

P. Davis' History of Nevada, 1913, Vol. 1, p. 476, as follows: "*Jim Townsend*.—This unique specimen was by all odds the most original writer and versatile liar that this coast, or any other coast, ever produced. He began his journalistic career in Mono County with the *Mono Index* and wound it up in Carson City, where so many newspapers lie buried. He kept the coast laughing for years with quaint sayings that he set up as from the case they came into his mind. They never saw manuscript. He simply set the type when he felt like expressing an idea and worried himself almost to death because he could not set the type as fast as he could think.

"To read his paper you would think it was published in a city of ten thousand inhabitants. He had a Mayor and City Council, whose proceedings he reported once a week, although they never existed, and enlivened his columns with killings, lawsuits, murder trials and railroad accidents and a thousand and one incidents of daily life in a humming growing town, every last one of which he coined out of his own active brain.

"One of the most exciting things with which he kept churning up his readers was a shooting scrape and scandal and divorce proceedings arising from a scandal in which the Mayor's wife and a member of the city council figured. It dragged along through his columns for nearly six months. It was very interesting to read and implicitly believed—except by persons who knew that there was no mayor and no council at that time in the town where Jim's paper was published.

"He was called 'Lying Jim Townsend' to the day of his death and could he have had his way it would have been graven on his tombstone."

Townsend was the original of Bret Harte's Truthful James. The fabulous humor of Townsend is dwelt upon in a longer account of him in "Bret Harte and Truthful James" by Robert L. Fulton in the *Overland Monthly*, 87: 89-98, August, 1915.

After learning about Jim Townsend who undoubtedly wrote the goose story, it seems certain that the banding was a hoax as Editor Bergstrom suspected. Either the whole thing was entirely a figment of Townsend's fertile imagination or was a practical joke on Sturgeon in which Jackson participated unwittingly or otherwise. Or perhaps the reverse was true. In any event this supposed early banding and longevity record is discredited.—William H. Behle, Biology Division, University of Utah, Salt Lake City.

Interesting Starling Returns.—I have been trapping and banding Starlings for two or three decades at Garden City, New York, but it is so seldom one is retrapped that there have been very few returns, although there is usually a larger or smaller percentage of banded individuals (by observation) about the station. My trap was in operation, although not every day, throughout the twelve months beginning September 1953, and new birds of various species taken and banded. These included 2 Starlings in September, 19 in October, 21 in November, 2 in December (total 44); none in January, 1954, 6 in February, 10 in March, 6 in April, 4 in May, 2 in June (total 28), none in July or August.

It was surprising and entirely unprecedented when three return individuals were trapped on May 22, 1954, and a fourth on May 23. At this date they should have been on or near their nesting grounds, and it is interesting that all four were banded in November; corroborating a previously held opinion that many of our Starlings return to home territory in fall, though they may not remain there through the winter (1937, *Bird-Banding*, VIII, pp. 76-77).

Of the four, 2 (including that of May 23) were banded on November 14, 1953; one on November 4, 1953; one on November 9, 1952. These four were the only Starling returns trapped during the twelve months in question. It suggested itself that they belonged to a wandering unit group, such as seem to make up our resident Blue Jay population (Kimball and Nichols, 1945, *Bird-Banding*, XVI, pp. 130-134).

Another point of interest is eye color. Male Starlings have a dark eye, dark brown I suppose, but rarely sufficiently pale to be noticeably brown offhand. But in a minority, presumably females (Kessel, *Bird-Banding*, 22: 16, Jan. 1951), it has a noticeable pale or paler rim. The eye of the Nov. 9, 1952, bird (512-17824), and of the two of Nov. 14, 1953 (502-48421 and 22), had a pale rim; that of the one of Nov. 4, 1953 (512-17895) did not. And it was the same when the four were taken as returns in May, 1954.—J. T. Nichols.