A study of d’Orbigny’s “Voyage dans l’Amerique Meridionale”
I. The contents of the parts of the volumes on natural history¹, ²

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ABSTRACT: Sherborn & Griffin (1934), based on a complete set of wrappers of d’Orbigny’s book reported on their findings and stated that they had had the texts of the wrappers copied. Those copies, typed, are now held as a bound book in the library of the Natural History Museum, London, and this note reports on an examination of them which was undertaken in an effort to clarify some puzzles posed by the data published in 1934. Several plates that Sherborn & Griffin did not find are mentioned in the typed copies. This paper lays the ground for a more detailed study of the ornithological content of this work.

KEYWORDS: original wrappers, misdated wrappers, missing plates, dates of publication, Alcide d’Orbigny, Sherborn.

INTRODUCTION

Sherborn & Griffin (1934) discussing the dates of publication of the natural history portions of Alcide d’Orbigny’s ‘Voyage dans l’Amérique Méridionale’ reported that Mr. Bernard Quaritch, the antiquarian bookseller, had obtained “a magnificent copy of the work entirely in original wrappers”³ (see Figure 1). They were given full access and knowing that the work would be sold and that its buyer might have the work bound (if it was not), and might arrange the content in volumes instead of in the sequence of the parts issued, and then might fail to retain or safeguard the wrappers, they decided “a complete copy of every wrapper” was required and this they entrusted to Miss. P. Taylor who copied them “faithfully”.

The typed details prepared by Miss Taylor have been bound in a slim volume held in the General Library of the Natural History Museum, London which bears call number L76 f FRA. Thanks to the museum librarians all the pages in this volume have now been photographed. That set of photographs is the basis for a comparison between the data furnished by Sherborn & Griffin (1934) and the evidence of the type written pages. It will be apparent to readers that, had there been no details that differed this paper could have said so and omitted much of what follows!

¹ This paper is the first of a series of five closely related papers, appearing in a single volume. It will be followed by, first, “II. On the composition of the 1837 and 1838 volumes of the Magasin de Zoologie”, and then by a long paper (No. III), specific to the birds, examining case by case the nomenclatural precedence as regards publication, between the Synopsis Avium (published in the Magasin de Zoologie), and the Voyage, considering the plate captions and the text which almost always appeared after the relevant plate, and, by a paper (No. IV) indicating where and how the demonstrated precedence contradicts Sherborn’s entries in his Index Animalium, and, finally, (No. V) comments on types held in the museum in Paris.
² ZB Contribution No. 2, part 1, to the ZooBank verification process.
³ Sherborn & Griffin also said “a glance at the details will show the importance of binding the wrappers in place ...” so it would seem that each wrapper held the contents that agreed with the wrapper details.
Figure 1. The front of an original part wrapper (used for part 35). Scanned by Alison Harding, Librarian, The Rothschild Library, Tring: ex Mammals volume therein and included with the permission of the Natural History Museum, South Kensington and Tring. © The Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London.
This wrapper is dated M. DCCC. XXXVI (1836), but in the set made available to Sherborn & Griffin (1934) wrapper 35 was dated 1837 \(^4\) but the details of content given in the underlying typed sheet agree with those shown in what appears to be a sticker shown in the lower centre of Figure 1. It should be noted that this livraison and next one respectively included pp. 185–232 and 233–248 of the text for the *Oiseaux* and that the date of 1835 in the table set out by Sherborn & Griffin (1934: 131) would imply publication of pp. 233–238 before pp. 97–232 so that that date, which is from Miss Taylor’s typed sheet, is evidently an earlier wrapper that was spare and used without regard to the date \(^5\).

It is likely, for reasons of economy, that wrappers for parts were printed in quantity annually with a year date (or, as reported by Sherborn & Griffin, for a later period with just “184 .” leaving the final date digit to be added by hand). Judging by the typed details from Miss Taylor and the apparent label or sticker shown above it is unlikely that content details were handwritten and presumably such labelling was used throughout (but this was not explained by Sherborn & Griffin (1934). However, unless we obtain sight of more parts wrappers we will not know whether this sticker matches others or, as it is on a misdated wrapper, whether this is a different sticker supplied by a remainder merchant. However, the character of the page is no doubt an example of what was used throughout the series over the whole period of publication.

Wrapper dating began with Roman numbers but with livraison 53 Arabic numerals were adopted.

**METHODOLOGY**

All of the typed pages prepared by Miss Taylor and included in the bound volume were photographed. To check the details against those given by Sherborn & Griffin (1934) spreadsheets were used – a tool not available to them!

The photographs show changes in ink to the typed contents (see Table I). These could have been due to collation differences noticed by Sherborn or Griffin, but they did not mention such changes, and if each case is examined it seems likely that the wrapper stickers were themselves annotated and this could have been noted by Miss Taylor or by Sherborn or Griffin.

**Table I.** Visible manual changes to typed pages by Miss Taylor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Livr.</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Text or plate</th>
<th>Nature of change</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Antiquités</td>
<td>Pl. 6 listed</td>
<td>Delisted</td>
<td>It appears in Livr. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Relations</td>
<td>pp. 193-200</td>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Changes to Itinéraire</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^4\) There is also a small typographical error below d’Orbigny’s name: the printed wrapper says “Naturalist-voyageur du Museum d’Histoire Naturelle”; Miss Taylor had ‘au’ in place of ‘du’.

\(^5\) Which almost certainly implies that the set examined was not wholly original, but that, at least in part, it was reconstructed with some parts needing wrappers.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Livr.</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Text or plate</th>
<th>Nature of change</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Itinéraire</td>
<td>pp. 529-552</td>
<td>See at right</td>
<td>Here, for the first time, “Fes” (Feuilles) numbers (here 67, 68, 69) appear as well as page numbers6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Oiseaux</td>
<td>Pl. 14</td>
<td>’- 18’ added</td>
<td>However pll. 15-17 are not here but in three other livraisons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Mollusques</td>
<td>Pl. 24-31</td>
<td>Restricted to Pl. 31</td>
<td>Plates 24 to 35 are said to be in Livraison 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Oiseaux</td>
<td>Pl. 21, 24, 30, 32, 33</td>
<td>Pl. 32 deleted</td>
<td>It was included in Livraison 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Insectes</td>
<td>pp. 17-24</td>
<td>Corrected to 17-32</td>
<td>Both corrected on the line and inserted above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Oiseaux</td>
<td>pp. 185-192</td>
<td>Deleted</td>
<td>Pp. 185-232 appeared in Livraison 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Homme Américain</td>
<td>Feuilles 9-14 [?? pp. 65-104]</td>
<td>Added by hand “1/2 § p. 80”</td>
<td>This apparently signals a half gathering (4 pp) of music inserted after p. 80.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Homme Américain</td>
<td>Feuilles 26-32</td>
<td>Added by hand “1/2 § p. 212”</td>
<td>This apparently signals a half gathering (4 pp) of music inserted after p. 212.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Géologie</td>
<td>Feuille 12-16</td>
<td>Corrected to 11-16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>Géologie</td>
<td>Feuilles 11, 17-22</td>
<td>11 deleted</td>
<td>Seems to have appeared in Livraison 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>Géologie</td>
<td>Feuilles 36</td>
<td>Corrected to 32</td>
<td>Livraison 63 held feuilles 29-31 (36 appears in Livraison 71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>Géologie</td>
<td>Feuilles 38</td>
<td>Deleted</td>
<td>Does not reappear in later livraisons7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The *Atlas* has been consulted to help resolve some of the issues.

**RESULTS**

The spreadsheets were used to look at the content of the wrappers, based on Miss Taylor’s typing, section by section – except for the itinerary sections and that on American man – and the following information emerges:

**A) Mammals (Mammiferes):**

The text details reported by Sherborn & Griffin (1934) are broadly substantiated.

The plate details differ in the case of livraison 84 for which Sherborn & Griffin listed plates 17 and 20 but the typed evidence has “17 à 20” (where plate 18 also appears in

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6 The typed sheets demonstrate the inconsistency in treatment of sections of text. Sometimes both the numbers of the feuilles are given (no doubt taken from the signature numbers) as well as the pagination concerned, but in other cases either the pagination alone is given or the feuille numbers alone.

7 The geology part comprised 290 pages (36 complete 8 page gatherings and a half or quarter gathering for pages 289-290).
livraison 79). Sherborn & Griffin listed plate 18 from livraison 79, which the evidence substantiates, but they considered plate 19 non-extant. Perhaps it was extant and appeared in livraison 84 (when there might also have been a re-issue of plate 18.

There was supposed to be a plate 23 but Sherborn & Griffin had no data and no mention was found in the typed copies of the wrapper but the Atlas shows this to be of Delphinus blainvillei. Plate 7 is also absent from Sherborn & Griffin’s listed and the typed sheets and is lacking in the volume displayed by the Biodiversity Heritage Library.

B) Birds (Oiseaux):

Sherborn & Griffin (1934) misreported data in the typed copies of wrapper contents.

They cited two dates for wrapper 51 giving 1840 for the four avian plates, one reptile plate and some mollusc text – but 1841 for mollusc plate 72 – and 1841 for the Foraminifères text and plate, where the typed sheet has M. DCCC. XLI.

In a second case, wrapper 88 where the typed sheet dates this “1846” they gave ‘feuilles’ 45 and 46 (pp. 353-368) as 1846 but mollusc plates “83, 85”(omitting pl. 84) as 1842. So the first-hand reports on these two wrappers support 1841 and 1846.

Looking at Sherborn & Griffin’s data on the Oiseaux plates there are also some problems. One is in the work itself. Sherborn & Griffin reported pl. 36 in livraison 26 and in livraison 29, but did not account for plate 37. This is because the Atlas – downloaded (29.11.2015) from the Biodiversity Heritage Library – contains two avian plates numbered 36; only by checking with the text can one see that the plate depicting Cucullava reguloides and Fluvicola rigitectoralis should be numbered pl. 37. This seems best associated with livraison 29.

They reported “no record” for plate 4, but this can be found in the typed details of livraison 6.

In addition to plate ‘36’ – discussed above – they listed two other plates twice:

Pl. 3 (Buteo tricolor) in livr. 6 and 10 – the typed sheets show livraison 10 to be correct;

Pl. 45 (Emberiza hypochondria, Emberiza carbonaria and eggs of Muscicapa ictophrys and Loxia cucullata) in livr. 35 and 42 – the typed sheets show livraison 42 to be correct.

As regards the text Sherborn & Griffin referred to an “erased” listing of pp. 185-192 against livraison 31 and to the issue of these pages with succeeding pages in livraison 35.

Livraison 36 for the Oiseaux text pages 233-248, they dated 1835, (but evidence shows that to be a date two years before livraison 22 when pp. 113-120 were issued), but used 1837 for plate 12 in Poissons. As discussed above (p. 3) the text pages concerned (pp. 233-248) would not normally have appeared until 1837, the year pp. 185-232 were published, so –as for the fish plate – use of 1837 must be correct.

As regards the plate, I have mentioned the correct date for livraison 51 above, but four further comments are needed to summarise:

Pl. 4, of which Sherborn & Griffin reported ‘no record’, is actually listed in the typed text for livraison 6 (wrapper dated 1834);

Pl. 32 was listed for livraison 23 (wrapper dated 1836) – in the typed sheets plate 32 is also listed against livraison 24 but this has been struck out with a diagonal line in Indian ink so 23 is correct

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8 The text in the Voyage gives pl. 37 for both species, and this is the logical progression for it results in the three species of the genus Fluvicola being depicted in consecutive plates.
Pl. 45; this Sherborn & Griffin listed from livraison 35, giving “45, 56”, but the typed records shows 48 (not 45) and 56 (removing 45 from the cases of duplications)

Pl. 37 was not listed by them, nor is it to be found in the typed details, but this has been explained above.

Otherwise the details from Sherborn & Griffin are fully substantiated.

C) Reptiles:

The text is given as “pp. 6-12 (complete)”; the typescript has ‘feuilles 1 and 2’. The entire work was comprised of gatherings (feuilles) of 8 pages, so we can reasonably deduce that here there was a gathering and a half and that the first five pages were in the nature of a title and supporting pages. For the reptiles – and the fish – the whole text appeared within the final livraison so that it is logical that the title pages should have been included.

Sherborn & Griffin (1934: 131) reported ‘no record’ of plates 3 and 4. The typed pages do not mention plate 4 but plate 3 is reported in livraison 37 (wrapper date 1834). Plate 4 may still have been mentioned and just lacking in this set. Sherborn & Griffin also reported that plates 7-12 were “not extant”. There is no evidence of these, and this too may be a fault of this set.

D) Fish (Poissons):

The text was reported as “pp. 5-11 complete”; the typescript notes ‘feuilles 1 and 2’. We can deduce one and a half gatherings with the half gathering blank on its fourth page, and no doubt pages 1-4 were a title and other preliminary material as in the case of the reptiles.

There were 16 plates listed and the details of these are all substantiated.

E) Molluscs (Mollusques):

The text details listed by Sherborn & Griffin (1934: 131) are substantiated and indeed no light is shed on pp. 729-758. As regards the “(8)” that is listed after pp. 105-123 by Sherborn & Griffin the typed details clearly show 105-128 not 105 to 123. See above regarding the date of livraison 88.

Sherborn & Griffin (1934: 131-2) listed the plates, stated that they did not find 33 or 36 and that “the few duplicates may be replacers”. Several comments are required. First, the typescript for livraison 88 reported plates 83-85 (not included by Sherborn & Griffin); second livraison 24 held plate 33 so this was not missing; there is confused information regarding some of plates 34 to 35 – in livraison 21 the typescript shows “24-31” but these have been struck out in Indian ink and 31 written in to the right so presumably this was the only mollusc plate found in this wrapper, in livraison 22 the typescript shows pl. nos. “24-35” and these details are not corrected (despite Sherborn & Griffin writing that 33 was not traced). Checking these we find in the preceding or subsequent livraisons that these numbers (mostly) reappear: 25 in livraison 14, 27 and 28 in livraison 17, 26 in livraison 18, 31 in livraison 21, 32 and 34 in livraison 23, and 33 in livraison 24, and 29 in livraison 28. We are there dependent on 24 and 35 from livraison 22 and we guess that the typist erred in using a dash rather than a comma. If so no plates were missing and only 38 and 41 appear to be duplicates.

The entire text for the mammals was also in livraison 90 and the title pages will have been included.
F) Insects (Insectes):

Sherborn & Griffin (1934) seem to have miscalculated the pagination here. They record a total of 232 pages. From livraison 56 onwards the typed details record gathering numbers and the last one listed, in livraison 90, is 28 so that with a multiple of 8 there should be only 224 pages. The evidence from the typed copy of livraison 90 is that gatherings 24 to 28 were included which would make 40 pages and yielding the correct 224 pages. However, the work itself has not been examined and the mistake could be in the “24 to 28”, perhaps there were 29 gatherings. The details for livraison 77 are “files. 12, 14” which should have read “13, 14” as gathering 12 was listed in livraison 68.

As regards the plates the listing of pl. 4 against livraisons 17 and 41 is substantiated as is the listing of pl. 19 against livraisons 60 and 71. Sherborn & Griffin (1934) found no record of plates 15 and 25. However, the typed copies show plate 25 in livraison 70.

G) Crustacea (Crustacés):

The text details given by Sherborn & Griffin are fully substantiated.

The plate details – including the apparent lack of pl. 12 – also agree except for the listing by Sherborn & Griffin of a second issue of plate 7 in livraison 74; in fact the typed details show that to be plate 9 for which the 7 is presumably a typographic error as Sherborn & Griffin did not signal its lack.

H) Polypary (Polypiers):

The whole text was issued in livraison 89, as stated by Sherborn & Griffin, but the wrapper appears to have referred to this section as zoophytes.

The issue of the plates given by Sherborn & Griffin is completely substantiated.

I) Foraminifera (Foraminifères):

The text details given are substantiated except that the typed wrapper details refer to pp. 57-88 in livraison 51. Perhaps the text ends on p. 86 and 87 and 88 are blank.

The plate details are fully substantiated. However, as regards the wrapper date for livraison 51 see above.

J) Botany (Botanique)

The botanical content comes in three parts: chronologically the section on Patagonia came first (as confirmed in the typed details of the wrapper for livraison 48), that on Bolivia second and the section on palms last but they overlapped.

Sherborn & Griffin treated these clearly and their data is substantiated, but it seems evident that pp. 1-16 of the Patagonian section are those mentioned in the wrapper text for livraison 24) – this transcription error ties up with mention of plates “11-16” from that livraison under the Flora Boliviana.

The plates are also substantiated except that where Sherborn & Griffin showed “11-20” for plates of palms in livraison 70 this is a typographic error for “11, 20”. Below the Flora Boliviana subtitle they suggested confusion with the “Sert. Patag.” but they thought this was in plate material. When these items have been is corrected it is apparent that pl. 12 from the
K) Geology (Géologie):

The apparent absence of pp. 33-64 (gatherings 5 to 8) of the text remains a mystery especially as gathering 1 to 4 were in livraison 58 and gatherings 9 and 10 in livraison 59.

If there were in palaeontology plates 1 to 13 (as well as in geology), then the duplicated numbers suggest that of those 13 only 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 12 were present and that plates 1, 3, 7, 10, 11 and 13 were missing.

L) Palaeontology (Paléontologie):

The text details given by Sherborn & Griffin (1934) are substantiated.

Sherborn & Griffin listed plates 14 to 21 and 25 (which they assumed should have been number 22). However, the typed details relating to livraison 70 show the plate 25 to have been one from the insect section.

If there had been plates 1 to 13 in palaeontology (as well as in geology), then the duplicated numbers suggest that of those 13 only 4, 5, 6, 8, 9 and 12 were present and that plates 1, 3, 7, 10, 11 and 13 were missing.

COMPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

In addition to the listings of contents\textsuperscript{10} Miss Taylor also typed out the text of a two-page prospectus that preceded or accompanied the wrapper of first livraison. She also created several typed sheets from the backs of wrappers or from notes that were bound in and these include some historical information not drawn on here.

For several sections title pages were provided during the course of the project; this is the case for birds (titling issued in livraison 68\textsuperscript{11}, at which point there were still many pages to be published – and not all ever were), for molluscs (also in livraison 68, and again many pages were still to be published), for insects in livraison 71 (again before the text was complete), for crustaceans in livraison 70, for foraminifera in livraison 68, and for botany – for two separate volumes – in livraison 69.

In Part III of this series readers will find tabulated details from various sources showing when each livraison was in existence as a published work (see ICZN, 1999: Art. 21). There will also be a summary table linking each livraison by number to (a) the text pages for the Òiseaux and (b) to the Òiseaux plate numbers as well as to the earliest date of availability as a published work. When dealing with each new taxon, in the extensive text that follows these tables, there may be three citations to any given name: one to the Synopsis Avium, one to a plate in the Voyage and one to the descriptive text in the Voyage. In Part III it will be argued, as in Dickinson \textit{et al.} (2015), that the first valid publication of a new name may consist of an illustration in a plate together with a caption giving a scientific name (see ICZN, 1999: Art. 12.2.7).

\textsuperscript{10} The author can provide images of the photographs of Miss Taylor’s typed pages – in the form of three Word files (images 1-30, 31-60 and 61-90) with the images inserted. He is unfortunately not able to give you permission to reproduce them. You will need to ask the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, London for help in this connection.

\textsuperscript{11} No copy of this title page has been seen.
Amongst the offerings on the Biodiversity Hertitage Library, contributed by BHLSciELO, is a bound copy of the section from Vol. 5 on Zoophytes. Pasted into the front of this is a letter from Anna Hastings to Dr. Marcus dated December 12th, 1941. In this she refers to Sherborn’s work on the dates but apparently was unaware of the paper by Sherborn & Griffin (1934) so that her information was very incomplete.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For locating this volume of typed evidence within the library system of the Natural History Museum I am most grateful to Paul Cooper; very grateful thanks go to Dorothy Dickinson who very kindly took all the photographs of the typed texts. Alain Lebossé received a set of the photographs so that he could check everything and find my mistakes, and has gone carefully through this contribution to verify my conclusions. The image of the wrapper that we depict in Figure 1 was found and scanned for me by Alison Harding of the Natural History Museum at Tring. The images in our Appendix are from the holdings of the Balfour and Newton Libraries at the Department of Zoology, University of Cambridge where the pictures were kindly found and taken by Jane Acred. In relation to a volume in the Hope Library at the Museum of Natural History in Oxford I have been graciously assisted by Sophie Wilcox and Kate Diston and I understand there are no wrappers in that volume. I am also grateful to Ray Williams for discussions and advice and Patrice Bouchard for suggesting some changes all of which I have adopted.

REFERENCES


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APPENDIX I: THE COVER SUPPLIED FOR PARTIE 5 OF VOLUME 5

This is of historical interest for what it tells us. The date it carries (1843) is two years after the last date (1841) recorded for any of the livraisons that included any component part of the subject of this section. It seems to have appeared in livraison 6812.

Figure A. The front of the section wrapper or cover (image copyright, Balfour & Newton Libraries, University of Cambridge. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission).

12 Which had a wrapper dated just “184 .” and Sherborn & Griffin (1934) assumed it dated from 1842; but the evidence above suggests 1843 may be better.
There are no text changes below Alcide d’Orbigny’s name where his list of honours and positions requires over two lines, and the work is now dedicated to the King. Note too that although a Ministre d’Instruction Publique is still involved M. Guizot is referred to in the past tense. In addition the publisher is now P. Bertrand (not F.G. Levrault) whose address is given as that of the printers (Imprimerie de veuve Berger-Levrault).

Figure B. The back of the cover (image copyright, Balfour & Newton Libraries, University of Cambridge. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission).
This reveals the scope of the publications currently available for sale – from the bookshop of M. Bertrand. One of the more interesting pieces of information is the price at which the two volume work on the birds of Brazil by “de Spix” was sold; it is described as containing 222 plates which tallies with the number of plates in von Spix’s *Avium Species Novae* (1824-25) listed by Zimmer (1926: 600), who mentioned a revised edition from 1840 edited by von Martius: judging from its French titling, contrasting with the Latin for the 1824-25 edition, this advertisement must relate to the 1840 edition.

![Figure C. Advertisement for the book (enlarged; part of Fig. B) (image copyright, Balfour & Newton Libraries, University of Cambridge. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission).](image)

From this advertisement we can see, three lines from the bottom, that this was not just a section title; it was made available as a volume in its own right.

Higher up it can be seen that in 1843 the overall work was still intended to contain only 75 livraisons as given in the 1835 Prospectus, as opposed to the 90 which appeared, and that completion by the year end was intended.