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Richard Thomas Lowe's unfinished *A Manual Flora of Madeira*: The fate of the letterpress remaining after his untimely death

R. B. Williams

Abstract

Previous findings appeared to indicate that John Van Voorst, the London publisher of Richard Thomas Lowe's unfinished *A Manual Flora of Madeira*, owned the wrapped parts and unsewn sheets of letterpress that remained after Lowe's untimely death at sea and sold them directly to the London bookseller Bernard Quaritch. However, new information necessitates a revision of that interpretation. Letters recently discovered in the archive of the publishers Messrs Oliver & Boyd, indirect successors of Van Voorst's business, reveal that Lowe had financed the printing of his own work, which therefore remained his property. While Lowe was still alive, Van Voorst, in fact, sold the book on commission. The work, mainly as letterpress sheets, remaining with Van Voorst after Lowe's demise was sold the following year, on the authority of Lowe's executor Thomas Vernon Wollaston, through the auction-house of Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge. It was thereby acquired by Quaritch as evidenced by a marked-up copy of the auction-catalogue held by the British Library. The timing of these events furthermore indicates that, whilst cased copies of the five parts completing volume I were issued by Van Voorst before Lowe's death, copies of volume I that are cased with the first part of volume II were issued not by Van Voorst, as previously supposed, but by Quaritch after Sotheby's auction. A description is provided of a previously unrecorded third variant of the cloth-case style of the Quaritch issue. A worldwide census of current holdings of Lowe's book in academic and private libraries, with a statistical analysis of the geographical distribution of the two issues of cased volumes and some wrapped parts, is presented. The data provide unique insights into Van Voorst's and Quaritch's bookselling business practices.

Introduction

A Manual Flora of Madeira and the Adjacent Islands of Porto Santo and the Desertas, by Richard

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Thomas Lowe (1802–1874), was published by John Van Voorst in six parts (Lowe 1868 [1857–1872]) but remained incomplete on Lowe's death. The publishing history of this seminal work (hereinafter referred to as *The Flora*), still important for the study of the flora of the Madeiran Archipelago, has recently been described by Williams (2017); key personalities (Figs. 1 and 2) were the publishers-cum-booksellers John Van Voorst (1804–1898) and Bernard Alexander Christian Quaritch (1819–1899). Based on previously available information, it was believed that after Lowe was tragically drowned when his ship foundered *en route* from Liverpool to Madeira, Van Voorst sold the remainder of the letterpress directly to Quaritch. However, recent discoveries now reveal that Lowe himself had borne the financial risk of publication of *The Flora*, and so the stock belonged to him, not to Van Voorst. In fact, the ultimate disposal of the unsold remainder stock was ordered by Lowe's executor, Thomas Vernon Wollaston (1822–1878), rather than by Van Voorst. Furthermore, Quaritch acquired the stock at an auction by Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge, instead of by direct purchase as previously thought (see later).¹

Previous information

The Flora was apparently not a commercial success (Williams 2017). The publisher's imprint on the title-page is that of the highly respected London publisher John Van Voorst (see Williams 2004), implying that publication was at Van Voorst's risk (Williams 2017). In a



Figure 1. John Van Voorst (1804–1898). Photographic portrait (LSPC/88) from the Literary and Scientific Portrait Club album, courtesy of the Linnean Society of London. Another copy of the same portrait (NPG P106), in the National Portrait Gallery, London, is dated circa 1855.

separate part I of volume II held by Cambridge University Library (shelf-mark MD.30.36), a curt manuscript note inside the front wrapper (p. w[2]) reads, “Note from Publisher. ‘Lowes Flora of Madeira’ [sic]. Pt. I of vol II was the last published. Author dead. Quaritch has the stock. 31.10.’84.” In view of Van Voorst’s imprint in *The Flora*, I had previously assumed that he had owned the sheets of letterpress remaining after Lowe’s death and had subsequently sold them directly to Bernard Quaritch (Williams 2017, p. 20). Implicit in my assumption was that, if Van Voorst was the named publisher and also possessed the stock, he had presumably undertaken the financial risk of publication, which would have automatically conferred on him its legal

ownership. That interpretation must now be revised in the light of new information.

Another previous misconception (Williams 2017, p. 16) was that all four of the recorded cloth-case styles of the volumes bound up from the parts of *The Flora* were issued by Van Voorst. However, the timing and detailed description of Lowe’s remainder stock in the auction-sale, so soon after his death, prove that, in fact, only the first two styles could have been issued by Van Voorst. The other two, and a previously unrecorded one described later herein, were issued by Quaritch.

New evidence from the Oliver & Boyd archive

It can now be stated with confidence that, although named as the publisher of *The Flora*, Van Voorst actually sold Lowe’s book on commission. This is revealed by a letter from Messrs Oliver & Boyd² (long since absorbed by the Pearson publishing group), who took over Messrs Gurney & Jackson, the immediate successors of Van Voorst (Williams 2004). This crucial letter (Acc.5000/151) is dated 15 May [1906] to the botanist Charles Baron Clarke (1832–1906), who had proposed the publication of a “Cauda” to *The Flora*, as a much-belated completion of Lowe’s book.³ An extract of the letter states,

On referring to the late Mr Van Voorst’s Books we find that Lowe’s “Flora of Madeira” was sold by him on Commission for the Author. It was commenced in 1857, and published down to 1874, and after the Author’s death the stock would appear to have been sold off—we think by auction—a pencil note saying “sold to Sotheby & Wilkinson for the Executors” since that date there is no trace of the Work in Van Voorst’s Books. The sale was very limited, and we should say the publication would result in considerable loss to the Author.

Presumably, “Mr Van Voorst’s Books” were his business ledgers, unfortunately no

longer in the Oliver & Boyd archive. This new information not only confirms the suspicion that *The Flora* was not a commercial success (see Williams 2017, p. 20) but also explicitly reveals Van Voorst's true involvement in its publication and clearly explains the fate of the stock remaining after Lowe's death. There is no record of any sale of Lowe's library or his own publications in the register of natural-history auction sales by Chalmers-Hunt (1976), but the sale including Lowe's library may be found advertised in the *London Evening Standard* of 19 June 1875 (p. 8) thus: "MESSRS SOTHEBY, WILKINSON, and HODGE ... will SELL by AUCTION... on Monday, June 21, and Two Following Days... the LIBRARIES of the late Rev. Richard Thomas Lowe ... and of other clergymen, deceased...." Various miscellaneous works are listed in this advertisement, but no personal ownership of any particular books is indicated, and none of Lowe's own publications is specifically mentioned.

Lowe bequeathed his books and manuscripts to his wife and executrix, Catharine Maria Lowe, but there is no special mention in his will of his own unsold publications.⁴ Since Catharine was drowned with her husband, Lowe's only surviving executor was his friend Thomas Vernon Wollaston, who was personally granted administration of the will. Wollaston therefore was solely responsible for the disposal of Lowe's remainder letterpress, which was most probably held in Van Voorst's warehouse rather than at Lowe's home.

The Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge auction

As previously noted, Quaritch was certainly in possession of the remaining stock of *The Flora* by 1884, but hitherto it has remained an open question as to how and when he acquired it. In view of the auctioning of Lowe's library



Figure 2. Bernard Alexander Christian Quaritch (1819–1899). Photographic portrait dated "between 1850 & 1860–1863," courtesy of Bernard Quaritch Limited®.

by Sotheby's, it is relevant that there was a close relationship between Sotheby's and Quaritch, as described in an online history of the auctioneers, although it is not implied that Quaritch would thereby have gained any advantage in their public auctions:

Under the leadership of John Sotheby [after 1778], the auction house expanded its activities beyond books for the first time, including the sale of prints, medals, coins, and rare antiquities. The company's staff also expanded, and, in 1842, Sotheby's senior accountant, John Wilkinson, was permitted to purchase a 25 percent share in the partnership. In 1861,

the last member of the Sotheby family died, and Wilkinson took over as the company's leader. Three years later, Wilkinson promoted another long-time employee, Edward Grose Hodge, and changed the enterprise's name to Sotheby, Wilkinson, and Hodge, the name it would carry for the next 60 years. In the late 19th century, Sotheby's dominated the book trade of London. Key to this success were the activities of Bernard Quaritch, a book dealer who purchased the property of such prominent figures of the day as Disraeli and Gladstone, both British prime ministers, and other leading cultural and political figures. Quaritch maintained a high profile, bringing free publicity and renown to Sotheby's and helping the company to maintain its preeminent spot in the industry.

[Excerpt from <http://www.fundinguniverse.com/company-histories/someby-s-holdings-inc-history/>, accessed 23 December 2017.]

Fortunately, the records of the purchasers, and prices fetched, at the sale of Lowe's library on 21 June 1875 are preserved in the British Library.⁵ The stock of *The Flora* comprised lot 138, which was bought by Quaritch for £19. 10s. Its detailed description facilitates an estimation of the total number of remaining copies of each part; a very few were cased as volume I, but others were in wrappers or in the main as letterpress sheets. Thus, the lot consisted of five cloth-cased copies of volume I (comprising parts 1–5), and many copies of the individual parts either "sewed" (i.e., in wrappers) or "in quires" (i.e., as unsewn sheets, presumably including the title-page and dedication for volume I). Of the parts in various forms (including the first 5, cased as volume I), there were: part I, 7 sewed and 366 in quires (= 378 copies in total); part II, 41 sewed and 367 in quires (= 413 in total); part III, 12 sewed and 409 in quires (= 426 in total); part IV, 15 sewed and 414 in quires (= 434 in total); part V, 17 sewed and 413 in quires (= 435 in total); and part I of volume II, 7 sewed and 450 in quires (= 457 in total). It may therefore be calculated that Quaritch bought a total of

2,543 parts of *The Flora* (cased, sewed or in quires), for which he paid an average of 1.84 pence per part. In the contemporary currency, that would have been equivalent to just over one penny and three farthings (1¾d.) per part.

Sales of *The Flora*

The initially poor commercial success of *The Flora*, despite its undoubted scientific value, seems likely to have been due to a number of factors, including its very slow rate of publication (only 6 parts between 1857 and 1872); its lack of illustrations; its limited biogeographical coverage (Madeiran Archipelago only); and the relatively high cost of each part⁶ (see Williams 2017, p. 20). The numbers of copies remaining of each part (cased, sewed or quires) when Quaritch bought them at auction are directly correlated with their publication dates (see above). Thus, assuming that each part was printed in equal quantities, fewer copies of each successive part had been sold than of the preceding part. From the calculations made above, it seems probable that a minimum of 600 copies of each part was printed.⁷ If that could be proved to be true, estimates of sales achieved would be 222 of part I; 187 of part II; 174 of part III; 166 of part IV; 165 of part V; and 143 of volume II, part I (see Tab. 1). However, those figures would certainly include some copies presented to friends and colleagues (see Williams 2017, pp. 7–8). These data therefore corroborate Oliver & Boyd's contention that "The sale was very limited" (see previously).

The following conservative estimates of numbers of known copies of *The Flora* in national, specialist and private libraries were derived from a worldwide census. At least 107 libraries and private individuals, mainly in Europe and North America, possess copies of *The Flora* (Tab. 2). Those sources account for 31 copies of the complete volume I, issued

Table 1. Numbers of copies of each part (all published) of *A Manual Flora of Madeira* accounted for in worldwide academic libraries, based on an estimated print-run of 600 copies.

Part nos.	Estimated no. of copies printed	Copies bought by Quaritch	Estimated nos. sold or gifted	Minimum nos. of copies in census	Estimated nos. unaccounted for
I (vol. I)	600	378	222	124	98
II (vol. I)	600	413	187	117	70
III (vol. I)	600	426	174	117	57
IV (vol. I)	600	434	166	117	49
V (vol. I)	600	435	165	117	48
I (vol. II)	600	457	143	107	36

Table 2. Numbers of copies of *A Manual Flora of Madeira* in its various states, cased or in wrappers, held by 107 academic and private libraries worldwide.

	Vol. I only	Vol. I plus part I of vol. II	Part I of vol. I	Part I of vol. II
United Kingdom	9	20	1	6
Mainland Europe	20	18	5	15
USA & Canada	2	44	1	0
Rest of world	0	4	0	0
Total no. of copies	31	86	7	21

by Van Voorst; 86 copies of volume I cased with part I of volume II, issued by Quaritch; 7 copies of part I alone, issued by Van Voorst; and 21 copies of part I of volume II alone, also issued by Van Voorst. In terms of the 6 parts published, they account for 124 copies of the letterpress for part I; 117 for part II; 117 for part III; 117 for part IV; 117 for part V; and 107 for part I of volume II (Tab. 1).

Clearly, since these findings cannot be regarded as comprehensive, the data represent minimum numbers of copies still extant in libraries or in private hands worldwide; others will inevitably have been lost or destroyed. Nevertheless, the data are entirely consistent with an estimate of at least 600 copies having been printed. Since presently traceable copies fall short of the previously calculated minimum numbers of sales and

gifts, a significant proportion of the edition still remains unaccounted for (see Tab. 1).

Commercial success of *The Flora*: Van Voorst and Quaritch compared

While Lowe was still alive, Van Voorst was selling *The Flora* on his behalf at 3s. 6d. (three shillings and sixpence) per part (see Williams 2017, pp. 10–12); and the five parts of volume I cased in cloth-boards sold for 15s. (fifteen shillings), a saving to clients of 2s. 6d. compared with buying the parts singly and with no extra charge for the boards (see Williams 2017, p. 20).

It is of interest to analyse Quaritch's business strategy, following his purchase of the remainder stock at auction in June 1875. In a somewhat condescending "Address to my

Customers" (Quaritch 1880a), he stated,

My Catalogues will be issued for the future as during the past; but as I am desirous of effecting more rapid sales than formerly, the prices of the books will, in many instances, be reduced BELOW THE MARKET VALUE.

Amongst *thinking* book-collectors (that is,—men who are capable of appreciating the wide difference between fine and ordinary copies of books) I have always had the reputation of being moderate in my prices, and this reputation I mean further to extend.

On the receipt of a Catalogue, the *judicious* collector will instantly secure such works as he wants, or may want, while the *supine* or occasional buyer is obliged, at the moment when he needs a book, to grope about for it blindly, and usually then without success.

I would recommend my customers to make selections from my Lists *at once* and then to destroy the latter. I expect to receive an order—however small—from gentlemen to whom my catalogues are sent, as an equivalent for the pains I take in collecting and describing the books which are offered them to choose from. It is of little satisfaction to me to be told that my catalogues are carefully preserved for future reference.

Whatever of my ORDINARY STOCK is not sold within a year will be dispersed by auction or otherwise.

Thus, clearly not one to allow stock to lay idle for very long, less than three weeks after the auction of Lowe's library, Quaritch had a list of the most saleable items prepared. In his "A ROUGH LIST OF IMPORTANT AND VALUABLE BOOKS ... offered for Sale at the affixed Cash Prices" may be found "Books from the Library of the late REV. RICHARD THOMAS LOWE," comprising items 37–183 (Quaritch 1875, pp. 6–11). Item 83 is *The Flora*, priced at 5s. for a volume I in cloth with part I of volume II in wrappers ("sewed"). That would represent a huge profit on a set of the six parts (bought for a total of 10½d.) of 471%; the cased volume I would have been one of the five included in Sotheby's auction (see previously), the cost being calculated as if it were five separate parts. However, it is difficult

to understand why the same combination of volume I in cloth plus the odd part of volume II is also advertised on page 22 of the same list at 9s., yielding an even more astonishing profit of 929%. Nevertheless, those retail prices to clients still represent a considerable saving on Van Voorst's original retail prices of 15s. for volume I alone, and 3s. 6d. for the odd part I of volume II.

Further information on Quaritch's handling of *The Flora* has fortuitously come to light as a result of his becoming, in 1879, *persona non grata* with the United States Treasury, who accused him of fraudulent importation of books ostensibly over 20 years old into the United States of America. Qualifying books would have been duty-free, but the Treasury regarded them actually to be of more recent printing (Blanck 1966, p. 13). The details and outcome of this matter are not of importance here, but because Quaritch was required to open his business records for inspection, the prices that he was asking from various American booksellers in August 1878 became public knowledge (Quaritch 1880b, pp. 34, 36, 46). Thus by 1878 he had had some sets of all six published parts cased: "Vols. I and II part 1, sm. 8vo. *all that ever will be published, over 700 pages, in 1 vol.* (sells 15s), cloth 1868–71" (Quaritch 1880b, p. 46). Those copies, cased with part I of volume II, were offered wholesale either at 2s. or at 2s. 6d. Hence, the profit margin for Quaritch's sales to the book-trade then would have been circa 45–82% (based on the auction-cost of 1¾d. per part, and allowing for casing at a nominal 6d. per copy). The claim that volume I and part I of volume II cased together "sells 15s" was disingenuous because such volumes were not available until Quaritch himself had bought Lowe's remainder stock in 1875, and he apparently never sold them for more than 6s.⁸

In 1881 we again see *The Flora*, "Vols. I and II part 1, sm. 8vo. *all that ever will be published, over 700 pages, in 1 vol.*," included as item 962

in Quaritch's extensive *Catalogue of Works on Natural History, Physics, Mathematics, and Other Sciences*, this time at a price to retail customers of 6s. (Quaritch 1881, p. 160). Again allowing for an outlay of 6d. for the casing, this would represent a massive profit of circa 336% on what he had paid for the auction stock. Quaritch's continual changes of price for the whole work during a period of six years apparently reflected his various estimations of what particular trade or retail markets would stand.

Most of the cloth-cased copies of *The Flora* sold by Quaritch must have comprised all of the six published parts, since he had obtained only five copies of the completed volume I at Sotheby's auction (see previously). The consolidated volume I, i.e., parts I–V only, were therefore sold almost entirely by Van Voorst as probably were most of the individual parts in wrappers. The data in Table 2 further suggest that:

1. When Van Voorst had parts I–V cased as the consolidated volume I, he apparently sold circa 94% of the issue in Europe and the remaining circa 6% in North America.
2. When Quaritch issued cased sets of all six published parts, he apparently sold circa 177% more of those consolidated parts than Van Voorst had sold of volume I. Circa 44% of Quaritch's volume were sold to Europe and circa 56% to the rest of the world, of which circa 92% went to North America.
3. The purchasers of the very few copies now to be found of part I alone (only seven, of which six are in Europe) apparently did not continue buying the parts as they appeared. Furthermore, it seems likely that most of the 21 copies of part I of volume II, all currently in European libraries (which hold 29 copies of volume I alone), were sold by Van Voorst before Lowe died. Quaritch seems unlikely to have offered that sixth part separately after he had issued the complete consolidated set, except perhaps

to some clients who already possessed Van Voorst's original volume I alone.

A contingency table contrasting the present numbers of copies of Van Voorst's and Quaritch's issues of consolidated volumes in libraries in Europe and in the rest of the world may be constructed (Tab. 3a). For statistical analysis, the data for North America and the rest of the world (excluding Europe) must be pooled to avoid a value of zero in one of the contingency-table cells. Then the difference between the present geographical distributions of the two volumes is demonstrated by a χ^2 test to be highly statistically significantly different ($\chi^2 = 26.63$; 2 d.f.; $P << 0.0001$). The null hypothesis that numbers of each volume are distributed in the same proportions throughout the world must be rejected. Since the probability that the difference occurs by chance is so extremely low, the above conclusions about relative sales by Van Voorst and Quaritch are very strongly supported.

In Table 3b the same data are compacted even further to demonstrate the differences in distribution of copies between the whole of Europe (including Macaronesia) and the rest of the world. Fisher's Exact Test (two-tailed) confirms that the excess of volume I in Europe and the excess of the combined volume I with volume II outside Europe are highly significantly different ($P << 0.0001$). Those differences in geographical distributions of the two consolidated volumes hence result from the temporally different commercial activities of Van Voorst and Quaritch.

Quaritch's greater success than Van Voorst's in selling *The Flora* was most probably due to a combination of his greatly reduced prices for the remainder stock and his customarily aggressive marketing strategy (Quaritch 1880a, 1880b). Interestingly, some years earlier, the equanimous Van Voorst had revealed, in a letter dated 7 January 1861, to Robert Hudson,⁹ his ironic view of Quaritch's

Table 3a. The present worldwide geographical distributions of library copies of the two states of consolidated volumes of *A Manual Flora of Madeira*.

	UK	Mainland Europe	USA & Canada	Rest of world	Totals
Vol. I only	9	20	2	0	31
Vol. I plus part I of vol. II	20	18	44	4	86
Totals	29	38	46	4	117

Table 3b. The compacted geographical distributions (from Tab. 3a) of library copies of the two states of consolidated volumes of *A Manual Flora of Madeira*.

	Europe	Rest of world	Totals
Vol. I only	29	2	31
Vol. I plus part I of vol. II	38	48	86
Totals	67	50	117

competitive disposition: “My dear Sir, The Supplements sent herewith will complete your Yarrell’s Birds & Fishes. M^r. Quarritch [*sic*] does me honour by putting them into his Catalogue at such noble prices.”

Methodology: Provisos and caveats

In the worldwide survey of copies of *The Flora* described herein, as many national, academic and private libraries as possible were investigated. The major sources were Williams (2017); responses to a request to members of the Society for the History of Natural History (<http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/hist-nat-hist.html>); Google Books (accessed 28 April 2018); Biodiversity Heritage Library (accessed 28 April 2018); HathiTrust Digital Library (accessed 28 April 2018); COPAC (Consortium of Online Public Access Catalogues, accessed 28 April 2018); WorldCat-OCLC (Online Computer Library Center, accessed 3 May 2018); and direct requests to other libraries.

However, the databases of COPAC and OCLC are inevitably not comprehensive, nor can copies in private hands be fully accounted for. Hence, the data in COPAC and OCLC were complemented where possible by holdings of non-contributing libraries, and in addition certain individual botanists were queried about personal copies. Because of the misleading current practice of copy-cataloguing by most libraries (see Williams 2012, p. 82), it was necessary to obtain from each individual library the exact description of the copy or copies that they hold. Unfortunately, several libraries did not respond, while some others reported that their catalogued copies were missing, and so could not be examined; in such cases only the catalogue entries could be relied upon.

Since COPAC includes only British universities, and also OCLC is heavily biased towards northern-hemisphere libraries, specific Australasian databases were consulted to complement those results: (1) For Australian universities, <https://www.ansl.org.au/>.

AustralianUniversities.com.au; (2) For the National and State Libraries in Australasia, <https://www.nsla.org.au>; (3) For New Zealand universities, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/list_of_universities_in_New_Zealand. However, only one copy of *The Flora* was traced in Australasia, actually in New Zealand. Furthermore, of the South African academic libraries consulted, only one holds a copy of *The Flora*. Libraries of Macaronesia (Madeiran, Canarian and Azorean archipelagos) were consulted individually, and their copies are included in the records for Europe. Hence, the sampling of geographical distributions was as complete as is reasonably possible, although the actual numbers of surviving copies are doubtless still under-estimated.

Regarding the *present* geographical distributions of copies in libraries (Tab. 2, 3a and 3b), it is cautioned that the data do not necessarily reflect the *original* worldwide sales of *The Flora* by Van Voorst and Quaritch. Many of the libraries consulted were not in existence during the period when *The Flora* was published; and unfortunately the accession date and provenance of existing copies are in general unobtainable. Nevertheless, whilst acknowledging that there would have been transferences of copies from original owners to present libraries since they were first sold about a century-and-a-half ago, it is suggested that the data may still reasonably reflect their original *continental* distributions.

Quaritch's unrecorded cloth-case style

Williams (2017, p. 16) described four styles of cloth cases (**a–d**) for *The Flora*, attributing them all to the original publisher, Van Voorst. However, the recent information gleaned from Sotheby's auction records and Quaritch's catalogues reveals that the only cloth-cased copies that Van Voorst can have issued were of the first five parts comprising

volume I, styles **a** and **b**, before Lowe's death in April 1874. Part I of volume II was also issued by Van Voorst but only in wrappers in 1872. Five copies of volume I dated 1868, but no volumes containing all of the six parts, were included in the Sotheby's auction of 1875. It must, therefore, have been Quaritch who was responsible for casing complete sets of all six parts in cloth-styles **c** and **d**, misleadingly dated 1868,¹⁰ which previously I had incorrectly attributed to Van Voorst (see Williams 2017, p. 16).

During research for the present paper, another rather uncommon Quaritch cloth-style for casing all six parts was discovered on copies at the Universities of Edinburgh (UK), Oklahoma (USA) and Yale (USA), and the Museu Carlos Machado¹¹ in the Azores. It is here designated style **e** (see Fig. 3) and may be compared with styles **c** (Williams 2017, p. 16 and fig. 5) and **d** (Williams 2017, p. 16). The cloth is dark green "sand" cloth-grain (**Krupp San1**; see Krupp 2008). The front board has blind blocking, comprising an oval central device, the same as styles **c** and **d**; a single plain rule is at the head and tail; and there is an elaborate frame, 14 millimetres wide, with a small pendant square in each inner corner, and a small pendant triangle pointing outwards, midway on each inner side. The back board is the same as the front. Gilt lettering on the spine reads "MANUAL | FLORA | OF | MADEIRA. | [11 mm rule] | LOWE." with a distinctive gilt decorative band immediately below; decorative bands and multiple rules are in gilt at the head and tail (Fig. 3). The boards measure 196 × 111 millimetres. All edges are uncut. The text-block is circa 42 millimetres thick. Mason's advertisement is discarded; the last leaf is an integral Van Voorst advertisement; the endpapers are cream or off-white; there is no binder's ticket.

The spine-lettering of each of styles **c**, **d** and **e** spans 46 millimetres vertically but differs in

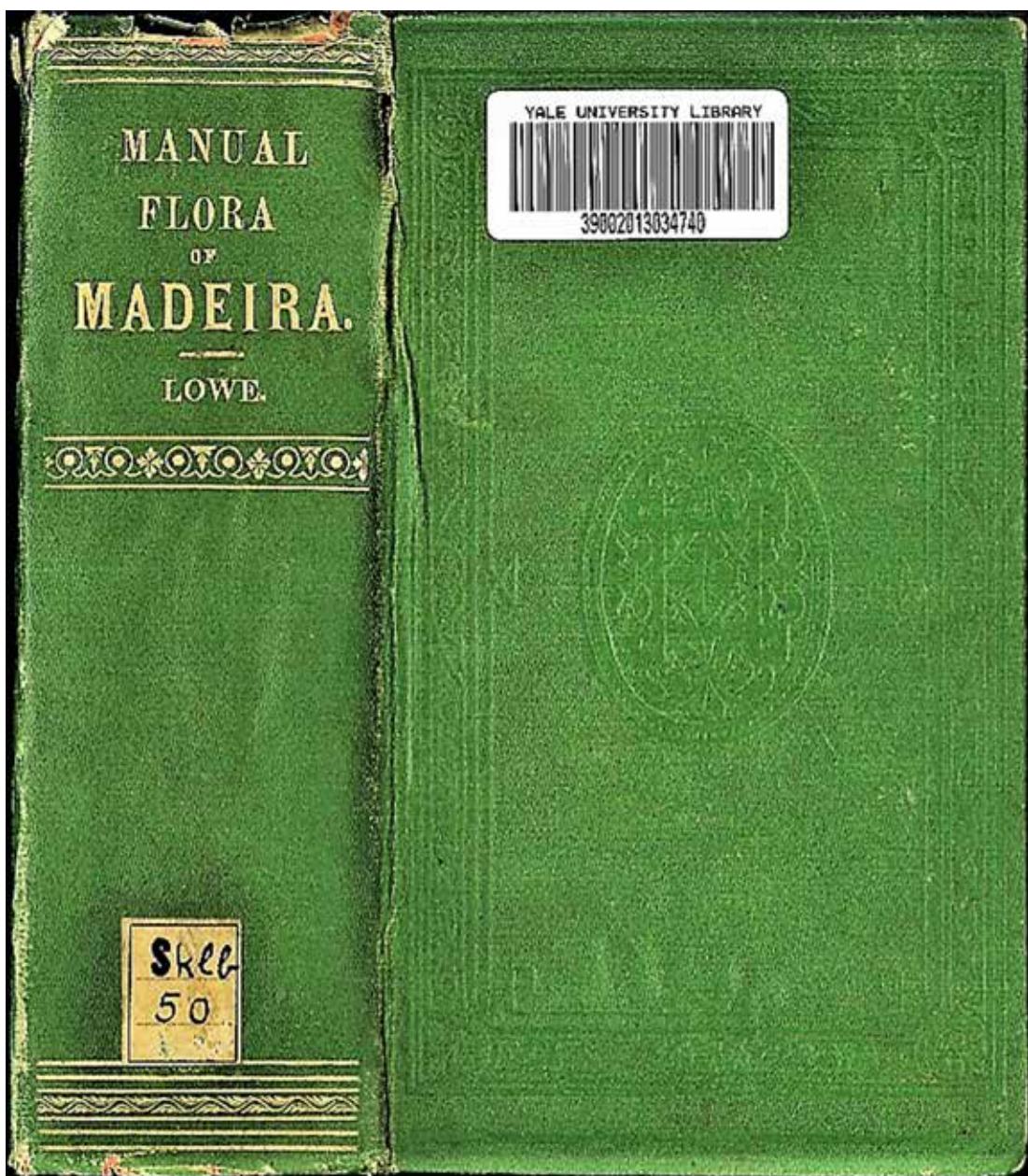


Figure 3. *A Manual Flora* of Madeira. Front board and spine of the consolidated volume I plus part I of volume II (Quaritch cloth-case, style **e**), courtesy of Yale University Library.

other respects (cf. Fig. 3 herein; and Williams 2017, p. 16 and fig. 5). The type-face of style **e** is bolder than that of styles **c** and **d**, although the word “MADEIRA” is only 45 millimetres

long (including serifs, but excluding the full-stop, which is lacking in styles **c** and **d**), compared with 48 millimetres long in styles **c** and **d**. Furthermore, letter “O” in the word

"OF" is a wrong fount in styles **c** and **d** but is correct in style **e**. Moreover, the plain rule above "LOWE" measures 9 millimetres in styles **c** and **d** but 11 millimetres in style **e**. Finally, "LOWE" is followed by a full-stop in style **e** but not in styles **c** and **d**.

Judging by his catalogues, Quaritch apparently never offered separate parts in wrappers for sale, with the exception of part I of volume II, included in his "Rough list" no. 28 (Quaritch 1875), which was before he had copies of it cased together with the five parts of volume I. Hence, all cased copies seen of part I of volume II are therefore in binder's or library cloth.

Conclusions and updates

1. *A Manual Flora of Madeira and the Adjacent Islands of Porto Santo and the Desertas* by Richard Thomas Lowe, previously thought to have been published by John Van Voorst at his own risk, was actually financed by Lowe himself. It is now shown herein that Van Voorst was only the selling-agent on commission and did not, therefore, own the warehoused remainder stock of *The Flora*, which remained unfinished after Lowe's death.
2. The stock left after Lowe's demise in 1874, previously thought to have been sold by Van Voorst directly to the bookseller Bernard Quaritch, was in fact auctioned in London by Sotheby, Wilkinson and Hodge on 21 June 1875 on the authority of Lowe's sole executor Thomas Vernon Wollaston. It was bought by Quaritch, who included it in a printed sales-list issued on 10 July 1875 and in further catalogues at least up to 1881.
3. During Lowe's lifetime, the initially rather poor sales of *The Flora* progressively declined with the publication of each part from 1857 to 1872. The enumeration in Sotheby's auction-catalogue of the

remaining stock acquired by Quaritch, corroborated by numbers of copies of the work now traceable worldwide, suggests that at least 600 copies of the sole edition were printed.

4. Information in Sotheby's catalogue and in Quaritch's trade-catalogues confirms that cased copies of volume I alone, in cloth-styles **a** or **b** (see Williams 2017) were issued by Van Voorst, perhaps early in 1869, since the latest possible publication date of part V was 31 December 1868 (Williams 2017, tab. 2). However, copies of volume I cased with the first part of volume II could not have been issued, as previously thought, by Van Voorst. The recently discovered exact date of Quaritch's acquisition of the letterpress sheets indicates that he must have had them cased at some time after July 1875 and at the very latest by August 1878. They comprise the cloth-styles designated **c** and **d** by Williams (2017) and a previously unrecorded style designated **e** and described herein.
5. Quaritch apparently achieved greater sales of *The Flora* than Van Voorst, presumably by a combination of more aggressive marketing in North America and heavily discounted prices.

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Notes

1. At this same auction Quaritch also acquired the remainder stock of the unfinished *A History of the Fishes of Madeira* (Lowe 1843–1860).
2. Oliver & Boyd's archive (Acc.5000) is now held by the National Library of Scotland.
3. Unfortunately, Clarke died before his “Cauda” could be published.
4. Lowe's will was proved at the Principal Registry in London on 18 December 1874.
5. See *Catalogue of the Libraries of the Late Rev. Richard Thomas Lowe... and of Other Clergymen, Deceased...* (1875); shelf-mark “S.C. Sotheby (1)” (British Library).
6. Reflecting this, it is perhaps significant that on 1 September 1868, when only the first four parts of *The Flora* had been published (see Williams 2017), Franz Thimm, a bookseller and publisher of Grosvenor Square, London, was already seeking second-hand, thus presumably cheaper, copies (Anonymous 1868).
7. It seems that, in the Victorian era, the total letterpress sheets of an edition were most often printed in multiples of 50. Assuming, in the present case, that possibly at least 600 copies of each part were printed leads to an estimate of fewer than 50 remaining copies of part I of volume II (that part with the least number accounted for). An estimate of only 550 copies would have resulted in a negative number of copies accounted for of part I of volume II, which is clearly impossible. However, there is no potential way of checking whether more than 600 were printed, unless the Taylor & Francis printers' archive, which was of such great value in a previous project (see Williams 2012, pp. 80–82) but is currently restricted of access, might again be freely opened by the St Bride Foundation, London, for research.
8. Van Voorst sold volume I alone for 15s. before Lowe died in April 1874 and then sold no more.
9. Letter in author's collection.
10. This is because Quaritch used the original title-pages that were printed by Van Voorst for volume I alone.
11. Also in the Museu Carlos Machado is a separate part I, bearing the label of the bookseller Friedrich Klincksieck, 11 rue de Lille, Paris, one of the agents in France (see also Williams 2017, p. 20).

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