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## Araneid Types in Liverpool Museums

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The collections in the department of invertebrate zoology of the City of Liverpool Museums divide themselves naturally into two parts. They are, those specimens which survived the bombing damage and ensuing fire in May 1941, and those which were accessioned after this time (even though the collections may predate it). The very few arachnids which survive from pre-war accessions fortunately include three holotypes, but others do not now exist. Post-war accessions of this Class include only one collection containing type material, namely the donation of William Falconer's collection by Miss M. Falconer, his daughter, following his death in 1943 at Waterloo, Liverpool.

It has been very difficult to ascertain what type material this museum did possess before the second world war. The cryptic descriptions of incoming material recorded in the stock books are not very helpful. In many cases specimens have been used for original description after they had been accessioned, but these facts were not recorded alongside the original entry. Hence, reliance has been made on old correspondence, requests for types on loan and the answers made to these enquiries. The result has been poor for spiders. Although it may be possible that type material other than that noted below came to Liverpool Museums, it is certain that none of it exists now.

The nineteenth century types all originate from the Reverend Nendick Abraham of South Africa and were presented to the museum by Mr. Frederick Taylor of Rainhill, near Liverpool. Abraham studied spiders and their behaviour and although a very poor man, who claimed in one letter that he could barely raise the postage for that parcel of specimens, he managed to send large numbers of spiders to Taylor. The latter had produced standard printed requests for trap-door spiders which he sent to correspondents all round the world and Abraham was the most

productive. In one of Taylor's reprints there is the sentence "Mr. Taylor would be exceedingly obliged to those correspondents who take an interest in assisting him to form this collection for the benefit of Brown's Museum" (Taylor, 1885). Liverpool Museum, built by Sir William Brown, a local Member of Parliament and philanthropist, was probably known by this name locally at the time but it was more frequently referred to as the Derby Museum (Pocock, 1898) because of the massive natural history collections of the 13th Earl of Derby which made the construction of a new building an imperative requirement. Taylor gave all his specimens to the museum and there is manuscript material in the form of correspondence concerning the specimens which were donated. This collection of letters makes extremely interesting reading and gives clues indicating that at least one type series did come to the museum although no specimens can be found now. This was of the species *Moggridgea abrahami* O.P.-Cambridge. The sequence of events is reconstructed from the known facts following a presumed request from Cambridge to Abraham for specimens of the Trap-door spiders which the former knew Taylor had been obtaining.

1888

Sept. 3rd Abraham sends Taylor further specimens of the *Moggridgea* spiders which he had been studying which lived on trees near his home in Cape Colony. He instructed Taylor to forward them to Cambridge, who had requested specimens for examination. Instead of doing this, Taylor gave them to T. J. Moore, the museum curator at that time and they were accessioned into the collections on October 4th. A note in one of Taylor's letters to Moore indicates his wish that this should be done because he did not like the idea of one man (i.e. Cambridge) having the best specimens of all the species which were sent to this country. The material was then posted to Cambridge.

Oct. 15th Cambridge acknowledges receipt and states that there appears to be a new species there as well as *Moggridgea dyeri* which had already been recorded.

Nov. 20th Cambridge sends specimens back, saying that he will publish soon.

1889

Feb. 5th Description published.

1890

Jan. 14th Article in "Liverpool Courier" on the specimens which were Taylor's "new species of trap door spiders - one being the tree trap-door spider from Africa, *moggridgea abrahamii*" exhibited at a meeting.

Subsequently, Cambridge was sent one of the specimens, or possibly he kept one originally (for there is no record of exactly how many were sent from Abraham) for there is a type specimen of this species in the Hope Department, Oxford University where Cambridge's collection went.

### Catalogue of Type Material.

#### A. Pre-War Accessions.

*Paradesis tubicola* Pocock 1898 Genoholotype  
adult female, Desidae, Acc. No. 8.9.98  
Pocock, R. I. (October 1898). *Bulletin of the Liverpool Museums*  
Destroyed during 2nd World War bombing.

*Argyropeira blanda* O.P.-Cambridge 1890 Holotype  
Adult female, Epeiridae, Acc. No. 28.10.90.3.

*Tetragnatha taylori* O.P.-Cambridge 1890 Holotype  
adult female, Epeiridae, Acc. No. 28.10.90.4.

*Platyoides abrahami* O.P.-Cambridge 1890  
Genoholotype  
adult female, Drassidae, Acc. No. 18.10.90.5.  
Cambridge, O.P.- (November 1890),  
*Proc.zool.Soc., London*

The above three species are described in the same article and all three have the same data which are:  
Somerset East, Cape Colony, South Africa  
Collected by the Rev. Nendick Abraham  
Presented to Liverpool Museums by Mr. Frederick Taylor of Rainhill, Lancashire in 1890. They survived the bombing but either as a result of it or from drying out in the past are not in prime condition.

*Moggridgea abrahami* O.P.-Cambridge 1889 Syntypes

2 adult females, four nests, Theraphosidae, Acc. No. 4.10.88  
Cambridge, O.P.- (1889), *Proc. zool. Soc., London*.  
Destroyed during 2nd World War.

### B. Post-war Accessions

*Troglohyphantes margerisoni* Falconer 1919 Holotype  
Adult female, Linyphiidae, Acc. No. 44.39  
South of Buttermere, Cumberland, September 1913,  
S. Margerison.

Falconer, W. (1919) *The Naturalist*

A. F. Millidge examined this specimen in 1950 as part of his work in compiling data for *British Spiders*. This resulted in *T. margerisoni* Falconer being synonymised with *Centromerita concinna* (Thorell 1875) in Millidge & Locket, (1952).

*Maro humicola* Falconer 1919 Syntype

Adult female, Linyphiidae, Acc. No. 44.39

"Wilberlea" (Ainley Place beck), Slaithwaite,  
Yorkshire, ?[1911-1919], W. Falconer

Falconer, W. (1919) *The Naturalist*.

Only one female was found in a tube labelled "*humicola*" and possibly other specimens were added to the "*minutus*" tube after Falconer admitted that there was only one species present in the locality. He did send one to O.P.-Cambridge. Today, there is one female labelled *humicola* in the British Museum (Natural History) – another syntype. It was synonymised by Falconer (1937).

*Neon valentulus* Falconer 1912 Syntypic series

43 specimens, Salticidae, Acc. No. 44.39

Wicken Fen, Cambridgeshire, 25-28 May 1912, W. Falconer.

Falconer, W. (1912) *The Naturalist*.

There are 43 specimens altogether. 2 males and 2 females have the date 25th May 1912, the other 39 (21 females, 16 males are definitely discernible as to sex) are from the period 25-28th May 1912. Falconer's notebook (No. 16) states that he sent one of each sex to the British Museum (Natural History). In fact, they have two females and one male (syntypes).

*Zora letifera* Falconer 1912 Syntypes

2 females, 1 male, Clubionidae, Acc. No. 44.39

Wicken Fen, Cambridgeshire, 25-28th May 1912, W. Falconer

Falconer, W. (1912) *The Naturalist*.

Several specimens were collected and some appear to have been sent to A. R. Jackson and O.P.-Cambridge. Notebook No. 16 indicates that 2 females and a male were also sent to the B.M. (N.H.).

This species is now regarded as being synonymous with *Zora armillata* Simon 1878.

*Eboria caliginosa* Falconer 1910 Genosyntypes

1 male; 1 female, Linyphiidae, Acc. No. 44.39

Old Pack Horse Road, Clowes Moor, Marsden,  
Yorkshire

15th May 1909, W. Falconer

Falconer, W. (1910) *The Naturalist*.

Falconer did not specify which was the holotype so both are regarded as syntypes. Shortly after publishing this type description he found another male and six females at the same site and so he published again, (same volume, pages 253-254) adding more information on the species. A note in one of his journals states that the male and a female were sent to the B.M. (N.H.) The others were probably sent to his friends, Jackson, Hull, Cambridge, etc., in exchange or as gifts. None are left in the collection now. They would qualify as topotypes (from the same site as the type material), metatypes (compared by the author with his types and found to be the same) and plesiotypes (adding materially to the knowledge of the species after the original description) but have no real systematic significance (Swinton, 1955).

*Centromerus incultus* Falconer 1915 Holotype

adult female, Linyphiidae

*Maro sublestus* Falconer 1915 Holotype

adult female, Linyphiidae

Falconer, W. (1915) *The Naturalist*.

Neither of the above two specimens came to the City of Liverpool Museums. It is known that *C. incultus* was lost in the post to Professor Kulczynski before its description was published, but diagrams had been made and it was examined by Cambridge and Jackson before its disappearance. *M. sublestus* might well have been lost in the same way.

As well as the seven species of spiders which Falconer described (only four are still good species) there were specimens of gamasid mites which he described in 1923, *Macrocheles cognatus* and *hulli*. *M. cognatus* was found to be preoccupied (Falconer 1924). Although *M. hulli* did not appear to come to Liverpool Museums, *submotus* was in the collection but was exchanged with the British Museum (Natural History) in 1967.

Falconer's position as an English arachnologist is well known following his obituary (Jackson 1943), Bristowe's introduction in Locket and Millidge (1951) and his more recent article (1973).

The specimens collected on a joint expedition of the B.M. (N.H.) and Liverpool Museums to the island of Sokotra in the Indian Ocean resulted in a large number of Arachnida being collected and described as new in Forbes (1903) and Pocock (1900 a, b). However, none of the type material came to Liverpool at the time. Since then, a few examples of these scorpions and spiders have been obtained by gift from the B.M. (N.H.) but they do not include any of the type series.

To summarise, there have been types of ten araneid names represented in the collections of the Liverpool Museums, two of which have been destroyed by enemy action.

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