



HENRY T. UNDERDOWN

1875 - 1965

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ALAN BRADY

Over much of its seventy-six year history the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club has been held together by a few men, some not as sincerely interested in field birding, collecting, or scientific writing as they were in the companionship of fellow ornithologists and in the support of the Club through tireless devotion to the infinite details necessary to keep it in operation. Dedicated to the D.V.O.C. for forty-seven years, Henry T. Underdown was such a man.

He became an associate member in 1918, and thereafter there was seldom a meeting that he missed. Although he participated on numerous field trips, it was the rich companionship that attracted him more than the possibility of a rare ornithological find. Henry's interest rubbed off on his young son, Eliot, who also became a member and who became the serious birder of the family. Eliot kept copious notes of Club trips, and during the family summer vacations at Bailey Island, Maine, he crammed notebooks full of his observations.

It was surely through his inner strength that Henry was able to overcome the tragic and untimely death of Eliot as he was just beginning such a promising career in 1932. At that moment both the D.V.O.C. and Henry must have profited from the close association. He did not give up his interest in birds, but rather became more devoted than ever to the Club.

In 1927 Henry became Treasurer, a post to which he was elected annually until he asked to be relieved in 1959. At the 1960 Annual Meeting the D.V.O.C. honored him for these thirty-two years of service when it conferred upon him the honorary title of "Devoc," an award presented previously only to Julian K. Potter.

For a number of years, Henry, along with other well-known members, represented the Club at various A.O.U. meetings as attested to by notes in *Cassinia*. He attended the 1922 meeting in Chicago with Potter, Robinson, Rhoads, and Stone, and the meeting at Cambridge the following year with Robinson, Rhoads, and Stone. He was present at several subsequent A.O.U. meetings.

His employer, the Provident Mutual Life Insurance Company, honored him only two years prior to his death for his seventy years of service, and he still held a desk there when he died at age 90 on March 19, 1965.

He was truly a gentleman of gentle nature, one whom we shall never cease to miss.

Wycombe, Pennsylvania