

EDWARD CHARLES WALLACE (1909-1986)

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This is one in a series of articles about prominent British and Irish field-bryologists of the past. The author would be very pleased to learn of any information which supplements its content.

A Social and Biographical History of British and Irish Field-bryologists is also available on-line at <http://britishbryologicalsociety.org.uk/>

Botanical career

Wallace botanised a great deal in the Home Counties around London. He also spent many holidays in Scotland, and planned to write a bryoflora of Scotland; many packets in his herbarium were marked "Flora Scotica". He prepared 'An Annotated List of British Mosses' with Paul Richards (*Transactions of the British Bryological Society*, 1950).

He discovered *Tortella inflexa* in west Sussex in 1957, new to the British flora (although E.M. Holmes had collected it in 1904), *Hygrohypnum polare* in Western Ross in 1952, *Didymodon mamillosus* (now sunk into synonymy with *D. rigidulus*) in West Perthshire in 1967, *Pohlia crudoides* in Eastern Ross in 1968, and *Campylopus (Dicranodontium) subporodictyon* in the West Inverness-shire in 1971.

Wallace was introduced to bryology by Miss Alice G. Young, who knew Alfred Sutton of the British Bryological Society, and in 1922/3 at the age of 13 he met William Robert Sherrin at the Natural History Museum. He joined the British Bryological Society in 1926, became distributor in 1939, served as secretary from 1948 until 1969, and was elected president for 1972-73, and an honorary member in 1974.

Wallace also knew his vascular plants, as well as birds and butterflies, and served the Botanical Society of the British Isles (which he joined in 1932) in several capacities.

He bequeathed his herbarium of bryophytes to the National Museum and Gallery of Wales at Cardiff, lichens to the British Lichen Society, and vascular plants to Reading University. Liverpool Museum has 20 of his bryological packets. His papers were deposited in the British Bryological Society's archive at the National Museum and Gallery of Wales in Cardiff (minutes of the BBS's Council meeting, October 2008).

Family background and biography

Unlike most other prominent bygone bryologists, Wallace benefited neither from a comfortable middle-class family background nor from a rural environment conducive to

studying natural history. Instead, both his parents were working class, and he grew up and remained in London, where contact with other botanists while still a schoolboy acted as a portal to wider botanical world.

Edward Charles (Ted) Wallace was born at 45 Haverhill Road, Clapham, London on February 12th 1909, a son of Edward Charles Wallace (1879-1956) and Annie Maria (*née* Simmons, 1882-1966). Wallace's father was a printer's compositor in 1901 and 1911, and later became a taxi-driver.

Ted Wallace's grandfather was also Edward Charles (or Charles Edward, 1852-?1918), who was a seaman in 1871, a steam-tug engine-driver in 1881, and an engineer in 1907. He was a son of Frederick Wallace (1820-c.1858-1861), who was sometime a clerk to a lawyer, and Harriet Caroline (*née* Rabbeth, c.1825). Frederick and Harriet's son Edward Charles married Ellen Barratt or Barrett (born 1852/3), probably a daughter of Diana and John Barrett or Barratt (1827/8-<1871). John was a painter and writer in 1861. Ellen and Edward (Ted Wallace's paternal grandparents) also had two daughters, Mildred (1884-1980), who married James Thomas Curwood (c.1879-c.1967) who was a bus conductor when he married Mildred in 1909, and Ellen Diana (born 1889).

Ted Wallace's mother Annie was a daughter of Thomas Simmons and Emma Sophia (*née* Richings, 1858-1948), daughter of Andrew Richings (1835-1919) and Ann Maria (*née* Frith, 1836-1919). The Friths came from Great Marlow in Buckinghamshire. Andrew Richings was a son of John Richings (1804-<1891) and Sophia (*née* Dixon, 1801). Thomas Simmons (born 1853/4) was a general labourer in 1891 and a scaffolder in 1907. He was a son of John Simmons (born in Ardingley, Sussex in 1822) who was a labourer in Paddington, London in 1881, and Hannah (*née* Williams, 1827). Hannah came from Somerset, and was a daughter of Hannah (*née* Allen, 1800-1834) and Giles Williams (1796-1863), who made boots and shoes.

At the time of the 1911 Census Return, Edward and Annie lived with their two-year-old son Edward at 45 Haverhill Road, Hydethorpe Road, Balham, south-west London, but later that year they moved to 2, Strathearn Road, Sutton, Surrey, where all three – father, mother and son – lived for the rest of their lives.

Wallace attended Sutton County Grammar School until the age of sixteen, when he began work for W.H. Smith & Son, the high street newsagents and booksellers. As with his home, Wallace remained with Smiths for the rest of his working life (until 1972, when the head office of W.H. Smith's moved out of London), apart from military service as a medical orderly in India and Burma during the Second World War. In India he contracted poliomyelitis, which left him with one arm slightly paralysed. Latterly at Smiths, Wallace worked in the wholesale department, where he was responsible for subscriptions to magazines and newspapers.

Ted did not marry, and lived alone after his mother died in 1966. He died on July 23rd 1986.

Acknowledgement

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