

2. THE HISTORY  
OF THE  
COLLECTIONS  
CONTAINED IN THE  
NATURAL HISTORY DEPARTMENTS  
OF THE  
BRITISH MUSEUM

VOL. II.

SEPARATE HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS OF THE  
SEVERAL COLLECTIONS INCLUDED IN THE  
DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGY.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM  
*SOLD BY*

LONGMANS & Co., 39 Paternoster Row, E.C.; B. QUARITCH, 15 Piccadilly, W.;  
DULAU & Co., 37 Soho Square, W.; KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH,  
TRÜBNER & Co., Dryden House, 43 Gerrard Street, Soho, W.;

AND AT THE  
BRITISH MUSEUM (NATURAL HISTORY), Cromwell Road, S.W.

1906.

*(All rights reserved.)*

# 1. MAMMALS.

By OLDFIELD THOMAS, F.R.S.

---

## OFFICERS SPECIALLY CONNECTED WITH THE COLLECTION OF MAMMALS DURING ITS FOUNDATION AND GROWTH.

---

OF the various officers of the Museum, it does not appear that any before George Shaw (Assistant, 1791; Keeper, 1807-13) took any particular interest in Mammals, but he was the author of several works on the subject, of which the best known is his "General Zoology—Mammalia, 1800-1801" (four volumes). Some of his types are still extant.

Dr. W. E. Leach (Assistant, 1813) wrote a few articles on Mammalia, but worked primarily at Insects.

The real maker of the collection was Dr. J. E. Gray (Assistant, 1824; Keeper, 1840-75). To his indomitable energy and enthusiasm, in the face of much opposition and discouragement from officials more interested in the Library and Antiquities than in Natural History, the early growth and position of the Mammal collection is mainly due. (See below, p. 35.)

From 1873 onwards, Dr. A. Günther (Assistant, 1862; Keeper, 1875-95), who had always taken a general interest in Mammals, described a certain number of the more striking novelties among the accessions, and made a MS. list of the collection of Monkeys.

Sir William Flower (Director, 1884-98) took a personal interest in the general arrangement of the Mammals, and especially of the Cetacea, of which he wrote a list in 1885.

Oldfield Thomas, the present Assistant, was appointed in 1876, and transferred to the Zoological Department in 1878.

R. Lydekker, though not on the permanent staff, should be mentioned as having had general charge, since 1896, of the exhibited series, and, more recently, of the collections of domesticated Mammals.

---

A CHRONOLOGICAL ACCOUNT OF THE PRINCIPAL ACCESSIONS  
TO THE COLLECTION OF MAMMALS UP TO 1904.

Owing to the earlier naturalists having had no appreciation of the value of particulars about specimens, and the consequent absence of records or registers, it is impossible to give anything like a detailed account of the accessions to the Mammal collection of the British Museum before 1837. In that year Dr. J. E. Gray began the first register of accessions, in the form of a small square octavo volume, replaced in 1838 by a large folio register arranged on exactly the same plan as at present, so that from 1838 to the present time there is a continuous and uniform record of accessions. The method of numeration in this series of registers, invented by Dr. Gray, is such that every register number shows, without further inquiry, the exact date of incorporation of the specimen it refers to.

BEFORE 1837.

The first specimens received would have been those in the original collection of Sir Hans Sloane, purchased by the nation under his will of 1753, and thus forming the nucleus of the National Museum. Unfortunately no detailed list of the Natural History collections is available, and only some few isolated specimens can be identified as having belonged to it. Of these mention may be made of the record pair of horns of the Indian Buffalo (*Bubalus bubalis*), 14 feet from tip to tip, round the curves, said to have been given to Sir Hans Sloane in lieu of doctor's fee by a barber in East London, and of a horn, 33 inches in length, of Burchell's Rhinoceros (*Diceros simus*).

But even older than these are the few specimens that can be identified as from the original Royal Society's collection, described in 1681 in Grew's "Catalogue of the . . . Rarities belonging to the Royal Society, and preserved at Gresham College," and transferred to the British Museum in 1781. Of these the most notable is the frontlet of the West African Dwarf Buffalo, described by Grew in 1681, and figured by Pennant in 1781 (Quadr. I., pl. II., Fig. III.), this being, therefore, the type of *Bos nanus*, Boddaert, and of *Bos pumilus*, Turton.

As the identification of other objects from the Royal

again specially mentioned:—F. W. Styan, C. B. Rickett, and J. D. La Touche (China); R. C. Wroughton (India); Dr. C. Hose (Borneo); T. H. Lyle (Siam); St. G. Littledale (Siberia); C. S. Betton, Sir A. Sharpe, R. J. Cuninghame, Major H. N. Dunn, Col. A. T. Sloggett, A. B. Percival, Capt. R. Crawshay, S. L. Hinde, J. ff. Darling, and G. L. Bates (Africa); E. Hollis (Canada); J. A. Wolffsohn, W. Foster, R. Miketta, L. Dinelli and others (South America).

In comparing the number of accessions with those of other Museums, it has to be remembered that the numbers here given are those of the selected registered set, and that all duplicates are eliminated before registration. From eight to fifteen adult specimens of a species from any one locality are generally thought sufficient to illustrate its characters, even when more are available, and the enormous series of individuals absorbed by some Museums, combined with the enumeration of all of them, duplicates or not, make up totals on which no true comparison with the British Museum numbers can be based.

The same fact should be borne in mind by donors and collectors, who may find that the number of specimens here credited to them are less than the actual number originally sent.

---

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF THE MORE IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTORS  
TO THE COLLECTION OF MAMMALS.

---

NOTE.—The date following the sender's name indicates the year when the *first* contribution came in from him. Many, perhaps the majority, of the persons here enumerated continued to send in collections over a long period of years.

---

**Edward VII.** (HIS MAJESTY KING). [1883]

Skulls of a Rhinoceros and two Tigers from Nepal, a Boar from Windsor Forest, and a number of small Mammals from Sandringham. Presented.

**Aitchison** (*Dr. J. E. T.*). [1886]

39 Mammals collected during the African Delimitation Commission of 1885. (*See* O. Thomas, *Trans. Linn. Soc. Zool.* v., p. 55, 1889), and others from Kashmir, including the type of *Microtus aitchisoni*, Miller. Presented.

Pl. 92 = *Tatara æquinoctialis* (Lath.); Sharpe, Cat. B., vii., p. 528.

*Acrocephalus æquinoctialis*, Sharpe, Handl. B., iv., p. 190.  
 "Christmas Isle. W. W. Ellis ad viv., 1778."

Latham described this bird (Gen. Syn., Suppl. i., p. 187) from the papers of Mr. Anderson, and does not mention Ellis' Drawings or Sir Joseph Banks' collection.

Pl. 93. Fig. 1. *Parus insularis*, Hellmayr (cf. Hartert, Vög. Pal. Fauna, i., p. 359).

Fig. 2. *Parus minor*, Temm. (cf. Hartert, t.c., p. 346).  
 "Coast of Japan. W. W. Ellis ad viv., 1779."

Pl. 94. Is *Parus hudsonicus*, Forst. (cf. Hellmayr, Tierr. Paridæ, p. 71).

"Norton Sound. W. W. Ellis ad viv., 1778."

Pl. 95 = *Malurus cyaneus* (Ellis); Cat. B., iv., p. 286.

"Adventure Bay. W. W. Ellis ad viv., 1777."

This is the Tasmanian Superb Warbler, described by me in 1879 in the "Catalogue of Birds" (iv., p. 287) as *Malurus gouldi*. This must now be called *Malurus cyaneus* (Ellis), and the Australian species, hitherto called *M. cyaneus* by authors, must bear the name of *M. superbus* (Shaw).

Pl. 96. Is *Collocalia leucophæa* (Peale); Hartert, Cat. B., xvi., p. 502.

"Friendly Isles."

Forster's Drawing represents a different species to that figured by Ellis, which shows a white rump.

---

## 1809-1820.

### THE BULLOCK COLLECTION.

When Dr. Leach was Keeper of the Zoological Department, he represented the British Museum at the sale of Bullock's great collection, and several birds were bought for the National Museum. Unfortunately many of the most valuable specimens, including a number from Captain Cook's voyages, were allowed to pass into the hands of purchasers from abroad, and left the country. These specimens were probably acquired by Bullock at the dispersal of the Leverian Museum.

Professor Newton possesses a copy of the Sale-Catalogue of Bullock's Collection, and he has most generously lent it to me, thus enabling me to trace the history of many important

Museum" to London, and in 1812 he published another guide-book to his collection, now called the "*London Museum.*" The title is as follows:—

A Companion | to | Mr. Bullock's | LONDON MUSEUM  
| and | PANTHERION; containing | a Brief Description | of  
upwards of fifteen thousand | Natural and Foreign Curio-  
sities, | *Antiquities*, | and | **Productions of the Fine Arts**,  
| *collected during seventeen Years of arduous Research, and* |  
*at an Expense of* | **Thirty Thousand Pounds**; | and  
now open for Public Inspection in the | **Egyptian**  
**Temple**, | just erected for its reception, in | Piccadilly,  
London, | opposite the end of Bond Street; | by W<sup>m</sup>  
Bullock, | Fellow of the Linnean Society, and Honorary  
Member of | the Dublin Society. | [Then follows Beattie's  
verse, "O Nature!" *etc.*] The Twelfth Edition. | Printed  
for the Proprietor. | 1812.

It will be noticed that he now states that his Museum had cost him £30,000, being £10,000 more than was stated in 1809. In the "Address" which takes the place of the "Preface" of 1809, "Mr. Bullock respectfully begs leave to solicit the attention and patronage of the Nobility, Gentry, and the Public, to an Establishment for *the advancement of the Science of Natural History*, which in magnitude and expense, he presumes, is unparalleled, as the work of an individual."

"The very flattering and general approbation which honoured the exhibition of his Museum on its first opening in a temporary situation in London, was a convincing proof that his future efforts for the extension and improvement of the Collection would be duly appreciated. His exertions to obtain articles of rarity and interest have, therefore, been unceasing. In most departments, the subjects have been doubled in number; the specimens are choice, in the highest possible preservation, and are arranged according to the Linnean system. They consist of about Fifteen Thousand species of Quadrupeds, Birds, Reptiles, Fishes, Insects, Shells, Corals, *etc.*, *etc.*, collected during twenty years of unwearied application, and at an expense exceeding thirty thousand pounds.

"In adapting the edifice which Mr. Bullock has just completed for his present Collection, by displaying it advantageously for the Study of the Naturalist, the Instruction of the Curious, and the Amusement of those who are delighted in viewing the

Beauties of Nature, or the Curiosities of Art, he has endeavoured to render it worthy of the British Metropolis, whilst he has also provided this means for enlargement, as future additions shall accumulate.

“One department of the Museum (the Pantheon), completed with much labour and great expense, is entirely novel, and presents a scene altogether grand and interesting. Various animals, as the lofty Giraffe, the Lion, the Elephant, the Rhinoceros, *etc.*, are exhibited as ranging in their native wilds and forests; whilst exact models, both in figure and colour, of the rarest and most luxuriant Plants from every clime, give all the appearance of reality; the whole being assisted with a panoramic effect of distance and appropriate scenery, affording a beautiful illustration of the luxuriance of a torrid clime.

“The Museums of France have been enriched with the spoils of nearly the whole Continent, and the Gallery of the Louvre contains more treasures in Painting and Sculpture than perhaps will ever again be amassed in one Collection. But though her active and persevering Ruler, desirous of making his capital the centre of attraction, has contributed to the Museum Naturelle every specimen of Natural History which in the present state of the Continent could be procured, our unrivalled Navy, and the extension of our Colonies throughout the habitable world, present such advantages to this country, that the writer feels confident, that if his exertions are seconded by the Public as they have hitherto been, he will very shortly be enabled to make a collection of Natural History far surpassing anything of the kind at present in existence; and he pledges himself to exert his utmost power in accomplishing this important work.

“To the numerous Royal, Noble, and liberal Contributors to his Museum, by whose kindness his Collection has been enriched by so many valuable articles, which could not have been procured by pecuniary means, Mr. Bullock returns his unfeigned thanks.

“When the information and delight which may be derived from this Exhibition, especially by the rising generation, are considered, the great sum expended in forming it, and the erection of the present large and commodious building for its reception, the Proprietor trusts that the terms will be approved of.

“Admission to each Exhibition, one shilling . . . . . Annual Ticket, not transferable 1*l.* 1*s.* . . . . . Subscriber for Life 10*l.* 10*s.*

“MUSEUM, PICCADILLY,  
March 28, 1812.”

and many objects from Captain Cook's voyages are included in the Catalogue.

The FIRST DAY'S SALE (Thursday, April 29, 1819) consisted of Roman antiquities, models in rice paste by Mr. Geo. Bullock, *etc.* Most of these lots were purchased by a Mr. Davis, including Lot 44, which fetched 33s. and consisted of "Portraits of various British Birds, executed in feathers, and a copy of Tenniers in coloured straw." A "curious model of a Man-of-War, near three feet long, made entirely of glass, in a mahogany glazed case," having a MS. note added, "made by the proprietor when a boy," was sold for seven guineas. Several "models of Animals finely executed from life in a manner entirely new," included those of a "Lion and Lioness, very spirited and fine," which was bought by Mr. Mathieson for £7, and "a large Elephant, a correct copy of the one lately living at the Jardin des Plantes at Paris," went to the same gentleman for £5; while a Rhinoceros, a Camel, and a Buffalo and Roman Bull were purchased by Lord Mountmorres for £19 14s.

Mr. Davis, of Bond Street, purchased Lot 66 for £39. It consisted of "Fifteen different Animals, appropriately displayed on a rock, modelled in cork, with foliage carved in ivory, and inclosed in a large glazed mahogany case; the animals consist of the Elephant, Panther, Wild Boar, Zebra, Stag, and Hind, White Stag, Spotted Axis, Wood Goat (male and female), Chamois (male and female), Roe Buck, Blood Hound, and Italian Greyhound, all copied from life, and forming a fine group for a public exhibition." "The original model of the Colossal Statue of Napoleon, twelve feet high, which was taken from the top of the celebrated Column of Peace in the Place Vendôme, when the Allies entered Paris in 1814," was bought for £33 12s. by Mr. Beckford of Fonthill.

The SECOND DAY'S SALE (April 30, 1819) consisted of pictures, a few birds, property of Napoleon, *etc.*

Lot 19. A "Virgin and Child and St. Anthony—Corregio" fetched £16, and a MS. note says: "Cost him 10*d.* and 5*d.* carriage. Bought at Tivoli, near Rome, where he found it stopping up the window of a cow-house."

Lot 11 was a "portrait of Titian, extremely spirited," by Giorgione, and fetched 23 guineas. A MS. note informs us that it was "declared as above by Mr. West, P.R.A."

The birds were contained in Lots 37 to 44, and are only