

Systematic notes on Asian birds. 52.
An introduction to the bird collections of
Brian Houghton Hodgson (1801¹-1894)

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Hodgson spent most of his career in Nepal and several years of retirement in Darjeeling, making collection in both areas. Dates relating to these periods are clarified and his collections and donations are discussed. His drawings, touched upon briefly, are now receiving further study and will be reported upon in due course.

Introduction

Brian Houghton Hodgson's career in and out of the service of the Honourable East-India Company ², and the controversies about his political life were covered in a biography by Hunter (1896). More recently, Waterhouse (2004) provided a shorter biographical sketch that introduced a book bringing together scholarly contributions offering a more modern perspective on Hodgson's political work, his interest in Buddhism, his zoological contributions and his ethnological studies.

Hodgson has rightly been seen as the earliest and most prolific worker on the ornithology in particular of Nepal (see, e.g., Cocker & Inskipp, 1988; Inskipp & Inskipp, 1985, 1991), but more remains to be done to understand the significance of the specimens he had collected and drawings he had executed. Several accounts of parts of his collections have appeared, including those of Gray & Gray (1847, 1863), Sharpe (1906) and Benson (1999), but none has brought together the full scope of his donations to scientific institutions and the entirety of specimens and of drawings involved, indeed such numbers as have been reported have often been contradictory. In seeking to sort out these contradictions in the published record, and to rebut them, it has been necessary to construct a chronology of Hodgson's activities.

His numbered drawings are central to our understanding because, after a certain time, the numbers become indicative of discovery at later dates. This is particularly

¹ Waterhouse (2004) preferred this birth year as it was used by Hodgson himself and because the latter was christened on 28 Nov. 1801, although Hunter (1896), Cocker & Inskipp (1988) and most intervening authors accepted 1800.

² The English Company of that name, not the Dutch.

important in separating Nepal novelties from those of Sikkim. However no sequential list of his drawings has yet been published and no mention has been found in Hodgson's own writings or elsewhere of his own list, although he most probably had one. Inskipp & Inskipp (1982) examined the Hodgson drawings, one set held by the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) and the second by the Natural History Museum (BMNH), but their primary objectives were to check the identifications of the subjects and to explore the notes that are found on the back of most of the originals to see what might have been relevant to their work in progress on the avifauna of Nepal and its distribution. Sharpe (1906) had observed that the two sets of drawings had not been compared, and the Inskipp, although examining both, were not able to bring the two sets together and thus to establish the sequential list that is needed. They did not report, as a direct comparison would have permitted them to do, what is lacking from each set. Limited preliminary examinations by the writer have since shown that the two sets are not a full match for each other, and the necessary detailed comparison is now in hand.

Because the drawing numbers also appear on Hodgson's original specimen labels they should play a role in the identification of valid type material from amongst Hodgson's specimens. So far, identification of Hodgson's types has lacked rigour, for reasons explained below, and the development of a rigorous approach will be assisted by this comparison of the two sets of drawings. There will be two preliminary outputs. First, a sequential list of the Hodgson numbers, with appropriate annotations; second, the development of a list of cases where Hodgson is thought to have used the same drawing number on the labels of specimens of two or more taxa. These should allow a careful, history-based validation of Hodgson's type material.

A chronology of Hodgson's residences in the subcontinent (1818-1858)

The seventeen year-old Hodgson arrived in Calcutta in 1818 (Waterhouse, 2004) to conclude at Fort William the studies he had begun at the East-India Company's Haileybury training college in England; but he soon began to suffer the health problems that would lead to a succession of postings to the hills. After a year at Kumaon as assistant commissioner, in 1820 Hodgson was appointed Assistant Resident in Nepal, and stayed until November 1822 when he was promoted to Deputy Secretary in the Persian Department of the Bengal Civil Service's Foreign Office in Calcutta. But within about a year in the plains his health had failed again and he returned to Nepal as the Kathmandu Residency's Postmaster (his old job being occupied). He reoccupied the Assistant Resident's post in 1825 and held this position until 1833, with a two-year stint from 1829 to 1831 as Acting Resident. Too young to become Resident, in 1831 he returned to the rank of Assistant Resident but at the age of 32 was promoted Resident, a position he held until December 1843 when disagreements with Lord Ellenborough³, the difficult and autocratic Governor-General, led to his removal (Hunter, 1896).

Upset by his treatment, Hodgson refused Ellenborough's offer of an inferior position at Simla and left the employ of the East-India Company. He sailed for England on

³ Edward Law, 1st Earl of Ellenborough (1790-1871) was Governor-General of India from 28 Feb. 1842 to 1 Aug. 1844.

7th February 1844, a day after the Asiatic Society of Bengal had honoured him with a special meeting (Hunter, 1896: 235) and after having retrieved at least one of the specimens ⁴ he had sent to the Society in Calcutta (Blyth, 1845: 177).

On returning to England he had found that Lord Ellenborough had been dismissed as Governor-General, and it is suggested that Hodgson “could well have been reinstated” (Waterhouse, 2004), but after 25 years of service he decided to retire and to return to India in a private capacity. During this time in England he concluded his part in the presentation of his first gift of natural history materials to the British Museum (BMNH ⁵) (it should be noted that although Cocker & Inskipp, 1988: 30, wrote that “Hodgson made a gift of all his collections ... to the British Museum” this statement is incorrect and was contradicted on their next page). After just over a year in Europe he then returned to India, sailing from Cork in July 1845.

Back in Calcutta, he visited Darjeeling which had been recently developed as a hill station, and decided to live there. This was to be Hodgson’s base until his final return to England in 1858. He visited England in 1853 and met Anne Scott and married her before returning to Darjeeling with her. She remained there until 1857 when her health gave way and she returned to England, leaving him to follow.

A chronology of Hodgson’s collections of birds (his specimens and drawings)

Hodgson began collecting early. By 1826, in Nepal, he was employing local hunters to collect for him and was training local artists so that he could develop his collection of drawings. His main collection of birds and mammals was procured in Nepal. However, he resumed collecting after moving to Darjeeling and continued to employ native artists to make drawings (some among them being artists he had employed when in Kathmandu).

In some ways Hodgson’s drawings, although unpublished in his lifetime and little published since, are more important than the specimens. He numbered them and used these numbers to relate each of his specimens to particular drawings. His specimens originally had a pair of labels (regrettably, at the BMNH these were removed: Sharpe, 1906: 386), one with the date of collection ⁶ and locality as well as a local name, presumably one known to the collector, and a second carried the drawing number, in red ink (Gray & Gray, 1847 ⁷, opp. p. 1) ⁸. By 1837, Hodgson had assigned 721 numbers to drawings and specimens (Hodgson, 1837a: 369). Thereafter, he found fewer birds that were

⁴ Hodgson’s *Buteo aquilinus* which Blyth (1845: 176) described.

⁵ This acronym, which related to the British Museum (Natural History), is still in use today for the Natural History Museum and is used here throughout, regardless of when the titles changed. This is purely to provide continuity.

⁶ Though rarely the year (Cocker & Inskipp, 1988: 33).

⁷ Usually given as 1846, based on the imprint date, but see Dickinson & Walters (2006; this volume).

⁸ This label occasionally survives (especially on specimens that did not go to the BMNH during the Grays’ tenure). Sometimes what is presumably that number is found on the BMNH labels used by the Grays. Some specimens in the Cambridge University Zoology Museum, where acquired from the Jardine or Strickland collections, have Hodgson labels numbered in black ink (Benson, 1999: 189, figs. 16 and 17).

strange to him but by December 1843 when he left Nepal his count was approaching 890. This numbering system appears not to have been chronological, by acquisition. Rather, the structure of the list suggests that only after collecting several hundred different birds did he arrange numbers for them based initially on a chosen sequence of families and genera (thus Hodgson, 1836a, dated his use of the MS name *Pomatorhinus ferrugilatus* to 1826, but did not tell us of a drawing number⁹. From this and other clues one gains the impression that numbering, and perhaps drawing, began later¹⁰). Then, as material continued to flow into his collections, the systematic scheme he had initially planned broke down and his sequence of numbers became illogical. After gaps had been filled, it must have been solely chronological whenever paintings of new taxa needed numbering.

By 1826 Hodgson was publishing, and three years later he described his first new species, *Buceros nipalensis* Hodgson, 1829¹¹. The path to publication was not easy; of descriptions he sent to the Asiatic Society in Calcutta in November 1829 some were eventually published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (JASB) in 1832, but at least three were lost. For evidence, see Editorial notes in the JASB, one inserted just ahead of the article by Hodgson (1835), and a second footnoted in Hodgson (1836b).

Between 1832 and 1845 his works appeared in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, the *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London*, *Asiatic Researches*, and the *India Review and Journal of Foreign Science*¹² as well as in some local publications in Calcutta and Madras¹³. In several instances he published descriptions twice, seemingly because he had had no news from the journal to which he had first sent his proposed paper. For instance, he, Hodgson (1837b), 'described' *Gallinago nemoricola* and *G. solitaria* with the following footnote added: "Those to whom it went best know what is become of the paper I sent home with these names and characters affixed." In fact, the original descriptions had appeared on or soon after 9th April 1836¹⁴ in the *Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London*¹⁵. Hodgson (1839: 136) was also of the opinion that some of his novelties had been either appropriated and described by others¹⁶, or overlooked. It seems extraordinary that this issue was not brought up and resolved with those with whom he went on to deal (such as Edward Blyth in Calcutta and the Gray brothers in London) yet Hodgson seemed to go on suffering from situations, at least partially of his own making, in which his novelties were described by others. It should nevertheless be

⁹ In Hodgson (1844) this appears as *Pomatorhinus erythrogeus* and is drawing no. 237.

¹⁰ He could probably ill afford to employ artists while he was still Postmaster.

¹¹ This is the earliest new name by Hodgson that is still in use. *Phasianus nipalensis* Hodgson, 1827, proposed two years earlier, was a pheasant that had been described much earlier by Latham (1790).

¹² Abbreviated in almost all ornithological citations, and in reference lists in successive issues of the Systematic notes on Asian birds, to just *India Review* (earlier occasionally *Indian Rev.*, but all Hodgson's notices include, below his name, 'For the India Review').

¹³ In 1836 Hodgson described several birds of prey in the *Bengal Sporting Magazine* under the pseudonym Parbattiah. The types of some are listed in Warren (1966: 4, 50, 266), who ascribed them to Hodgson.

¹⁴ The date these pages were delivered to the ZSL by the printers (Sclater, 1893).

¹⁵ Hodgson (1836c).

¹⁶ John Gould appears to have been the first to cause this feeling, probably based on material Hodgson had sent to the ZSL, but the exact stimulus is not known.

recalled that, at that period, writers who cited the name of the author of a manuscript name appeared to believe that that name would continue to be credited to that person and that they were being entirely fair to their correspondent.

In 1832, Hodgson had been made a Corresponding Member of the ZSL, but presentations of bird specimens by that date are not recorded. Three donations¹⁷ by him to the Society are known: in 1834, 1835 and 1836 (Wheeler, 1997)¹⁸. Soon thereafter the Society's interest in its museum collection, much affected by problems over premises, began to wane and in 1841 John Edward Gray was involved in discussions over a proposal that it should be taken over by the BMNH (Wheeler, 1997). This foundered because of the Society's unrealistically high cash valuation¹⁹, and by 1850 the collection was being broken up, although even before that some specimens, perceived to be duplicates, had been presented to several provincial museums²⁰.

Wheeler (1997) quoted the 1856 Annual Report of the ZSL as saying that it had been decided "to transfer to the British Museum the whole of the types²¹ of species described in the Society's publications" and that the Museum might purchase "such other portions of the collection ... as were desirable for the purpose of filling up desiderata in the National Museum". Some specimens that had come from Hodgson may have been included, but as these would have been assumed not to include types – the BMNH having by then received Hodgson's major donation in 1843-45, which J.E. & G.R. Gray (1847) thought included his types – it seems unlikely that any would have been bought now.

Benson (1999: 190), discussing Hodgson specimens in the Cambridge University Zoology Museum (UMZC), noted that Carol Inskipp had checked the sale catalogue of Sir William Jardine's collection (Anon., 1886), which had contained 197 specimens from Hodgson, and seems to have supposed that Jardine's holdings of Hodgson's skins had come to him from his son-in-law, Hugh Strickland. But, in 1837, and this appears to have been unknown to Benson, Hodgson sent "a box of Nepalese bird skins to William Jardine who claimed to have found from thirty to fifty new species amongst them" (Datta & Inskipp, 2004: 148). Strickland had had a share of the duplicate material from Hodgson's donations to the BMNH in 1843-45 (see Gray & Gray, 1847, p. iv). There is no reason to suppose, as Benson seemed to do, that when Strickland's widow gave her

¹⁷ Totalling several hundred skins; Wheeler (1997) drew on the Society's Annual Reports for this information, but the Society's Catalogue of its Museum, listing the accessions, has not survived and smaller donations could have been made earlier.

¹⁸ In 1832 Gould presented 120 bird specimens to the Society. He had obtained these in or before 1831 and they provided models for some of the plates in *A Century of birds from the Himalaya Mountains* (Gould, 1830-1833). It might be suspected that these came from Hodgson, but Ticehurst & Whistler (1924) considered the origin of them, which they believed Gould had deliberately concealed, and concluded that they were not from Nepal, but probably from the Simla -Almora region.

¹⁹ In 1840, two valuers, one of them John Gould, estimated its worth at £ 10,965 (Wheeler, 1997).

²⁰ Norwich, Ipswich, Dover, Worcester, Lancaster and Warrington (Wheeler, 1997).

²¹ A list was given by Sharpe (1906: 514), but comprised only about 50 taxa, and it is apparent that most of the birds described by Vigors (1831, 1832) were not included. Similarly, others that should have been found were not included. No taxon named by Hodgson is included. Such as it is, the lists supports the view that there was then little or no understanding of the meaning or value of types. R. Prys-Jones (pers. comm.) considers that interest quickened only with the work on the *Catalogue of Birds of the British Museum* in the 1870s.

husband's collection to Cambridge University in 1867, a portion including Hodgson material was retained by Jardine, her father. Rather, what Jardine possessed will have been what Hodgson had sent to him direct and these skins were no doubt included in the 1886 auction of Jardine's collection, some of them thereafter coming together with Strickland's material in the UMZC.

Between 1841²² and 1843²³ Hodgson also sent specimens, but apparently not those in best condition²⁴, to the Asiatic Society of Bengal in Calcutta where Edward Blyth had recently been appointed Curator (Blyth, 1852)²⁵. At least some of what Hodgson sent to Calcutta may still be there, in the collection of the Zoological Survey of India, but some specimens, perhaps considered duplicates by Blyth, may have been passed on to the East-India Company Museum in London.

Meanwhile, Hodgson was looking for the right home for the bulk of his collection and having tried the ZSL (Datta & Inskipp, 2004: 140), in 1843²⁶ approached the BMNH, via his cousin Edward Hawkins, the Keeper of Antiquities, and in response to John Edward Gray, Keeper of Zoology since 1840, having "embarked on a massive collection-building programme."

Hodgson attached conditions to his proposed donation. The first was that the museum should prepare and publish a catalogue of his collection. Hodgson thought of his drawings as the basis of his collection and at the request of Gray²⁷ prepared a document that appeared in Gray's *Zoological Miscellany*²⁸ under the title *Catalogue of Nipalese Birds, collected between 1824 and 1844* (Hodgson, 1844)²⁹. This was essentially a list of drawings and none of the names came with a written description. Some of these names had been validly published in prior years, but others were *nomina nuda*. This list served as a start point for the systematic Catalogue that the museum had agreed to produce.

²² Two specimens of *Conostoma aemodium* were presented in 1841, and described as new in the Society's journal that year (Hodgson, 1841). These, listed by Blyth (1852: 101), may be presumed to be Hodgson's types.

²³ In May 1843, apparently, Hodgson sent the Asiatic Society of Bengal a paper with descriptions of some of his new birds. It seems that with it Hodgson sent specimens of most of the forms his draft proposed as new. Due to Edward Blyth's editorial delays and substantial re-writing, this draft became the basis of a lasting estrangement between the two men. His 1843 donation may have been Hodgson's last gift to the Society, and '1848', given for one among Hodgson's specimens listed by Blyth (1852) in the latter's catalogue of the Society's collection, may well have been a typographical error for 1843.

²⁴ "Many are in very imperfect condition" Blyth (1842: 788). "In bad order" appears often in Blyth (1852)!

²⁵ Blyth (1852) dated most of the accessions to the Asiatic Society's holdings from the period of his own curatorship. Although Hodgson had published in the Society's journals from 1832, it does not seem that he presented any specimens before 1841. The first major gift, representing "270 species", was recorded by Blyth (1842: 788) in his report to the July 1842 Committee Meeting of the Society.

²⁶ Datta & Inskipp (2004: 140) concluded, from letters from J.E. Gray to Sir William Jardine in early February 1843, that Hodgson had offered the collection to the ZSL but that the offer had been declined due to conditions that Hodgson had wished to attach.

²⁷ Or perhaps of the two brothers (John Edward and George Robert).

²⁸ For further comments on this publication see Kluge (1971).

²⁹ This was compiled at his parents' home in Canterbury. Hodgson (1855) wrote that it was "substantially my own, but with groups disposed according to the system followed in the National Museum Catalogue".

The opening paragraph of this Catalogue says “the specimens, forming the following Catalogue, were collected by Mr. B.H. Hodgson ... and are the type specimens described in that gentleman’s various scientific papers”³⁰.

Other conditions agreed, probably in 1844, related to access for Frank Howard, who was expected to publish Hodgson’s drawings, and restrictions on access to prevent others from figuring or describing Hodgson’s birds until Howard’s publication appeared³¹. In addition, copies of the Catalogue and duplicate specimens were to be supplied to thirteen other persons and institutions³².

This first large gift from Hodgson to the BMNH comprised 2596³³ birds from Nepal and Tibet (Sharpe, 1906: 385) and 806 sheets of drawings (Hodgson, 1863³⁴). Sharpe (1906: 385) thought that the 2596 specimens that entered the museum registers in 1843-1845 “were presented by him to the Museum when he left Nepal in 1843”, but Hodgson was not back in England until about April 1844 and while the accessions in 1844 and 1845 may have been donated in 1844 at least the first 1302 specimens (BMNH 1843.1.13.1-1302) were registered in 1843. These, at least, must have been presented before Hodgson left Nepal³⁵. Four more skins were separately accessioned in 1844 (BMNH 1844.12.27.1-4). Despite enquiries about registers of the period, the dates of accession of the drawings have so far not been traced.

The 1845 accessions (BMNH 1845.1.9.1-841, 1845.1.12.1-414 and 478-513) connect two letters. One is Hodgson’s letter from Arnhem³⁶ in October 1844 to his father asking that he have the collections stored at the family home in Canterbury sorted, which his father duly arranged. The other dated 24th December 1844 and addressed to Hodgson

³⁰ This opening statement in the Catalogue gives the impression that the collection held the types of all Hodgson’s early names but that is next to impossible to verify. Warren (1966) and Warren & Harrison (1971) addressed some of the types issues and rightly noted instances where specimens previously thought to be types of names from Hodgson (1844) do not qualify, because the names were *nomina nuda*.

³¹ It is not clear how long this condition was respected, but the Trustees of the Museum rejected Hodgson’s appeal for financial help with this publication and the work never materialised. It would seem that the descriptions given in the Appendix to the Catalogue that Hodgson had requested were not seen as breaching this condition, and perhaps by 1847 Frank Howard had advised the Museum that he would not be publishing. Even so, Cocker & Inskipp (1988: 36) reported an 1859 letter in which Hodgson was still hoping that the Trustees of the British Museum would agree to a plan for some or all of the drawings to be published.

³² Listed as the museums of: 1) the Hon. East-India Company, 2) the University of Leyden, 3) the Garden of Plants, Paris, 4) the University of Berlin, 5) the Senckenbergian Society at Francfort [sic], 6) the University of Edinburgh, 7) Trinity College, Dublin, 8) the Natural History Society, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 9) the Canterbury Natural History Society, 10) the Manchester Natural History Society, 11) the Earl of Derby, Knowsley, 12) Hugh Strickland Esq., Oxford, 13) the Zoological Society [sic, but presumably of London].

³³ This appears to be a mis-count as the accessions he listed total 2597.

³⁴ If Hodgson provided a count of the drawings presented in 1843-45 his information was not reported by Gray & Gray (1847).

³⁵ Probably, Hodgson’s father made this delivery from material that Hodgson had brought home earlier.

³⁶ Where Hodgson was visiting his sister Frances, Baroness Nahuys, whose husband was “Governor of one of the Seven Provinces of Holland”. The husband was also the stepson of her elder sister Ellen (Hunter, 1896: 10-11, 239).

by J. Forshall, Secretary to the Trustees of the British Museum, promised a visit to Canterbury by a "proper officer" (Hunter, 1896: 240). Sharpe (1906: 386) wrote that "Mr. Gerrard, sen., remembers going to Canterbury to pack the collections for transmission to London" and this transfer appears to have included the "nearly complete series" (Hodgson, 1844). Hodgson's words were written in the context of "drawings and specimens". 'Nearly' complete is correct for there were indeed gaps in what Hodgson presented. Most species were represented by specimens and drawings; however, examination of Gray & Gray (1847) shows that some were provided only as specimens and some only as drawings. In a very few cases Hodgson's serial numbers did not appear at all (although at least some of these missing numbers may prove to be present on drawings in the set given to the ZSL)³⁷.

Of the 2597 specimens, 414 were of skeletal material, so that the net total of skins was 2183. It is not yet clear whether included duplicates were assigned registration numbers, and nor has it been established when the duplicate specimens that were to be shared were distributed. Hunter (1896: 308) implied that Hodgson made donations to a good number of institutions, but it is not clear whether these were independent of the BMNH's distribution of duplicates or were that distribution. Strickland's specimens, now in UMZC, carry the date 1845³⁸ which Benson (1999) suggested was when Strickland received them, and which would fit with the expected distribution (direct from Hodgson or via the BMNH). Other than these specimens in Cambridge no confirmatory details of quantities received or dates of receipt have been discovered from the intended beneficiaries. Apparently, no records survive relating to what went to Manchester (H. McGhie, pers. comm., 27 Apr. 2005). Among the other intended recipients, Leiden has no surviving correspondence relating to such a distribution³⁹ and since Finsch re-labelled the entire collection between 1897 and 1904 it is not possible to say whether the Hodgson specimens that arrived there had already lost their original Hodgson labels in favour of BMNH labels.

In 1845, Hodgson made his first significant donation to the East-India Company Museum (Horsfield & Moore, 1854)⁴⁰ and Frederic Moore (who did not remove the original Hodgson labels, which pleased Sharpe, 1906: 387) described several of the

³⁷ The drawing numbers that appeared in the Grays' 1863 Catalogue, which is essentially concerned with additions to the content of the 1847 Catalogue, largely confirm that numbering in Sikkim began from about 790. However, there are a few early numbers therein and these may represent originals that that had been held back by Hodgson and not presented in 1843-45, perhaps because they had not at that stage been copied.

³⁸ I understand this to apply to the 129 Strickland specimens (Benson, 1999: 190) acquired in 1867 and not to those that came from Jardine (see discussion, above, where I conclude that Jardine received his specimens directly from Hodgson in, and perhaps after, 1837).

³⁹ The museum (RMNH) maintained no accession register in the 1840s, but a member of staff has agreed to try to list the Hodgson specimens that remain (many of which it is supposed might be types).

⁴⁰ There is no mention in Horsfield & Moore (1854: v) of the receipt of material from the BMNH, neither of the duplicates from the 1843-45 donations by Hodgson, nor of a later transfer of duplicates (mentioned by Sharpe, 1906: 386). It is thus possible that the specimens received in 1845 were not given directly by Hodgson, but were the duplicates that Hodgson and the BMNH had agreed should go to the East-India Museum. If this is so then it would make it likely that all transferred duplicates did still have original labels attached.

specimens as new to science ⁴¹. These birds were from Nepal and Hodgson must have held them back when making his donations to the BMNH. However, also in 1845, Hodgson gave the BMNH 301 bird skins from Bihar, and Sharpe (1906) recognised that they had been prepared quite differently from the Nepal collections.

In 1848 the BMNH received a further 307 skins and registered them from 'India' (BMNH 1848.6.4.1-307). Sharpe (1906: 386) was satisfied these came from Sikkim and Darjeeling (although he noted that George Gray had registered some as from Bihar he was able to show that their style of preparation was the same as in the Nepal collection. In the same year the East-India Company Museum also received "several birds from Sikkim and Darjeeling" (Horsfield & Moore, 1854). These Sharpe (1906: 386) associated with the 211 duplicates passed on by the BMNH ⁴².

The East-India Company Museum received a further large collection ostensibly from Nepal and Tibet in 1853 (Horsfield & Moore, 1854). Some specimens were thought actually to have come from Sikkim, near to which, in Darjeeling, Hodgson had already been living for several years. Any genuinely from Nepal ⁴³ must have been retained by Hodgson for 10 years, or had come to him in Darjeeling from friends in Nepal or from his collectors who may have entered Nepal from Sikkim and brought back fresh material. Datta & Inskipp (2004: 143) suggested that Hodgson's trappers "could have unwittingly wandered into Nepal", but they may also have entered Nepal quite deliberately. The border would have presented no obstacles, and even though Hodgson remained barred there is no evidence that his collectors had been. Hodgson would have found the Sikkim avifauna somewhat different from that near Kathmandu and may well have wished to discover what material from eastern Nepal would tell him. In Hodgson (1848) there is mention of a specimen from central Tibet "brought back by Bhotias ⁴⁴ employed to shoot mammals", so it is apparent that Hodgson did not feel unduly constrained by territorial borders.

In May 1858, after his return from Darjeeling to England, Hodgson made his final donation to the BMNH. Sharpe (1906) recorded 598 birds from 'Nepal' ⁴⁵, registered in 1859 ⁴⁶. These and a further quantity of drawings became the basis of the second Catalogue of Hodgson material (Gray & Gray, 1863). While packing in Darjeeling in December 1857, Hodgson had accounted for 2986 skins, only eight of which he considered still needed description, and for these he gave his drawings numbers (908, 953, 956, 977, 979, 980, 981 and 982). Of the 598 that the museum selected only about 90 are actually listed in the 1863 report (the rest presumably being additional specimens of species received in the 1843-45 donations, including duplicates intended to be used in exchanges).

⁴¹ As with Blyth, when Moore described birds to which Hodgson had given a manuscript name he gave Hodgson the credit before appending a description. See also Dickinson (2004: 152, 159-163).

⁴² Presumably these duplicates had not been registered by the BMNH. The entry in Horsfield & Moore in fact seems more likely to relate to a small donation by Hodgson direct.

⁴³ The description of *Sacfa hodgsoniae* Hodgson, 1857, from Tibet appears to prove that Hodgson had contact with Tibetan collectors almost to the end of his stay in Darjeeling.

⁴⁴ Bhotia is a Hindi or Nepali word for the people, or some of the people, of Tibet and Bhutan.

⁴⁵ Cocker & Inskipp (1988: 29) and Datta & Inskipp (2004: 143) noted that Hodgson corrected 'Nepal' to 'Sikkim' in his annotated copy of Gray & Gray (1863).

⁴⁶ Presented in May 1858 (Gray & Gray, 1863: iii).

Cocker & Inskipp (1988: 27) mentioned a "total bird collection of some 9512 specimens of 672 species" of birds made by Hodgson. This number reappears in Datta & Inskipp (2004: 143) as the sum of the birds that Hodgson donated to the BMNH⁴⁷ and is attributed to Hunter (1896); but Hunter (p. 307) in fact said that this was the sum of Hodgson's two collections from which the museum "made its selection"⁴⁸. Archer (1962: 11) wrongly understood this number to be the total of Hodgson's drawings of birds.

The content of the two reports by Gray & Gray (1847, 1863) is dealt with by Dickinson & Walters (2006; this volume).

The specimens Hodgson sent to Blyth

It was common practice in the first half of the 19th century, and somewhat later, to credit a name to the person who coined it, and Blyth was attentive to this. Clearly, when using Hodgson's names, Blyth anticipated that the credit for the species would go to Hodgson. Only rarely is there any evidence that Hodgson supplied Blyth with a description. When Blyth quoted Hodgson, as he did both for the occasional description of a new species and in footnotes containing the diagnoses of some genera (see, e.g., Blyth, 1844: 379-380), he placed such texts in quotation marks (see for example the description of *Pteruthius melanotis* in Blyth, 1847: 448)⁴⁹. Unless quotation marks appear Blyth's descriptions must be seen to be his own, and Blyth's were in any case not in the style of Hodgson. Names attached to such Blyth descriptions are to be attributed to Blyth as the author of the description (Article 50, I.C.Z.N., 1999).

That nomenclatural rules would be established that required this can have been foreseen neither by Hodgson nor by Blyth, but they reflect the changes that followed quickly from the widespread acceptance of the "Stricklandian Code" (Strickland, 1842). Eventually these will have become evident to Hodgson and may have fuelled his view that he was being deprived of credit for his discoveries (Cocker & Inskipp, 1988: 36).

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⁴⁷ Against the 3802 noted by Sharpe (1906).

⁴⁸ Hunter (1896: 375) suggested that none of these was returned to Hodgson, but that those not retained made up the duplicates distributed. If this figure is correct it suggests that the birds available for distribution as duplicates would have numbered several thousand. Limited researches so far suggest that much smaller distributions occurred.

⁴⁹ The description cited is of a bird Blyth did not see. He mentioned 'non vidi', and thus could not have described it himself. Deeper analysis is required to see whether Blyth used quotation marks more widely, or perhaps only began to use them after 1845, as should that be so it might suggest that Hodgson had by then discussed the issue with him (or that Blyth had taken advice from Strickland, although the 1842 'Code' did not address this question).

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⁵⁰ This is a Minute of Council. No authorship is stated, but within the minute the original Committee appointed is listed and H.E. Strickland is given as its "reporter".