

WILLIAM JONES SERRILL

EDWARD WOOLMAN

William Jones Serrill, a Fellow of the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club, died May 27, 1952. He was elected a member in 1891, and took an active part until his last year.

He graduated in engineering with the Class of 1883 at the University of Pennsylvania, and joined the United Gas Improvement Company in 1885. He retired in 1929, having served for many years as the Head Engineer of Distribution. As a result of this experience he was well-acquainted with all the suburbs of Philadelphia, and led many of our outings to places of beauty near home.

In 1898 he married Alice Rush Douglas. They lived at Haverford in a lovely home until her death in 1944. Always interested in his neighbors he became a leader in civic affairs, serving as President and Treasurer of the Haverford Township School Board, President of the Main Line Community Health and Civic Association, Vice-President of the Delaware County Park Board, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, and the Pennsylvania State Parks Association; also Secretary of the Merion Cricket Club. In engineering he acted as head of the American Standards Association created by President Hoover; also President of the Illuminating Engineering Society and the Engineering Society of the University of Pennsylvania.

I became one of his close neighbors in 1917, and was soon included in the early Sunday morning field trips with Will Baily and Sam Scoville. During the spring migrations we visited many private estates long before anyone was awake, where we found long lists of warblers and many rare plants. Will Serrill could tell us the names of the plants, trees, and grasses, which few of us ever learn.

Some of our members will remember that occasionally at our Thursday evening meetings William Serrill would read aloud a choice poem of bird life which he had enjoyed. His own poem, "A Sparrow Paradox", telling of "the joys the hills and valleys yield", and a verse for each of our native sparrows, was read at the Annual Meeting of 1936.

Other contributions which should be mentioned are "A Morning with the Warblers", "Some Bird Experiences in the South", "Mt. Desert Island—The Home of Acadia National Park", "A Park System for Delaware County", "A Hiker in Ricketts Glen", "Adventures of Two Nestlings", and an address on "John Bartram at South-West Harbor".

In conclusion we can testify that the passing of William J. Serrill is a great loss to our Club and to the Community.

BUCK AND PANMURE ROADS, HAVERFORD, PA.



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