



*Stewardson Brum*

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### Stewardson Brown

BY WITMER STONE

WHILE technical knowledge and activity in research are admittedly necessary for the successful progress of a club such as ours there would be no club were it not for further qualities exhibited in the membership. There must be personalities that hold us together—that inspire respect and affection and weld bonds of friendship that will not yield with the lapse of time.

Stewardson Brown possessed such qualities in a marked degree and it is no detriment to his scientific knowledge to say that it will be in this connection that his memory will be cherished in the years to come by those whose privilege it was to be associated with him. And in the promotion of good-fellowship and in the cheerful and unselfish aid that he rendered both to individual members and to the club, lies perhaps his greatest service to the D. V. O. C.

I first became acquainted with Brown in the autumn of 1877. I had entered the Germantown Academy, and found among the other new boys who were to be my classmates, the late

Amos P. Brown, sometime Professor of Mineralogy and Geology in the University of Pennsylvania. Living not far from one another we became close friends, and through him I met his brother Stewardson, a few years his junior. The family of seven sons and two daughters resided with their parents at "Restalrig," one of the Logan properties near Wayne Junction, adjoining on the south the famous homestead "Stenton," rich in historic associations. It lay on the extreme eastern edge of Germantown and beyond it stretched miles of open country, with delightful bits of woodland here and there, and the Wingohocking Creek, then a clear open stream, flowing not far away. The surroundings were ideal for the development of a love for natural history; and the atmosphere of the home equally so. There was a general interest in out-door life in the family, and a love of hunting and fishing on the part of the father and elder brothers. A gun closet in the hall was ever ready to furnish the means of securing any rare bird that visited the neighborhood, while many mounted specimens graced the bookcases in the parlor. And life there was not bound about by narrow restrictions such as some parents feel it necessary to impose. There were flower beds, shrubbery, orchards and a large old-fashioned vegetable garden with a grape wall, and extensive hotbeds. In this enclosure each of the boys, so long as they desired, had a small patch of his own where flowers and early vegetables were raised.

In this environment Stewardson Brown was born April 29, 1867, and here he resided until the family moved to East Penn St., Germantown, in 1900.

He naturally developed an interest in nature, and a love of out-door sports,—cricket, baseball, etc., for which ample opportunity was offered without leaving his home grounds. Especially however, was he attached to the garden and from constant association with the gardeners he attained at an early age a knowledge of cultivated and wild plants, trees and shrubs which formed the foundation of his later career.

Stewardson was the fifth son of Amos P. and Frances Brown and was descended from Henry Brown who emigrated from England to Haverhill, Mass., in 1639. One of his grand-

mothers was Elizabeth Stewardson, sister of Dr. Thomas Stewardson, an eminent physician, scientist and botanist of his time, and from the Stewardsons doubtless came the strong interest in natural history so manifest in Stewardson Brown as well as in his brother Amos.

We three boys had very many interests in common—a love of nature, of music and of out-door athletic exercises—and we became inseparable companions. Indeed for a period of more than ten years we spent almost our entire spare time at Restalrig or in the immediate vicinity mainly in collecting and studying specimens of plants, animals and minerals. Stewardson was preeminently the botanist of the party and Amos the geologist, although we each absorbed a healthy amount of knowledge upon all branches of natural history.

In 1882 in conjunction with my late brother Frederick D. Stone Jr., and Brown's younger brothers, Herbert and Francis H., we formed the "Wilson Natural Science Association" which met in our house where a room had been transformed into a museum for the housing of our collections; and here weekly sessions were held and papers read with all the formality of a more serious organization. While our activities were admittedly very local in scope, I have since been impressed with the admirable basis that they afforded for our future work, better, I am inclined to think, than would have been derived from less concentrated work over a wider field. Our aim was to become familiar with all of the animal and plant life of that part of Germantown as well as the minerals and rocks, and I think we nearly succeeded.

For several seasons Stewardson and his brothers spent the months of July and August with an aunt at Pt. Pleasant, N. J. and there he became acquainted with the wonderful flora of the Pine Barrens as well as with the shore birds, marsh finches, gulls and fish-hawks, and with new and rare insects, washed up on the beach and the shore of the Manasquan river, and many were the additions to our museum from this source. Together we visited my ancestors' homestead in central Chester Co., Pa., and in 1886 spent a week at York Furnace on the lower Susquehanna where we found a still different fauna and flora.

After leaving school in 1885, Stewardson Brown entered the offices of the Lehigh Valley Railroad where he remained until 1900 when he accepted the position of Assistant Curator at the Academy of Natural Science in charge of the herbarium, and there his real scientific career began.

The writer became connected with the Academy as early as March, 1888, and almost immediately Stewardson had begun to visit the institution becoming a member on January 27, 1891. He soon made the acquaintance of Dr. J. Bernard Brinton who was at that time heading a party of younger botanists on Sunday and holiday collecting trips to points in the neighborhood of Philadelphia.

On these excursions he met many of the men with whom he later became closely associated in the activities of the Botanical Section of the Academy and the Philadelphia Botanical Club. This Club was organized in 1892 by Dr. Brinton and the coterie of young botanists that he had brought together. Brown was the first secretary and in later years became the president.

His first interest had always been botany and the service he rendered the Academy in caring for the herbarium during a critical period of its history when the volunteer workers of earlier years were passing away and the entire arrangement of the collection and method of supervision had to be completely revised, will probably never be fully realized. During his years of service in the herbarium he made the acquaintance of many botanists of other institutions, notably Dr. N. L. Britton who became a close personal friend. Brown also became affiliated with other societies, being elected a member of the Torrey Botanical Club, the Botanical Society of America and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, as well as Professor of Botany to the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and lecturer on botany in the Ludwick Institute Courses.

He had a charm of character and a magnetism that drew to him many persons interested in plant life, beginners as well as those advanced in the study, and he soon took the place that Dr. Brinton had earlier filled as the head of those whose activities kept the Botanical Club in continued operation. He was editor of the Club's annual publication *Bartonia*, and spared no effort to make the meetings attractive and instructive.

In the early days of the Club he introduced the members to the lower Susquehanna Valley which he had visited in former years, and later on made tours of Pike and Wayne and Somerset Counties, Pennsylvania, with C. F. Saunders the well-known botanical author, while with the writer he explored many parts of the New Jersey Pine Barrens.

In 1904 he visited the Florida Keys with H. W. Fowler, and in 1906 and again in 1908, traveled through the Canadian Rockies with Mrs. Chas. Shaffer, making valuable collections upon which was based his well-known volume on the flora of the region which was illustrated by reproductions of Mrs. Shaffer's paintings. A few years previously he published a handbook of the flora of Philadelphia and vicinity in conjunction with Dr. Ida A. Keller which was largely used in the city high schools. In 1910 Brown accompanied his brother to Jamaica and in 1911 was botanist on an expedition to Trinidad and Venezuela, organized by Mr. Francis E. Bond, one of his old schoolmates. He also made trips to Bermuda in 1905, 1909, 1912, 1913 and 1914 and to Porto Rico in 1915 in company with Dr. N. L. Britton.

On all of these expeditions valuable collections were obtained which greatly enriched the Academy's herbarium, while Brown's knowledge of plants was vastly extended. The constant care of the herbarium and his devotion to horticulture made him familiar with many exotics and the knowledge obtained in the tropics only increased his ability to identify specimens on sight—an ability which he possessed to a remarkable degree. This sort of botanical knowledge always appealed to him much more than the differentiation of the unlimited races and varieties of the present-day specialist.

Brown's interest in birds was only second to that in plants. In our school days in Germantown we learned the local birds together and the first specimen of many a species to grace our cabinet was secured by Stewardson. He became thoroughly familiar with all the local species in their various plumages and was a most accurate field ornithologist. We jointly compiled during these years the migration record for Germantown which went to the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture. The D. V. O. C. was

founded soon after I came to the Academy and moved its meeting place to this institution in 1891. Brown was elected an Associate on October 6 of that year and became an Active Member January 7, 1897, served as Treasurer 1901-1907; as Vice President 1908-12, and as President 1913-1915. He became an Associate of the American Ornithologists' Union in November, 1895 and took a prominent part in arranging for and managing the several meetings that were held in Philadelphia.

On all his botanical trips he was constantly alert for ornithological information and favored the Club with many most interesting communications. As early as 1891 he addressed us on bird-life at Harvey's Lake, Pa., and later on ornithological observations at Point Pleasant, N. J., Tobyhanna and Ganoga, Pa., while he accompanied Francis R. Cope, Jr., on an ornithological trip through Clinton and Potter Cos., Pa., which was reported upon in *CASSINIA* for 1901. His observations on the birds of the West Indies, Bermuda and Venezuela were still more noteworthy communications, while his wide experience furnished material for comments in various discussions at numerous meetings.

His technical contributions as we have already said were by no means the full measure of his worth to the D. V. O. C. His cheerful smile and cordial greeting, his constant attendance at meetings so long as health permitted, and his never-failing assumption of responsibilities and proffer of assistance—these were the qualities that remain indelibly in our memory, qualities as precious as they are rare.

It is distressing to see so active a career cut short as was his by the serious illnesses which beset him in 1913 and 1915-1916 and by the accident that befell him in 1920 and culminated in his death on March 14, 1921. And yet the manly way in which he faced the inevitable and the continued cheerfulness with which he turned to find enjoyment in the limited field of his garden, where the cultivation of flowers and the study of such casual birds as came there had to take the place of trips farther afield, could not help but inspire greater respect and affection for him in the hearts of those of us who knew him best.

It will be a gratification to all of us to remember the keen

enjoyment that he derived from the Washington's Birthday trip of the D. V. O. C. in 1919, when the shelter of Street's cabin at New Lisbon, N. J., made it possible for him to visit again the Pine Barrens which held so many delightful associations and to share once more the companionship of the Club in the field, which ever meant so much to him.