

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON BIOGRAPHY AND  
BIBLIOGRAPHY—THE DEANE COLLECTION

BY T. S. PALMER.

THE Committee on Biography and Bibliography, first appointed in 1919, has been more or less active during the past fifteen years in spite of the fact that it has suffered greater losses in its personnel than any other Committee of the Union. Death removed two of its most important members, Charles W. Richmond in 1932, and Ruthven Deane in 1934 and although these gaps have not been filled the Committee has continued its work. During the year 1934 it confined its efforts largely to coöperation with the Index Committee, in reading proof and securing data necessary to complete certain entries in the 'Ten Year Index of The Auk.' It has also co-operated with the Editor of 'The Auk' in securing data for suitable notices of deceased members. Most of the biographical sketches which have appeared in the current volume were prepared by or through the solicitation of members of the Committee.

Two months before his death Mr. Deane presented to the Library of Congress a collection of portraits of ornithologists which he had brought together during a period of nearly fifty years. This collection comprising some 1800 items and portraits of 1030 individuals contains a practically complete series of pictures of Fellows of the Union, most of the Foreign Fellows and Members and many of the more prominent Associates. It was presented on condition that it should be kept accessible to any persons interested in it and should be indexed with information sufficient to bring out the identity of each individual. A brief description of its installation, plan of indexing and directions for securing copies of pictures was published in 'The Auk' for July, 1934 (pp. 436-437).

Included in the collection were a number of group pictures taken at various sessions of the American Ornithologists' Union and covering a period of half a century. This series of pictures, twenty in number, has been completed and copies made especially for the meeting; keys have been prepared for each of the groups and an index to include each individual in all of the group pictures is in course of preparation. The number of members included in the various groups probably exceeds six hundred.

One of the earliest projects undertaken by the Committee was the preparation of a catalogue of published portraits of ornithologists. For several years the Council of the Union continued small appropriations for printing this catalogue but it soon became evident that the work was too incomplete to warrant publication in its present form. Recently the Committee has

offered to place at the disposal of the Library of Congress any or all of the material collected in this connection if the Library will furnish the necessary clerical assistance to incorporate the references in the Deane Collection in the same form as other entries already included therein.

It is hoped that the Deane Collection may be extended still further by the addition of other references to published portraits of ornithologists from the earliest times down to date. Many of the published portraits are already in the Library of Congress but almost impossible to locate through lack of references. The plan thus outlined will include an index of several thousand portraits, published or unpublished, of the principal authors, workers, field collectors, explorers and museum officials who have contributed to the literature of ornithology. With the index will be certain biographical data not generally accessible which will enable readers to refer at once to important facts relating to the activities of the principal workers in this subject. So far as known no such project has been attempted elsewhere and in developing the plan the Committee hopes to have the generous support of the members of the Union. This can be given by depositing in the Library copies of their own photographs or published portraits, or furnishing references to places where such portraits have been published. Particularly is it desired that the series of workers in each State should be as complete as possible. It should contain not only the pictures of the author of each important work on birds, but, when possible, copies of portraits taken about the time the author's chief work was published and showing also how he looked in youth as well as later in life. Arrangements have been made whereby copies of any of these pictures may be obtained at cost of photographic reproduction, on application to the Chief, Division of Fine Arts of the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C., and copies of the data on the index cards and keys to the A. O. U. group pictures may be had on application to the same source.