WALTER KARL JOHANN ROEPKE (1882-1961)

On the 7th February 1961 Dutch lepidopterology suffered a severe loss by the decease of Professor Dr. WALTER KARL JOHANN ROEPKE, who died at his home in Wageningen, Holland, at an age of 78 years.

For long years Professor ROEPKE was the leading Dutch lepidopterist. Besides he has been for over thirty years an important figure in the field of general entomology and was well-known far outside this country. His whole long life was chiefly consecrated to entomology, in the last years, to lepidopterology only. His enthusiasm, versatillity and energy were remarkable.

ROEPKE was born on 18 September 1882, in Hohensalza (Inowrazlaw), in the province of Posen (now in Poland), from German parents. In 1901 he began the study of biology at the University of Berlin, but soon moved to Zürich, attracted by the great figure of M. STANDFUSS who lectured there. Under this nestor of lepidopterology ROEPKE developed his talent further and the influence of this scolar upon the young student was great and of a permanent value. Possibly from that period dates ROEPKE'S interest for lepidoptera. He made, as STANDFUSS' assistant, several trips through southern Europe and North Africa, in order to collect material for the classical cross-breeding experiments of STANDFUSS with Saturniidæ and Sphingidæ (A small authentic collection of hybrids of the last family remained for long years with ROEPKE and is now in the Leiden Museum). He inaugurated in 1907.

In 1908 the fervent hope of ROEPKE, to learn the living nature of the Tropics, was fulfilled by his accepting of the appointment of assistant entomologist at the Agricultural Station at Salatiga, Java, in the former Nether-
lands East Indies. He became Director of The Central Java Experiment Station and then Entomologist at the Institute of Plant Diseases and Pests of Buitenzorg.

His activities were handicapped by World War I and, more seriously, by the symptoms of a tropical disease, the sprew, which soon made his stay in the Tropics not longer possible. A fortunate change was his appointment of Professor at the Agricultural College, Wageningen, where he arrived in 1919 to teach tropical agriculture till 1925, and from 1925 till his retirement in 1953, applied entomology. In these years his new laboratory published over 200 papers, 12 of which were inaugural dissertations.

Roepke continued working, in his spare time, on the fauna of Lepidoptera of the East Indian Archipelago, chiefly of Java. Due to his extraordinary energy and in spite of his many other duties, a fine collection of Javese Lepidoptera (still at the College) and several extensive monographs resulted.

A complete list of his papers will appear in the *Tijdschrift voor Entomologie*. Of the most important monographs may be mentioned here his series “Rhopalocera Javanica, an illustrated survey of the Rhopalocera of Java” (in Dutch), “Heterocera Javanica, fam. Sphingidae” (with Dupont), his extensive studies of Nyctemera (1949 and 1957), of Traba (1951), of Delias (Pieridae) of New Guinea (1953), and of South Asiatic Cossidae (1957).

He was an excellent observer and field entomologist. During his Java­nese period he noted, bred and studied biologies of a very great number of insects, of which the studies of Acrocerops crameralia v. Dev., the cacao moth, and especially the fantastic life history of Hypophryctis dolichoderella Roepke (1925) a Tineid larva preying on the brood of Dolichoderus ants, are notable.

With Roepke we lose one of the last all-round entomologists of his generation. Although obstinately defending his scientific views, he was a kind and generous colleague and a loyal friend. He will not soon be forgotten. Our sympathy goes to his family.

LYCÆNOPSIS PSEUDARGIOLUS IN LIGHT TRAP

I have seen very few records of butterflies having been caught in light traps. It therefore seems advisable to record such a capture. I have used various types of light in the past few years in catching Neuroptera. Only once in many nights of trapping has a butterfly been taken. On 14 July 1959 I caught a male *Lycænopsis pseudargiolus* (Bvd. & Lec.) identified by my friend A.H. Moeck. The trap was put into operation with the light about 4 feet above the ground in my backyard in Shorewood, a residential suburb of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, at 9:00 P.M. (temp. 65° F.) and was emptied at 12:00 p.m. (temp. 62° F.). Among many other insects was a nearly perfect *L. pseudargiolus*. Its condition suggests that it was in the trap a short time only. The trap was a typical sheet metal funnel trap with two vanes. The light source was a General Electric 6 watt Black Light BL Lamp which radiates most of its energy in the 3500 Angstrom region.

The apparent rarity of capture of butterflies in light traps would seem to indicate that they are attracted to the light from a very short distance only and most likely only when disturbed from their resting spot of the night.

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