Soil near the sea side I found a procumbent plant in flower which I considered as a new genus of the Class Pentandria Monogynia", etc. [p. 289].

Speaking of the natives at Monterey: "Their food at this time was chiefly shell fish, which the Women collected along shore, while the Men loungd about the Country with their Bows and Arrows, killing Rabbits and Quails, which they generally brought to us to barter for beads and other trinkets [pp. 293-294]."

Writing of San Francisco on the day of his first arrival there, November 15, 1792, Menzies says [pp. 267 ff]:

"Our present situation was pretty well sheltered and afforded good and safe Anchorage, the skirts of the Bay and hilly Country behind was interspersed with brush-wood and clear spots of Pasturage on which a number of Black Cattle were seen feeding in Herds; these inducd us to think favorably of the Country, which we should otherwise from general appearance be apt to pronounce naked dreary and barren.

"As I was at this time not quite recoverd of a severe cold I had on the passage from Nootka I did not venture on shore till about mid-day when I landed and took a short walk into the Country, and found it was not so very barren/as its appearance led us to suppose it. The Soil in general is loose and sandy of a dark brown colour, but pretty deep; the Grass which grew on the Pastures was not of a very thick bottom, the Bushes too with which a great part of the Land along shore was covered was of a stunted scrubby appearance and not very numerous in variety, yet I was not able to ascertain their names, being so unfortunate as not to meet with a single Plant in Flower in my whole excursion; I however observd that these Thickets were in a great measure composd of a species of Ever green Oak with Holly-like leaves which I took to be the *Quercus Cocciferus*¹ and which did not here grow above fifteen feet

¹ *Quercus agrifolia* Neé.

high. There was another Ever green nearly the same height but more ornamental and at this time plentifully cropped with red Berries which appeared to be a new species of *Cratoegus*.² I also found growing near the sea side, what by its fruit seemed to be a dwarf species of Horse Chestnut³ and another bushy Plant which appeared to be a *Ceanothus*⁴ with some smaller shrubby Bushes of the Class *Syngnesia*;⁵ two kinds of Willows⁶ and the *Lonicera*⁷ *Nootkagensis*.

"I saw likewise several Birds which were new to me, but I shall be able to speak of them more particular hereafter.

"I met no fresh water stream in all my walk, what they filld our Casks with was from a standing Pond in a Marsh behind the Beach and which provd very good and wholesome [pp. 267-268]."

At the second anchorage, in the Bay, now the Marina, abreast of the Presidio, Menzies writes:

"In the morning of the 17th it was Cloudy with Showers but afterwards became fair. In the forenoon I accompanied Cap^t Vancouver and some of the Officers on shore, we found a low track of Marshy Land along shore, with some Salt Water Lagoons that were supplied by the overflowings of high Tides and ooziings through the Sandy Beach: On these we saw abundance of Ducks and wild Geese. The watering party who/landed before us could meet with no fresh water stream, they were therefore obliged to dig a Well in the Marsh to fill their Casks from, but the Water thus procurd was afterwards found to be a little brackish, which might indeed be expected from the nature of the Soil which was loose and sandy and the little distance it was from the sea on the one side and salt water ponds on the other. Fire Wood was here equally difficult to procure, there being only scrubby brush wood on the side of an adjacent hill, a Tent was however erected in order to screen the parties employd on these duties at night and to afford shelter in case of bad weather [p. 270]".

There follows much description of the Mission and of the Presidio, as well as of a trip taken by his fellow officers to Santa Clara Mission, but which he was unable to accompany. Some of this narrative helps to build a good picture of the territory from San Francisco southward 40 miles or so, as it was 139 years ago.

In the vicinity of Tomales Bay, on October 20, 1793, Menzies was ashore a short time and makes record as follows:

"We landed on the west side and ascended the high ground which formd the bluff headland/in expectation of a fine prospect which was however very limited from a thick fog that enveloppd the inland country; Here we found a cross that did not appear to be long erected, it was formd of a piece of the stave of a Cask fastend to a pole by a rope yarn; the grass and brush wood on this headland had been lately burnd down so that I had little opportunity here to augment my botanical collection, the few plants I saw were not different from those I had before met with at San Francisco and Monterrey excepting a new species of *Sisyrrinchium*⁸ with yellow flowers of which I brought on board live plants for the garden [p. 302]."

"We strolled about on the low land between the Bay and the Lagoon which was composd of sandy banks and small hillocks on which we shot several Plovers and other small birds. We saw on the Lagoon large flocks of Pelicans and vast

² *Heteromeles arbutifolia* (Lindl.) Roem.

³ *Aesculus californica* Nutt.

⁴ *Ceanothus thyrsiflorus* Esch.

⁵ Probably *Baccharis pilularis* DC. and *Ericameria ericoides* (Less.) Jepson.

⁶ *Salix lasioides* Benth. *Salix lasiandra* Benth.

⁷ *Lonicera Ledebourii* Esch.

⁸ *Sisyrrinchium californicum* Ker.

flights of common Curlews flying about, but both were so shy that we could not get near enough to have a shot at them.

"The Lagoon was observ'd winded round to the North west ward environ'd by low land so that we did not see its termination: The East side of the Bay rose gradually to a moderate height and was apparently at this time coverd only with shrivell'd grass without trees or bushes of any kind, but our prospect was very confin'd on account of the fog [p. 303]."

At Santa Barbara, in November, Menzies had some time ashore, though with much distraction from his natural history pursuits. He says:

"Having previously obtain'd the Commandant's leave I set out pretty early on the morning of the 12th and ascended the hills to the eastward of the Presidio for the purpose of collecting Plants and examining the natural produce of the Country; the day was very favorable for my pursuit, but the season of the year and the arid state of the Country was much against it, for though I was surrounded by new and rare objects in almost every/step of my journey, yet finding very few of them either in flower or seed I was able to receive but little pleasure or advantage from my excursion; I went through beautiful groves of the Ever green²⁷ Oak which here grew to pretty large trees, though at San Francico and Monterrey the same plant seldom exceeded 15 feet high and grew in crabbed bushes, but here they had clear stems of nearly that height and no wise crowd'd but scatter'd about to beautify the lawns and rich pastures with their shady and spreading branches, so that it was a delightful recreation to saunter through them; The thickets swarm'd with squirrels and quails and a variety of other birds which afforded some amusement in shooting them as I went along. — I observed that a number of the Natives chiefly old women were at this time employ'd in collecting acorns amongst these Groves for the purpose of food for themselves.

"Beyond these Groves the side of the ridge became very rugged with rocky cliffs chasms and deep gulleys and coverd with scrubby brush wood which made the ascent very difficult, and as there was no great inducement at this time to go on, I did not persevere to gain the summit of the ridge but return'd on board in the afternoon with what collection I was able to make of Plants and Birds [p. 317]."

"On the 13th I landed with Cap^t Vancouver and some of the Officers to take a short ride, we found/horses ready saddled for us on the Beach and after mounting them we pursued a road that led to the Westward of the Presidio and having passed through a Wood compos'd chiefly of Ever green Oaks we open'd an extensive track of Arable land to the Westward of it, on entring this naked track we found the Sun's heat so powerfull that we did not find it pleasant to continue our ride far in the middle of the day but return'd back by the Mission where we found the worthy fathers assiduously engag'd in carrying on the various occupations of industry and rural œconomy in and about their Settlement which is so necessary for the prosecution and maintenance of their laudable plan of civilization [pp. 317-318]."

"In the forenoon of the 15th in order to extend our excursion and see a little more of the Country I rode with a party of the Officers about 7 or 8 miles to the Westward till we reach'd the Bay we mention'd having passed the afternoon we came to an anchor; from the view we obtain'd of this Bay it appear'd to be very shallow water and incapable of admitting Vessels of any burthen, it branch'd back into the Country among extensive salt Water Marshes on which grew vast quantities of Samphire (*Salicornia*²⁸ herbacca): round the bottom of it we found three different

²⁷ *Quercus agrifolia* Neé.

²⁸ *Salicornia pacifica* Standley.

Villages of upwards of 30 conical huts in each, we visited two of them and saw but few Natives and these chiefly old men and old decrepitated women, some of them the most miserable looking objects we had yet beheld in our Voyage; The guide which the Commandant was so attentive and obliging as to send with us to conduct us where-ever we pleased informed us that most of the Natives were at this time up the Country in a Wood at a little distance collecting Acorns which he assured us they stored up in considerable quantities as an article of food on which they greatly depended for maintenance, and when we beheld that the country we traversed in this day's ride was mostly arable land, and the soil in many places deep and rich which we were confident would with a little industry yield in this climate productive Crops of Grain, we could not help lamenting the blind ignorance of these poor Natives in depending still on such miserable resource for support after the example which had been set before them by the Spaniards of cultivating the Soil and rearing esculent roots and grains more congenial to nourish and subsist them, but it may be the interest of the Spaniards in their plan of civilization to keep these Natives poor and ignorant who have not yet embraced their tenets to induce them to yield the more readily to the persuasion of the fathers, else we cannot account for these Natives who appear tractable and possessed of a considerable share of ingenuity still persisting in their former precarious mode of living [pp. 318-319]."

"As Mr. Manley Master of the Chatham was this day beating up the thickets for Game a small rattle snake made a dart at him but he had the dexterity and presence of mind to level his piece and shot it dead in the act and brought it on board for my inspection; these reptiles were however not very common here as they were very seldom seen in our excursions on shore, in not above two or three instances during our stay [pp. 319-320]."

"I devoted the 16th to a solitary botanical excursion and landed early in the morning at the Indian Village near which I observed a number of long Poles stuck in the ground and on examining the spot I found it to be their burying ground, where the principal graves were thus pointed out. I afterward proceeded to the Westward by a fertile Valley where I met with extensive cultivated fields and a large Garden belonging to the Garrison which however was not at this time very plentifully supplied with Vegetables [p. 320]."

At San Diego, owing to restrictions imposed by the Commandante, little of the total time there was spent ashore. Some paragraphs from Menzies' journal follow:

"In the forenoon [of December 1, 1793] I accompanied Mr. Whidby to the low sandy place to the Southward of us near the entrance of the Harbour, where he was directed to look for Water, as we were told that the Crews of the Spanish Vessels who touched at this Port found good Water there by digging Pits in the Sand: As the part on which we landed was made up of little hillocks formed by drifting Sand, it was not an easy matter to find out the particular place, and when we did, it was only two small Pits contiguous to one another in which we found brackish Water, but on emptying it all out and deepening those Pits, the water which oozed fresh up was deemed so far useful that it would answer for washing cloaths, boiling meat and other culinary purposes, therefore each of the Vessels took some of it on board, Indeed the Commandant informed us that good water was not to be got any where/near the Harbour especially in the dry seasons, that their own Vessels used formerly to procure it at great labour and expence from a brook beyond the Presidio by employing the people and Mules belonging to the place to fetch it, which greatly interfered with their common duty, this being represented to the Government at

Mexico, particular orders are now issued to each Vessel destined to this Country before she leaves San Blas requesting her to Water at some of the Ports to the Northward before she touches at *San Diego*.

"Fire wood was here equally scanty and difficult to procure, what we laid in was got from some scrubby brushwood on the side of the ridge to the westward of where we lay and as it was hard it answered tolerably well with Coals.

"On the Sandy Beach near the low point at the entrance of the Harbour I found a new plant in flower which I named *Morinda*³⁹ *glauca*, its trailing branches with glaucous leaves contrasted with globular heads of light blue flowers were extremely ornamental to such a barren situation where a plant could hardly be expected to vegetate; I found nothing else in this excursion that I could ascertain what they were.

"The following day I accompanied a party of the Officers to the Peninsula between the Harbour and the Bay, where we traversed over an extensive plain beating up the thickets in quest of game and though a number of hares rabbits and quails were seen, yet being the heat of the day, they lurked so close in amongst the brushwood that we had but very indifferent success, nor did we meet with any better success by going round the head of a Creek of the Harbour that was separated from the sea only by a narrow beach [pp. 335-336]."

Of the numbers of specimens of birds which, by inference, we may suppose Menzies, the first known collector of Californian birds, to have brought back to England, only two, insofar as I now know, gave basis for description of new species. These were the California Condor and the California Quail, both described and figured by George Shaw and Francis P. Nodder in volume 9 of the *Naturalist's Miscellany*, 1797, plates 301 and 345, respectively, each with some pages of text. These two species were the first birds to be named scientifically from California, and they remain known today as perhaps the two most conspicuously peculiar birds of this State. According to the definite statements of the describers, the specimens they handled were ones "brought over" to England "by Mr. Archibald Menzies", and were then in the British Museum. That they were obtained at Monterey, on or about December 5, 1792, my study of Menzies' Journal, as above, now leaves scarcely a trace of doubt.

In the later history of the British Museum (see Sharpe, in *Hist. Colls. Nat. Hist. Depts. British Mus.*, 2, 1906, pp. 79 ff) it has been set forth that it was customary in the latter half of the 18th and early half of the 19th century, to *mount* all specimens of birds that were preserved at all, and as the earlier acquired ones became faded, greasy or broken. To replace them with fresh specimens of the same species as such became available. Thus very many original type specimens doubtless were thrown away; very likely the type of the California Quail met that fate, for it long since disappeared. Insofar as I have learned, just one Menzies-taken bird remains, and that is the type specimen of the California Condor. Through the kindness of Mr. Percy R. Lowe, and especially through Mr. Harry S. Swarth who examined it when in London, May 12, 1930, I am able to offer the following facts in regard to its condition.

It is an adult bird; now a "skin" (once mounted), in rather poor condition; no stuffing (or very little) in the body; wings were imperfectly cleaned or poisoned, so that most of the lesser coverts "slipped" and are gone; legs partly decayed before drying; a piece broken from left side and tip of upper mandible and fragment tied in bit of paper attached to leg; naked skin of head and neck had been painted a dull

³⁹ *Heliotropium Curassavicum* L.

pinkish drab, through which the black markings show obscurely. The only label now on this specimen is not an old or original one; one side is blank, the other reads: "No. 10. 5a [probably a taxidermist's memorandum]. Brit. Mus. Reg..... | Onops californiana (Shaw) | Type | Loc. California. Pres. by A. Menzies".

Curiously, there is no bird in the world that bears a name commemorating the services of Menzies to ornithology. In botany a number of flowering plants bear his name, most notably, in California, our wonderful madroña tree, *Arbutus menziesii*.

After the conclusion of Vancouver's voyage, and one other tenure of service on a British ship, Archibald Menzies retired from the Navy and for many years followed his profession of doctor and surgeon in London, and with continuing interest in botany. He died there, February 15, 1842, when 89 years old. Travel and adventure, and the avocation of a naturalist, make for long life!

Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, September 27, 1931.