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EDWIN BEAUPRE

By R. O. Merriman

IN THE death of Edwin Beaupre, bird-study in Canada loses one of its most enthusiastic and careful field observers and collectors, and his associates lose a valued friend.

Edwin Beaupre was the youngest son of Edward Beaupre and his wife, born Esther Moffatt, and was of French blood on his father's side and of Scottish and Irish extraction through his mother. He was born in Portsmouth, Ontario, and received his early education at a private school, and, except for a short time in early manhood spent in Alberta, he lived all his life in Portsmouth and Kingston, Ontario. He was in the hotel business for some years, and later was a wine merchant, and since the advent of prohibition he was a manufacturer of carbonated beverages. He was a widower without children, having married, in 1904, Anna Leahy, of Cleveland, who died in 1914.

When Edwin Beaupre was a boy, a chance meeting with the late Dr. C. K. Clarke, then superintendent of "Rockwood", the provincial lunatic asylum at Portsmouth, led to a lasting friendship and infected Beaupre with Dr. Clarke's enthusiasm for bird-study, for which he was widely known. Beaupre himself dated his scientific interest in birds from 1894, when he started his ornithological library with a copy of McIlwraith's "Birds of Ontario," and taught himself to prepare bird skins and to mount birds. His collection of birds, which were mostly mounted specimens, did not grow to large proportions; but at his death his collection of eggs included a good representation of Canadian birds. He collected constantly through the neighbourhood of Kingston and along the lakes of northern Frontenac County and the adjoining counties, and made collecting trips to more distant breeding grounds. He exchanged with collectors in other parts of Canada, but he did not habitually buy or sell specimens; for he was a conservationist as well as a collector, and he was keenly aware of the danger to rare species through the work of the commercial collector.

Among his longer collecting trips may be mentioned his visits to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, (the Magdalen Islands, Perce Rock and Bird Rock), in 1903 and 1926, his trip to the Georgian Bay in 1918, and his last trip, to the neighbourhood of Fort Assiniboine, Alberta, north of the Athabasca River, in the spring of 1929. On this last trip he was especially pleased to observe the breeding of the Solitary Sandpiper; for he had been indirectly connected with, but had never accepted, one of the now generally rejected records of this species nesting on the ground in Southern Ontario. Beaupre was an accurate and conservative observer, supporting his observations by collecting specimens whenever necessary, and making notes on breeding habits and habitats, migration, and many other topics. He also used photography and bird-banding as methods of bird study. He contributed occasional notes to The Canadian Field-Naturalist and other magazines; but his usual method of making known the fruits of his observations was by letter, his

correspondents including the late E. H. Forbush, P. A. Taverner, A. C. Bent, several members of the staff of the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology and others. At the Ottawa meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union, of which he was an associate, he met several of his correspondents for the first time, and in some instances for the only time.

He was unable to watch the migration of birds this spring, and in May he was taken to the Hotel Dieu Hospital, Kingston, where he died on June 2, 1930, aged 58. After his illness was known to be mortal, he was delighted to receive a set of eggs of the Canada Jay, from a homesteader in Northern Alberta with whom he had lodged during his trip in 1929, and from the hospital he gave directions for the care of these specimens. The collection which thus interested him to the last days of his life now goes by his will to the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology. In religion he was a Roman Catholic, and his requiem was sung in St. Mary's Cathedral, Kingston. R.I.P.