

recent Government publications, and of African bibliographies south of the Sahara, have become a regular part of South Africa's bibliographical equipment.

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The *Quarterly Bulletin of the South African Library* was launched ten years ago more in faith than expectation, and the fact that it has not only survived, but is now reaching practically all the important centres of the world, on both sides of the "Iron curtain", seems to indicate that it has a definite purpose to serve. As the official organ of the recently-founded *Friends of the South African Library* it is also a link between the increasing number of those, both in South Africa and beyond, who have the well-being of the Library at heart. To them, and to our readers in general, we extend our thanks for their support and interest in the past, and our sincere hope that these will long continue in the years ahead.

#### PIERRE-ANTOINE DELALANDE, NATURALIST, AND HIS CAPE VISIT, 1818-1820

In the Africana Collections of the South African Library there is a copy of the *Précis d'un voyage au Cap de Bonne Espérance, fait par ordre du Gouvernement* (Paris, 1822), by the French naturalist and traveller, Pierre-Antoine Delalande.<sup>1</sup> Although an article on Delalande appears in the French Dictionary of National Biography,<sup>2</sup> little seems to be known of him in other sources, and the account that follows has been pieced together from the *Précis* itself and some other fugitive references. Arriving comparatively late on the Cape scene, Delalande had been preceded by careful observers such as Sparrman, and flamboyant ones such as Le Vaillant, whose works were well known in France; he died at a comparatively early age, and although he was awarded the Legion of Honour for his intrepid achievements, no material assistance was forthcoming to enable him to publish the results of his collecting. To this extent, he is one of the "forgotten men".

Delalande was born at Versailles on 27 March 1787.<sup>3</sup> Through his father,

<sup>1</sup> This work consists of the report read by Delalande to the Académie Royale des Sciences, 16 July 1821, followed by a Report to the Minister of the Interior, signed by "les professeurs administrateurs du Jardin du Roi", 10 January 1821, on Delalande's work and collections; and finally, a Report made on 5 November 1821 to the Royal Academy of Sciences, commending Delalande's achievements, and signed by Humboldt, Latreille, Cuvier, Desfontaines Duméril, de Lacépède and Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire. There is another copy of this printed item in the South African Museum, with the autograph of J. P. Verreaux, and the Mendelssohn Library has a manuscript transcript of these same items, also signed by Verreaux.

<sup>2</sup> Michaud, *Biographie universelle*, 1855. tom. x, pp. 1293-94.

<sup>3</sup> His portrait, now in the Public Library at Versailles, is reproduced at page 12 of this article. I am indebted to M. Lucien Berland for drawing my attention to this portrait, and to Mr. J. P. Kent for obtaining a photographic copy.

who was employed at the Paris Museum of Natural History, he took up the study of natural history at an early age, at the same time studying painting under the artist Berré (it is recorded that he exhibited some landscapes and animal pieces at the Salon, but nothing is known of these to-day).<sup>4</sup> In 1808, when only twenty-one years of age, he was appointed aide to M. Geoffroy St. Hilaire, and travelled to Portugal with him on an official scientific mission. In 1813 he was sent by the Museum on a collecting expedition in the Mediterranean, and in 1816 he accompanied the French Ambassador, the Duke of Luxembourg, to Brazil, where he collected natural history specimens on an extensive scale.

In 1818 he set out for the Cape, this time accompanied only by his twelve-year old nephew, Jules Verreaux, a youngster of remarkable stamina and enterprise, who was later to play an important part in the history of the South African Museum in Cape Town. The two travellers arrived at False Bay on 8 August 1818, and made their way to Cape Town, where they presented letters of credence to the Governor, Lord Charles Somerset. In his *Précis* Delalande describes his impressions on landing at the Cape, in the footsteps of "Kolbe, Sparrmann [*sic*], Paterson, Le Vaillant, Barrow and so many others" (a curiously indiscriminate company), and describes how, during the months of September and October, while preparations for his journey up-country were being made, he gathered a mass of plants at the Cape to enrich his herbarium. Many of these were subsequently lost in transporting his specimens to Europe.

It was necessary for the traveller to arm himself not only with letters of recommendation to the various landdrosts, but also with a permit to hunt hippopotami—"permission which the Governor, Lord Somerset, particularly wanted to give me, despite the law forbidding such hunting under penalty of a fine of 1,000 rixdollars". Eventually he set out accompanied by his nephew and three Hottentots, with a wagon and 22 oxen, travelling eastwards along the coast to an unspecified point, where he was forced to turn back by the approach of warring tribes. This journey he describes as being one of unending difficulty. "I found very few objects worth collecting, and was obliged to return on a forced march on account of an aridity remarkable even in these parts. I had more to fear of falling into the hands of the Kaffirs who, irritated by the approach of the British, joined forces to the number of about 10,000 combatants, and advanced on the Colony spreading universal devastation and death. So sure were they of victory that they had broken the wooden shafts of their assegais so as to use them as daggers; but 200 English troops who surprised and encircled them were sufficient to disperse them by musket-fire, which soon struck terror into their ranks." It was on the return

<sup>4</sup> Daniel, *Biographie des hommes remarquables de Seine et Oise*, 1832. p. 144.

trip that Delalande found a 75-foot whale stranded on the beach. He immediately took possession of it, and for two months, "in the scorching sun, and despite the appalling and infectious stench, I worked ceaselessly until I had dissected it entirely." The only whale skeletons then existing in the Paris Museum were made up from a number of different specimens, and this was the first complete specimen they had been able to secure.

On their return to Cape Town the two travellers set out once again, this time in a northerly direction, reaching the Oliphants River "which debouches into the ocean at about 2° 39' from the Cape of Good Hope". Near the Berg River he found the "Sacred Ibis of Egypt" and many other specimens; finally, after six weeks' fruitless searching for hippopotamus in the marshlands bordering the Berg River ("which it was one of the chief objects of my journey to discover"), one of his Hottentots who had been sent on a search party, reported hearing one "cry out" in the rushes bordering the river. After stalking the beast eventfully, he succeeded in shooting it, and brought away the skin and skeleton, "both serving to prove the inaccuracy of previous descriptions of this animal".

He now set out on his third and last journey, this time sailing to Algoa Bay on the advice of the Colonial Secretary, Christopher Bird, and striking out from there in a north-easterly direction, eventually reaching the Keiskama River. This territory, especially between the Great Fish and Keiskama Rivers, was largely inhabited by Kaffirs, but after a year these people were driven beyond the latter river by the British, "who transported thither a settler population drawn from the mother-country, to ensure the safety of this beautiful colony". In these territories he found magnificent forests, watered by fine rivers whose mouths were obstructed by sandspits stretching the length of the coast, so that it was impossible for even the smallest ships to penetrate them. "There it was that my collection was enriched by a vast number of rare insects, birds and quadrupeds formerly unknown or inaccurately described, including a "two-horned rhinoceros" which nearly cost him his life. He had completely skinned this latter beast, and had gone back to the camp to look for men and transport to cart it away, fearing with some reason that it might be pilfered by Kaffirs or devoured by wild animals. "I was returning on this errand when my horse, which up till then had been completely docile, possibly irritated by the scent of the rhino, reared so violently that I could no longer control him; he threw me, and as I fell I badly bruised my head and smashed my shoulder".

In spite of this mishap, from which he never entirely recovered, Delalande and his nephew set out for the Cape after eight months in Kaffirland, regretting that he had not been able to penetrate further inland, where he was told that two months' journey away, beyond the Orange River, there were fertile lands and populous settlements which he "burned to know". But the

news he had received from Europe, the arrival of his ship, the fear of abandoning his precious collection to the care of inexperienced people, all led him to abandon that project, and after two years' stay in Africa, he left for home on 1 September 1820.

At this point in his *Précis*, Delalande proceeds to give an account of his findings, some of which are dealt with below by Dr. Keppel Barnard. "Of the travellers who have set out to study the natural history of these far lands", says Delalande, "some began their studies with a preconceived system of ideas, into which they have fitted the facts they have collected, instead of first collecting the facts and then marshalling them so as to draw general conclusions from them. Others—the majority—have described what they have seen, and have gathered together in haphazard fashion a mass of material, being anxious, apparently, to see much rather than to see well." He goes on to describe the advantage of applying scientific method to the examination of specimens, laying emphasis on the importance of collecting all characteristics of the animals discovered; "most of them, and all new species, have been accompanied by their skeletons. I have spared no trouble in procuring skulls and even skeletons of human beings, and considered as a scientific report, this part of my collection will not be the least interesting."<sup>5</sup>

His observations on the Hottentots are characteristic of the time. "M. le Vaillant", he says, "who has perhaps not received sufficient justice, long ago rescued the Hottentots from the calumnies of Kolbe, who depicts them as people given over to the wildest and most extreme superstitions. Doubtless there are among them some prejudices born of ignorance, and as everywhere else, the most crafty sometimes find a means of imposing on simple and credulous folk; but they are simple and ignorant, not degraded, and you find among them virtues which you will seek in vain among more civilized peoples . . ." Elsewhere Delalande foresees the disappearance of most of the larger animals "as man makes progress towards civilization", and there follows a description of the main zoological and botanical discoveries of his expedition. In the animal world alone, these total 13,405 specimens belonging to 1,620 species, made up as follows:

	Specimens	Species
Mammals	228	50
Birds	2,205	280
Reptiles	322	136
Fishes	263	70
Insects	10,000	982
Molluscs	387	102

<sup>5</sup> Where he obtained these human specimens is not stated.

to which 122 skeletons should be added.

Finally he pays tribute to those who assisted him in his work: the French Consul at the Cape, M. le comte des Ecotais (on whose recommendation he was awarded the Legion of Honour); Governor Lord Somerset, and the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Bird; and he asks for the means to continue his work on the collections he has brought back for the Paris Museum, means which were then, as afterwards, entirely lacking.

In spite of the recommendations of his sponsors, Delalande received no other reward or encouragement, and he did not long survive his return to France. "His labours, his zeal, his boundless devotion, the eminent services which he rendered natural history, all these deserved some additional recognition; he secured none whatsoever. This ingratitude, so common these days, but which he had every right to be spared, delayed indefinitely the narration of his travels; the grief it caused him aggravated the cruel illness which he had contracted under scorching skies and in the foetid atmosphere which he was obliged to breathe when dissecting a whale twenty-four and a half metres long stranded on the Cape coast, an enormous hippopotamus in the Berg River marshes, and a two-horned rhinoceros on the banks of the Great Fish River".<sup>6</sup> Delalande died in Paris on 27 July, 1823, at the early age of 37. As mentioned by Dr. Barnard below, a number of species were named for him, and these remain his chief memorial.

D. H. VARLEY

### DELALANDE'S CONTRIBUTION TO NATURAL HISTORY

In Sherborn's *Index animalium*<sup>1</sup> there are 56 entries under the name *delaland-* or *laland-*, with various terminations: *-ae*, *-e*, *-ei*, *-eanus*, *-i*, *-ia*, *-ii*. This, however, does not mean that 56 species of animals were named in honour of Delalande. Sometimes the same species was assigned in later years to different genera by different authors, e.g., Delalande's Fox is listed under four genera. Thus the number 56 is misleading. Some meticulous research would be required to determine exactly how many species commemorate Delalande.

Such species occur in several classes: Mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians, fishes, insects, crustacea, mollusca; also a sea-urchin, a spider, a fossil fish and a fossil ammonite; which indicates the wide scope of his collecting.

Owing however to the rule of priority in nomenclature not having always

<sup>6</sup> Translated from a biographical memoir of P.-A. Delalande by Thiébaud de Berneaud, appearing in *Mem. Soc. Linn. Paris*, tom. 3, 1825, pp. 484-490. I am indebted to Mr. A. C. Townsend, Director of the Library of the British Museum (Natural History) for this reference.

<sup>1</sup> Sherborn, C. D. *Index animalium* . . . 1801-1850. Part viii. British Museum, London, 1925.

been followed in those days, in fact sometimes deliberately flouted, many of these names have had to be suppressed in favour of earlier names. Thus Delalande's Fox was called *Canis lalandi* by Desmoulins in 1823, but only a year previously it had been named *Canis megalotis* by Desmarest; consequently the species name is *megalotis* ("le renard aux longues oreilles", *Précis*, p.14). The whale, whose skeleton Delalande took two months to prepare (*Précis*, p.5), and which after his death was named *Balaena lalandii*, is now known by the earlier name *Balaena australis*.

Without access to original works it is not always possible nowadays to say whether Delalande's actual specimens were used for the description of an animal bearing his name. Delalande's Fox certainly was,<sup>2</sup> but one cannot be so sure in the case of the Cape crayfish, named *Palinurus lalandii* fourteen years after his death, or the Cape King Klipfish, named *Hoplophycis lalandii* thirty-five years after his death. The name of the former holds good, but that of the latter has passed into synonymy.

In analysing the provenance of the species named "after"—that is, in honour of, or as American naturalists say, "for"—Delalande, a curious fact is noticed. All the Fishes so named were collected on his Brazilian tour (except the Cape Klipfish, if it can be proved that he did collect a specimen of this fish); and all the Mammals together with most of the Reptiles were obtained at the Cape. One of his Brazilian fishes, the Yellowtail (*Seriola lalandi*) occurs also at the Cape.

Amongst the Mammals, today only Delalande's Fox perpetuates, in colloquial English zoology, the naturalist's name. In Afrikaans it is known as the Bakoor. It is rather remarkable that this animal was left for Delalande to collect, because as regards the larger animals his predecessors had swept the board.

The strange animal the Aardwolf, named by his mentor Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire *Proteles lalandii*, had already been described by Sparrman nearly forty years previously (1785). One cannot believe that Saint-Hilaire was ignorant of the earlier description; one prefers to think he wished to honour his pupil and compatriot. But the rule of priority allows no sentiment, and Sparrman's name *cristata* takes precedence ("la civette à crinière", *Précis*, p.14).

Two South African Birds were dedicated to Delalande: a Hawk, by Andrew Smith in 1830, and a Pigeon by Bonaparte in 1854. Only the latter, Delalande's Green Pigeon (*Vinago delalandii*) serves as a memento of the French naturalist's visit to the Cape. One would like to know if the "type

<sup>2</sup> "1820-22. Desmarest, A. G. Mammalogie. 2 vols. Paris: many of the South African animals collected by Delalande are here described for the first time". Quoted in Sclater, W. L. *Fauna of South Africa*. Mammals, I. 1900. p. xiii. Later research, however, has relegated Desmarest's names to synonymy.

specimen" of this bird is still in the Paris Museum; and if so, the exact locality where he obtained it. His travels extended as far as the Keiskama River, so there is every likelihood of his having obtained this tropical bird, which has been recorded as far southwest as King William's Town.

Two Reptiles—a burrowing Blind Snake and the Tiger Lizard, and two Amphibians—a frog and a Bull-frog—retain Delalande's name as proof of his enthusiastic collecting. Moreover, another species of frog and another Bull-frog were also first described from his Cape specimens.<sup>3</sup>

He found only one small kind of fish in the streams. The rivers, owing to their impetuosity in times of flood are, he says (*Précis*, p.15), entirely lacking in fish. Evidently he was unfortunate in not obtaining the Whitefish in the Berg and Breede Rivers, the Yellowfish in the Olifants River (Clanwilliam District), or the Moggel in the Great Fish or Keiskama Rivers.

Among the Molluscs, in which group in these days naturalists classified not only shell-fish but also many soft-bodied marine animals, such as sea-squirts, Delalande seems to have been particularly pleased at finding "tétries" (*Précis*, p.15; cp. "théthyes", *Rapport*, p.25; i.e., *Tethyum*), both the solitary kind and those united *en famille* (known nowadays as respectively Simple and Compound Ascidians). But they were much larger than those whose anatomy had been studied by his compatriot Savigny (*Précis*, p.15).<sup>4</sup> Most probably he collected some "Red-bait", which is certainly a giant among the Ascidians.

After having collected in Brazil, Delalande could not fail to be struck by the different character of the Cape entomological fauna: the rarity of forest-dwellers and the abundance of terrestrial sand-dwellers, e.g., toktokies (*Tenebrionidae*). Probably the "300 novelties" (out of 982 species) which he says he collected has now in the light of later researches been shown to have been an exaggeration. One of the South African Buprestid beetles still bears his name.

He was evidently a methodical and conscientious collector. Realising that without full knowledge of its whole anatomy no animal can be assigned to its proper place in relation to other animals, nearly all his animal (Vertebrate) skins were accompanied by their skeletons (*Précis*, p.10).

He took pains also to secure human crania and even skeletons (*Précis*, p.10), and considered that these formed by no means the least interesting part of his collections. One wonders how he managed to obtain the skeletons of various human racial types. His opinions on the correlation between facial types and intelligence appear to be superficial, if not actually erroneous; at least they had no influence on the science of anthropology.

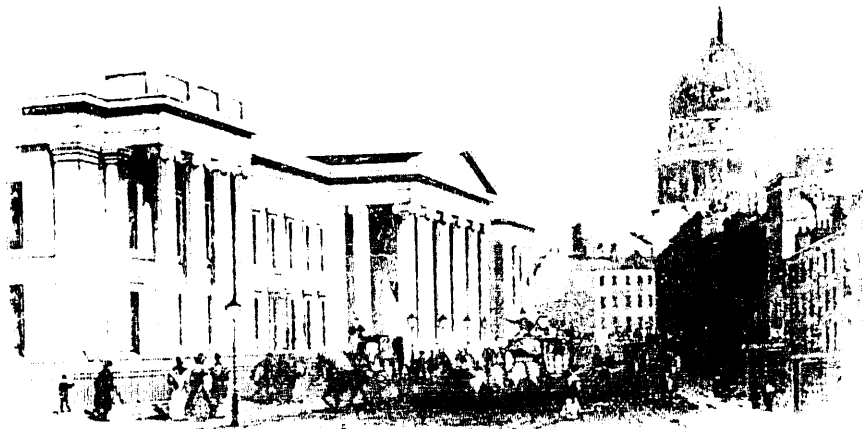


Jean-Vincent, Versailles

PIERRE-ANTOINE DELALANDE  
(from an engraved portrait)

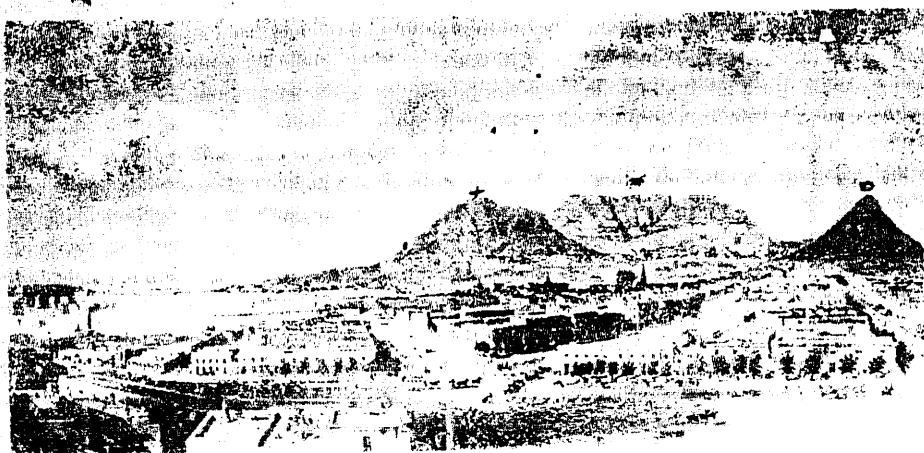
<sup>3</sup> Dumeril, A. M. C. and Bibron, G. *Erpétologie . . . Histoire naturelle . . . des reptiles*. Paris. e.g., tom. V, 1839, p. 241; tom. VI, 1844, p. 273; tom. VIII, 1841, pp. 386, 388, 444, 445.

<sup>4</sup> Savigny, M. J. C. L. de. *Tableau systématique des Ascidiens. Description de l'Égypte*. Tom. 1. (ca. 1816).



*Courtesy of Mr. R. M. Jurisch*

ENGRAVED NOTEPAPER: ROWLAND HILL'S CHAPEL.



*Courtesy of Mr. Wm. Febr*

ENGRAVED ENVELOPE SHOWING PANORAMA OF CAPE TOWN BY SHERWILL.

His 300 mineralogical specimens were, he says (*Précis*, p.17), neither remarkable nor of great value for the Museum collection, but would give geologists some idea of the composition of the mountains, which was not obtainable from the books then available dealing with the Cape.<sup>5</sup> French geologists were apparently content to let the matter rest.

It is not so easy to assess Delalande's contribution to South African Botany, because there is no "Index Plantarum (specierum)" corresponding with Sherborn's *Index animalium*. He is not mentioned in MacOwan's *Personalia of Cape Botanists*,<sup>6</sup> nor in other books dealing with botanical collectors. As in the zoological, so in the botanical field, he was overshadowed by his predecessors Sparrman, Thunberg, Masson and Burchell.

Nevertheless, his collections in all fields must have greatly enriched the Paris Museum and the Jardin des Plantes, and filled many of the gaps in those cabinets. And that was the primary object of his visit to the Cape.

Delalande's nephew J. P. Verreaux, then aged 12, accompanied him throughout his travels at the Cape. Verreaux returned to the Cape and was later joined by his two brothers. They also contributed to our knowledge of the South African fauna—but that is another story.

The copy of Delalande's *Précis* and the *Rapport* to the Minister, in the South African Museum Library, bears the signature of J. P. Verreaux on the title-page, and at the end a pencil note:

Mort au Museum en 1823, a l'age de 37 ans.

KEPPEL H. BARNARD

## ILLUSTRATED NOTEPAPERS AND ENVELOPES AT THE CAPE

Africana research often leads one into strange fields far removed from the Africana world. I little dreamt for instance that the Notepapers of St Georges Street and Table Bay which Thomas Bowler had done in 1844, would lead me to the "Saints", and the Lord's Day Society, and Rowland Hill, and the British General Post Office. My interest in the Bowler Notepapers which were engraved by Harwood & Sons in 1844 and were described by *Sam Sly's Journal* of July, 1844 as being "the best representations of the subjects that have ever been printed . . ." received an added stimulus when Mr. R. Jurisch of Riversdale recently showed me copies of these two Notepapers in mint condition. Previous to this, the only copies I had seen or heard of were ones printed on blue paper, all of which were mutilated, as

<sup>5</sup> For the state of knowledge of Cape geology at that time see Rogers, A. W. Pioneers in South African geology (*Trans. Geol. Soc. S. Afr.* Annexure to vol. xxxix. 1937).

<sup>6</sup> MacOwan, P. *Trans. S. Afr. Philos. Soc.* IV. 1888. Minutes of proceedings, p. xxx.