

DOUGLAS JOHN CLARK



The sudden death of Douglas Clark at the age of 41, on 29 September, 1971, was a great blow to arachnology in Britain and a severe loss to his colleagues and many friends in our Society who had a very great affection for him. He began his professional life as an entomologist and was appointed to the staff of the British Museum (Natural History) as a Scientific Assistant in the Diptera Section of the Entomology Department in May of 1947, where he worked for eleven years, publishing four papers in *The Entomologist* on species he had found new to Britain. He began studying spider systematics in 1953 and the way in which he became interested in that group was characteristic. He and his wife had joined a friend, who was an arachnologist, for a day's collecting, but the friend, finding little, became depressed

and to cheer him up they abandoned their insects and all set about collecting spiders. The result was interesting and, as Doug Clark's interest never remained superficial for very long, he began to take spiders seriously. With some guidance from Dr. Bristowe and Mr. Locket he soon came to have a sound knowledge of the systematics and of the British species. This was about 1953; in October 1958 he was transferred to the Zoology Department of the Museum to succeed Mr. Browning in the Arachnida section and in July 1959 he was promoted to Experimental Officer.

He now set to work to re-organise what is probably the largest and most important single collection of spiders in the world, but a collection on which nothing serious had been done since the beginning of the century, and this work involved him in a great deal of identification. In addition he was preparing a type catalogue and his comments on the specimens are an important contribution, especially as types had often not been designated in time past and such catalogues are very badly needed at the present time.

He also assumed general responsibility for other macro-arachnid orders, dealt with enquiries, requests for loans, determinations, comparisons and so forth. His wide knowledge of the biology and systematics of Arachnida now gained him the respect of workers all over the world and in 1963 he was made British correspondent for the Centre Internationale de Documentation Arachnologique. His knowledge of spiders of the world was at the time of his death unsurpassed in this country.

In the sphere of public relations he was as conscientious as in every other; he always set himself to identify any specimen brought to him and would pursue such questions relentlessly, as not a few members of our Society remember with gratitude. The last person to seek publicity, when television came his way he carried off the interview with quiet distinction.

Research workers from other countries, as well as from our own, acknowledge his help in preparing

innumerable papers, and the debt many of us owe him for obtaining specimens and direction about the libraries in search of references is incalculable and very great.

As well as his work in the department he developed a research interest in the Salticidae during the early 1960's and had compiled notes particularly of the West African and St. Helena fauna, a study which took him to visit Paris and also the Museum at Tervuren to work for Professor Benoit. It is particularly tragic that this work was cut short, for he alone had any great knowledge of the African salticid fauna; his notes, comments on type-material, sketches and completed drawings show the deep interest he came to have in the subjects of this study, and also his reluctance to come to hard and fast conclusions. The multiplicity of forms appalled him at times and he was dissatisfied with existing attempts at their classification; but his policy was to collect the data, and chance remarks suggested that his ideas regarding the family had begun to take definite shape in his mind. His knowledge of its synonymy was probably unique and was freely given for some of the British species in the preparation of the third volume of Locket and Millidge *British Spiders*, in which a number of his discoveries will be published for the first time. He also made available for that purpose some extremely interesting and suggestive observations in the field as well as in the laboratory, on the relationship between the lycosid species *Pardosa arenicola* (Cambridge) and *P. agricola* (Thorell) and also between *P. agrestis* and *P. purbeckensis* (F. Cambridge).

Doug was a very good critic with whom to discuss anything new. He would always be aware of what had been done and was being done on the subject and any judgement he gave would be very soundly based. On the other hand, he was reluctant to commit himself and, knowing that further information would probably cause him to change his view, he always preferred to await results, the fruits of his own investigations and those of others. Consequently it was extremely difficult to get papers and articles out of him, for at that point his interest seemed to stop; and never did anyone have less regard for his own reputation in print, his interests lay wholly in the subject. It is then not surprising that on his sudden and unexpected death, incompleting notes of all sorts

are available but few near the manuscript stage.

Some of these notes have addenda which show how his mind worked when trying to fit his discoveries into the accepted framework, and reveal a most interesting attitude to biological theories. He found it difficult to bring himself to regard a hypothesis as a necessary, if temporary, scaffolding for building a more complete thought structure. His thinking was characterised by humility and by a strength based on direct knowledge, the essential and necessary incompleteness of biological theory always bothered him. Perhaps much of his philosophy lies in a short paragraph at the end of a series of meditations arising out of some questions of synonymy, which we quote with Mrs. Clark's permission: "It is not fashionable to enquire what the ultimate purpose of knowledge is. In the case of the study of living creatures surely it is to discover ourselves and in so doing recover an identity with the rest of nature".

Away from the Museum he was a very good naturalist with a wide knowledge and was an ideal companion in the field, never obtruding himself but missing nothing. A very ardent collector, he would persist long after other members of his party had tired physically and mentally. He loved the sun-drenched stony places in France and the Mediterranean islands, watching for Salticids and turning over rocks hour after hour or digging out trap-door spiders. He knew a lot about these and other mygalomorphs and collected them extensively, and he was excited by the prospect that Corsica might have something new to him. There are still a number of live mygalomorphs from Paraguay in his room and one monster he reared from the egg has lived in his care for exactly ten years, during which time it has moulted 15 times.

His interests had started with butterflies which he hunted on the downs behind Portsmouth where he lived as a boy, since his father was in the Navy, and in time he developed strong interests in particular groups, such as the carabid beetles and some of the Diptera families, especially the Tachinidae and Sarcophagidae. In more recent years he had spent much of his holidays travelling in Europe in search of spiders; his wife always accompanied him on these occasions and he used to say "It's she who finds them". In France they visited the Pyrenees

Orientales, Arles-sur-Tech, Vernet and also Longeville in the Vendée to see Mons. J. Denis and collect on the dunes. They went to Majorca on three occasions, Minorca, Elba and also the Austrian Tirol, and brought back a great deal of valuable material.

But spiders were by no means his whole life for he was a man of many interests and studied several subjects other than spiders quite intensively. He had built up a cactus collection of 223 species (now to be housed in the well known *Exotic Collection* at Worthing) and he was an authority on them. He read a lot of history, especially of the Napoleonic era, of which he had a considerable knowledge. (It was not entirely due to the spider fauna that the Clarks included Elba in their travels and were about to visit Corsica).

Music fulfilled a need he always had and was his chief relaxation. It was said that he found that the music of Delius achieved for him the essence of Nature in sound, and an especially touching and understanding tribute was paid to his memory by a few friends who formed a quartet and played some of his favourite music before his funeral service.

Tributes to his memory have been collected at the suggestion of his colleagues at the British Museum (Natural History). The Society has warmly welcomed this gesture and members felt it would also be useful to draw attention to the existence and extent of his unpublished work in the form of a catalogue. The original notes are in the care of the British Museum (Natural History), and by arrangement with the Keeper of Zoology, Dr.J.G.Sheals, the Society has a facsimile in its library.

The Society wishes to acknowledge the help given by the Museum authorities in the preparation of this tribute, for access to, and permission to use material, and to authors for permission to reproduce excerpts from letters.

Excerpts from various letters

From a letter to Mr G. H. Locket, from Professor P. L. G. Benoit of the Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren, Belgium.

"... Comme vous ma femme et moi ont été

touchés par le brusque décès de Doug Clark. A travers nos relations professionnelles nous étions en effet devenus amis et familialement liés. Le fait mérite d'être mentionné car vous savez combien dans notre milieu il est rare de pouvoir dire "collègues et néanmoins amis".

Je crois que je connaissais relativement bien Doug, bien que sa timidité innée conditionnée davantage encore par une réserve toute britannique, faisait qu'il ne se donnait pas facilement aux autres.

Je puis cependant vous dire que Doug avait des connaissances insoupçonnées dans le domaine des Salticides africains. Le grand reproche que je lui faisais toujours était de ne pas publier suffisamment ce qu'il savait, . . .

Précédé par sa réputation de spécialiste des Salticides africains, notre Musée l'a invité en 1967, afin de venir mettre de l'ordre dans nos collections de Salticidae. En deux semaines et aidé par son épouse, il a fait un travail d'une efficacité extraordinaire dont le résultat est toujours présent. Grâce à lui, nous disposons maintenant d'une des plus belles collections du monde dans ce groupe.

Il possédait une capacité de travail extraordinaire et un pouvoir de concentration très élevé, il m'est arrivé de lui parler pendant qu'il travaillait . . . après 3 ou 4 minutes je m'apercevais qu'il ne m'entendait pas et qu'il ne soupçonnait même pas ma présence.

Au moment de son décès, il mettait la dernière main à l'étude des Salticides recueillis par les deux missions de notre Musée à l'île de Sainte-Hélène. Je me chargerai de faire paraître le manuscrit à titre posthume dans la suite des volumes "La faune terrestre de l'île de Sainte-Hélène" que notre Musée publie."

Part of letter sent to the British Museum (Nat. Hist.) by Prof. Dr Max Vachon, Secrétaire général, Centre International de Documentation Arachnologique.

"C'est avec beaucoup de tristesse que j'ai appris le décès prématuré de notre Collègue, le Dr Clark. Son aide précieuse et sa connaissance des spécimens d'Arachnides conservés au British Museum étaient pour nous d'un grand prix. Il fut par ailleurs le Correspondant britannique de notre Centre International de Documentation et il a toujours accompli cette tâche avec beaucoup de dévouement."

From a letter to the British Museum (Nat. Hist.) from Dr. R. E. Crabill, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C., U.S.A.

"... Doug Clark is gone. Not for many years have I had sadder news. What does one say? I don't know. It's all been said before of good and kindly men so many times. He was that and more. I value having known him. I shall miss him."

Extract from letter to Mr K. H. Hyatt, British Museum (Nat. Hist.), from Fr F. Chrysanthus, Netherlands.

"A few days ago I received your letter announcing the death of Mr Clark; the news startled me. I am sure that this is a loss for your Museum and for Arachnology as a whole since he was one of the very few connoisseurs of Salticids. Moreover he was very helpful for his colleagues as I experienced during my work in your Museum in 1963 and during several years in my correspondence with him. I will always remember him with gratitude."

From a letter to Mrs Clark from Mr. H. Oldroyd of the Museum.

"It is a long time now since he left the Diptera Section but he is still a big part of the post-war history of the Section. In his day he had to struggle along single-handed, and the group of people who run the Section now owe a great deal to Doug for what he achieved in the collection. I remember him personally with affection and I can't tell you how sorry I am for you to be left without him at such an early age..."

Extract from a letter from Dr H. L. Stahnke, Arizona State University, to Mr K. H. Hyatt, British Museum (Nat. Hist.).

"During our visit in 1961 Mrs Stahnke and I learned to both respect and appreciate Mr Clark a great deal. ... I personally will miss him a great deal because he was so very kind in replying to my numerous inquiries and requests."

From a letter from Mrs J. Pope who works in the Childrens' Section of the British Museum (Nat. Hist.) to Mrs Clark.

"I cannot claim to have known him well, though when I bothered him for identifications of specimens, or the apparently simple but often truly complex questions that often came my way, he was always among the most patient of people in the Museum. He greeted the sight of animals taken to him for identification with the enthusiasm which made one feel that his was a great love of the world around."

Excerpt from Monthly Notes on the Exotic Collection of Cacti-Succulents and other Exotic Plants.

"Douglas Clark had been a member of *The Exotic Collection* for a number of years ... It had been his wish that his collection (of cacti) ... came here where it would be looked after. As a result his collection was brought here late in 1971 where some of the best plants will be displayed together. His particular interests were with the *Rebutias*, *Lobivias* and *Echinopsis*."

Catalogue of the Unfinished Work of D. J. Clark

It was felt that it would be useful to make known the amount of work left behind by D. J. Clark at his death. Unfortunately, he committed very little of his knowledge to paper, carrying most of it in his head, the sum and extent of his knowledge being, as it were, synthesised into his identification of the

arachnid collections at the British Museum (Natural History) in London, at the museums at Paris and Tervuren, and also the collections sent to him for naming. This named material is perhaps the greatest gift he has left to future workers.

Although the following list of species which he mentions in his notes seems extensive, the notes themselves are brief, dealing mainly with his own suggested synonymies or relationships, one species

with another, or perhaps simply stating that they are species seen by him. However, his views may be of use, particularly to those working on the Salticidae, and therefore his notes and figures are housed in the Arachnida Section of the British Museum (Natural History) where they may be consulted. The list has been taken from an index, compiled since his death by his wife, which also states the place where the notes can be found. They were either written by him in his notebook, or in his own interleaved copy of Berland & Millot's 1941 paper on the spiders of French West Africa, or are to be found in the files or sometimes are notes written on drawings.

He had made quite a number of figures, mainly of palps and epigynes; some finished ink drawings, some only in pencil. Unfortunately, many have no notes to go with them, but they are well labelled including the locality and collection of the specimens. Quite a number are from Simon's collection in Paris, which he worked on in 1965, and some of which he later

borrowed and was still working on at his death.

A paper on Simon's African Salticidae has been compiled from these notes and drawings, and will appear in a future issue of the Bulletin. Those species included in this paper are marked with an asterisk (*) in the following lists.

Work was well advanced on the Salticidae of St. Helena. The following extract is taken from a letter from Prof. P.L.G.Benoit, who has undertaken to publish the manuscript posthumously. It is understood that this will shortly be published by the Tervuren Museum.

"En ce qui concerne son étude sur les Salticidae de l'île de Sainte-Hélène, et que la mort est venue interrompre brusquement, Doug y dénombre 10 espèces, dont 5 nouvelles pour la science. Il crée un nouveau genre avec 4 espèces endémiques dans l'île. Il n'a malheureusement pas eu le temps d'en faire le manuscrit."

Section 1. Genera and species referred to in notes

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| * <i>Aelurillus cristatopalpus</i> Simon | * <i>C. tristis</i> Berland & Millot | * <i>H. aurantiacus</i> Simon |
| * <i>A. guttiger</i> Simon | * <i>Dasycyptus dimus</i> Simon | <i>H. congoensis</i> de Lessert |
| <i>Afraftacilla</i> Berland & Millot | * <i>D. dubius</i> Berland & Millot | <i>H. moestus</i> Peckham |
| <i>A. risbeci</i> Berland & Millot | <i>Dictyna viridissima</i> (Walckenaer) | * <i>H. nigitaris</i> Simon |
| <i>A. similis</i> Berland & Millot | <i>Epiblemum uncigerum</i> (Simon) | * <i>H. nummularis</i> (Gerstäcker) |
| <i>Alfenus calamistratus</i> Simon | <i>Eugasmia? occidentalis</i> Denis | * <i>H. plexippoides</i> Simon |
| <i>A. chrysophaeus</i> Simon | * <i>Euophrys capicola</i> Simon | * <i>H. ventrilineatus</i> Strand |
| * <i>Almota quini</i> Peckham | * <i>E. purcelli</i> Peckham | <i>Jacobia brauni</i> Schmidt |
| <i>Asemonea</i> O.P.-Cambridge | * <i>Evarcha natalica</i> Simon | * <i>Klamathia flava</i> Peckham |
| * <i>A. puella</i> Simon | * <i>Festucula lineata</i> Simon | <i>Langona avara</i> Peckham |
| <i>Ballus? depressus</i> (Walckenaer) | <i>F. vermiformis</i> Simon | <i>L. bristowei</i> Berland & Millot |
| <i>B. piger</i> O.P.-Cambridge | <i>Gangus concinnus</i> (Keyserling) | * <i>L. maindroni</i> (Simon) |
| <i>Baryphas ahenus</i> Simon | * <i>Habrocestum albimanum</i> Simon | * <i>L. manicata</i> Simon |
| * <i>B. albicinctus</i> Berland & Millot | * <i>H. annae</i> Peckham | <i>L. senegalensis</i> Berland & Millot |
| * <i>B. eupogon</i> Simon | * <i>H. dotatum</i> Peckham | <i>Linus africanus</i> Simon |
| * <i>B. jullieni</i> Simon | * <i>H. flavimanum</i> Simon | * <i>Malloneta guineensis</i> Simon |
| * <i>B. micheli</i> Berland & Millot | <i>H. insignipalpe</i> Simon | <i>Maltecora janthina</i> Simon |
| <i>B. scintillans</i> Berland & Millot | * <i>H. laurae</i> Peckham | * <i>Marpissa balteata</i> C. L. Koch |
| * <i>Blaisea bicalcarata</i> Simon | * <i>H. luculentum</i> Peckham | * <i>Massagris</i> Simon |
| * <i>B. lyrata</i> Simon | <i>H. schinzi</i> Simon | <i>Menemerus bivittatus</i> (Dufour) |
| * <i>Brancus viciriaeformis</i> Berland & Millot | <i>'Habrocestum' rubrotypeatum</i> de Lessert | <i>M. brevibulbis</i> Thorell |
| * <i>Carrhotus scriptus</i> Simon | * <i>Harmochirus luculentus</i> Simon | <i>Mexcala elegans</i> Peckham |
| * <i>C. semiaurantiacus</i> Simon | <i>Hasarius adansoni</i> (Savigny & Audouin) | * <i>Mithion hesperius</i> Simon |
| * <i>C. singularis</i> Simon | <i>Holcolaetis</i> Simon | * <i>M. sexplagiatus</i> Simon |
| * <i>Cosmophasis australis</i> Simon | * <i>H. albobarbata</i> Simon | * <i>Modunda aperta</i> Peckham |
| * <i>C. cincta</i> Denis | <i>H. balteata</i> (C. L. Koch) | * <i>Mogrus albogularis</i> Simon |
| * <i>C. caerulea</i> Simon | * <i>H. strandi</i> Caporiacco | <i>M. sahariensis</i> Berland & Millot |
| * <i>C. lucidiventris</i> Simon | * <i>H. vellerea</i> Simon | * <i>M. semicanus</i> Simon |
| <i>C. natalensis</i> Lawrence | * <i>H. vidua</i> de Lessert | <i>Napoca insignis</i> (O.P.-Cambridge) |
| * <i>C. nigrocyanea</i> Simon | * <i>H. xerampelina</i> Simon | * <i>Pachypoessa lacertosa</i> Simon |
| * <i>C. quadrimaculatus</i> Lawrence | * <i>H. zuluensis</i> Lawrence | * <i>Paramodunda thyenioides</i> de Lessert |
| * <i>C. tricincta</i> Simon | <i>Hyllus africanus</i> de Lessert | <i>Pardosa saturatior</i> Simon |

- P. wagleri* (Hahn)
Partona bianoriformis (Strand)
P. duboscqi Berland & Millot
Pharacocerus ephippiatus (Thorell)
P. fagei var Berland & Millot
P. xanthopogon Simon
Philaeus mathisi Berland & Millot
* *P. raribarbis* Denis
P. senilis Denis
* *Phlegra albostrata* Simon
* *P. bairstowi* Simon
P. suaverubens Simon
Pochyta fastibilis Simon
P. insulana Simon
P. major Simon
P. occidentalis Simon
P. pulchra (Thorell)
Portia strandi Caporiacco
* *Pseudicus* Simon
P. africanus Peckham
P. bipunctatus Peckham
* *P. histrionicus* Simon
* *P. icioides* Simon
P. punctatus Denis
- * *P. zebra* Simon
Saitis brevisculus Simon
* *S. mundus* Peckham
'Saitis' sapiens Peckham
Salticus cornutus Blackwall
S. (Rhanis) insignis O.P.-Cambridge
S. mutabilis Lucas
'Salticus' nepos O.P.-Cambridge
S. olivaceus (L. Koch)
S. propinquus Lucas
S. simoni Kulczynski
S. unciger (Simon)
S. zebraneus (L. Koch)
* *Stenaelurillus leucogrammus* Simon
* *S. nigricaudus* Simon
* *S. nigritarsis* Simon
S. wernerii Simon
* *Tarne dives* Simon
* *Telamonia comosissima* Simon
* *T. trinotata* Simon
T. virgata Simon
Thiratoscirtus capito Simon
T. torquatus Simon
* *Thyene coccineovittata* Simon
- T. coronata* Simon
T. inflata Gerstäcker
T. magdalenae de Lessert
T. natalii Peckham
T. ogdeni Peckham
* *Thyenula juvenca* Simon
* *Tomocyrra* Simon
* *Tularosa ogdeni* Peckham
Velloa bianoriformis Strand
* *Viciria albocincta* Thorell
V. chabanaudi Fage
* *V. chrysophaea* Simon
* *V. epileuca* Simon
* *V. equestris* Simon
* *V. fuscimana* Simon
V. jeanneli Berland & Millot
V. lawrencei de Lessert
* *V. lupula* Simon
* *V. niveimana* Simon
V. ocellata Thorell
V. prenanti Berland & Millot
V. sp.

Section 2. Species figured but not necessarily referred to in notes

- * *Aelurillus cristatopalpus* Simon
Asemonea pallens (Blackwall)
* *A. puella* Simon
A. sp. nov.
Atrax formidabilis Rainbow
A. robustus O.P.-Cambridge
A. veneriatus Hickman
A. sp?
* *Baryphas eupogon* Simon
Brancus viciriaeformis Berland & Millot
Cheiracanthium erraticum (Walckenaer)
C. pennyi O.P.-Cambridge
* *Cosmophasis australis* Simon
* *C. caerulea* Simon
* *C. lucidiventris* Simon
C. natalensis Lawrence
* *C. nigrocyanea* Simon
* *C. quadrimaculatus* Lawrence
* *C. tricineta* Simon
Dendryphantes purcellii Peckham
Epiblennum uncigerum (Simon)
Euophrys obsoleta (Simon)
E. sp. nov. A [from Mt. Everest]
E. sp. B [from Mt. Everest]
Habrocestum nigratum Berland & Millot
Hasarius adansoni (Savigny & Audouin)
- Hel[io]phanus] auratus* C. L. Koch
H. melinus L. Koch
H. viriatus Simon
H. sp? not debilis [from Nimba Mts.]
H. sp.? [from Nimba Mts.]
* *Holcolaetis albobarbata* Simon
* *H. xerampelina* Simon
Homalattus pustulatus White
Hyllus sp. nov. [from Benito River]
H. sp. nov. [from Gabon]
H. sp.
Langona trifoveolata (de Lessert)
Lycosa hortensis Thor. [gynandromorph]
Myrmarachne sp. nov. [from St. Helena]
Gen. & sp. nov. A [from St. Helena]
Gen. & sp. nov. B [from St. Helena]
Gen. & sp. nov. [from St. Helena]
Orsima constricta Simon
Pachyballus sp.
P. sp. nov. [2nd Oxford Univ. Tanganyika Exp.]
Pachypoessa sp. nov. not lacertosa Simon
[from Madagascar]
- Paramodunda thyenioides* de Lessert
Pellenes sp. [from St. Helena]
Pharacocerus fagei var. Berland & Millot
Pochyta pannosa Simon
- P. sp. nov. nr. poissoni* Berland & Millot
[from Nimba Mts.]
P. sp.? nr. simoni de Lessert [from Nimba Mts.]
P. spinosa Simon
P. several spp. [from Nimba Mts.]
Salticus mutabilis Lucas
S. olivaceus (L. Koch)
S. sp.? [from Vernet, France]
'Salticus' inexcultus O.P.-Cambridge
'S.' subinstructus O.P.-Cambridge
Schenkelia modesta de Lessert
Stenaelurillus hirsutus de Lessert
S. sp. nov. [from Tanganyika]
* *Tarne dives* Simon
Thiratoscirtus versicolor Simon
Thyene vittiersi
* *Viciria albocincta* Thorell
V. chabanaudi Fage
* *V. chrysophaea* Simon
* *V. epileuca* Simon
* *V. equestris* Simon
* *V. fuscimana* Simon
V. sp. possibly equestris [from Nimba Mts.]
V. monodi Berland & Millot
V. sp. [from Nimba Mts.]
V. sp. [from Ruwenzori]