

## Beetles, butterflies and bibliophilia: the entomological legacy of Robert Wylie Lloyd

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### ABSTRACT

Robert Wylie Lloyd (1868–1958) made major contributions to the holdings of the Entomology Department of the Manchester Museum. Biographical details are provided for this remarkable man, the nature of his donations is described and his motivations in giving them discussed. The breadth and extent of these collections makes them a valuable resource to which modern methods of analysis could be applied. For half a century he owned and influenced the *Entomologist's Monthly Magazine*.

Keywords: Robert Wylie Lloyd, biography, entomological collection, Manchester Museum

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### INTRODUCTION

Museums in Britain have always benefited from donations to develop their holdings, and these are especially important to museums that are not nationally funded. The Manchester Museum came into being when the University of Manchester took over from the Manchester Society for the Promotion of Natural History following its liquidation in 1868. It in turn had been set up to preserve the collections of the business man J. Leigh Philips (1761–1814) and had over subsequent years accumulated further material, which formed the starting point for the new enterprise (Alberti 2002; 2009; Cook & Logunov 2017). Beginning with natural sciences the range later extended to include ethnography and Egyptology. All these areas of activity grew with time. On the entomological side, through active field collecting by a succession of dedicated curators and a series of major donations the department enlarged and diversified, so that it now houses more than three million specimens, making it the third or fourth most extensive holding in Britain (Logunov 2012; Dockery & Logunov 2015).

In the 19th and early 20th centuries collectors were often competitive, attempting to assemble as many specimens as possible in their chosen area of expertise, even to the point of endangering rare species. That attitude has now changed, and in addition to taxonomy, the objective is now the study of evolution, ecology and conservation, as well as to further the role of the Museum in university and public education, citizen science and other public related affairs. Over the years the generosity of donors enriched the museums; consideration of the lives and motivations of the donors themselves can also provide insights into the societal changes that influenced them as collectors. Using the Departmental archives and the collections themselves we have examined the lives of some of the entomology benefactors in Manchester (Johnson 2004; Higham 2012; Dockery & Logunov 2015; Cook & Logunov 2016). One of the most generous was R.W. Lloyd. His gifts cover collections of Coleoptera and Lepidoptera, both his own and from other sources, direct financial support and

a substantial section of his personal library. Despite all this he remains something of an enigma. His contributions and character are considered here.

#### ROBERT WYLIE LLOYD (1868–1958): LIFE AND ACTIVITIES

Like many notable figures in the 19th and early 20th centuries Lloyd (Fig. 1) had antecedents with careers linked to the cotton industry of north-west England. He was born in Oswaldtwistle, Lancashire, the son of John Lloyd, bleacher, and grandson of Nathaniel Lloyd (probably 1817–1895), calico printer and bleacher. John's wife, Robert's mother, was Rachel née Wylie (1844–1890), from a commercial family in Glasgow. Due to poor health Robert had little formal education and, when his parents separated, he and his elder brother Nathaniel (1867–1933) were taken by their mother to Clapham in London. He first worked as a junior clerk in a warehouse in Mincing Lane in the City, a centre for the tea and spice trade. Nathaniel began his career managing among other things, advertising and printing for the Mazzawattee tea company, at that time a flourishing concern. In 1893 he founded Nathaniel Lloyd & Co., lithographic printers, where he was joined by Robert. This was a successful enterprise, so much so that Nathaniel retired in 1909, moving to Great Dixter in Sussex and studying architecture. One of Nathaniel's sons, Christopher, later opened the gardens of their house to the public. Robert remained with the printing firm until 1912, also running the Star Bleaching Company and being involved in cloth and printing enterprises.

Family background may have influenced his choice of occupations, but Robert evidently possessed exceptional business acumen that could be put to a variety of uses. Among other things he had interests in Druce & Co of Baker Street, London, a store specializing in fine furniture, and a Manchester concern dealing in cotton goods. He was a director of the Morning Post newspaper until it was sold to the Daily Telegraph in 1937. The income obtained supported a wide range of other activities and hobbies and progressively better housing. In the latter part of the 19th century he lived in Balham, a relatively modest part of south London. By the 1930s his residence was Treago Castle, Herefordshire. From there he moved to Bampton Grange, Oxfordshire by 1950, with in addition a London base at the Albany, Piccadilly.

Having an early passion for insect collecting on the commons near his London home, he was elected Fellow of the Entomological Society of London in 1885 at the early age of 17. A purchase at about the same time was a fine four-volume illustrated account of insect natural history by Kirby and Spence (1815–26), which he signed and dated. Allen (1994, p. 90 ff.) says of it 'Most attractively written, it captures the spirit of the old collectors in a way that has probably never been rivalled. It is not hard to believe that many new converts to the subject – converts at least, from the usual listless and transient schoolboy collecting – were won from a happy reading of its pages.'

In 1904 Lloyd became owner of the *Entomologist's Monthly Magazine* on the death of the then editor Robert McLachlan. Lloyd was on the editorial board from 1909 to 1958. He enhanced the presentation by subsidising the inclusion of coloured plates where appropriate. This journal had been published since its inception in 1864 by the London natural history publishing firm of John van Voorst, then by his successors Gurney and Jackson from 1886 to 1924. It was then transferred to Nathaniel Lloyd & Co. Ltd., and remained with the family firm until 1964. After that



Fig. 1. — Robert Wylie Lloyd in later life.

it was run by a company associated with the Oxford entomologist B.M. Hobby, an editor from 1937 to 1983 (Champion 1964; Southwood 1989). Subsequently it passed to the Gem Publishing Company (1982–2006) and Pemberley Books from 2007.

Purchase of paintings, particularly watercolours by J.M.W. Turner (Sloan 1998), and of Chinese and Japanese artefacts led to association with the fine art dealer Agnew's and to the auction house Christie's. In 1939, the Christie's staff left to fight in the war, leaving only one of their number, Alec Martin, in charge. Lloyd came in as advisory director, and soon turned it into a private limited company with himself as chairman. Some, at least, of his Chinese and Japanese lacquer, Japanese ivories and sword blades were kept at Albany, where they 'were crowded into a few glass cases ... and were more suggestive of a store than of an artistic display.' (Martin 1958). The Turners were more carefully arranged, with blinds from Agnew's to protect them from the light.

Lloyd was also a keen Alpinist, having first developed an enthusiasm after visiting Austria in 1896 with the family of his friend H.G. Champion, a fellow entomologist. After successful and ground-breaking ascents these activities were curtailed in 1937, when he lost his left leg to thrombosis. He continued to purchase paintings and prints relating to climbing as well as books relevant to all his varied

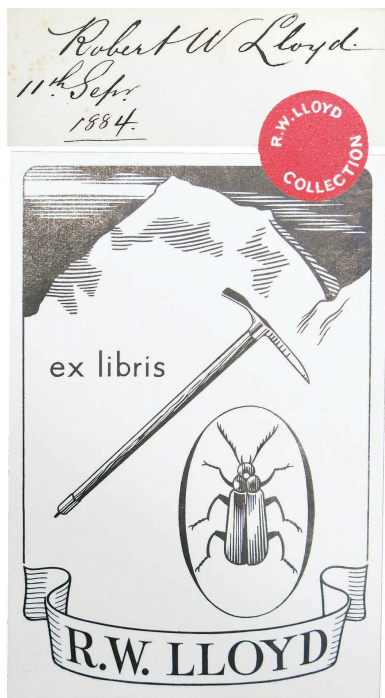


Fig. 2. — Lloyd's signature, aged 17, from one of his books, his book-plate and the red label; the Manchester Museum.

enthusiasms. He also played an active part in many fields, being at times Vice President of both the Entomological Society and the Alpine Club, for whom he was treasurer of their Mount Everest Committee. Because of constant pain associated with his leg, Christie's board meetings were held at Albany. On the entomological side he gave up the pursuit of butterflies, turning instead to the Coleoptera because, as he said (Champion 1958) 'beetles are no more active than I am now'. His chauffeur drove to suitable collecting sites, set up a chair and table for his apparatus and contributed to the collecting.

Lloyd published numerous very short notes in the *Entomologist's Monthly Magazine*. Thirteen of these appeared between 1890 and 1899, ten on Coleoptera the rest referring to other insect groups. Then there was a period until 1938, in which he contributed only three, jointly with H.G. Champion, on *Some interesting British insects*. Like the earlier contributions, these were lists of records, but included colour plates. From 1938 to 1954 forty-two further contributions appeared, seven of them obituaries of fellow entomologists, the rest mostly beetle records. The reason for the four-decade gap is unknown; business and the worsening condition of his leg may have played a part.

The picture we have is of a very private, and perhaps, even solitary man. An enquiry at Christie's uncovered no Boardroom portrait, and few photographs of Lloyd survive. There is one in a group attending an insect survey (Donisthorpe 1939), otherwise they are connected with the Alpine Club, such as the portrait with dog (Fig. 1) (Blakeney 1958; Higham 2012; Sloan 1998) and one with two guides (Sloan 1998). Lloyd undoubtedly had many acquaintances, both professional and in



Fig. 3. — One of Lloyd's collectibles, a plate showing *Saturnia simla* (Westwood) from J.O. Westwood, *The Cabinet of Oriental Entomology*; the Manchester Museum.

the societies to which he belonged. Those who appear as closer friends are the Champion family (G.C., 1851–1927 and his son H.G., 1891–1979), perhaps H.St.J. Donisthorpe (1870–1951) and the Alpine climbing guide Josef Pollinger. Lloyd first employed Pollinger in 1904 and their association continued until 1939 (Blakeney 1958), during which time they established a number of first ascents and route variations in the Alps and Dolomites.

As Champion (1958) relates, Lloyd had been referred to as ‘a latter-day Victorian’. Beyond that, opinions vary and there were evidently two sides to his character, possibly influenced on the one hand by generosity and on the other by business sense. He goes on, ‘Lloyd could be firm, even hard, when dealing with anyone whom he considered unworthy, but most generous to persons and causes he had at heart. He always reacted strongly against any indications of the second class or lack of effort, but was always ready to take the initiative without prompting – which he was liable to resent – when decided that the cause was worthy.’ Some factors that may have influenced his character are described by Blakeney (1958),

‘In a revealing moment, he once remarked that it had given him, as a boy, a shock to see his mother having to economise and he early determined to retrieve her fortunes and set her up in comfort. He had just succeeded in establishing himself satisfactorily, in his early twenties, when his mother died, and the blow was one he never forgot. From then on, instead of being able to work for another’s welfare, he simply concentrated on extending his business activities and it was from this concentration that there arose that dour strain and vein of ruthlessness



in his character that struck many who encountered him. That he tended to drive a hard bargain, that he liked his money's worth, will not be denied; but there were other facets to his character not always seen by the world.'

The two sides were sometimes seen in his dealings with climbers. In 1947 he donated the large sum of £3500 to establish the Ynys Ettws (R.W. Lloyd) Hut at a site in the mountains of north Wales (Wall 2018), while refusing 'with characteristic penny-pinching wit' to allow a loan from the Everest Committee for dental treatment to a member who suffered injury while participating in a publicity project (Conefrey 2014).

#### THE BEQUESTS

When Lloyd died, bequests went to the British Museum of watercolours by Turner and others, Chinese lacquerware and Japanese swords (Sloan 1998). The Entomological Society, which became the Royal Entomological Society in 1933, received manuscript works by Jacob Hübner and Carl Geyer and a fund to assist further publication. They had earlier been recipients of another act of generosity, when Lloyd expressed 'his willingness to provide, entirely at his own expense, the oak-panelled interior and elaborately moulded ceiling, as well as a handsome chair and desk for the President and Officers that now adorn the present Meeting Room' (Neave 1933, p. 59.). Lloyd's mountaineering books and papers, some 2000 items, were given to the National Library of Scotland. The Manchester Museum received Japanese artefacts, including lacquerwork, ivory and bronze.

Champion (1958) says that although living in the south of the country Lloyd always kept his interest in Manchester. That is not obvious from the other biographical details, although he had a business interest there and was in touch with W.D. Hincks (1906–1961), Keeper of Entomology at the Manchester Museum. Whatever the motivation, the Museum benefited, too, from a substantial donation of entomological material. This comprised 19 cabinets of 332 drawers, 240 store boxes, two microscopes and various collecting apparatus (MM 1958). The insects were almost entirely British beetles and European and some British butterflies. In preparation, strong wooden staging was erected in one of the Museum store-rooms to allow the cabinets to be stacked to the ceiling. It was noted in the Museum's reports that it would take some time to curate the new material (MM 1958). In addition to all this, the Museum is recorded indicating that Lloyd provided nearly 1000 entomological books.

Lloyd had earlier been instrumental in ensuring that the Museum received another significant addition, the Spaeth collection of Cassidinae or tortoise beetles, Chrysomelidae. Franz Spaeth (1863–1946) was a distinguished Austrian coleopterist and the exchange took place in 1950–51. Arrangements for the move were made with his son in Vienna, and unfolded against the background of the recent war and of the Soviet administration of the city. Hincks arranged that £1100 should be paid for the collection, notebooks, catalogues and other material, with £300 coming from the Manchester Museum, nominally for the notebooks and materials, while £800 was to be provided by Lloyd. The family needed the money, for medical treatment among other things, but were concerned that due to strict censorship of the mail there might be difficulties in delivery (see Higham 2012). A Board of Trade permit was also required. Following considerable correspondence it was arranged that

Lloyd's contribution would go to a bank in Holland for transfer from there while the rest was sent directly from Manchester. The cabinets were too heavy to transport, but 40 drawers from them were packed, and duly delivered to Manchester by air and rail (Hincks 1950; 1951; MM Hincks Archive box 5).

#### THE ENTOMOLOGY BOOKS

On arrival, the consignment of books from Lloyd's extensive library was distributed among the shelves of the Entomology department and, appropriately, some of the rarer works were passed on to the University Library. After the amalgamation of the University Library with the Rylands Library, situated in the City, books that were probably of most bibliographic interest went to the special collection there. These transfers were carefully noted. Some Entomology Department records which may have included similar information were lost in the 1970s. The Department already possessed some books similar to those in the bequest, but from his earliest days of collecting Lloyd had a distinctive book-plate (Fig. 2), which he applied to the inside cover; if present a book was definitely his. In addition, a number of those with book-plates also have a small round carmine-coloured paper label identifying them as coming from the donation. Lloyd appears to have been punctilious in adding his plates, even to notebooks and to every volume of a series of journals. However, we cannot know that every book was so treated, and there are a number of unbound items that could have come from him as well. Considering only bound volumes with book-plates and counting separately the individual volumes of journals and multi-volume treatises, including those in the main library, the total is considerably smaller than that quoted. Using these criteria a search identified 621 items. There are also over a dozen volumes on Japanese swords, pottery or other works of art, or sales catalogues, sometimes annotated with the sums realised at the sale. These are held by the Living Cultures department. Two hundred and thirty-six of the entomological books are journal volumes. Among the rest there are 126 each on Coleoptera and Lepidoptera; most are descriptive or taxonomic revisions. This is consistent with Lloyd's tastes; the majority of the remainder are general entomology. As might be expected Lloyd was evidently attracted by older and rarer material. The oldest here is by Frederic Nausea (1522) a Catholic theologian during the Counter Reformation who was sympathetic to scientific ideas, including those of astronomy. More characteristic of Lloyd's interests is the single work from the 17th century, the 1634 edition of Thomas Moffet's *Insectorum sive minimorum animalium theatrum*, a guide to the classification of insects, and inspiration, it is said, for the nursery rhyme *Little Miss Muffet*. Twenty-two are from the 18th century and the majority, over 130 items, are from the 19th century (Fig. 3), some of them almost contemporary with the time he was actively collecting. The 20th century is represented by more than 60 volumes. A list is available from the Museum.

#### THE INSECT COLLECTIONS

Lloyd's collection of butterflies is housed in four cabinets, arranged in systematic order (Fig. 4). The specimens are beautifully prepared and come from a wide range of European localities, many of them alpine. They are often present in long series (Fig. 5), so that the 141 species are represented by over 7900 individuals. From a



Fig. 4. — The cabinets with Lloyd's Lepidoptera collection, Manchester Museum, June, 2018.



Fig. 5. — Series of blue butterflies, *Polyommatus bellargus* (Rottemburg) and *P. coridon* (Poda) in Lloyd's collection; the Manchester Museum.





Fig. 6. — Two beetle species very rare in Britain, collected by Lloyd: *Omphalapion laevigatum* (Paykull, 1792), Apionidae (left), and *Anitys rubens* (Hoffmann, 1803), Anobiidae (right); the Manchester Museum.



Fig. 7. — The holotype of *Spaethaspis lloydi* Hincks, 1952 (Chrysomelidae, Cassidinae), its data labels, and the original drawing used by W.D.Hincks in his description; the Manchester Museum.

21st century perspective one wonders at the intention. *Polyommatus corydon* (Chalk hill blue), with 293 specimens, or *P. icarus* (Common blue), with 240 specimens, are variable species (Russwurm 1978). In his collection they show a good degree of uniformity. The same applies to some mountain species such as the European endemic *Colias phicomone* (Mountain clouded yellow, 100 individuals), or *Boloria napaea* (Mountain fritillary, 98 individuals). A couple of cases where he has noted variation are *Erebia pronoe* (Water ringlet) where 7 individuals of var *pitho*, from Switzerland and the Tyrol (Elwes 1898), were separated from the other 11 specimens, while for *Colias palaeno* (Moorland clouded yellow) he has separated the 18 specimens of the alpine var *europomene* from the other 59. Overall, however, the patterns of variation do not seem to have been of interest. Collecting took place from Britain and Spain to Austria and from northern Europe to the Mediterranean, so that the collection could become a useful resource for study of genetic divergence using modern markers.

Lloyd's collection of Coleoptera was very extensive. In addition to material he obtained himself he also had specimens assembled by other collectors (Johnson 2004; Logunov 2012). The material from W.G. Blatch amounted to about 30,000 insects, that of T.H. Edmonds to 10,000, with a further 20,000 from E.M. Eustace. J. Taylor's efforts contributed 16,000 and R.R. Uthhoff-Kaufmann 2,700 belonging to the family Cerambycidae. The collection made by J.J. Walker went to the Oxford Museum but Lloyd had some 6,000 of his duplicates. With Lloyd's own very comprehensive collection of 30,000 specimens this brings the total to more than 100,000. One wonders at the energy of the collectors, to say nothing of the perceived usefulness of such an assemblage. One common preoccupation was the establishment of distribution and range, particularly of rare species, for which purpose mounted insects from different locations are valuable evidence. This seems to have been one of Lloyd's chief motivations (Fig. 6), pursued with great perseverance and sometimes good fortune. The coleopterist Jon Cooter remarked on Lloyd having found the anobiid beetle *Anitya rubens* in rotten oakwood at Moccas Park, Herefordshire, 'I've sieved tonnes of the stuff over the years and found all the other ancient timber rarities but only the single elytron of *Anitya* – and I did not even retain that as evidence!' (Lloyd 1949; Cooter, pers. comm.). The collection contains at least 12 specimens that have been designated as types of one kind or another. The specific epithet *lloydi* was given to three of these by Donisthorpe (Johnson 2004). Hincks (1952) named one of the tortoise-beetles (Cassidinae), *Spaethaspis lloydi*, acknowledging both collector and donor (Fig. 7). As Alberti (2009, p. 100.) puts it, referring to this name, '... The relationship between collector and the Museum therefore endured beyond the act of donation. ... This constituted what has recently been dubbed a 'vital contract' between amateur donors and the professional museum sector based on trust and data exchange.'

## CONCLUSION

Lloyd was a professional business man who could turn any of a wide variety of undertakings into a commercial success. Although accepting executive positions in many societies his interests in fine art, mountain climbing and entomology seem to have been centred on experience, collecting and enjoyment. In pursuit of those ends he might be competitive and acquisitive, but that allowed him to make extraordinarily generous bequests. At the same time, as a 'latter-day Victorian' he may

have resisted the tendency of societies to which he belonged to become dominated by the more technical aspects of their interests. The move towards increasing professionalism in natural history and biology had been strong throughout the 19th century, fuelled, among other influences, by the rise of the study of biological subjects in university departments (Allen 1994; Johnson, 2007). In the Manchester context the dealings of both the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society and the Manchester Field-Naturalists' Society reflected the tension that developed between enquiry as science and enquiry for the sense of pleasure it evokes (Kargon 1977; Cook 2015). The Royal Entomological Society was also not immune; both E.B. Poulton and G.D. Hale Carpenter had earlier experienced resistance to their tendency to discuss underlying causes rather than to concentrate on appearances (Cook & Logunov 2017). As to Lloyd's position, Champion (1958) writes:

As a member of the Society, he was very keen that it should continue to cater for entomologists who, like himself, had not undertaken any special training as such, and with this went the strongest dislike of bureaucracy, and a fear that the Society might be dominated by narrow specialists for whom entomology was liable to be a means of livelihood rather than an innate and absorbing interest, and who would want to regiment everybody and everything, with a loss of the more personal bonds of friendship which bring and keep together those who share a common interest.

He notes, however, that Lloyd's view softened with age and never coloured his feelings for individuals.

Similarly, climbing became increasingly technical during his lifetime and, for some, correspondingly less pleasurable. Thus, in a North Wales climbing guide (Harding 1955) the Alpine and Everest climber C.W.F. Noyce wrote 'It will be noticed that on some of the newest and fiercest routes pitons have been used. This does not mean that pitons are approved; that question can safely be left to those who enjoy disputing such subjects'. Having promoted north Wales climbing by funding the Climbing Club Hut at Ynys Ettws, Lloyd attended its opening in 1950 and afterwards the dinner, where he gave the company his views on climbing and climbers (Wall 2018). To the extent that he may have regretted change he shared the sentiment with John Ruskin, like him an admirer of J.M.W. Turner and of the Alps, and indeed of Turner himself. They wished to celebrate the study of nature, for its own sake and sublimity and to emphasise the important role of the amateur, in both senses of the word. Beyond that, Lloyd's chief entomological preoccupation seems to have been the recording of localities of rare species. For the modern museum, the large bulk of material he assembled could now provide an invaluable resource to which new techniques of systematic, morphometric and genetic analysis may be applied.

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