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LIGHTNER, James (editor). *Parry's California notebooks, 1849–51 with letters to John Torrey. Charles Christopher Parry (1823–1890).* San Diego Flora, San Diego, California: 2014. Pp vi, 170; illustrated. Price: US$ 24.95 (hardback). ISBN 9780974998169.

LIGHTNER, James. *San Diego County native plants in the 1830s. The collections of Thomas Coulter, Thomas Nuttall, and H. M. S. Sulphur with George Barclay and Richard Hinds.* San Diego Flora, San Diego, California: 2014. Pp [ii], 54: illustrated. Price US$ 9.95 (paperback). ISBN 9780974998145.

Charles Parry's notebooks record his work in California, and the editor, James Lightner, has interpolated Parry's contemporary letters to John Torrey. The transcriptions are appropriately annotated. It is an attractive small book of undoubted value to botanists and of more general interest. Parry's text describes the landscape, weather, plants and people. He is occasionally quite poetic: "A newborn moon hangs her crescent over the western hills and by its full orbed light we hope to see our way to winter quarters on the Pacific." Among other matters, he carefully noted the food plants cultivated by the Yuma Indians – they relied on several varieties of beans of "excellent quality", and looked on maize "as a luxury". The notebook gives glimpses into the frustrations of a plant collector in California in the mid-1800s. The loss of a sextant when a pack mule ran away was only one of the misfortunes to deprive Parry of his scientific equipment – "a broken barometer and lost thermometer completed our feckless expedition."

The second booklet deals with plant-hunting by Thomas Coulter, Thomas Nuttall, George Barclay and Richard Hinds. I was particularly impressed that Lightner has identified Coulter's companions on the trek to the Gila-Colorado confluence. The group included Jonathan T. Warner, who wrote about the journey, as well as David E. Jackson and Ewing Young, men who "were tough and experienced" trappers. This adds significantly to the information my late co-author Alan Probert was able to unearth for our biography of Coulter (*A man who can speak of plants* ... : reviewed in *Archives of natural history* **23**: 454. 1996). This volume concludes with a "selected" list of plants native to San Diego known to have been collected by the quartet, and an extensive series of notes. Colour photographs of some specimens collected by these men, now held in the herbarium of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, are among the illustrations.

DOI: 10.3366/anh.2014.0259 E. CHARLES NELSON

GLAUBRECHT, Matthias. *Am Ende des Archipels: Alfred Russel Wallace*. Galiani, Berlin: 2013. Pp 442; illustrated. Price € 24.99 (hardback). ISBN 9783869710709.

In 2013, the year of the centenary of the death of Alfred Russel Wallace (1823–1913), he was widely celebrated for his achievements in the natural sciences. Wallace has given us plenty of reasons for celebrating his life and legacy – his role as the co-discoverer (with Charles Darwin) of the principle of evolution through natural selection is just one of them. However, it is the one that most of his biographers tend to focus on, and this new German biography is no exception.

The anniversary year prompted a flurry of new publications about Wallace in the English-speaking world, including a facsimile edition and annotated transcription of some of Wallace's most important notebooks by James T. Costa (2013 *On the organič law of change*. Jamaica Plain). Numerous articles, television programmes, lectures, exhibitions, and online resources helped to bring Wallace into focus again, for the scientific community as well as the general public.

Outside the English-speaking world, however, Wallace, as opposed to Darwin, is little known. Matthias Glaubrecht, evolutionary biologist at the Natural History Museum Berlin, has now addressed this imbalance with the first biography of Wallace in German. He is particularly well-placed for it – he is also the author of a recent biography of Charles Darwin (in 2009), as well as of various articles about Darwin and Wallace. Glaubrecht highlights particular aspects of Wallace, especially the wonderful

combination of the intrepid traveller and the astute scientist, with whom he shares a great ability to communicate complicated concepts and facts clearly and captivatingly. The biography indeed often reads more like a suspense-filled crime story than a biography (most German reviews have commented on that fact).

Once again, it is the "who done it" question of precedence in the race for cracking and publishing the principle of evolution which takes centre stage. The usual conspiracy theories rear their heads – but only to be put through a rigorous analysis of historical sources by Glaubrecht. His approach works, mainly for two reasons. As it is the first biography of Wallace in German, this issue is not as "exhausted" (in the absence of decisive new evidence) as it is in England. It also touches on Wallace's work in the context of German natural history, which previously has not received much attention.

The second reason is, in fact, one of the reasons why this biography deserves to be translated into English. His disentangled perspective on the whole precedence-issue allows for one of the most lucid and comprehensive summaries of the evidence, primary and secondary sources, to date (there is a separate annotated bibliography and a chronology of events and evidence). There is no need for Glaubrecht to choose between "Camp Wallace" and "Camp Darwin" – he is also free from some of the personal rivalries between researchers that muddy the already murky waters of historical evidence in the English-speaking world.

His short conclusion "Five misconceptions about Wallace" convincingly achieves a balance between what is known, what remains unknown, and what should be more widely known about Wallace. An example would be that Wallace was indeed the first to publish the "tree of life" metaphor in 1855 which is now always associated with Darwin.

Another reason why this biography deserves to be translated into English is the Epilogue, "The lost forests". Glaubrecht concludes with a sobering warning about Wallace's most important discovery apart from the principle of evolution, and the environment he researched (especially what is now Indonesia, Malaysia and Borneo): "The Wallace-line in the middle of the Archipelago will only ever continue to exist on a map", as the key species making up the transitional zone between the fauna of Asia and Australia will soon have vanished along with their habitat. Wallace's Archipelago, as well as Wallace's Amazon, will become another Atlantis, and will follow Wallace into obscurity. Wallace, unassuming as he was, would probably have agreed that more energy should be put into saving this crucial environment than his reputation. A living legacy is worth more than a good epitaph – it can only be hoped that Wallace as a great activist himself will inspire as many deeds as words.

DOI: 10.3366/anh.2014.0260 ELAINE CHARWAT

RITTERBUSCH, Cory. *H. S. Pepoon: pioneer conservationist of northwest Illinois (essays on ecology 1904–1933).* Prairie Works, Inc., Galena: 2011. Pp viii, 191; illustrated. Price US$ 30.00 (paperback). ISBN 9780615431239.

Herman Silas Pepoon (1860–1941) was born in northwestern Illinois in the Driftless Area he so loved. After receiving a degree in natural history at the University of Illinois in 1881, he was trained as a physician but left the medical profession in 1892. After a summer of training at Woods Hole in Massachusetts, he served as botany instructor at Lake Forest High School in Chicago for 38 years. Prior to reading this book, I was aware of Pepoon's classic 1927 volume *An annotated flora of the Chicago area* and had encountered his name in the historical works of Greenberg (2004, 2008), which are also centred on the Chicago region. The present volume, however, emphasises Pepoon's work in northwestern Illinois and the bulk of its pages are taken up by twelve of his essays on such topics as the destruction of the flora originally present on his family's farm, the flora of cliffs, a survey of the flora of a railroad right-of-way, ecological surveys of the Driftless Area, and his most significant plant discovery, the bird's eye primrose (*Primula mistassinica*), a boreal species with a disjunct population on cliffs in the Apple River Canyon. As noted by Ritterbusch, the value of these works is the detailed