

Systematic notes on Asian birds. 10.¹
The “Nouveau recueil de planches coloriées” of Temminck & Laugier (1820-1839): the little known impression of 1850

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A copy of the reported 1850 impression of the “Nouveau recueil de planches coloriées” that has recently come to light suggests that bound copies would be virtually indistinguishable from the first edition (1820-1839) despite the different publisher. In spite of clear statements by the publisher, we believe there must be doubts whether any part of such an edition, other than the wrappers, was specially reprinted. The wrappers found with this copy confirm that during the appearance of the first edition generic wrappers were created, which did not have details of the contents on the back.

Introduction

Until recently it had been largely forgotten that a second impression of the “Nouveau recueil de planches coloriées” was supposed to have been reprinted and published in 1850 (Ronsil, 1948).

In 1933 a copy of this was purchased by Marquis Yamashina of Japan from Wheldon & Wesley Ltd., London (now of Leighton Buzzard, Beds.). This copy is now in the library of the Yamashina Institute for Ornithology, Abiko City, Japan (YIO).

In 1996 the senior author brought the existence of this copy to the attention of the librarians at The Natural History Museum, London, and to the attention of R. Dekker and L. Holthuis during a visit to the National Museum of Natural History, Leiden. Copies made of the front of a wrapper, and of the back of the same wrapper, showed that this related to the forgotten 1850 impression.

The junior author, who was working on a broader paper about the first edition of the same book (Dickinson, 2001, this issue), had the opportunity to visit the YIO in July 2000 and was most kindly permitted to examine this impression. Our combined findings are now presented.

¹ An invitational series arranged by René W.R.J. Dekker and Edward C. Dickinson under the auspices of the National Museum of Natural History, Leiden, The Netherlands, and the Trust for Oriental Ornithology, U.K.

The 1850 edition at the Yamashina Institute for Ornithology

The YIO copy is the smaller size edition. It is bound essentially in accordance with the binding plan provided as the *Tableau Méthodique*. In addition to the full *Tableau Méthodique* the suppressed eight page version from livraison 87 is included (and bound in volume one). The title pages for the five volumes are identical to those used for the first edition, including the name of F.G. Levrault and the date of “MDCCC XXXVIII” [= 1838]. The original printing plates were clearly used to print these pages.

Loosely inserted in this copy is a letter from Wheldon & Wesley dated 2nd February 1933. This mentions that on checking the book carefully it had been found that the texts for four of the plates (Nos. 66, 95, 154 and 167) were missing, but that “we understand the Publisher still has a stock of this work and we are trying to get the missing parts”. It was apparently not possible to secure these texts, and the book was supplied in July 1933 with photographed texts inserted in their place.

Our most important finding, the wrapper, previously copied and examined in London and Leiden, certainly proves that Baillière produced wrappers for his edition. However this raises other important questions. Before treating these we address subsidiary findings that support other evidence about the first edition.

The first edition (1820-1839): more information on wrappers

The five volumes of the “1850” edition in Abiko City contain 102 wrappers. These have been bound in at the ends of the volumes, but they are not all the same as the wrapper that was copied for discussions with The Natural History Museum, London and with the National Museum of Natural History, Leiden. The vast majority of these wrappers was printed by Baillière for the 1850 issue. These bear the addresses of Baillière’s firm and are identical one to another, except for the hand-written addition to each of a livraison number.

However, other similarly generic wrappers are present that were apparently produced by the two successive publishers of the first edition. These were presumably part of the “stock in trade”, along with the engraving plates, that Baillière purchased in order to print his 1850 edition. Their presence in this copy of the book suggests that they were pressed into service by Baillière, presumably because he didn’t print enough blank wrappers or needed replacements. For how many of the copies he sold he did this we have no way of knowing.

In the set now in the YIO Baillière used his own wrappers for livraisons 1-89 and again for 93-101. For this set, at least, he sent out wrappers produced by “G. Dufour et E. d’Ocagne, 182..” (the publishers of the earliest livraisons of the first edition) for livraisons 90, 91, and 102 (and in the case of those used for 91 and 102 these wrappers seem to have been marked for use with livraison 24 before being reused by Baillière)².

² The “182_” generic wrappers of these publishers later examined in Newton’s copy by ECD are entirely consistent with his recollections of those examined in Abiko City seven months earlier. It is important to recognise that because the livraison number was added to each of the wrappers by hand their use with a particular livraison is no proof that that livraison emanated from that publisher.

Baillièrè also used, for livraison 92, an undated wrapper printed by F.G. Levrault.

These wrappers produced by, or for, all three publishers are “generic”, requiring hand numbering with the livraison number. They include no list of contents, with scientific names and other details, which were present on the wrappers of the first 20 livraisons of the first edition — before the livraisons began to include both plates and texts (Sherborn, 1898).

In the accompanying paper (Dickinson, 2001) further information is provided on the wrappers in Alfred Newton’s copy which was examined by Sherborn (1898). After livraison 20 when texts were included a list of contents may have been included in some form with the plates, once these generic wrappers began. Although these generic wrappers seem likely to have begun with livraison 21 they may have begun a few livraisons later. Mathews (1925-1927) believed that wrappers were discontinued after livraison 20. In the context he was writing, thinking of the evidence they would yield as to the content of each livraison, he was most probably right, but very similar wrappers in generic form certainly took their place.

The 1850 impression: conclusions

Most of the wrappers, as stated, were printed by or for J.-B. Baillièrè in Paris. The wrapper bearing this name, with a Paris address, and related addresses in London, New York and Madrid, is dated 1850. The back of the wrapper announced the “acquisition” of this publication, which one might *presume* to imply the purchase of the printing plates. The back of wrapper (see fig. 1) tells us that it was, as before, to appear in a “in folio” edition and in a “grand in-4” edition with the prices reduced from 15 francs per livraison to 10 for the folio edition, and from 10.50 to 7.50 for the quarto. Here Baillièrè specifically reported that the necessary print runs (“tirages”) had been made for the engravings and for the text. There would, therefore, be no delays in delivery. The same 102 livraisons were to be published, starting in June 1850, at the rate of two livraisons every 15 days. The work should thus have been published within about 25 months.

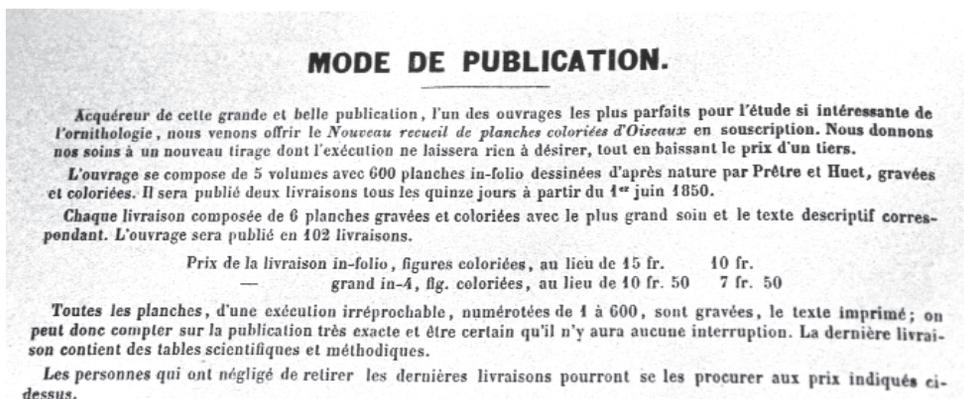


Fig. 1. The distinctive text on Baillièrè’s wrappers in which he claims to have already printed his new edition.

This appears to be strong evidence of an actual reimpression. It has not been possible to make a direct comparison between an undoubted first edition copy and this copy (e.g. paper quality, which would need to be facilitated by evidence that could be collated in Cambridge of the variation in paper quality over the years 1820 to 1839, and the quality of the colouring of the engravings). No evidence was found suggesting that fresh printing plates had been created other than for the new wrapper.

If none of these wrappers had been bound in, there would be no immediate way to know that the contents of these five volumes are not the first impression. This, no doubt, explains why there is so little information available about the "1850" edition.

Having drafted this paper, and sent it out for comment, the junior author heard from Gerlof Mees, that he doubted that Baillière, in spite of his very precisely worded announcement, had in fact made a reimpression. Might there not in fact have been a purchase of unissued printed stock, of both text and plates, sufficient for the assembly of a good number of copies? This was discussed with Alwyne Wheeler, who also felt that the financial requirements for printing a new impression would have deterred such a venture. Richard Linenthal suggested that it was not uncommon during the 20th century for stocks of part works to be remaindered and when necessary individual parts were reprinted to allow the stock to be used to best advantage. The fact that the eight page *Tableau Méthodique*, issued with livraison 87 of the first edition, is included also argues against a fresh impression. Any conscientious publisher should have noticed the duplication as well as the footnote on page 1 of the final *Tableau Méthodique* stating that these earlier pages should be suppressed.

On balance we conclude that this is simply a copy that was remaindered and made available by Baillière in the guise of a fresh impression.

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