

Tuantine, on 19<sup>th</sup>. I cycled over to Dgestock Wood, w. Fleet,  
 and at once located a pair on the lower ground  
 (Aldershot side) where there were 4 possible nests, two  
 in very tall pines. These birds were very shy & wary,  
 & left when I was hundreds of yards away. I watched  
 for an hour, without success, & when I got up the  
 galeon flew off the tree behind my hide! I returned  
 on 21<sup>st</sup> and again they both left the same spot, & I  
 thought I saw the tree the hen came off. It was  
 the highest tree of all, 60 or 70 ft. up and a difficult  
 climb. I went up & found no eggs. I then left  
 for that day. I returned on 22<sup>nd</sup>, when birds  
 again left the same spot, when I was too far off to  
 see the exact tree. I had made a hide the day  
 before in an old trench very close to the nests and  
 at once went into this. In 10 minutes the hen  
 returned ~~and~~ at once went to the nest I had  
 climbed to on 19<sup>th</sup>! She left it immediately I  
 left the hide and dived low, as they do off eggs.  
 This was puzzling. Had she eggs in an adjacent  
 nest, or did she propose to lay in that nest at  
 this late date? I watched again for an hour,  
 but she did not return. Eventually I left, &  
 decided to return on Sat. 1<sup>st</sup> July. On that  
 day I approached cautiously & kicked the tree  
 I expected the nest to be in. But the hen left  
 another nest 12 yards to my right, & did not  
 see me, so perched on top of next pine for  
 a moment, then she flew off. This was an  
 easier tree, which I at once climbed, but found  
 the nest empty and unused! I again repaired  
 to the hide and in about 20 minutes the hen  
 returned and went on to the original nest.  
 I climbed this tall tree again, took cl. 3, sticks  
 were, of course, dead & fresh.

1945.

1945 was an exceptionally early year, and most birds were nesting several weeks before their normal dates. This was notably the case in this district with woodlarks, some of which had eggs by mid March. During most of May I frequently saw a pair of Hobbies working for beetles & dragonflies just behind the Ash Ranges.

On 9<sup>th</sup> June young Crows left a nest on Deepers Hill behind Stone Castle Rifle Range, and on 16<sup>th</sup> June I watched a hobby sitting in the nest and shuffling about, pecking the sides etc. for 4 hours. The Cuckoo also appeared & perched close to me. I thought this nest was a certainty, but when Cottart climbed to it on 24<sup>th</sup> it was empty and deserted, and birds were not to be seen. However, on 27<sup>th</sup> evening Cottart climbed to a good alternative nest which I had previously found on the extreme southern edge of the burnt ground West of Flagstaff, and 1/2 mile from the other nest & took 3 very poor eggs\*. The nest was well out on a side branch, & may have been used in 1943, when I heard birds calling there, but firing prevented me from searching.

On 15<sup>th</sup> June Cottart found the Bistey pair in Colony Bog & took a rather poor set of 3 eggs, incubated 9 or 10 days! The legs & eyes were just formed. This is very early for this district.

He narrowly escaped being shot three times by stray bullets from the Deepers Ranges.

On 19<sup>th</sup> June I went to the brickfields near Ascot, Sonley forest district by Berkshire Golf Club & found this pair. Later in the day Cottart climbed & found 1 egg only. The nest was 35 ft. high and 10 ft. from the

\* These eggs were incubated 10 days.

trunk on a lateral branch, requiring a rope scoop.  
 On 24<sup>th</sup> June we returned to this nest, right behind a  
 new rifle range, & Cottart took a rather poor set of 3,  
 after tying himself on to the trunk of the tree. It required  
 a 6ft. scoop to take the eggs.

On 14<sup>th</sup> July I found the repeat of the Ash Tale pair,  
 in a Crow's nest I had prepared for them in May.

It contained 2 eggs identical with those taken on  
 27<sup>th</sup> June. As the full repeat takes 18 days, it  
 should have the 3<sup>rd</sup> egg on 15<sup>th</sup> July, and hatch  
 out about 12 August.

Bernard

A third egg was laid on 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup>. Capt Jeans  
 came over on 21<sup>st</sup> to photograph. I had put the  
 bird off in the morning with Hood, but she had  
 not returned by 2.30 pm. Jeans spent 3/4 hour  
 there, & the bird forsook. I took the set  
 on 11<sup>th</sup> August, showing no signs of incubation.

1946. Brief summary.

- 16<sup>th</sup> March. Found Woodlark just commencing to build  
 on N. 1 range. Ready for eggs 24<sup>th</sup> March. Took  
 clutch 4 on 30<sup>th</sup> March.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> April. Cuckoo heard by Gerald. Woodlark sitting on  
 3 eggs, later taken by Magpie. 6<sup>th</sup> April heard  
 Cuckoo at 8 A.M. Found Woodlark with 2 young  
 & 1 added egg by pistol ranges. This nest must  
 have had eggs by 25<sup>th</sup> March. 31<sup>st</sup> March f. W.B. and  
 N.C. found Peregrin 4 - 2. 1. - early date.
- 19<sup>th</sup> April. Woodlark. 1 egg sucked & bird eaten at nest.
- 5<sup>th</sup> May. Woodlark. 3 eggs sitting. 2<sup>nd</sup> lot. (vide 6 April.)
- 7<sup>th</sup> May. Woodlark. 3 young 10 yds from nest 3 April.
- 18 May. Located pair of Hobbs Superior Hill, moved  
 to Red Hut Copse 12<sup>th</sup> June, but Chener found no  
 eggs yet. 10<sup>th</sup> June Cottart & I located Pigeon  
 Hobbys, but no eggs yet in 2 nests climbed.

1946.

We saw no H. on Railroad Heath this year.  
8<sup>th</sup> June. N.C. located Budy H. & took cl. 3 poor eggs  
on 15<sup>th</sup> June, which I had. 18<sup>th</sup> June Pystock H.  
had 1 egg, and cl. 3 taken on 22<sup>nd</sup> June.

Saw 1 bird Minty Manor, but saw no bird at  
Brickfields or Cambridge Heath. 21<sup>st</sup> June Nightjar  
2 eggs. Both Ranges seem are puzzling this year  
no egg being found yet. They may have been  
taken or destroyed. On 6<sup>th</sup> July Cuckoo took  
cl. 2 by Red Hut, behind Stony Partle Ranges.  
This may have been a second laying.

1947.

4 April. (Good Friday). Clutch 4 Woodlark, fresh, taken  
on 6<sup>th</sup> April. Also cl. 4 forsaken, top of N<sup>o</sup>. 1 range  
a few yards in front of Target 21.

17<sup>th</sup> April. Woodlark 2 eggs on N<sup>o</sup>. 1 A. in front of Target 18  
which forsake. 2 eggs taken 10<sup>th</sup> April. (Micky)  
Either Bullfinch or Sparrow Hawk must be the cause  
of their forsaking. 9<sup>th</sup> April Cliffchaff, 12<sup>th</sup> Apr  
Willow Wren 13<sup>th</sup> Thr. Pipit & Swallows seen.

12<sup>th</sup> April. Woodlark cl. 4 taken on N<sup>o</sup>. 1 range, 600 yds.  
incubated 3-4 days. 18<sup>th</sup> Apr. Dr. M. Ter Cliffchaff  
living nest in tin garden! 20<sup>th</sup> Apr. Cuckoo came  
over in afternoon, but we had no luck with W. h..  
Found nest torn out by Magpies on N<sup>o</sup>. 3 range,  
where a pair were sitting last week.

6<sup>th</sup> May. Creeper in garden 5 eggs, hatched end May.

12<sup>th</sup> May. Flycatcher building in garden, 5 eggs hatched  
7<sup>th</sup> June. 15<sup>th</sup> June. In heavy mist & drizzle I took  
Lawn to see "Clump" Hobby sitting on 2 eggs.

There were substituted for dummies, which were  
taken during the week-end. This was the only  
nest found this year. On 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> we located  
Pystock & "Brickfields" birds but never found eggs  
On 18<sup>th</sup> we met Mayo at Pystock & left him in charge

1948.

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This was a very early Spring and by mid-March Robins  
wrens, mistle-thrushes were building in the garden &  
Magpies & Crows on the ranges. March was fine & warm  
for first two weeks, then dull & cooler. On 28<sup>th</sup> March  
(Easter) robin in garden had 4 eggs. Chener came over  
& we found Woodlark cl. 4 on N<sup>o</sup> 3 range incub. at least  
a week. Also found cl. 4 on N<sup>o</sup> 1 A, a 2<sup>nd</sup> set, Magpies  
having pulled out first nest. Also cl. 3 incubated  
some days near Target on N<sup>o</sup> 1, & several other pairs  
about. On 4<sup>th</sup> Apr. Eddy Edwards found Little Grebe 4 eggs  
on canal bank, & on 7<sup>th</sup> Apr. a Pied Wagtail had 4 eggs  
in a hut on N<sup>o</sup> 4 range. On 10<sup>th</sup> April I took cl. 5  
Woodlark on N<sup>o</sup> 3, the repeat of Chener's cl. 4 there.  
Magpies are now sitting. I did little further nesting  
this spring. A Goldfinch built in chestnut in garden,  
but was blown out in a May gale. Two Flycatcher's  
nests in garden, but Jay took one under our bedroom  
window. One in greenhouse hatched off 3 young.  
On 16<sup>th</sup> June Pollart took Birey Hobby with 3 in Polary  
Boog. On 17<sup>th</sup> The Ash Ranges pair had 1 egg in the  
"Red Hat" Copse, but on 21<sup>st</sup> had been robbed.  
On 18<sup>th</sup> The Pyestock pair had 2 eggs found by Reudle.  
On 19<sup>th</sup> I went with Pollart & Tony Booth to Lord  
Brocket's park at Bramhill & saw H. sitting on 3 eggs  
which we left. Also saw a pair at Minty Manor  
& saw nest where they hatched last year, but we  
did not spend time looking for them. We went  
on to "Brickfields" Aset, & again saw Hobby but  
failed to find nest. On 20<sup>th</sup> I found Nightjar  
sitting, between N<sup>o</sup> 3 and 4 ranges, but gave the  
eggs away. J. Pond: Clear came over 19<sup>th</sup> to look  
at my eggs & to take the Birey Hobby, sitting on  
dummies. This season about ends my Hobby nesting.  
The work in his streamers at 67!

Died 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1949

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## OBITUARY

### DOUGLAS HADLEY MEARES.

Time takes toll of us all; and step by step the old brigade of ornithologists passes away. One of the latest members is Douglas Meares, a very old and valued friend of mine, who died on June 2nd, 1949; at his residence The Rowans, Ash Vale, Surrey. Born on June 15th, 1881, one of the younger sons of the late Thomas Meares of Clive Hall, near Shrewsbury, Douglas was educated at Bilton Grange (near Rugby) and Uppingham, where for several years he was in the shooting eight, ultimately becoming captain of it. He was not keen on ball-games. Had he been, his splendid physique would surely have made him a fine forward at "rugger". But he was an accomplished equestrian. Chiefly, however, were his faculties and energies centred on the study of birds, especially our breeding species, of which he possessed a sound and extensive knowledge. He was in fact, a first-rate field-ornithologist (though in his latter years deafness proved a severe handicap), and it is a great pity that his observations were not more often made public. He was also, at one time, an excellent cragsman and tree-climber. After leaving school, he sought the Stock Exchange as a profession; and had indeed only just retired therefrom when fatal illness o'ertook him. I, at any rate, was amazed, since I had always regarded him as a stalwart who would easily woo the eighties.

Of the man himself, let it be said that he was particularly plucky, generous to a fault, modest and quiet. Of a most amiable disposition, too. Often, for instance, did he help young collectors, and that sometimes to his own let and hindrance. From which some of us would do well to take a lesson. He married Minnie, daughter of the late James Ambler of Moorlands, Ben Rhydding, near Ilkley, Yorkshire. She survives, as do two of their three sons, namely, Gerald and John (Lt.-Col., M.B.E.). Their third son, Stanley (D.F.C.), was killed when in command of the 1st American Eagle Squadron at that time attached to the Royal Air Force.

It only remains to add that Douglas leaves behind a whole host of pleasant memories; and that his loss is not only a loss to ornithology, but also, apart from relatives, to a great number of people who will always cherish with undiluted pleasure the memory of his never-failing courtesy and friendship. My task has been a sad one. But it has none the less been a pleasure to pay well-deserved tribute to one who was in every respect a real man. I never looked at Douglas but that I thought of Cowper's lines:

"An honest man, close button'd to the chin,  
Broad cloth without, and a warm heart within."

J. W. Bond.





