

OBITUARIES

HUGH BIRCKHEAD, an Associate of the Union since 1936, was killed in action in France on November 13, 1944. He had been in the army for twenty-six months as a member of a tank-destroying battalion and had fought in the Tunisian and Sicilian campaigns as well as in the invasion of Normandy and the subsequent fighting in France.

He was born in Baltimore on January 18, 1913, a descendant on both father's and mother's sides of families distinguished in colonial history. Julia Ward Howe, author of the Battle Hymn of the Republic, was his great grandmother, Samuel Ward, first chairman of the Continental Congress, Roger Williams, founder and first governor of Rhode Island, and the sister of General Francis Marion were other ancestors. After graduation from St. Paul's School, Concord, N. H., he came to the American Museum of Natural History, New York City, as a volunteer, helping with the unpacking and arranging of the Rothschild Collection. On the basis of the excellent record he established in this work, he was given employment as assistant in the department though he previously had had no specialized training. From 1937 to February, 1942, he assisted in rearranging nearly the entire Old World Collection of the department, leaving it in the most meticulous order when he left for the army. He was a perfectionist in everything he did, never leaving a job superficially or only half done. Among his published papers are a report on the Birds of the Sage West China Expedition and, in joint authorship with Dillon Ripley, a revision of the Polynesian genus *Philinopus*. He was a gifted draftsman and ever ready to supply his friends with an original drawing for a Christmas card or a book plate. In addition to drawing birds, he was very talented in architectural drawing and had a great knowledge of the Gothic style. In 1938 he attended the 14th International Ornithological Congress at Rouen. At this time he studied not only European birds but also Gothic cathedrals in France and England.

His enthusiasm for birds was without limits. No weather was too bad or distance too great when he set out to search for some rare bird or its nest. All of his experiences, usually in company with his uncle, Captain H. N. Hall, were meticulously recorded in a diary. He kept up this habit even during the difficult period of war and extracts of his notes have been published in the Audubon Magazine.

A promising career was cut short by his death, but the devotion to ornithology which he inspired will continue to live.—E. MAYR.

RONALD WARD SMITH, an Associate of the American Ornithologists' Union since 1932, was reported killed in his 32nd year, on September 11, 1944, in active service, flying overseas with the Royal Canadian Air Force. He was born at Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, May 21, 1913, the son of Mr. and Mrs. J. William Smith.

R. W. Smith early displayed an interest in birds, and came under the influence of the enthusiastic Nova Scotia sportsman and ornithologist, R. W. Tufts. Smith's interest soon widened to mammals, modelling and painting of birds, and collecting birds and mammals. Before he completed his studies at Acadia University in 1934, for a Bachelor of Science degree, he had made an extensive collection of Nova Scotia birds for the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. During his final year at the university he also collected locally for Allan Brooks, L. B. Bishop, and the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at Berkeley, California.

In the fall of 1934 he came to the National Museum of Canada as a volunteer assistant, to study museum methods, and here he quickly displayed his aptitude for

the work. In 1935 he secured a temporary appointment in the Bureau of Geology and Topography and was detailed on various kinds of work in the National Museum until spring of 1936. From June to October 1936 he collected birds and mammals for the National Museum in northern Manitoba, along the Hudson Bay Railway. During the first part of this period, Mr. P. A. Taverner was in the field in charge of the party, later leaving Smith in charge.

In 1937, from January to September, he collected for the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, on the George Vanderbilt South Pacific Expedition, visiting Panama and many island groups in the south Pacific.

After a period spent in studying Nova Scotia birds and mammals, in the fall of 1938 Smith entered the University of California at Berkeley, where he secured his Master's degree in Zoology in 1939. His thesis, 'The Land Mammals of Nova Scotia,' published in the *American Midland Naturalist* (24: 213-241, July, 1940), was based largely on the private collections he had brought together and his studies at various times since he was in high school. During his time at Berkeley, he helped prepare a number of exhibits showing California life zones for the San Francisco World's Fair of 1939, and also collected vertebrates in southern California, Nevada, Oregon, Montana, Wyoming and Idaho for the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology.

Leaving Berkeley in September, he was employed, under a two-year Carnegie Foundation Grant to Queen's University at Kingston, in renovating and developing the Biological Museum at Queen's for educational and research purposes. In November, 1941, he volunteered for service in the Royal Canadian Air Force, and went overseas the next year as Sergeant. He received his commission as Pilot Officer in May 1943. Even when in the Air Force he found time to carry on his main interest, and his letters from the British Isles spoke of occasional opportunities to study birds, meet ornithologists, and make collections of small mammals in the north of Scotland.

Smith's most important publication was 'The Land Mammals of Nova Scotia,' a critical study. He also published two short papers describing two new races of Nova Scotia mammals, a short note on Galapagos shearwaters and man-of-war birds in the 1939 'Condor,' and some noteworthy records for Nova Scotia in the 1938 'Auk.'

To those of us who knew him, his cheery manner and good nature were captivating. He had a wonderful faculty of making friends wherever he went. With a versatility of talents and an intention to use them in his native country, his loss is a great one to us. He is survived by two sisters: Mrs. C. M. Campbell, Ottawa, and Mrs. W. B. Perry of St. John, N. B., and a brother, Murray Smith, of Esquimalt, B. C.—A. L. RAND.

NOTES AND NEWS

READERS of 'The Auk' will be interested to learn that Mr. W. P. C. Tenyson has taken over the compilation and editing of the Aves section of the 'Zoological Record' in the place of the late W. L. Sclater. Authors who wish to be sure that their papers are not overlooked in this invaluable bibliography should send their reprints to Mr. Tenyson, care of the British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, London, S. W. 7, England.

NOTICE.—In case a bill for dues was received after your check or money order was sent in, it may be disregarded. Receipt of this number of 'The Auk' is evidence that your record is clear for the current year.—FREDERICK C. LINCOLN, *Treasurer*.