

OBITUARIES

OTTO BUCHHOLZ (1874-1958)

OTTO BUCHHOLZ, a well known lepidopterist, died on the 14th day of September 1958 in the East Orange General Hospital, East Orange, New Jersey, two days before his 84th birthday. He was born in Hanover, Germany, the son of GUSTAVE and PAULINE BUCHHOLZ. He had two sisters.

During his entire life OTTO was interested in butterflies and moths. At the early age of ten he started his first collection in Germany. His daughter has today in her possession his first butterfly book entitled *Hermann's Raupen und Schmetterlings Jaeger* by Dr. E. REUTHER, 1877, which he used at that time and brought to the United States with him when he immigrated to this country without his parents at sixteen years of age. During the following years his collection grew rapidly and became at the time of his death the largest private collection of Lepidoptera in the United States.

OTTO BUCHHOLZ married Wanda Held on the 2nd day of April, 1897. They had one child, a daughter, AGNES, now Mrs. HARRY EVANS of Roselle Park, New Jersey. One *Acronicta* form he named for his wife, who died after a long illness on November 30th, 1936 at Westfield, New Jersey. Thereafter he lived with his daughter and her family. At first they lived in Elizabeth, then Westfield, and for the past twenty years at Roselle Park, all in New Jersey. At all of these localities OTTO collected many rare species which no longer occur there because of the changes of environment caused by the growth and development of the country.

By profession OTTO was a mechanical engineer. He was employed for twenty-five years by the Aluminum Corporation of America at its Garwood, New Jersey, plant. He made at least one trip to Germany for that Company in connection with the opening of a new plant. Since his retirement in 1944, he devoted his entire time to his collection, spreading new acquisitions and respreding old ones, because he always sought perfection in all his material and some specimens in the course of time had become partly relaxed. When the family moved to Roselle Park, the top floor of the house consisted of a bedroom with a bath and a "bug" room larger than the other two combined. There he spent all his days and evenings when at home. The accompanying photograph shows him at his desk there; it was taken in 1949.

In the pursuit of his hobby, OTTO traveled through half of the forty-nine states in search of new specimens. His first cross-country trip was made over fifty years ago in 1907. Numerous other trips followed in rapid succession. All of these trips were made by car, loaded to the top with necessities for a collector planning to be away for many months. Generally he traveled alone and stayed in the chosen localities for the full season. Often he returned home with over 10,000 specimens neatly packed away in cigar boxes between layers of cotton. His favorite collecting places were the Florida Keys, the Carolinas, Okeechobee Swamp in Georgia, Virginia, and the Rio Grande Valley in Texas. Several trips were taken to each of these localities as well

as to many others. His last trip was to California, when he was already in his seventies, with HERMANN WILHELM of Willimantic, Connecticut. OTTO was an excellent collector in the field and at his best as a field naturalist. His endurance was remarkable. Never seeming to tire, he competed easily with much younger men and outdid many of them.

With his mechanical training OTTO was very handy with tools. Most of his collection was contained in boxes about 12×16 inches which he made with great skill. In these the specimens were pinned on both sides. Even the cork used in these boxes was pressed by him. He made his own forceps and butterfly nets, also his light and bait traps which were quite original in design. Everything he made along these lines was most accurate and suitable for the purpose intended. Many fellow collectors are using his equipment today.

All of his specimens were spread and labeled in the most exact manner. Even for one not interested in Lepidoptera it was a pleasure just to look at his collection and see everything so neatly arranged and in such perfect order. No one was ever a better curator. His huge collection is estimated to contain about 130,000 specimens, with the butterflies alone accounting for almost ten percent of that number. All of these are housed in about four hundred double boxes and one cabinet with forty-eight large sized glass-covered drawers containing *Catocala* only, a genus in which he was much interested. In addition, his favorite groups were Sphingidæ, *Apantesis*, *Eubaphe*, *Acronicta*, *Grapholitha* and *Papaipema*. A great number of species he reared himself and also inflated their larvæ. In the course of this work he discovered many lepidopterous food plants previously unrecorded in the literature.

His companions in the field in the earlier days were CHARLES RUMMEL, T. D. MAYFIELD, FREDERIC LEMMER, HENRY BIRD, GEORGE KELLER, and many others. Many members of the Newark Entomological Society took field trips with OTTO and visited him in his home, where they were always welcome to compare specimens or help themselves from his large accumulation of duplicates. Others visited him for his advice or information with which he was most liberal.

OTTO, with an amazing memory and a keen eye, was a mine of information. It is to be regretted that he published so little but it was his nature to collect, build a collection, and take care of it, and not to write. He imparted his knowledge freely to everyone who inquired. Several butterflies and moths were named after him, among them being:

Feltia buchholzi Barnes & Benjamin, 1929.

Pseudoboarmia buchholzaria Lemmer, 1937.

Plebeius icarioides buchholzi dos Passos, 1938.

Zale buchholzi McDunnough, 1943.

Strymon melinus buchholzi H. A. Freeman, 1950.

Atrytone conspicua buchholzi Ehrlich & Gillham, 1951.

Megathymus yuccæ buchholzi H. A. Freeman, 1952.

Also two generic names were proposed in his honor by BARNES and BENJAMIN: *Buchholzia* (1926) and *Eubuchholzia* (1929).

BUCHHOLZ was a Charter and Sustaining Member of the Lepidopterists' Society. He was also a member of the Brooklyn Entomological Society and a former President thereof, the New York Entomological Society, and the Newark Entomological Society of which he was also President for some years.

OTTO BUCHHOLZ was acquainted personally or by correspondence with most North American lepidopterists. He will be greatly missed by all of them who will remember him as a friend and good companion, always encouraging and inspiring.

His collection including 5 holotypes, 3 allotypes, and 551 paratypes has been sold by his daughter to the American Museum of Natural History and will be incorporated in the general collection of that institution.

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PAPERS BY OTTO BUCHHOLZ

1917. A new species of *Acronycta*. *Ent. News* 28: 183.
1926. Geo. J. Keller. *Journ. New York Ent. Soc.* 34: 293.
1951. *Mitoura gryneus octoscripta* n. var. *Bull. Brooklyn Ent. Soc.* 46: 78.
1957. A new species of *Papaipema* (Noctuidæ) from New Jersey. *Lepid. News* 10: 139-140.

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