

EDWARD ARNOLD AND WALTER RAINÉ AT THE SHOAL LAKES, MANITOBA — 1894

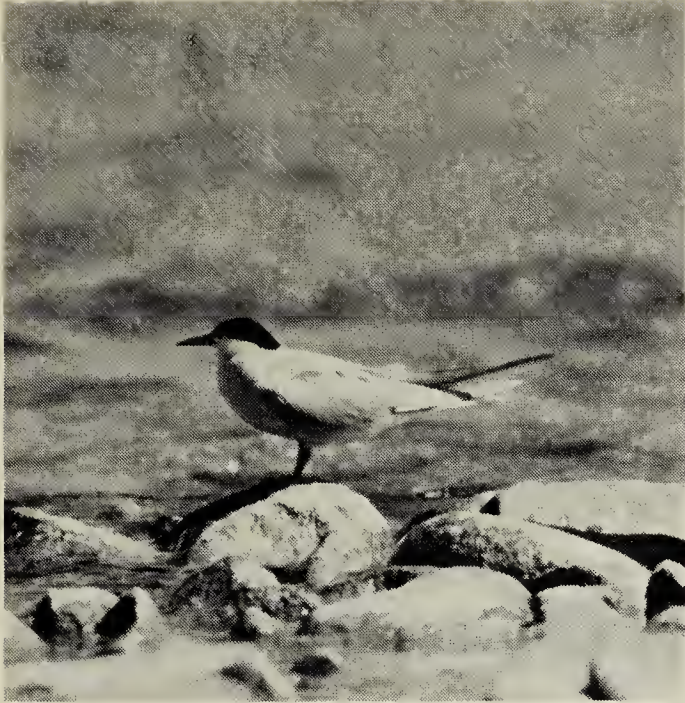
MARTIN K. McNICHOLL, 320 Markham Street, Toronto, Ontario. M5G 2K9

Houston and Bechard recently provided a highly informative account of the contributions of oologist Edward Arnold to the ornithology of the Canadian prairie provinces.⁷ In this account, they mentioned a trip that Arnold made with Walter Rainé (the subject of another paper by Houston) to Shoal Lake, northwest of Winnipeg.^{6,7} In his earlier account of Rainé's contributions, Houston mentioned a trip by Rainé to Raeburn, Manitoba in 1893, but did not mention the trip of the following year to Shoal Lake.⁶ Much earlier, Taverner stated that Arnold and Rainé visited Shoal Lake in 1893 *and* 1894.¹³ In fact, Rainé made two trips to Shoal Lake, both in June 1894, the first with Arnold and two companions, the second with an unnamed local farmer.^{1,11} Houston and Bechard were correct in stating that these trips occurred in 1894, as Arnold states that he and Rainé planned the trip in winter 1893 and that it took place in 1894.¹

Rainé mentioned the first trip only briefly, apparently relying on Arnold to supply the details.¹¹ According to Arnold, they travelled from Raeburn to the lake on 8 June in "rather warm" weather, stopping en route to look at some nests of Cliff Swallows on an old house and to look for a nest of a Blue-winged Teal by a ditch.¹ They arrived at Shoal Lake about 1800 and were soon in a colony of terns with "hundreds" of nests. They identified the terns as Forster's, but Taverner questioned this identification on the grounds that neither mentioned Common Terns, a species which is more abundant there.^{2,13} Cer-

tainly the gravel nest sites of this colony are more suggestive of Common, although Forster's occasionally nest on such sites.¹⁰ An earlier account by Donald Gunn of finding terns nesting both on gravel and on floating mats of vegetation suggests that both species may have been present.⁴ Arnold also mentions finding nests of Canvasback, Redhead, and Greater Prairie-Chicken that first day.¹ Modern naturalists may raise eyebrows at the latter, but this species was common on the prairies during this period, and Taverner found them still more common than the Sharp-tailed Grouse in 1917.^{8,13} Mosquitoes were a major irritant to Arnold, but the heat proved more of a problem as he was driven to sample the alkaline water of the lake, the effects of which he felt long after their visit.¹ Arnold also reports that on 9 June he and Rainé found nests of three species of grebes, American Bitterns and Wilson's Phalarope.¹ Although Rainé mentioned their stay was 5 days, Arnold's account covers only two.^{1,11}

Rainé had hoped to visit a colony of American White Pelicans visited by R. Hunter in 1878, but he and Arnold did not find it on their joint visit.¹¹ Rainé decided to try again and returned to the lake with a local resident on 17 June, when they found that a 12 June storm had washed out much of the tern colony that he and Arnold had visited earlier.¹¹ He found a few young terns there as well as a Spotted Sandpiper nest. Rainé and his companion found several duck nests, another Wilson's Phalarope nest, and several



Common Tern.

Larry A. Morgotch

grebe nests before proceeding to another peninsula of the lake. While they took shelter from a storm, a settler told them the location of the pelican colony. That evening they rowed to a colony island, where they collected eggs of the pelicans, Double-crested Cormorants and Herring Gulls. They then moved on to another island where they found more pelicans, more duck nests, more Herring Gulls and another colony of "Forster's" Terns. As darkness overtook them, the weather grew stormy again, and they spent the night under their boat. Raine's dedication to his hobby is indicated by his rising at 0400 the next morning to spend 3 hours blowing eggs before awakening his companion to complete their return trip.¹¹

The "Shoal Lake" of Gunn, Arnold, Raine, Chapman and Taverner northwest of Winnipeg varies markedly in water levels and is at times divided into three lakes: East Shoal Lake, West Shoal Lake, and North Shoal Lake.⁹ These marked changes in water levels affect the breeding of birds in the area, most notably that of the American White Pelican.^{3 5 9 13}

Houston and Bechard wisely caution the reader not to confuse the "Shoal

Lake" visited by Arnold with the town of the same name west of Minnedosa.⁷ To this caution, I would add that there is yet another Shoal Lake in Manitoba near Lake-of-the-Woods from which Winnipeg gets its water supply and which is also a subject of the ornithological literature.¹²

¹ ARNOLD, E. 1895. A few notes from Shoal Lake, Manitoba. *Oologist* 12:22-24.

² CHAPMAN, F. M. 1908. *Camps and cruises of an ornithologist*. D. Appleton and Co., New York.

³ EVANS, R. M. 1972. Some effects of water level in the reproductive success of the White Pelican at East Shoal Lake, Manitoba. *Can. Field-Nat.* 86:151-153.

⁴ GUNN, D. 1868. Notes on an eggging expedition to Shoal Lake, west of Lake Winnipeg. *Smithsonian Inst. 22nd Ann. Rept. for 1867*: 427-432.

⁵ HOSFORD, H. 1965. Breeding success of the White Pelican in two colonies in Manitoba in 1964. *Blue Jay* 23:21-24.

⁶ HOUSTON, C. S. 1981. An assessment of Walter Raine and his Saskatchewan records. *Blue Jay* 39:168-181.

⁷ HOUSTON, C. S., and M. J. BECHARD. 1982. Edward Arnold, enthusiastic oologist. *Blue Jay* 40:184-192.

⁸ JOHNSTON, A., and S. SMOLIAK. 1976. Settlements of the grasslands and the Greater Prairie Chicken. *Blue Jay* 34:153-156.

⁹ LAWRENCE, A. G. 1943. Receding waters cause great faunal changes. *Chickadee Notes* No. 1176. Winnipeg Free Press 7 Oct. 1943.

¹⁰ McNICHOLL, M. K. 1971. The breeding biology and ecology of Forster's Tern (*Sterna forsteri*) at Delta, Manitoba. M.Sc. thesis, Univ. Manitoba, Winnipeg.

¹¹ RAINE, W. 1895. A rough time collecting at Shoal Lake, Manitoba. *Oologist* 12:3-6.

¹² ROWAN, W. 1922. Some bird notes from Indian Bay, Manitoba. *Auk* 39:224-232.

¹³ TAVERNER, P. A. 1919. The birds of Shoal Lake, Manitoba. *Ottawa Nat.* 32:137-144, 157-164; *Can. Field-Nat.* 33:12-20.