

### Herbert Simpson Parish (1870-1957)<sup>1</sup>

The well-known professional collector of tropical American insects, Mr. Herbert S. Parish, died in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, on July 26, 1957. Many entomologists of the past owe a great debt of gratitude to Parish for his efforts in making known the rich and, at that time, poorly collected insect fauna of the American tropics. In my own case, I began purchasing crane-flies from him during his first trip to Brazil in 1911-1912 and continued to secure from him very desirable materials from all of his succeeding expeditions. The following account of his life and activities is based primarily on a long series of letters from him, covering his principal expeditions since 1911, with some additional personal data supplied by him at my request in a letter dated March 8, 1934. I am particularly indebted to his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Robert Simpson Parish, of Toronto, for additional information required to complete this biographical account.

Herbert Parish was born in Toronto on July 17, 1870, the son of Robert Simpson Parish and Margaret Hornibrook Parish. The father was born in Yorkshire, England, coming to Canada in 1855, and residing in Toronto until 1895. At that time he moved to Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, where he died in 1903 at the age of 74. The mother died in Toronto in 1917 at the age of 78, having been born in County Cork, Ireland; her family migrated to Canada in 1851. From this union five children were born, the sole survivor at the time of Parish's death being a brother, John Hornibrook Parish, presently living in Sault Ste. Marie. In 1900, Herbert Parish married Miss

<sup>1</sup>Contribution from the Entomological Laboratory, University of Massachusetts.

Lavina Taylor, of Toronto, who died on March 22, 1939. There was a single child, Robert Simpson Parish, presently residing in Toronto with his wife, Alice. They have two children, a daughter, Mrs. Davis W. Heffring, and a son, John Herbert, residing in Woodstock, Ontario, and having two children, the great grandchildren of the subject of this biography.

From his letters, Parish had indicated that he held an interest in insects even as a small boy. In 1896, at the age of 26, he undertook his first collecting trip to the tropics, to Haiti, where he remained for nine months, specializing in the Lepidoptera but collecting in many other orders.<sup>2</sup> His second trip, to Cuba in 1898, was a failure due to financial difficulties. The next year he went to British Guiana, his first trip to South America. In 1902, two years after his marriage, Parish returned to Cuba, this time stressing Oriente State in the mountainous eastern part of the island. In 1908-1909 he again collected in British Guiana.

His first trip to Brazil was in 1911-1912. Parish arrived in Belém (Pará)<sup>3</sup> in December 1911, later moving easterly to the village of Igarape Açu (Igarape Assu) and finally to Prata, all such stations being in eastern Brazil just south of the Baía de Marajo. Students who may require additional information concerning his four major expeditions to South America (eastern Brazil, 1911-1912; British Guiana, 1912-1913; Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru, 1914; Amazonian region of Brazil and Peru, 1919-1920) will find some further account in my papers.<sup>4</sup>

On his 1912-1913 trip to British Guiana, Parish worked particularly at Bartica, on the Essequibo River, and at Malali

<sup>2</sup> While it was never so indicated by Parish, one might believe that he may have been influenced in going to Haiti by a book by Eugene Murray-Aaron, "The Butterfly Hunters in the Caribbees," that had appeared in print only two years before (pp. 269, 1 map, 8 plates; Scribners, 1894).

<sup>3</sup> Names in parentheses indicate alternative spellings at the time collections were made.

<sup>4</sup> Alexander, C. P. Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., 44: 484; 1913 (*Brazil*, 1911-1912). Trans. Amer. Ent. Soc., 40: 223-225; 1914 (*British Guiana*, 1912-1913). Trans. Amer. Ent. Soc., 42: 1-4; 1916 (*Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru*, 1914). Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Philadelphia, 1921: 39-41; 1921 (*Amazonian Brazil and Peru*, 1919-1920).

(Mallali), on the Demerara. His 1914 expedition to the northern Andes of Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru was brought to an abrupt and disappointing end by the oncoming of World War I and the cutting off of his financial sources. He arrived in Buenaventura, Colombia, on May 5, 1914, moving to the mountains and collecting at Cisneros, Caldas, and La Cumbre, thence crossing the western cordillera to Cali, in the valley of the Cauca River (Magdalena system). Proceeding southward into Ecuador, he stressed particularly coastal Guayaquil and Duran, continuing into the mountains to Huigra and Alaousi (9450 feet). In Peru he collected at Callao and Lima, on the coast, and thence travelled into the higher Andes, collecting particularly at Oroya (12,178 feet), Jauja (11,878 feet), and Huanacayo (10,636 feet).

Parish's longest and most important expedition was his second to Brazil in 1919-1920, when he spent approximately one year following the Amazon and some of its tributary streams. He arrived in Belém (Pará) in June 1919, at first collecting over the same ground that he had visited in 1911-1912. Continuing up the Amazon by river steamers, Parish made stops at Santarém, Óbidos (Óbydos of Henry W. Bates), and Oriximiná, the last on the Trombetas River, a tributary stream. Proceeding further up the Amazon he collected at Parintins, Ilha de Serpa (Itacoatiara), and Manaus (Manaos), visiting a nearby station, Flores, where unusually rich collecting was found. He then followed the upper Amazon, now called the Solimões, making various stops in Brazil, including Tefé (Teffé; Ega of Bates), Tonantins, Matura (Amatura), São Paulo de Olivença, and finally Tabatinga, where Brazil, Colombia, and Peru meet. Continuing up the river, now the Marañon and in the Peruvian territory of Loreto, he visited successively Pernata, Mancallacta, Pebas, and Iquitos. He followed the river until it joins the Huallaga, advancing up the latter to Yurimaguas, his farthest point on the Amazonian system. His final trip to South America was in 1933, when he visited Paramaribo, Dutch Guiana, continuing into British Guiana. On this trip he contracted a case of blood poisoning that came very close to ending his career.

All of Parish's later years were spent in Ontario. For seventeen summers, from 1935 to 1952, the family had a cottage on Georgian Bay, Lake Huron, near Penetanguishene and Midland. Here, at Thunder Bay Beach, he collected many thousands of insects, these serving to make his brief label "T.B.B." very familiar to various entomological correspondents. Some ten years before his death, Parish became unable to do much active field collecting and he devoted more and more of his time to oil painting, in which art he became highly proficient. Many of his beautiful paintings, as well as his personal collection of insects—the latter consisting especially of showy butterflies and moths—remain in the possession of his son. It is believed that the insect collection eventually will become the property of the University of Toronto.

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