recorded as attending the funeral and to date no extant relatives have been traced. His botanical legacy, however, lives on in many modern revisions and monographic works published for this region.

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References


Plantagenet Lechmere Guppy

By NICHOLAS GUPPY
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"Jim", or "Planty", as he was known, was the eldest child of Lechmere and Alice (née Rostant) Guppy, and was born in Port of Spain, Trinidad on 15th April 1871, at No. 1 Wellington Terrace, Queen's Park. He was educated in England at Buntingford Grammar School. After leaving school he entered Government service, first as a clerk in the Audit Office (1891), and later in many different capacities. He spent many years in Tobago, where he was Sub-Receiver and Postmaster, and then Warden.

Inheriting his father’s scientific proclivities, from an early age he undertook work in his spare time for the Natural History Museum in South Kensington, London, and wrote a number of papers on Trinidad fish and insects. These he illustrated with drawings and paintings of outstanding quality, which are indeed beautiful works of art. The largest collection of these is in the London Natural History Museum and about a dozen are in the Trinidad museum.

He was an early advocate of the biological control of insect pests, which he applied successfully to the sugar-cane froghopper. Discovering that a hover-fly or Syrphid was an important parasite on eggs of the froghopper in Kenya, where the cane varieties 'Scely Seedling' and 'Striped Ribbon' were grown as in Trinidad, he advocated that a complete system be set up to provide the right conditions for the fly to control the pest. This involved the planting of clumps of Samaan trees near the cane to provide both birds and the fly with shelter in hot dry weather, the 'hurdling' of cattle (which eat the fallen fruit) under the trees, and the use of their manure on the cane. The system was so successful that after nine years he was able to report that no further outbreaks of the pest had occurred. He visited Grenada, Martinique (which curiously has no froghoppers) and other Caribbean islands in February of 1917, while researching the pest. Aged 20, in July 1891, with seven other naturalists he was co-founder of The Trinidad Field Naturalists’ Club; and he was a member of the Museum Committee of the Royal Victoria Institute, the forerunner of our museum.

After retiring from Government service in 1929, for some years he worked independently as an expert and dealer in tropical fish for aquaria, and in 1934 was living in Georgetown, Guyana (then British Guiana), where he is described as the chief animal dealer, collecting for the American Museum of Natural History in New York, and the New York Zoological Gardens, among other organisations. He introduced the ‘Guppy’ fish (named after his father Lechmere Guppy, who discovered it in 1859 when 23 years old) to England (1906), Europe and the United States, where it rapidly became the world’s most popular aquarium fish, a status it has maintained ever since.

His sister, Yseult Bridges, describes him as by nature a singularly happy man, who cared nothing for social occasions and took life uncritically. He devoted his leisure hours to sailing a small yacht called Vanessa lo (scientific name for the English Peacock butterfly), his crew consisting of ‘Tobago Jim’, an elderly negro who had roaming the seven seas. Sadly, tragedy befell him early

* Guppy’s discovery of the fish in Trinidad was in fact preceded by the discovery of the same fish in Venezuela. See “Agouti to Zandoli” in this issue – Ed.
in life, for he fell deeply in love with Margaret Lenagan, of an Irish-Trinidadian family, who carried in her genes a tendency to insanity after the birth of the first or a later child. Despite his own parents' warnings he married her, and by her had a son, Ian, and a daughter, Ianthe. After Ianthe's birth Margaret became increasingly demented, until one day she chased him around the house and garden with a carving knife and she was then confined to a mental home. In those days insanity of a spouse was not considered grounds for a divorce, and when Jim wanted to marry again several years later, he was unable to do so. When still quite young, his son Ian committed suicide, while during World War II his daughter Ianthe married a Bahamian, Charles Kelly, and left the island to live in Spanish Wells, Bahamas.

In 1934, the year of his death, Arthur Greenhall of the Bronx Zoo described him as a little man, sunbaked and pliant, untouched by his 63 years except for thinning grey hair and a grey moustache. This is how I also remember him from about the same time, during my own Trinidad days as a child. I can remember meeting him on several occasions, usually when he visited my home in St. Ann's, and each time with delight, for he was genuinely interested in me as a person, and we talked like two adults about mutually interesting subjects. I too was interested in aquarium fish, and one day when walking up Lady Chancellor Road I met him and he took me into his home nearby and gave me an annotated copy of Stoye's "Tropical Aquarium Fish", which I still treasure. He died at Colon, Panama, on 1st July 1934, whilst on a world cruise in company with his friends, Mr. & Mrs. J. Moderate. He was cremated there, and his ashes brought back to Trinidad, where they were placed in a headstone on the grave of his brother Gareth (my father) in Lapeyrouse Cemetery.

Richard Richardson Mole
By HANS BOOS and VICTOR QUESNEL

Family Life and Business Interests

R.R. Mole was born at Fore St., Bridgewater, Somerset, England on 27th September 1860, the elder son of Richard Hopkins Mole and his wife Eliza, née Howels. (The names Richard and Richardson appear repeatedly in the Mole genealogy). We know nothing of his years at school but we know that on leaving school he became a journalist and worked for several British newspapers.

A publication by Jose M. Bodu records that Mole arrived in Trinidad “on 14th September 1886 by the DSS "Antilles", under engagement to “Public Opinion" newspaper”. Presumably the newspaper had advertised in England for someone to fill a vacant post and Mole had applied and been successful. He was “the first Englishman to be associated with the Colonial Press in the capacity of a shorthand reporter”. However, he did not remain long with “Public Opinion" because by 1891 his name appears as a clerk to the Attorney General of the Trinidad Government in the 1891 and 1982 editions of the Colonial Office List.

He remained an even shorter time in this post for in 1892 he was joined by his brother Arthur Hopkins Mole, born on the 22nd May 1863, and together they founded the firm of Mole Brothers, Bookbinders, Printers and Publishers. Two years later Arthur died from “pernicious bilious remittent fever" (yellow fever), but Mole carried on the business for many years thereafter, joined later by his first son and a cousin.

There is an area of uncertainty here for we know that Mole worked for a time in the Government Printing Office - the obituaries in both the Trinidad Guardian and the Fort of Spain Gazette say so - but the obituary in the Trinidad Guardian states that he left the Government Printing Office in 1898 to found his newspaper “The Mirror”. This newspaper was indeed founded in 1898 but by then Mole had already founded Mole Brothers so that it is highly unlikely that Mole was still at the Government Printing Office in 1898. In our view it is more likely that Mole got a temporary job at the Government Printing Office after he left “Public Opinion", going from there to the Attorney General’s office and then leaving the post to found his own business firm.

On 5th December 1888, at the Wesleyan Chapel at the corner of Duke and Hanover Streets, Mole married Georgina Elizabeth Hibbs who was born in 1861 in England. We do not know what brought her to Trinidad but she arrived here “towards the end of 1888 and a few weeks after was married to Mr. R.R. Mole”. (Hanover Street was the part of the present Abercromby Street between Knox Street and Park Street. Above Park Street in the “new town” laid out about 1802, the name changed