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George Bristow: Oologist.

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George Bristow will be remembered for his involvement in, what became known to British ornithologists as the 'Hastings Rarities Affair', when in the early part of this century a number of rare birds were recorded in south-east England, and the suspicion was that many of the rarities were not genuine (Harrison 1968). The affair became public in 1962 when E.M.Nicholson and I.J.Ferguson-Lees set the record straight in British Birds, and sixteen species were removed from the British list and nearly 550 records of rare birds deleted. Interest in George Bristow continues with publications by Morris (1983) and, lest we should forget, in British Birds as well (Greenland 1983, Joel 1984, ~~Rumsey~~ Rumsey 1984).

By profession George Bristow was a taxidermist and gunsmith at 15 Silchester Row, St. Leonards-on Sea, Sussex (Harrison 1968). In ^{James} Harrison's book there is no reference to George Bristow dealing in eggs. David Harrison and the late Jeffrey Harrison (sons of ^{the late} James Harrison) however would not have been surprised if Bristow had dealt with eggs (pers.comm.). Although the Booth Museum at Brighton holds some of the 'Hastings Rarities' specimens, there are no

Bristow eggs in their extensive collections (G.Legg pers. comm.), nor are there any in the collections at the British Museum, sub-department of Ornithology, Tring (M.Walters pers.comm.).

Whilst working on the egg collections at Merseyside County Museums, I discovered some Bristow eggs in the Capt. G.L.Pilkington collection, which was given to the Museum on 10th. October 1941. The clutches are:-

Egyptian Vulture. clutch of 2 eggs.

Andalucia. 12.3.1902.

obtained from Bristow.

Kentish Plover. clutch of 3 eggs.

Dungness beach, Kent. 24.5.1904.

obtained from and collected by Bristow.

~~Kentish Plover~~

Kentish Plover. clutch of 3 eggs.

Dungness beach, Kent. 28.5.1904.

obtained from and collected by Bristow.

Black-winged Stilt. clutch of 4 eggs.

Andalucia. 18.5.1902.

obtained from Bristow, the clutch originally collected for Wilhelm Schlüter.

Avocet. clutch of 4 eggs.

Holland. 19.5.1902.

obtained from Bristow, the clutch originally collected for Wilhelm Schlüter.

Pilkington's manuscript catalogue¹ also mentions another clutch which is no longer extant:-

Temminck's Stint. clutch of 4 eggs.

Triare, Lappland. 13.6.1910.

obtained from Bristow, the clutch originally collected for Wilhelm Schlüter.

It is clear from this evidence that George Bristow was not only a taxidermist and gunsmith, but an egg-collector and egg-dealer as well.

NOTES.

1. Capt. G.L.Pilkington. The catalogue of eggs in his collection is held in the Vertebrate Zoology Department, Merseyside County Museums, Liverpool.

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