

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON DAWSON'S BIRDS OF CALIFORNIA

WITH EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS

By W. LEE CHAMBERS

Repeated inquiries from librarians, students and book collectors requesting various details concerning the several formats of William Leon Dawson's "Birds of California" prompt the writer to place on record such pertinent facts as have come to his notice incidental to a more or less intimate association with the later marketing of these well known books. It does not lie within his province to indulge in personalia regarding the colorful genius responsible for these sumptuous quartos, but merely to remove, as far as his present knowledge permits, a most annoying stumbling-block in the path of bibliographers dealing with west coast ornithological literature.

Dawson, as is well known, began his publishing career with "The Birds of Ohio" in 1903, after which he moved to the Pacific coast, and in collaboration with J. Hooper Bowles issued in two quarto volumes, in 1909, "The Birds of Washington." The following year he settled in Santa Barbara and with his characteristic energy and zeal began at once to work out a plan larger and more magnificent than any he had yet brought to fruition. This was of course to be "The Birds of California." With assurances that publication would be rushed, the energetic and ambitious author inaugurated a whirlwind campaign for subscriptions to the following proposed "editions:"

*Patrons' Edition De Grand Luxe Super Illustrated (4 vols.): with 16 original watercolor paintings by Allan Brooks bound in.

*Patrons' Edition De Grand Luxe (4 vols.): with 6 original watercolor paintings by Allan Brooks bound in.

Stockholders Edition De Luxe (3 vols.).

Large Paper Edition De Luxe (3 vols.).

*Campanile Edition De Luxe (3 vols.).

*Shasta Edition De Luxe (3 vols.).

Sunset Edition De Luxe (3 vols.).

Booklovers' Edition (3 vols.).

*Ribbed Cloth Edition (3 vols.).

Students' Edition (3 vols.).

The editions marked with an asterisk were later abandoned.

The plan at this time contemplated the issuance of the work in three volumes which were to appear simultaneously, but the author was forced by circumstances to begin issuing it in parts under printed wrappers. Two such parts, which are referred to in detail below, were distributed and paid for on delivery. The author soon awoke to the fact, however, that the limits he had set for himself would be entirely inadequate to accommodate the vast amount of textual and illustrative material available for his harvest, and that subscription prices would necessarily have to be increased to keep pace with the climbing expenditures. This added greatly to the problem that grew constantly more complex and difficult, but it in no way dampened the enthusiasm or checked the ardor of the indomitable Dawson. The present writer was in personal contact with him during the years of his struggle, and he is well aware that few men unsupported by the boundless courage and vision that Dawson brought to his work could have possibly overcome the many obstacles that blocked his path.

The long delay that followed, irritating alike to the author and to his many expectant subscribers, was drawn out to still greater lengths by a confusion of interests, not the least of which was the promotion of a museum dedicated to oology. However, all interests were made to serve the ends of the great work, and ultimately the staggering

accumulation of copy with the enormous array of supporting illustrations and color plates to be made into formats of elegance and luxury placed the enterprise entirely without the pale of commercial possibilities. A real patron of California ornithology, a benefactor of wealth, must be found.

"To Ellen Browning Scripps, lover of the human-kind, and of birds, and of flowers, and of books, patron of science, and of art, and of education, whose steadfast faith has made its publication possible this work is gratefully dedicated." Thus wrote the author out of a full heart of appreciation and gratitude for the limitless generosity that assured the complete realization of his ambitious dream.



Fig. 39. William Leon Dawson, author of "The Birds of California."

In the March, 1913, issue of the *Condor*, the late Harry S. Swarth stated, in a biographical sketch of Dawson, that among the several projects which the Cooper Ornithological Club had pledged itself to support there was probably none of greater general interest than the proposed publication, "The Birds of California," then being so energetically pushed toward completion. The aim of the sketch, aside from presenting the salient facts of the author's life, was to outline the circumstances leading up to the production of the work, as well as to give something of the ideas and ideals with which the author approached his task, and to interpret some of his aspirations as to what the forthcoming book should be. A knowledge of what Swarth wrote at that time is necessary to an understanding of the background of Dawson's activities in California.

No better outline of the progress of the work up to 1921 can be given than that contained in Dawson's own words. He states on page 3 of the wrapper enclosing Part One published in that year: "*Part One of 'The Birds of California,' presented herewith, marks a distinct departure from our original publication plans. Instead of three volumes, appearing simultaneously, 'The Birds of California' will come out in standardized parts of 64 pages each, thirty or thirty-two in all, and will make, when assembled, four volumes, (three only in the cheapest edition). Upon the completion of twenty-eight of these parts and upon notice that the remainder of the work (including title pages, indexes, etc.), is ready for delivery, the parts already delivered will be recalled for binding and for such extra equipment of pictorial material or appendices as each special edition, or copy, calls for. The binding charges and the fees for the final parts will be due and payable at that time.*

"This serial method of publication is necessitated not alone by the heavy expense involved (One Hundred Thousand Dollars *in press*, besides field and preparatory costs already met, and binding costs), but rather by the enormous complexities of art production upon such a large scale. The work *cannot be hurried* in press. In fact, we intend to take a great deal more pains in production, especially in the matter of half-tones, than was possible in the case of these two initial parts. We expect, however, to issue eight parts per annum and we may be able to issue as many as twelve, but no more. The MS and illustrative resources of this work are practically complete and all possible diligence will be observed in order to assure continuous and complete production in press"

The distribution of Part Two followed immediately that of Part One, and both bore the imprint, "The Birds of California Publishing Co.," as well as the two lines, "Pub-

lished Under the Patronage of | Ellen Browning Scripps." It is understood from the most reliable sources that five thousand each of these two parts were printed and that this stock was later utilized in the finished volumes. Transcriptions of the wrapper titles of two of the formats follow:

The Birds of California [in red] | A Complete, Scientific and | Popular Account of the 580 Species and Sub-species of Birds | Found in the State | By | William Leon Dawson | of Santa Barbara | Director of the Museum of Comparative Oology, Author of "The Birds of Ohio" | and (with Mr. Bowles) of "The Birds of Washington" | — | Illustrated by 16 Photogravures, 4 Full-page Photographs and More Than | 1000 Half-tone Cuts of Birds in Life, Nests, Eggs and | Favorite Haunts, from Photographs | Chiefly by | Donald R. Dickey, Wright M. Pierce and the Author | Together with 30 Drawings in the Text and a Series of | 48 Full-page Color Plates | Chiefly by | Maj. Allan Brooks, D.S.O. | — | Booklovers' Edition [in red] | Four Volumes | Issued in 64-page Parts and Sold by Subscription | — | Part One | Published Under the Patronage of | Ellen Browning Scripps | — | The Birds of California Publishing Co., | San Francisco | Los Angeles | Santa Barbara | Legal residence | Publishing office | Correspondence | 1921 | All Rights Reserved.

Two parts, superroyal 8vo. Pt. 1, pp. 1-64, text illus. [34] (2 f.p.), pll. [2] (1 col.); Pt. 2, pp. 65-128 text illus. [29] (2 f.p.), pll. [2 col.].

The verso of the front wrapper of each part bears the author's copyright notice and a list of the commercial houses engaged in fabricating the volumes. Page 3 of the wrapper of Part One displays the publisher's announcement transcribed in part above, the other pages of the wrappers of both parts being blank.

The Birds of California [red line] | A Complete, Scientific and | Popular Account of the 580 Species and Sub-species of Birds | Found in the State | By | William Leon Dawson | of Santa Barbara | Director of the Museum of Comparative Oology, Author of "The Birds of Ohio" | and (with Mr. Bowles) of "The Birds of Washington" | — | Illustrated by 30 Photogravures, 30 Full-page Photographs and More Than | 1000 Half-tone Cuts of Birds in Life, Nests, Eggs and | Favorite Haunts, from Photographs | Chiefly by | Donald R. Dickey, Wright M. Pierce and the Author | Together with 30 Drawings in the Text and a Series of | 100 Full-page Color Plates | Chiefly by Maj. Allan Brooks, D.S.O. | — | Format De Luxe | Presentation Edition [in red] | Four Volumes Issued in 64-page Parts and Sold by Subscription | — | Part One | Published Under the Patronage of | Ellen Browning Scripps | — | The Birds of California Publishing Co., | San Francisco | Los Angeles | Santa Barbara | Legal residence | Publishing office | Correspondence | 1921 | All Rights Reserved.

Two parts, med. 4to. Pt. 1, pp. 1-64, text illus. [34] (2 f.p.), pll. [6] (4 col.); Pt. 2, pp. 65-128, text illus. [29] (2 f.p.), pll. [7] (6 col.).

The matter on page 2 of the wrappers of both parts is identical with the 8vo given above; the publisher's announcement on page 3 of the wrapper enclosing Part One is the same as in the 8vo but is set in larger type to conform to the larger space. The outside of the back cover of Part One displays a selected list of subscribers containing 22 names for the Format De Grande Luxe and 184 for the editions in the Format De Luxe, with the statement added that there are 140 others. The corresponding page of Part Two is blank. The writer has been able to check the part issues of only the Presentation and the Stockholders' editions, but all the other quartos are obviously identical with these.

Miss Scripps was so greatly pleased with the appearance and content of these two parts that she decided to obviate further delay by underwriting the entire publication. Thus, the activity of The Birds of California Publishing Company was brought to a sudden end. She placed the management of the costly enterprise in the hands of her own organization, The South Moulton Company, which took over all assets of the old company. A letter was issued over the author's signature recalling the parts distributed, and subscribers were notified that these would be bound in the finished volumes. It is

presumed that this request was pretty generally complied with, as these part issues are of great rarity, the writer having been able to assemble but one set each of the Presentation, Stockholders', and Booklovers' editions.

With unlimited funds at its command the new company now moved briskly forward with the manufacture of the great volumes according to the extravagant specifications of the author and along the lines of the backer's wishes. The entire edition of five thousand copies of all the formats was printed from hand-set type and was run off the press continuously until finished. The printed page of every so-called edition is identical with the corresponding page of every other, having been printed from the same undisturbed forms, and in this vital particular there is of course but one edition. The number of color plates and other full page inserts, the weight and quality of paper used, the dimensions of format, and the design and quality of binding mark the different editions.

A pretentious binding establishment was set up in Los Angeles in charge of a master craftsman imported for the purpose, and the enterprise as a whole was of such magnitude as to attract the attention and interest of the entire typothetae. This story is out of place here, but is a matter of record in various printing trade journals of that time, and the interested reader is referred particularly to the several articles in a special "Birds of California" issue of "The Wolf Howls" (house organ of The Wolfer Printing Company of Los Angeles), vol. II, no. 6, November 21, 1923, and to an anonymous advertising insert of four pages titled "A Real Bookbinding Problem | How oversewing solved it," to be found in one of the numbers of *The Inland Printer* (Chicago) in 1923.

In a discussion of the various formats, particularly in any attempt to bring together a reliable census, a difficulty is encountered in the large "remainder" of stock that passed into the hands of the Claremont Colleges. Thus, there are perfect sets and imperfect sets, original bindings and later bindings, later bindings with the pictorial end papers, and later bindings with plain end papers. The numbers of these remaining copies can now only be approximated; they are indicated below along with the original copies sold by subscription.

When The South Moulton Company began distributing its finished product, the obligations of the Birds of California Publishing Company were liquidated, and each of the early subscribers was furnished with a set of the books in a format commensurate with the amount paid to the old company. If a purchaser had subscribed to one of the formats that was announced but never issued, he was given a corresponding, or even a better, format. Also, in accordance with the wishes of Miss Scripps, every high school and junior college in California, as well as many worthy students and interested friends, were presented with complimentary copies of the book.

During the period of its activity, the South Moulton Company exerted every effort to dispose of the large stock at the original subscription prices, and it prosecuted with some success a vigorous advertising and selling campaign. On the dissolution of the company, and in accordance with the terms of the will of Miss Scripps, who died in 1932, the entire stock of the publication remaining on hand, together with binding paraphernalia, dies, printed end papers, material, etc., became the property of Claremont Colleges, Claremont, California.

In their turn the college authorities tried their hands at marketing the expensive books with but little success until the usual "remainder" method was employed; prices were slashed to such figures as to attract the attention of dealers. Most of the formats were then rapidly disposed of, and at the present time the work may be said to be virtually out of print, there being less than twenty of the more expensive formats held in reserve. All other available sets are in the hands of scattered dealers.

Four thousand seven hundred and fifty copies of all formats of "The Birds of California" were published and can be accounted for. No records are available to indicate the total number printed, although it is safe to assume that the full five thousand copies announced, plus the usual printer's overrun, issued from the press. Since only bound copies and copies sewed ready for binding were inherited by the Claremont Colleges, it is again safe to assume that two hundred and fifty sets in sheets had been destroyed or salvaged as waste. The names of the various formats with the number of each published are as follows:

Students' Edition	2000
Booklovers' Edition	1000
Trade Souvenir Edition.....	35
Format De Luxe [no name, line blank].....	539
Large Paper Edition.....	350
Sunset Edition	350
Santa Barbara Edition.....	100
Presentation Edition.....	50
Stockholders' Edition	75
Patrons' Edition	
Patrons' Inlaid or Raised Leather.....	100
Patrons' Plain	150
The Scripps Copy [unique].....	1
<hr/>	
Total	4750

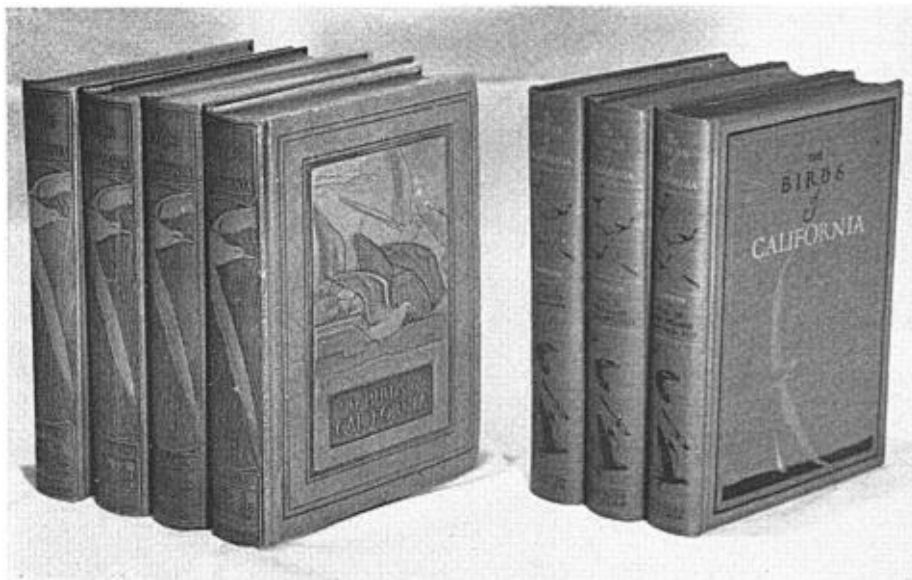


Fig. 40. Dawson's "Birds of California." Four volumes, Booklovers' Edition in green fabricoid; three volumes, Students' Edition in green buckram; both in original binding.

The following collations of these different issues include brief notes on such bindings as have been personally examined by the writer, but a few variants (bound to order) may exist which he has been unable to examine.

The Birds of California [in red] | A Complete, Scientific and | Popular Account of the 580
Species and Subspecies of Birds | Found in the State | By | William Leon Dawson | of Santa

Barbara | Director of the International Museum of Comparative Oology, Author of "The Birds of Ohio" | and (with Mr. Bowles) of "The Birds of Washington" | — | Illustrated by More Than 1100 Half-tone Cuts of Birds in Life, Nests, Eggs, and | Favorite Haunts, from Photographs | Chiefly by | Donald R. Dickey, Wright M. Pierce, Wm. L. Finley and the Author | Together with 44 Drawings in the Text and a Series of | 15 Full-page Color Plates | Chiefly by | Major Allan Brooks | — | Students' Edition [in red] | Complete in Three Volumes | Volume One [- Three] | — | South Moulton Company | San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco | 1923 [= 1924] | Sold Only by Subscription. All Rights Reserved.

Three vols, superroyal 8vo (7¾ x 10¾ inches). Vol. I, pp. 4 11. (subtile; name edition; col. frontis.; title;), [i] (dedication), iii-[x] (preface), xi-xv (contents), xvi (explanatory table of comparisons [sizes of birds]), xxvii (list col. plates), 1-696 (text-description species nos. 1-139). Vol. II, pp. [i] (subtile), [iii] (name edition), 1 1. (frontispiece), [v] (title), vii-xii (contents), xiii (list pl.), [xv] (vol. subtitle and species nos.), 697-1432 (descriptions sp. nos. 140-281). Vol. III, pp. [i] (subtile), [iii] (name ed.), 1 1. (frontis.), [v] (title), vii-xii (contents), [xv] (vol. subtitle and nos. sp.), 1433-[2063] (description sp. nos. 282-424), [2064]-2096 (analytical keys), 2097-2100 (hypothetical list, [2101]-2121 (index)). The illustrative equipment of this issue, as well as of all the others, is sufficiently indicated in its title page.

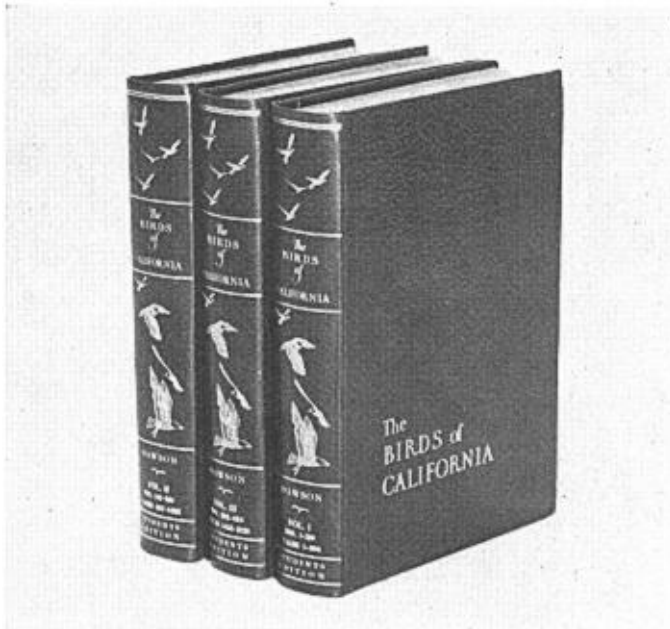


Fig. 41. Students' Edition, in full leather.

Nearly the entire edition of this popular and best known format (fig. 40) was bound in a heavy green buckram, stoutly put together to insure a long life of hard usage. A panel enclosing the title and a bird design in poster style is printed (not stamped) in three colors on the front, and a like design, though not in poster style, is printed on the spine. The top edge is stained in a dark neutral shade. This is the only issue in which the sets are unnumbered. A few orders were filled for the Students' Edition bound in half and in full leather (fig. 41) in both of which the front cover design was omitted and replaced with a simple lettered display, and gilt replaced the top edge stain. There are two variants of the back strip panelling of the full leather issue. The lining and end papers in all editions, unless otherwise noted, were printed in half-tone from photographs of flocking birds taken by the versatile author. This feature of the book is very striking and most appropriate, and is rendered more pleasing by a matching in each case of the color of printing ink with color of binding. These prints exhibit at once good taste in

the selection of subjects and in pictorial composition, as well as in the delicacy of effect attained in the printing.

The Birds of California [green line] | A Complete, Scientific and | Popular Account of the 580 Species and Subspecies of Birds | Found in the State | By | William Leon Dawson | of Santa Barbara | Director of the International Museum of Comparative Oology, Author of "The Birds of Ohio" | and (with Mr. Bowles) of "The Birds of Washington" | — | Illustrated by 16 Photogravures, 32 Full-page Duotone Plates and More Than | 1100 Half-tone Cuts of Birds in Life, Nest, Eggs, and | Favorite Haunts, from Photographs | Chiefly by | Donald R. Dickey, Wright M. Pierce, Wm. L. Finley | and the Author | Together with 44 Drawings in the Text and a Series of | 48 Full-page Color Plates | Chiefly by | Major Allan Brooks | — | Booklovers' Edition [green line] | Complete in Four Volumes | Volume One [- Four] | — | South Moulton Company | San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco | 1923 [= 1924] | Sold Only by Subscription. All Rights Reserved.

Four vols. superroyal 8vo. Vol. I, pp. 4 11. (subtitle; copy no., name ed., name subscriber; frontis.; title;), [i] (dedication, iii-x (preface), xi-xiv (contents), xv (list pll.), xvii (expl. table), 1-522 (description sp. nos. 1-102). Vol. II, pp. [i] (subtitle), [iii] (copy no. and name ed.), 1 1. (frontis.), [v] (title), vii-x (contents), xi (list pll.), [xiii] (vol. subtitle and sp. nos.), 523-1034 (description sp. nos. 103-201). Vol. III, pp. [i] (subtitle), [iii] (copy no. and name ed.), 1 1. (frontis.), [v] (title), vii-xi (contents), xiii (list pll.), [xv] (vol. subtitle and nos. sp.), 1035-1548 (description sp. nos. 202-307). Vol. IV, pp. [i] (subtitle), [iii] (copy no. and name ed.), 1 1. (frontis.), [v] (title), vii-xi (contents), xiii (list pll.), [xv] (vol. subtitle and nos. sp.), 1549-12063] (description sp. nos. 308-422), [2065]-2096 (analytical keys), 2097-2100 (hypothetical list), [2100]-2121 (index).

Being printed on a heavier stock, and carrying a more generous assortment of full-page plates, as will be noted in the above title transcription, the Booklovers' Edition (fig. 40) required four instead of the three volumes of the Students' Edition. It was originally bound in full fabricoid of either a pale green or a straw color, and later in a green keratol. Stamped in high relief on the front cover is a group of western gulls (made directly from one of the author's photographs) enclosed in a double border of straight lines, the whole occupying nearly the entire area of the cover. An inner panel at the bottom displays the title in hand lettering. The design on the spine is from a drawing of a flying gull against conventionalized rays of the sun, and there are small panels at top and bottom carrying title, authorship and volume data. Top edges in this format and in all three following are gilt. As a result of inexpert gathering of sheets and full page inserts for the original binder, many early sets contain extra plates and duplicate pages, and the remaining stock was inadequate at the end of the later binding to form complete sets. Thus one hundred and fifty three sets of the Booklovers' Edition were sold with the understanding that they were incomplete in certain minor particulars.

So intimate had the author's association necessarily been with the printing trades organizations, photo-engravers and others that he saw fit to issue a small edition in the octavo format exclusively for them. He termed this the Trade Souvenir Edition and included in it the choicest of the plates they had manufactured and printed with such matchless skill and success. Only thirty-five sets of this issue were bound and distributed.

The Birds of California [green line] | A Complete, Scientific and | Popular Account of the 580 Species and Subspecies of Birds | Found in the State | By | William Leon Dawson | of Santa Barbara | Director of the International Museum of Comparative Oology, Author of "The Birds of Ohio" | and (with Mr. Bowles) of "The Birds of Washington" | — | Illustrated by 4 Photogravures, 120 Full-page Duotone and More Than | 1100 Half-tone Cuts of Birds in Life, Nests, Eggs, and | Favorite Haunts, from Photographs | Chiefly by | Donald R. Dickey, Wright M. Pierce, Wm. L. Finley | and the Author | Together with 44 Drawings in the Text and a Series of | 76 Full-page Color Plates | Chiefly by | Major Allan Brooks | — | Trade Souvenir Edition | Complete in Four Volumes | Volume One [- Four] | — | South Moulton Company | San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco | 1923 [=1924] Sold Only by Subscription. All Rights Reserved.

Four vols. superroyal 8vo. (7¾ x 10¾ inches). Vol. I, pp. 5 11. (subtitle; no., ed., subscriber; col. frontis.; title; dedication;), [i] (roster 35 subscribers), iii-x (preface), xi-xiv (contents), xv (list pll.), xvii (expl. table), 1-522; vols. II-IV, pagination identical with Booklovers' Edition.

The same materials and dies used in binding the Booklovers' Edition were employed in making up the Trade Souvenir Edition, and these two editions cannot be told apart on the shelf save by the name stamped in small letters in the panel at the base of the spine.

All the Editions De Luxe are identical as to contents except for a brief paragraph printed on an extra leaf in the front of each Volume I and the name of the edition printed on the title page. Also, the Santa Barbara Edition is alone distinguished by a photograph of the author and the Patrons' Edition contains an engraved insert listing subscribers. A single title transcription will therefore serve for the entire group.

The Birds of California [in red] | A Complete, Scientific and | Popular Account of the 580 Species and Subspecies of Birds | Found in the State | By | William Leon Dawson | of Santa Barbara | Director of the International Museum of Oology, Author of "The Birds of Ohio" | and (with Mr. Bowles) of "The Birds of Washington" | — | Illustrated by 30 Photogravures, 120 Full-page Duotone Plates and More Than | 1100 Half-tone Cuts of Birds in Life, Nests, Eggs, and | Favorite Haunts, from Photographs | Chiefly by | Donald R. Dickey, Wright M. Pierce, Wm. L. Finley | and the Author | Together with 44 Drawings in the Text and a Series of | 110 Full-page Color Plates | Chiefly by | Major Allan Brooks | — | Format De Luxe | Large Paper Edition [in red. Sunset Edition. Santa Barbara Edition. Presentation Edition. Stockholders' Edition. Patrons' Edition. No Name—line blank.] Complete in Four Volumes | Volume One [- Four] | — | South Moulton Company | San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco | 1923 [= 1924] | Sold Only by Subscription. All Rights Reserved.

Four vols. medium 4to (9½ x 12¼ inches). Vol. I, pp. 4 11. (subtitle; copy no., name ed., name subscriber, statement and sig. author; col. frontispiece; title;), [i] (dedication), [1 1 only in Santa Barbara Ed. (camera portrait of author)], [1 1 in comparatively few copies (register of subscribers)], iii-x (preface), xi-xiv (contents of vol.), xv-xvi (list full-page pl.), xvii (explanatory-table comparisons), 1-522 (description species nos. 1-102). Vol. II, pp. [i] (subtitle), [iii] (copy no. and name ed.), 1 1 (frontispiece), [v] (title page), vii-x (contents), xi-xii (list full-page pl.), [xiii] (vol. subtitle), 523-1034 (description species nos. 103-201). Vol. III, pp. [i] (subtitle), [iii] (copy no. and name ed.), 1 1 (frontispiece), [v] (title, vii-xi (contents), xii-xiv (list pl.)), [xv] (vol. subtitle), 1035-1548 (description species nos. 202-307). Vol. IV, pp. [i] (subtitle), [iii] (copy no. and name ed.), 1 1 (frontispiece), [v] (title), vii-xxi (contents), xii-xxiv (list pl.), [xv] (vol. subtitle), 1549-[2063] (description species nos. 308-424), 2065-2096 (analytical keys), 2097-2100 (hypothetical list), [2101]-2121 (index).

First runs from the press, "first issues of the first edition," have always been sought for by collectors, who are willing to pay much higher prices for undisputed early firsts than for any later printing. These desirable and sought for copies often depend for their identification on certain points of the binding alone, and while it may occur to the reader that the first sheets being on the bottom of the pile are last to be bound, Dawson was careful to see to it personally that his book was absolutely right in this particular. The earlier the printing, the better and more expensive the binding. Volume I of every copy of the de luxe issues contains a statement covering this point (indicated above as occupying the second of the extra leaves), reading as follows:

The Scripps Copy | This copy of "The Birds of California," unique | in pictorial content and in binding, consists of | proof-sheets of the *format de luxe* drawn from | press by the author and folded by hand.

The author begs leave to present this concrete | evidence of his wayward gifts to his most gracious | friend and benefactor,

Miss Ellen Browning Scripps

with the sincerest expressions of gratitude and | rejoicing.

Copy No. | Patrons' Edition, De Luxe | Subscribed by | for | This edition comprises the first choice of selected | sheets from the first impressions of the *format de luxe* of "The Birds of California," and its circula- | tion is limited to an approved clientele of 250 names. | [Signed] W. Leon Dawson.

Copy No. | Stockholders' Edition, De Luxe | Subscribed by | for | This edition comprises selected sheets from the | first impressions of the *format de luxe* of "The Birds of California;" and its circulation is limited | to the stockholders of the one-time Birds of | California Publishing Company, or to de luxe | subscribers of record December 31st, 1920. The | edition is specially bound and the number of | copies is limited to the

number (not over 119 [75 issued]) | now fully subscribed. | [Signed] W. Leon Dawson.

Copy No. | Santa Barbara Edition, De Luxe | Subscribed by..... | for | This edition contains early sheets of the exclusive *format de luxe* of "The Birds of California;" and its circulation is limited to 100 copies. | [Signed] W. Leon Dawson.

Copy No. | Sunset Edition De Luxe | Subscribed by | for | This edition comprises sheets from the first impressions of the *format de luxe* of "The Birds of California;" and its circulation is limited to 350 copies. | [Signed] W. Leon Dawson.

The Author has pleasure | in presenting to | | this copy of his most carefully considered work | and begs to subscribe himself | Your devoted friend | | The "Presentation Edition" comprises fifty copies | of the *format de luxe* of "The Birds of California" | served by the author for his personal dispositions. [The author evidently changed his mind and used other formats as gifts, as the entire edition of 50 copies passed to Claremont.]

Copy No. | Large Paper Edition, De Luxe | Subscribed by | for | This edition completes the output of the *format de luxe* of "The Birds of California;" and comprises 350 copies. | [Signed] W. Leon Dawson.



Fig. 42. Large Paper Edition De Luxe.

The quarto issue referred to in the foregoing title transcription as having no name represents the use by the legatees of a supply of title pages which had not been finished by the printer. All titles were designed to emphasize the lines "The Birds of California" and the name of the edition by printing them in colors contrasting sharply with black; bright red or green were used in the 8vos, and bright red in all the 4tos. The entire edition of titles was run off the press at one time, and as the lines in color were added only as needed to keep pace with bindery demands, there remained at the end a quantity of unfinished titles. This stock was utilized in making up 539 sets for the "remainder" market, and among these sets are volumes deficient in other particulars aside from the incomplete titles. A total of 323 sets of the later binding of *all* the formats are defective in lacking pages or plates, or both, or in unmatched title pages (that is in showing different edition names), but no detailed record was kept of the number of each format

in this category. Nor is any record available of the number of sets bound after the supply of pictorial end paper was exhausted, though a few hundred are known to contain plain lining paper of a shade to match the covers.

The large issue of this edition without name was all sewed, glued and made ready for the covers but was never completed. This remainder was sold to the general public at a very low price.

The Large Paper Edition (fig. 42) was bound originally in very pale green paper on extra heavy binder boards, with plain printed paper labels. This was a rather distinguished looking dress, but proved impracticable on two counts; it soiled easily, and it was too weak to stand the strain of so heavy a book. Only a few copies were delivered, all the rest of the 350 sets being given later the full green keratol.

The Sunset Edition (fig. 43), one of the most popular of the expensive formats, occurs in two distinct types of binding in several colors of material. The three-quarter burnished levant in a deep shade of either blue, brown or violet on heavy, beveled boards, with plain gold lettering on the back strip, was the choice of many early subscribers because of its simple dignity and good taste. The second type is more ornate

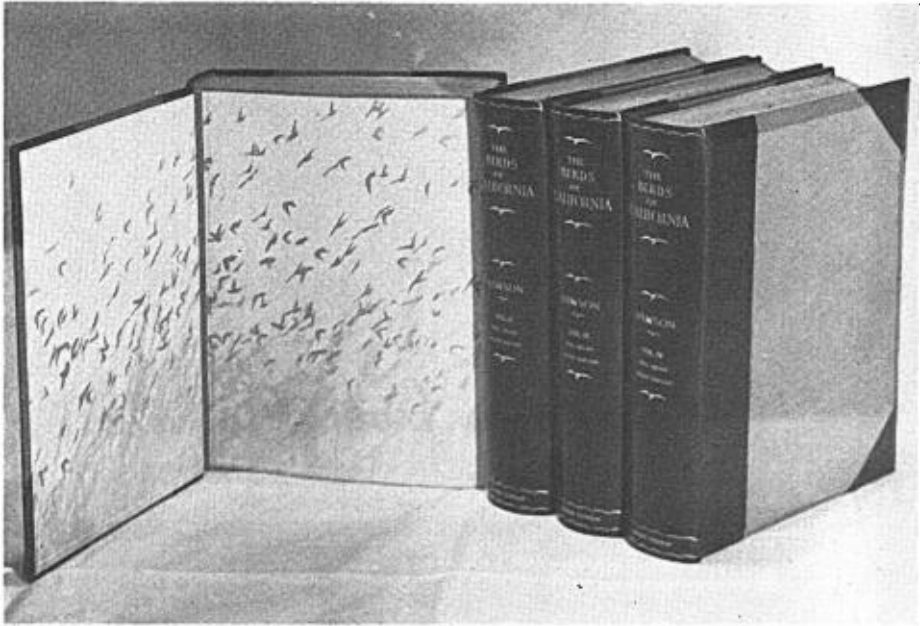


Fig. 43. Sunset Edition De Luxe, in one-half leather.

and is in full fabricoid of a deep wine red, with a large semicircular panel stamped in relief on the front enclosing a seascape design containing a gull in flight against the setting sun. The same motif is carried out on the back strip. The few remaining copies were bound in exactly this same style, but the material was full keratol in pale green.

Nearly the entire issue of the Santa Barbara Edition was absorbed by original subscribers. The edition was richly bound in keeping with the tastes of wealthy collectors. It was done in three-quarters crushed levant in either green, brown or blue of subdued shades, and was decorated on the back strip with three birds, one of which was stamped, the other two (identical) being hand-colored inlays. These inlays repre-

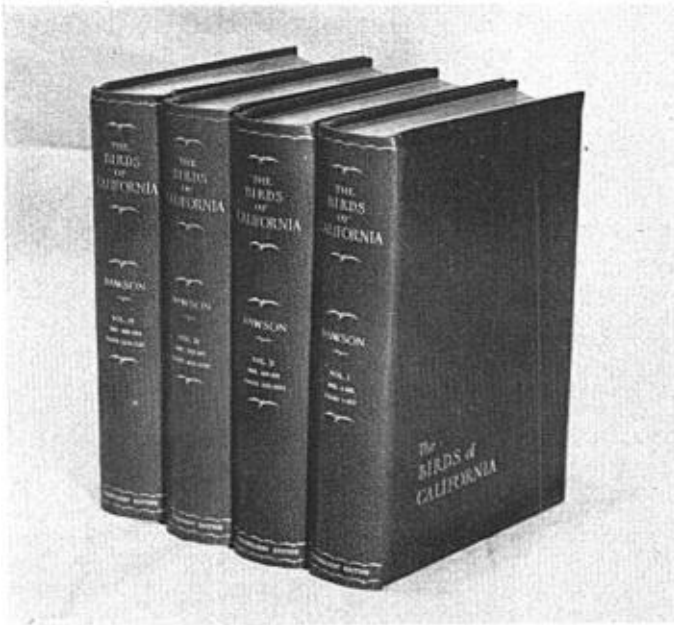


Fig. 44. Stockholders' Edition De Luxe, in full leather.

sent a different species of bird on each of the four volumes of a set and are authentic portraits. The small remaining stock of this issue was later bound in the full keratol stamped with the Sunset dies. Dawson evidently used this format largely for personal copies, as it alone contains his portrait (a fine photographic print in sepia), and the

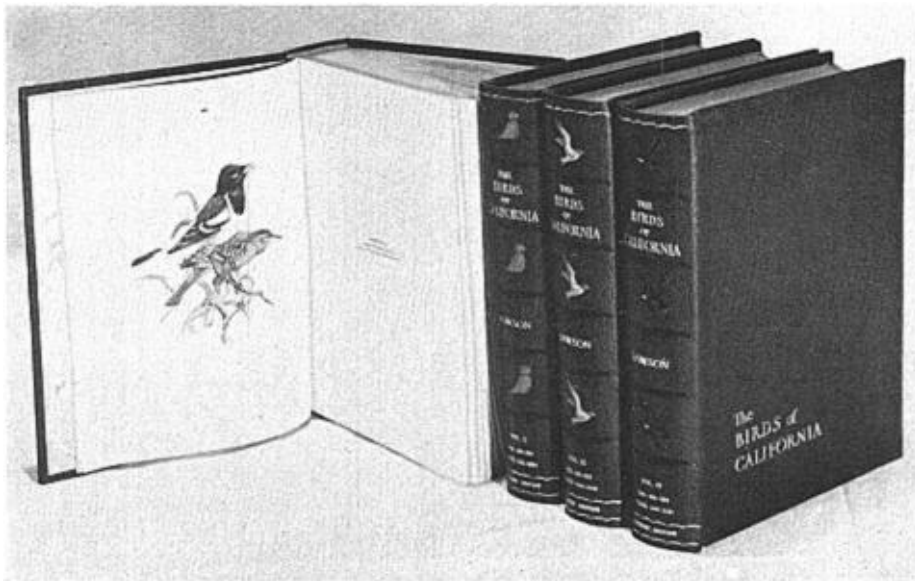


Fig. 45. Patrons' Edition De Luxe, Plain, in full morocco.

entire issue of the Presentation Edition, designed for this purpose, reached the legatees in unbound sets. These were handled in the same manner as were all the others.

It cannot be found from the voluminous advertising matter that the South Moulton Company ever solicited subscriptions to the Stockholders' Edition (fig. 44), but many Cooper Club members subscribed to and were supplied with this format. It was done in full levant of a deep brown color, and none remained for later binding.

Most pretentious and most expensive of all the formats offered the public were the two of the Patrons' Edition. Both were executed in full crushed levant of any color or shade desired by the subscriber, but only the Patrons' Plain (fig. 45) is subdued as to tooling and ornamentation. This format, with its rich material and simple luxuriance of design, cannot fail to satisfy the most exacting demands of good taste. This is not to say that the Patrons' Inlaid is in bad taste, far from it, but merely that many discriminating book buyers prefer embellishments only in the text, and Dawson could and did satisfy all tastes. The spine panels are separated in both issues by inlaid bird figures of the most skillful workmanship; three sets of species alike on each volume of the Plain, and the same figures on each volume of the Inlaid. Another feature distinguishing the Inlaid Edition (fig. 46) is the presence on the front cover of an authentic bird portrait hand carved in half relief from a block of hardwood. This bird, colored by hand and of a different species on each volume of a set, is in such high relief that with the similar five conventional carvings on the back cover it makes it impossible to shelve the book except in the four-compartment corduroy-lined slip cases that were provided. These massive decorations are so firmly inlaid or anchored to the covers as to appear virtually as parts of them. While there is no denying that this format is a masterpiece of binding craftsmanship, it is far too bulky for easy or comfortable handling.

It has not been the writer's privilege to examine the unique Scripps copy, but on reliable information it can best be described as a museum piece, and as typifying about all that modern binding masters are capable of producing. Lately it has been understood

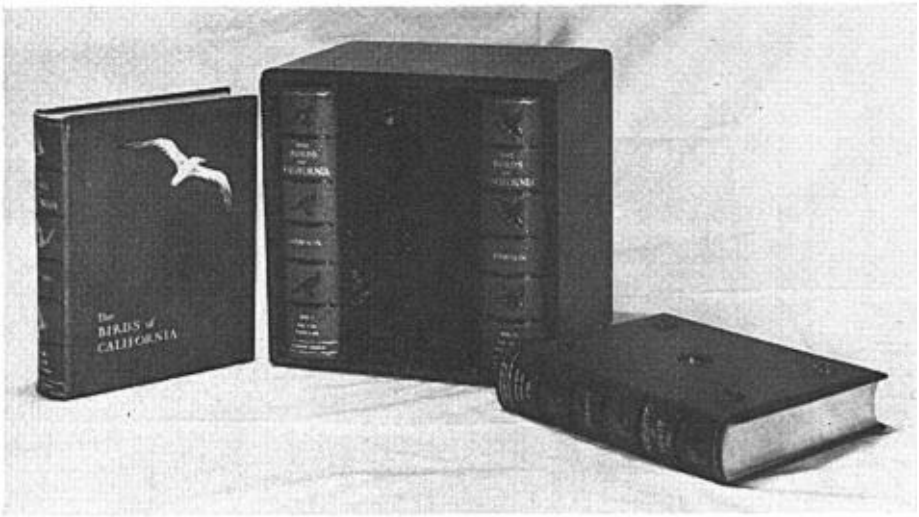


Fig. 46. Patrons' Edition De Luxe, with carved figures of birds; in full leather.

that another copy of almost equal magnificence was made for one of the other early patrons, but this has not been verified.

Some time after the book had been on the market, and while the subscription campaign was in full swing, Dawson informed the writer that a total of \$250,000 had been expended, which may have included the heavy expense he had been put to in extensive field trips for life history material and photographs. Over half of this amount came from Miss Scripps, and it is certain that her only thought in connection with her part was that it be a cultural and artistic gift to posterity, as others of a like nature had been. Let posterity, then, judge of the true worth of the book, and if the matter here recorded can add any value to the final summation of data, so much the better.

It may be said in conclusion that the book obviously occupies an utterly unique place in modern American ornithologica, and that no contemporary will deny Dawson the full credit due him for an amazing achievement.

Eagle Rock, California, June 9, 1939.