

OBITUARIES

IVAN REXFORD TOMKINS, one of the South's most capable naturalists, was born August 18, 1893, in the farming community of Ellenton, near Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

He first came to Georgia to work with the Public Health Service on 8 December 1922 and was assigned to the U. S. Quarantine Station located on Cockspur Island near the mouth of the Savannah River. Some three years later he accepted the position of Dredging Inspector with the Corps of Engineers, serving on the dredges "Cumberland," "Morgan," "Welatka," and "Clinton." He continued to work with the Corps, rising through the ranks to the position of Chief of the Projects Branch of the Savannah District, which position he held at his retirement on 1 March 1956.

The isolated character of his work at the Quarantine Station and his life aboard the dredges in the Savannah River gave Mr. Tomkins ample opportunities to develop his interest in the life of the salt marshes, beaches, and open waters surrounding him.

Eventually assigned to the Corps of Engineers office in Savannah, on 15 March 1941 he married Isabel F. Beery who, in her gracious way, was as charming and capable as her husband. This good marriage was doomed to a short existence and terminated when Mrs. Tomkins died on April 19, 1948.

Through the years his study of the wildlife of his area continued without serious interruption, and Mr. Tomkins became widely recognized as an expert on the wild-life, birds in particular, of the Savannah River delta and surrounding country. In 1934, the Charleston (South Carolina) Museum elected Mr. Tomkins an Associate in Zoology, and for many years he rendered invaluable service on a voluntary basis to that outstanding institution, where many of his study skins are to be found. Numerous other specimens of scientific worth can be found in the study collections of the University of Georgia, Mercer University, Youth Museum of Savannah, and other, similar institutions.

In 1928 Mr. Tomkins became an Associate Member (as it was then called) of The American Ornithologists' Union, and in 1939 he was honored by becoming one of the Members (today known as Elective Members) of that organization. The same period found him active in The American Society of Mammalogists. During these years Mr. Tomkins began to publish various notes, observations, and articles of scientific interest, eventually totalling 161, 32 of them in *The Auk*.

When the Georgia Ornithological Society came into being in 1936, Mr. Tomkins was a charter member. His loyalty to that organization has been outstanding, and he insisted always, in his quiet manner, that the work of the Society and its publications be kept at the highest scientific level. In 1936 Mr. Tomkins contributed several notes to the first issue of *The Oriole*, official journal of the Georgia Ornithological Society, and contributed many more excellent notes and longer articles in later years.

On February 12, 1966, after an illness of about a month, Ivan Tomkins passed away. With his death the more serious ornithologists of Georgia lost one of their finest colleagues, and this writer lost a most valued and generous friend.—HERMAN W. COOLIDGE.

ALEXANDER DAWES DU BOIS, the writer's brother, died in a Minneapolis, Minnesota, hospital February 17, 1966, from effects of a fall in his home at Christmas Lake, near Minneapolis. He was born December 19, 1875, at Springfield, Illinois.

He received his B. S. from the University of Illinois in 1899, and an advanced professional degree in Electrical Engineering in 1912, while teaching that subject at

Cornell University. He later became assistant professor of electrical engineering at Purdue University. His writings on engineering subjects included a published book, *The power factor*, and numerous articles in *Electrical World*.

Ornithological writings, based on his field studies, and accompanied by his photographs, appeared from time to time in *The Auk*, *The Oologist*, *The Condor*, *British Birds*, *Bird-Lore*; and in *Natural History Magazine*, *Nature Magazine*, *Audubon Magazine*, and *The Readers' Digest*.

His field observations and home-life photographs of birds were published in numerous volumes of A. C. Bent's *Life histories of North American birds*. He contributed in a smaller way to *The mammals of Minnesota*, published by the University of Minnesota, and to Thomas S. Robert's *Birds of Minnesota*. Aretas A. Saunders' book, *The birds of Montana*, was illustrated exclusively with Du Bois photographs.

Alex recently completed a book-length manuscript, "Glimpses of bird life," not yet published, to include some of his finest photographs of the home-life of birds. At the time of his death he had been working on another book-length manuscript, "The ways of birds."

At one time he and his wife Alma Houser, who survives him, homesteaded in Montana, where he made extensive field studies and photographs. Other observations were made mainly in Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana, New York, Texas, and Minnesota.

Alex's photographs were hung in international exhibitions at Chicago and Minneapolis. Articles on photography included a highly technical discussion of "Depth of field" in *The American Annual of Photography*.

His large collection of bird eggs, all with full scientific data, at the request of Dr. A. A. Allen was given to Cornell University. A small collection of mounted birds was given to the Natural History Museum at the University of Minnesota.

Alex was an Elective Member of The American Ornithologists' Union, an early member of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, and a member of the National Audubon Society, the Wilderness Society, and the Society for the Preservation of the Prairie Chicken in Illinois, and for many years was a member of the Wilson Ornithological Society and the Cooper Ornithological Society.

One of his published photographs that is of special interest to ornithologists is a portrait of the head of an American Bittern that shows plainly this bird's ability to focus each eye independently of the other.—CHARLOTTE DU BOIS.

CORRIGENDA

In *The Auk* for July, 1966 (vol. 83, no. 3), on p. 475, line 21, for "3 to 30 feet" read 10 to 30 feet; in the same issue, on p. 480, line 16, for "The normal habitats" read Numbers of individuals.