



Historic Bakersfield & Kern County, California

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Redwood City Naturalist Chase Littlejohn (1854-1943)

By Gilbert P. Gia

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Littlejohn was crack shot who slaughtered a species but in his mature years was a protector of wildlife and a respected naturalist. ¹ He had no children of his own to celebrate his life, but it is a story worth telling.



¹ b. Apr 8, 1854, Redwood City - d. May 26, 1943, San Mateo, California; Not mentioned in other sources is the statement of his sister Flora, who said in an interview that he was born in Redwood City on April 8, 1854. (Raymond E. Hall, "Chase Littlejohn, 1854-1943: Observations by Littlejohn on Hunting Sea Otters," *Journal of Mammalogy*, Feb 1945, (vol. 26), pp. 89-91

Young Chase's school was in a spreading Valley Oak. The teacher, a Mr. Phillips, drove to Redwood City in a two-wheeled box-cart pulled by a donkey and seated himself on a box behind the recitation table, which was four posts driven into the ground and covered by a broad plank. At playtime, pupils climbed among the limbs, but at instruction time they scrambled down from the canopy.³

At an early age Chase wandered nearby groves and estuaries to hunt birds and eggs, and when he was 12 he started a collection that grew larger over the decades.⁴ In 1926 when Stanford University's Natural History Museum bought the vast collection, many of his mounted birds were species that had passed into extinction.⁵ Of scientific value as well were Chase's hundreds of field notes on the flora and fauna of the Pacific Coast. Here are two examples.

The Black Oystercatcher: "Their warning cry at the approach of man if heard by the sea otter causes the latter to make off at once, for this reason they are much hated by otter hunters."⁶

The Salt Marsh Yellowthroat: "In the spring a few are about, but soon disappear. They do not nest on the salt marsh, but at one place, where the ground is springy and covered with willows, they nest among the weeds and tules that are half-fresh and half-salt water plants, as very high tides reach quite a distance into the willows where they grow at the very edge of the salt marsh. All other nesting sites that I know of are some distance inland about moist or swampy ground."⁷

³ Bankitaly Life, (v. 3, no. 1), Jan 1919, <https://archive.org>; Science Guide for Elementary Teachers, California State Department of Education, (v. 5, no. 10), May 1939, p. 49

⁴ San Francisco Call, Jun 27, 1909; Daily Palo Alto, Apr 14, 1926

⁵ Daily Palo Alto, Apr 14, 1926; His father and mother came to Redwood City in 1868. The online data base www.idigbio.org lists the names of many hundreds of preserved specimens and dates that Chase collected m from 1892 to 1935.

⁶ "Chase Littlejohn Manuscript Notes, 1887-1888" in Olaus J. Murie, Fauna of the Aleutian Islands and Alaska Peninsula, 1936-38. Publication no. 61, U.S. Dept. Interior, Fish & Wildlife Service, Washington, 1959, p. 131

⁷ "More Summer Birds for San Francisco County," The Condor, Nov 1916

He once casually observed a red-bellied mouse common near Redwood City, but as time passed he began to wonder if the variety had been overlooked in the scientific literature.

“In 1907 he took specimens of the mouse to Dr. Joseph Dixon of Stanford University, and together they concluded that the literature was inconclusive.⁸ Dixon and Littlejohn gathered more than two dozen study-skins and skulls of the mouse from various representative points around San Francisco Bay. A close study led him [*Dixon*] to agree that the mouse was an unknown form found only in the salt marshes. The evidence was sent to Washington, and a comparison of it with material in the Biological Survey Collection resulted in the decision that it, in the words of the Survey, ‘was a very good new form.’”⁹

Chase was born to William and Emma Littlejohn in 1854, which was about five years after they settled at Redwood City.¹⁰ In 1860 seven family members were in the home: The father, William, 41, the mother, Emma, 32, and their five children -- George, 11, Frederick, 9, Simon, 6, Chase, 4, and Flora, 3.¹¹ At that time the elder Littlejohn owned and operated a saw mill and built stamp mills for mining; In following years he became successful building boats, bridges, canal locks, and a city-water piping system.¹²

⁸ Joseph Scatterwood Dixon (1884-1952)

⁹ Joseph Dixon, “A New Harvest Mouse from the Salt Marshes of San Francisco Bay, California,” *Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington*. (v. 21), Oct 20, 1908, pp. 197-198

¹⁰ William Emanuel Littlejohn (Oct 1813, England – Jan 17, 1907, Redwood City, California) “Redwood Boasts a Nonagenarian,” *San Francisco Call*, Oct 17, 1906); Emma Matilda (Doyle) Littlejohn (born Jul 16, 1827, Canada – died Dec 29, 1877, San Mateo, California); www.cagenweb.com/sanmateo/death_book_index.pdf; <http://files.usgwarchives.net/ca/sanmateo/cemeteries/union.txt>

¹¹ 1860 US Census

¹² John Edmonds, “The Town of West Union: Lumber Mills, Wineries and Farms. Pioneer millwright and shipbuilder in Redwood City. *Journal of Local History*, Summer 2010 (v. 2, no 2), Archives Committee of the Redwood City Public Library, 1044 Middlefield Road, Redwood City, CA 94063

In 1870 the last two Littlejohn children at home were Chase and Flora.¹³ Chase's older brother George by then was hunting seals, and he was probably the one who introduced Chase to shooting. When Chase was 18 he hired out on a schooner bound for Alaska and for Russia's Kuril Archipelago to hunt for sea otters, fur seals and bears.¹⁴

In 1879 Chase married 23 year-old Mary Ellen T. Koen, known as Nellie.¹⁵ In 1881 he organized a family outing for his wife, his father, a Peter Peterson and family, and himself, and that spring they departed on steamer *Anio* for the village of Belkofsky in the Aleutian Islands to hunt furs.¹⁶ Chase knew the area well because he had hunted there, and he would return to hunt for the next couple of years.¹⁷

In recalling a trip with his brother George, he wrote,

"As late as 1885 I was located on Sanak Island [*Alaska*]. Over on the Kuril Islands there was a flat rock probably two acres in extent. This island was not hunted much because there was no anchorage. One year we went there and that rock looked like a seal rookery with otter. There was something between 70 and 80 on that rock. We just kind of got on three sides of the rock with our and kept them [*the otters*] running back and forth. Very difficult to hit them on the rocks. They go fast; they are much quicker than a seal on the rocks. There was kelp on the rock. They would scoot [*slip*] 20 or 30 feet. Those fellow would get overboard [*into the sea*] in spite of all, but we killed quite a number."¹⁸

During that time, pelagic (open-sea) hunters saw fewer and fewer otters, which was why hunting methods changed. In 1886 when Chase was at San Francisco outfitting an expedition to Marjovia Bay, he

¹³ 1870 US Census

¹⁴ San Francisco Call, Jun 27, 1909

¹⁵ Married Mar 8, 1879. In the 1880 US Census, Chase's occupation was sea otter hunter and his father's was carpenter. Nellie was keeping house.

¹⁶ These details appear in Roy Walter Cloud, History of San Mateo County (1928) and are dated March 8, 1881.

¹⁷ San Francisco Call, Jun 27, 1909

¹⁸ Journal of Mammalogy, Feb 1945, (v. 26), pp. 89-91

loaded steam-launches built by the AC Company. The cost of each small craft was \$2,000 to \$3,000, but their expense was soon recovered because they made it possible for hunters to enter shallow coastal waters where the larger ships could not go.¹⁹

International hunting had decimated populations of Alaskan fur seals and otters, and much of that decline is attributed to the shooting of nursing females, which resulted in starvation of pups.²⁰ Unregulated hunting also impoverished native-Alaskan hunters, reduced the overall worth of the US fishing economy, and damaged the profits of domestic and international fur trade.

In order to rebuild populations, the US government enacted a law in 1886 that prohibited hunting in the Alaskan coastal waters and in the international waters hundreds of miles from shore.²¹ In 1893 the international ban was reversed, but during the seven years it was in force, hunters suffered great loss of income.²² As for Chase Littlejohn, his pelagic hunting days were over. He returned to his father's businesses and to his own passion for birding.

¹⁹ San Francisco Call, Jun 27, 1909. Ray Hudson and Rachel Mason, *Lost Villages of the Eastern Aleutians: Biorca, Kashega, Makushin*. National Park Service, US Government Printing Office (2014), p. 96

²⁰ Hudson, Ray and Rachel Mason, *Lost Villages of the Eastern Aleutians: Biorca, Kashega, Makushin*. National Park Service, US Gov. Printing Office, 2014. p. 96

²¹ A few years later the international fur trade withered in the worldwide economic recession. [*Fur Trade Review*, (v. 21), 1893 (Google Books)]. This volume reflects the complexity of the fur trade: the diversity of international furriers, the great magnitude of international sales in hides and furs, the scope and diversity of advertising, the complexity of maritime politics, and the many disputes over international hunting rights among leading maritime nations.

²² In later years the US Government paid millions in punitive damages to hunters and boat owners. (Ray Hudson, and Rachel Mason, *Lost Villages of the Eastern Aleutians: Biorca, Kashega, Makushin*. National Park Service, US Government Printing Office, 2014. p. 96); Raymond E. Hall, "Chase Littlejohn, 1854-1943: Observations by Littlejohn on Hunting Sea Otters" *Journal of Mammology*, Feb 1945, vol. 26, p. 89-91)

The ban on hunting was not strictly observed. On the morning of March 2, 1889 George Littlejohn navigated the hunting schooner *Otter* through San Francisco Bay.²³ His final destination was Shumagin Islands on the Alaskan peninsula, but when the *Otter* was opposite Point Reyes she was enveloped in a violent storm and driven into the rocks. Lost without a trace were George Littlejohn, the ship's cook and cabin boy, all 20 crewmen, and the *Otter* itself.²⁴ George's death was particularly hard for the Littlejohns because their elder son, William, had been lost at sea 22 years earlier.²⁵

In 1894 Chase traveled to the Alaskan Peninsula for the Smithsonian Institution where he climbed the cliffs to collect birds, eggs and nests.²⁶ The April 1896 issue of *The Oologist* shows a Chase Littlejohn ad for Alaskan bird skins and eggs, the more costly of which were two dollars, or about \$60 today.²⁷

²³ San Francisco furrier Herman Liebes owned the *Otter*.

²⁴ Redwood City Democrat, Aug 30, 1917. Dimensions of the *Otter* (built 1881 at San Francisco): Tonnage (cargo-carrying capacity) 73.75; length 81 feet; beam 24.6 feet; draft 7.6 feet

²⁵ George's brother William F. Littlejohn (Aug 4, 1850-Dec 23, 1867, San Francisco Bay); Stockton Daily Independent, Jan 18, 1868, in <http://www.sfgenealogy.com/sf/vitals/sfobilg.htm>

²⁶ San Francisco Call, Jun 27, 1909

²⁷ *The Nidologist*, (v.3, no. 5) Apr 1896. Nidology is the study of bird nests. This publication advertised itself as "Exponent of American Ornithology and Oölogy" and was published by Cooper Ornithological Club of the Pacific Coast. Oölogy is the study or collecting of birds' eggs.

Eggs and Skins from Alaska.

FIRST CLASS, WITH DATA.

In order to close out my remaining specimens, I have concluded to cut the prices in *half*, to suit hard times. send in order soon and get the benefit. No order filled for less than \$1.00.
Terms, Cash with order. *Best of References.*

Ancient Murrelet.....	Set 2 eggs.....	\$2.75 per set.	Skins, \$2.50
Cass-in's Auklet.....	" 1 egg35 "	" 2.50
Pigeon Guillemot.....	" 2 eggs.....	.50 "	" "
Tufted Puffin.....	" 1 egg.....	.30 "	" "
Fork-tailed Petrel.....	" 1 egg.....	2.00 "	" 2.00
Leach's Petrel.....	" 1 egg.....	.65 "	" "
Mallard Duck.....	8 to 10 eggs.....	.15 each.	" "
Merganser Serrator.....	7 to 10 eggs.....	.40 "	" "
Alutian Sandpiper.....			" 1.25
Alutian Song Sparrow, 3 and 4 eggs.....		1.00 each.....	" 1.75
sandwich sparrow.....			" 1.00
Alutian Leucosticte.....			" 1.00

C. LITTLEJOHN, Redwood City, Cal.

After Nellie's death in 1897, Chase collected more often around the bay.²⁸ In the arcane world of ornithology he met Professor Alfred Webster Anthony, 32,²⁹ who was a naturalist at the San Diego Museum of Natural History and who also worked for the Smithsonian Institution as a collector of coastal flora and fauna of Baja California and Central America. In December 1898, at San Francisco, Anthony bought and outfitted the *Stella Erland* and enlisted several botanists and zoologists for a year-long expedition to the South Pacific. Named among the nine working crew was Chase Littlejohn, a man who was neither a common sailor nor an academic scientist. Instead, he was described as "one of the most expert seal hunters on the coast and a dead shot."³⁰ Chase Littlejohn's passion was birding, but his hunting past would not let go.

The *Stella Erland* first sailed for Amapala, Honduras, to deliver 30 tons of dynamite, but on the night of March 16, 1899, about 30 miles north of Magdalena Bay, she was overtaken by a storm and driven ashore.³¹ The crew spent a cold night and over the next few days were harassed by Mexican police, but eventually all hands returned to San Francisco. The sea had not claimed another Littlejohn son.

²⁸ b. 1837, Washington Territory – d. Apr 8, 1897, Redwood City

²⁹ Alfred Webster Anthony (1865-1939) was an avid birder. See his "A Night at Sea," that he read before the Northern Division of the Cooper Ornithology Club on September 2, 1899.

https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Condor/1_%286%29/A_Night_at_Sea

³⁰ San Francisco Call, Apr 1, 1899

³¹ Ibid.; Raymond E. Hall, "Chase Littlejohn, 1854-1943: Observations by Littlejohn on Hunting Sea Otters" Journal of Mammalogy, Feb 1945, vol. 26, p. 89-91

Chase was traveling less and collecting more, but he still worked in the family business. The 1900 US Census listed him as a boat builder and his father as a carpenter.³² About this time Chase married 36 year-old Jennie Koen, known as Jane.³³

About the time Chase and Jennie were married, the San Mateo County sheriff chose Chase Littlejohn as an expert witness in a firearms murder case.³⁴ Chase's livelihood in the 1910 census was "Own Income,"³⁵ but between 1900 and 1910 he was also county Deputy Fish Commissioner. In 1902 he ticketed an out-of-season hunter carrying a bag of quail, and that fine sweetened the county treasury by \$25, which today is about \$700.³⁶

Community spirit might have entered into Chase's decision to sell a lot on Broadway between Middlefield and Jefferson to the Redwood City board of education for a school,³⁸ and community spirit might also have caused him to run for (and be elected to) the Redwood City board of school trustees.³⁹

Chase was busy at home, but Alaska still beckoned. In the spring of 1907, a 40 year-old philanthropist named Annie M. Alexander assembled five naturalists to accompany her on a trip to the Admiralty Island to collect birds and mammals, particularly Alaskan bears.^{40 41}

³² 1900 US Census for California taken in June at Redwood City

³³ The 1900 US Census identified Jennie Koen, 36 and single, as in the Littlejohn household as a boarder. Jennie's name appears in the 1910 US Census as Jane R. Littlejohn, 46, born in 1864 in California. She had been married to Chase for 11 years.

³⁴ San Francisco Call, Aug 2, 1900

³⁵ 1910 US Census

³⁶ San Francisco Call, Jul 30, 1902

³⁸ Sequoia High School's first dedicated building opened July 15, 1904.

³⁹ San Francisco Call, Mar 29, 1906

⁴⁰ Admiralty Island is 15 miles southwest of Juneau. Its mountains rise to 4,650 feet, and it is covered by coastal rain forest, tundra and permanent ice fields. The Tlingit people call it Kootznoowoo, meaning Fortress of the Bear

The group that departed was Joseph Dixon, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Stephens, Mr. and Mrs. Chase Littlejohn, and Miss Alexander herself.⁴²

Their returning trophies numbered 1,008, including 532 birds, 33 sets of eggs (some with nests) and 28 bears.⁴³ Twenty years later Chase drew upon that trip for a bear-hunting talk he delivered before the Redwood City Exchange Club.⁴⁴

Chase was San Mateo County's game warden in 1908 when he ticketed Alameda Mayor E.K. Taylor, who was an ex-state senator and game protectionist. One morning Littlejohn observed Taylor in a boat in the marshes with a party shooting rail (rallidae). After Chase charged the three with violation of county game laws, Taylor vigorously protested. Littlejohn won the legal dispute but also agreed that they had unwittingly broken the law. He let them off. The amicable outcome probably had something to do with Taylor's past work in the state legislature where he wrote bills protecting song birds and fought for strict hunting laws.⁴⁵

⁴¹ *1907 Alexander Alaska Expedition*, Friends of Admiralty Island, (Winter 2015), p. 4. Although not a scientist, Annie Montague Alexander (1867–1950) was an explorer who not only financed international expeditions but actively conducted field work. Her wealth derived from her father's Hawaiian sugar plantations. In 1908 she funded the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at the University of California, Berkeley.

⁴² Joseph Scatterwood Dixon was then an undergraduate student at Throop Polytechnic Institute (1893-1912), which was an early manifestation of California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, California. (<http://mvz.berkeley.edu/Biographies.html>)

⁴³ "Birds and Mammals of the 1907 Alexander Expedition to Southeast and Alaska", University of California Publications in Zoology (vol 5, No 2) pp 171-254, Feb 18, 1909. p. 172; "1907 Alexander Alaska Expedition", Friends of Admiralty Island, Winter 2015, pg 4

⁴⁴ San Mateo Times and Daily News, Apr 11, 1928

⁴⁵ San Francisco Call, Jan 9, 1908



San Francisco Call, July 27, 1909

In 1911 Chase and Jane Littlejohn were retired at 1012 Warren Street, but the 56 year-old naturalist remained busy with the school board.⁴⁶ In summer 1911, four teachers filed charges against Redwood Grammar School Principal Marvin L. Benson for ungentlemanly conduct, and after teacher Margaret Roche testified against him, the board fired her. The Redwood City Women's Club rose to Miss Roche's defense and in the process accused Chase Littlejohn and fellow trustee Henry Steinberger of collusion owing to their personal friendship with Principal Benson. The outcome was Benson's resignation and the reinstatement of Miss Roche.⁴⁷ Littlejohn's personal reaction to the chaos is unknown, but he remained on the board.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ 1911 Redwood City Polk Directory

⁴⁷ Oakland Tribune, Jun 28, 1911

⁴⁸ Oakland Tribune, Dec 18, 1912

For Chase, the year 1912 was also a busy one. The Redwood City Council appointed him and five others to a newly-created park board,⁴⁹ the San Mateo Grand Jury accepted him as a member,⁵⁰ and, at the end of the year, the newly-formed, 100-member San Mateo branch of the Great Fish and Game Protective Association elected him president.⁵¹

In 1913, when Chase was 59, he no longer made trips out of California, but he did agree to join a trek into the high Sierras to find the California Pine Grosbeak, the last specimen of which had been collected in 1863 by pioneer ornithologist James G. Cooper. Outfitting the three-week summer expedition was industrialist and amateur ornithologist Milton S. Ray (1881–1946), who with Oluf J. Heinemann and Chase Littlejohn soon found themselves in rugged terrain at 8,500 feet. There “they heard its melodious voice and spied the brightly colored bird at the top of a 200 feet-tall fir tree.”⁵²

Chase was 60 when he rose to speak before the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at Berkeley on the subject of San Mateo County birds. The master of ceremonies said he was “one of the oldest collectors in the state, having been active along this line for forty-six years.”⁵³ A newsletter wrote,

“Among the unusual talks mentioned [*each bird being a talk*] were the following: Ashy Petrel, Least Bittern, Snowy Egret, Barrow Golden-eye (termed by him the rarest duck in California), American Scoter, Pectoral Sandpiper, Saw-wet Owl, Boreal Flicker, White-

⁴⁹ Oakland Tribune, Jan 25, 1912

⁵⁰ San Francisco Call, Oct 6, 1912, Jan 27, 1913

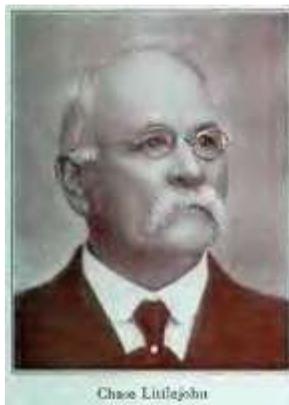
⁵¹ San Francisco Call, Dec 1, Dec 12, 1912

⁵² “Discovery of the Nest and Eggs of the California Pine Grosbeak” By Milton S. Ray, *The Condor*, (v. 14, no. 5) Sep-Oct, 1912; “The Eggs of the World’s Rarest Bird,” *San Francisco Call*, Jun 22, 1913. How they approached the bird and its nest must be saved for another story.

⁵³ Meeting of Nov 18, 1915. *The Condor*, Jan 1916 (v. 18), “Minutes of Cooper Club Meetings,” p. 39

throated Sparrow and Forbush Sparrow. Species which have totally disappeared from the country are: California Brown Pelican; European Widgeon; White-fronted, Hutchins and Cackling Geese; Little Brown and Sandhill Cranes; Painted Quail (not uncommon in 1865); California Condor; Yellow-billed Magpie; and Western Raven."⁵⁴

Chase and Jane's marriage lasted about 15 years.⁵⁵ By 1920 Chase was married to 58 year-old "Anne M.," born in Canada.⁵⁶ By then Chase worked at home as a taxidermist, but he was also Assistant Curator, Department of Ornithology and Mammology in the Museum of the California Academy of Sciences at San Francisco.⁵⁷



At the fifth annual meeting of the Audubon Society of California held in the Assembly Hall of San Francisco Public Library, Chase spoke about man's impact on wildlife. "Mr. Chase Littlejohn, of the staff of the

⁵⁴ "Minutes of Cooper Club Meetings" (Nov 18, 1915), *The Condor*, Jan 1916 (v. 18), p. 39

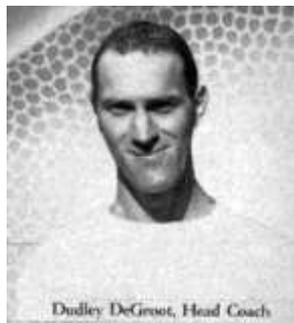
⁵⁵ I found no other information about Jane R. Koen.

⁵⁶ 1920 US Census; Anna Marie Church Schneider Littlejohn. Chase's sister Flora Easterday said Anna Marie had been a Schneider. [E.R. Hall, "Observations by Littlejohn on Hunting Sea Otters," *J. of Mammalogy*, (v. 26, no. 1) Feb 23, 1945, pp. 89-91]; "Anna Maria Littlejohn (born Church). Anna was born on March 6 1861, in Durham-South, Drummond, Quebec." (Devon-NY-Australia-California Littlejohns, www.genealogy.com; See also San Mateo Times Gazette Index, 1859-1879, compiled by Mary Lou Grunigen, San Mateo County Genealogical Society.

⁵⁷ Chase was noted as an employee on Sept 13, 1920 [California Academy of Sciences, Fourth Series (v. 10) 1920, Museum of the California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco]

California Academy of Science,” wrote The Gull, “delivered a most interesting address dealing with the diminutions in numbers of birds formerly very common in San Mateo County and vicinity. He named several dozen birds now extinct or very rarely seen compared to the early years. Condors were quite common in the early days. When hunters started to shoot birds, they followed the fashion of killing as many as they could, and bags of 200 per day for each hunter were readily secured.”⁵⁸

In 1926, Stanford Natural History Museum bought 72 year-old Chase Littlejohn’s lifetime collection of 1,825 specimens, which contained 22 species of San Mateo County birds that for the most part had passed into extinction.⁵⁹ Stanford also hired him to catalogue the collection. As he worked on the campus he might have thought his field days were over. But then he met a young collegian named Dudley de Groot.



No one who passed de Groot could have forgotten him; His commanding, Jay-Leno-esque chin also presaged his athletic fame and prowess.⁶⁰ “Dud” was a member of the Quadrangle Club, Sigma Nu, Pi Kappa Tau, and an athletic association called Skull and Snakes. He was president of the Interfraternity Conference and lettered in football,

⁵⁸ “Monthly meeting of the Audubon Society of Calif,” The Gull, Feb 1922

⁵⁹ Daily Palo Alto, Apr 14, 1926

⁶⁰ Nov 10, 1899, Chicago, IL–May 5, 1970, El Cajon, CA

basketball, swimming, and water polo.⁶¹ In 1923-1924 he was named backstroke champion by the Intercollegiate Association of Amateur Athletes of America, and in 1924 he received a gold medal at the Paris Olympics as a team member on the US rugby team. Dud's greatest passion, though, was American football, and he played it well. But he also was a birder.

Just how 22 year-old Dud de Groot and Chase Littlejohn became friends is not clear, but it could have happened in any number of ways. When Dud's family lived in the East, his father -- Edward B. de Groot -- was secretary of Chicago Playground and Recreation, executive director of Boy Scouts of America, and an outdoors man and birder.⁶² After the family moved to Southern California he continued to collect bird specimens.⁶³ As for Dud himself, he was barely a teenager when he authored a short article for an ornithological journal called *The Oologist*. In 1915 he was recommended for, and accepted into, membership in the Cooper Ornithological Society of California.⁶⁴ Also, Dud had been a boy scout, and Chase happened to be an early founder of Boy Scouts of America at Redwood City.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Stanford Magazine, Jun 6, 1923; Dud attended UC Berkeley, 1920-1922.

⁶² "Yearbook for 1917-1918" U. of Southern California, p. 182. Edward B. De Groot was a visiting "distinguished educator" and "Scout Executive, Boy Scouts of America. Playground Activities";

⁶³ "Annual Report of the President of the University on Behalf of the Regents to his Excellency the Governor of the State of California," U. of California Bulletin Third Series, (v. 9, no. 6) Dec 1915; www.idigbio.org

⁶⁴ *The Oologist*, (v. 32, no. 7) Jul, 15, 1915, p. 112, (Albion, NY); Dudley was accepted into membership in 1916. ["Directory of Members of the Cooper Ornithological Club, Revised to May 1, 1920," *The Condor* (v.22) 1920]

⁶⁵San Francisco Call, Feb 9, 1913

The old man had no children of his own, but he might have seen in Dud de Groot the robust, intelligent ornithologist son that he wished he had.⁶⁶ In 1927 Dud dedicated his paper on the California Clipper Rail to Chase:

"To my good friend Chase Littlejohn, that vigorous, enthusiastic, keen-eyed observer and naturalist, I owe endless thanks. Without Mr. Littlejohn's extensive field notes and minus his constant help and advice, this paper would indeed have been a difficult task. Despite his 73 years of age he is today as active in the field as many collectors 50 years his junior, as was witnessed by the fact that during the spring of 1926 we took together no less than 20 field trips, covering in all over 2500 miles of territory!"⁶⁷

Chase's marriage to Anna lasted until her death in 1930.⁶⁸ In 1935 he moved to 323 Alleston Street and over the next few years probably spoke occasionally before local groups.⁶⁹ He died in 1943.

His heirs at law were his sister, Mrs. Flora Easterday of San Gregoria, and his nephew, George Littlejohn of San Francisco, but those names did not appear in the will that Chase wrote eleven days before his death.⁷⁰ Either Flora, or George, or both of them, challenged the will

⁶⁶ Dudley Sargent de Groot, "A Teacher's Guide to Study of Commoner Birds of California" submitted to Stanford University Department of Education, Thesis (MA), 1929; Dudley Sargent de Groot, "A History of Physical Education in California, 1848-1939" Ed. D. dissertation, Stanford University 1940

⁶⁷ Dudley Sargent de Groot, "The California Clipper Rail Its nesting Habits, enemies and Habitat," *The Condor*, Cooper Ornithological Society, (v. 29, no. 6) Nov 1927, p. 259; De Groot taught at Menlo Union High School in Menlo Park, 1931-1933. (*The Gull*, Jan 1931, June 1933)

⁶⁸ Anna Marie died Jan 28, 1930 at the Littlejohn home at 323 East Butler Avenue, Redwood City. Anna's sister was (Mrs.) J. Emma Streightif, 56, of Berkeley. Anna's brother was Calvin Church of South Durham, Canada. ("Anna M. Littlejohn," *San Mateo Times*, Jan 29, 1930

⁶⁹ 1940 US Census

⁷⁰ *San Mateo Times*, Jun 4, 1943

saying that Chase was not of sound mind when he wrote it.⁷¹ His attorney Arnold Rumwell rejected the allegation and petitioned the court to immediately probate the entire estate, \$834.81 cash and \$4,200 in real property.⁷²

The court agreed, and the estate went to probate.⁷³ Bequeathed to Sequoia Union High School at Redwood City was Littlejohn's remaining collection of "stuffed birds and shells."⁷⁴ But the balance of his estate went to the head football coach at the University of Rochester at New York. His name was Dudley S. De Groot.

APPENDIX

Sea Otters

*"The sea otter (Enhydra lutris), the heaviest of all otters, weighs up to 100 pounds (45 KG). This specie [sic] once inhabited the North Pacific rim from Baja California to the Aleutian Islands to Russia and the northern Japanese archipelago. Arctic explorer George Steller encountered thousands of sea otters during his stay on Bering Island in 1741. Steller's navigator, Vitus Bering, considering the soft, thick pelts a resource which could provide great potential wealth, returned 900 pelts to Russia. Catherine the Great ordered a full-length cloak of sea otter, which initiated the decline of the species."*⁷⁵

"From a single vessel in 1879 the pelagic industry expanded enormously until in 1891 the sealing fleet numbered 122 vessels, each with from 5 to 20 sealing crews, and in 1894 it made a total catch of 143,000 seals. From this point the pelagic catch declined steadily with the diminishing herd. In 1902 it numbered about 15,000 seals or about the average land catch at that time. The methods of pelagic

⁷¹ San Mateo Times, Jul 26, 1943

⁷² San Mateo Times, Jun 29, 1944. The equivalent value today of the 1943 estate is about \$70,000.

⁷³ San Mateo Times, Jul 26, 1943

⁷⁴ San Mateo Times, Jun 4, 1943

⁷⁵ Greta Nilsson, Endangered Species Handbook, Animal Welfare Institute (1983, 2005), Washington, DC. www.endangeredspecieshandbook.org

sealing may be described as follows: When the sealing vessel comes into sight of seals its boats are lowered and the hunters put off to windward in diverging directions. The spearman stands in the bow and the steersman manages the boat. The seals are usually found sleeping on the surface of the water. The boat approaches noiselessly and the spear is thrown by means of a long detachable shaft. The spear head is attached to the boat by a line, and when the captured animal is tired out it is drawn up to the boat and killed with a short club. If the shotgun is used the animal is similarly approached and, after being shot, the body is quickly recovered with a gaff to prevent its sinking. The operations of the sealing fleet were gradually extended from the vicinity of the Straits of Fuca until they covered the entire migration route of the Pribilof herd, from the Santa Barbara Channel to the passes of the Aleutian chain. Finally it entered Bering Sea and attacked the herd on its summer feeding ground.”⁷⁶

Commerce in pelts spread to Europe, Asia and the US, and between 1741 and 1911 the world population fell to 1,000–2,000 individuals.⁷⁷ *“Pelagic sealing was necessarily indiscriminate, as the sex of the animal could not be distinguished in the water and the hunter tried to kill every animal found. The killing of the males on land naturally left the herd as found at sea composed chiefly of females. The killing of the female seal on the spring migration involved the death of her unborn offspring. When killed in Bering Sea in August and September her dependent young was left to starve on the rookeries. Investigations of the pelagic catch in 1895 and 1896 showed the percentage of females in the pelagic catch for these years to be 63 and 84 per cent respectively. In the latter season 20,000 starved pups were counted upon the rookeries of Saint Paul and Saint George, their mothers having been killed at sea.”⁷⁸ In 1903 the average price for high-quality pelts was \$1,125, or about \$30,000 in purchasing power today.⁷⁹*

⁷⁶ “Seals and Sealing ,” Encyclopedia Americana, 1920

⁷⁷ Greta Nilsson, Endangered Species Handbook, Animal Welfare Institute (1983, 2005), Washington, DC. www.endangeredspecieshandbook.org

⁷⁸ “Seals and Sealing ,” Encyclopedia Americana, 1920

⁷⁹ Greta Nilsson, Endangered Species Handbook, Animal Welfare Institute (1983, 2005), Washington, DC. www.endangeredspecieshandbook.org

*"A subsequent international ban on hunting, conservation efforts, and reintroduction programs into previously populated areas have contributed to numbers rebounding, and the species now occupies about two-thirds of its former range. The recovery of the sea otter is considered an important success in marine conservation, although populations in the Aleutian Islands and California have recently declined or have plateaued at depressed levels."*⁸⁰

Further Research

The following collection might have been Chase Littlejohn's because he was known to have collected in Mexico. *"Chase Littlejohn Photograph Album, Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas Libraries, the University of Texas at Austin. One album containing 295 photographs, many of which portray scenes of the Décena Trágica during the Mexican Revolution [February 9 -18, 1913, Mexico City]. The remainder comprises photographs of family members (including snapshot portraits of Littlejohn's first wife) ; scenic views of California, New Hampshire, and unidentified locales; and travel snapshots of residents, landscapes, and city scenes in Jalisco and unidentified locales in Mexico."*

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⁸⁰ www.thefullwiki.org/Sea_otter#References