Obituaries

ERIC SMOOTHEY EDEES
(1907—1993)

Eric Edees was born at Runcorn, Cheshire, on 5 June 1907 and died on 14 October 1993. He was the son of Isaac Edees, a Methodist minister, and Eric himself was for many years a lay preacher in the Methodist church. The family moved to Manchester, where he was educated at Manchester Grammar School, and went on to read Classics at Manchester University. In 1930 he moved to Stoke-on-Trent as a history teacher, and from that time Staffordshire was his adopted county.

He joined the North Staffordshire Field Club in 1938 and was elected Chairman of their Botany Section in 1941 on the retirement of W. T. Boydon Ridge. He held this post until his death and was a most active and distinguished member of the Field Club. He joined our Society, then the Botanical Exchange Club, in 1943. Eric's long-term study of Staffordshire plants resulted in his *Flora of Staffordshire*, published in 1972. He was a founder member of the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust.

Eric Edees' important contributions to British field botany were recognised by the award of the North Staffordshire Field Club's Spanton Medal (1948) and Robert Garner Silver Medal (1955), the Linnean Society of London's H. H. Bloomer Silver Medal (1975) and a Master of Science degree by Keele University. He was elected an Honorary member of the B.S.B.I.

He was a quiet and courteous man, but held strong opinions. He was a natural teacher with a wide knowledge of plants, who would patiently explain in the field the diagnostic characters of his beloved *Rubus* to everyone interested. His wife Margaret, who gave him much support and help with the *Flora*, predeceased him, but he is survived by two brothers and a sister.

B. R. Fowler

ERIC EDEES' CONTRIBUTION TO BRITISH BATOLOGY

I first met Eric at a Breckland field meeting in 1965, but it was not until 1967, when I needed to make progress with *Rubus* for the Cheshire Flora, that a closer relationship developed. I had sent a few specimens for his determination, but had omitted to ensure that the pressings retained the essential characters of the plants. They were cursorily returned unnamed, but he invited me to meet him on our county march to inspect the local brambles on both sides of the line. Thus began a 20-year period of fruitful cooperation in bramble study.

Eric first came to grips with *Rubus* in 1936 when he submitted local gatherings to W. C. Barton. Later he turned to Francis Rilstone for enlightenment and assistance in naming specimens. Unfortunately, Rilstone's detailed knowledge was mainly of the Cornish bramble flora, but nevertheless he was able to name the more widespread Staffordshire plants satisfactorily. This early collaboration, conducted energetically on both sides, culminated in the joint publication of a local Staffordshire bramble as *Rubus daltrii* in 1945.

Thereafter, specimens were submitted to William Watson, then the Botanical Exchange Club's referee for *Rubus*. Eventually, in 1950, Watson visited Staffordshire to examine growing bushes which he could not name satisfactorily in the dried state. Eric was not impressed by the initial hesitation on encountering the plants, followed later by pronouncement of an obscure name exhumed from the recesses of Sudre's *Rubi Europae*. Watson's view at that time apparently was that inability to ascribe a name amounted to a stain on his reputation, an attitude completely at variance with Eric's careful, methodical, and above all cautious approach to the determination of *Rubus* specimens.

Following Watson's death in 1954, Eric became the B.S.B.I.'s referee for *Rubus* and published the first of his 'county' articles, on the brambles of Staffordshire, in 1955. These consisted of a list of species, with notes on the features, taxonomic history and distribution of each. As referee, he was approached for help by several county Flora writers, which resulted in accounts for Derbyshire in 1959 and Lincolnshire in 1966. While these, together with visits to Cheshire in support of my own 1971 Flora, were a natural development of his Staffordshire experience, receipt of gatherings from Scottish and Welsh botanists, in particular Miss U.K. Duncan, Miss M. McCallum Webster and T. A. W. Davis, reinforced his developing conviction that a number of taxa lacked descriptions in the literature and could not be satisfactorily named from either Rogers' or Watson's handbooks. His outlook on methodology is well set out in 'The difficulties of a *Rubus* referee' (*Proceedings of the Botanical Society of the British Isles* **3**: 281–282, 1959). Visits were made further afield during summer to Scotland, Mid-Wales, Cumbria, Norfolk (at regular intervals), Suffolk, Hampshire and Cornwall.

B. A. Miles had, from 1961 onwards, set himself the task of refinding Watson's and J. E. Woodhead's collecting sites, amassing much definitive material of taxa described in Watson's *Handbook*. Based in south-eastern England and applying himself to the task with vigour, he built up a detailed knowledge of the brambles of the Home Counties, both in field and herbarium, as well as a burgeoning distrust of Watson's taxonomy. Eric was pleased to find a batologist familiar with the South-East to complement his own mainly Midland and Northern experience. Specimens were exchanged, problems ventilated and provisional conclusions reached about many of the conundrums discussed in a lively correspondence. A few tentative proposals were made, e.g. to embark on regional reviews of bramble taxonomy and nomenclature. Eric visited Miles in 1968, when specimens were examined and cooperation within spheres of influence mooted. No definitive plan of action had, however, been agreed before Miles' untimely death in January 1970.

I had already decided to publish some of the unnamed Cheshire brambles for inclusion in my Flora (virtually my batological apprenticeship). Fortunately our contiguous counties allowed frequent Saturday visits to Eric's house at Newcastle-under-Lyme for reviews at first of **MANCH** specimens, then of our own collections, as well as parcels from enthusiasts, who now included Messrs Kenneth and Stirling from Scotland and Messrs Ironside-Wood and Bull from eastern England. Eric had been given a number of Rilstone's specimens (including continental sheets) by Woodhead and also a selection of Watson's herbarium. This material, together with his own expanding gatherings, became the reference point for comparison and discussion.

When I broached the subject of possible publications, including a revision of *Rubus* in Britain, he was lukewarm on anything other than staged regional accounts, insisting that our knowledge was inadequate. It was clear that, if the British *Rubi* were to be better understood, syntype material of British and Continental authors must be critically examined.

In 1972 I determined to collect together the relevant material for study, no easy task as it is scattered across the herbaria of Europe. I was fortunate to enlist the support of the late David Valentine, then Professor of Botany at Manchester University, in gaining access to the biggest and best British collection, the Barton and Riddelsdell herbarium (**BM**). Barton's photographs and notes, the fruit of 25 years' study, including discussion of Muller's and Focke's taxa, as well as the whole of Sudre's *Batotheca Europaea*, were sent on loan to Manchester Museum, where Charles Bailey's *Rubi* were also made available. These, together with sheets loaned from Kew, the South London Botanical Institute and Lausanne, with Rogers' **BM** syntypes, enabled me to assemble groups of associated specimens. Referring to the literature passim, I began to review the *Rubus* list: as assessment was completed, I took the groups of specimens to Eric for his independent opinion. We then compared notes and found that in most cases our views coincided. It became clear that it was sensible for each of us to concentrate on our adopted fields of interest. I began to compile articles for publication, and after some hesitation, Eric followed suit, not however until I had faced him with the thought that a chance encounter with a bus could render his hard-won expertise abortive: his published contribution was vital if progress was to be made.

Two developments in the mid-1970s served to advance British batological aspirations. First, our growing contacts with the Continent, particularly H. Weber in Germany and H. Vannerom in Belgium, enabled concepts to be challenged or confirmed and elucidation of the N. W. European bramble flora to reach an advanced state. Second, there was the launch of a projected 'Flora of Great Britain and Ireland', for which Eric and I committed ourselves to write *Rubus* for Volume 2.

This task filled almost four years and required a disciplined, systematic approach. Eric concentrated on descriptions and keys, while my contribution embraced the geography, ecology and nomenclature. There was, of course, regular discussion on problems in both spheres. Joint meetings were held in the field and once in the Cambridge University Herbarium, where the profusion and diversity of material readily available, along with library facilities, provided a major stimulus for research.

Unfortunately the Flora project was becalmed by the ill-health of two of the three editors and our *Rubus* account languished until, in 1985, I approached the Ray Society with a view to publishing our work as a monograph. By this time Eric had retired from active batology and compilation of the introductory material fell to my lot, as well as the assembly of supporting features and liaison with our stalwart editor, D. H. Kent. Eric's eagle eye, was, however, cast fruitfully over the final draft and he was quietly pleased and proud to look through the finished product in July 1988.

Through the years of our collaboration, his steadfast adherence to defined objectives, sound judgement based on meticulous attention to detail, with discussion lightened by bluff, occasionally quirky humour, made for a congenial relationship which I shall always cherish.

A. NEWTON

ERIC EDEES, NORFOLK AND NORFOLK BRAMBLES

Eric Edees' wife, Margaret, was born in the village of Necton, near Swaffham, Norfolk, and her family were still living there a few years ago, and probably still do. As a result, many holidays were spent at Necton, in the course of which Eric collected sufficient material to produce a short MS entitled 'The Flora of the Swaffham district'. It was never published, but his efforts were not wasted, as the MS was passed on to Eric Swann, co-author of *The Flora of Norfolk*, in which the use of Edees' work is acknowledged. Eric (Edees) told me on one occasion that, when the family went to the sea for the day, either to Blakeney or to the Wells/Holkham area of the North Norfolk coast, he would go with them, then turn round and walk the 30 or so miles back to Necton, botanising all the way.

I first met him at the end of the 1960s. In the previous two seasons I had been struggling unsuccessfully to come to terms with *Rubus*, using W. C. R. Watson's *Handbook*, and sending a small package of wildly inaccurately identified specimens to Eric for 'confirmation'. The only one I ever got right at that stage was *R. ulmifolius*! In 1970 I wrote and asked if I might impose on his goodwill again and send another parcel, to which he replied that he would be visiting his wife's relatives during October, and if I cared to wait until then, he would call and name them. Then, if I had a site nearby with a number of species in that we could walk round, he would name those that he could so late in the season. I could mark them, and examine them during the summer of the following year, and I would then have a basis on which to build.

We lived at Foxley at the time, with the large area of ancient woodland, Foxley Wood, just 1 km away, which I had permission to visit. The day duly arrived, and so did Eric and Margaret Edees, my gatherings were named, and he expressed himself surprised at one or two of my discoveries. We spent an hour walking around the wood and I had 14 named species to collect next season – indeed the basis for all my subsequent work on *Rubus*. Within a year or two, it became obvious that in Norfolk, as in most other counties, there were brambles that did not have names, and two stood out as being widespread and locally abundant.

In 1977, Eric came to stay with us for a week, and we visited many sites in Norfolk and Suffolk. From gatherings made on this visit, the names *R. boudiccae* and *R. norvicensis* were both subsequently published. Since then, both have been discovered to have a much wider distribution than East Anglia, with the former here and there across central and southern England, and a number of sites in southern Ireland, and the latter as far south and west as Hampshire and Guernsey.

I felt sometimes that Eric's fascination for brambles was something of a 'love-hate' relationship, which was borne home to me whilst investigating *R. norvicensis* in depth. We stood in a large woodland clearing with a seemingly endless mix of plants all around, some of which were nameable, several others not. Turning slowly through 180°, glaring silently all around as he did so, he suddenly

exclaimed: "I hate blackberries!". We all feel like that from time-to-time, but 25 years of study of them has given me a deal of satisfaction – a satisfaction which I should not have had, had Eric not gone some distance out of his way to help a beginner.

A. BULL

RICHARD WILLIAM ('DICK') DAVID
(1912—1993)

To his large circle of friends and colleagues, Richard David, who died on 25 April 1993, will always be known and remembered as 'Dick'. It is some indication of the breadth of his interests and the attractive qualities of his personality that very many botanical friends had little or no knowledge of his considerable academic achievements as a Shakespearean scholar or his professional career in learned publishing as University Publisher and Secretary to the Syndics of Cambridge University Press.

Dick David was born on 28 January 1912 in Winchester, where his father, the Rev. F. P. David, was a Housemaster at the College, and Dick went there as a Scholar. His academic career was smoothly brilliant, and he entered Corpus Christi College to read first Classics and then English in 1931. After graduating, followed by a year's research in Paris, he wrote a Prize Essay on Shakespeare's dramatic poetry, which was published by Cambridge University Press in 1935 when the author was only 23. In the following year he joined the Press as assistant secretary. This publishing career was interrupted by wartime service in the Royal Navy, in which he rose to be a Lieutenant-Commander, and after the war Dick returned to the Press and rose steadily to his leading position among academic publishing, a service recognised by his C.B.E. in 1967.

Whilst English literature and Shakespearean studies were Dick's main academic interest, and publishing his professional expertise, he was keenly interested in the countryside and in field botany in particular, having acquired at an early age his mother's love of flowers. Dick's own delightful account of how he was given the "Bentham & Hooker Illustrations on his fourth birthday and encouraged by his mother to paint in the daisy and the dandelion" can be found in his 1980 Presidential Address to the B.S.B.I., "Gentlemen and Players" (*Watsonia* **13**: 173–179, 1981). Throughout his career, the family holiday home at Polzeath on the beautiful Camel estuary in Cornwall drew Dick most summers, and immersed him in a very different botanical world from that provided by Cambridge; and his friendship with John and Faith Raven, together with his enthusiasm for fly-fishing, also made him a regular holiday visitor to Ardtornish on the marvellous Morvern peninsula in Argyll, again a totally contrasting botanical scene.

Dick's Presidential Address reminds us that his own contribution to botany can be taken as a model of the value of that close link between amateur and professional which is undoubtedly one of the main reasons why the Botanical Society of the British Isles continues to serve the science of taxonomy so well. With long service on the Society's Publications and Records Committees, and following an established tradition of alternation between amateur and professional in the post, Dick became President of the B.S.B.I. for the customary two-year stint from 1979 to 1981, and in that position made his unique contribution. It was a time of continuing change in the B.S.B.I., which needed to address important questions of orientation and policy, especially in the field of the conservation of the natural environment. The Society's pioneer role in the Distribution Maps Scheme in the 1950s and 1960s had firmly established the value of systematic recording of the British flora in determining policies for nature conservation, and Dick put much effort into liaison with both official and voluntary conservation bodies to shape the way ahead. He had, as early as 1955, become the B.S.B.I.'s Recorder for East Cornwall (v.c. 2), and later in 1961 took on the post for West Cornwall (v.c. 1) as well. From these interests developed his friendship with Len Margetts, with whom he collaborated to produce the *Review of the Cornish Flora, 1980* in 1981. Len recalls (in Davies (1994)) how "his quiet humour, modesty and expertise made him an ideal companion, and our shared fascination for the lesser critical groups – *Euphrasia* (eyebrights) and *Fumaria* (fumitories) in particular – ensured a succession of Cornish venues."

What of the sedges, the botanical passion of Dick's later years? In his account of his own friendship with Dick, Clive Jermy (in Davies 1994) reminds us how it all began: "In 1968 the Botanical Society of the British Isles published a little book aimed at helping botanists identify British and Irish sedges. It had been written by myself, together with my former tutor, Tom Tutin, under whom I had researched the group at Leicester University. As with all books, we as authors had a few copies to give to those friends who had helped, and when those were satisfied I had one left. Tom said "I think you should send that to Dick David at the Cambridge University Press. I think he likes sedges!"

Tom Tutin's pithy sentence was proved to be a monumental understatement, for, in his retirement, Dick became devoted to the British sedges and obviously found, in his careful, planned survey of the surviving field populations in the British Isles of many of the rarer *Carex* species, a perfectly satisfying way of combining his zeal and expertise in field botany with his deep enjoyment of the 'wild places' of the British and Irish countryside. In this he was following an honourable tradition of gifted amateurs. He did much more than mere recording, however; stimulated by his growing friendship with two outstanding professional botanists, Arthur Chater and Clive Jermy, he tackled the notorious 'critical' sedge groups of *Carex muricata* and *C. flava*, and the fruits of their joint labours are available to all to appreciate in the second edition of the Society's Handbook, entitled *Sedges of the British Isles* (Jermy, A. C., Chater, A. O. & David, R. W., 1982) – a book, incidentally, that is much appreciated and used by many Continental European botanists as providing an up-to-date and definitive survey of an important European genus.

In his attitude to that other great traditional British hobby, gardening, Dick differed significantly from many of his fellow-botanists in having a foot in both camps. He could search for hours for an insignificant rare alpine sedge of no conceivable interest to gardeners, but he also developed a parallel passion for that very attractive horticultural genus, *Crocus*, which provided him with occasions for field trips abroad in the winter and early spring when the sedges were 'lying low'. In part, the stimulus to take up the study of *Crocus* was provided by his association with the University Botanic Garden in Cambridge, an institution for which he developed a deep affection, especially after he and his wife Nora moved to a house nearby. A frequent visitor to the Botanic Garden, especially to the rock garden and alpine house in early spring, Dick served as a Manager of the Cory Fund, which administers the important Reginald Cory bequest to the Garden, from 1979 to 1982. During my time as Director (1973–83) Dick began to use the facilities of the Experimental and Research Area of the Garden to grow wild-origin stocks of his critical sedges under comparable conditions, and it is pleasant to record that we still have plants derived from these stocks in cultivation in the Garden on the Systematic Beds.

No picture of Dick would be remotely adequate without some reference to his happy marriage and family life. In 1935 he married Nora Blakesley, a graduate of Newnham College who shared Dick's interests in the countryside, travel and the theatre in particular, but whose own career took her into local and national Labour Party politics, culminating in a life peerage in 1978. It was a constant source of admiration to their many friends that Dick and Nora happily pursued their separate careers from a firm and affectionate family basis with shared pleasure in the careers of their four children, Dick coping with amused tolerance with the unusual social problem of being plain 'Mr David' to Nora's 'Lady David'.

Dick was active to the end. He died in Corsica on a field excursion to see the lovely *Crocus*. We all feel a great loss, not least because the modern world seems to produce fewer selfless 'gentlemen' of Dick's calibre, but we realise that increasing incapacity in old age would have been difficult for Dick to tolerate, and the end was appropriate. Our sympathies go out to Nora and the family.

I am personally indebted to Nora and others concerned for permission to use and to quote from draft texts of some contributions to a volume of essays, *Dick David remembered by his friends*, covering the many facets of Dick's life. This volume, edited by Dick's son-in-law Tony Davies (1994), contains inter alia a bibliography of Dick's published works, including the botanical ones (available from L. A. Davies, 50 Clarence Road, Birmingham, B13 9UH).

S. M. WALTERS

KATHLEEN MARGARET HOLLICK
(1913—1993)

Kathleen was a keen plantswoman and an able artist. Her garden at the Old House at Ashbourne, a shadow of its former self, is sadly neglected since she tragically lost all her mental powers – she was in a nursing home for some years before death released her on 6 December 1993. But her drawings will not die.

She was born on 26 October 1913, the only daughter of a much respected G.P. of the town, where she lived all her life. She was educated by a governess, Miss Orme, who kindled her life-long absorption in plants.

She was B.S.B.I. Recorder for Derbyshire (v.c. 57) for 36 years up to 1985. Professor A. R. Clapham wrote in his *Flora of Derbyshire*, which came out in 1961, that he was "very deeply indebted" to her. She was the mainspring of the two Supplements to the *Flora* in 1974 and 1979, which she produced with Susan Patrick of the Derby Museum. She knew her county very well, its landscapes, people, history and all, her travelling done by bicycle, bus or train. She had close connections with the lovely parish church next door to her really old house, and she wrote its history. She helped her father plant the daffodils in the local churchyard, and it is due to her insistence that the grass should not be mown until the flowering was over and the foliage had died down, that they are still the magnificent show they are today.

We are told that when the steeple was being repaired, she went up the steeple-jack's ladder to the top – she was then over 60. This was typical of her 'go' and dauntless spirit, in all weathers too.

Her garden was open to the public on occasions for charity, with good plants which she would talk interestingly about. Several of them had been sent her for drawing, to ensure she had fresh material.

She made scores and scores of drawings of wild flowers. The first were for Dr R. W. Butcher's two-volume *New Illustrated British Flora* of 1961, no fewer than 359 of them. She also did many for the sadly never-finished *British Alien Flora*, originally conceived as Volume 3 of Butcher's work.

Her interests included local history (her notes on early tiles are in the Derbyshire County Records Office), birds, regular duck counts, and being a member of the Conservation Committee of the Derby Wildlife Trust; and she was no sleeping Fellow of the Linnean Society of London.

Our happy memories of her go back over 50 (D.McC.) and over 20 (A.B.) years, as always a welcoming, lively and inspiriting companion and friend. Her herbarium and drawings are in the Museum at Derby. Her private collection of paintings has been kept within the family.

We are grateful to her niece Mrs Joanna Neal for help with details of her life.

D. McCLINTOCK & A. BURNS

KENNETH GUY MESSENGER
(1920—1993)

All who knew him were shocked and saddened at the news of the sudden death of Guy Messenger in November 1993, especially as some were expecting to meet him at the B.S.B.I. Annual Exhibition Meeting to be held on the following day, and at which Guy had been intending to mount an exhibit.

Kenneth Guy Messenger was born on 26 February 1920 at Hampstead, London. His father was a dentist, and Lecturer and Consultant at Guy's Hospital; his mother had been a nurse at Guy's. He had one brother and one sister. His childhood was spent at Hendon. He was educated at Grove Park Preparatory School and Felsted School, Essex, at the latter as a scholar. In 1937 he began the course of Medical Studies at Guy's Hospital, but he abandoned this in 1939 when he went up to Emmanuel College, Cambridge to read for the Natural Sciences Tripos in Chemistry, Zoology and Botany. This course was interrupted by military service, most of which he spent in India and Ceylon in the Royal Corps of Signals. After the Second World War he returned to Cambridge, and graduated with Second Class Honours in 1949.

At first he thought of specializing in Marine Biology, but decided on a career as a teacher. He was appointed Senior Biology Master at Uppingham School in September 1949, and taught there for 31 years, retiring in 1980. He had read Zoology for the second part of his Tripos, and claimed to have

been somewhat shaky on the Botany at the beginning of his teaching career. However, he acknowledged his debt to Humphrey Gilbert Carter at Cambridge and the stimulus provided by acquaintance with other botanists such as Max Walters and Paul Richards. In 1957, at the instigation of John H. Chandler of Stamford and Franklyn Perring, he joined the B.S.B.I. and began recording for the Atlas Distribution Maps Scheme. In the Preface to his *Flora of Rutland* Guy expresses amazement at his own temerity in undertaking a 10-km square for this survey in the state he considered his own botanical knowledge to be, but he had the cooperation of a very competent botanist in John Chandler. His efforts for the Distribution Maps Scheme provided some of the groundwork for a complete survey of the county of Rutland on a tetrad basis, with the assistance of John Chandler and an enthusiastic team of Uppingham schoolboys. The outcome of this survey was Guy's *Flora of Rutland*, published in 1972.

I first became acquainted with Guy Messenger when he joined the Leicestershire Flora Committee at its inauguration in 1967. His experience on the Rutland *Flora* was invaluable, and he was also a very useful committee member with a shrewd capacity for cutting Gordian knots and breaking vicious circles. He and I made several 'square-bashing' excursions together, sometimes in my area and at others in the large area of Leicestershire adjacent to Rutland for which he had assumed the responsibility. My friendship with him really matured after 1974 when he undertook the specialist work on the critical groups *Ulmus*, *Rubus*, *Hieracium* and *Taraxacum*, and I took on the work for *Rosa*. Together we covered the greater part of Leicestershire, Guy recording elms and I roses. Our conversations during these forays would have amused an outside observer, consisting as they did of monologues on *Rosa* and *Ulmus*, delivered almost simultaneously with little mutual comprehension. Later I spent some days with him at Uppingham, helping him to make a complete survey of the Rutland roses for the supplement to the *Flora of Rutland* which, alas, he did not live to complete.

Guy's interest in the genus *Ulmus* began with his Rutland survey, and was enhanced by the survey of Leicestershire, during which he was working against time, because the ravages of Dutch Elm Disease were rapidly destroying nearly all the adult elm trees in the county. He had two long sessions with R. H. Richens at Cambridge on *Ulmus*, and the study of the genus became one of the two absorbing interests during his retirement. His object was to devise a practicable scheme which would reconcile the two violently opposed current taxonomic views of the treatment of the genus. He accumulated a vast quantity of data, but had not arrived at a workable solution to the problem. He was not, I think, a very systematic worker, and was also a perfectionist who would not dream of publishing anything until he was absolutely sure of his facts. He was probably, too, diffident of setting himself up as an authority against the eminent people who have studied the genus. It is to be hoped that the notes he has left can be effectively used by others in the future, and that all his work will not have been wasted.

Guy never married, and after the death of his mother lived a solitary life with only his Siamese cat for company. Nevertheless he was a sociable person and was good company, with a wry and sometimes slightly bawdy sense of humour. He derived great pleasure from classical music, and played the double bass in the Uppingham School orchestra. His second main absorbing interest besides *Ulmus*, and of longer standing, was in cartobibliography. He amassed a collection of more than 5000 Ordnance Survey maps, and published a monograph on the 1-inch maps. He was also a leader in the Brathay Exploration Group, and was one of the authors of the *Flora of Foula*. He contributed several articles to the B.S.B.I.'s journals, and his interest in maps and mapping no doubt inspired him to contribute the topographical and botanical gazeteers for his own *Flora of Rutland* and the *Flora of Leicestershire*. He was elected a fellow of the Linnean Society of London in 1974.

All in all, Guy was a warm-hearted man with a keen mind, wide interests, and sound views on all subjects. He will no doubt be remembered with affection by many of his former Uppingham School pupils. He certainly made a name for himself in botanical circles, and will be sadly missed by his many friends.

A. L. PRIMAVESI

SIR GEORGE TAYLOR
(1904—1993)

Sir George Taylor, Keeper of Botany at the British Museum (Natural History) 1950–1956, Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, 1956–1971, and a Life Member of the Botanical Society of the British Isles, which he joined in 1933, died at Dunbar, Lothian, on 12 November 1993, in his ninetieth year. He was born in Edinburgh on 15 February 1904, the only son (though he had three sisters) of William Taylor and Jane Sloan, and was educated at George Heriot's School, where, it is said, encouraged by a housemaster, George Scott, he developed a keen interest in field botany, cycling extensively around the countryside in search of rare plants. Although remembered chiefly as a botanical and horticultural administrator, he had a sound knowledge of British plants, with a particular fondness for, and interest in, the Scottish flora. Indeed his attachment to Edinburgh, Scotland and things Scottish, persisted throughout a lifetime spent largely in the south of England. He was proud of his 'Scottishness', and to the end of his life retained, almost unmodified, his Scottish accent.

On leaving school he went to Edinburgh University, where he had a distinguished academic career, graduating in 1926 with first class honours in Botany, and being awarded the Vans Dunlop Scholarship. After a collecting trip to South Africa, in company with Reginald Cory, he joined the staff of the Botany Department of the British Museum (Natural History) in 1928, where – apart from wartime secondment to the Air Ministry – he remained until 1956, becoming Deputy to the easy-going John Ramsbottom in 1946, and succeeding him as Keeper of Botany in 1950. Those of us who first became acquainted with the B.M. Botany Department in the immediate post-war years, may remember the occasion as a somewhat intimidating one, with the choleric A. J. Wilmott ruling like one of the less predictable Roman Emperors over the European section of the herbarium, while those who ventured into exotic botany risked the sharp-tongued derision of the disputatious J. E. Dandy. It was not a place for the weak-nerved; in such company, George Taylor, formidable though he could be, seemed the very model of normality.

George Taylor had developed a special interest in the botany of the Himalayan region during his Edinburgh days, and this enthusiasm remained with him throughout his life. In 1934 he published an excellent monograph of the genus *Meconopsis*, for which he was awarded a doctorate, and in 1938, just before the outbreak of the Second World War, he accompanied Frank Ludlow and George Sherriff on what was to prove for him a memorable collecting trip to Bhutan and S. E. Tibet.

Early in his career at the B.M. he had begun to take an interest in *Potamogeton* (pondweeds), and working with J. E. Dandy, published a series of critical revisions of the species and hybrids in *Journal of Botany* and *Watsonia*. Along with Dandy he was for many years a B.S.B.I. referee for this difficult genus. For most of his career he was a leading authority on the family *Podostemaceae*, a remarkable group, many of the species superficially resembling bryophytes rather than flowering plants.

In 1956, on the retirement of Sir Edward Salisbury, George Taylor was appointed Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, a post for which he was eminently well qualified. He already knew most of the Kew botanical staff; he had served as Botanical Secretary of the Linnean Society from 1951 to 1956, and as a member of the Royal Horticultural Society's Council from 1951. Furthermore he was a keen practical gardener, very proud of the rarities he had successfully established in his garden at Rickmansworth.

Kew in 1956 was still recovering from the effects of the war years and the austerities of the early post-war period; considerable areas of the Gardens had changed little since the beginning of the century, and there were uninviting expanses of dull, commonplace evergreens, by this time aged and often overgrown. These the new Director replaced with rhododendrons, camellias and other flowering trees and shrubs. A Heath Garden provided colour at a season when there was little else to catch the eye. Waste ground at the back of Kew Palace (which the Duke of Edinburgh had accurately described as "a bit of a dump") was transformed into the popular Queen's Garden. A new Jodrell Laboratory was built, and a new wing added to the Herbarium; Kew took over control of the fine gardens at Wakehurst Place, Ardingly, Sussex. Looking back, one wonders how so much was accomplished in a relatively short time. But George Taylor was a vigorous and determined man, always ready to push ahead where a project met with his approval, and no less ready to reject any proposal which he reckoned unsound. Naturally such a decisive personality made enemies, but all

except the most irreconcilable of these would have had to admit that he was a most effective administrator. Certainly, under his Directorship, botanical research at Kew rapidly extended beyond the traditional taxonomy and anatomy into cytology, physiology and phytochemistry, and he would, I am sure, be very gratified to note the many recent advances and developments in these and other disciplines. In one respect he might not see eye-to-eye with the current programme: he once told me emphatically that he did not want Kew to be actively involved in educating the general public. He wanted it to be a fine garden and research centre, where the intellectually curious could add to their knowledge, and the others simply enjoy themselves.

He received many honours, amongst them the Victoria Medal of the R.H.S. (1956) and a knighthood (1962), and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1968. He is commemorated in the genus *Tayloriophyton* M. P. Nayar, and in no fewer than 14 species, including one British plant, the very rare willow hybrid, *Salix* × *taylorii* Rechinger f.

On retirement from Kew in 1971, Sir George became the first director of the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust, with its headquarters at Belhaven House near Dunbar. He was back in Scotland, not far from Edinburgh, and settled in a fine house in a good garden, where he was to enjoy many happy years, still in touch with many of his friends and former colleagues, and still able, through the Trust, to play an active role in assisting a wide range of horticultural and botanical projects.

Until his final illness he remained the same Sir George, restless, forthright and pungently humorous – an original character and, to me, an engaging one.

R. D. MEIKLE

SIR GEORGE TAYLOR'S STUDIES OF THE GENUS *POTAMOGETON*

Although George Taylor was best known as a botanical and horticultural administrator, it is for his studies of the genus *Potamogeton* that he will be remembered by field botanists in Britain and Ireland. This work was carried out with J. E. Dandy, in a remarkable and perhaps unique partnership which lasted until Taylor's promotion to administrative posts meant that the work had to be continued by Dandy alone.

When asked towards the end of his life when he first became interested in aquatic plants, Taylor replied that he had 'paddled in water' for as long as he could remember. The first specimens of *Potamogeton* collected by Taylor which are recorded in Dandy's card index were gathered in Scotland in 1926, and the fact that he found at least eleven taxa that year (including the rare hybrid *P.* × *olivaceus*) suggests that he already had some knowledge of the genus, or immediately discovered that he had an affinity with it. If Taylor collected much material in the next few years it has not survived, but he collected extensively in both England and Scotland in 1932. These collections included the very rare *P.* × *griffithii* from Loch na Creige Duibhe, Argyll; this population had been described as *P. macvicarii* by Arthur Bennett in 1907 but Taylor was the first to attempt to refind the plant. The specimen was submitted to the acknowledged expert in the genus, W. H. Pearsall, who misidentified it as *P. alpinus*; Dandy and Taylor themselves were later to sort out the taxonomy of this hybrid.

J. E. Dandy became interested in *Potamogeton* when he worked up some specimens collected by Taylor on an expedition to Africa in 1934–35. These included some species which also occurred in Britain, and while working on them Dandy and Taylor resolved to write a monograph of the genus in Britain and Ireland. Eighteen preliminary papers were published in the series "Studies of British Potamogetons" between 1938 and 1942. These established the correct application of the name *Potamogeton pusillus* and clarified the taxonomy and British distribution of numerous species and hybrids. A 19th paper in the series, on *P.* × *sudermanicus*, was at an advanced stage of preparation when the *Journal of Botany* ceased publication in 1942, a calamity which Taylor attributed to the laziness of the editor, J. Ramsbottom. After he moved to Kew, in 1956, Taylor was unable to continue his work on *Potamogeton*. The projected monograph had by then been drafted but it was never submitted for publication: the demise of the *Journal of Botany* and Taylor's move to Kew may have been partly responsible, but the main reason was probably the reluctance of Dandy, a notorious perfectionist, to commit himself to print. Taylor did not undertake any serious work on the genus after his retirement, but he collected one or two specimens: it gave him particular pleasure

to discover *P. polygonifolius* in East Lothian in 1982, as he had searched for the species in the county for many years.

Taylor's contribution to the partnership with Dandy included extensive fieldwork (see below). During his collecting trips Taylor spent many hours in the evenings floating out specimens, usually in a bath in the hotel in which he stayed. His specimens are lodged in **BM**, with duplicates in numerous other collections. They are of outstanding quality, usually displaying entire plants from root to apex, but are not accompanied by ecological notes. During his fieldwork Taylor made the first (and, so far, the only) British collections of *P.* × *lanceolatifolius*, and also discovered the rare *P.* × *cognatus* in Scotland. Some of Taylor's wartime Yorkshire collections which appeared in the field to be *P. pectinatus* turned out on detailed examination to be *P.* × *suecicus* (*P. filiformis* × *pectinatus*), and thus established the presence of this hybrid south of the current limit of the rarer parent, *P. filiformis*. In addition to these discoveries, Taylor made a point of visiting sites where other rare hybrids had been discovered, and collecting representative material for the herbarium. He visited the Outer Hebrides in 1951 and Colonsay in 1953, for example, to follow up records made by J. W. Heslop-Harrison and his team. In addition to the fieldwork, Taylor was responsible for dissecting the stipules of many of the linear-leaved specimens determined by Dandy and Taylor, including the type specimen of *P. pusillus* in the Linnaean herbarium. The publications were, in Taylor's words, 'polished' by Dandy and therefore bear the imprint of Dandy's personality.

In his old age Taylor was justly proud of his work on *Potamogeton*. He was delighted by a chronological printout of his collections which I gave to him, and asked repeatedly whether it qualified him for an appearance in the *Guinness Book of Records*! His only regret was that the monograph which he and Dandy had planned had never materialised.

Dandy once remarked to W. T. Stearn that "George does the collecting and I do the thinking", a caustic comment which doubtless contains an element of truth. However, it is perhaps fairer to conclude with Taylor's view that theirs was a true partnership in which it was difficult and perhaps undesirable to assess their individual contributions. Certainly, Taylor's own hard work and his determination to publish must have been partly responsible for the stream of papers on the genus *Potamogeton* which appeared in the period when they were working together, a series of publications which must constitute one of the most critical and scholarly contributions made this century to the taxonomic study of the British flora.

The years in which Taylor is known to have collected *Groenlandia* and *Potamogeton* specimens are listed below, with the vice-counties in which he gathered them. I hope to publish a full bibliography of the work of Dandy and Taylor on the British and Irish *Potamogeton* taxa in a forthcoming B.S.B.I. Handbook.

1926: 83, 88, 101.
1928: 88.
1932: 8, 17, 20, 21, 24, 62, 83, 88, 97.
1933: 9, 75, 80, 81, 83, 87–90, 95, 97, 106.
1934: 62, 65, 66, 69, 73, 74, 77, 79, 81, 86, 92.
1935: 78, 80, 83, 85, 86, 88, 89, 95, 96.
1936: 57, 89, 105.
1937: 20, 21, 30, 39, 55–57, 69, 79, 80, 83–86, 88–90, 97, 98, 105.
1938: 22.
1939: 7, 8, 17, 20–22, 24, 30, 31, 63, 64, 68, 72–74, 76, 78, 81–86, 92, 93, 95, 96.
1940: 7, 20, 21, 58, 59, 61–65.
1941: 32, 53–57, 61–65, 67, 78, 80, 82–84.
1942: 32, 53, 54, 56, 62–64, 68, 77, 81, 83, 84.
1943: 23, 59, 64, 77, 85, 86, 90.
1944: 54, 56, 61–67, 86, 90.
1945: 30, 56, 59, 61–67, 77, 78, 83, 85, 86.
1946: 7–9, 11, 16, 20–22, 24, 30, 31, 56, 62, 64, 68, 77, 78, 80–83, 85, 88, 91, 92, 95, 96, 108.
1947: 21, 23, 25, 27, 28, 32, 38, 54, 56, 58, 60, 62–65, 68, 73, 75, 77, 82, 86, 90.
1948: 14, 16, 20–23, 32–34, 36, 38, 43, 80, 86, 87, 90, 108.
1949: 6, 17, 31, 32, 34, 38, 47, 50, 54, 64, 65, 67, 68, 75, 77.
1951: 110.
1952: 25, H9, H38, H39.
1953: 18, 19, 31, 48, 55, 56, 72–74, 79, 80, 85, 86, 90, 92, 96, 102.
1954: 73, 74.
1955: 31, 101.
1956: 84.
1979: 80.
1982: 82.
1984: 78.

C. D. PRESTON