



J. D'ARCY NORTHWOOD
1897—1972

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ERNEST A. CHOATE

J. d'Arcy Northwood was born in Wolverhampton, Staffordshire, England, on February 21, 1897. When World War I broke out about the time of his graduation from Prince Edward's School, his classmates almost to a man enlisted. Few lived through the war. On active duty on the western front, d'Arcy endured the misery of trench warfare. He once dropped the remark "I guess my living in the trenches has made me hate rain." After recovering from wounds, he transferred to the air force and served out the remainder of the war on active duty as a fighter pilot. On one occasion he crash landed in his crippled plane just inside allied lines. Among d'Arcy's keepsakes was a metal cigarette case which, indented by shrapnel, had saved his life.

At war's end he joined a group of young pilots on an around-the-world junket which abruptly ended in California when one of their number absconded with their pooled financial assets. After a spell as a sailor, d'Arcy tired of rounding the Horn and settled down in Hawaii. From supervisor of pineapple plantations he moved on to police chief.

Always interested in natural history, particularly ornithology, d'Arcy organized the Hawaiian Audubon Society and served as its president. In this capacity he was host to John H. Baker, then executive director of the National Audubon Society and himself a veteran of the United States Air Force in World War I. The two ex-pilots hit it off well. They agreed that more than a warden was needed in a locality where endangered species were threatened. The answer might be in arousing local sentiment to protect the birds rather than shoot them. Peterson has pointed out that the development of this idea was certainly one of the first enterprises that evolved into the present popularity of nature tourism. So more than thirty years ago d'Arcy was among the first of the Audubon guides around Lake Okechobee and the Kissimmee Prairie in Florida. As money came in to the towns from people who came to see the birds, the local attitude began to change. After all, who would be so foolish as to kill the ibis that lays the golden egg?

Leaving the National Audubon Society, d'Arcy studied ornithology at Cornell University before serving for a short period as Executive Director of the New Jersey Audubon Society. He left this position to become curator of the Audubon Shrine, the original home of Audubon at the mouth of the Perkiomen in Pennsylvania. A man of books as well as birds, he became a recognized authority on the life of Audubon.

In his retirement years d'Arcy made his home in Cape May Point. At the time of his death on March 20, 1972, he was an Honorary Member of the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club and president of the Cape May Geographical Society.

He is survived by his wife, the former Anne Ardrey, and brother.

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