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Collections & Information

Sought

Sherborn's "Where is the _____ Collection ? contains five enigmatic entries relating to Perth Museum. These are

Black J E	Brit. Coleopt	In Perth Mus	received in 1926
Bowhill J W	Brit. Coleopt	In Perth Mus	received in 1931
Greville R K	Coleopt	In Perth Mus	received 1856
Hislop R	Brit. Coleopt	In Perth Mus	received 1931
Wilson ___	Ins.	In Perth Mus	in 'shocking state' received in 1868

Sherborn gave no information on his sources and none of the above could be identified as discrete collections in Perth today. A recent chat with Ted Pelham - Clinton at the Royal Scottish Museum produced the revelation that all of these collections had in fact been donated directly to the Royal Scottish Museum and thus, had absolutely no connection with Perth !

This note is submitted in order to set the record straight and to show one the many uses to which up to date regional registers of collections can be put.

Does anyone have any idea where Sherborn obtained his information ?

Michael A Taylor,
Keeper of Natural Sciences,
Perth Museum & Art Gallery.

Sherborn's book has several entries which give no bibliographical sources and we can only assume that these were by word of mouth. The consistency with which these five collections are wrongly located is odd.

INTRODUCTION

This book contains facts accumulated over sixty years in answer to enquiries: "Where is the ——— Collection?" It is not exhaustive; that were too much to expect and almost an impossibility, but it contains a vast deal of information now brought together and should be of service to enquirers. The original MS has been on my table at the British Museum (Natural History) and of daily use to the Staff or others and in its present form is made widely available to all who need it.

The late Dr Walter Horn published in 1926 a similar work dealing with all the collections of Insects noted by him, and Woodward and Sherborn in their *Catalogue of British Fossil Vertebrata*, 1890, gave a sketch in their Introduction of many British collections which had passed under their observation. Remaining notes have been collected from various sources and persons too numerous to mention, as it is necessary to keep down the bulk of such a volume for handy reference.

A few abbreviations are needful:

Ath. = *The Athenaeum*, London, 1828- .

B.M. with very few exceptions = Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.).

Gent. Mag. = *Gentleman's Magazine*, London, 1731- .

Mus. J. = *The Museums Journal*, 1901- .

Nature = *Nature*, London, 1869- .

N. & Q. = *Notes and Queries*, London, 1849- .

All of these can be found in any library. Other references have been quoted as fully as necessary.

C. DAVIES SHERBORN

(1940)

Keep taking the tablets?

I am looking for background information on 'Denton's Patent Butterfly Tablets'. These may sound like a medicine for jaded lepidopterists but they are in fact individually mounted butterflies (and moths). It is presumably the mounting method that forms the 'tablet'.

Each specimen is enclosed in a glass topped box, sealed with white paper tape. Sizes range from 27mm x 21mm x 15mm (for 'micros') to 137mm x 108mm x 15mm (for hawkmoths). The unusual feature of the mounts is the method used to support the specimens. Each specimen rests on a curved, white background which has a central depression to fit the body. The wing tips are pressed against the glass by this background, so that the specimen is held firmly.

All the specimens are numbered on the glass front, and the larger specimens also bear a label on the back of the mount. The numbers on the Horniman specimens fall in the range from 46 to 4718, though we have only around 300 specimens. The numbers probably refer to a catalogue, as different mounts of the same species carry the same number.

The labels bear the following inscription:-

Denton's Patent Butterfly Tablets
<u>Keep in a dry place</u>
Name No. XXX
.....
<u>Locality Capri, Italy</u>
Manufactured and mounted by Shelley W. Denton & Co.
99 Regent Street, London W .

None are named, and the location is always Capri.

I would be interested to hear from other museums with Butterfly Tablets. It would be very useful if the catalogue could be traced - why do all the specimens come from Capri? The actual 'tablet' construction is also a puzzle. The white background substance could be plaster, but the 'tablets' feel too light. I suppose one could dissect a 'tablet' to find out, but ours are all in good condition and I am reluctant to vandalise them.

Whatever the secret of their construction, the Butterfly Tablets seem to be solid and sturdy mounts. It occurs to me that this type of mount might well prove useful in Museum Education Sections. Perhaps Butterfly Tablets will enjoy a new popularity in the 1980s.

Ex-Horniman Museum Specimens

In the immediate post-war period (mainly 1947-8) the Horniman Museum disposed of many of its larger mounted specimens. 'Disposed of' in this context may simply be a polite term for destroyed. However it is possible that some of them found good homes elsewhere, and we would like to trace them.

Most of the missing specimens were fairly chunky, so they are unlikely to be in storage anywhere. I hold out very little hope for the lion 'destroyed by order of committee', but the 'disposed of' list includes Caribou, Virginia deer and a group of Rocky Mountain goats. The largest specimen 'disposed of' was a Polar Bear, shown with a dead seal.

We do possess a bizarre photograph of this last group, with two charming Edwardian children sitting on the back of the bear. The children were the offspring of a member of staff and the photograph was taken just before the bear was enclosed in a glass case.

In addition to the specimens listed as 'destroyed' or 'disposed of' we have others that are simply missing, including a Brown bear and a Grizzly bear head. The most likely explanation is infestation followed by destruction, but their fate is not recorded. Any information, however sad, would be welcome.

Commemorative Token

The Ethnography Department of the Horniman Museum have a commemorative token which appears to refer to the early taxidermist Thomas Hall. The inscriptions read as follows: side 1 Sir Jeffrey Dunstan. Mayor of Garratt (plus a human figure)

side 2 The 1st artist in Europe for preserving birds and beasts T. Hall, City Rd, nr Finsbury Sq. London 1795.

Any ideas on the background to this token will be welcome.

J. Cooper Collection

The Cooper Collection was purchased by my predecessor in 1974 from a third party. The collection includes a wide range of disarticulated skeletons of small mammals, plus some larger skulls. The labels on the specimens indicate that they were collected and prepared during the late 1950s to mid 1960s. I would be most interested to learn the background to this very useful collection.

Penny Wheatcroft,
Horniman Museum.

A COLLECTION OF MOSSES MADE BY JOHN NOWELL (1802-1867)

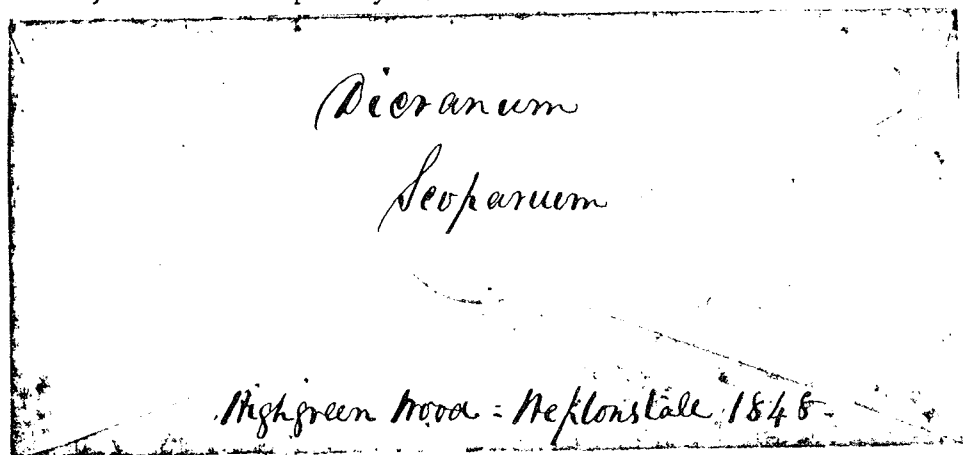
In 1968 the Hancock Museum received a gift of 210 specimens of mosses in packets made by an unknown collector in the middle years of the last century.

From evidence of handwriting and data on the packets I have been able to prove that the collection was made by John Nowell of Todmorden (1802-1867). For this interesting discovery I am indebted for help received from Dr. Derek Foster of Macclesfield and Mr. T. L. Blockeel of Leeds and others.

Included with Nowell's specimens in this collection are 41 packets of mosses collected by some collector from similar localities. This unknown collector was probably a friend of Nowell's who collected with him or possibly exchanged specimens with him. So far I have made some enquiries concerning Abraham Stansfield (sen.) who wrote the "Flora of Todmorden" and of William Sutcliffe of Heptonstall whose collection went to the Halifax Museum but the results suggest that they were not the collectors of the specimens in question.

The writing on one of the packets of the unknown collector is reproduced in case any reader might be able to supply information or suggestions concerning possible origin.

Albert G. Long, D.Sc.,
Hancock Museum, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.



HMS Sylvania - research vessel

At Bolton Museum among the usual conglomeration of foraminifera microscope slides are a few from the HMS Sylvania. Knowing nothing about foraminifera perhaps does not help but nowhere can I find any satisfying references to what, where and why this research vessel was active. The slides are as follows:

124 - between 5 December 1872 and 3 January 1873 on a route off the coast of East Africa between Seychelles and Durban. Exact latitudes and longitudes are given with depths and surface/bottom temperatures.

4 - 29 June 1886 Cape Finistere.

The BM(NH) list of drawings and manuscripts (*Bull BM(NH), Historical Series, 4(2)*; 1971; page 190) gives that they have a copy of an "Account of the Soundings in the Red Sea by HMS Sylvania, 1972".

The ship itself listed as a wooden screw sloop, 865 tons; 185 x 28½ feet; 2 x 68 pounders; 2 x 32 pounders, built at Woolwich and completed on 20 March 1866, was sold in 1890. (Collidge, J. J. (1969) *Ships of the Royal Navy: An historical index*, volume 1).

No doubt the activities of HMS Sylvania were overshadowed by those of Discovery and Alert on their Arctic expeditions. It would still be nice to know if this material has some special interest, whether or not any of the results were published, etc. Nobody seems interested in old micro-preps of protozoa or diatoms these days or at least in eleven years in museums I have never had one enquiry relating to them. This lot of slides is part of an accession left to the museum by W. W. Midgley, the first curator of the museum (then called the Chadwick Museum and situated in Queens Park, Bolton) and his handwriting is on the labels.

(There are also 27 Crustacea but without data, ex HMS Sylvania, some of which are marked *Pontella* nov.sp. apparently on the basis that there were none like it in the Challenger reports).

Found

HUDLESTON, Wilfred Hudleston (1828-1909)

Although unable to locate any of Hudleston's ornithological collections in North East England, a volume entitled The Dove Marine Laboratory commemorating the erection of that establishment was located, which includes an account of the life of its benefactor. The book has three main sections:

'A history of the Dove family and their descendants in Connection with Cullercoats, Northumberland' by W. H. Hudleston.

'An account of the Dove Marine Laboratory and its structural details' by J. J. Lish (the architect).

'History and purpose of the laboratory' by Professor Alexander Meek.

To this is appended an obituary of Wilfred Hudleston, written by J. J. Lish. Hudleston had died the year before the volume was published (by Andrew Reid & Co. of Newcastle) in 1910. A portrait of Hudleston, reproduced by permission of the Royal Society, is used as a frontispiece. The following is a precis of information gleaned from the obituary.

He was born in York on 2 June 1828, the eldest son of Dr. John Simpson of Knaresborough, who married Elizabeth Ward, heiress of the Hudlestons of Cumberland, and who by letters patent assumed the name of Hudleston in 1867. However, he first made his name as W. H. Simpson, ornithologist, visiting Scandinavia and Lapland in 1855 with Professor Alfred Newton (1) of Cambridge and Mr. John Wolley (2). He explored the 'eastern atlas' with Canon Tristram (3) and Osbert Salvin (4) and made ornithological collections in Greece, Turkey and Algeria. From 1850 to 1862 he travelled extensively in Europe and North Africa.

He attended St. John's College, Cambridge, gaining a B.A. in 1850 and an M.A. in 1853. He studied law, being called to the bar in 1853, although he never practised. In 1858 he helped to found the British Ornithological Society. From 1862 to 1867 he studied at Edinburgh under Playfair (5) and Stephenson MacAdam, and then followed a period at the Royal College of Chemistry in London under Hofmann (6), Valentin (7) and Frankland (8). The year 1867

seems to have been a turning point in his life, when he began to pursue geology under the name Hudleston, indeed he was made a Fellow of the Geological Society in that year. He was made an F.R.S. in 1884 and in 1897 received the Wollaston Gold Medal of the Geological Society, principally for his monograph on the Inferior Oolite Gastropods. His collection associated with this work - 'many thousands of specimens carefully labelled and arranged, the types being all specially marked' was donated to the Sedgewick Museum, Cambridge. At the time of his death he was engaged in sorting Dorset fossils at the Dorset County Museum (he was a Vice-President) and presented choice specimens from his collection to the Museum.

No reference exists to the ornithological collections and their fate. Hudleston's connections with N. E. England are tenuous ones, and his main spheres of activity link him closely with London (he resided for many years at 8 Stanhope Gardens, Kensington), Yorkshire (he was President of the Yorkshire Naturalists Union and the Malton Field Naturalists Society) and South West England (he was President of the Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science and the Dorset Natural History and Antiquarian Field Club, and resided at West Holme, Wareham, Dorset). Perhaps it is in Museums in these regions that Hudleston's ornithological collections will be located?

William Hudleston was a descendant of the Dove family of Cullercoats, and was the owner of the site of the original wooden structure used by Armstrong College for marine studies, which was destroyed by fire on 28 March 1904. When approached by the College about the construction of a more permanent laboratory on the site Hudleston generously gave £4,000 for the building and the construction of a new quay wall. The Dove Marine Laboratory was officially opened by the Duke of Northumberland on 29 September 1908. A red granite tablet records the following 'Erected AD 1908 by Wilfred H. Hudleston MA FRS for the furtherance of Marine Biology and as a memorial of his ancestress Eleanor Dove'.

NOTES

1. Alfred Newton (1829-1907) Professor of Zoology and Comparative Anatomy at the University of Cambridge 1866-1907
2. Wolley's egg collection was donated to Cambridge University and was described by Newton in 'Ootheca Wolleyana' (1864)
3. Canon Henry Baker Tristram (1822-1906) Bird collection at Liverpool, egg collection BM(NH)
4. Osbert Salvin (1835-1898) Strickland Curator, University of Cambridge 1874-1882
5. Lyon Playfair (1818-1898) Professor of Chemistry, Edinburgh 1858-1869.
6. Presumably August Wilhelm Hofmann
7. William George Valentin (1829-1879)
8. Sir Edward Frankland (1825-1899)

Peter Davis
Sunderland Museum