

Letters of John Gould to F. G. Waterhouse.

By J. Sutton.

Recently, amongst some old papers at the South Australian Museum, I came across some letters from the celebrated ornithologist, John Gould, to F. G. Waterhouse, who was, at the time, Curator of the Museum of the South Australian Institute. As they may be of interest to ornithologists, they are produced below exactly as they were written, with, however, the words originally underlined now appearing in italics. Eleven of the letters (Nos. I to XI) are written by one person, but the last, No. XII, is in the handwriting of another person. All, except the incomplete letter, No. VI, bear John Gould's signature.

In "The Emu," Volume XXI, pp. 114-125, there is an article entitled "'The Times' on John Gould," and on page 115 is an illustration of part of a letter from John Gould, then in the Public Library at Brisbane, which is stated in a footnote on page 114 to be an "autograph letter from Gould." The letters numbered I to XI in Adelaide are in the same handwriting in the body as the Brisbane one, and are certainly not in Gould's own hand, but probably were written by his secretary. It is evident, therefore, that the only autographic part of the Brisbane letter as far as Gould is concerned is the signature thereto.

The only records I can find of the birds forwarded to Gould from Adelaide for determination and alluded to in these letters are appended.

Letter No. I.—September 23, 1863:—I have availed myself of the opportunity afforded me by my having occasion to send a Box of Books to your Institution to return your birds all correctly named. I have not had them mounted because the more rare ones are scarcely in a state to admit of it and because I think it likely that ere long you may be able to get more perfect skins. Take the greatest care of the new Parrakeet⁽¹⁾

(1) *Polytelis alexandrae*, Princess of Wales Parrakeet, now the Princess Parrot.

and those I have marked as rare. Should you at any time obtain duplicate examples of this species I should very much like to have a pair (male and female) and I would send you more than their value in skins of other birds for your museum. In the present instance I have forwarded twelve species of Humming Birds all correctly named which I beg your Institution will accept as a donation from me. I have also enclosed a little book or two for yourself with your name written on the Title-pages. You will probably find them useful as working books. Pray write me a line on the receipt of the box and if you can send me any other collections either of Mammals or Birds for the accurate determination of the species they shall be promptly returned to you. I have made a good drawing of the new Parrakeet⁽¹⁾ which will be published when I get a sufficient number of new species to form a fourth part of the Supplement to the Birds of Australia. See then what you can do to find novelties many yet exist depend upon it towards the north-west.

P.S.—The Box goes by the "Thracian." I have sent a Bill of Lading to Mr. Kay.

Letter No. II.—July 19, 1864:—I have just received yours of May 26 with the Photograph of the Little Eagle which is doubtless the *Aquila morphnoides*⁽²⁾ of my work vol. I pl 2. You must understand that colour goes for nothing among the Raptores: their variations are endless. The bird is one of your rarest species and I am glad you have a specimen for your Museum. I shot the species myself while in Australia and moreover took its nest and eggs. I send by post a copy of the Introduction to my Birds of Australia for your acceptance and regret I did not send it before but I entirely forgot it. I must tell you that this work as well as those formerly sent you are not printed for sale but merely for presentation to scientific and private friends. I regret very much that no collector has gone from your Colony to the north as many novelties would doubtless have been found there. The matter should really be reconsidered by your Council and you may urge this from me if you like. It is the first explorers of new countries that reap the greatest benefits. You may send Collectors as often as you like the Darling or any of the other south eastern parts of Australia but they will never find novelties in my department while precisely the reverse would be the case in the north. I shall be glad to see

(2) *Hieraaetus morphnoides*.

the Eggs of the Birds of the Darling River District, of the Murray Scrub and indeed of any but your commonest species. The *Euphema* has not been received and I must beg of you never to send any thing by private hands for they rarely reach their destination. Always happy to hear from you.

Letter No. III.—December 22, 1864:—I have this morning received yours of Oct. 26 in which you state that you have sent me a specimen of *Euphema splendida*⁽³⁾ by some private friend. Now this is always a very bad plan and I tremble when I know rare objects are thus forwarded, for 8 times out of 10 they are never delivered and in the present instance the rule holds good for I have not yet seen either your friend or the bird. By whom did you send it? Can I make enquiry? I should recommend you always to send every parcel by Ship in the regular way, with a Bill of Lading by post, but so small a matter as the skin of a bird defended by a piece of brown paper and made into the form of a letter can always be sent by post. I frequently receive skins of Humming Birds &c. so sent from Quito and other countries. Pray send for my inspection any new or doubtful quadrupeds and Birds you may get from the north; and if you can present me with a specimen or two of the new Parrakeet *Polytelis Alexandrae*⁽¹⁾ when you get a supply I should esteem it a great favor.

Letter No. IV.—January 24, 1866:—I have just published a Handbook to the Birds of Australia price £2.10: which you will find most useful in arranging your collection of Australian Birds; in fact you can scarcely do without it. I would send you a copy free of charge but the expense of printing it, over £600, precludes my so doing. Will you kindly get the authorities of the Library to order one and speak of it to any person taking an interest in Ornithology. I proposed you the other day as a Corresponding Member of the Zoological Society and at a subsequent Council you were duly elected. Pray do not forget me should you obtain any Birds or Quadrupeds from the north, as any new or interesting things I should much like to see in order to keep the Ornithology and Mammalogy of your Country as complete as possible. If any such collections are sent to me by Ship with a regular Bill of Lading they would reach me safely and should soon be returned free of charge and with due acknowledgment in my publications. Trusting you are in the enjoyment of health.

(3) *Neophema splendida*, Scarlet-chested Parrot.

Letter No. V.—November 26, 1866:—Like you I seize a moment before the post leaves to answer your letters of the 26 of March and 27th of April. I rec^d. your bat safely and it is now before me; it shall be safely returned soon. I have called it *Taphozous flaviventris*. The other bat you spoke of as being in the possession of Mr. Wheeler of Bristol I have also seen, it is the common Pteropus of New South Wales. Pray let me see the *Atrichia*⁽⁴⁾ and any other doubtful species which shall be duly returned unless you say some are for exchange in which case I shall send you their value in Humming Birds. Again I say let me see all you can: in tremendous haste.

(P.S.) Mr. White⁽⁵⁾ promised to send me some eggs see him and send anything he has in your parcel.

Letter No. VI.—March 25, 1867:—I return your Bat which I have named and drawn and for the sight of which I am highly obliged. I am always anxious to see any new or extraordinary Mammals but my interest is ten fold greater with regard to birds. You have repeatedly promised me the sight of any that you thought new and even offered to exchange duplicates for Humming Birds &c. to which arrangement I acceded. I must say therefore that I am somewhat disappointed that you have forgotten me with regard to the beautiful little Pardalote lately described in the Annals of Nat. Hist. by Prof. McCoy as *P. xanthopygius*⁽⁶⁾ with the remark that some of the specimens in the National Museum at Melbourne are from Swan Hill near the junction of the Murray and Darling and Mr. Waterhouse has presented others from near Adelaide in S. Australia. Had I not devoted the greater part of my life to the Birds of Australia and still entertain the greatest interest therein I should not have mentioned this. If you cannot send me examples of this species in exchange pray ask the Governors of your institution to grant me the loan of some for the purpose of figuring which being done they shall be quickly and safely returned. If this can be managed the sooner they come by post the better as I am preparing a new part of the supplement in which I should like the species to appear, at all events write to me I pray. I should like to see any . . . [The remainder of this letter is missing.]

(4). Either *Atrichornis rufescens*, Rufous Scrub-Bird, or *Atrichornis clamosus*, Noisy Scrub-Bird. Specimens of both species appear to have been held in Adelaide.

(5) Mr. Samuel White, father of Captain S. A. White.

(6) *Pardalotus xanthopygius*, Yellow-tailed Pardalote.

Letter No. VII.—November 19, 1867:—I send the accompanying Humming Birds for the acceptance of the Governors of your Museum in return for the specimens of *Xerophila leucopsis*⁽⁷⁾ and *Pardalotus xanthopygius*⁽⁶⁾ sent to me: I very much regret to find that I did not keep a list of the Trochilidae I sent you before, consequently some in the present parcel may be sent in duplicate. Will you be so good as to send me a list of those forwarded in 1863 with their sexes that I may know what to send you in future. In case you should transmit other things to me, while I believe it will be to your interest to do, I venture to repeat that I should like any duplicates you may have, of birds, quadrupeds, or eggs of birds from the interior which you may consider I have not yet seen; and I again express a hope that you will at least forward to me on loan (as you did the Bat) for the purpose of describing and figuring, any new birds you may obtain: such a favour has been repeatedly accorded me by the authorities at Melbourne and Sydney. I must now tell you that on the 1st of next month I shall publish a 4th part of the supplement to the Birds of Australia. It will contain many highly interesting novelties and some that every ornithologist will be pleased to see. I cannot give you the contents of the part but I may say that S. Australia contributes a fair quota, among them is the beautiful Alexandra Parrakeet, with a mention of yourself, your Museum &c in the accompanying letterpress. This new part shall be sent to your Institute by some convenient opportunity; they will then owe me £3.3 and £2.10 for the "Handbook" sent out in Jan. last and not yet paid for. Pray write and say if you have any novelties to forward and in haste.

P.S.—If you fer other than Humming Birds in Exchange for anything you may send me please say and your wishes shall be attended to.

Letter No. VIII.—July 21, 1868:—Yours of May 24 has just come to hand and I thank you for the trouble you have kindly taken respecting the part of the supplement for Mr. White, and the a/c against your Institution the amt. of wh. has not come by this post but I dare say is not very far distant. You mention that you are in correspondence with a Gentleman Shepherd in the far north and that he has sent you some specimens of *Artamus melanops*.⁽⁸⁾ Can you spare me one,

(7) *Aphelocephala leucopsis*, Eastern Whiteface.

(8) Black-faced Wood-Swallow. The type was obtained by Mr. Samuel White on 23rd August, 1863, at St. a'Becket's Pool (Pond, in maps), near Lyndhurst, S.A.

or more if they differ to figure from the one sent by Mr. White⁽⁵⁾ not being very perfect. Pray see to this by return of post as I am anxious that the bird shall be included in the 5th part of the Supplement now in preparation. I will also say that if you have any duplicates to spare of *Falco hypoleucus*,⁽⁹⁾ *F. niger*,⁽¹⁰⁾ and *Maurus leuconotus*⁽¹¹⁾ I shall return more than their value in other birds for your Museum. These large birds cannot be sent by post like the *Artamus* which I very much desire to see without delay. Thanking you for your promise, which I know will not be neglected, of sending me any novelties you may receive.

Letter No. IX.—December 16, 1868:—I duly recd. yours of Oct. last with the little box containing specimens of *Artamus melanops* &c for which I thank you. I now return, the same box curtailed in size, with 10 species of Trochilidae in exchange for your sending. I also enclose for your inspection a little *Sericornis*⁽¹²⁾ forwarded to me by you which at first sight appears to be a new species nearly allied to the Tasmanian *S. humilis* and I am very desirous of knowing if you have received any other examples of this bird from Mt. Gambier or elsewhere and whether they are alike in colour, in size, and in the absence of markings on the throat. In all probability you will find that more adult specimens are streaked on that part. If so please let me see at least one in that state as quickly as possible that I may figure, the bird if new, in the forthcoming pt. of my Supplement, now far advanced. Should other novelties turn up please to think of me and of the list of desiderata sent in my last letter. If you have a fine pair, male and female of *Maurus callainus*⁽¹³⁾ to spare, I should like to have them, and will, as I am doing now, send something in return. I am glad to hear your Society intends sending a collector to the north and shall be much obliged by your apprising me as early as may be of any interesting species he may procure; I mean before they are distributed over Europe. Pray send to Mt. Gambier for more of the *Sericornis** if you have no other specimens.

(9) Grey Falcon.

(10) *Falco subniger*, Black Falcon.

(11) White-backed Wren.

(12) *Sericornis osculans* = *Sericornis frontalis*, White-browed Scrub-Wren.

(13) *Maurus callainus*. Turquoise Wren

*Of course, any specimens you may send and wish ret'd. shall: but pray let me see all you can.

Letter No. X.—January 28, 1870:—Two or three days ago *only* Mr. White⁽⁵⁾ sent me the small box of birds you entrusted to his care as mentioned in yours of the 24th of August last. I hope to see Mr. White soon. I am sorry to say the Birds you sent are all known species but you will I am sure soon get some novelties from your northern territory and I pray you not to forget me when they arrive. The birds you sent are—1 specimen of *Pachycephala simplex*⁽¹⁴⁾; 2 of *Sauloprocta picata*⁽¹⁵⁾ vide Handb. 1, p. 246; 3 of *Sericornis oculans*⁽¹²⁾ from Mt. Gambier; and 1 skin of *Charadrius Geoffroyi*⁽¹⁶⁾ a common Indian plover which sometimes visits the northern portion of Australia but not yet included in my work. On the 19th of August I sent to your Institute through Mr. Pitman of Paternoster Row the 5th part of the Supplement in which you will see many fine species figured: when it has been received get the 5 Nos. arranged and bound or at least boarded and tell me what you think of the contents of part 5. especially the Moorhen⁽¹⁷⁾ sent by you some 12 months ago: also tell me if you wish the birds brought by Mr. White to be returned to you. Could you not get Mr. Galbraith⁽¹⁸⁾ to procure for me some specimens of *Geopsittacus occidentalis*⁽¹⁹⁾ and *Malurus leuconotus*⁽¹¹⁾ and if possible some eggs of the former. In haste but trusting you are well.

Letter No. XI.—August 12, 1871:—I duly received the Box of Birds, sent through Mr. Angas as announced in your welcome letter of the 28th of March last which I now proceed to answer. First let me tell you that *Charadrius Geoffroyi*⁽¹⁶⁾ and *Terekia cinerea*⁽²⁰⁾ were not in the box which I opened myself and which I believe had not been meddled with by anyone in transit. The remainder of the birds 15 in all were mostly common and ordinary species; as a redeeming feature, however, there were two that interested me, especially one of them—the *Xerophila*⁽²¹⁾—which is quite new and very distinct from the old species hitherto the sole representative of the form; the other is a little Tern from Port Darwin. I have had a

(14) Brown Whistler.

(15) *Rhipidura leucophrys*, Willie Wagtail.

(16) *Charadrius leschenaulti*, Large Sand-Dotterel.

(17) *Gallinula ruficrissa* = *Amaurornis ruficrissa*, Bushhen.

(18) Mr. A. L. Galbraith, of Machrihanish Station, which was situated near Blanchewater, close to Lake Callabonna, S.A.

(19) Night Parrot. The eggs are unknown.

(20) Terek Sandpiper.

(21) *Aphelocephala pectoralis*, Chestnut-breasted Whiteface.

bad skin of the latter in my collection for many years, I was very glad therefore to see a second example as it enabled me to name it with more confidence. With the exception of these two birds the others were of little interest to me. I will now comment upon the whole seriatim.

- No. 1 is doubtless a female of *Rallus brachypterus*.⁽²²⁾
2. *Microeca flavigaster*,⁽²³⁾ rather large, probably a male.
3. *Mirafra Horsfieldi*,⁽²⁴⁾ a very fine old male.
4. *Zosterops dorsalis*.⁽²⁵⁾ I admit that two species of *Zosterops* inhabit the southern coast of Australia; if one of them should require a name it will be the bird I have figured in the 5th vol. of my work for having compared the yellow throated specimens you have sent me as well as the specimen recd. from Mr. White, similarly marked, with the original specimen formerly in the possession of the Linnean Society and now in the British Museum I find them to be precisely alike.
5. *Xerophila pectoralis*,⁽²¹⁾ Gould. See what I have said about this new species in Taylor's Annals and Magazine of Nat. Hist, for next month, Sept. 1871.
6. *Pachycephala melanura*⁽²⁶⁾ female.
7. *Microeca flavigaster*.
345. Two females of *Myzomela obscura*.⁽²⁷⁾
8. *Ardetta picata*,⁽²⁸⁾ young.
- 607b. *Sternula* like *Nereis* with the tip of the bill black. Believing this to be new I have called it *S. placens*:⁽²⁹⁾ see Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist. Sept. 1871. I have not sent this species back at present wishing to keep it a little longer for comparison. I will, however, return it should you not succeed in getting another specimen from the northern territory, in which case please write to me.

(22) *Rallus brachypterus* = *Rallus pectoralis*, Lewin Water-Rail.

(23) Lemon-breasted Flycatcher.

(24) *Mirafra javanica*, Horsfield Bushlark.

(25) *Zosterops lateralis*. Grey-breasted Silvereye.

(26) Black-tailed Whistler.

(27) Dusky Honeyeater.

(28) *Notophoxyx aruensis*, Pied Heron.

(29) *Sterna albifrons*, Little Tern.

607b young of the last or some other species—which it is impossible to determine.

610. Hydrochelidon young—species uncertain.

531a. *Totanus*—is *Schoeniclus magnus*.⁽⁸⁰⁾

521. *Limosa uropygialis*⁽⁸¹⁾ female—very common.

With the exception of the Tern I have returned all you have marked with a cross and the *Gallinula ruficrissa*⁽¹⁷⁾ figured in my supplement and at the same time sent you a dozen species of Humming Birds for your museum; viz. . . . I think I formerly mentioned that I am very desirous of receiving the eggs of any of the Australian Birds except the more common species and I shall be greatly obliged by your bearing me in mind on this point, as I shall be by your continuing to send me any novelties you may receive from the northern territory or elsewhere; for the sight of which and the privilege of naming any that may prove to be new, I will as in the present instance add to your stores of the *Trochilidae*. With my kind regards to yourself and to Mr. White who I also hope will not forget me with regard to birds and eggs, I remain in the hope of soon again hearing from you both.

Letter No. XII.—September 30, 1875:—Your letter written on the 15th of July, and the box containing the birds from the Lake Eyre expedition arrived safely a few days ago. I thank you very much for thinking of me, for, I had almost thought you had never intended writing again. Two at least of the birds are new to science and I immediately sent descriptions of them to the "Annals" as you will see by the proof enclosed, these, with others of great interest received by me lately from northern Queensland and New Guinea will at once be embodied in two new parts under the title of "Supplement to the Birds of Australia" part 1 vol. 2 and I suppose your library will like them sent out in continuation of my great work. Although I have been in bad health for the last two years I still take a very lively interest in all Australian discoveries and I shall really feel much indebted to you if you will at *all times* and *at once* forward for my inspection any species you may receive that you may consider interesting, I say *immediately* you receive them because novelties get described elsewhere before I have an opportunity of seeing them, small birds may at all times be sent by post the expense of which I will immediately repay you

(80) *Calidris tenuirostris*, Great Knot.

(81) *Limosa lapponica*, Bar-tailed Godwit.

or your society in some way or other. That new birds are yet to be found in the interior and particularly towards the north west I am certain, and, if such a man as Mr. Andrews⁽³²⁾ could join any future expedition he would doubtless be rewarded. Would you tell me in your next if Mr. Andrews wishes to dispose of any duplicates, and if so, he would send me a list of the kinds and prices. For my own part my wants are few but I most particularly require for *my own collection* a *very fine male and female of malurus leuconotus*,⁽¹¹⁾ also a *female of malurus calianus*,⁽¹³⁾ *male and female of pardalotus rubricatus*,⁽³³⁾ also a *geophaps plumifera*⁽³⁴⁾ or two. Referring again to the species you have just sent, the *Melithreptus*⁽³⁵⁾ is the most beautifully coloured of the group, but is most closely allied to *M. gularis*, the *Amictus*⁽³⁶⁾ appears to be quite distinct from the other three species, the Honey-eater (*ptilotis*)⁽³⁷⁾ is as much a puzzle to me, as it is to you, I have the same bird collected by Gilbert in de Leichard's⁽³⁸⁾ expedition, and also from some parts of the north, all having a general similarity, yet all differing according to locality: at present I do not see my way clear to describe the birds the *Cinclosoma*⁽³⁹⁾ is precisely like specimens collected by Sturt. I shall retain your little box of specimens until I hear from you when perhaps you will say if the whole or any part are to be returned. If I retain them I will forward for your Museum a good "quid pro quo" in any birds I have, that your Museum most requires, and now, after this long rambling note, I must first ask you not to forget to procure for me, *Malurus leuconotus*, and end by attending to a subject of another nature, the illness of your brother at the British Museum. Three weeks ago he was in some danger, but yesterday, a telegram from one of his daughters, to one of mine, was to the effect, that he was slowly advancing towards recovery, I thought you would like to hear the latest account of him. Awaiting a reply.

P.S.—I shall be glad to see your list of the Lake Eyre birds.

(32) Mr. F. W. Andrews, collector with the Lake Eyre Exploring Expedition, 1874-5.

(33) Red-browed Pardalote.

(34) *Lophophaps plumifera*, Plumed Pigeon.

(35) *Melithreptus laetior*, Golden-backed Honeyeater.

(36) *Amytis* = *Amytornis goyderi*, Eyrean Grass-Wren.

(37) Honeyeater. This specimen does not appear to have been named by Gould. (See "S.A. Ornithologist," Vol. IX, pp. 130-1.)

(38) Leichhardt. Overland Expedition from Moreton Bay to Port Essington, 1844-5.

(39) *Cinclosoma cinnamomeum*, Cinnamon Quail-Thrush.

P.P.S.—Mr. Dutton called on me last year asking the price of such of my larger works not in your possession, stating a sum would be attempted to be raised by some of your rich colonists in London to send them out, but, as I have heard nothing since, I fear the matter has fallen to the ground.

Specimens forwarded from Adelaide.

October, 1868.—6 *Artamus melanops*; 4 *Epthianura tricolor*; 1 *Calamanthus fuliginosus*, Mt. Gambier; 1 *Sericornis*, Mt. Gambier; 2 Quail query sp., habitat, near Adelaide; 2 *Ptilotis plumula*? Murray Scrub, N.W. Bend.

November, 1868.—Forwarded per T. W. Tyas, a new sp. of *Tribonyx*⁽¹⁷⁾ from Cape River, Queensland.

June, 1869.—Forwarded per favor of Mr. Saml. White to Mr. Gould, London—2 *Rhipidura motacilloides*⁽¹⁵⁾ N.T.; 1 *Petroica*⁽¹⁴⁾ n.sp. N.T.; 1 *Charadrius*⁽¹⁶⁾ n.sp. N.T.; 3 *Sericornis*⁽¹²⁾ n.sp. Mt. Gambier.

March, 1871.—Forwarded to J. Gould favr. by Capt. H. Angel "Collingrove" the following rare bird skins from N.T. and elsewhere for examination, some for exchange for Humming Birds or some to be returned.

No. on
Spen.

1. 1 *Rallus*.⁽²²⁾ New sp., near Rockhampton, lent by Mr. S. White.
2. 1 *Microeca*.⁽²³⁾ New sp., Cleveland Bay, to be returned.
3. 1 *Mirafra*.⁽²⁴⁾ New sp., Bowen. Diggles thinks is *Horsfieldi*—large.
4. 1 *Zosterops*.⁽²⁵⁾ New sp., Cleveland Bay, lent by Mr. S. White.
5. 1 *Xerophila*.⁽²¹⁾ New sp., near Port Augusta, to be returned.
6. 1 *Eopsaltria*.⁽²⁶⁾ New sp., Port Darwin, to be returned.
7. 1 *Microeca flavigaster*⁽²³⁾? Port Darwin, exchange.
8. 1 *Ardetta*.⁽²⁸⁾ New sp.? white head and neck, query young of *A. picata*, exchange.
345. 2 *Myzomela obscura*⁽²⁷⁾? For comparison smaller and darker than Queensland specimens.
- 607b. 1 *Sternula nereis*.⁽²⁹⁾ Like but tip of bill black.
- 607a. 1 *Sternula nereis*.⁽²⁹⁾ Like but bill black.

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527. 1 *Terekia*—*cinerea*?
 610. 1 *Hydrochelidon fluviatilis*.⁽⁴⁰⁾ Query young.
 531a. 1 *Totanus*.⁽³⁰⁾ Query,
 521. 1 *Limosa*.⁽³¹⁾ New sp.
 1 *Charadrius Geoffroyi*.⁽¹⁶⁾

July, 1875.—2 *Amytis*.⁽³⁶⁾ n.sp.? allied to *A. texilis* but with white throat, fainter colour and smaller; 1 *Cinclosoma*.⁽³⁹⁾ n.sp.? smaller than *C. cinnamomeum* being lighter coloured and varying in markings than any specimens &c.; 1 *Ptilotis*.⁽³⁷⁾ sp.? may prove a variety of *catitia*.⁽⁴¹⁾; 1 *Melithreptus*.⁽³⁵⁾ n.sp.. and one of the finest &c. of the tribe.
