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Book Reviews and Announcements

Dorr, Laurence J. *Plant collectors in Madagascar and the Comoro Islands: A biographical and bibliographical guide to individuals and groups who have collected herbarium material of algae, bryophytes, fungi, lichens, and vascular plants in Madagascar and the Comoro Islands.* Kew, Surrey, England: Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, 1997. xlvii, 524 pp., ports., illus., CD. £66.70. ISBN 1-900347-18-0.

In 1983, Laurence Dorr was hired by the Missouri Botanical Garden to set up a program of botanical research and exploration in Madagascar. In order not to duplicate the work of previous explorers of the area, he began to document the collecting localities and discoveries of his predecessors. This publication is the product of his research. There are 510 pages of biographical sketches of plant collectors, along with portraits of many of them. In addition to the usual vital statistics, each sketch contains the areas of exploration, the herbaria where specimens are conserved and a bibliography. Future collectors in the area will be indebted to Dr. Dorr for this careful documentation that will assist them in determining the localities that need further exploration.

The first 46 pages of the work contain keys that define the abbreviations used in the biographical sketches, including abbreviations of reference sources, parks and natural reserves, and the names of herbaria. Two maps of Madagascar are provided, one showing its location in relation to Africa, and the other showing the location of the national parks and the natural reserves. A preface by Césaire Rabenoro, président of the Académie Nationale des Arts, des Lettres et des Sciences, Madagascar, and an introduction by Sir Ghilian Prance, FRS, director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, explain their high regard for the quality of this work. Excellent photographs by Andrew McRobb of Kew showing street scenes, flora and fauna of Madagascar are used as dividers in the alphabetical arrangement of the biographies. An appendix contains a list of collectors employed by the Service des Eaux et Forêts, Madagascar. Many collectors who worked for the service contributed specimens to two collective series, and these are noted in the text. Introductory paragraphs precede the list and explain its uses. The book's cover shows an eye-catching spray of colorful fronds combined with a photograph of canoeists. A plastic envelope containing a companion CD is fastened to the inside of the back cover. The CD is a read-only version of the book for browsing and word searching. The book is visually pleasing and rich in content.

Collectors planning to explore Madagascar and the Comoro Islands should study this volume before making

their plans. *Plant collectors in Madagascar and the Comoro Islands* is essential for botanical libraries, herbaria and botanical gardens.

Anita L. Karg
Hunt Institute

Dorr, Laurence J. and Basil Stergios, eds. *John J. Wurdack festschrift.* (BioLlania, Edición especial, no. 6). Guanare, estado Portuguesa, Venezuela: BioCentro de la Universidad Nacional Experimental de los Llanos Occidentales Ezequiel Zamora (UNELLEZ), 1997. xi, 571, [2] pp., frontis. (port.), ports., illus., maps. \$10.00. ISBN 980-231-131-6.

The festschrift was organized and edited by Laurence J. Dorr and Basil Stergios, and was sponsored by Congreso de la República de Venezuela, the National Museum of Natural History, the Smithsonian Institution, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It is a beautiful and inspiring acknowledgement of John Wurdack's work and his influence on his colleagues. Fortunately, it was published before his death in May 1998 so that he was aware of the high esteem in which he was held by his friends. The festschrift commemorates John Wurdack's 75th birthday and his outstanding contributions to plant exploration and systematic botany, especially his work on Melastomataceae.

All 570 pages of this resource contain information valuable to a botanical library collection. John Wurdack's biography is presented in the introduction by the editors, and the volume includes many photographs as well as lists of his publications. Friends and colleagues remember Wurdack in a section called "Tributes and reminiscences." Thirty-seven scientific papers were contributed to honor John Wurdack. Lists of taxa of flowering plants named by him, lists of taxa named for him and eponymous taxa published in his honor are all included in this work. It is an impressive festschrift and essential for every botanical collection.

Anita L. Karg
Hunt Institute

Johnston, Stanley H., Jr., comp. *The Cleveland herbarial, botanical, and horticultural collections: A descriptive bibliography of pre-1830 works from the libraries of the Holden Arboretum,*

the Cleveland Medical Library Association, and the Garden Center of Greater Cleveland. Kent, Ohio and London, England: The Kent State University Press, 1992. xviii, 1012 pp., 26 plates. (1 in col.). \$85.00. ISBN 0-87338-433-4.

Johnston, Stanley, H., Jr. *Cleveland's treasures from the world of botanical literature*. Wilmington, Ohio: Orange Frazer Press, 1998. xvi, 141 pp., 140 illus. (partly in col.). \$24.95. ISBN 1-882203-51-8 (paper).

If you have ever wished that the contents of a well-written scholarly work could somehow be made accessible to a wider audience, you will appreciate what Stanley Johnston has accomplished with the publication of his two books on herbals and other rare plant literature held in three Cleveland collections. As curator of rare books at the library of the Holden Arboretum, Johnston has a working familiarity with the contents of the Holden's rare book collection. He has also worked closely with books in the collections of the Cleveland Medical Library Association and the Cleveland Botanical Garden (formerly the Garden Center of Greater Cleveland). He has combined the resulting subject mastery with bibliographic expertise to produce a bibliographic catalogue, *The Cleveland herbal, botanical, and horticultural collections*. He then published a second book on the same collections but intended for a wider audience. *Cleveland's treasures from the world of botanical literature* combines beautiful illustrations, a knowledgeable historical narrative, and an attractive book design in a pleasing companion volume to *The Cleveland herbal, botanical, and horticultural collections* that can also stand alone as a colorful history of nearly four centuries of plant literature.

In *The Cleveland herbal, botanical, and horticultural collections*, the entries are arranged chronologically "according to the earliest imprint present in each work or the earliest date of publications to be inferred by internal or external evidence." Entries include full title page transcriptions, collations with irregularities noted, notes on the number of illustrations (and the number of botanical versus non-botanical illustrations in cases where the scope of the book goes beyond plants), local notes on the Cleveland copies, references, and background notes. These last can include biographical information on the author, some historical context, comments on the significance of the book to the larger botanical or horticultural community at the time of publication, notable features, and information on printer's marks. Gaskell's bibliographic format is followed throughout.

As is necessitated by the complexities of the plant literature produced during the hand-press period, Johnston pays considerable attention to bibliographic detail and to the nature of illustrations. He provides notes on the processes used to render or reproduce illustrations and differentiates between books with color-printed illustrations

and those largely hand-colored or hand-finished. Creators of illustrations are identified whenever possible. He also notes differences from the ideal copy, leaf and binding measurements, notes on provenance and annotations or other material added by previous owners, as well as on other interesting features of the specific copies he describes. Through this blending of comments on ideal and specific copies, his bibliography serves as a useful reference tool for anyone working with historical plant literature, while also providing information on the exemplars residing in the three Cleveland collections involved.

The bibliography is organized in chapters for each century from fifteenth to nineteenth. Each chapter begins with a plate reproducing an illustrated page or two-page spread from a representative work from that century. In addition, midway through the volume there is a section of 20 additional plates from key works. All plates but the frontispiece are uncolored.

Appendices and indices enhance the informativeness and usability of this substantial reference work. Three appendices list a handful of books either added at the end of the project or difficult to date; relevant manuscripts and paintings in the three collections; and pre-1830 books owned by the Herb Society of America but held on deposit at the Holden Arboretum. Indices of authors and titles; printers, publishers and booksellers; illustrators; portraits; and nonbotanical illustrations provide access to the text from multiple lines of inquiry. A bibliography follows the final index and provides a list of useful references for anyone interested in the history of plant literature.

Cleveland's treasures from the world of botanical literature is, as Johnston notes, "a narrative and subject oriented treatment of many of the most important books described in detail in *The Cleveland herbal, botanical, and horticultural collections*." As such it does not claim to be a comprehensive historical treatment of plant literature, but the breadth of the Cleveland collections and the selections chosen for treatment in *Cleveland's treasures* result in a good historical overview of European and North American plant literature.

Cleveland's treasures has an attractive design and layout with approximately 140 colored and uncolored illustrations interspersed throughout the text. The nicely-reproduced illustrations convey the variety and beauty of the changing face of botanical illustration over time, as shown in both published and unpublished plant images. Examples of the latter include such disparate items as a hand-colored, unpublished woodcut "presumed to be by Veit Rudolf Speckle and Heinrich Füllmaurer after Albrecht Meyer for an intended continuation of Leonhart Fuchs's *New Kreuterbuch*" and an anonymous painted drawing of *Helenium* from a late 16th- or early 17th-century manuscript herbal. Published images may come in several forms from the same source, as evidenced by the two versions

of an illustration of *Phytolacca decandra* appearing in different editions of Bigelow's *American medical botany*. Concise captions for the illustrations in *Cleveland's treasures* include (as applicable) a title or descriptor for the illustration, the technique used to produce the illustration, the artist if known, a previous or original version of the illustration if known, the title and date of the source publication, and a code indicating the holding library.

The text begins with a short section on the collectors who brought together the books and other materials described by Johnston. As he reports, these men fell into two groups: early Cleveland physicians who developed working collections, and prominent bibliophiles. Johnston makes the important point that by knowledgeably building collections and then giving the collections to institutions for curation, these collectors have created a legacy of important resources and records for posterity.

The remainder of the text sets forth the story of some four centuries of plant study and use as embodied in the literature of the field. Book titles are given in bold italics to facilitate identification and reference. The four chapters correspond to categories of plant literature, and each chapter begins with a brief note on the general features of the type of works discussed. The first chapter, "Herbal and medical botanical works," describes that genre of plant literature with examples ranging from a 1483 Apuleius herbal (2nd issue) to a number of North American works on medical botany published in the 1820s. Arrangement in each chapter is largely chronological within subtopics.

The second chapter, "Botanical and scientific works," begins with a discussion of medieval and Renaissance editions of the works of several classical authorities from Greece and Rome. Several incunabula described, including two 15th-century encyclopedias, reflect the medieval view of botany. Other works reflect the medieval European dependence on the learning of the ancients, the numerous 17th-century efforts to systematize and classify plants, emerging studies of plant anatomy driven by the development of the microscope, the intensifying drive to develop a natural taxonomic system, and the 18th-century rise of experimental science. Books on North American botany are treated separately, ranging from the 1635 *Canadensium plantarum historia* by Cornut, through various 18th-century accounts of North American plants, to a number of popular botanical works by Amos Eaton and several authors influenced by him.

The third chapter, "Botanical illustration," fills nearly half the book. Beginning with illustrations from the 1483 *Herbarium* of Apuleius, thought to be early metalcuts reflecting a late Roman school of illustration, Johnston's text and illustrations reflect the evolution of artists' and printers' techniques. He discusses the qualities of these changing illustration techniques over time, and he notes

possible interrelationships among works or artists, including influences when known or suggested. The collections include incunabula and 16th-century herbals with woodcut illustrations; florilegia with woodcuts, engravings and etchings; bound groups of watercolor paintings from the 17th and 18th centuries as well as individual works; and color-plate works from the 18th and early 19th centuries, representing work of well-known and unknown artists. Johnston spins many interconnections of association and influence among those who collected plants, those who wrote about them and those who illustrated them.

Treasures of botanical illustration held in Cleveland include such fascinating items as "a unique collection of 510 proofs before letters of the illustrations for the *New Kreüterbuch*" and seven volumes of paintings which, Johnston says, may shed light on the identity of the illustrators of the deluxe edition of Jacquin's *Selectanum stirpium Americanarum historia*, the painted title page of which appears prominently in *The Cleveland herbal, botanical, and horticultural collections* as a color frontispiece. Johnston notes that this painted floral title page "is believed to represent some of the earliest surviving work of Ferdinand Bauer." The cover of *Cleveland's treasures* is graced by a boldly brilliant red poppy, an anonymous painting from an eighteenth-century manuscript florilegium from Nuremberg.

The fourth and final chapter, "Gardening and landscape architecture," appears to have been somewhat abbreviated in coverage due to space considerations. However, a representative selection of works conveys the range of topics covered in the collections, with most of the material in this chapter held by the Cleveland Botanical Garden. The works on practical gardening cover such topics as agriculture, early seed catalogs, gardener's calendars, gardening methods, and cultivation of specific plants. A pair of 17th-century *Hesperides* works on citrus fruits are also described. The works on decorative gardening and landscape architecture include writings on ancient Roman terracing, Italian and French formal gardens, and English landscape design. The collections also contain a number of intricately engraved plans and views of gardens.

All in all, Johnston's two books are impressive and enjoyable and recommended for anyone with an interest in the history of plant literature. *Cleveland's treasures* is very readable, and *The Cleveland herbal, botanical, and horticultural collections* provides in-depth information that is as valuable for the historical notes as for the bibliographic information. Cleveland is fortunate to have these collections, and we are fortunate to be able to sample them through Johnston's books.

Charlotte Tancin
Hunt Institute

McVaugh, Rogers, Michael R. McVaugh and Mary Ayers. *Chapel Hill and Elisha Mitchell the botanist*. Chapel Hill, N.C.: The Botanical Garden Foundation, 1996. 122 pp., illus. \$13.25. ISBN 1-889065-00-5.

When the rich and varied career of Elisha Mitchell is described, his short and enthusiastic absorption with plant collecting is often given brief mention or ignored. This volume examines that period in Mitchell's life at Chapel Hill. Rogers McVaugh and Michael R. McVaugh, research professor of botany and professor of history respectively at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, with Mary Ayers, North Carolina registered land surveyor, have examined Mitchell's ledgers and notes, retraced Mitchell's collecting trips, scrutinized old maps of the area and, with the use of a computer, other techniques and much research, produced a map of Chapel Hill and vicinity showing the village lots and other relevant property lines of the period when Mitchell explored the area. The volume is small but the amount of information it contains is astonishing.

The editors wisely separated the volume into chapters and appendices. The first seventeen pages consist of a preface, introduction, and biographical information followed by a chapter entitled "Botanical identification" that discusses the sources used by Mitchell to identify plants. The chapter entitled "Botanical notes" is devoted to the transcription of Mitchell's notes—a challenging and inexact endeavor because of Mitchell's unique prose and punctuation.

Information obtained from original letters and documents found in the university papers at the University of North Carolina library were used to compile Appendix A, "Chapel Hill's topography and Mitchell's botanizing localities." One of the most intriguing sections of the book is Appendix B, "The genesis of Map 1," in which the authors describe the difficulties in creating the map: "Since magnetic north fluctuates east or west of true or astronomic north in a cycle of approximately 300 years, with small daily and annual variations, it was necessary to establish the angular difference between the magnetic bearings of the old deed descriptions and the grid north used on the USGS map, based on latitude and longitude. The bearings and distances for each grant were entered into a computer with a surveying software system, and the endpoints were plotted on a dot-matrix printer. The lines between the points were drawn on clear mylar film, and became the foundation of our Map 1."

Appendix C is "An eclectic index to Mitchell's places and people." Appendix D, "The numbered tracts shown on map 1," gives the size and descriptions of the tracts of land as well as the names of sellers, purchasers, and dates of transaction. The final appendix describes the lots sold by university trustees at an auction on 12 October 1793 and gives the names of the purchasers as well as the pur-

chase prices. A bibliography, a glossary of plant names used in the text and an index conclude the volume. The map created by the editors and described in Appendix B is tipped into the volume in front of the free endpaper.

Many collections would benefit by the addition of this volume, but it is essential for botany libraries and herbaria that conserve North American plant specimens. Also, geology and North Carolina history libraries would find this volume a useful source.

Anita L. Karg
Hunt Institute

Thackray, John C. *A guide to the Official Archives of the Natural History Museum, London*. London: Hobbs the Printers Ltd. and The Society for the History of Natural History on behalf of The Natural History Museum, 1998. 174 pp. £25 (\$42). ISBN 0-901-843-08-3.

John Thackray, archivist of the Natural History Museum, has produced a thorough, much-needed text. The archives catalogued here include all of the museum's work, whether "scientific research, curation, exhibit production, education, publishing, building maintenance, library provision or internal management." The museum archives, Thackray notes, are separate from the manuscripts and drawings produced outside the museum and held in the libraries. Although, he adds, the "distinction between archival and library printed materials is to some extent arbitrary," the archives covered in this guide are primarily materials produced within the museum.

Thackray includes a historical sketch of the Natural History Museum from its inception, via the British Museum Act in 1753, to 1975—an ending date chosen because few archival items are less than 25 years old. Thackray begins his guide with: "The Natural History Museum owes its foundation to the work of one man: Sir Hans Sloane." This narrative framework does not allow for either the collectors whose efforts boosted Sloane's own collection or the cultural climate that made parliamentary creation of, and royal assent to, a public institution such as the British Museum possible. However, this brief history does offer vivid images of moments in the museum's history, as when Thackray recounts that "[George] Shaw is famous for his bonfires of moth-eaten stuffed specimens, many of them no doubt from the Sloane Collection." Shaw was head of the Department of Natural History and Modern Curiosities beginning in 1806, when the earlier Department of Natural and Artificial Productions was split, and natural history was separated from the museum's coins and antiquities. Thackray's inclusion of

such details make this guide interesting reading in its own right.

The guide is clearly organized, with a chapter devoted to each of its subgroups, based on the administrative levels of the museum: the board of trustees; the director; each of the departments (zoology, entomology, geology/palaeontology, mineralogy and botany); the Unofficial Archives; the Zoological Museum at Tring; and an index of personal, institutional, and ship names. A historical sketch of each subgroup is followed by a lineage of the departmental keepers when appropriate. Subgroups are broken down into classes that are listed, described, and measured, including the date of transfer from its creating department, shelf length, number of items, and the status of its microfilm. Class titles reflect the movement of sections from one department to another or departmental name changes (as when the Geology Department was renamed Palaeontology in 1956). Throughout, Thackray provides cross-references to other collections, both within the museum and in other libraries, as well as citations for any works used in his historical sketches. The guide also includes a small selection of pleasurable, even amusing, captioned black and white photograph reproductions from the museum's large photo collection, including one from 1927 featuring an elephant that had been stuck in the museum's doorway while being removed for restuffing.

The guide directs its user easily through copies of the collections of the British Museum Board of Trustees (the originals are in the British Museum Archives) such as meeting minutes, books of presents, gallery development plans, the new building in South Kensington and the 1881 removal of collections from Bloomsbury, and loan regulations. The collection of the director's office points the reader to the original papers of the librarian, the superintendent (Sir Richard Owen was the only one appointed to this position, which he held from 1856 to 1883), and the director. These include bound volumes of incoming letters, reports, and memoranda related to the new South Kensington building; keepers' monthly progress reports; publication sales statistics; offers of specimens for purchase; the papers of the General Library; boundary disputes; exhibition information; annual reports; press releases; ledgers; and correspondence.

Highlights from the departmental papers include wartime evacuation of collections; the zoology keeper's correspondence, which includes letters from scientists such as Cuvier, De Candolle, De Jussieu, Darwin, and Huxley; files on the Great Barrier Reef Expedition and the John Murray Expedition to the Indian Ocean; and papers on the Piltdown Man controversy in the Department of Geology. The botanical collection includes correspondence from Oakes Ames, Arnold Arboretum, Liberty Bailey, Sir Joseph Hooker, the New York Botanical Garden, and the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, Edinburgh and Sydney.

This collection also includes the papers of the *Journal of botany*, *The Island of Mull* (London, 1978), the *Biographical index of British and Irish botanists* (London, 1893, 1931), Wilmott's papers on the genus *Salicornia*, and materials related to Barton's and Rogers' *Rubus* collections. The Unofficial Archives hold newscuttings; papers of part-time workers, benefactors, and trustees; employees' papers donated after leaving the museum; and the trade union branch of the museum.

The guide is a valuable tool for understanding inter-departmental struggles, trends in museum prioritization, and how individual personalities shaped the archive and the museum. For example, Thackray notes that the content of the assistant secretary's correspondence varies widely with the secretary: "Flower's letters, mostly written on holiday, are friendly and full of gossip about mischief-making by the Principal Trustees and other topics; Lankester's are brief and business-like requests for action; while Fletcher's are mostly concerned with the poor state of his health."

In addition to providing a fine map of the Natural History Museum Archives, the guide is an informative text in its own right. This book is essential for any library, repository, or scholar focusing on the history of natural history or its divisions, or on the history of the museum. This is also an important text for those interested in the history of institutional or museum organization, including patterns of donations and purchases, visitor attendance, archival methods, museum architecture, relations between museums, and for anyone researching a person employed by or involved with the Natural History Museum.

Angela Todd
Hunt Institute

Zdanowicz, Irena. *Beauty in truth: The botanical art of Margaret Stones.* Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria, 1996. 96 pp., frontis. (port.), ports., illus. (mostly color). \$34.95 (Australian dollars). ISBN 0-7241-0187-X.

Margaret Stones is considered by many to be one of the preeminent botanical illustrators of the 20th century. She was born in Culac, Australia, in 1920 and studied art at Swinburne Technical College and the National Gallery of Art School in Melbourne. She initially found employment as a commercial artist, but while confined in bed with pulmonary tuberculosis in 1945, she began to make studies of plants. Her physician admired her drawings and brought them to the attention of the director of the National Gallery of Victoria. From his recommendation, she was offered an exhibition at the Georges Gallery in Melbourne in 1946, which launched her career as a botanical

artist. In 1948 she participated in her first field expedition, sponsored by the Department of Botany at the University of Melbourne. Private commissions and solo exhibitions followed, and her interest in furthering her experience in botanical illustration led her to Britain in 1951. She soon found freelance employment at the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, and she was the principal contributor to *Curtis's botanical magazine* between 1958 and 1983. In 1964 the Hunt Institute considered her work to be of merit and included four watercolors in its "Exhibition of Contemporary Botanical Art and Illustration." Some of her commissions include 20 portraits of Australian flowers for the Commonwealth Art Advisory Board of Australia, drawings for the six-volume *Endemic flora of Tasmania* (London, 1967–1978) and *Flora of Louisiana* (Baton Rouge, La, 1991), and drawings of plants grown at Monticello to commemorate the 250th birthday of Thomas Jefferson for the University of Virginia in 1993.

This catalogue accompanied the exhibition on display at the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Victoria, from 17 October to 16 December 1996 and was written by the museum's senior curator of prints and drawings. It provides a survey of the artist's work from 1946–1996 and includes examples from both private and public collections.

The initial essay provides a brief history of the scientific tradition of botanical illustration in Australia, and it is interwoven with a history of Margaret Stones' life and career as a botanical illustrator. It continues with descriptions of her expeditions to the Bogong High Plains in Australia, Tasmania, and the flora of Louisiana project that spanned the years 1975–1986 and included 250 drawings. Most of her subjects are from Australia and Tasmania, but also include some native to the Balkan region (mountains), Brazil, Central America, China, eastern Asia Minor, eastern Canada, the eastern Mediterranean, the Himalayas, Hong Kong Territory, Lebanon, New Zealand, South Af-

rica, southwest Asia, southeastern United States, Sumatra, tropical eastern and northeastern Africa, tropical Americas, Turkey, Turkestan and Afghanistan, western New Guinea and western North America.

The following essay is titled "Procedures and working methods" and provides an interesting and thorough description of her techniques for illustrating each specimen—from initial observations and studies to finished drawings and watercolors. She formerly preferred to work from dried and dissected specimens in the studio, but now she works from cut, living specimens and observations she makes on location. Included in both essays are photographs of the artist working and observing in the field and in her studio.

The color reproductions of her artworks are divided into the following seven chronological groups: early drawings, 1946–56; drawings from the 1960s; drawings for *Curtis's botanical magazine*, n. s., 1956–81; drawings for *The endemic flora of Tasmania*, 1961–77; drawings for *Flora of Louisiana*, 1976–84; drawings from the 1970s; and drawings from the 1980s and 1990s. Each illustration is accompanied by its botanical and common names, family name and distribution, medium and date of completion, location cultivated and collected, references to any text, the lender's name and interesting botanical notes that include descriptions and a short history of the genus.

This publication concludes with a listing of Margaret Stones' solo and group exhibitions, a select bibliography of books, catalogues and articles and an index of botanical and common names of specimens illustrated in this catalogue.

While more large-scale reproductions might have better shown her artistic skill and technique, this catalogue is a deserving tribute to the distinguished career of one of the more important contemporary botanical artists.

Lugene Bruno
Hunt Institute