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100 YEARS AGO IN THE AOU

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The 36th meeting of the AOU took place on Monday, November 11, 1918, at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. Public sessions were canceled for the first time in the annual meeting's history, because of the worldwide influenza epidemic. This meant that the meeting consisted only of the Council and Fellows and Members who could attend. The meeting also coincided with the celebration of Armistice Day, ending World War I, that was occurring in the streets of New York that day.

The meeting of Fellows was called to order at 8:05 P.M. by President John H. Sage. New bylaws were adopted, setting the fee for a Patron at $1,000. The meeting of Fellows and Members was called to order at 8:20 P.M., with 13 Fellows and 4 Members present. Following the reading of the members in military and naval service, the Secretary reported that the AOU's membership had grown to 953: Fellows, 50; Retired Fellows, 2; Honorary Fellows, 15; Corresponding Fellows, 56; Members, 80; and Associates, 750. During the year, the AOU had lost 14 members to death: one Retired Fellow, one Honorary Fellow, one Corresponding Fellow, and 11 Associates, three of whom were killed in war action in France: Eric Brooke Dunlop (1887–1917), Walter Freeman McMahon (1889–1918), and Douglas Clifford Mabbott (1893–1918).

Lyman Belding (1829–1917) was a Retired Fellow who was the oldest member of the AOU at the time of his death; as mentioned in the last column, he was also considered the oldest ornithologist in the United States. His research was mostly on birds in California and he was a stalwart of the Cooper Ornithological Society, being made an Honorary Member in 1896. In his memorial, A. K. Fisher referred to him as the "Nestor of California ornithologists." Friedrich Hermann Otto Finsch (1839–1917) was a German naturalist and explorer and was an Honorary Fellow in the AOU. He held a number of curator appointments early in his career and late in his career, sandwiched between extensive foreign travels. He spent considerable time in the Pacific Southwest on behalf of the German government and was successful in establishing the German protectorate of German New Guinea in 1884, the capital of the colony being named Finschhaven in his honor. His major ornithological publication was on parrots of the world (*Die Papageien*, 1867), and several parrot species are named after him (Figure 1). His book was criticized for its new taxonomy, which many viewed as Finsch's attempt to get authorship of many parrot taxa. Cornel William Vincent Legge (1841–1918) was a Corresponding Fellow in the AOU and an Australian soldier with an interest in ornithology. He was born in Tasmania and spent his career in the Royal Regiment of Artillery in the British Army. He had the good fortune of being stationed in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) from 1869 to 1877, which led to the publication of *History of the Birds of Ceylon*, published in three parts between 1878 and 1880 in London, comprising two quarto-sized volumes, with colored plates by Johannes Gerardus Keulemans (1842–1912), the famous Dutch bird illustrator. Legge helped start the Royal Australasian Ornithologists Union in 1901 and was its first president.

Among the members that died were Jonathan Young Stanton (1834–1918), who was a professor of Greek and Latin at Bates College, known as "Uncle Johnny." He also taught a course in ornithology, starting in the summer of 1874; "Baird" was listed as the text, possibly referring to the updated edition of *The Birds of North America* (Baird 1870). Since there was no such thing as an elective at that time, ornithology was a requirement for sophomores from 1874 to 1898 and for freshmen from 1898 to 1918, when ornithology was dropped from the curriculum following Stanton's death. Lynds Jones is generally credited with teaching the first course in ornithology at an American college, in 1895 at Oberlin College (Taylor 1938), but Stanton's course preceded that one by 20 years. The Stanton Bird Club in Lewiston, Maine, was named after Professor Stanton in 1919 and will be celebrating its centennial next year. David Ernest Lantz (1855–1918) died during the influenza epidemic, succumbing within a week after contracting the disease. He spent about 25 years in Kansas, starting in 1878 as an educator, and published about 35 papers and notes on birds in Kansas. His most famous work was "A Review of Kansas Ornithology" (Lantz 1898). He accepted a position with the Bureau of Biological

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FIGURE 1. Finsch's Pygmy Parrot (*Micropsitta finschii*; also known as the Emerald Pygmy Parrot or Green Pygmy Parrot) is one of several parrots named for Finsch. This pygmy parrot inhabits tropical rainforests of islands in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and the Bismarck Archipelago. Photo courtesy of Josep del Hoyo/Lynx at http://www.hbw.com/ibc/975795

FIGURE 2. One of the posters used to advertise Liberty Bonds during the Third Liberty Loan program, which was started in April 1918.

Survey in Washington, D.C., in 1904 and spent much of his career there working on economic mammalogy.

An unprecedented 5 Honorary Fellows and 14 Corresponding Fellows were elected, representing 12 countries: four from England; two each from Argentina, Sweden, France, and what is today Malaysia; and one each from South Africa, Russia, Scotland, Australia, Japan, Cuba, and Rhodesia. Since there were 50 Fellows, no new Fellows were elected, but 5 people were elected to the status of Member. Harold C. Bryant (1886–1968) had a long and illustrious career with the National Park Service, and, along with Loye H. Miller, was responsible for starting the interpretive program in the national parks, whereby naturalists gave talks and led tours for park visitors. George K. Cherrie (1865–1946) was an important bird collector who traveled on more than 40 expeditions, mostly to Central and South America. Robert White Williams (1877–1940), a lawyer by trade, worked for many years for the Bureau of Biological Survey and was responsible for many of the wildlife conservation laws passed by Congress from 1907 into the 1930s. In 1939 he was named chief counsel for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The other two Members were Lieutenant Ludlow Griscom (1890–1959) and Lieutenant James L. Peters (1889–1952), both of whom would go on to have outstanding careers in ornithology. Griscom had recently joined the staff at the American Museum of Natural History in the Ichthyology Department in 1916, then transferred to the Department of Ornithology in early 1917. He entered the army in August 1917 and, because of his language skills, spent his military career as a linguist, primarily in France (Davis 1994:27–29). Peters also served in France at the same time and spent a year after the war in Germany as part of the army of occupation (*The Auk* 74:168). Both would become Fellows in the AOU, Griscom in 1925 and Peters in 1927. Both would be elected as president of the AOU, but Griscom resigned in 1956 without serving, as a result of health issues, and Peters was president from 1942 to 1945. Peters is remembered for his series *Check-list of Birds of the World*, for which he was awarded the Brewster Medal in 1940.

A total of 147 people were elected as Associates, at least 47 (32%) of whom were women (based on their listed names). Some outstanding people were Alfred Marshall Bailey (1894–1978), who was associated with the Denver Museum of Natural History for most of his professional

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life. He became a Fellow in the AOU in 1941. Lee Raymond Dice (1887–1977) had an illustrious career as a mammologist at the University of Michigan. Loye Holmes Miller (1874–1970) spent most of his career at the University of California at Los Angeles, with a dual career in paleornithology, researching the bones from the Rancho La Brea tar pits, and as a naturalist. Known as "Padre," he was elected a Fellow in the AOU in 1930.

During the war, the AOU sought to get donations to the Third Liberty Loan program (Figure 2) for members of the society that were serving in the war. A total of $1,700 was collected, and those who contributed a sum equal to or greater than a life membership were given permanent memberships in the AOU by vote of the Council: one Fellow, two Members, and three Associates.

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