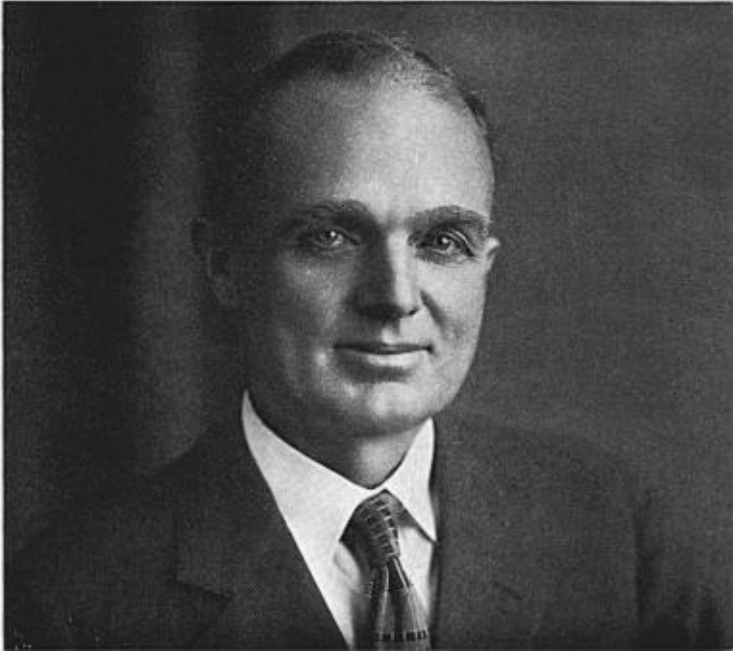


OBITUARIES



J. STOKLEY LIGON (1879-1961)

The name of JAMES STOKLEY LIGON, an Elective Member of the American Ornithologists' Union, is indelibly associated with New Mexico ornithology. For many years he was virtually the only student of birds in the state; he was a prime contributor of data to the first comprehensive state ornithological work, "Birds of New Mexico" by Florence M. Bailey with W. W. Cooke (1928); and later he authored a book of his own, "New Mexico birds and where to find them" (1961). He did not live to see this last fruition of his labors, for he died on April 23, 1961, at Carlsbad, New Mexico, just after he had approved text proofs for his book. His nearly 50 years of experience in New Mexico, beginning in 1905, certainly qualify him as one of the pioneer ornithologists of the state, and his acquaintance as a naturalist with all parts of New Mexico is unequalled to this time.

Stokley was born at Buda, Texas, in Hays County not far from the state capital of Austin, on June 21, 1879. In later years his mother recalled that he showed an interest in birds at the early age of three, but did not learn to identify them until the appearance of the famous colored bird cards packaged one to each box of Arm and Hammer baking soda. His early life on his father's sheep ranch near Buda placed him in close contact with birds of many kinds.

In 1900 Stokley and his brother built a raft and launched it on the Pecos River in New Mexico, drifting thence down the Rio Grande all the way to the Gulf of Mexico. This was his first experience with New Mexico birds. Stokley's interest in nature led to his specialization in biology at Trinity University, San Antonio, Texas, which he attended in 1900 and 1902.

His career as a professional biologist in New Mexico began with an appointment in June 1913 by the Bureau of the Biological Survey to study the distribution of breeding waterfowl of the state. The following year, still with the Bureau, he mapped the distribution of prairie dogs in the White Mountains region of Arizona, at the same time studying the waterfowl and other birds of the lakes of that area. In 1915 he was promoted to the position of Inspector of Predatory Animal Control in New Mexico and Arizona. By 1916 he became an Inspector-at-Large, instituting predator control operations and training bureau workers in Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, and Michigan. He continued his work in these states, plus spending a total of 5 months in Alaska, until 1923, when he returned to New Mexico as Supervisor of Predator Control.

Stokley's superior knowledge of New Mexico's wildlife was recognized in 1926 and 1927 when the State Game Commission employed him to make a game survey, with recommendations for management. This resulted in the publication of "Wild life of New Mexico," a 212-page report illustrated by his own photographs, in 1927. Upon completion of the survey, he continued to work intermittently for the Game Commission, implementing the recommendations of his report. During this time he established a game bird farm at Carlsbad, which the Game Commission acquired in 1946.

In 1938 the Bureau of the Biological Survey established its new Division of Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration, and Stokley was chosen to head the Division's work in several southwestern states, including New Mexico, with headquarters in Albuquerque. He continued in this capacity until 1943, when he retired from public service to experiment with raising game birds in captivity at Carlsbad. Among the birds he raised were Turkey, Masked Bobwhite, Lesser Prairie Chicken, and Sage Grouse, plus a number of exotics.

In 1921 Stokley was married to Rose Kunz in Michigan. She was devoted to Stokley and his work, enthusiastic about birds and especially the breeding experiments conducted at the Carlsbad game farm. She was indispensable in helping him to prepare the text of "New Mexico birds," and later in seeing it through the publication process after his death, which occurred on their fortieth wedding anniversary.

His waterfowl survey of the state in the summer of 1913 was accomplished on horseback, departing from Chloride on the east side of the Black Range in early June, and ending at Burford Lake near the Colorado border on August 12. His itinerary led him as far southeast as the lower part of the Pecos Valley. To read it today (see "Birds of New Mexico") is to experience astonishment at the amount of ground he covered in a little more than 2 months. It is testimony to the man's physical hardiness.

On this trip, as well as during many other trips, Stokley made extensive notes on birds, in addition to collecting specimens and taking many photographs of nests and habitats. He realized that he was working in comparatively unknown territory and that for this reason his observations were especially meaningful. To this day, he is the only ornithologist who has been in certain parts of New Mexico. His note-keeping and collecting were a habit with him, and were continued throughout his career.

Stokley's collection of personally-taken bird skins at the time of his death numbered 1,295, of which 966 are now at the University of New Mexico, and 329 at the Peabody Museum, Yale University. At the former place are also 552 eggs in 156 sets representing about 100 species, and 33 nests of 30 species. In

the National Museum of Natural History are about 250 bird skins Stokley collected, plus about 25 egg sets, mostly from the years 1913 to 1921. The bulk of all this bird material was taken in New Mexico, although there are specimens from about 15 other states, as well as from Sonora, Mexico. In addition to birds, Stokley also collected a lesser number of mammals, most of them now in the National Museum and the Peabody Museum. A few of his bird and mammal skins are in private collections.

Unfortunately, as detailed in "Catalog of bird specimens, Southwestern Museum of Natural History" (David M. Niles, 1963, New Mexico Ornithol. Soc.), the data on the University of New Mexico specimen tags do not always agree with the data in Stokley's original personal catalog. This ambiguity probably stems in part from errors made in relabeling specimens.

His special interest in game birds, besides leading to the establishment of his game farm, was evidenced by his pioneer work in trapping and transplanting Turkeys, Sage Grouse, and Lesser Prairie Chickens.

A paragraph from a 1969 article by Elliott S. Barker in *Outdoor Reporter* does much to characterize Stokley: "Stokley was a . . . soft-spoken man who got along well with everyone. He was small of stature but his physical endurance was amazing. At the age of 75 with a pack on his back he scaled Wheeler Peak, the state's highest mountain. Once he and I climbed the Big Hatchet Mountain from the west side and he had to wait up for me a dozen times. Then we came back down by different routes, and he got to the car at the base of the mountain long before I came, limping in sore-footed."

Stokley's influence on conservation in New Mexico was considerable. He early recognized overgrazing by cattle and sheep as nefarious, and he spoke out against the practice at a time when other people were careful to avoid antagonizing the politically powerful livestock ranchers. Except for his attitude toward predatory animal control, which is understandable in view of his background and early training, he espoused many of the conservation and ecological principles that are accepted universally today. A measure of the esteem in which he was held by the people of New Mexico is the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws bestowed on him by the University of New Mexico in 1952.—GALE MONSON.

HERBERT HUEBNER BECK was born in Lititz, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, on November 15, 1875, and was raised in the educational atmosphere of Audubon Villa, a private school maintained by his father, Abraham Beck. Herbert was graduated from Lehigh University in 1896, and did graduate work in Berlin, Germany. He became a member of the faculty of Franklin and Marshall College in 1901, later serving as head of the Chemistry Department of that institution.

His papers on various subjects, both technical and nontechnical, brought him many honors, but the one that he valued most highly was his appointment as Custodian of the Audubon Society's sanctuary on Mt. Johnson Island, where the last active Bald Eagle's nest in southeastern Pennsylvania was located. He was visibly saddened when the eagles finally deserted that long-occupied nesting site. His interest in and apprehension for the species of birds that were thought to be in danger of extinction led him to conduct an annual census of the Upland Plover in Lancaster County. In the spring of 1950 I had the pleasure of accompanying him and a small party of mutual friends on a trip to southern Texas to see the Whooping Cranes and birds of the Rio Grande Valley, after which he and Carl Fasnacht continued on to the California Condor country.

Dr. Beck took great pride in the fact that he was probably one of the last

living persons to have seen Passenger Pigeons in Pennsylvania. In his later years he would often recall the day in September, 1888, when he saw a flock of 150-175 of these rapidly vanishing birds near York. His "Chapter on the ornithology of Lancaster County" published in 1924 and a later paper, titled "Birds of the lower Susquehanna Lake Region" printed in 1955, are our chief sources of information on the birdlife of that region.

For many years Dr. Beck was the executive director of the Franklin and Marshall College Museum which later became known as the North Museum. He was a charter member and director of the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association, and in later years acted as professional consultant for the Pennsylvania Farm Museum at Landis Valley, where he overhauled and catalogued that museum's large collection of firearms.

He died in the Lancaster Hospital on December 22, 1960, at the age of 85. This abbreviated account is based on a longer one published in *Cassinia* (46: 19-20, 1961-62).—EARL L. POOLE.

JOHN STUART ROWLEY, a member of the A.O.U. since 1930 and a Research Associate in the Department of Ornithology and Mammalogy of the California Academy of Sciences, died accidentally on May 7, 1968. This occurred in a mountainous area of Oaxaca, Mexico, where he spent so much of his time studying and collecting birds during the last few years of his life. Stuart was born on April 6, 1907, in Oakland, California. His education was in Berkeley and Alhambra, California. At an early age he evinced an interest in ornithology which was furthered by his father, John S. Rowley, and by his association with O. W. Howard of Los Angeles. The former, who had worked for the Oakland Museum, became Chief of Exhibits at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco upon construction of its North American Hall in Golden Gate Park in 1916. Following young Rowley's marriage to Estelle Peyton in 1930, he joined the staff of the Academy's Exhibit Department, which was then completing the dioramas for the Simson African Hall under the direction of the late Frank Tose.

In the spring of 1933 Stuart Rowley left the Academy to collect birds and bird eggs along the length of the peninsula of Baja California. On his return he moved from the San Francisco Bay area to Alhambra and took a position with a weighing machine business in Los Angeles. In 1957 he sold the business in order to devote the remainder of his life to the things that he liked, especially birds. The Rowleys moved to San Mateo, California, in 1958 and Stuart then began a series of collecting trips to Mexico, concentrating on the states of Morelos and Oaxaca. He spent some time each year in the field until the time of his death. Part of the expenses of these expeditions was borne by the American Museum of Natural History, the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, and the California Academy of Sciences, and the resulting specimens are in the collections of all three institutions. Some of Stuart Rowley's more important discoveries were the nest and eggs of the Slaty Vireo (*Neochloe brevipennis*), the nest and eggs of the White-naped Swift (*Streptoprocne semicollaris*), a new species of hummingbird from Oaxaca, *Eupherusa cyanophrys*, and field data proving the specific status of Frantz's Nightingale-thrush (*Catharus frantzii*). The writer collaborated with Rowley in the papers describing these findings. Stuart Rowley's publications, numbering more than 20 papers, appear in the *Auk*, *Condor*, and *Proceedings and Occasional Papers of the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology*. He is survived by his wife, Estelle, a daughter, Mary, and two sons, William and David.—ROBERT T. ORR.

EMERSON KEMSIES, a member of the American Ornithologists' Union since 1949, died in Cincinnati, Ohio, sometime in late August, 1970. He was found dead in his apartment on August 30. Born in Cleveland, Ohio, on September 19, 1905, he attended Oberlin College, graduating in 1930 with a major in ornithology and animal ecology. Subsequently he received an M.A. degree from Case Western Reserve University in 1937. In the summer of 1929 he served as a naturalist at Yellowstone National Park and the following year published an article on the birds of Yellowstone National Park in the *Wilson Bulletin*.

During World War II Emerson moved with his mother to Cincinnati. He then worked for the Federal Bureau of Naval Inspection and the Army Defense Contract Administration. During this time he often worked up to fifteen hours a day. After the war, with some leisure time, he became interested in the bird collection at the University of Cincinnati. He was especially interested in the subspecific identity of the birds of the Cincinnati region and, in the course of reviewing the collection, found specimens of Robin, Yellow Warbler, and Yellowthroat representing subspecies not reported from the Cincinnati region. About the same time (1948) he issued through the Ohio Audubon Society a mimeographed annotated list of the birds of the Cincinnati region that updated Goodpasture's 1941 list. He served unofficially as curator of birds for several years, and was appointed officially to the position on July 1, 1968. He worked assiduously in expanding the already extensive collection at the university.

Field trips with Emerson were always fascinating because of the depth of his own knowledge of ornithology and his enthusiasm. Also he had a strong sense of humor, and frequently came up with puns or other bits of humor when the rest of us in the party least expected such a reaction. I especially remember one mid-May field trip in Clermont County, Ohio, when Emerson made the remark that the calls of crows when harassing owls varied with the species of owl. When we heard a flock of crows ahead a few minutes later, Emerson stated with complete self-confidence that they were scolding a Long-eared Owl. We scoffed when a Barred Owl was flushed, but then a few minutes later he found a Long-eared Owl, perched about six feet above ground on a red maple, looking straight at us. From then on, Emerson claimed that crows could identify owls for him.

In April 1949, he and Victor Sloane found several Smith's Longspurs associating with other open-country birds in the uplands of Butler County. Subsequent investigations by Kemsies and his associates showed the species to be a regular spring transient in small numbers. Kemsies became intensely interested in this species, and published several notes on its distribution and behavior, which culminated in his contributing the Smith's Longspur account to the Bent life history series (1968).

As his field work expanded in scope, Kemsies became interested in the entire state of Ohio. In 1953 he prepared with Worth Randle a paper on the birds of southwestern Ohio that was privately published. Kemsies indicated once to me that he was working on a revision of the *Catalogue of the Birds of Ohio*, originally written by Lynds Jones. He was still working on this project at the time of his death. His bibliography contains eleven titles extending from 1930 to 1968.—
NATHANIEL R. WHITNEY.

Correction: In *Auk*, 88: 480, 1971, Hebard's "Winter birds of the Okefenokee and Coleraine" was published not by the "Georgian Ornithological Society" as stated but by the Georgia Society of Naturalists, *Bulletin* No. 3, 1941.