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Abstract

Searches were carried out between 2015 and 2018 in several libraries of the University of Cambridge, England, for materials associated with botanists who had worked in Madeira during the 19th century. The Victorian botanists active in Madeira and of particular relevance here were Richard Thomas Lowe and his associates, Charles Morgan Lemann, James Yate Johnson, Nathaniel Haslope Mason and Francis Martin Norman. It was discovered that the 23 bundles of manuscripts recorded as present in the Cambridge University Herbarium Archives in 1967 had since been dispersed piecemeal, and some can be located now only with some difficulty or even not at all (8 of the 23). Some records of particular botanical manuscripts relevant to Madeira were found to be erroneous, incomplete or misattributed. Essential amendments to source records are therefore provided herein, and information on the present locations in Cambridge of the botanical manuscripts originally in the University Herbarium has been collated to assist scholars wishing to consult them in the future.

Introduction

My recent bibliographical research on the flora of Madeira (Williams 2016, 2017, 2018) has been focused on the Victorian naturalist Richard Thomas Lowe (1802–1874) and his associates, Charles Morgan Lemann (1806–1852), James Yate Johnson (1820–1900), Nathaniel Haslope Mason (fl.1850s) and Francis Martin Norman (1833–1918). Crucial to this work has been a search for relevant manuscripts in various libraries of Lowe’s alma mater, the University of Cambridge, England. Particular libraries investigated were as follows:

1. The Cambridge Philosophical Society (CPS; now housed in the Whipple Library, Department of History and Philosophy of Science);
2. The Department of Plant Sciences (DPS; formerly the Cambridge University Botany School, CUBS);
3. The Cambridge University Herbarium Archives (CUHA);
4. The Cory Library (Cambridge University Botanic Garden, CUBG);
5. Cambridge University Library (CUL).

Original sources of information

Since A List of the More Important Collections in the University Herbarium, Cambridge (Gilmour and Tutin 1933) provides records only of plant specimens, and no associated manuscript material is referenced, the earliest Cambridge source record for botanical manuscripts relevant to Madeira was found to be the roughly typed “LIST OF CONTENTS OF HERBARIUM ARCHIVES” currently held by the DPS (Fig. 1). This list, enumerating 23 labelled items (7 of them unnumbered) then in the CUHA, was signed off in September 1967 by “S.M.W.”, i.e., Stuart Max Walters (1920–2005), then director of the CUBG. Many of these items, identified by additional notes taped to the list (see Fig. 1), were translocated to CUL, where enquiries revealed the date of transfer to have been 5 August 1977 (Bowles, pers. comm., 31 January 2018).
Figure 1. List of contents of Cambridge University Herbarium Archives in 1967. Reproduced courtesy of the Department of Plant Sciences, University of Cambridge, with permission of Martin Walters, trustee of the estate of the late S. Max Walters.
In 1979 Dr. David E. Allen examined much of the content of this archive and recorded, in the *Newsletter of the Society for the Bibliography of Natural History*, the translocation to CUL of about half of the manuscripts that had originally been lodged with the CUHA. Anticipating, even two years after the 1977 transfer, that “it will be some while yet in any case before either collection has been incorporated or catalogued” (Allen 1979a, p. 8), he provided brief descriptions of some of the items transferred to CUL and of the portion of the archive retained by the then CUBS (now the DPS), pointing out the confusion that already existed then about the location of the dispersed contents of the CUHA. However, Allen’s (1979a, 1979b) notes, apparently made between May and November 1979 (judging by the newsletter dates), are not comprehensive. Although CUL has confirmatory records of most (but not all) of the translocated documents, in 2015 they still had not been incorporated in the current online catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the CUL (Bowles, pers. comm., 9 June 2015). Therefore, Allen's concerns about the effects of splitting up the original CUHA archive have proved, unfortunately, to be well founded, and errors remain in the present records of these items.

In view of the deficiencies in accuracy and completeness of the foregoing sources, the catalogue of *Natural History Manuscript Resources in the British Isles* by Bridson et al. (1980) is useful in confirming the identities of some of these archives. Even so, errors and lacunae remain, possibly because during the late 1970s the authors were in the process of gathering information around the time of the crucial translocations, which may have led to some fluidity of information. The most up-to-date record of the current holdings of the CUHA exists in the form of an unpublished electronic list (referred to hereinafter as Bartram’s list as it was compiled by Christine Bartram, curator of the CUHA until 2017; Gardiner, pers. comm., 8 March 2018). This list has been compared with currently unpublished information (Bowles, pers. comm., 31 January 2018) on most of the documents translocated from the CUHA to CUL in 1977–1978 (see Tab. 1).

**Current whereabouts of botanical manuscripts in Cambridge**

Table 1 herein records the items currently held by three libraries (CUHA, CUBS and CUL), collated with the published records of Allen (1979a, 1979b) and Bridson et al. (1980). Nothing relevant was discovered in the CPS (Kingham, pers. comm., 10 January 2018) and CUBG (Alexander, pers. comm., 5 June 2015) libraries. In Table 1 is presented a brief history and collation of archives, with their current whereabouts, tracing the translocations of CUHA items enumerated in the 1967 CUBS list. The unpublished list of the current 263 holdings of the CUHA (Bartram’s list; Gardiner, pers. comm., 8 March 2018) is much more extensive than the original CUBS list (see Fig. 1).

Of the 23 items on the original 1967 CUBS list, 7 are unnumbered (see Tab. 1). Recorded then as being retained for the herbarium were 8 items, of which 7 were confirmed to be present in 1979 (Allen 1979a), but only 3 of them (now divided into 21 entities) are currently identifiable in the holdings of CUHA (Bartram’s list). The remaining 15 items were apparently translocated to CUL (mostly to Western Manuscripts, but 3 to the University Archives), of which 7 were identified in 1979 (Allen 1979a); 12 (now divided into 16 items) can be traced in CUL at present (2018; Bowles, pers. comm., 31 January 2018).

It must be stressed that items not currently traceable in CUL or the CUHA are not necessarily lost. The failure to recognize them
Table 1. Correlation of identifiers and descriptions of manuscripts listed by CUBS, CUL, Allen (1979a, 1979b), Bridson et al. (1980) and CUHA. Bold type, the absence of which indicates that the item is currently not traced, indicates present locations of materials.

<table>
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<tr>
<td>1. “Correspondence of Mrs Merryfield [sic]; list of Australian and North American algae”</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Confirmed in CUBS</td>
<td>69.15. “MERRIFIELD, Mary P. List of Australian and North American algae; correspondence”</td>
<td>Not in Bartram’s list</td>
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<td>2. “Lindley’s notes on Quercus”</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Confirmed in CUBS</td>
<td>69.11. “LINDLEY, John. Notes on Quercus”</td>
<td>Not in Bartram’s list</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. “Babington’s notes on Rubi”</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Confirmed in CUBS</td>
<td>69.1. [part of] “notes on Rubi”</td>
<td>CGE7.8; CGE7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. “Babington’s correspondence (botanical)”</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Confirmed in CUBS</td>
<td>69.1. [parts of] “BABINGTON, Charles C. Botanical correspondence” [see Babington (1897)]; “Flora of Cambridgeshire, original record of localities, 1845–60, 3 volumes”</td>
<td>Not in Bartram’s list</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. “Babington’s Herbarium correspondence”, plus unnumbered “Darwin/ Babington letters”</td>
<td>MS Add.8182.</td>
<td>Confirmed to CUL</td>
<td>69.1. [parts of] “BABINGTON, Charles C. Botanical correspondence” [see Babington (1897)]; Also author’s annotated Flora of Cambridgeshire (1860) and Manual of British Botany (eds. 1-8, 1843-81); annotated Flora Cantabrigiensis (Relhan, ed. 3, 1820)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“C. C. Babington: correspondence.” Letters to Babington (including from Charles Darwin), 1 envelope</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>“Herbarium Appeal 1913”</td>
<td>Purportedly translocated to UA in CUL, but not found therein (2018)</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>“Henslow: Notes for Lectures and Botanical Correspondence”</td>
<td>MS Add.8177. “J. S. Henslow: letters to, 1 box”; MS Add.8178. “J. S. Henslow: notes for botanical lectures, 1 envelope”</td>
<td>Confirmed to CUL 69.7. “HENSLOW, John S.” (Catalogus biblioteca horti botanici Cantabrigiensis; notes for lectures; men attending botanical lectures 1828-91; botanical correspondence) [Actually in CUL by 1980]; annotated Flora Cantabrigiensis (Relhan, ed. 3, 1820) [a second copy]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>“Catalogue of the Genevier Herbarium”</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Confirmed in CUBS Not mentioned Not listed</td>
<td></td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>“Bunbury: Notes and Books on Herbarium”</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Confirmed in CUBS 69.5. “BUNBURY, Sir Charles J. F. Notes and notebook on herbarium” CGE3.1-9; CGE3.11; CGE3.12; CGE4.1-7</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>“Bunhill: Herbarium Notes”</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Not mentioned Not listed</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>“Lecture Syllabus: Hebenden 1747; Seward 1922”</td>
<td>Purportedly translocated to UA in CUL, but not found therein (2018)</td>
<td>Not mentioned Not listed</td>
<td></td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>“Nicholson correspondence &amp; MS account of visit to Crete”</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Confirmed in CUBS Not listed Correspondence: CGE10.1; box 28, not itemized. [No account of Crete]</td>
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CUL (1977 transfer): materials translocated from CUHA on 5 August 1977, except for “Henslow. Floral structures” transferred in May 1978 (see Fig. 1). CUL (1977 transfer) prefixes: UA = University Archives; MS = Western Manuscripts.
may be due to amendments to their labelling, precluding unequivocal identifications. Furthermore, the accession records for the University Archives in CUL only go back to 1978, and it is possible that some CUHA materials were entered into that collection with different names and descriptions from the original CUBS list (Bowles, pers. comm., 31 January 2018).

Provenances and attributions of some materials relevant to the Madeiran flora

The present account became necessary following attempts to discover manuscripts relevant to the flora of Madeira, particularly in connection with Richard Thomas Lowe and his associates. Research has revealed certain manuscripts with confusing provenances or misattributions. Notes are therefore provided here for the guidance of scholars who may wish to consult them in the future. For completeness, misattributions of some other manuscripts originally in the CUHA are also noted in Table 1.

My original search was specifically for a crucial manuscript purported to be R. T. Lowe’s completion of *A Manual Flora of Madeira*, issued in parts from 1857 but remaining unfinished on his death in 1874 (see Williams 2017, 2018). Such a manuscript was believed by Hansen (1974, p. 34) to exist in “an English university library.” Package 12 (“Lowe: MS Flora of Madeira”) in the CUBS list of 1967 initially seemed to be a promising candidate for that alleged manuscript; following its translocation to CUL, it is now designated MS Add.8183. It is apparently also the same entity as manuscript no. 69.12 (“LOWE, Richard T. Flora of Madeira”) of Bridson et al. (1980), who had located it earlier in the CUBS.

Disappointingly, the attributions of MS Add.8183 (= package 12 of the CUBS list, and item 69.12 of Bridson et al. 1980) to Lowe are ambiguous. Physically, the item is a bound volume, described inside as “Letters from R. T. Lowe & H. C. Watson about the flora of Madeira ex libris H. Gilbert-Carter June 1969”; it actually comprises five items (Williams, pers. obs.). MS Add.8183/1 and MS Add.8183/2 are letters from Lowe, to anonymous recipients, after his return to England from Madeira in 1852, when he resigned from his position as chaplain there (Newell 1931, p. 26). MS Add.8183/3 is a list entitled “Madeira indigenous & naturalized Plants”, described as “in Lowe’s hand”; it is headed “Dr C. Lemann”, the botanist Charles Morgan Lemann (Williams, pers. obs.). Comparison with an authenticated letter confirms that the list was written by Lemann himself, but no manuscripts at all by Lemann are recorded by Bridson et al. (1980). MS Add.8183/4 is a printed journal article published by Lowe (1856). MS Add.8183/5 is a letter from James Yate Johnson, addressed from Kew Green (where he was apparently visiting from Madeira), to Hewett Cottrell Watson (1804–1881), referring to a list of Madeiran plants made by Lemann, which Johnson was returning from loan; it is possible that MS Add.8183/3 is that actual list. Hence, MS Add.8183 comprises several manuscripts, not all by Lowe; but crucially it certainly does not include the elusive final manuscript of Lowe’s *A Manual Flora of Madeira*.

Nash (1990, p. 183) believed that Lowe’s notes for the remaining parts of *A Manual Flora of Madeira* had been kept in the CUBS but had disappeared some 20 years before. He was quite probably alluding to Hansen’s (1974) claim that such a manuscript had been discovered, but the present research strongly suggests that Lowe’s completion of his manual never existed in Cambridge; if it had, it would presumably have appeared on the 1967 CUBS list. In fact the manuscript believed by Hansen (1974) to be Lowe’s is now known to have been
by another botanist, Charles Baron Clarke (Williams 2018, p. 38; Williams et al. 2019).

Another misattribution of Madeiran material appears in Bartram’s list of the current holdings of the CUHA. Item CGE13.12 therein is described as “Lindley’s list of plants collected in Madeira by N. H. Mason 1855–57”, i.e., John Lindley (1799–1865). The manuscript is headed “Mason’s Madeira plants” and is an undated list of species comprising six foolscap pages (Williams, pers. obs.), which is not recorded by Bridson et al. (1980). It appears to be a trade list of Nathaniel Haslope Mason and, comparing it with one of his letters, is apparently in his handwriting, rather than Lindley’s.

My search also led to the discovery in the CUHA of item CGE13.6, “A Catalogue of all known Madeira Plants Indigenous & Naturalized”, compiled in 1866 by Francis Martin Norman. It is not included in the 1967 CUBS list, nor is it recorded by Bridson et al. (1980); an account was therefore provided by Williams (2016). In 1875 Norman lent this manuscript to J. Y. Johnson in Madeira (Williams 2016), believing that Johnson was preparing a comprehensive flora of Madeira to supersede Lowe’s incomplete work (see Norman 1889, p. 84). However, Johnson ultimately published only some brief botanical notes in a travel guide, Madeira, Its Climate and Scenery (Johnson 1885, pp. 216–234). Incidentally, this recently revived interest in Norman’s early botanical work facilitated the transfer in 2016 of his intact British herbarium in its original metal case (formed during 1872–1916) from Berwick to the Cambridge University Herbarium (see Williams 2016).

Acknowledgments

I thank Christine Alexander (Department of Plant Sciences, University of Cambridge) and Martin Walters (trustee of the estate of the late Dr. S. Max Walters) for their permission to publish Figure 1; Dr. Lauren M. Gardiner (Curator) for providing a copy of the unpublished current listing (Bartram’s list) of the CUHA; and Frank Bowles (Superintendent of the Manuscripts Reading Room, CUL) for retrieving the archives received by CUL from the CUHA during the 1970s. The valuable responses to my further enquiries of Dawn Kingham, Whipple Library, Department of History and Philosophy of Science, University of Cambridge; Christine Bartram, former curator of the CUHA; Christine Alexander; Dr. Lauren M. Gardiner; and Frank Bowles are also acknowledged.

Notes

1. The Natural History Museum, London, holds a microfilm of this item.
2. In fact MS Add.8183 contains no letters from H. C. Watson, but there is one to him from J. Y. Johnson. This small collection was once owned by H. Gilbert-Carter (1884–1969), who was the first scientific director of the CUBG from 1921 to 1950. The label date of June 1969 probably indicates when the five items were bound together before they were transferred to CUL.
3. From Lemann to George Bentham (1800–1884; G. Bentham Correspondence, vol. 6, folio 2222, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew).
5. What was previously known as the Berwickshire High School Herbarium (see Braithwaite 2011, 2012).

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Braithwaite, M. 2012. What can a vice-county recorder expect to learn from the study of herbaria? B.S.B.I. News 120: 50–53.


