

RICHARD F. MILLER

EDWARD J. REIMANN

"Dick loves the birds", his mother once told me when I first met his family about thirty years ago. I was to learn eventually that his entire life was *birds*; and although he lived in the city, most of his life was spent in the field. Genuinely interwoven with this love of birds and natural creation was his feeling for his family and his fellow man. His search for knowledge was insatiable, but with it all he possessed true meekness and humility of heart.

As a boy Dick's activity in collecting birds' eggs early influenced his career. And his *was* a career, even without formal education. Here was no just ordinary egger. With academic training Dick might easily have attained at least a museum curatorship. The great number of eggs he took was an incentive, was but a token exchange for the wealth of bird-lore he obtained and subsequently imparted to others.

His bird notes are voluminous. He kept a daily diary and cross references for each species. Dick's contributions appeared in the *Auk* and other ornithological literature shortly after the turn of the century; and references to his notes appear in almost every pertinent bibliography. He was respected by the well-known ornithologists of this land, and as I learned during the war years, abroad. His memory was phenomenal and he could recall incidents of fifty years past in clarity and great detail. He knew by name most of the plants and forms of animal life besides birds; and as for the birds, he memorized the entire A.O.U. numerical checklist, and would identify species by their number!

There seemed to be no limit to Dick Miller's physical endurance in the field. A great climber, he could "shinny" as high as twenty-five feet up a tree when he was over 60 years old; and I was with him when he climbed to a Crow's nest on his seventy-sixth birthday. He could spend an entire day up to his waist in water wading through a marsh looking at birds and their nests.

Dick joined the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club in 1908, and for a time was a member of the American Ornithologists' Union. He spent some of his early years near the Penn State campus and in the Poconos with Dick Harlow; and many of his collecting trips were taken with Turner McMullen. He was a good friend of the zoologist, Squire Gillin and the latter's son, James, of Ambler, Pa. He went on many Club field trips with Sam Scoville, Fletcher Street, Julian Potter, William Baily and Albert Whitaker, and birded with Fred Hemphill in Maine. At various periods during their lives, Dick and William Jay were inseparable. In later years, Miller and James Bond often exchanged information and theories. In the twilight of his bird-

ing career, Dick was able to bird in Mexico with his close friends, Robert and Marcella Newman of Louisiana State University. It was to this institution that Dick donated his entire oölogical collection.

Richard was one of ten children born to John and Carrie Scanlon Miller on March 18, 1880. He passed away on Thanksgiving Day, November 28, 1959, just four months shy of 80 years of age. Dick Miller was a true prototype of the early birder and his passing signified to us the end of his era. Though gone, much of him remains. Scoville explained it when he told us about the old slave on a southern plantation who once told Sam: "Mistah Sam, when Ah heahs that bird sing (Pine-woods Sparrow), Ah jest knows we will nevah die".

321 N. Easton Road, Willow Grove, Pa.