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“A nice old greybeard” – Friedrich Ris’ correspondence archived at the  
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## **“A nice old greybeard” – Friedrich Ris’ correspondence archived at the Senckenberg Museum Frankfurt/Main, Germany**

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### **Abstract**

The private papers of Friedrich Ris including letters he received were digitized and perused. Altogether 1635 letters written by 118 correspondents are considered, and their content is summarized. In addition 14 letters sent to Ris’ relatives after his death are included. The correspondence covers the 53 years from 28-xii-1884 to 28-i-1931. Generally the correspondence involves an exchange of expertise, publications, illustrations, photographs, and to some extent private matters. Also the selling of specimens is mentioned in some letters. During the First World War Ris, a neutral Swiss citizen, corresponded with several entomologists from warring nations on both sides of the conflict. The lack of letters from Förster and Krüger is discussed. The correspondence resulted in the discovery of some Odonata specimens captured by Bartenev. *Calopteryx splendens* was a species of special interest to Ris, he requested specimens from several correspondents at least after 1912. There is evidence for the deposition of the holotype of *Selysiothemis nigra* in Selys’ collection. Furthermore the correspondence provides information e.g. about the exchange of type material, the discovery of new species, the extensive collecting of [E.B.] Williamson, of different points of view regarding the correct spelling of *Aeshna*, and further odonatological topics. Apparently unpublished data found in the correspondence are the first records of *Lestes macrostigma* at the Lake Neusiedl, Austria in 1923 by Zerny, and the quantities of *Somatochlora arctica* captured by Morton during his 1904 trip to Switzerland. Probably the earliest photographs of water mites on the wings of *Sympetrum meridionale* were found in Ris manuscripts responding to a letter of Viets.

**Keywords:** Type material, history of odonatology.

### **Introduction**

Much has already published about Friedrich Ris (1867-1931; fig. 1) and his important role in entomology, especially Odonata taxonomy. Recently Fliedner (2021) published on the scientific names of Ris’ Odonata species, and also included very useful biographical information. Further biographical information is available from the obituaries e.g. of Calvert (1931), Morton (1931), Schneider-Orelli (1931), Schulthess (1931), and Ueh-



**Fig. 1:** Friedrich Ris at Münchenbuchsee, Switzerland on 29-vi-1915. This ditch was a collecting locality of *Coenagrion ornatum* (Selys, 1850) but according to Ris mss it was filled up in 1917. Photo: Unknown, extracted from Ris mss.

linger (1931). Additionally Wildermuth & Weibel (2018) published information about Ris' sister Elisabeth and her part in supporting his odonatological work.

Beside these publications there are further sources available from private papers held at the Museum zu Allerheiligen in Schaffhausen, Switzerland (Transcript by Urs Weibel of letters sent by Ris in 1890-91 to his family) and the Stadtarchiv Schaffhausen (Transcript by Heinrich Schiess of Ris' entomological diary from 1917-1931).

From 2020-2022 Malte Seehausen (MS) digitized Ris' private papers supplementing his Odonata collection at the Senckenberg Museum Frankfurt/Main, Germany (SMF). These documents contain manuscripts and notes of Ris as well as correspondence and photographic plates. Surprisingly also manuscripts and collected items of Michel Edmond de Selys Longchamps were found – including the original manuscripts of Henry Walter Bates (1825-1892) regarding his Amazon Odonata (Seehausen 2022).

The intention of the present publication is to give a summarized overview of the letters received by Ris.

## Material and method

There are 1635 letters from 118 correspondents in Ris' private papers. Some of them were integrated by Ris in the species accounts of his handwritten manuscripts (Ris mss). In addition there are 14 letters sent to Ris' sister Fanny Elisabeth Ris (1872-1959), his brother Victor Ris (1868-1943), and his mother Maria Ris-Schmid (1842-1931) after his death. We include these letters because they reflect Ris' studies of Odonata.



The letters are written in English, German, French and Italian. The letters in French were examined by Mélanie Turiault (MT), and she summarized the letters of René Martin. Heinrich Fliedner (HF) studied and summarised the letters of Axel Rosenbohm and Erich Schmidt, and transliterated some letters written in cursive German. Cyrille Deliry (CD) summarized the letters of de Selys Longchamps.

The annotated list includes all correspondents, but usually only odonatological and partly private topics are summarized – thus contents referring to Trichoptera, Plecoptera, Lepidoptera or other subjects are not analysed.

### **Annotated list of correspondents**

The names of correspondents are listed in alphabetical order (family name). Their life span and some additional information about each person is added. For each the total number of their letters (including postcards) is provided. The exact date is specified for each letter for up to three letters per sender, with the the general period being given for more extensive correspondence. Additional letters written after Ris' death (if any) are listed subsequently. A date in brackets within the text indicates the date of a letter. Additional remarks are given in square brackets. The particular country of the localities and cities mentioned is given only once in the first entry. Beside the generally known cities the most important to know is Rheinau, Switzerland – the main domicile of Ris.

#### **Albarda, Johan Herman (1826-1898)**

Dutch lawyer, ornithologist, and entomologist; 4 letters, in French; 14-x-1889, xii-1889, and 06-xii-1889 (two postcards with the same date)

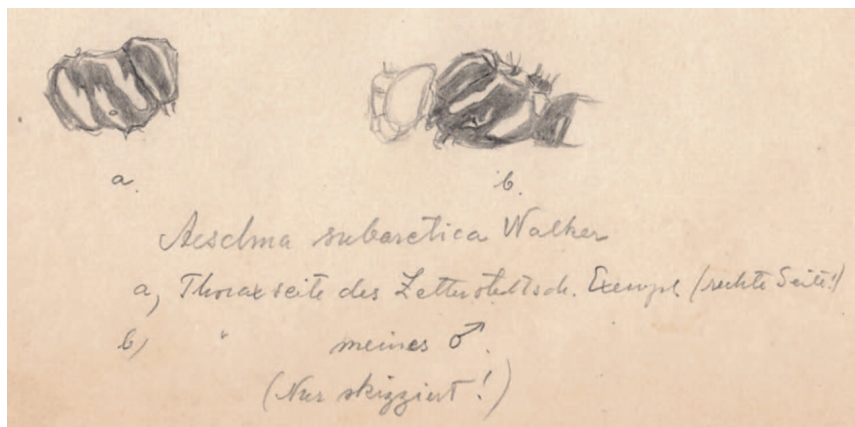
The letters of Albarda are about Plecoptera, mainly species of the genera *Taeniopteryx* Pictet, 1841 and *Rhaphidia* Linnaeus, 1758.

#### **Ander, Kjell Ernst Viktor (1902-1992)**

Swedish entomologist, and philosopher, employed at the Zoological Institute of the University in Lund, Sweden; 3 letters, in German; 29-iii-1927, 29-iv-1928, and 17-ii-1930

In 1927 Ander wrote about the amazing discovery of *Aeshna subarctica* Walker, 1908 in Germany. He reported that thereupon he had studied his specimens of *Aeshna juncea* (Linnaeus, 1758), and identified a pair of *A. subarctica*, captured in July and August two miles south of Lund. Also he had studied the collection of the Entomological Institute of the University Lund, and discovered another male of *A. subarctica* captured in July at Lund. Ander referred to some morphological characters and colour differences, and added sketches of the thorax (Fig. 2). Further he reported *Aeshna mixta* Latreille, 1805, *Epitheca bimaculata* (Charpentier, 1825), *Somatochlora flavomaculata* (Vander Linden, 1825), and *Aeshna viridis* Eversmann, 1836 from Sweden and said that recently he had acquired a collection including *Sympetrum striolatum* (Charpentier, 1840) – a species "... new to Sweden." Ris requested specimens of *Agrion concinnum* Johanson, 1859 [= *Coenagrion johanssoni* (Wallengren, 1894)], and *Calopteryx splendens* (Harris, 1780). In return Ander requested nymphae and imago of *Agrion* [*Coenagrion*] *mercuriale* (Charpentier, 1840). In 1928 Ander sent a few *C. splendens* but stated that he would

try to collect more specimens. Further he said that he was in mid Sweden in June and July 1927 and found *A. concinnum*, additionally Ander recorded *Leucorrhinia albifrons* (Burmeister, 1839) in northern Uppland. In 1930 Ander wrote that he had found *S. striolatum* even in Lappland and that this species is widespread in Sweden.



**Fig. 1:** Sketches of the thorax of *Aeshna subarctica* males showing differences in the pattern – a) specimen of Zetterstedts collection [Entomological collection of the University Lund], b) Ander's specimen. Sent to Ris by Ander on 29-iii-1927.

### **Ball, Antoine (ca. 1897-1981)**

Belgian entomologist, at that time curator for entomology at the Musée royal d'histoire naturelle de Belgique in Brussels, Belgium; 1 letter, in French; 19-v-1930

Ball sent 88 dragonflies collected in "Indes orientales" by "S.A.R. le Prince Léopold de Belgique" to Ris for examination and determination. [After Ris' death these specimens went to Fraser who studied and published them (Fraser 1932)].

### **Bartenev, Alexandr Nikolaevich (1882-1946)**

Russian odonatologist; 8 letters, in French and German; 31-i-1907 to 21-iii-1928

The correspondence started with a request for publications, and from then on both exchanged publications as well as specimens. In 1909 Bartenev mailed a list of Odonata specimens he could offer (Fig. 3). Apparently Ris requested at least specimens of *Aeshna crenata* Hagen, 1856, *Aeshna serrata* Hagen, 1856 and *Aeshna gigas* Bartenev, 1908 because Bartenev answered on 14-xi-1910 that he will send specimens of *A. crenata* but unfortunately he got only a pair of *A. serrata*, thus he could not spare a specimen. Regarding *A. gigas* Bartenev noted that this species is a junior synonym of *A. crenata*. Further Bartenev requested specimens of *Somatochlora alpestris* (Selys, 1840) and *Leucorrhinia caudalis* (Charpentier, 1840) and offered some Siberian species. On 20-xi-1910 Bartenev offered a pair of *Leucorrhinia intermedia* Bartenev, 1910 and stated that he had obtained several dozen specimens during his study of this species [he sent them on 16-xii-1910, see also Medvedev et al. (2013)]. Also Bartenev reported *Orthetrum*

*coerulescens anceps* (Schneider, 1845) from Batoum [Batumi], Georgia, and from Baku, Azerbaijan, he discussed about *Sympetrum [vulgatum] imitans* Selys, 1886 and *Sympetrum vulgatum decoloratum* (Selys, 1884), and noted in this regard that he had recently described *Sympetrum vulgatum grandis* Bartenev, 1910 from eastern Siberia. The discussion about *S. vulgatum decoloratum* was continued on 16-xii-1910 – “... only *Sympetrum vulgatum* with reduced black is to be called var. *decoloratum* ...” [translated from German].

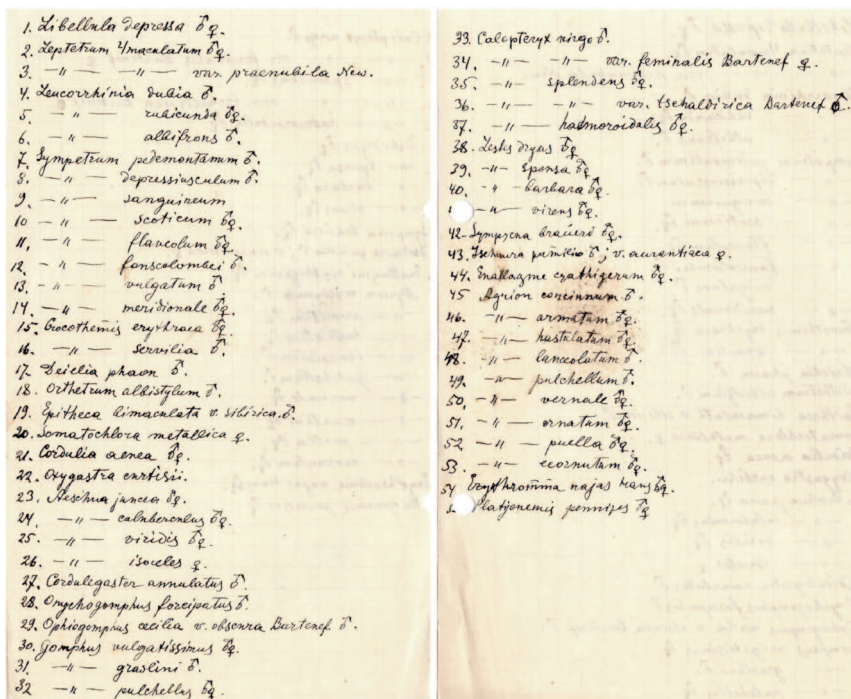


Fig. 3: List of Odonata specimens Bartenev offered to Ris in 1909.

### Bergroth, Ernst Evald (1857-1925)

Finnish physician, and entomologist; 1 letter, in German; 11-iii-1920

Bergroth pointed out that Ris – in his paper about the Odonata of Formosa [Taiwan; Ris 1916] – had overlooked a species described by Matsumura (1910 & 1911a): *Agrion (Ischnura) kagiensis*. Bergroth repeated the description and copied the illustration of the wing. Also he listed all species reported from Formosa by Matsumura, and mentioned Matsumura (1911b) where *Sympetrum arcticum* [jun. syn. of *Sympetrum danae* (Sulzer, 1776)] and *Somatochlora japonica* [jun. syn. of *Somatochlora exuberata* Bartenev, 1910] was described. Further Bergroth noted that in this paper Matsumura assumes that *Somatochlora borealis* Bartenev, 1910 is the female of *Somatochlora graeseri* Selys, 1887.

### **Bleuler, Paul Eugen (1857-1939)**

Swiss psychiatrist, head of the Psychiatric hospital in Rheinau from 1886-1898; 6 letters, in German; 15-xi-1897 to 22-i-1898

The letters are without entomological content. In January 1898 Bleuler sent the job offer for the new head of the Psychiatric hospital in Rheinau to Ris. [Ris was employed as assistant doctor of Bleuler in 1895. In 1898 Ris accepted the position as head of the Psychiatric hospital in Rheinau (Schneider-Orelli 1931)].

### **Blumer, Othmar (1848-1900)**

Swiss politician at the National council; 2 letters, in German; 14-i-1898, and 29-1-1898

There is no entomological content in the letters.

### **Borrer, Donald Joyce (1907-1988)**

US-American ornithologist, and entomologist; 2 letters, in English; 08-i-1930, and 21-iii-1930

The letters deal with the Odonata genus *Oligoclada* Karsch, 1890. Borrer mailed drafts of the identification key including several sketches to Ris.

### **Bryan Jr., Edward Horace (1898-1985)**

US-American natural scientist, employed at the Bernice P. Bishop Museums in Honolulu, Hawaii from 1919-1968; 1 letter, typewritten, in English; 13-xi-1930

Apparently Ris requested Odonata from Hawaii and Bryan Jr. answered that the Bishop Museum had sent all the "Agrionidae" except some paratypes to Kennedy in Columbus, Ohio, USA, but he will send the few specimens that have been collected since then to Ris. He will also send a specimen of *Nesogonia blackburni* McLachlan, 1883. Bryan Jr. said that the Bishop Museum would be glad for specimens from the South Pacific regions as exchange. If there are no specimens available from this region, Ris could nonetheless keep the Hawaiian specimens and Bryan Jr. might have the occasion to ask for a favour in the future.

### **Bugnion, Frédéric Édouard (1845-1939)**

Swiss entomologist; 1 letter, in French; 06-iii-1928

Bugnion was the brother-in-law of the Swiss psychiatrist and entomologist Auguste Forel (1848-1931). Bugnion sent two dragonflies to Ris, they were captured near Mar-rakesh, Morocco by "Miss Tolila" from Paris, France. Miss Tolila has reported to Bugnion that the dragonflies were "... aussi nombreuses que les abeilles d'une ruche (...). Elles semblent fatiguées et se laissent prendre sans difficulté lors qu'un léger coup de bâton les a jetées à terre." [... numerous like the bees of a beehive (...). They seem to be tired and were easily captured by hitting them using a stick]. Further she has noted to Bugnion that their "... black servant Salem ... knows them under the name cibouss ..." [translated from French] and that the eyes remind on a stone called "Cat's eye" [Cymophane, a variety of Chrysoberyl]. The sampling site and date was: Dar Chtouka, Route de

Mazagan [El Jadida], Kilometre 53, 26-ii-1928. Miss Tolila has sent twelve specimens alive to Bugnion but they received dead. [According to Ris mss these specimens are *Anax ephipigger* (Burmeister, 1839)].

### Calvert, Amelia Smith (1876-1965)

US-American botanist, married with Philip P. Calvert; 1 letter, in English; possibly 08-xii-1930

Calvert sent a Christmas card with a photograph showing an apple tree where she and her husband often had picnics, and two photographs showing her husband at the University of Pennsylvania, USA.

### Calvert, Philip Powell (1871-1961)

US-American entomologist, employed as professor at the University of Pennsylvania; 69 letters, in English; 01-iv-1897 to 28-xii-1930

The letters document an extensive exchange of publications, specimens, photographs, and detailed expertise – often regarding identification of American Odonata species, and discussions about synonymies. Calvert and Ris exchanged a lot of information and



material about American Libellulidae during Ris' work on the Libellulidae in Selys' collection [Ris 1909-1919] – for example about the genera *Erythrodiplax* Brauer, 1868 (the “American *Trithemis*”), *Perithemis* Hagen, 1861, *Micrathyria* Kirby, 1889, and *Dythemis* Hagen, 1861. On 22-ix-1904 Calvert mailed photographs of three specimens of apparently two undescribed species. Regarding these specimens he stated that the *Uracis* Rambur, 1842 is nearest to *U. fastigiata* (Burmeister, 1839) and Calvert proposed the name “*godmaniana*” [which was never published]. For the pair of the other species Calvert suggested the name *Dythemis maya* [Calvert, 1906; fig. 4], and added as etymo-

**Fig. 4: *Dythemis maya* male and female syntype. Photo sent by Calvert to Ris on 22-ix-1904. Photo: likely Philip P. Calvert, extracted from Ris mss.**



logy “from the Maya tribe of Indians.” A month later, on 20-x-1904, Calvert noted that he had found another undescribed *Dythemis* captured in Guatemala and allied to *D. constricta* Calvert, 1898 [currently *Elasmothermis constricta*] – Calvert first suggested the name *Dythemis laminalis* for it (14-ii-1905), but on 03-iii-1905 Calvert stated that he had found further specimens of this *Dythemis* “*laminalis*” captured in Brazil, and this time Calvert suggested the name *Dythemis cannacrioides* [Calvert, 1906; currently *Elasmothermis cannacrioides*] for the species.

On 01-i-1906 Calvert sent a pair of his *Orthemis levis* sp. n. [Calvert, 1906] for Ris to keep in his own collection.

Apparently Ris criticized Martin (1906) because Calvert answered on 05-ii-1907 that he is “... sorry to hear of the unsatisfactory nature of the text.”

On 20-ii-1907 Calvert noted that he received a message from [E.B.] Williamson stating that Ris lost an eye due to an attack of a violent patient. Calvert expressed that he is deeply sorry, and that he hopes that the other eye is not affected, and that this “... calamity will not prevent the continuance of your valuable entomological work.” Two years later, on 31-i-1909 Calvert asked again about the accident and the recovery of Ris’ eyes and that he hopes that they are steadily improving.

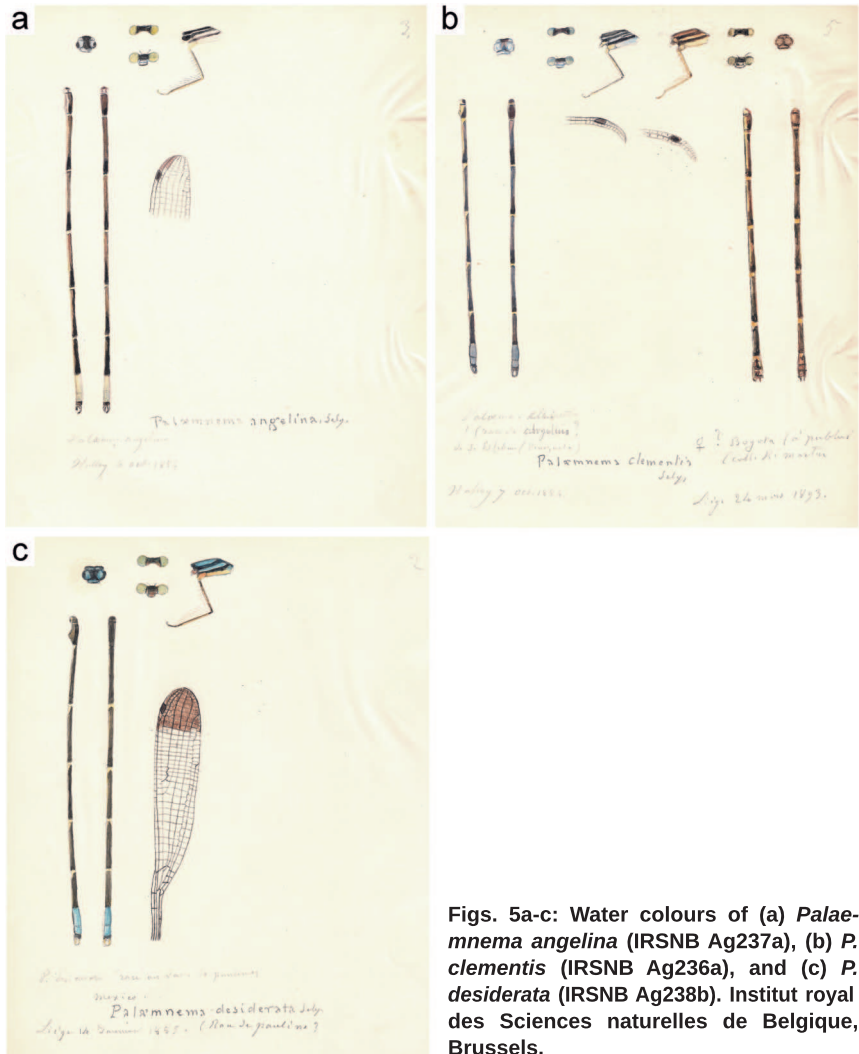
In a few letters Calvert noted that he had met other entomologists and would like to meet Ris too:

- 05-ii-1907: Calvert noted that he had met Karsch when he [Calvert] was in Berlin, Germany in winter 1895-1896.
- 12-iii-1909: Calvert would be happy if Ris could join the Costa Rica Expedition.
- 15-i-1913: Calvert noted that he had met [E.B.] Williamson for the first time in the last days of December [1912] and that he had met Morton last year [1912] in Edinburgh, Scotland as well as Campion in London, England. Further Calvert wrote that he hopes that he will have met all odonatologists one time, and that it will not take so much time to meet Ris.

Calvert apparently had planned to participate in the International Congress of Entomology at Vienna, Austria in 1915, but it was postponed because of World War 1. On 11-v-1915 Calvert noted that he cannot visit Europe and “... who knows whether we shall ever meet ...”. In the same letter Calvert asked Ris if he could request Emile C. Menger [Belgian scientific artist] in Brussels for drawings of the type males of *Philogenia* Selys, 1862 species deposited in Selys’ collection. During World War 1 the correspondence was less, on 02-iii-1916 Calvert noted that he is “... very glad that Switzerland has thus far been spared by the horrors of war (...) What a sad, a revolting spectacle it is that so many good men are being sacrificed in this fearful struggle and to what good?” According to a letter dated 05-vi-1916 some publications apparently got lost during transport across the Atlantic Ocean, and Calvert was afraid to send papers to Europe because of that. Calvert also asked about the drawings of Menger. Two years later on 29-v-1918 Calvert stated that the last letter from Ris received on 22-v-1916. Again Calvert asked about Mengers drawings and on 11-viii-1918 Calvert acknowledged that he had received three drawings of *Philogenia* via Ris. Apparently Ris paid the bill for these drawings, and Calvert asked the amount to repay it. The price for the three drawings from Menger was 30 CHF (31-x-1918).



At least from 1922 Calvert studied species of the genus *Palaemnema* Selys, 1860. On 04-viii-1922 he mentioned that according to Severin the types of *Palaemnema desiderata* Selys, 1886, *P. clementia* Selys, 1886 and the Honduras neotype of *P. angelina* Selys, 1860 went to Friedrich Förster (1865-1918), and to date he has not returned them to Brussels. On 22-viii-1922 Séverin wrote to Calvert that Ris should get the types via Mrs. Förster and that they probably could be sent to Calvert then. Calvert repeated the sentences to Ris with which he had answered Séverin: "... Please do not send any specimens of the Selys collection to me or to any one else. The risks of loss and of injury



**Figs. 5a-c:** Water colours of (a) *Palaemnema angelina* (IRSNB Ag237a), (b) *P. clementis* (IRSNB Ag236a), and (c) *P. desiderata* (IRSNB Ag238b). Institut royal des Sciences naturelles de Belgique, Brussels.

are too great (...) It will be better that my work should be incomplete or even incorrect than that those precious types should be exposed to the risk of destruction on the way to and from Philadelphia." Furthermore Calvert reported that two boxes of Selys' collection were lost due to a shipwreck on the way to Tillyard [quod vide] in Australia.

A letter dated 13-vii-1927 stated that Calvert reared eggs of *Anax junius* (Drury, 1773) to adulthood in 11 months and of *Nannothemis bella* (Uhler, 1857) in 23 months.

In summer 1929 Calvert visited Europe with his wife. Calvert wrote to Ris that they will leave New York City, USA on 13-vii-1929 bound for Antwerp, Netherlands. From there they want to go to Brussels to study the types of *Palaemnema* species and they expect that they could be in Rheinau on 14-viii-1929. On 05-viii-1929 Calvert sent a letter from Amsterdam, Netherlands and reported that they arrived on 22-vii-1929 in Antwerp. Regarding the types of *Palaemnema desiderata*, *P. clementina* and the only specimen of *P. angelina* in Selys' collection he noted that they "... never having been recovered from Förster." Nor could Calvert find them in Förster's collection at Ann Arbor, USA [also they are not held at the Coll. Ris in the SMF]. Thus Calvert studied the coloured drawings Selys made in 1884 and 1885 (Figs. 5a-c). Calvert acknowledged to Ris on 02-iv-1930 that he received the type of *Palaemnema melanota* Ris, 1918. In his last letter, dated 08-xii-1930, Calvert noted that he had finished his studies and that he will return the type in the "early part" of the next year.

### **Campion, Herbert (1870-1924)**

English entomologist; 71 letters, typewritten, in English; 18-x-1909 to 19-ix-1923

Apparently Campion and Ris met each other for the first time in Brussels in September 1909 (18-x-1909). Since then they started an extensive correspondence including loans, and exchange of Odonata specimens, as well as exchange of publications, manuscripts, and expertise. Campion mainly sent African Odonata to Ris for determination, for example specimens collected in British East Africa [Kenia], Nyasaland [Malawi], Uganda, Gambia, northern Nigeria, South Africa, and Sierra Leone. Often Ris was allowed to keep some duplicate specimens. Further Campion and Ris had a discussion about specimens from the Seychelles and in this regard also about species of the genus *Agriocnemis* Selys, 1877. In 1912 Campion sent Odonata collected by Frederick A.G. Muir (1872-1931) in Amboina [Maluku, Indonesia]. Campion stated that these specimens were immersed after capture in hot alcohol to preserve the colours. In further letters they discussed necessary nomenclatural changes, and pre-occupied species names as well as wing venation in Odonata. Before Campion (1914) was published he mailed a letter, dated 14-i-1913, including the manuscript of the species description as well as two pairs of *Ceriagrion ignitum* [Campion, 1914] to Ris for study and comment. Campion noted that the species name might change to "*parvum*" [he did not change it]. On 27-vi-1914 Campion mailed the manuscript of the species description of *Ceriagrion citrinum* [Campion, 1914] to Ris.

On 04-vii-1914 Campion noted that his brother F.W. Campion was sending some *Calopteryx splendens* to Ris. They were collected by the brother at the River Ouse, Hartford, near Huntingdon, Great Britain. Some reference to type material was sent with a letter from 22-i-1916: Campion mailed sketches of the thorax of the male and

female type of *Micromerus [Libellago] rufescens* Selys, 1873 as well annotations concerning the colour of the specimens [the sketches were not found in Ris mss].

### Dampf, Alfons (1884-1948)

Born at Hiiumaa Island, then part of the Russian empire [today Estonia]; 17 letters, some typewritten, in German; 06-xi-1911 to November 1928

According to the first letter Dampf and Ris met each other for the first time at the 1st International Congress for Entomology in Brussels [01-viii to 06-viii-1910]. With this letter Dampf sent some exotic Odonata of the Zoological Museum Königsberg [Kaliningrad, Russia] for determination.

During World War 1 Dampf was detained in Egypt as a British prisoner of war (Prisoner No. 34435), he mailed three letters from the prison camp in Tura (Fig. 6) and three from the Maadi Camp – both near Cairo. Dampf sent the first letter as prisoner on 28-v-1918, and he commented that "... after several adventures I wind up behind barbed wire and watch yearningly the dragonflies which fly free as they want ..." [translated

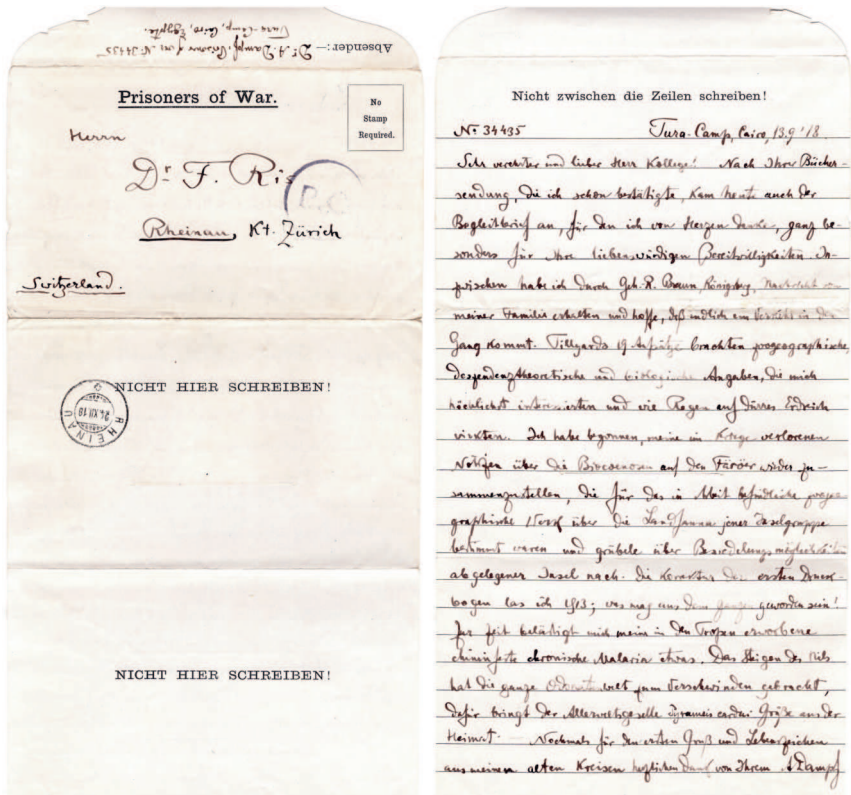


Fig. 6: Letter of Dampf sent to Ris on 13-ix-1918 from the Tura Prison-Camp.

from German]. He requested literature and wrote that he had received no messages, neither from his family nor from the entomological society, since 1914. In addition Dampf wrote on 22-ii-1919 that he is now working on a morphological study of the skulls of the twelve species of fish which were delivered from the Nile to the prison camp kitchen.

On 05-vii-1919 Dampf noted that he is now allowed to go to the river Nile for 1.5 hours every two weeks, and that he used this time to collect some dragonflies – Ris could expect ca. 100 specimens of about eight species. Almost three years later, on 07-iii-1922, Dampf sent 104 envelopes with Egyptian dragonflies to Ris, the larvae remained for the time being in Königsberg. Further Dampf stated that he got an offer for the professorship of applied entomology at the University for Agriculture in Mexico. [Dampf arrived in Mexico in 1923 and lived there until his death and remained active in entomology (Alexander 1948)].

### **Despax, Raymond Justin Marie (1886-1950)**

French entomologist; 5 letters, in French; 19-vi-1928 to 28-iii-1929

The letters deal with Plecoptera. The return address was the “Station Zoologique de Cette [Sète], Université de Montpellier”.

### **Döhler, Walter (1891-1988)**

German entomologist; 1 letter, in German; 09-x-1930

The letter deals with Trichoptera. Further Döhler offered Ris two papers by Navás dealing with Odonata.

### **Dunkel, G.J. [no biographical data available]**

Entomologist [Nationality unknown]; 2 letters, in German; 06-i-1931, and 12-i-1931

According to the heading Dunkel worked at the “Station de Recherches Botaniques et Entomologiques” at Lolodorf, Cameroon. Dunkel sent 150 Odonata specimens, all of them collected in a distance of 30-60 km around Lolodorf. Ris paid 50 Marks, but the Odonata had just a value of 30 Marks. Thus Dunkel stated that he will use the remaining 20 Mark for the next shipment. [Ris died on 31-i-1931, thus this was likely the last purchase of Odonata in Ris' life in general. No second shipment from Dunkel ever appeared].

### **Dziędzielewicz, Józef (1844-1918)**

Polish entomologist, born in Lviv [at that time Galicia, today Ukraine]; 5 letters, in German; 14-xi-1908 to 07-viii-1912

The letters were sent from Lviv (letters from 1908-1909), and Mikuliczyn, [at that time Galicia, today Ukraine] (letters from 1912). According to the letters from 1908 and 1909 he worked as a judge of the district court in Lviv. In terms of content Dziędzielewicz agreed with Ris about the “... sickness of increasing varieties ...” [translated from German] in nomenclature. Dziędzielewicz called himself a “... self-educated dilettante ...” [translated from German], and Ris' instruction was welcome. At 20-01-1909 Dziędzielewicz was obvi-

ously annoyed because of the German names [instead of Polish] of the localities used by Scholz (1908) in his paper about the Silesian Odonata. Dziędzielewicz noted that this is a "... violation against international rights and an intervention in the world history ..." [translated from German]. In 1912 he noted that large quantities of *Calopteryx splendens* appear in July and August in the plains of eastern Poland, and that the female has a tendency for changing colour. Apparently Ris requested specimens of *C. splendens* because Dziędzielewicz answered that he will be happy to fulfill this wish.

### **Ebner, Richard (1885-1961)**

Austrian entomologist; 1 letter, typewritten (handwritten additions), in German; 17-vii-1914

Ebner sent Odonata collected in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan to Ris, and referred to some localities. According to a handwritten note it seems as if Ebner had previously sent this letter to le Roi [and with it apparently also the collection]. Ris noted on this letter "115-120 specimens and 6 larvae" and that he had committed to submit a manuscript by 01-iv-1916 [it was published by Ris (1924)].

### **van Emden, Isidore Fritz (1898-1958)**

German-British entomologist, at that time curator for entomology at the "Staatliches Museum für Tierkunde und Völkerkunde" in Dresden, Germany; 2 letters, in German; 04-iv-1931, and 20-iv-1931

In the first letter van Emden expressed his condolences to Elisabeth Ris after the death of her brother. Also he requested the return 106 dragonflies from New Guinea which Ris had borrowed from the Museum in Dresden. In the second letter he confirmed the receipt of 87 specimens.

### **Esben-Petersen, Peter (1869-1942)**

Danish teacher, and entomologist; 1 letter, in English; 02-viii-1928

Esben-Petersen returned some papers he borrowed from Ris in 1912.

### **Fassl, Anton Heinrich Hermann (1876-1922)**

German entomologist; 10 letters, in German; 09-iii-1921 to 02-viii-1922

Fassl shipped 14 parcels with Odonata from Brazil to Ris (parcels 1-4 prior to March 1921) – in total more than 4100 specimens for which he received 1098 CHF. At 03-vi-1922 Fassl reported that he almost died at Rio Tocantins because of severe fever and falling "... chestnuts big as a head ..." [translated from German]. Two months later on 02-viii-1922 he mentioned that he was financially distressed because all his loose cash was stolen while travelling on a river. [Fassl died during this expedition on 04-x-1922 because of a stomach upset followed by fever. Ris wrote a letter to Fassl on 12-xi-1922, it returned to Ris on 31-xii-1922].

### **Fraser, Frederic Charles (1880-1963)**

British army surgeon, and amateur entomologist, serving in India and reaching the rank of lieutenant colonel; 14 letters, two typewritten, in English; 01-i-1921 to 26-viii-1930

Fraser and Ris exchanged publications and expertise, also Fraser sent Indian Odonata to Ris. On 21-ii-1922 Fraser stated that his series of "...Indian dragonflies' was an amateur attempt to popularise the insects amongst Indian collectors...". In summer 1922 Fraser discussed some characters and differences between *Orthetrum triangulare* (Selys, 1878), and *Orthetrum delesserti* (Selys, 1878) [currently considered a jun. syn. of *O. triangulare*]. On 11-i-1925 Fraser told Ris that he will try to come and meet him at the International Congress of Entomology in Zurich, Switzerland. But on 23-iii-1925 Fraser wrote that he would like to shift the visit in Zurich because he had already been three weeks in Europe, travelling from Rome, Italy to Paris and London, and that it was too cold for him after 20 years living in the tropics. Fraser wrote "Excuse this terribly bad writing but my hands are so numbed with cold that I can barely grasp my pen. I feel as if I should never be warm again." Further Fraser stated that he "... was disappointed by the Paris Museum collection as apparently René Martin has not deposited his types there." [Martin died on 20-viii-1925 in Chile, according to Horn et al. (1990) his Odonata collection is deposited in different Museums: Odonata up to 1913 are preserved in the Zoological Museum Leningrad (currently Zoological Museum of the Zoological Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Saint Petersburg, Russia), Odonata 1914-1920 are preserved at the Muséum national d'histoire naturelle Paris, and duplicates from 1903 and 1907 are preserved at the Naturhistoriska riksmuseet Stockholm, Sweden].

#### Fudakowski, Józef (1893-1969)

Polish zoologist; 11 letters, some typewritten, in German; 23-v-1927 to 07-i-1931

In 1927 Fudakowski noted that he studied the types of *Cordulia aenea* var. *tatrica* Dzieńdzielewicz, 1902 and *Somatochlora metallica* var. *montana* Dzieńdzielewicz, 1902. He considered ignoring *S. metallica* var. *montana*, and asked Ris about his opinion. On 07-ii-1928 Fudakowski wrote that he started to study *Calopteryx* [*splendens*] *ancilla* Hagen in Selys, 1853, and that he considered that both *Calopteryx virgo* var. *violacea* (Dzieńdzielewicz, 1902) and *Calopteryx splendens tümpeli* Scholz, 1908 (Fig. 7) are syno-



**Fig. 7: Male syntype of *Calopteryx splendens tümpeli*, labelled »Krehlau, 7.07« [= July 1907]. Collection of the Museum of Natural History, University of Wrocław. Photo: © Marek Wanat, MNHW.**



nymus. Therefore he had studied the type of *C. virgo* var. *violacea* at the Dziędużycki Museum [Wladimir Dziędużycki] in Lwow [Lviv]. On 20-ix-1928 Fudakowski posted two *Sympetrum fonscolombii* (Selys, 1840) captured in Poland. Also he noted that he had captured *Aeshna subarctica* as well as *Coenagrion ornatum* in Poland. On 09-iv-1930 Fudakowski thanked Ris for sending him *Calopteryx* Leach, 1815 collected in Macedonia. In October 1930 Fudakowski wrote that he had received a collection of about 150 specimens from Bursa, Turkey including *Calopteryx splendens amasina* Bartenev, 1911, *Cordulegaster insignis* Schneider, 1845, and some Gomphidae. Subsequently he sent specimens of *C. splendens amasina* from this collection to Ris. On 31-xii-1930 Fudakowski mentioned that he had examined a collection of more than 1000 specimens from Egypt preserved at the Polish Zoological Museum [Warsaw].

### **Gams, Helmut (1893-1976)**

Austrian botanist of Swiss descent; 6 letters, in German; 06-vii-1917 to 13-iv-1926

The letters were sent from Zurich (1917), Moscow, Russia (1925) and Wasserburg [Lake Constance], Germany (1925-1926). Gams wrote about a jelly spawn-band which he collected in 1917 at Barchetsee, Switzerland – on 30-vi [1917] the larvae emerged, and they turned out to be Odonata. Gams sent a preparation of the spawn, and some larvae to Ris. Subsequently the larvae were identified as *Ephitheca bimaculata*. In 1925 Gams was at the Volga Biological-Station, Russia, and there met Ariadna Nikolaevna Popova (1897-1972). She was interested in some papers of Ris and asked if he received her paper about *Gomphus* [*Stylurus*] *flavipes* (Charpentier, 1825) [Popova 1923]. In 1926 Gams stated that Julius Michailovic Kolossov (1892-?) from Yekaterinburg, Russia requested an exchange of scientific papers – Gams added that the best way would be to send the publications to him and he would forward them to Russia.

### **Golgi, Camillo (1843-1926)**

Italian pathologist; 1 letter, in Italian; 18-iii-1898

The letter bears a heading from the “Laboratorio di Patologia Generale ed Istologia” of the University of Pavia, Italy. There is no entomological content. [Ris did anatomical studies at Golgi's laboratory for some time in 1897 (Schneider-Orelli 1931, Fliedner 2021).]

### **Grünberg, Karl (1878-1921 or 1931)**

German entomologist, from 1915 employed as curator, and before that as assistant at the Natural History Museum Berlin; 1 letter, in German; 19-vii-1912

Grünberg mailed to Ris descriptions and measurements of the types of *Triacanthagyna dirupta* Karsch, 1889 and of *Platycantha microstigma* (Selys, 1878) [both currently attributed to the genus *Agyrtacantha* Lieftinck, 1937].

### **Handlirsch, Anton Peter Josef (1865-1935)**

Austrian entomologist, and palaeontologist; 5 letters, in German; 03-vii-1910 to 15-ii-1928

With the first letter Handlirsch mailed an illustration of a wing of a Miocene dragonfly

discovered in Bohemia [today Czech Republic]. He asked Ris to study this wing at the generic level. On 19-ix-1910 he sent a description and further details. Furthermore Handlirsch stated that within this "Cyprisschiefer" [a kind of schist] a lot of larval skins are preserved as well.

Apparently Ris had proposed a visit to Leutasch, Austria together with Tillyard in summer 1926. Handlirsch answered that he would be pleased to meet them, and he asked if they needed lodging (19-viii-1926). In the last letter Handlirsch criticised Tillyard's work on fossil insects, and stated that "... in many points our friend is at fault and that is why I must make a revision of his works (...) of course I will wear kidgloves to avoid hurting the good man too much" [translated from German].

### **Handlirsch, Martha (1869–1955)**

Married to A.P.J. Handlirsch; 1 letter, in German; 27-xii-1926

Handlirsch noted that she writes this letter for her husband because he has a sight illness. They send best wishes for the forthcoming New Year. She mentioned also that she gladly reminisced about the meeting with Ris and Tillyard in Leutasch.

### **Hetschko, Alfred (1854-1933)**

Galicia-born [Stadła, today Poland] entomologist; 1 letter, in German; 01-v-1928

Hetschko sent Odonata specimens, which were collected in 1884 at Blumenau, Santa Catharina, Brazil by his brother Lothar Hetschko.

### **Hirashima, T. [no biographical data available]**

2 letters, typewritten, in German, and English; 25-xi-1928, and 14-ii-1929

According to the letters Hirashima was the 1st Secret Secretary of the General Government of Formosa [Taiwan], then part of the Japanese Empire. Hirashima requested both of Ris' publications dealing with the Odonata of Formosa [Ris 1912, Ris 1916]. They were to be part of a collection of papers on the Fauna and Flora of Formosa to be presented to his Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Japan as a keepsake. There is a handwritten note by Ris stating that he sent the papers on 09-i-1929.

### **Hoffmann, William E. (1896-1989)**

US-American entomologist. 1 letter, typewritten, in English; 05-xii-1930

According to the heading the letter was written in London but Hoffmann added an address in New York City. Hoffmann was the head of the Lingnan Science Journal in Canton, China, and requested a manuscript by Ris about dragonflies of Kwangtung Province, China [it had not been published]. If Ris could provide it, he should send it directly to Canton. Hoffmann stated that if the envelope were to be marked "via Siberia" it would reach China much faster.

### **Horn, Walther Hermann Richard (1871-1939)**

German physician, and entomologist, from 1909 director of the German Entomological

Institute Berlin-Dahlem; 11 letters, some typewritten, in German; 07-vii-1912 to 14-iii-1928, and 10-iii-1931

In 1915 Horn reported to Ris his work as physician on the eastern front during World War 1. The letters are mailed from the Deyma River, Russia (01-viii-1915) and from Kowno [today Kaunas, Lithuania; 05-xi-1915]. He noted that he had six hospital ships and up to three steamboats in his care, and sometimes he had to dress wounds for 14 hours a day. On 07-i-1927 Horn sent a photograph of himself to Ris. In addition he wrote that Rudolf Emil Mell (1878-1970) visited him and Horn wrote scornfully about him: "I never saw a human who plays the role of a pissed poodle like he did" [translated from German]. Apparently Mell promised to give perhaps some specimens to the Entomological Institute because Horn continued "... do you think this shabby patron spoke one word about what he promised my Institute?" [translated from German].

On 10-iii-1931, after Ris' death, Horn notified Elisabeth Ris of the return of two dragonflies Ris had loaned from the Entomological Institute.

### **Huber, Alb [no biographical data available]**

Swiss biologist, at that time employed at the Natural History Museum of Basel, Switzerland; 1 letter, in German; 19-ii-1931

Huber expressed his condolences to the Ris family, and requested the return of dragonflies which Ris had borrowed from the Natural History Museum in Basel.

### **Hüeber, Theodor (1848-1931)**

German chief staff surgeon, and entomologist; 8 letters, in German; 27-vii-1894 to 07-xi-1895

Hüeber shipped Phryganeidae [Trichoptera] for determination.

### **Jacobson, Edward Richard (1870-1944)**

Businessman, and entomologist of Dutch descent, born in Frankfurt/Main; 5 letters, in German, and English; 04-viii-1926 to October 1928

Jacobson arrived in Java [at that time Dutch, today Indonesia] in 1892, being in business until 1910. Subsequently he undertook fieldtrips, for example to Simalur [Simeulue] Island [west of Sumatra, Indonesia], and later he settled at Fort de Kock, Sumatra. Jacobson was the founder of the Dutch Zoological Insulinde-Fund. On 4-viii-1926 Jacobson sent 334 enveloped Odonata (Fig. 8), and some larvae in alcohol from Sumatra for determination. He permitted Ris to keep some duplicates. Jacobson wanted to donate the types of new described species to the Museum Leiden, Netherlands [today Naturalis Biodiversity Center]. Ris added a handwritten list of 35 species. On 15-i-1928 Jacobson noted that he was currently holidaying with his family at the Hotel Beau-Séjour in Chateau d'Oex, Switzerland, and that he would like to meet Ris this week [the letter was already sent from Chateau d'Oex]. Jacobson wrote that he would arrive on 21-i-1928 at Rheinau to meet Ris (18-i-1928).



**Fig. 8: *Gynacantha bayadera* Selys, 1891, male, and envelope. Collected by Jacobson at »Sumatra, Sibolga, viii.1913«. Coll. Ris, Senckenberg Museum Frankfurt/Main. Photos: Malte Seehausen**

### **Jordan, Heinrich Ernst Karl (1861-1959)**

German-British entomologist, from 1893 employed as curator at the Walter Rothschild Zoological Museum at Tring, Great Britain, and from 1930-1938 as its director; 3 letters, in German, and English; 31-xii-1928, 20-vii-1930, and one undated.

Jordan was founder of the International Congress of Entomology, and permanent secretary of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature. The letters are about nomenclatural topics, for example a list by Handlirsch [typewritten, in German] of Orthoptera which he proposed to list as valid names. The corresponding circular letter was written by Charles W. Stiles [1867-1941; typewritten, in English].

### **Jørgensen, Peter (1870-1937)**

Danish entomologist; 1 letter, in German; 09-ix-1909

Jørgensen mainly collected in Argentina and Paraguay. Later he settled near Villarica, Paraguay where he was found murdered in 1937. The letter was sent from Chacras de Coria, Mendoza, Argentina. Jørgensen thanked Ris for the reprint about the Odonata from Mendoza collected by him [Jørgensen]. He referred to Ris as highly modest, and stated that he will send duplicates of the described species via Esben-Petersen [Silkeborg, Denmark]. Further he referred to the landscape and climate of Mendoza, and noted the seasonal abundance of some Odonata species.

### **Junk, Wilhelm (1866-1942) [actual surname Jetteles, but changed to Junk in 1890]**

Prague-born [at that time Austria-Hungary] publisher, and entomologist; 1 letter, in German; 08-ix-1919

The handwriting is smudged perhaps due to dampness. The heading is "W. Junk, Verlag und Buchhandlung für Naturwissenschaften und Mathematik, Berlin". Apparently Ris requested a different arrangement for a planned Odonata Catalogue. Junk answered that he suggested a fee of 80 Marks per printed sheet.

**Karsch, Ferdinand Anton Franz (1853-1936)**

German scientist studying sexology, and entomologist; 1 letter, in German; 18-x-1898  
The letter is about a submitted manuscript.

**Kempny, Peter (1862-1906)**

Austrian physician, entomologist, and composer; 13 letters, in German; 04-x-1898 to 22-ii-1906

The letters mainly deal with Plecoptera and Trichoptera. On 18-xii-1901 Kempny noted that he observed "*Libellula brunnea*" [*Orthetrum brunneum* (Fonscolombe, 1837)], *Sympetrum fonscolombii*, and *Leucorrhinia dubia* (Vander Linden, 1825) around Gutenstein, Austria the previous year [1900] but not that year. On 07-iv-1902 Kempny asked if Ris could identify some Odonata from Madagascar, and from the Marshall Islands – subsequently he sent them on 21-x-1902. Further, he requested some European Odonata specimens if Ris could spare them. On 19-i-1906 Kempny again asked for help with identification of Odonata, this time of specimens collected in Egypt, Sudan, and Uganda.

**Kennedy, Clarence Hamilton (1879-1952)**

US-American entomologist; 23 letters, in English, some typewritten; 08-i-1914 to 22-xii-1930

Kennedy's first letter stated that [E.B.] Williamson suggested writing to Ris because of

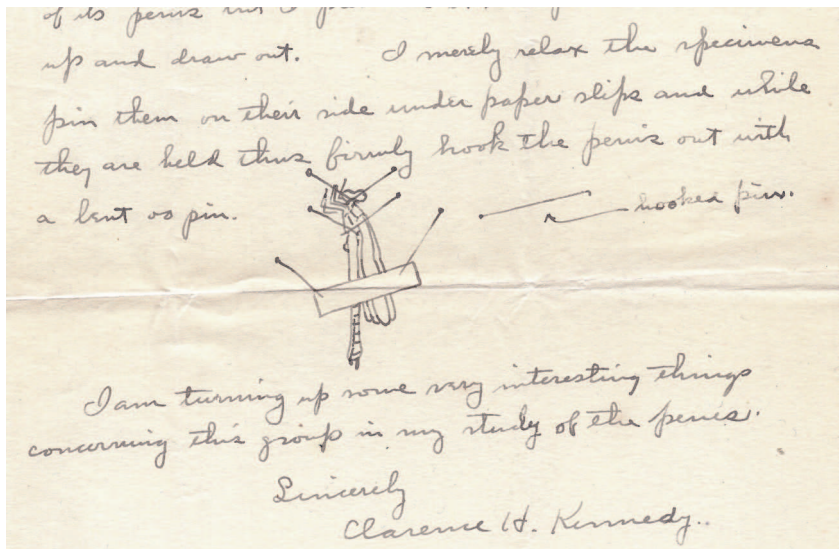


Fig. 9: Extract from the letter sent by Kennedy to Ris on 12-xi-1919. He explains how to extract the penis: "I merely relax the specimens, pin them on their side under paper stripe and while they are held thus firmly hook the penis out with a bent 00 pin."

Kennedy's work on Pacific Coast Odonata. Kennedy asked for publications, and sent a list of Odonata of which he got large series for trading. Subsequently Kennedy reported on his collecting trips; for example he mentioned on 10-xii-1915 that he was in southern California, USA in July and August and found a new *Erpetogomphus* Selys, 1858, two new *Argia* Rambur, 1842, and a new *Aeshna* Fabricius, 1775 near to *A. palmata* Hagen, 1856. On 14-i-1920 Kennedy reported on a meeting with [E.B.] Williamson who was "... packed up to go to Venezuela (...) they expect to get 12,000 specimens!!! Nobody else is collecting extensively enough to ... trade with Williamson."

A topic of several letters is Kennedy's study of the Odonata penis – for example Kennedy described with a draft how to extract the penis (12-xi-1919; fig. 9), and on 05-v-1921 Kennedy stated, regarding to the genus *Libellula* Linnaeus, 1758, that "...the penes show much better than other character the relation between the species in this genus...".

Kennedy worked over Friedrich Förster's collection at Ann Arbor [see also E.B. Williamson]. On 04-ix-1924 Kennedy noted that he supposes that 90 % of the types are represented in the collection. But regarding to Förster he commented "He [Förster] had no system to his work but seems to have worked just as the mood struck him. Some obvious types have only a scanty locality label – no name label and no 'type' on them." In the next letter written on 27-ix-1924 Kennedy added "Förster must have been a very conceited and sensitive soul. And he had never had any drill or training in doing his work in any manner of system. (...) I imagine he looked on himself as walking in de Selys shoes." Also, Kennedy stated that some types were apparently missing, on 29-v-1925 he asked Ris to find out if they are deposited in Berlin or elsewhere. This concerned the types of *Lestes somalicus*, *Disparoneura alba*, *Thermagrion webbia-num* and *Ischnura schoana* – all described by Förster (1906). [The lectotype of *I. schoana* is held at the UMMZ (Garisson et al. 2003)].

On 08-xii-1925 Kennedy reported on his visit in London. Kennedy had studied the Hawaii material of John Frederick Perkins (1910-1983), and met Laidlaw and Fraser. Additionally Kennedy tried to see the McLachlan collection but encountered difficulties. Kennedy wrote:

"It is in possession of a nephew of Robert McLachlan, an ignorant small architect of almost 60 years old. He over values it and cherishes it like a miser permitting no one to see it. I [Kennedy] ... was met at the door by a daughter who said that her father had been ill several days but had gone over to his sister's against the doctor's order. It looked like an opportunity to see the collection ... I asked to see the Hawaiian types. She let me study them and I figured ♂ and ♀ of three species. She gave me tea and was very pleasant ... she asked me to return the next day to finish them. I returned the next morning but her father met me at the door and said all the insulting things he could think of. So I did not get to see the other three types. (...) The daughter said after her father's death it [the collection] would go to some public museum. We hope he will die soon."

### **Kimmins, Douglas Eric (1905-1985)**

English entomologist, employed at the Natural History Museum London; 1 letter, in English; 17-ii-1930



Kimmins requested an exchange of reprints and literature. He also conveyed greetings from Mosely to Ris.

### **Kirby, William Forsell (1844-1912)**

English entomologist, from 1879 employed at the Natural History Museum London; 11 letters, in English, and German; 21-v-1895 to 04-i-1908

Kirby and Ris exchanged publications. On 27-iii-1905 Kirby mailed a list of species which he is able to send [as a loan] to Brussel for comparison while Ris was working on the Libellulidae of the Selys collection.

### **Klapálek, František [Franz] (1863–1919)**

Czech entomologist; 6 letters, in German; 12-ix-1893 to 20-iii-1895

Klapálek and Ris exchanged publications and Trichoptera specimens. A letter dated 10-iii-1895 indicated a disagreement between Ris and Klapálek – apparently Ris had criticized the figures of *Oxyethira frici* Klapálek, 1891.

### **Kleiber, Otto (1883-1969)**

German speaking entomologist, according to Ris mss employed at the Zoological Institute of the University Basel; 1 letter, in German; 06-viii-1911

Kleiber reported that he captured "*Aeschna [Boyeria] irene*" (Fonscolombe, 1838) again, as he had two years ago, at Vierwaldstätter See [Lake Lucerne], Switzerland. He captured four males and a female at Meggen, and a male at Weggis [both are communities on the north western shore of the lake].

### **Koenig, Alexander Ferdinand (1858-1940)**

Zoologist of German descent, born in Saint Petersburg, Professor of Zoology at Bonn, Germany, founder of the Alexander Koenig Zoological Research Museum; 1 letter, in German; 08-iv-1927

Letter of gratitude for the donation of a part of Ris' monograph of the libellulids [Ris 1909-1919] to the library of the museum [which was not opened until 1934]. Koenig's late assistant [Otto] le Roi is mentioned as a dragonfly specialist. Koenig sent Ris an ornithological publication on birds of Egypt in return.

### **Kohaut, Rezsö [Rudolf] (1858-1908)**

Hungarian entomologist; 3 letters, in German; 21-viii-1891, 05-x-1891, and 25-xii-1891

Kohaut noted that he was studying the Odonata of Hungary, and therefore requested publications. Apparently Ris requested an exchange of specimens because Kohaut answered, that he does not know if there is any species occurring in Hungary which is not known from Switzerland except for *Lestes macrostigma* (Eversmann, 1836).

### **Kolar, Heinrich (1871-1947)**

Austrian teacher, and entomologist; 1 letter, in German; 05-iv-1928

Kolar thanked Ris for sending his publication about *Pieris napi* (Linnaeus, 1758) [Ris 1927b].

### **Krancher, Oskar (1857-1936)**

German senior teacher, and entomologist, editor of the Journal "Entomologisches Jahrbuch"; 5 letters, in German; 23-iv-1894 to 10-vii-1895

In these letters Krancher asked Ris for contributions to his journal [on Neuroptera] or reminded him to send them.

### **Kuhlgatz, Theodor (1871-1935)**

German entomologist; 1 letter, in German; 23-xii-1926

Kuhlgatz mailed a corrected pre-printed Odonata register which Ris had requested [the register was not found, neither in Ris' correspondence nor in the mss].

### **Lacroix, Joseph-L. (1879-1939)**

French entomologist, employed as "conservateur" [curator] at the Musée d'histoire naturelle in Niort, France; 2 letters, in French; 05-ix-1930, and 16-xi-1930

Lacroix noted on 05-ix-1930 that he was interested in exchanging Odonata specimens, and he requested publications of Ris, he added "J'aime beaucoup les Odonates, mais j'avais besoin d'un maître" ["I like dragonflies very much, but I need a master"]. On 16-xi-1930 Lacroix shipped Odonata to Ris including some specimens collected on Timor – Lacroix considered them to belong to *Indothemis* Ris, 1909 and requested Ris' opinion [*Indothemis* is not known from Timor (Seehausen 2017, Seehausen et al. 2018, Pinto et al. 2020), perhaps it was *Trithemis festiva* (Rambur, 1842)]. Lacroix stated that he does not request specimens from a collecting-obsession but to study as many species as possible.

### **Laidlaw, Frank Fortescue (1876-1963)**

Scottish physician and biologist; 94 letters, in English; 16-xii-1903 to 26-i-1931

Unfortunately, many of Laidlaw's letters are without date or year respectively, or often the year is illegible. However, Laidlaw and Ris exchanged expertise intensively as well as specimens, and publications. In summer 1929 both met in Switzerland and Laidlaw stated while planning the trip that this is "... an opportunity of fulfilling a very old dream of mine, of seeing you in fact in the flesh" (05-v-1929). Consistent with his publications, Laidlaw reported mainly on Odonata from Borneo, India, Burma [Myanmar], and the Malay Peninsula as well as on the families Lestidae, Synlestidae, Gomphidae, and the genus *CoeLICcia* Kirby, 1890. Laidlaw also mentioned several times his correspondence with Fraser and Tillyard. For example in a letter on 10-xii-1919 Laidlaw wrote that Fraser had reported "... *Macrogomphus* [Selys, 1858] and *Cyclogomphus* [Selys, 1854] appearing in 'swarms' near Poona [India] (...) *P. [Pseudagrion] microcephalum* [(Rambur, 1842)] ... in incredible numbers on the shipping and docks at Bombay [India] (...) *Hemianax* [Selys, 1839] swarmed on the transport he [Fraser] is on, and was caught and

eaten by the ships cats! Often after a careful stalking!"

In the apparently pre-World War 1 correspondence Laidlaw noted on 28-viii-[without year] that he wanted to work on the Chlorogomphidae of Selys' collection – he wrote that "Some time ago you were good enough to suggest that I should undertake them [the Chlorogomphidae], but I felt obliged to decline. Lately I have been working on *Orogomphus* Selys, 1878 material ... and I believe that ... I could manage to work out the family." [However, Laidlaw never published any monograph on this family].

During World War 1 there was less exchange between Laidlaw and Ris. On 08-xii-1914 Laidlaw noted that he received a postcard from Martin stating that one of his [Martin's] sons had been wounded, and on 21-xii-1914 Laidlaw reported that "... two of my nephews have had a fearful time of it in the Belgian fighting ..."

Six of Laidlaw's letters deal with his discovery of the larva of *Epiophlebia laidlawi* Tillyard, 1921:

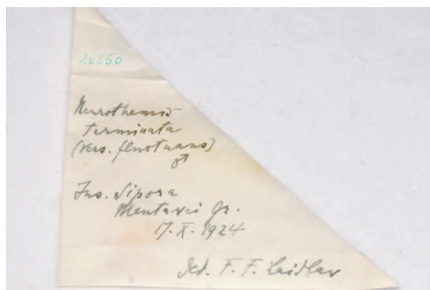
- Without date: Laidlaw sent a photo of the larva, and noted that it was found at 2000 m a.s.l. in the Himalaya Mountains near Darjeeling. He wrote "The wing features ... suggest to me very strongly *Epiophlebia* [Calvert, 1903]!" and adds a small sketch of the mask which "... is like that of *Pseudophaea* [Kirby, 1890] somewhat; found deeply cleft."
- Without date: Laidlaw reported that he mounted the gizzard of the larva. He described some characters, and noted that "... it is of a primitive Calopterygidae type (...) this beast must be something exceptional, either *Philoganga* [Kirby, 1890] or I think more likely an *Epiophlebia*."
- 30-iii-1920: Laidlaw wanted to send the specimen, and asked, if Ris could give his opinion on the larval venation then. Laidlaw noted that "Campion who is a very careful student is rather disagreeing with me over the interpretation of the specimen and I should be very grateful if you would favour me with your opinion."
- 05-viii-1920: Tillyard visited Laidlaw for a weekend and devoted some hours to the larva "... which ... he accepts unequally as '*Epiophlebia*' or an allied genus. He has undertaken to describe it for me."
- 03-v-1921: Laidlaw noted that "... Tillyard has accepted my larva as of *Epiophlebia* (...) it is truly Anisozygopterous, and has made him admit Handlirsch's suborder."
- 11-i-1922: Laidlaw asked again what Ris thinks about the larva and added "I am rather sorry that Tillyard has comprised the specific name on it."
- 08-ii-1927: Laidlaw stated that Ris never told him what he thinks about the larva, and so Laidlaw asked again about Ris opinion and added "Anyhow I hope somebody will rediscover the beast and its parents someday."

Several times Laidlaw commented that he has less time for odonatological work. On 02-i-1921 he noted "I have so little time for dragonflies and then is such a lot to do. I have a huge lot of *Ceragrion* [Selys, 1876] from India and Burma, several thousand specimens, including some difficult and some I think new, notably one beautiful little species with bifid lower anal appendages (...) Abdomen a beautiful rosy red colour. I propose I call it *C. eros*" [it has never been described under this name], and on 23-iv-[1921?] "... my professional work leaves me but little time for

entomology, though I confess that at times I feel that insects are nicer than people (...) I manage to get just an hour or two a week with the dragonflies and about 12 hours a day with mankind; and as I feel I want to talk entomology tonight and have no one to talk to I will put things on paper instead ...”

Some short examples of other Odonata topics are, that Laidlaw reported on 03-v-1921 that he found a new *Microgomphus* Selys, 1858 from India, and that he will name it *M. risi* – however half a year later Laidlaw noted that “Unfortunately the n. sp. of *Microgomphus* which I had intended to dedicate to you must be called *M. torquatus* [Selys, 1854] ...” (11-i-1922). In a letter without date, but written during studies of the Odonata from Mentawai Island, Sumatra [Laidlaw 1926], Laidlaw commented about the local species of the genus *Neurothemis* Brauer, 1867:

“But the point which interests me as much as anything is the identity of the *Neurothemis* (...) are my specimens 1) a form or race of *fluctuans* [Fabricius, 1793]? 2) a form or race of *terminata* [Ris, 1911]? (this is the view to which I incline) 3) or what?”. [This citation shows from own experience exactly how it feels to work with this genus, Seehausen & Dow (2016) did not assign the specimens from the Mentawai Islands to a species – and still their status remains uncertain. Laidlaw (1926) assigned the specimens to *N. terminata*, Ris labelled them as *N. terminata* (vers. *fluctuans*), fig. 10].



**Fig. 10:** *Neurothemis* spec., male, and envelope. Captured on 17-x-1924 at Sipora Island, Mentawai Islands. Coll. Ris, Senckenberg Museum Frankfurt/Main. Labelled as »*Neurothemis terminata* (vers. *fluctuans*)« but the species still remains unresolved (Seehausen & Dow 2016). Photos: Malte Seehausen

On 06-x-1929 Laidlaw noted that he collected eggs from a female *Sympetrum fonscolombii* for rearing on 09-viii-1912, the first larva emerged on 04-ix-1912 [after 26 days] but none survived the winter [so apparently also no imago emerged in autumn].

In his last letter, written on 26-i-1931, Laidlaw stated that he likes to study Calopterygidae, and to make a list of the species of *Rhinocypha* Rambur, 1842 and *Micromerus* Rambur, 1842 – “They are the jewels of Odonatology.” [Almost 20 years later Laidlaw (1950) published a survey of the Chlorocyphidae.]

### Lang, Arnold (1855-1914)

Swiss zoologist, director of the Zoological Institutes and Collections of both Universities in Zurich; 1 letter, in German; 26-v-1914

Lang sent Ris a letter with a photograph where he noted that he is resigning from all offices, and thanked him for supporting him all the time.

### **Lauterborn, Robert (1869-1952)**

German zoologist, and botanist; 1 letter, in German; 09-xi-1922

Lauterborn reported to Ris that Rosenbohm captured *Aeshna caerulea* (Ström, 1783) on 12-viii [-1922] at Scheibenlechtenmoos [Spießhorn mountain, Black forest], Germany at an altitude of 1100 m a.s.l., and that Ris will get a specimen for his collection. Further, he noted that Rosenbohm captured a male *Crocothemis erythraea* (Bullé, 1832) at Wollmatinger Ried near Constance, Germany [Rosenbohm 1922: 25-viii-1922, the second locality of this species for Germany at that time, see also Axel Rosenbohm].

### **Lieftinck, Maurits Anne (1904-1985)**

Dutch odonatologist; 29 letters, one typewritten, mainly in German, one in English; 15-x-1922 to 09-ix-1930

Lieftinck asked Ris for help concerning his work on Odonata of the Netherlands, Lieftinck shipped Odonata for examination, and requested some missing species. On 10-iii-1924 Lieftinck noted that the Zygoptera from Buru [Malukku, Indonesia], which he offered to Ris for examination, had suffered because of too much pressure on the envelopes. Ris requested *Calopteryx splendens*, and *Leucorrhinia rubicunda* (Linnaeus, 1758) from Lieftinck, who sent specimens of both – including one specimen of *L. rubicunda* var. *rubrodorsalis* Dziędzielewicz, 1902. On 30-xii-1927 Lieftinck reported that his attempt to cross *Sympecma fusca* (Vander Linden, 1820) with *paedisca* (Brauer, 1877) had failed but that he observed pre-copula in vain. Further Lieftinck and Ris exchanged specimens and expertise, for example about *Macromia Rambur*, 1842, and *Epophthalmia* Burmeister, 1839. Lieftinck and Ris met at Rheinau on 20-viii-1929 while Lieftinck was on his way to his new job in Bogor, Java, Indonesia. In 1930 Lieftinck sent Odonata from Java.

### **Lindner, Erwin (1888-1988)**

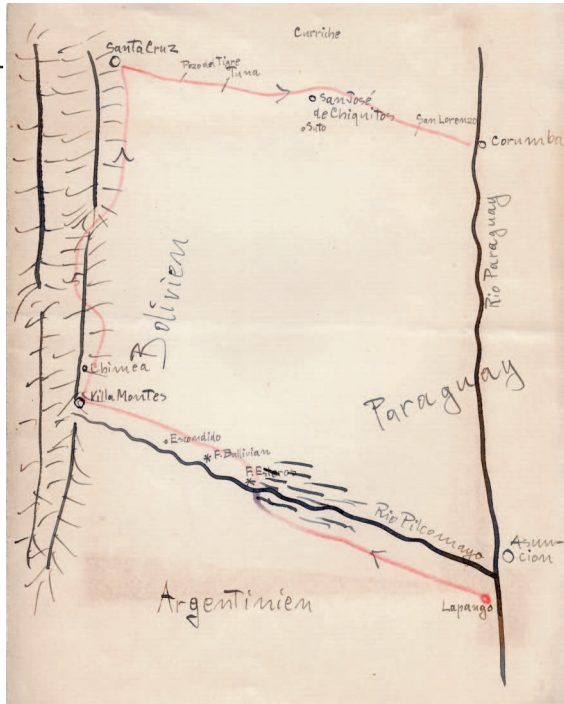
German entomologist, employed at the State Museum of Natural History in Stuttgart, Germany; 3 letters, in German; 16-x-1927, 22-x-1927, and 07-viii-1928

Lindner sent 42 South-American Odonata for determination. Ris was allowed to keep a duplicate if there were three or more specimens of a species. Lindner wanted the resulting publication to bear the title “Die Ausbeute der deutschen Chaco Expedition 1925/26, Odonata” [Ris 1928]. On 12-xii-1927 Lindner mailed the manuscript back, and added a draft of the localities (Fig. 11). He asked Ris for some changes and annotations. Further he thanked Ris for the dedication of the new *Acanthagrion* Selys, 1876 [*Acanthagrion lindneri* Ris, 1928, currently *Homeoura lindneri*].

### **Lutz, Frank Eugene (1879-1943)**

US-American entomologist, employed at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City; 1 letter, typewritten, in English; 28-x-1927

**Fig. 11: Route of the Chaco expedition of Lindner. Draft sent to Ris by Lindner on 12-xii-1927.**



Lutz confirmed the return of eight Odonata specimens which [E.B.] Williamson had loaned and forwarded to Ris – “Three are in good condition; the other five are more or less broken.” Ris requested a loan of Odonata specimens from the Galapagos expedition of Charles William Beebe (1877-1962), Lutz forwarded this request to Beebe.

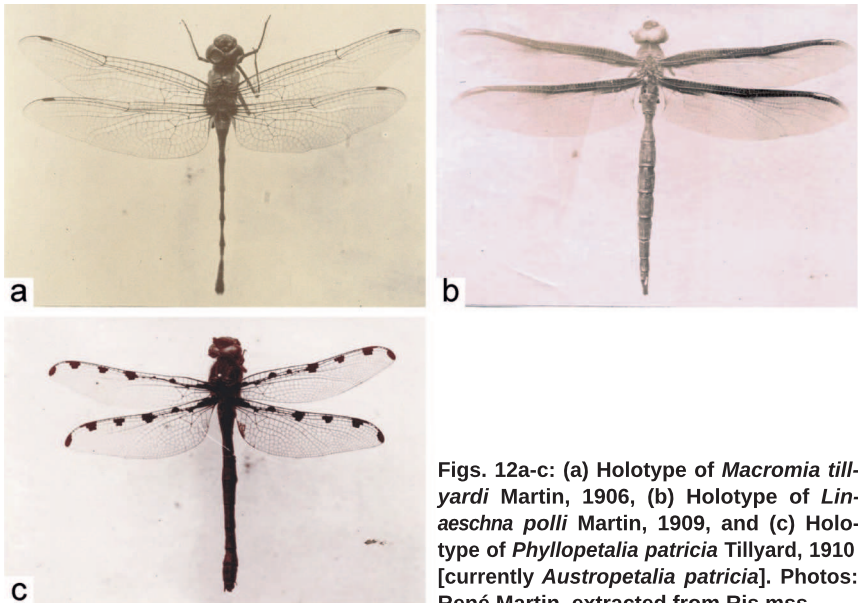
### **Martin, René (1846-1925)**

French entomologist, who worked as a solicitor until 1907; 149 letters, in French; 07-i-1887 to 10-iv-1919

Most of the letters deal with Odonata, some include also Trichoptera, Mecoptera, Neuroptera, and Ephemoptera. In the first letter Martin said that [Theodor] Steck had recommended him to write to Ris. Martin asked Ris for his recently published dragonfly publication [Ris 1886] and said that he [Martin] had published a small work about the dragonflies of central France [Martin 1886]. On 27-i-1887 Martin wrote that his other correspondents are Selys, McLachlan, Albarda, René-Théodore l'abbé Barbiche (1840-1901), and Henri Pierson [Archivist-librarian of the Société Zoologique de France], and Martin also mentioned that he has been engaged in studying dragonflies of France since 1884. Further correspondents he mentioned over the years are Charles A. Alluaud (1861-1949), Calvert, Förster, Tillyard, [W.] de Selys Longchamps, Severin, [E.B.] Williamson, and René Jeannel (1879-1965). According to the letter of 21-viii-1887, the first



Odonata specimens Martin shipped to Ris were “15 ou 20 *Agrion lindenii* [Selys, 1840] ♂”. Hereupon an extensive exchange of specimens began – first only local dragonflies but later also species from all over the world as well as photographs of type specimens (Figs. 12a-c). In his letter from 28-vii-1888, Martin related his hunting success regarding *Boyeria irene* during heavy wind in the middle of some ruins: “J'en ai capturé à la main, cachés dans des trous, une cinquantaine, presque tous ♂” [I caught some of them by hand, [they were] hidden in holes, about fifty, almost all males]. In contrast he mentioned that he tried to catch *Macromia splendens* (Pictet, 1843) several times from 1887 to 1895, but he was not able to get specimens. Martin stated that he tried to buy specimens of *M. splendens* from a schoolteacher, who had a dragonfly collection of the Département Charente [western France] including 17 specimens of this species. Despite Martin's attractive offers the schoolteacher refused any deal. On 13-vi-1893 Martin called him an “animal” and described his denial as “absurd” [“À aucun prix je n'ai pu m'en faire céder. J'ai offert les échanges les plus avantageux; cet animal ne veut pas se démunir d'un nombre d'exemplaires réellement trop élevé. C'est absurde – Sur 17!!”].

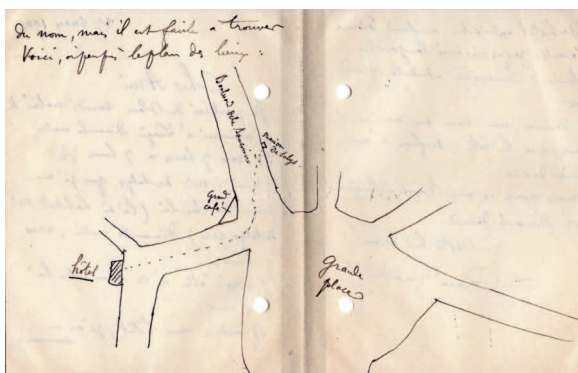


**Figs. 12a-c:** (a) Holotype of *Macromia tillyardi* Martin, 1906, (b) Holotype of *Linnaeschna polli* Martin, 1909, and (c) Holotype of *Phyllopetalia patricia* Tillyard, 1910 [currently *Austropetalia patricia*]. Photos: René Martin, extracted from Ris mss.

With regards to collecting in France, Martin wrote in his letter of 01-xii-1887 that the French farmers indeed are aggressive when somebody is hunting wild game on their properties, but they say nothing to insect hunters. They consider them as madmen and laugh about them [“Nos paysans français sont souvent très grossiers quand il s'agit de passer sur leurs propriétés en chassant le gibier, cerfs, lièvres ou perdrix, mais ils ne disent rien au simple chasseur d'insectes. Ils le considèrent comme un fou et se contentent d'en rire”].

Over the years Martin reported on his visits to several collections, such as Selys' collection (29-i-1894), a planned trip to Italy from 01 to 20-viii-1894 including a visit of the Museo Civico di Storia Naturale in Genoa (8-vii-1894), and on 21-i-1897 he wrote about the collections of the National Museum of Natural History in Paris, the British Museum of Natural History in London and McLachlan's collection. Odonatologists who visited Martin in Le Blanc, France were Calvert in 1895, and an English as well as a Russian odonatologist in 1898 [Martin did not name the persons]. Ris visited Martin in 1899 (letters on 03-iii-1899, 10-vi-1899, and 07-xii-1899) and a further meeting took place at least in 1901 in Liège, Belgium in order to examine Selys' collection (letters on 15-iii-1901, 23-iii-1901, and 27-iii-1901; fig. 13). Since 04-v-1908 Martin had lived in Paris and took his collection with him (letters on 31-iii-1908, and 17-iv-1908). The

**Fig. 13: Sketch showing the hotel where Martin stayed in Liège, not far away from Selys home. Martin wrote that he does not remember the name of the hotel but sent this sketch to Ris on 27-iii-1901.**



letters from Martin show that he only traveled in Europe at that time. On 14-v-1890 Martin wrote that he always regrets that he had married before he was able to visit Brazil, Australasia or India, and that he will encourage his sons to try to travel ["Je regretterai toute ma vie de m'être marié avant d'avoir été visité ou le Brésil ou l'Australasie, ou l'Inde et je conseillerai à mes petits garçons quand ils auront votre âge d'essayer de faire comme vous"].

In most of the letters Martin listed the dragonfly species which he got from Africa, America, Asia, Australia, and Europe, as well as the species he would like from Ris, and the species he sent to Ris. Martin often requested Ris for help, particularly for his opinion on many species for determination or description purposes. Besides collecting adults Martin reared Odonata larvae in aquariums (21-i-1897), and was interested in dragonflies as the prey of birds (letters on 27-ii-1910, 03-iv-1910). As a private person Martin talked about the loss of his wife in 1900 (letter without date), and also of the death of his mother (02-x-1908) and the loss of one of his sons during World War 1 (04-x-1916). On 08-i-1898 Martin described an accident with his own rifle but despite of the loss of his forefinger on the right hand, Martin continued to hunt, write and to play the cello ["Malgré le doigt en moins, j'écris aussi facilement, je puis jouer du violoncelle et même chasser encore"]. Apparently, the Ris's responses fell off after World War 1 because in the last letter, written on 10-iv-1919, Martin wrote that he has sent three postcards during the war but got no reply, and Martin again asked Ris for an answer.

### **Martynow, Andrey Vasilyevich (1879-1938)**

Russian entomologist, and palaeontologist; 4 letters, in German, and French; 01-xi-1912 to 03-i-1915

Martynow sent the letters from Warsaw, Poland (1912), and Ivangorod, Russia (1914). Their content is about Trichoptera. In June 1914 he was in Switzerland and met Ris. On 14-xi-1914 he noted that he was called up as a reserve officer of the artillery on account of war [World War 1] having broken out.

### **May, Eduard (1905-1956)**

German biologist, occasionally employed as specialist for chemical pest control, from 1942-1945 head of the Entomological Section of the "SS-Ahnenerbe" established at the concentration camp Dachau, Germany; 4 letters, three typewritten, in German; 01-vii-1927 to 26-viii-1927

May asked about the valid nomenclature of *Sympecma paedisca*, a species newly detected in Germany.

### **McLachlan, Robert (1837-1904)**

English entomologist; 29 letters, French, and English; 06-ii-1888 to 27-vii-1901

McLachlan and Ris exchanged specimens, and expertise mainly concerning Trichoptera, but also a little about Odonata. On 04-ix-1893 McLachlan reported that four or five years ago his general health was very bad with nervous debility, and also his eyesight was not in a good condition. As soon as his general condition ameliorated his eyesight did the same. But McLachlan stated, that he used a microscope very seldom now.

McLachlan shipped a couple of *Orthetrum internum* McLachlan, 1894 on 05-x-1896. Apparently Ris shipped Swiss *Coenagrion ornatum* to McLachlan because on 19-i-1897 McLachlan answered that "The local *Agrion ornatum* are welcome" and that he had only three specimens in his collection – "... all old, two of them given to me by Hagen more than 30 years ago."

In a letter dated 18-iii-1898 McLachlan reported that he received a long letter from Selys "... who, in spite of his age is as energetic as ever. There are some signs of failing memory, but he was always ... 'un homme distrait' ..." [an absent minded man].

In 1898 McLachlan visited Switzerland, on 15-x-1898 he wrote that he was at Le Pont, and in the surroundings of Lac de Joux in the Jura Mountains. On 20-x-1898 McLachlan reported to Ris that he captured *Leucorrhinia albifrons*, *Cordulia aenea* (Linnaeus, 1758), *Somatochlora metallica* (Vander Linden, 1825), *Aeshna juncea*, *Enallagma cyathigerum* (Charpentier, 1840), *Coenagrion pulchellum* (Vander Linden, 1825) and *Lestes sponsa* (Hansemann, 1823) during this sojourn. Further he observed *Aeshna grandis* (Linnaeus, 1758), and *Calopteryx virgo* (Linnaeus, 1758), and in the mountains *Somatochlora arctica* (Zetterstedt, 1840) or *Somatochlora alpestris* or both, and a small *Aeshna*, "... probably *borealis* [Zetterstedt, 1840] ..." [currently a jun. syn. of *Aeshna caerulea*]. Six months later on 29-iv-1899 McLachlan noted that he read the publication by Mory (1899) who was in the same year in the Vallée de Joux and recorded Odonata. McLachlan commented to Ris "... I feel quite ashamed that I found so few species in comparison" and

explained two reasons for that: "(1) I did not visit the 'Torfmoor' [a swamp locality] (...) I did not know of its existence. (2) Several of the species (...) were probably past by the time I arrived. Moreover my health was not good ...".

On 14-xi-1898 McLachlan offered to Ris a large collection which he [McLachlan] received from Buitenzorg [Bogor], Java. McLachlan noted that the majority was *Pantala flavescens* (Fabricius, 1798) but that he supposed there were 20-30 other species. On 05-iii-1899 he sent specimens collected at the Mount Gedeh, Java, and returned the specimen of *Orthetrum bismarckianum* Ris, 1898 [jun. syn. of *Orthetrum villosovittatum* (Brauer, 1868)]. Further McLachlan noted that Förster wrote to him, that he [Förster] is studying the genitalia of *Crocothemis erythraea*. McLachlan commented that it would be interesting to know which variations exist in a large number of specimens from the same locality, for example from Bogor [these specimens represent *Crocothemis servilia* (Drury, 1773)].

In the last letter, dated 27-vii-1901, McLachlan noted that he is glad that Ris is working on a part of Selys' collection, and that "Sometimes I [McLachlan] much regret that I [n]ever seriously studied and collected Odonata."

### **Meyer, Didi [no biographical data available]**

1 letter, in German; 22-xii-1926

The letter was sent from Milanino, Milan, Italy. It is without entomological content.

### **Michaelsen, Wilhelm (1860-1937)**

German zoologist, since 1887 employed at the Zoological Museum of the University Hamburg, Germany; 1 letter, in German; 30-ix-1913

Michaelsen shipped West African Odonata to Ris for determination. [Michaelsen had collected the specimens in German South West Africa (= Namibia) in 1911.]

### **Montgomery, Basil Elwood (1899-1983)**

US-American entomologist, and odonatologist; 3 letters, typewritten, in English; 05-x-1925, 01-xi-1928, and 10-i-1930

Montgomery sent specimens of *Perithemis* (on 05-x-1925) and *Tramea* Hagen, 1861 (on 01-xi-1928) to Ris for examination. Ris was allowed to keep some specimens. On 10-i-1930 Montgomery mailed lists of European Odonata specimens and duplicates held in his collection, and one bibliographical list with papers published in 1925 by several authors regarding Odonata. Montgomery asked Ris to complete that list of publications.

### **Morton, Kenneth John (1858-1940)**

Scottish entomologist; 285 letters, in English; 11-ix-1893 to 01-i-1931

Morton and Ris exchanged publications, expertise, and specimens of Trichoptera, Plecoptera, and Odonata. Also, they discussed dragonfly publications of colleagues, and Morton wrote extensively about characters, determinations, and about his own records.

In Scotland the Odonata records usually concerned *Aeshna caerulea* and *Somatochlora arctica*, already in the first letter Morton stated that there are not many dragonflies where he lives. On collecting *A. caerulea* he reported on 04-vii-1895:

“... most of the examples obtained came to me and were not chased. The first ♂ was caught on my breast and secured with the fingers! I wore a light coloured coat, whitish straw hat + carried a rather large white net – quite an attracting if not attractive object, and taking up my position where the sun shone directly on me, the insects either came slowly sailing towards me as if to settle when of course they were easily secured, or, as in two or three instances, actually flew into the net! This may seem almost incredible, but it is true ...”

Since 1903 Morton's interest for Odonata increased, and he received several collections – for example from West Africa, Algeria, and Asia Minor, but also from South America, and India. An important contact from whom he received Odonata specimens for many years was Margaret Elizabeth Fountaine (1862–1940). On 07-viii-1904 Morton stated that he received more than 200 specimens collected in Algeria from Fountaine, including puzzling *Ischnura* Charpentier, 1840 species. Morton was convinced that beside *Ischnura graellsii* (Rambur, 1842) there were two further species in this consignment; on 25-ix-1904 he wrote:

“... one of them is as near as possible to [*Ischnura*] *genei* [(Rambur, 1842)] ... while the other is unknown to one and probably new (...) I send figures ... + if you compare them ... you will see they are very different from all the other species especially in the lower appendages which are upright, retracted much with in the cavity and bearing a strong inturred tooth. Whatever it may be it is an excellent and well defined species...”

Morton and Ris discussed the identity, and on 20-x-1904 Morton mailed further sketches (Fig. 14). The larger *Ischnura* turned out to be new (19-ii-1905), and Morton (1905b) described it as *Ischnura fountainei* [*fountaineae*]. Regarding the other species Morton tried to get specimens of *I. genei* from Sicily and Italy for comparison. Three years later, on 05-xi-1907, he reported to Ris that he got *I. genei* now, and that the minor specimens from Algeria actually belong to this species – “... although the crest of the prothorax is not quite the same as in typical *Genei* ...” [in fact these specimens are *Ischnura saharensis* Aguesse, 1958; cf. Schmidt 1967].

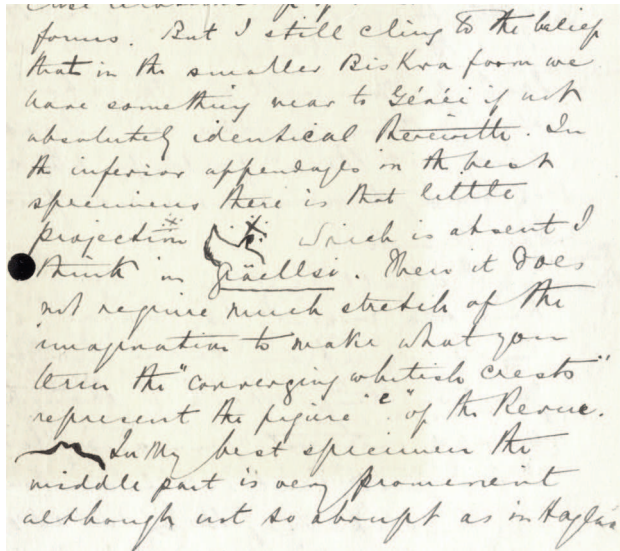
On 24-i-1909 Morton reported that he received the finished print of Ris' South African paper [Ris 1908], and Morton commented regarding to the wing photographs by Ris:

“Books are now produced on a grand scale and to the average man in a very attractive form, although the great artists seem to consider the triumphs of photographic processes as the responsible agents for the decad[e] free of art or rather for the decad[e] free of artistic taste. But [for] entomological students photography has been an unmixed boon.”

Like other odonatologists Morton wanted to see *Macromia splendens* in France. He tried it in vain together with Ris in 1911 (22-xi-1911: “I must really have another shot at it!”), and again in 1914 where he noted “Perhaps I saw the beast! But ... it may only have been *Cordulegaster* [Leach, 1815]” (03-xi-1914). On 10-vii-1923 Morton reported that he found *M. splendens* at Cahors, France along with *Oxygastra curtisii* (Dale,



Fig. 14: Extract from the letter written on 20-x-1904 regarding the *Ischnura* from Biskra, Algeria. Morton wrote: "But I still cling to the belief that in the smaller Biskra form we have something near to *genei* if not absolutely identical (...). In the inferior appendages in both specimens there is that little projection which is absent I think in *Graellsii*. Then it does not require much stretch of the imagination to make what you term the 'converging whitish crests' represent the figure '2'



forms. But I still cling to the belief that in the smaller Biskra form we have something near to *Genei* if not absolutely identical therewith. In the inferior appendages in the best specimens there is that little projection which is absent I think in *Graellsii*. Then it does not require much stretch of the imagination to make what you term the "converging whitish crests" represent the figure "2" of the *Revue*. In my best specimen the middle part is very prominent although not so abrupt as in Hagen's

of the *Revue* [Selys Longchamps & Hagen 1850: Plate 7]. In my best specimen the middle part is very prominent although not so abrupt as in Hagen's figure ... I should add that the crossed superior appendages of *Genei* are also present ..." [last sentence on the following page and not figured here].

1834), and *Gomphus graslinii* Rambur 1842. On 05-vii-1924 he reported that he was again at Cahors and collected five males [Morton 1925].

A further interesting topic is the discovery of *Lestes parvidens* Artobolevskii, 1929, although without naming it [Morton 1922]. On 05-xii-1921 Morton stated "... please compare *Lestes viridis* [(Vander Linden, 1825)] ♂ from Western Europe with examples from the near East. In examining one or two from Constantinople I find difficulty in seeing the distal tubercle on the superior appendages. My material from France, Switzerland and Sicily shows the tubercle to be quite distinct. I asked Campion to look over the B.M. specimens and he says the tubercle is little or scarcely evident in examples from Cyprus and also from Ostia, Italy. This rather destroys my idea that the obsolescent condition of the tubercle was distinctive of Eastern Mediterranean examples but on the other hand, it may rather tend to suggest the existence of two species."

On the discovery of *Aeshna subarctica* in Europe Morton noted on 06-i-1927 that it "... gave me quite a thrill of excitement rather than of surprise! I have always had a kind of presentiment that this species ... would turn up in the old world and I have more than once overhauled with care my extensive series of the latter [*Aeshna juncea*] in search of *subarctica*, even making preparations of the genitalia ... but without result."

Regarding the correct spelling of *Aeshna*, Morton supposed that "... the name is derived from Aeshmâ Daevâ, one of the evil demons of the old Persian religion" (23-viii-1928). On 10-vi-1928 Morton noted, that he had asked Archibald Henry Sayce (1845-1933), a well known assyriologist: "He considered ... that the name was a misprint for *Aeschna*



... he did not think that in the 18th century Fabricius would have known anything about Aeshmâ or Aeschmâ; Zentic [from Zend, a former name for Avestan which is the oldest recorded language of the Iranian branch of the Indo-European family] studies were then but just beginning and Old Persian was unknown (...) I am as far as ever from being satisfied with the Greek word as a true explanation ...”.

Morton and Ris also exchanged some private content. A serious incident happened to Ris in 1907 where he was attacked by a patient [Calvert 1931]. Morton noted on 08-ii-1907 that “It was with horror that I read of that attack and needless to say the heartfelt sympathy of all of us went out to you in your suffering and loss so serious and irreparable”, and on 13-ii-1907 he wrote “I send you a few words to cheer you a little in your very trying time, and to show you that we often think of you and are sincerely sorry you have had to suffer so much, and then lose an eye.”

Morton and Ris not only corresponded but also met each other several times. In 1904 Morton met Ris during his trip to Switzerland [Morton 1905a] – there are also three letters sent during this trip to Ris, for example on 15-vii-1904 where Morton reported “... *Cordulia* [aenea] appeared and as the morning advanced they were in sunshine all over this place, and a great hunt ensued. The result of my mornings work was over 20 examples and of these 11 ♂ + 2 ♀ are [*Somatochlora*] *arctica*!” After Morton’s return home he noted on 07-viii-1904 that he “... had many pleasant holidays, but none upon which I look back with so much satisfaction, none which have [has] in every way purchased all expectations and left so many permanent impressions of the sunny side of things. Much of this is due to you and yours.” He also stated that the collection from Switzerland consisted of five cigar boxes. In 1906 Ris visited Morton in Edinburgh, on 26-iv-1906 Morton said of his collection “You will find them in an unspeakable muddle but that you will just have to make the best of!” About their trip to France in 1911 Morton noted on 08-viii-1911:

“Although you suffered much discomfort, I trust that even from the point of view of health our holiday may yet have some good indirect effects. Personally I think the holiday has done me a great deal of good and apart from that, the experience has been delightful and one that I would not have missed for worlds.”

Apparently Ris suggested a further trip to Italy because on 12-iii-1912 Morton answered:

“I appreciate the depressing effects your professional work must have at times, but I fear the alternative you take in the shape of your Entomological work sometimes assumes the dimensions of an overdose! Indeed the amount of work in this time that you do simply amazes a lazy man like myself, and it probably takes more out of you than you imagine. (...) your proposal to go to Italy some summer must be recognized as an arranged affair between us!”

In 1925 there was a short meeting in Lucerne, Switzerland (03-x-1925), and in 1928 both met each other in Zurich for the last time while Morton was on his way back from a trip to Vienna and northern Italy (letters on 07-viii-1928, and 23-viii-1928).

Morton mentioned contact with several other entomologists in his letters to Ris, for example Tillyard (“Still he is a very genial correspondent”, 04-v-1910), with Bartenev (22-xii-1910, 08-v-1923), and Calverts visit to Morton in 1912 (31-x-1912). According to Morton’s letter on 22-xii-1910 Bartenev had send a pair of “... Bartenefs *Leucor-*

*rhinia* [Brittinger, 1850] ..." to Morton [*Leucorrhinia intermedia*, figs. 15 & 16]. On 12-iii-1910 Morton noted regarding Förster that he is "...certainly not amiable and his policy of keeping things exclusive to himself savours somewhat of 'the dog in the manger'." And on 27-xi-1910 he added "What that man has gained by his attitude is a puzzle: what he has lost in reputation is a certainty."

In his post-World War 1 correspondence Morton noted on 26-v-1925 that he met Fraser at the British Museum [of Natural History in London], and Fraser visited Morton in Edinburgh in April 1930 (30-ix-1930). Further Morton was visited by Walker in 1928, and in August 1930 (letters on 06-x-1928, and 30-ix-1930) but he missed Tillyard in 1928 – "I found the melancholy evidence from his card in my letter box, that Tillyard had been here only to find a deserted house" (23-viii-1928). Further he mentioned correspondence with Lieftinck (first time on 3-x-1925), Schmidt (e.g. 04-v-1927), and on 18-ii-1928 Morton noted with regard to le Roi: "... indeed he gave me a few very fine West African species. The only *Sapho bicolor* [Selys, 1853] I possess came from him."

**Fig. 15:** *Leucorrhinia intermedia*, male, labelled »Sib. Or.« [Siberia orientale = East Siberia], likely from the original series. Coll. Morton, National Museums Scotland, Edinburgh. Photo: © Milo Phillips, National Museums Scotland.



**Fig. 16:** *Leucorrhinia intermedia*, male. Russia, Kamchatka Peninsula, wetlands near Kamchatka River, south of Milkowo, 26-vi-2019. Photo: Malte Seehausen.



In the last letter to Ris, written on 01-i-1931, Morton noted correspondence with [E.B.] Williamson, and said that Williamson was collecting in Southern Missouri, USA – “Of *Macromia* he took exactly 200 specimens and probably over 200 *Somatochloras* [Selys, 1871], while on one day he had a phenomenal catch of *Tachopteryx* [Uhler, 1859] – 15 specimens with 16 strikes and he actually had the 16<sup>th</sup> in his net but did not know until he saw it going off!”

### **Morton, Kenneth V.F [no biographical data available]**

K.J. Morton's son; 1 letter, in English; 21-v-1926

The letter is without entomological content. Morton thanked Ris for securing “details of German University courses”. [K.J. Morton noted on 17-iv-1926 that his son studies German, and wants to spend a part of his vacation at a German University, his idea was to go to Heidelberg, Germany. Ris apparently gave to Morton further information about the University.]

### **Mosely, Martin Ephraim (1877-1948)**

English entomologist; 30 letters, in English; 13-x-1922 to 09-x-1927, and 18-iii-1931

The letters are predominantly about Trichoptera. Mosely collected insects in Switzerland from June-September 1927 [Mosely 1933] and mailed species lists, and information from the localities visited. On 30-vii-1927 Mosely reported that on 22-vii-1927 he “... met with the most unpleasant adventure that has ever befallen me. I set out to explore the Val del Fain [Ova da la Val da Fain, Switzerland], lending out of the Bernina pass + unknowingly crossed the Italian frontier + got myself arrested by fascists on my return.” Mosely mentioned also that unfortunately his passport was locked in the hotel at Pont-resina, Switzerland, and so he was taken to the prison in Sondrio, Italia for 12 hours. During Mosely's stay in Switzerland he met Ris at Rheinau on 11-ix-1927 (letters on 10-ix-1927, and 13-ix-1927). After Ris' death, Mosely asked Victor Ris on 18-iii-1931 what is to become of Ris' collections, and if they are perhaps for sale. Also, he requested letters and lists sent by him to Ris regarding the Odonata captured 1927 in Switzerland – since Ris' death Mosely still wanted to publish the data by himself. [A handwritten notice, perhaps by Victor Ris, stated that 13 letters from 1928 to 1930 were sent to Mosely.]

### **Mueller, L. [no biographical data or first name available]**

[German?] physician; 3 letters, in German; 07-ix-1892, 16-ix-1892, and 30-xii-1892

According to the first letter Mueller was an assistant physician employed at the gynaecological hospital of the University of Munich, Germany at that time but living in Gotha, Germany. Mueller noted that he had been a zoologist in the past, and collected a lot during his journeys – he shipped some Odonata for determination to Ris. Their colour labels indicate the region: red label = Africa, blue = South America, grey = North America, green = Palearctic Asia, yellow = South Asia. Ris was allowed to take duplicates but according to a letter by Mueller written on 30-xii-1892 Ris did not take much.

**Müller, Otto Herbert [no biographical data available]**

German teacher, and entomologist; 13 letters, in German; 13-ii-1923 to 05-iv-1925

The heading indicates that Müller lived in Hohenstein-Ernstthal, Saxony, Germany at that time. According to a letter, dated 02-iii-1924, Müller was a member of the Natural Research Society in Leipzig, Germany.

Müller borrowed Odonata literature from Ris, and returned it to him. He noted that he wanted to learn more about Odonata because he would like to record the species in his surroundings. On 02-iii-1924 Müller mentioned that he learned English because he was a prisoner of war for two years because of his military service as a medic during First World War. Furthermore, Ris requested specimens of *Calopteryx splendens*, and Müller answered that he would try to capture some. Müller also kept odonate larvae in the aquaria of the "Aquarium and Terrarium exhibition" which he established (Fig. 17). On 22-iv-1924 Müller reported that a female "*Agrion* [*Enallagma*] *cyathigerum*" emerged from an aquarium on 01-iv-1924. On 14-x-1924 Müller sent a picture of himself and his family to Ris, and on 05-iv-1925 he sent a picture of two Anisoptera larvae to Ris.



**Fig. 17:** Postcard written on 08-ix-1924 showing Müller with his Aquarium and Terrarium exhibition.

**Muttkowski, Richard Anthony (1887-1943)**

US-American entomologist; 27 letters, most of them typewritten, in English, and German; 26-i-1909 to 11-iii-1921

During Muttkowski's work on the catalogue of the North-American Odonata [Muttkowski 1910] he asked Ris on 12-vi-1909 for an update of the classification of Libellulidae. In subsequent letters Muttkowski wrote about some pre-occupied genus names, for example the genus *Platyplax* Karsch, 1891 where he suggested the replacement name *Planiplax* [Muttkowski, 1910], and the genus *Apatelia* Karsch, 1893 for which he suggested the name *Lokia* [Ris, 1919] instead.



Muttkowski was undecided concerning Kirby's reversion of *Agrion* Fabricius, 1775 to *Calopteryx*, and according to a letter on 08-vii-1909 he submitted it to C.W. Stiles of the commission of the International Zoologists Code of Nomenclature. On 01-xii-1909 Muttkowski stated that the commission decided in favour of Kirby: ten (of 15) votes, of them nine pro Kirby and one against Kirby – "... this would leave a possible margin of 5 additional votes against Kirby ...", and that's why Muttkowski noted that he would forward it to the commission again when all 15 are able to vote. On 15-xi-1910, and again on 14-ii-1912 Muttkowski explained that the etymology of *Agrion* is "a wild beast" and that this would pertain more to the "... sculling, irregular, therefore wild flight of the *Calopteryx* species ..." (15-xi-1910) rather than to the "... straight arrow-like flight of *Enallagma* [Charpentier, 1840] or of true *Coenagrioninae*" (14-ii-1912).

With regards to nomenclature Muttkowski noted on 28-ii-1910 that "Recent extremists have even gone so far as to advocate that words of similar sound shall not be permissible; e.g. *Pleurema* and *Plurima* would be synonyms, a strange proceeding ...".

Beside the *Agrion* and *Calopteryx* matter, Muttkowski argued against the notation "*Aeshna*" instead of "*Aeschna*": he noted on 15-xi-1910 that Fabricius derived his names from "... a. external features, as in *Gomphus* [Leach, 1815], *Cordulia*; b. habits, as in *Nitidula* [Fabricius, 1775], *Necrophorus* [Fabricius, 1775], and *Agrion*." In case of *Aeshna* vs. *Aeschna* Muttkowski argued that "... habits are not considered in the etymology of the name" but he found this: "Quick, beautiful and speedy in life, ugly and discoloured after death." Muttkowski considered the name to be derived from external features by Fabricius because Fabricius was so impressed that the discoloration take place so shortly after death – "Hence he named the insect *Aeschna* (...) meaning 'disfigured', with the special interpretation 'disfigured after death', as used by Euripides and Hippolyte among Greek authors." Muttkowski commented that the notation *Aeshna* "... is a stupidity and should be emended." Further Muttkowski wrote in this letter that he found an undescribed *Enallagma* from Florida inside an old drawer. But because of damage due to *Dermestes* Linnaeus, 1758 beetles he will probably not describe the species.

On 13-ix-1910 Muttkowski listed his odonatological correspondents, and stated that he never received an answer from Förster, Karsch and Leopold Krüger (1861-1942). Apparently Ris answered with regards to Förster because on 04-x-1910 Muttkowski noted that he was amused about Ris' summary of Förster as an "Einzelgenie" [literally "single genius"; Muttkowski translated it as "monogenial", perhaps like a self-contained genius]. Further Muttkowski reported that he asked his chief Dr. S. Graenicher to examine Förster's publications and form an opinion of the man. Graenicher said "Förster is a splitter where his own species are concerned, and a lumpner when he discusses those of others. Evidently he believes only in his own opinion". Muttkowski added spitefully that "... Förster probably regrets that Linne ever lived, and that the world did not wait for him." In subsequent letters dated 15-xi-1910, and 20-i-1912 Muttkowski called Förster again sarcastically "monogenial Foerster", and "Weltgenie" [literally "World genius"].

Concerning Martin's "Aeshnines" [Martin 1908-1909] Muttkowski commented that he "... do not think much of the work. Martin leans too much to the old Selysian classification" (14-ii-1912).

In the second last letter, dated 03-v-1919 and sent from France, Muttkowski noted that he joined the army a year ago. He spent some months in the USA, and then he came over to France and spent a short time in Coblenz, Germany for “intelligence work”. Their unit will leave France in June. Further Muttkowski stated that “This war has played the deuce with things scientific ... it is up to all of us to make a fresh start.”

### **Navás Ferrer, Longinos (1858-1938)**

Spanish entomologist; 3 letters, in French; 24-xi-1928, 04-v-1929, and 10-v-1929

Apparently Ris requested specimens of *Pseudagrion zumbense* Navás, 1917, and Navás sent at least one specimen on 24-xi-1928 to Ris. He noted that Ris could keep the specimen or return it to him [likely Navás sent the male, the description being based on a pair, cf. Navás (1917)]. On 10-v-1929 Navás sent two specimens of *Allopetalia* Selys, 1873 to Ris and wrote that Ris can keep one of them for his collection [no specimen was found at Ris' collection in 2022].

### **Needham, James George (1868-1957)**

US-American entomologist, head of the Department of Entomology at the Cornell University in Ithaca from 1914-1935; 11 letters, some typewritten, in English; 16-ii-1902 to 14-i-1929

Needham and Ris exchanged publications, expertise, and specimens of Perlidae (Plecoptera) and Odonata. On 28-i-1904 Needham stated that he wants to send the types of *Micrathyria pallida* Needham, 1904 [*Erythrodiplax pallida*] – “The female is the bred specimen whose nymph I described.” Additionally, Needham wrote that he will send South-American Libellulinae. Some specimens collected at Brazil, Columbia, Bolivia and Argentina were shipped on 26-vii-1904.

From January 1910 to November 1928 there was a long break in their correspondence. Needham noted on 30-xi-1928 that he reared a lot of Odonata genera at Nanking [Nanjing], China. He listed *Acisoma* Rambur, 1842, *Brachydiplax* Brauer, 1868, *Periaeschna* Martin, 1908, *Deielia* Kirby, 1889, and *Lyrithemis* Brauer, 1868. Needham also stated that he had elucidated the life histories of *Gomphus agricola* Ris, 1916, and of *Gomphus abdominalis* McLachlan, 1884, and that he would include an account of the immature stages in his manual about Chinese dragonflies [Needham 1930]. Needham mentioned that he could offer a lot of duplicates from China, and asked Ris if he was interested in exchanging specimens.

### **d'Orchymont, Armand-Hippolyte (1881-1947)**

Belgian entomologist, at that time curator at the Musée royal d'histoire naturelle de Belgique in Brussels; 1 letter, in German; 30-iii-1931

d'Orchymont acknowledged to Ris' brother Victor Ris the restitution of two boxes of Odonata which Ris borrowed from the Musée royal d'histoire naturelle de Belgique.

### **Pagenstecher, Arnold Andreas Friedrich (1837-1913)**

German medic, and entomologist, superintendent since 1882, and director from 1900-1913 of the Natural History Collection of the Museum Wiesbaden, Germany; 2 letters,



in German; 04-ii-1895, and 09-ii-1895

Pagenstecher and Ris apparently exchanged butterflies. Pagenstecher noted on 04-ii-1895 that he possibly will send some exotic Odonata to Ris which were sent to him by mistake together with a consignment of butterflies.

### Peus, Fritz (1904-1978)

German entomologist, at that time employed at the regional office for hygiene of the water, earth and air in Berlin; 1 letter, in German; 07-xii-1929

Peus was working on his publication about the moor fauna [Peus 1932], and asked Ris for information about the behaviour of *Aeshna caerulea*. He also wanted to know if this species only occurred on upland moors. Further Peus was interested in information about *Somatochlora alpestris* and *Somatochlora arctica*.

### Portmann, Adolf (1897-1982)

Swiss zoologist; 1 letter, in German; probably beginning of 1920

The letter contains best wishes for the New Year, and a small watercolour landscape at Tinzen [Tinizong], Switzerland from Portmann's summer trip in 1919 (Fig. 18).



Fig. 18: Portmann sent best wishes for the New Year including his own small watercolour landscape.

### Prenn, Fritz Friedrich (1878-1964)

Austrian biologist, and botanist, born in Bruneck [today South Tyrol, Italy], employed at the secondary school in Kufstein, Tyrol, Austria; 4 letters, in German; 05-xii-1924 to 16-ii-1928

According to the letters Prenn studied the development of Odonata larvae, e.g. of *Sympetma paedisca* and *Leucorrhinia dubia*. On 14-x-1927 Prenn stated that he recorded *Sympetrum fonscolombii* last year as well as this year at a pond near Kufstein. Prenn

captured males, and on 26-vi-1927 he collected eggs from a female, then he reared the eggs and on 15-vii-1927 [after 19 days] the larvae emerged. On 04-x-1927 [after 81 days] the imago emerged.

### **Puschnig, Roman (1875-1962)**

Austrian medic, and entomologist; 1 letter, in German; 28-x-1928

The letter was sent from Klagenfurt, Austria. Puschnig stated that he received a collection of Odonata from Greece and Morocco including an unidentified *Ischnura*. Further he noted that he captured *Aeshna caerulea* for the first time at Flattnitz, Austria in an altitude of about 1390 m [a photograph of the specimen is published by Mildner & Leute 1987]. Puschnig mentioned that he would study his specimens of *Aeshna juncea* to check if *Aeshna subarctica* was among them.

### **Rhodes, B. [no first name or biographical data available]**

1 letter, in English; 07-ii-1924

Rhodes wrote a letter representing Tillyard, and stated that "...he [Tillyard] underwent the operation of appendicostomy (...) it will be some considerable time before he can attend to his correspondence."

### **Robert, Paul-André (1901-1977)**

Swiss illustrator, and naturalist; 1 letter, in French; 24-ix-1928

Robert reported to Ris that he found a colony of *Sympetrum fonscolombii* in the harbour of Saint-Blaise, Switzerland at Lake Neuchâtel. On the 18-vii-1914 he had already collected a pair and in mid July 1928 he observed several *S. fonscolombii* mating and ovipositing there. Robert added that he returned at the beginning of September, and saw no adults flying. But eight or ten days ago, on the way to bathe in the lake, he found an exuvia. The subsequent search revealed a few exuviae along the mole at heights from 5 cm to 2 m above water level. Two days later he found further new exuviae at the same places where he had searched. Furthermore, Robert mentioned that he went there early in the morning on 21-ix[-1928] and 22-ix[-1928], and discovered freshly emerged individuals which he captured and sent to Ris. Robert stated that this is "... a strange thing, before 9 a.m., despite of cold weather, all flying away and vanishing. Perhaps they are flying southward?" [translated from French]. Robert asked Ris about his opinion of a second generation.

In addition Robert reported on his study of painting together with his brother Théophile Robert (1879-1954), and that both of them were to go to Paris in the coming winter. Robert noted that he wishes to learn painting thoroughly before travelling abroad. Not only to paint insects but also landscapes and scriptural scenes. The latter because he belongs to the "Alliance Biblique", and wants to travel to warm countries to proselytise.

### **Roepke, Walter Karl Johann (1882-1961)**

German entomologist and lepidopterist, born in Hohensalza [Inowrocław, Poland; at that time Prussia]; 1 letter, in German; 05-ix-1910

For several years Roepke worked at the Experiment Station at Salatiga, Java, Indonesia, and subsequently at the Institute for Plant Diseases at Bogor, Java. Roepke reported to Ris the death of Herman van der Weele at Java, Indonesia. Roepke stated that van der Weele was not made for the tropic climate. Van der Weele first had an operation, and while convalescing he contracted cholera on 27-viii-1910 and died after two days.

### **le Roi, Otto (1878-1916)**

German zoologist; 26 letters, in German; 26-iii-1908 to 05-vi-1916

On 24-ix-1910 le Roi noted that he joined Prof. Dr. Alexander Koenig on a mainly ornithological expedition to the Nile at the beginning of the year. On the expedition le Roi also collected around 50 Odonata specimens, and asked Ris if he would like to examine them. Ris was allowed to keep duplicates. The Odonata had been captured mainly at the "Gazellenfluß" [Bahr al-Ghazal], South Sudan. Two months later on 28-xi-1910 le Roi reported on Odonata collected for him in 1910 by a friend in Brandenburg, Germany, including *Anax parthenope* Selys, 1839 which had not been reported from Germany since 1855.

After 1913 le Roi and Ris exchanged odonatological expertise more intensively, especially concerning the identification of African dragonflies – notably *Sapho gloriosa* McLachlan, 1873, and *Sapho orichalcea* McLachlan 1869. On 21-ix-1913 le Roi mentioned that he wanted to examine the Odonata from his second expedition to Sudan and on 25-xi-1913 noted that he would follow Ris in preserving the Odonata in envelopes.

According to a letter on 20-i-1914 le Roi was offered an Odonata collection from North Tibet: around 1000 specimen for 75 Pfennig each, so altogether around 750 Mark. This was too much for le Roi's budget, and he asked Ris if he was interested. It is unclear what happened to this collection; le Roi's next letter on 24-i-1914 just stated "Your information about Tibet was very interesting" [translated from German].

In 1914 le Roi and Ris discussed the identification of species of the genus *Umma* Kirby, 1890. According to a letter on 08-iv-1914, le Roi obtained the type of *Umma cincta* (Hagen in Selys, 1853) from the Zoological Museum in Copenhagen, Denmark, and photographs as well as illustrations of male appendages of some specimens held in the Selys' collection in Brussels. On 06-ii-1914 le Roi mentioned a new *Umma* species (Fig. 19), and subsequently Ris wanted le Roi to describe it, but on 13-vii-1914 le Roi answered that he unfortunately must decline. In the same letter le Roi noted that he wants to take a holiday in the mountains and asked if there is a possibility of meeting Ris in Schaffhausen; le Roi expected that he would be in Schaffhausen from 23-viii[-1914] to 24-viii[-1914]. On 28-viii-1914 le Roi acknowledged Ris for his amiable hospitality, and noted that he captured *Sympetrum fonscolombii* around Constance. Further le Roi referred to First World War: He wrote "... back then it was deepest peace [when both met in Schaffhausen] and now the world is on fire" [translated from German; original word used for "the world is on fire" was "Weltenbrand"]. Le Roi stated that he had to interrupt his holiday and that he hopes to get accepted as a war volunteer – "there is a sense of a glorious atmosphere (...) about the outcome I am not afraid" [translated from German]. On 20-i-1915 le Roi wrote, that he feels ashamed because he still is in Bonn in civilian clothes but for some months they do not accept many volunteers,

and they do not want people older than 30 years. However, on 18-iii-1915 le Roi reported that his military enlistment began at the beginning of April, and that he wants to put his affairs in order just in case. Therefore, le Roi asked Ris if he could finish his [le Roi's] manuscript about the Central-African Odonata [le Roi 1915a] in case that he [le Roi] wants to be able to finish it – “for this last friendly turn I would be very grateful” [translated from German]. Further le Roi wrote that the manuscript about the Odonata from the Sahara [le Roi 1915b] is finished, there are four species new to Algeria in the collection: *Ischnura genei* [misidentified, perhaps *Ischnura saharensis*], *Orthetrum ransonnetti* (Brauer, 1865), *Orthetrum sabina* (Drury, 1773) and *Sympetrum [vulgatum] decoloratum* [perhaps *Sympetrum sinaiticum* Dumont, 1977]. The last letter was written on 05-vi-1916, about four months before le Roi's death [on 11-x-1916; killed in action near Szybeny, today Ukraine]: He wrote that he was on furlough but would take a net with him on his return to the front, and there he would try to capture *Calopteryx splendens* for Ris.

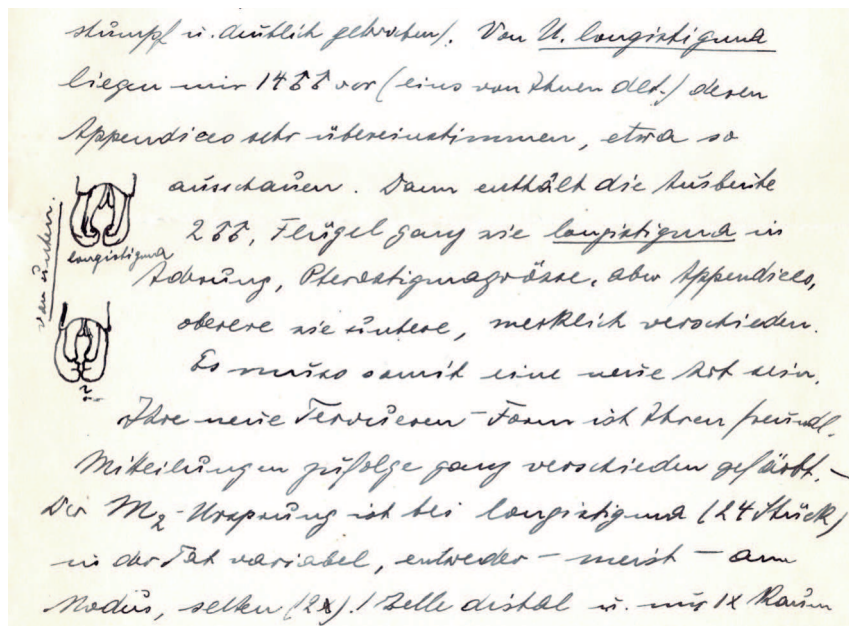


Fig. 19: Extract with sketches of the male appendages and evidence of an undescribed *Umma* species. Translated from German: “I have 14 males of *U. longistigma* ... whose appendages agree as shown in the draft [the drafts show the view from below]. Further there are 2 males with upper and lower appendages noticeably different. It must be a new species.”

#### Rosenbohm, Axel (1892-1968)

German physician, and odonatologist, born in Graudenz [at that time Prussia, today Grudziądz, Poland], studied medicine in Freiburg, Germany from 1919-1922, from 1923

employed at a cancer clinic in Hamburg; 13 letters, in German; 09-vi-1926 to 15-ii-1928

The letters are largely related to the discovery of *Aeshna subarctica* in Central Europe, in which findings by Rosenbohm in Northern Germany and in the Black Forest, Southern Germany played a major role – leading to one publication each by Ris (1927a) and by Rosenbohm (1928). The letters also concern other observations of rare dragonflies by Rosenbohm in Southern Germany: *Anax ephippiger* (Burmeister, 1839; 07-x-1927), *Coenagrion scitulum* (Rambur, 1842; letters on 10-x-1926, and 28-x-1926), and *Sympetma paedisca* (letters on 28-x-1926, 5-xi-1926, and 07-x-1927).

In the first letter (09-vi-1926) Rosenbohm introduced himself, and asked about dragonfly biotopes worth investigating around Lake Constance, and stated his wish to meet Ris in Rheinau. This visit took place on 31-viii to 01-ix-1926, during which Ris must have asked Rosenbohm to look out for a dragonfly species looking like a variety of *Aeshna juncea*, which he had seen at the Zoological Museum Hamburg. Following this request, Rosenbohm looked for it in vain in the Black Forest (but securing some specimens of *Aeshna caerulea*), but on 14-ix-1926 he sent such a pair caught in copula on Lüneburg Heath, Northern Germany. Later, on 01-xi-1926, Rosenbohm commented: "What I enjoy most about the *Aeshna subarctica* is that I caught it more or less on your command" [translated from German].

Concerning cooperation with other entomologists Rosenbohm mentioned, that he was in contact with [Erich] Schmidt, who was preparing his publication on the Odonata of Middle Europe [Schmidt 1929], and provided him with material (*Aeshna caerulea*; 10-x-1926), as well as with Titschack, and with the Austrian Puschnig (31-x-1927), and he asked Ris for the address of Liefertinck whom he would like to contact (28-x-1926). [From Ris' diary we know about further visits of Rosenbohm to Rheinau each summer from 1927 to 1930 and a visit of Ris to Hamburg in May 1927.]

### **Rostock, Michael (1821-1893)**

German entomologist of Sorbian descent, born in Ebendorfel, Germany; 2 letters, in German; 31-v-1889, and 04-ix-1889

The letters deal with Trichoptera and Rostock asked if Ris could send him corrections for the 2nd edition of his book "Neuroptera Germanica".

### **Schmidt, Erich Walther (1890-1969)**

German odonatologist, for some time employed at the Agricultural College Geisenheim, Germany (1922-1926), at the Deutsches Entomologisches Institut, then at Berlin-Dahlem (1927-1934), and at the Museum Alexander Koenig, Bonn (1934-1936); 62 letters, some typewritten, in German; 08-iv-1913 to 01-i-1931

Several main phases can be identified in Schmidt's correspondence with Ris. The first begins with the request for material and support for his doctoral thesis [Schmidt 1915] until its completion in mid-1914 (15 letters), the next covers the years of the First World War (20 letters), the third extends from 03-x-1926 to 09-vi-1928 (23 letters) and is particularly concerned with the preparation of Schmidt's outstanding contribution on Odonata in the manual "Die Tierwelt Mitteleuropas" [Schmidt 1929].



Schmidt's first letter (08-iv-1913), which ends with a recommendation from his doctoral supervisor Prof. H. Ludwig, briefly introduces the dissertation topic, asks for material from dragonfly families for which he has none (e.g. Petaluridae, Macromiidae, Synthemistidae), and requests additions to his literature list. Obviously in an effort not to make a request without reciprocation, he offered in return odonate larvae and exuviae, which Ris (1911) had described as desiderata. The following letters contain requests for further material and questions concerning nomenclature, systematics and terminology, especially with regard to the copulatory organs (e.g. letters on 17-xii-1913, 30-iii-1914), but also announcements of consignments of larvae and exuviae sent with information on the locality and biotope of discovery (e.g. letters on 16-v-1913, 06-ix-1913). The latter consignment also includes adult specimens of *Calopteryx splendens* from the mouth of the river Sieg, Germany, which were probably requested by Ris; since the imagines of this species from various parts of Europe are a regular topic in subsequent correspondence. Schmidt showed a special interest in the lestids and in ways to distinguish them from the podagrionids or coenagrionids. He even considered that it was appropriate to place them apart from all other Zygoptera (30-iii-1914). We also learn of a visit by Schmidt to Ris at Rheinau on 01-ix-1913 (06-ix-1913); in a letter from 13-iii-1914 a trip to Brussels at the end of January to study *Epiophlebia superstes* (Selys, 1889) in the Coll. Selys is mentioned. Before the dissertation was finished, Ris had kindly checked that the material Schmidt used had been correctly determined (05-v-1914).

The first letter of the second phase, written on 01-xii-1914, states that Schmidt is now garrisoned in East Prussia, but that Ris' specimens are safely stored in Bonn. In the next letter on 18-ii-1915 Schmidt wrote that he collected insects at the front: "...when we had eaten in our subterranean bunkers, sometimes beetles and Hymenoptera came out of the wood or straw ... I killed them with Cognac or vapour from a cigar..." [translated from German]. In this letter Schmidt also stated that le Roi will soon be sent to the front (Schmidt mentioned le Roi's death on 30-x-1916; on 29-i-1917 he promised to try to get a copy of le Roi's last publication for Ris). One topic of the following letters (the first two from the front in France, the others from Bonn during furlough) is the dissertation, first its printing, then the graduation ceremony (07-x-1915) [for which Schmidt did not get furlough], a request for addresses of scientists to whom he wished to mail it (22-x-1915), announcement of the mailing of a copy to Ris (two versions, one with 1 plate, the complete one with 3 plates), thanks to Ris for sending copies to foreign colleagues, and a request to Ris for a sharp critique for lack of expertise in Bonn so that shortcomings can be avoided in future publications (02-xi-1915). After Ris had complied with this request, finally there was an account of the assignment of dissertation themes in his time and now in Bonn, with Schmidt's present ones being held in low esteem (03-vi-1916). In the course of the correspondence we learn, that the thesis was sent to Calvert, Campion, Förster, Laidlaw, Morton, Mutkowski, Needham, Tillyard, Walker and [E.B.] Williamson (letters on 02-xi-1915, 28-ii-1916, 31-xii-1918; see also Ernst Schmidt); upon request also to Kennedy, who had informed Schmidt, that he had dealt with almost the same problem (08-ii-1916).

Several times Schmidt reported Odonata or larvae he had observed or collected, and which he was willing to send to Ris. Among them were specimens of *Calopteryx*



*splendens* that he collected himself in East Prussia (Figs. 20 & 21), and in France, or that he had asked colleagues to collect on all German fronts (e.g. letters on 30-11-1916, 15-ii-1918), and also *Lestes* Leach, 1815 larvae for a publication by Ris [Ris 1920] (22-ix-1917).

We learn of publications Schmidt is planning, for example on the dragonfly fauna of southern Germany (15-i-1917) [Schmidt 1926c], on the swimming of dragonfly larvae

...über den Zusammenhang der Verbindung mit-  
zuteilen. Gleichzeitiges möchte ich Sie fragen, ob  
Sie *Calopteryx splendens* aus Masurien-  
genauer Fundort Kreis Landen<sup>II.15</sup> Kanal (nord-  
östlich von Lotzen (Ostpreußen) gelegen) in weiteren  
Stücken gebrauchen können? Die Tiere scheinen  
etwas anders zu sein als die rheinischen. Ich fand  
dabei auch eine Varietät des ♀ mit schwarzen Flügeln,  
die wohl auch von Interesse ist.  
Meine Versuche, die Larve von *Lestes dryas* zu

Fig. 20: Letter sent by Schmidt from the western front on 07-x-1915. He told Ris that the "...*Calopteryx splendens* from Masuria (...) appear a bit different than those from the Rhineland. I found a variety of the ♀ with black wings..." [representing the disputed subspecies *C. splendens ancilla*; translated from German].



Fig. 21: *Calopteryx splendens ancilla*, female. Lithuania, Kauras, 10-viii-2022. Photo: James Lundberg.

[Schmidt 1919], the egg-laying of *Calopteryx splendens* (21-xii-1917) [Schmidt 1926b], or, after the war, on the systematics of lestids (08-iv-1916) [Schmidt 1928]. He said that in France he was also interested in arachnids and mentioned the manual by Dahl (1913), by which he got a good insight into body structure, size, relationships, enemies, food, adaptation to environment, parasitism, and that a corresponding work for other animal groups was desirable (15-ii-1918). On 20-vi-1918 he presented his plans for a systematic card catalogue and asked Ris for advice in this matter. The following letter was written on 31-xii-1918 after the armistice: Schmidt described how he was able to observe and collect dragonflies under wartime conditions and mentioned his injury in June 1918. He was now occupying himself with chemical practicals in preparation for the state examination (a precondition for working in the school service).

Three letters bridge the interval between the second and third main phases and show the development of his professional orientation.

The first, written on 10-x-1920, stated that after passing the examination, the demanding preparatory service for a teaching position left Schmidt only time for a Sunday walk as recreation. The next letter was written two years later on 14-xii-1922 from Geisenheim, where Schmidt had been employed for 1 ½ years at the Agricultural College, a position that was not very suitable for freshwater biology. This letter also mentioned Schmidt's contact with Tillyard. The third one, written three years later on 23-xii-1925 reported on Schmidt's difficulties at Geisenheim and his efforts to find a new position, and also asked Ris to look for opportunities for him as an entomologist or phytopathologist. The first two letters also contain odonatological observations by Schmidt and others, which later appear in publications [Schmidt 1926a-c, 1927], their completion being mentioned in the third letter.

It is not possible here to reproduce in detail the contents of the 26 letters of the third phase. The starting point is the acceptance of the assignment to write the odonate part of a handbook on the fauna of Central Europe [Schmidt 1929], resulting from the death of the originally intended author, the Silesian Eduard Scholz (03-x-1926). Schmidt asked to be able to access on loan the material provided to the deceased for this task (30-x-1926) and later tried to obtain missing material for Ris from Scholz's widow, but finally asked Ris to contact her directly (30-iii-1927). Schmidt was more successful in his efforts to recover a set of specimens of the genus *Sapho* Selys, 1853 that Ris had loaned to le Roi from the latter's executor (15-xii-1926), after trying in vain to find them at the Museum Koenig in Bonn. Many letters refer to terminology, distinguishing characteristics, colour variations and distribution of dragonflies in Central Europe, questions in context with the manual [Schmidt 1929], others are related to a reliable differentiation of lestids from other Zygoptera, a question Schmidt had already raised in the first phase and the results of which he had published in Schmidt (1928). On 16-i-1928 he reported the results of his expeditions to Crete and Morocco and offered to ask Prof. Richard Hesse (1868-1944), who had been his substitute doctoral supervisor and chief in Bonn and was now the editor of the 'Zoologischer Anzeiger', whether he would take Ris' planned paper on African *Pseudagrion* Selys, 1876 [Ris 1936, completed by Schmidt]. We also learn of contacts with the odonatologists Rosenbohm (20-x-1926), Fraser and [E.B.] Williamson (24-xi-1926), Krüger (24-xii-1926), Morton, Sándor (Alexander) Pongrácz (1888-1945) and Valle (ii/iii-1927), as well as Wladislaw Eugeniusz

Mierzejewski (1882-1959; 30-iii-1927). He belatedly thanked Ris for the dedication of *Philogenia schmidtii* Ris, 1918 on 03-x-1926, because he had not noticed it before. We also find very personal notes, such as when he repeatedly thanked Ris for stamps sent for his father (e.g. 16-i-1928) or when he exhorted Ris not to despair of his ability to work, when he had made such excellent contributions to our knowledge of *Enallagma deserti* Selys, 1871 and *Aeshna subarctica* (24-i-1928). The last communication of this phase was a picture postcard from Hungary, written on 09-vi-1928, in which he reported his dragonfly observations there.

After that there was only one postcard from Berlin (01-i-1931), in which Schmidt announced the sending of three typewritten copies of his dragonfly bibliography [Schmidt 1933] and reported on his visit to the Berlin Zoological Museum, where he requested material for future study. But this break in the correspondence did not mean a gap in contact, since Ris' diary recorded a visit by Schmidt to Rheinau on a trip to Algeria in May 1930. This visit is echoed in greetings to the hostess, Ris' sister Elisabeth [to whom Schmidt dedicates the species *Pyrrhosoma elisabethae* Schmidt, 1948; Wildermuth & Weibel 2018] on that last postcard.

### **Schmidt, Ernst Waldemar (1859-1947)**

Father of Erich Schmidt; 5 letters, in German; 01-xii-1915 to 27-iii-1918

Schmidt sent letters by order of his son Erich Schmidt [Erich Schmidt was at the front in World War 1, and not always able to correspond]. Schmidt mailed his son's dissertation [Schmidt 1915] to Ris and added copies for Tillyard, Walker, Morton, Campion, Laidlaw, and [E.B.] Williamson with the request if Ris could send them to "enemy country and overseas" [translated from German]. On 03-viii-1916 Schmidt asked Ris if he received the Odonata that he sent, they were collected by his son in the [front] field. Further he stated that his son again collected Odonata and that a part of these were for Ris' collection after the war. On 28-vi-1917 Schmidt reported that his son found larvae and exuviae of *Lestes dryas* Kirby, 1890, and that the series of *Lestes* larvae is now complete.

### **Schmidt, M. [no biographical data available]**

German entomologist [?]; at that time employed at the Zoological Museum in Hamburg; 1 letter, in German; 22-iv-1931

Schmidt wrote to Elisabeth Ris after the death of her brother. He affirmed the restitution of loaned specimens from the Zoological Museum in Hamburg, and stated that three vials with larvae from "German South West Africa" [Namibia], loaned on 30-ix-1913, were still missing.

### **Schmidt, Margarethe (1892-?)**

Sister of Erich Schmidt, later Mrs. Schippers (Asahina & Heymer 1970); 1 letter, in German; 11-x-1917

Schmidt sent this message in the name of her brother Erich Schmidt [see also Ernst Schmidt] who was at the front again. She wrote that her brother had not yet identified

the Russian *Leucorrhinia* but it was a male; he stated that he needed further specimens for comparison. He would also try to organize eastern *Calopteryx splendens* for Ris.

### **Schoenemund, Eduard [no biographical data available]**

German entomologist; 1 letter, typewritten, in German; 10-v-1925

Schoenemund stated that he was working on an identification key for the Plecoptera which should be published. He asked Ris for help in some details and requested some specimens.

### **Scholz, Eduard Joseph Rudolf (1873-1926)**

Silesian-born [Wrocław, today Poland] entomologist; 6 letters, in German; 06-xi-1913 to 04-v-1926

The letters from 1913 were sent from Königshütte [Chorzów, Poland] and those of 1926 from the "Oberschlesisches Museum für Naturkunde" [Upper Silesian Museum of Natural History] in Oppeln [Opole, Poland]. On 06-xi-1913 Scholz noted that the melanotic specimen of *Libellula quadrimaculata* Linnaeus, 1758 [= *L. quadrimaculata* var. *dittrichi* Scholz, 1902] had been deposited at the University Breslau [Wrocław, Poland, Museum of Natural History]. Due to switching the drawer several times the specimen was damaged [currently MS has not found a corresponding specimen among photographs, so it is likely lost]. But Scholz stated that he would try to capture specimens for Ris. In return he requested specimens of *Aeshna borealis* [jun. syn. of *Aeshna caerulea*] for the collection of the Zoological Museum Breslau which Ris sent immediately because only five days later, on 11-xi-1913, Scholz thanked Ris for the specimens. Further, Scholz stated in this letter that he would try to capture *Calopteryx splendens*, and *Libellula quadrimaculata* [var. *dittrichi*] for Ris. On 16-iii-1926 Scholz wrote that he had to submit a manuscript by 01-vi-1926 and that he still needs some material to illustrate, Scholz asked if Ris had any suggestion as to where he could get specimens of *Calopteryx* [*splendens*] *ancilla*, *Orthetrum albistylum* (Selys, 1848) and "*Lestes* [*Sympecma*] *paedisca*". Scholz also requested larvae from Ris for illustrating. On 28-iv-1926 Scholz noted that he had to abandon the idea of illustrating Odonata wings for his publication because he had insufficient time. Therefore, photographs by Ris of Odonata wings were welcome. The last letter, dated 04-v-1926, dealt with *Somatochlora arctica*: Scholz studied his collection from 1911/1912 again and found a female and two males captured by him at his "old localities" [translated from German].

### **Schouteden, Henri Eugene Alphonse Hubert (1881-1972)**

Belgian biologist, then director of the "Musée du Congo Belge" in Tervuren, Belgium; 1 letter, in French; 07-iii-1931

Schouteden expressed his condolences to Victor Ris and requested the return of loaned specimens. [A handwritten note, perhaps by Victor Ris, stated that there were 191 specimens.]

### **de Selys Longchamps, Michel Edmond (1813-1900)**

Belgian entomologist, naturalist, and politician, a member of the Belgian Senate; 42 letters, in French; 28-xii-1884 to 11-viii-1899

Selys generally responded very promptly to letters from Ris, which he always received with great pleasure. It was consequently Ris who determined the tempo of the exchanges, his letters being sometimes punctuated by long silences (often more than a year). The correspondence became more extensive from 1895, while the topics took on a wider geographical dimension than simply Switzerland (letters from 1884 to 1886) or Europe (from 1886 to 1894).

Apparently Ris [still a high school student, almost 19 years old] asked in his first letter to Selys the distinction between "*vulgata*" [*Sympetrum vulgatum*] and "*striolata*" [*Sympetrum striolatum*]. Perhaps Selys Longchamps (1884) provoked this question. In his first letter Selys discussed the genus *Diplax* Burmeister, 1839, in which *S. striolatum*, and *S. vulgatum* were then placed, and which he confused them as two forms of the same species. We learn from Selys' letters to Ris, that Gustav Schoch (1833-1899) mentioned the young Ris several times in his letters to Selys in 1885. Selys did not fail in his letters to Ris to ask him to greet his Zurich "teacher". Selys encouraged Ris from his first missive (28-xii-1894) to continue his odonatological studies, and that he [Selys] was interested in some species from Switzerland that are difficult to find. These are *Cordulia arctica*, *C. alpestris*, *Agrion speciosum*, and *Aeshna borealis* [= *Somatochlora arctica*, *S. alpestris*, *Nehalennia speciosa*, and *Aeshna caerulea*].

Almost a year later, Ris contacted Selys again to help him verify a specimen that turned out to be *Anax ephippiger*. Selys confirmed in his answer on 24-xi-1885 the list of Swiss species which interested him for his collection, and added *Anax parthenope*. He offered Ris duplicates of European Odonata, as well as articles on these insects.

From then on and over the course of his letters, Selys gradually provided odonatological training for the young Swiss entomologist. Selys advised Ris on the precautions necessary for the transport abroad of collection specimens, and introduced him to his network of odonatologists.

In March 1886 Ris sent his synthesis on the Odonata of Switzerland (Ris 1885) to Selys, and in his letter on 10-iii-1886 Selys responded with remarks on the biogeography. Although very busy with his meetings in the Senate, Selys had just completed his revision of the Synopsis des Agrionines which was printed a few months later [Selys Longchamps 1886], and Selys planned to resume his correspondence with his friends like McLachlan, and Albarda. Further, Selys wrote about his work on the "Odonates de l'Asie Mineure" [Selys Longchamps 1887] where he planned to separate "*striolata*", and "*vulgata*" as two distinct species. Selys announced to Ris on 12-vi-1886, that he had prepared an important consignment of specimens from various places in Europe. As an exchange Selys requested further species of Swiss Odonata such as *Epithea bimaculata*, and *Cordulegaster bidentatus* [*bidentata*] to add to his collection. On 11-xii-1886 Selys acknowledged the receipt of a parcel of Odonates from Ris. Apparently Ris requested some specimens to exchange, including [*Selysiothemis nigra*], which was only known from a single specimen described from Terracina, Italy by Vander Linden (1825). Subsequent correspondence in 1887 (21-ix-1887) and 1888 (05-xii-1888) contains general-



ly comments on the status, phenology or monitoring of species like *Coenagrion scitulum*, *Cordulegaster bidentata*, *Somatochlora alpestris*, and *Erythromma viridulum*.

Selys also wrote about his friend McLachlan's illness. Note that it was exceptional for Selys to talk about health concerns. The letter on 05-xii-1888 was the only one in which Selys wrote briefly of his personal worries on this matter. On the contrary Selys regularly proclaimed his good health despite of his advancing age. Selys wrote on 18-vi-1891: "Ma santé reste bonne - mais mon âge est mauvais (78 ans!). Il ne me reste pas assez de temps devant moi pour terminer avant de mourir l'étude de toute les matériaux que je possède" ["My health remains good – but my age is bad (78!). I don't have enough time left to finish studying all the materials I have before I die"].

There was a break in the correspondence during the period in which Ris finished his doctoral thesis, and after that went on to a trip to Asia. But in a letter written on 5-x-1891 Selys invited Ris to visit him in Belgium. Selys also mentioned that he had bad news from his good friend Hermann August Hagen (1817-1893) who had been stricken with paralysis for almost a year and had never recovered. Selys recalled a meeting with him, which took place in Paris in 1840. Hagen had come there to further his medical studies, and since then their relationship had remained close. Selys wrote to Ris: "Je ne sais pourquoi je m'imagine que vous devez être un autre Hagen. Il y a analogie entre votre situation et celle par où il a débuté. Malheureusement à mon âge (78 ans!) je n'ai aucune chance d'avoir satisfaction de vous voir arriver a point élevé que votre vocation permet pour l'avenir" ["I don't know why I imagine you will become another Hagen. There is an analogy between your situation and the way in which he had begun. Unfortunately, at my age (78!) I have no chance of having the satisfaction of seeing you attain the high point that your dedication promises for the future"]. We learn from a letter of 26-x-1891 that a meeting with Ris was decided on 2-xi-1891 in Liège, where Selys' Odonata collection was located. The other zoological collections were at Longchamps, a chateau set in parkland with a pond and streams, which Selys always described with a capital letter "la Campagne" [the Countryside], his country estate located half an hour from Liège.

On 28-xii-1894 Selys acknowledged that he received collections sent by Ris, mainly of Gomphines, notably from Switzerland, China, and Argentina [the specimens arrived at Liège on 25-xii-1894 (Caulier-Mathy & Haesenn-Peremans 2008: 1294)]. Selys wrote in his letter on 17-i-1895 that he wishes to draw them, and that he cannot return his specimens to Ris before February of the following year.

Selys apparently was increasingly oppressed by his political obligations and his activities in the Senate which prevented him from advancing his scientific work. On 10-viii-1895 Selys mentioned that he did not know when he would be able to work on dragonflies again. In the same letter Selys wrote that he received Calvert at his home to consult Selys' collections [Calvert's visit took place from 26 to 30-vii-1895 (Caulier-Mathy & Haesenn-Peremans 2008: 1305-1306)]. Subsequently Calvert went to meet Martin at Le Blanc. Calvert examined drawings of *Anax parthenope* and *Anax julius* sent by Ris at the request of Selys. The conclusion was that they are indeed two different species – it took more than 120 years for this idea to be revisited (Kalkman & Proess 2015, Onishko et al. 2023).

Selys' letter on 15-viii-1896 addressed an outstanding question which both had consid-



ered. It started from the ... "so important question of the [*Selysiotthemis nigra*] [(Vander Linden, 1825)] and the [*Urothemis advena*] [Selys, 1878]" [translated from French] which Ris had earlier posed to Selys. On 13-ix-1896 Selys wrote that he compared the venation of the male "*nigra*" from Terracina, and the female "*advena*" from Catalonia, Spain. Selys noted that that he [Ris] was correct: "It is indeed the male *nigra* that you described from Hamburg, and I also think that the female according to your description is *advena* (the female of *nigra*?)" ["... c'est bien la *nigra* mâle que vous avez décrite à Hambourg et je pense aussi que la femelle d'après votre description est aussi l'*advena* (femelle de *nigra*?)". Indeed, as finally resolved by Ris (1897), he had visited the Museum of Natural History in Hamburg in July 1896, and had spotted in a series of specimens collected at Maralbachi [Maralbexi], China which reminded him of the type of the *Libellula (Urothemis) nigra* which he had seen five years earlier [December 1891] in Selys' collection. Selys attached to his letter on 13-ix-1896 a sketch of the forewing of the type of "*Macrodiplax? nigra*" (Fig. 22). Consequently, the conspecificity of the two taxa was established, but the genus remained unnamed. According to Selys' letter on 30-ix-1896 Ris wished to dedicate the new genus to Selys – there was a problem with *Selysia*, as this was preoccupied by *Selysia Cogniaux*, 1881 (03-x-1896), a genus of Cucurbitaceae, and moreover although nomenclatorial rules do not proscribe the formation of zoological and botanical homonyms, that name irritated Selys. He wrote with a touch of humor "My name of *Selysia* would have been more appropriate ... among dragonflies than among Cucumbers, Gherkins, Pumpkins and Gourds! ... I only eat melons and Watermelons" (13-x-1896) ["... mon nom de *Selysia* eut été plus à sa place ... parmi les Libellules qu'au milieu des Concombre, Cornichons, des Potirons et des Coloquintes! ... je ne mange que les melons et les Pastèques"]. *Selysius* Bonaparte, 1841 was also discussed but that name was already preoccupied by a bat genus. Thus, the name *Selysiotthemis* was finally fixed on by Ris (Fig. 23), and for his part, Selys undertook to work on the group of *Urothemis* Brauer, 1868, and planned to add a "Causerie" [Selys Longchamps 1897] which would complete the article prepared by Ris [Ris 1897] (25-x-1896). Selys wrote on 22-xi-1896: "I will be happy with this simultaneous publication noting the brotherhood of the flourishing young entomologist and the old man in his declining years" [translated from French].



Fig. 22: Illustration of the wing of the type of »*Macrodiplax ? [Selysiotthemis] nigra*, Vander Linden [1825]«. Sent to Ris by Selys on 13-ix-1896.

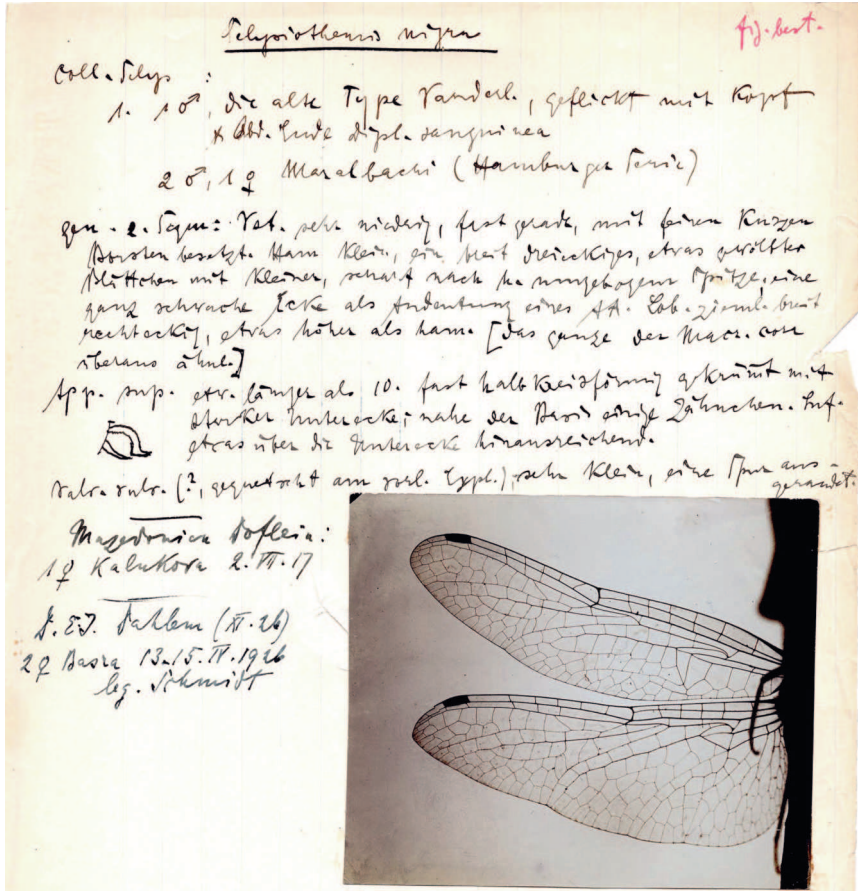


Fig. 23: Species account of *Selysiothemis nigra* extracted from Ris' mss, including a sketch of the male appendages in lateral view, and a photograph of the wings. Ris stated that the old type of Vander Linden was "... repaired with a head and abdomen of *Diplax* [*Sympetrum*] *sanguinea* [(Müller, 1764)]" [translated from German].

Selys drew up a list of the odonatologists that he thought to be important at that time, with Calvert (whom Selys thought could become the "leader of Odonatologists in North America"), Förster, Martin, McLachlan, as well as Ris (19-xi-1898). Selys again invited Ris to meet him in Belgium as time was running out – Selys recalled that he was now 85 ½ years old.

In the last letters we learn that Ris visited Liège again on 23-vi-1899 [the visit lasted four days, Ris left Liège on 27-vi-1899 (Caulier-Mathy & Haesenn-Peremans 2008: 1383)]. Selys promised to send five boxes of Odonates chosen by Ris during his visit to Liège in June [1899]; it contained 136 specimens in total. But the dispatch was post-

poned by Selys for several times due to “boring” trips to Brussels for the Senate. The last piece of correspondence is a simple letter card bearing the following message: “Monsieur et cher Collègue, Je viens d'expédier votre Caisse. Votre tout dévoué. Edm. de Selys Longchamps, en hâte” [Sir and dear Colleague, I have just despatched your box. Your ever devoted Edm. de Selys Longchamps, in haste]. The termination of this correspondence seems to end quite abruptly, a little as if Selys had completed his mission which looks like ensuring his succession.

### de Selys Longchamps, Walthère (1846-1912)

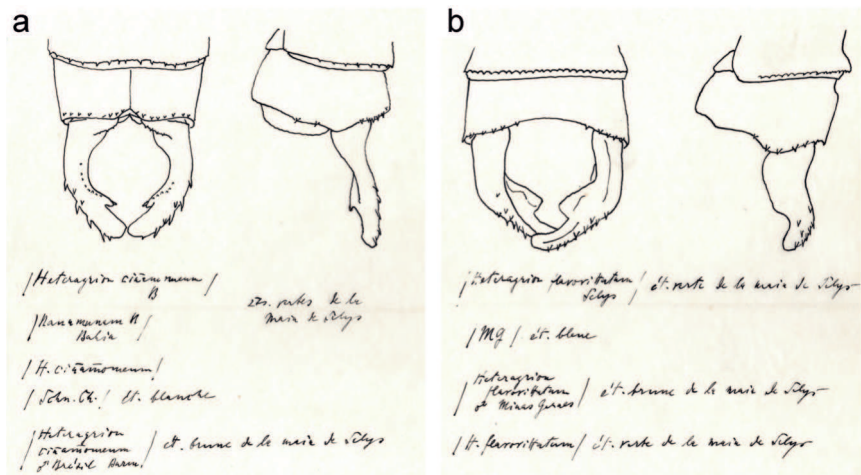
Belgian senator, son of M.E. de Selys Longchamps; 3 letters, in French; 02-iii-1901, 21-iii-1901, and 21-iii-1901

Selys asked Ris if he would consider the editing of the Odonata collection of his dead father, especially the Libellulidae. He stated that Martin and Förster already agreed to work on the collection. Further Selys noted that Ris could keep duplicates if the species are represented by many specimens.

### Séverin, Guillaume [Wilhelm Peter Robert] (1862-1938)

Dutch illustrator, and entomologist, employed as conservator at the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences in Brussels; 1 letter, in French; 19-xi-1916

Séverin sent illustrations of male appendages of seven *Heteragrion* Selys, 1862 species (figs. 24a-b; *H. flavovittatum* Selys, 1862, *H. cinnamomeum* Hagen in Selys, 1862, *H. erythrogastrum* Selys, 1886, *H. chrysops* Hagen in Selys, 1862, *H. aequatoriale* Selys, 1886, *H. majus* Selys, 1886, *H. aurantiacum* Selys, 1862) to Ris. The price for these il-



Figs. 24a-b: Examples of Severin's illustrations of male appendages of *Heteragrion* species held in Selys' collection: (a) *H. cinnamomeum*, and (b) *H. flavovittatum*. Sent to Ris on 19-xi-1916.

illustrations was 35 francs. Séverin was not able to make illustrations of *H. ovatum* Selys [nomen nudum], *H. triangulare* Hagen in Selys, 1862 and *H. amazonicum* Selys, 1886 [jun. syn. of *H. aurantiacum*] because the males were lacking, of *H. ochraceum* Hagen in Selys, 1862 and *H. dorsale* Selys, 1862 because they were damaged and of *H. obsoletum* Selys, 1886 and *H. macilentum* Hagen in Selys, 1862 [jun. syn. of *H. cinnamomeum*] because Förster had borrowed them for examination and had not returned them after more than ten years.

### **Shiraki, Tokuichi (1882-1970)**

Japanese entomologist, at that time employed at the Entomological Laboratory of the Taihoku University, Formosa [Taiwan]; 2 letters, typewritten, in English; 11-ix-1928, and 01-ii-1929

Shiraki visited Switzerland in 1928 and met Ris. Subsequently he acknowledged Ris for providing literature.

### **Silfvenius [since 1906 Siltala], Antti Johannes (1878-1910)**

Finnish entomologist, Trichoptera specialist, Docent of Zoology at the University of Helsinki, Finland; 1 letter, in German; 23-xi-1909 [arrival postmark »Rheinau«]

Silfvenius explained to Ris that he worked on oviposition in Trichoptera and therefore he requested Ris (1905).

### **Sjöstedt, Bror Yngve (1866-1948)**

Swedish entomologist, employed as professor, and curator at the Swedish Museum of Natural History Stockholm; 26 letters, some typewritten, in German; 13-ii-1926 to 28-viii-1930, and 23-ii-1931, 04-iii-1931, and 09-iv-1931

Sjöstedt sent photographs of Odonata and specimens for examination to Ris. They discussed especially Calopterygidae. On 05-vi-1926 Sjöstedt wrote about meeting Ris in Zurich and asked about a preliminary Systematic list of Odonata on which Ris was apparently working. Later in the year Ris sent a Systematic list of Calopterygidae to Sjöstedt. According to a letter dated 20-vii-1926 Ris suggested the name *anderssoni* for an undescribed Chinese *Neurobasis* Selys, 1853 and Sjöstedt answered that he would follow this [cf. Sjöstedt 1926].

On 05-ii-1927 Sjöstedt said that he would like to have a specimen of the new *Chlorogomphus* Selys, 1854 [*C. papilio* Ris, 1927] for his exhibition. There was a showcase called "The giants of the Insects" containing "*Megaloprepus coerulatus* [(Drury, 1782)] with the largest wings, *Petalura ingentissima* [Tillyard, 1908] as the strongest dragonfly, and *Mecistogaster lucretia* [(Drury, 1773)] as the longest one. The new *Chlorogomphus* would be the one with the largest wing surface" [translated from German].

In 1927 Sjöstedt discovered a corduliid in a collection from the Amazon River ("Coll. Roman, 2nd expedition") which he considered to be new. On 16-2-1927 Sjöstedt noted that it is "... between *Aeschnosoma* [Selys, 1870] and *Libellulosoma* [Martin, 1907]"



[translated from German] and he called it "*Cordulicromia*". Additionally, he sent a sketch of the male appendages to Ris and on 28-ii-1927 he mailed him the description of the genus (Fig. 25). There is a handwritten note by Ris on the backside of the sketch stating "Kirby Cat.: *elegans* Type des Gen." [= *Aeschnosoma elegans*]. According to a letter dated 07-iii-1927 Ris sent a photograph of the wings of *Aeschnosoma forcipula* Hagen, 1871 to Sjöstedt and he [Sjöstedt] answered that this gave him a new view of the genus and apparently revised his opinion about erecting a new genus and species. On 17-iii-1927 Sjöstedt posted a "cotype" of *Macromia urania* Ris, 1916 to Ris for his collection.

*Abstrakt*

Gen. Cordulicromia n.

Steht zwischen Aeschnosoma aus Südamerika und Libellulasma aus Madagaskar<sup>1)</sup>. Das Submedianraum (cu) der Hinterflügel <sup>nicht</sup> wie bei Aeschnosoma leer sondern wie bei Libellulasma mit 1 Querader versehen. Die Antennodalen der Vorderflügel zahlreich wie bei Aeschnosoma mehr als 10 (hier 15-17) nicht weniger als 10 wie bei Libellulasma. Augenrath wie bei Aeschnosoma lang nicht sehr kurz wie bei Libellulasma <sup>poona</sup> Gattung<sup>2)</sup>. Die oberen Maxillenhäute unten mit einem langen Borst versehen. Die Innenseite des Säckchens der Hinterflügel fast völlig (nicht ganz) in der Verlängerung des Areolus.

\*) Peristigium kleiner als bei diesen Gattungen.

1) Cf. Mutin, Ess. Selys Condul. p. 57-60.

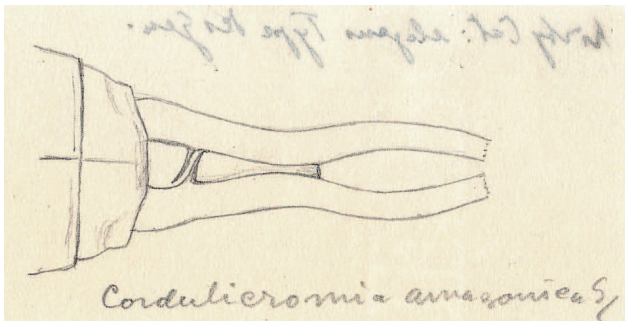


Fig. 25: Description and sketch of the appendages of *Cordulicromia* [= *Aeschnosoma elegans*] by Sjöstedt. Sent to Ris on 16-ii-1927, and 28-ii-1927.



Three letters were written after Ris' death. In the first, written on 23-ii-1931, Sjöstedt expressed his condolences to Ris' mother Maria Ris-Schmid. The other letters were sent to Ris' sister Elisabeth Ris regarding the return of borrowed Odonata specimens from the Swedish Museum of Natural History Stockholm.

### **Sömme, Sven (1904-1961)**

Norwegian zoologist; 6 letters, one typewritten, in German; 28-ii-1927 to 28-i-1931

Sömme wrote the first letter as a student at the University Oslo, Norway. In this letter Sömme noted that he just started to study Odonata and asked if Ris could send him publications. On 02-x-1929 Sömme stated that he searched for *Aeshna subarctica* in Norway since Ris (1927a) and that he found four specimens in the collection of the Zoological Museum Oslo. They had been captured in 1887 and July 1889 at Modum, Norway, around 45 km west of Oslo by Wilhem Maribo Schøyen. Sömme asked Ris for verification and noted that he can keep one specimen for his collection. The last letter, written on 28-i-1931, was probably received after Ris' death.

### **Standfuss, Maximilian Rudolph (1854-1917)**

German-Swiss entomologist born in Schreiberhau [at that time Silesia, today Szklarska Poręba, Poland]; 1 letter, in German; 13-viii-1913

Standfuss reported on the oviposition of *Aeshna caerulea*. He observed that they only laid eggs in stagnant peat ponds.

### **Steck, Theodor (1857-1937)**

Swiss entomologist; 4 letters, in German; 11-xii-1913 to 05-vi-1928

The letters concern an exchange of publications.

### **Stoll, Otto (1849-1922)**

Swiss medic, ethnologist, and entomologist, employed as conservator at the Zoological Museum of the University Zurich from 1898-1919; 1 letter, in German; 21-viii-1912

The letter concerns the exchange of publications.

### **Süffert, Fritz (1891-1945)**

German entomologist; 3 letters, typewritten, in German; 21-iv-1928, 08-ix-1928, and 05-x-1928

The letters deal with Lepidoptera, e.g. the exchange of cocoons and photographs.

### **Tarnuzzer, Christian (1860-1925)**

Swiss teacher, and naturalist; 1 letter, in German; 31-viii-1921

Tarnuzzer reported a swarm of migrating dragonflies to Ris. It was seen on the afternoon of 12-vii-[1921] at St. Moritz, Switzerland. Ris identified the specimens as *Sympetrum striolatum*.

### **Thomann, Hans (1874-1959)**

Swiss entomologist; 3 letters, in German; 06-x-1927, 15-viii-1928, and 28-viii-1928

Thomann was member of the Swiss Entomological Society and on 06-x-1927 he noted that he regretted that Ris could not be present at the annual meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland. Further content is about Lepidoptera, e.g. cocoons and photographs.

### **Tillyard, Robert John (1881-1937)**

English-Australian entomologist, and geologist; 102 letters, some typewritten, in English; 11-xii-1907 to 19-vii-1928

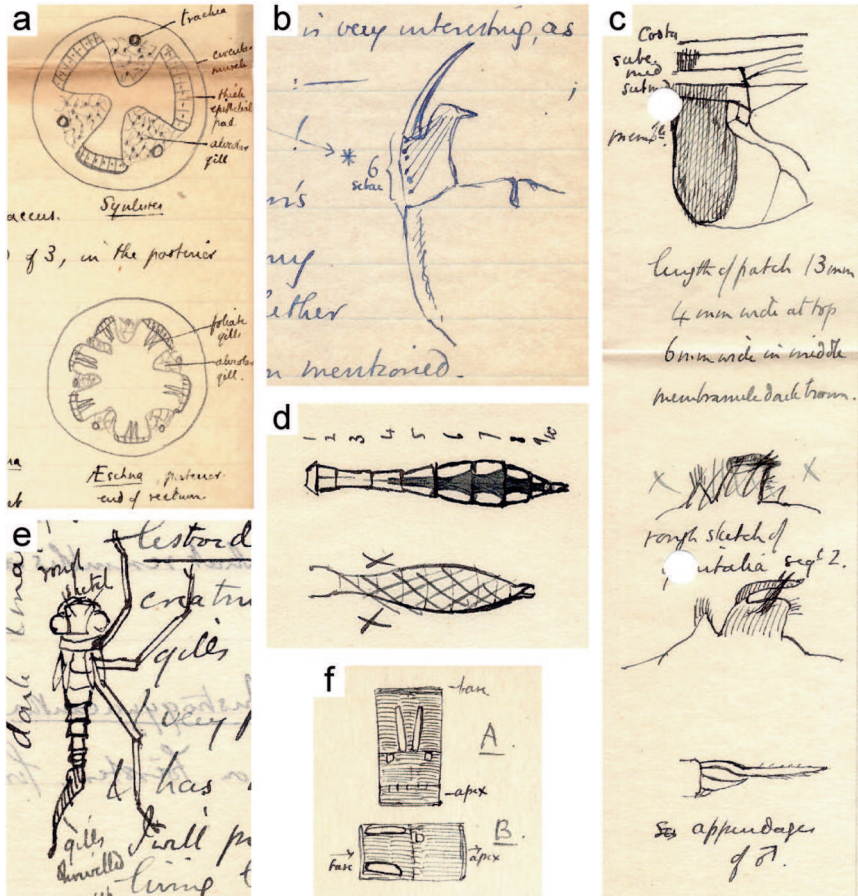
Tillyard and Ris exchanged, besides publications and specimens, very detailed expertise – often the letters by Tillyard include small sketches to illustrate topics discussed (Figs. 26a-f). Many letters are about larvae, especially the gizzard and trachea, and about the evolution of the anal loop and the wing venation. Moreover, Tillyard developed charts of classification of Odonata and both exchanged opinions about Phylogeny and Zoogeography, and of course identification of species, mostly Australian species. A few paragraphs deal with Australian Coleoptera and Neuroptera.

Tillyard noted on 10-i-1911 about his relationship to Ris:

“... I feel quite unable ever to thank you sufficiently or to make an adequate return for all your kindness and help. To [René] Martin I owe the elements of Odonatology; but to you alone the fascinating peeps into the deeper mysteries, which the genius of your letters yields. I have sometimes thought that I would treasure those letters & publish them one day when your work may be over, but I think they are too sacred to me even for that. To me you are Gamaliel, the teacher; & I feel you to be the man with the truly great insight into Nature's Plan, which is vouchsafed to but few. Darwin had it, but I doubt if either Wallace or Bateson [Bates] have it.”

Tillyard invited Ris to visit Australia in 1914. On 25-viii-1912 Tillyard stated that the Federal Government pays the cost of 250 passages because of the conference of the “British Association for the advancement of Science” in Australia – “We hope that it might be possible for you to be nominated as a delegator or representative for some Swiss or German Society.” According to a letter written on 02-i-1913 Ris rejected the offer and it was not until summer 1926 that they met each other, when Tillyard visited Ris in Rheinau. Afterwards he noted on 30-viii-1926 “I trust that our personal contact has turned our long scientific acquaintanceship into a solid friendship.”

Regarding contact with other entomologists Tillyard noted on 01-iii-1908 that Krüger, Karsch and Förster “... all seem to have selfish habits such as not corresponding or answering letters.” Tillyard made comments on Förster in several letters. On 14-iii-1908 Tillyard wrote “I wish you could tell me more about your ‘bête noir’ Prof. Förster.” Concerning Förster's publications Tillyard commented “It seems to me that he is trying to create types simply for the fun of the thing, or else to enhance the value of his own collection! At any rate, who has a right to make a new species of a single ♀ so closely allied to a common & variable species like *A. [Austroargiolestes] ictromelas* [(Selys, 1862)]?” [Tillyard talked about *Austroargiolestes amabilis* (Förster, 1899) which Tillyard considered to be a jun. syn. of *A. ictromelas*]. Further Tillyard stated that Martin told to him that Förster “never answers letters sent to him” and Tillyard also sent publications



Figs. 26a-f: Compilation of sketches included in the letters sent by Tillyard to Ris: (a) Transverse section of the larval rectum of *Synlestes* spec. Selys, 1869 and *Aeshna* spec. Fabricius, 1775 (24-v-1914); (b) labium of an exuvia of *Gynacantha rosenbergi* Brauer, 1867 (09-v-1910); (c) wingbase, and genitalia and anal appendages of a *Tramea* spec. Hagen, 1861, provisionally named *Tramea purpurea* (29-iii-1909); (d) abdomen of *Austrothemis nigrescens* (Martin, 1901; 30-i-1909); (e) exuvia of *Diphlebia lestoides* (Selys, 1853; 12-xi-1908); (f) colour pattern of abdominal segments 1-8 of the female "Petalia" [*Austropetalia patricia*, see also René Martin], A = dorsal, B = lateral (29-iii-1909).

to Förster and never got a reply – "... this exceedingly rude man has not answered any of my letters (...) it seems to me the duty of a scientist to keep in touch with his co-workers" (10-i-1909). As a postscript on 09-vi-1910 Tillyard added "My Scotch friend K.J. Morton says 'if Foerster does the *Agrionidae* we shall be left in a worse muddle than before' (...) Morton doesn't think much of Foerster; neither do I."

Apparently, his relationship with Handlirsch was better. On 10-i-1921 Tillyard wrote "I was very grieved to learn that poor old Handlirsch is nearly starving in Vienna, so I have written him a nice letter and have sent him a parcel of food; if he gets that safely, my wife and I will continue to send similar parcels at intervals." In the same letter Tillyard reported that he visited [E.B.] Williamson, Kennedy, Calvert, Needham, John Henry Comstock (1849-1931) and Walker during his trip to the USA. Tillyard reported that he collected *Gomphus* larvae together with Needham and dissected the wing-sheaths – "... I was able to prove to him that, in all specimens examined, supposed Rs crosses both M1 and M2 from the very first (...) he was much to blame, and the effect these drawings have had on the minds of present-day Odonatists has been a most disastrously misleading one. I never saw a man so crest-fallen as when I demonstrated his error to him (...) So now you can throw away the supposed Rs of Anisoptera overboard." Seven years prior, on 26-i-1914, Tillyard strongly criticized Needham regarding his classification of the wing venation and noted "His paper was good up to a certain part, but about two-thirds of it is pure bluff (...) I honestly believe he never troubled to examine the trachiation of more than 3 or 4 Anisopterid types & one Zygopterid (*Lestes*) (...) It is essential to get to the TRUTH in all the details, before we accept a stereotyped system of naming of parts (...) I blame the spirit in which you, I, & everyone accepted Needham without testing his results, when the test lay ready to our hands." Tillyard added that he wrote a letter pointing out the errors to Needham but never got a reply. But despite these criticisms Tillyard stated that "With all its faults, it was the greatest step forward that has yet been taken in Odonatology" and he wrote to Ris "I beg of you ... please don't hail my paper with the delight that we all hailed Needham's."

Beside the main themes, namely the wing venation and larvae with respect to their gizzards, Tillyard noted some further odonatological topics and associated stories. On 01-iii-1908 he reported on his trip to Cooktown, Queensland, during which which was unfortunate because of rain all the time and furthermore Tillyard got dengue fever and was ill for a week. On the day before he left he had six hours of sunshine and collected 80 specimens including two new species – but while drying the specimens in his drying oven "Unluckily a cyclonic storm came up ... and a gust of wind caused the kerosene lamp to explode & before I could rescue anything all my specimens ... were reduced to a black oily charred mass." During this trip Tillyard collected male *Camacinia othello* Tillyard, 1908 and on 19-x-1908 he stated that he just corrected the proof of its description when "The very day ... a man came to me & said 'I've got 2 lovely dragonflies ... I'll sell them to you for 10 shillings' (...) they were a magnificent young male & a female of *C. othello*! (...) It was too late to incorporate the description of the ♀ in my paper."

Regarding the discussion about the correct spelling and meaning of *Aeshna*, Tillyard suggested on 05-vii-1908 that Fabricius derived the word from the Greek "αἰχμή" [Latin "cuspis", which means "tip" but also "spear"] "... which fits the long-bodied Aeshnidae with their darting glittering flight so well. I believe if his MSS turned up, that you would find *Aechma* written & that *Aeshna* ... was either a lapsus calami or a printer's error."

On 20-xi-1909 Tillyard explained to Ris how he found the larvae of *Petalura gigantea* Leach, 1815. He added a sketch (Fig. 27) and explained that the larvae live a long way down under the peat of the swamp and that they emerge through a hole of about ½ inch width. Tillyard opened three of these holes and found that they reach down "...



3-4 feet [about 90-120 cm] into solid damp earth & finally ended in cold clear water (...) isn't it a remarkably interesting discovery!"

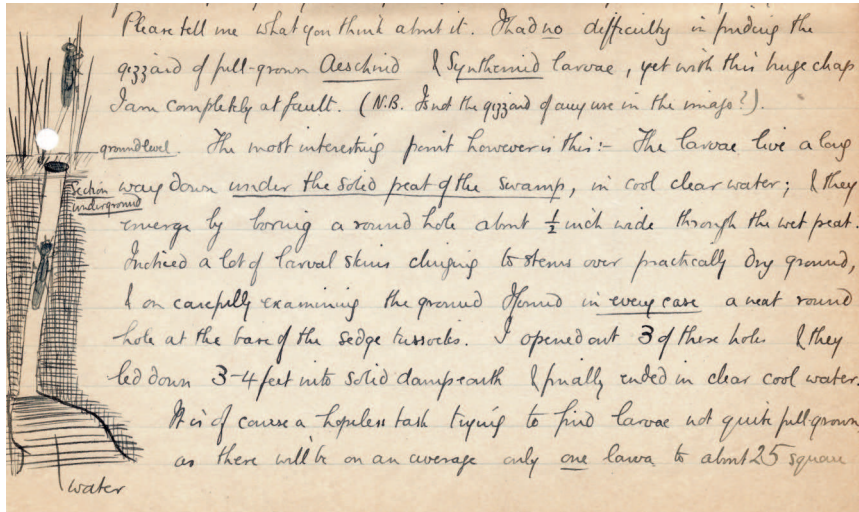


Fig. 27: Paragraph of the letter with the sketch where Tillyard explained how he found the larvae of *Petalura gigantea*. Sent to Ris on 20-xi-1909.

About the newly discovered *Diphlebia nymphoides* Tillyard, 1912 (Fig. 28) he wrote on 10-i-1911: "I took a wonderful new *Diphlebia* (*D. nymphoides* n. sp.) of a most brilliant royal blue colour – the loveliest d'fly I have ever seen, I think. I once saw 7 of these placed at equal intervals of almost a foot along a horizontal bough overhanging a clear ... mountain stream; & I think that was a glorious sight, enough to make the hardest atheist believe in a God."



Fig. 28: *Diphlebia nymphoides*, male, Australia, New South Wales, Kanangra-Boyd National Park, 31-xii-2014 – Tillyard stated this to be the "... the loveliest d'fly I [Tillyard] have ever seen" (10-i-1911). Photo: Reiner Richter.



With regards to new species Tillyard wrote a poem which he enclosed handwritten to a letter on 02-vi-1912. He added that it "... is a 'skit' on the desire of many entomologists to 'create' new species on the slightest pretext". On 30-vi-1912 Tillyard sent the printed form from the school magazine [likely of the Sidney Grammar, where Tillyard was finishing his teaching career] (Fig. 29).

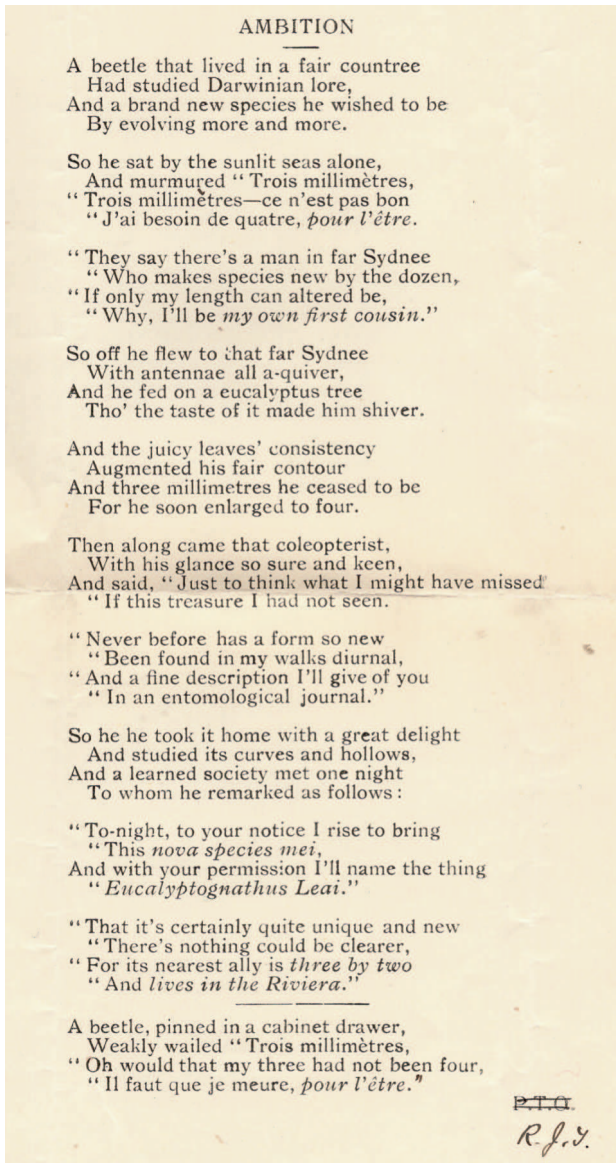


Fig. 29: Poem by Tillyard, sent to Ris on 30-vi-1912.

Apparently Tillyard did not collect extensively. On 10-xi-1912 he shipped 96 specimens to Ris and noted "I am very sorry that I have so few to send, but you know that I have a horror of taking huge catches. If I get a dozen of a species, I begin to think that I am exterminating it!" In the same letter Tillyard reported that his "larva X" [he gave this name to the larva and used it in several letters] emerged – it was *Austrocordulia refracta* Tillyard, 1909. Tillyard had reared this larva since he captured it five years ago during his trip to Cooktown where he collected the type specimens as well.

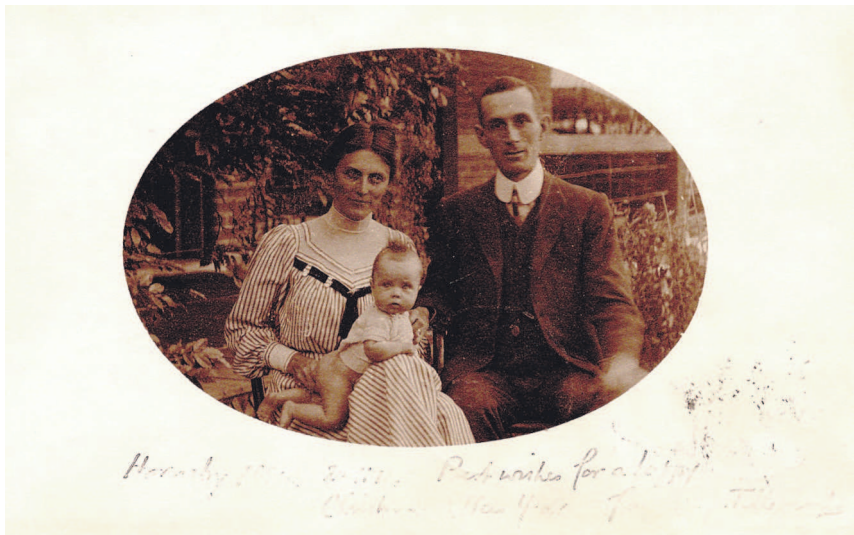
A few letters deal with Selys' collection in Brussels and the corresponding monographs. On 03-vii-1910 Tillyard noted "It seems to me that the Selysian Gomphinae & Agrionidae are not going to be done in a hurry. I wish I could get over to Europe for a year & do them; but I suppose there is no payment attached to this job ..." and some years later on 17-iii-1914 Tillyard wrote that he would like to work on the Calopterygidae of Selys. However, almost ten years later Tillyard worked on Selys' "Gomphées fissilabiés" [Cordulegastriidae, and Chlorogomphidae]. Therefore, he got a shipment of specimens from Brussels but unfortunately two drawers were lost when the "S.S. Wiltshire" was wrecked near Auckland, New Zealand [Rosalie Bay, Great Barrier Island] in 1922. Tillyard noted that this loss included type specimens of five species of *Cordulegaster* and of *Chlorogomphus magnificus* Selys, 1854 (24-iv-1923). On 26-vii-1926 Tillyard stated that he had invited Fraser as co-author for the "Gomphées fissilabiés" [cf. Fraser 1929]. He wrote that they studied together the material in Brussels and in Paris where they were "... incidentally finding in it a lost type of a rare species of *Cordulegaster* (...) We also rediscovered the lost type of *Phyllopetalia apicalis* Sel. [Selys, 1858], a male without either abdomen or head; but we failed to find Rambur's type of *Phenes raptor* [Rambur, 1842], which is said also to be in Paris."

Concerning Ris' monographs on the Libellulidae [Ris 1909-1919] Tillyard remarked several times that he wished that they were written in French or English. But Tillyard started to learn German and on 18-viii-1913 he stated "I have been learning German, very slowly, but can manage to make cut a good part of a scientific paper by now."

Tillyard remarked on the preparation of his book "The biology of dragonflies" [Tillyard 1917]. On 27-x-1913 he stated that "One great disadvantage will be the fact of plates. I am allowed to spend £ 25 only on illustrations; anything extra I must pay for myself. Unfortunately, my financial situation is very bad (...) I hope to be able to save up enough to pay for a coloured plate and some extra diagrams, for a biological work can scarcely be a success unless it is well illustrated." Subsequently his mother offered to pay for two plates (20-i-1914) but on 17-iii-1914 Tillyard wrote to Ris, that he [Tillyard] had send illustrations to the editor Arthur Everett Shipley (1861-1927) and he was so excited that he doubled the grant for illustrations – thus there is enough space to publish everything he [Tillyard] wants to. Tillyard had the idea of making the colour plates by using the real wings and painting the body with water-colours (letters on 20-xii-1914, and 07-ii-1915). On 28-viii-1915 Tillyard stated that he submitted the manuscript to the editor: "Owing to the chance of German submarines sinking the result of nearly 3 years work while on its way home, I divided the book into 3 parts (...) These were sent home in 3 separate mail-steamers. I have just heard that the MS, which was sent at first, arrived safely, and I trust that the other two consignments will do the same."

World War 1 was topic of several letters. Tillyard expressed strong pro war opinions – for example he commented "... even if it takes us ten years, we shall not stop until the Kaiser and his whole Devilish scheme of "Kultur" are utterly destroyed (...) I pray that God may heal my poor body & make me strong enough to go and fight for my beloved England ..." (01-xi-1914) [Tillyard had been seriously injured in a railway accident in 1914]. Apparently, Louis Albert Péringuey (1855-1924) in Cape Town, South Africa commented negatively on Ris, presumably as a consequence of the war. On 14-v-1918 Tillyard noted that Péringuey wrote "unbelievable things about you, I was grieved to the heart, and never for one moment did I believe that you had thrown up your neutrality and gone over to the other side. I wrote very strongly to him about you, and championed you as one of the most honourable men I have ever known."

Tillyard's letters also included many private topics during the years of their correspondence. He mailed photographs of his family (Fig. 30) and noted the births of his daughters, regarding his first daughter he wrote on 03-vii-1910 "Do not think I had forgotten about the specimens I promised you. The truth is that I had things even more interesting than Odonata to think about. On June 20th my wife gave birth to a dear little daughter (...) Later on she will I hope cut a few teeth & thus qualify for inclusion in the Odon(t)ata!!" Also, Tillyard often noted his "poor health" due to painful rheumatism which causes that he sometimes was "unable to walk without assistance" (15-ix-1913). On 27-ii-1911 Tillyard wrote "I think I am improving, but I am very sere & utterly weary of life, I ought ... to give up teaching & go into a sanatorium for 12 months. But this is quite behind my means." And in November 1913 again Tillyard stated that "... I cannot send you good



**Fig. 30:** Postcard with a photograph of Tillyard, his wife Pattie (1880-1971), and his daughter Patience ("Pat"; 1910-1992), sent to Ris on 20-xi-1910 with "Best wishes for a happy Christmas & New Year". Photo: Unknown.

news of myself. Financial worries and several very severe attacks of illness have brought me very close to another complete breakdown ... For two weeks I have been invalid, mostly in bed, but in my spare time I have found great joy in studying the many larvae in my aquaria" and he added that "Professor Welsh is looking for a suspected tropical cause for my illness ...."

### **Titschack, Erich (1892-1978)**

German zoologist, at that time head of the Entomological Section of the Zoological Museum in Hamburg; 1 letter, typewritten, in German; 16-iii-1931

Titschack expressed his condolences to Victor Ris and requested the return of specimens which Ris had borrowed from the Zoological Museum. Additionally, he sent an overview of the material – the oldest loan is dated 30-ix-1913.

### **Toxopeus, Lambertus Johannes (1894-1951)**

Dutch entomologist, born in Tuban, Java, Indonesia; 3 letters, in German; 29-iv-1924, 20-i-1925, and 10-iii-1927

On 29-iv-1924 Toxopeus noted that Lieftinck would like to give a part of the collection of Odonata from Buru, Maluku, Indonesia to Ris for examination. The conditions he makes are: there must be a publication as "Fauna Buruana" in the journal "Treubia", types can be kept by the editor [Ris] but he must ensure that the collection will be preserved in a Museum after his death, and the "Rijksmuseum Leiden" [today Naturalis Biodiversity Center, Leiden] should be given preference. In 1927 Toxopeus gave a new address to Ris for returning the Zygoptera. Again, he noted that the editor [Ris] could keep the types as well as half of the other specimens. The returned material will be preserved at the "Rijksmuseum Leiden". Further Toxopeus reported on a lake on Buru "almost free from fish, where Odonates had sovereignty, where they whirr and cluster in hundreds of thousands. Many of the birds feed on them and their larvae – a beautiful black-brown coloured falcon captured them by crashing down from the tree to the water and a darter had its crop full of larvae" [translated from German].

### **Träger, Ludwig [no biographical data available]**

German [?] entomologist [lived at that time in Leipzig, Germany and was at least a member of the local Entomological Society]; 3 letters, in German; 09-ii-1893, 16-vi-1893, and 18-x-1893

Träger requested publications and Ris had sent them to him, including a determination table for the genus *Agrion* [*Coenagrion* Kirby, 1890].

### **Turner, Gilbert [no biographical data available]**

English-Australian [?] entomologist; 1 letter, in English; 20-i-1894

Turner sent a small box of Neuroptera collected at Mackay, Queensland, Australia.

### **Uéno, Masuzo (1900-1989)**

Japanese entomologist; 1 letter, in English; 18-iv-1929

Uéno acknowledged Ris for sending Plecoptera publications.

### **Ulmer, Georg (1877-1963)**

German entomologist; 2 letters, in German; 02-v-1927, and 31-v-1929

The letters are about a planned visit of Ris. Ulmer noted that he will be happy about a visit. Further he reported to Ris that his [Ulmer's] mother died on 05-iv-1927 and that he lives together with his ill sister now. Ulmer's sister called Ris "... the nice old greybeard who was here two years ago" [translated from German]. Further content is about Trichoptera and an exchange of preparation techniques.

### **Valle, Kaarlo Johannes (1887-1956)**

Finnish entomologist and hydrobiologist, Professor of Zoology at the University of Turku, Finland in 1943-1955; 2 letters, in German; 05-i-1931, and 20-i-1931

Valle noted that he had started to build up an Odonata collection and that he collected specimens from the whole world. Valle commented that he already exchanged specimens with Walker, Morton, Schmidt and Fudakowski. He sent *Agrion concinnum* [= *Coenagrion johanssoni*], *Aeshna crenata*, *Aeshna osiliensis fennica* Valle, 1927 [= *Aeshna serrata*], *Aeshna subarctica elisabethae* (Djakonov, 1927), and *Somatochlora sahlbergi* Trybom, 1889 collected in Finland and asked for duplicates from Ris' collection. He appended a list of European Odonata which are lacking in his collection. Ris sent him specimens two-thirds of which were new to Valle's collection. Valle called Ris the "most gentle of all odonatologists living today" [translated from German]. Further he noted that *Orthetrum coeruleescens* (Fabricius, 1798) had been found in South Finland, and *S. sahlbergi* in the North. Valle stated that he had studied Odonata from northern Asia in the collection of the University Helsinki as well as a small collection from Morocco which comprised an interesting *Cordulegaster* near to *C. insignis*. Furthermore, Valle told Ris that he sent a pair of *A. osiliensis fennica* to Bartenev and requested an examination and comparison regarding *A. serrata*. But Valle is not sure if they were received by him because of the "... locally barbaric circumstances" [translated from German].

### **Viets, Karl Heinrich [no biographical data available]**

German zoologist; 1 letter, in German; 15-x-1930

Viets thanked Ris for sending two preparations of Odonata with water mites [likely wings of *Sympetrum meridionale* (Selys, 1841) because Viets' letter was included in the corresponding species manuscript account by Ris, figs. 31 & 32], and he requested further infested dragonfly specimens. Ris could send them alive or freshly dead. Viets explained Ris that he should fix them alive or freshly dead in a small dish filled with water and included a small sketch how a specimen should be fixed.

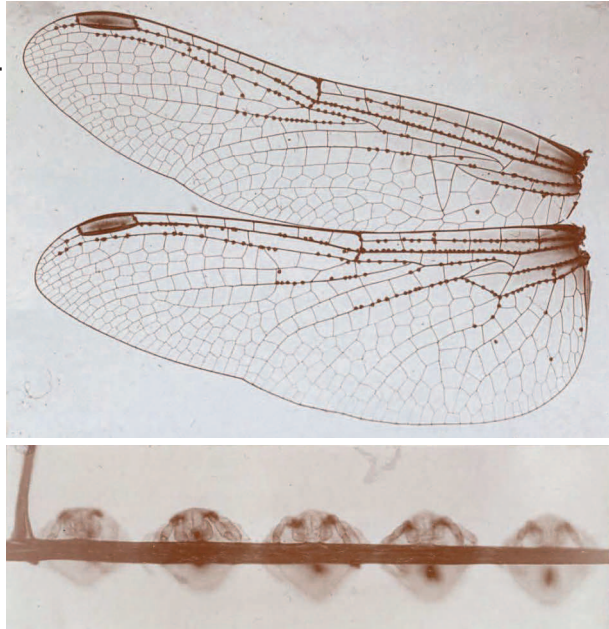
### **Wadsworth, Mattie (Martha) (1862-1943)**

US-American entomologist; 21 letters, in English; 08-iv-1895 to 04-iii-1913

Ris requested an exchange of specimens and Wadsworth replied that she could send Odonata and some Lepidoptera, but not Trichoptera. Wadsworth shipped some Odonata to Ris, e.g. *Somatochlora walshii* (Scudder, 1866) and some Aeshnidae. Ris also sent



**Figs. 31 & 32: Water mites on the wings of *Sympetrum meridionale*. Photos: likely Friedrich Ris, from Ris mss.**



specimens and publications to Wadsworth. On 25-x-1897, while Ris worked in Pavia, she asked if he could collect some postage stamps for her or if he should know anyone who might wish to exchange postage stamps with her. Concerning publications Wadsworth noted on 06-viii-1909 that "... it would be very nice if a book for all nations – like this of yours [Ris 1909-1919] – might be written in the international language Esperanto, which I can now read quite easily." On 09-i-1911 Wadsworth stated that the 1910 season was not good because three dry seasons in succession had dried out the water bodies.

### **Wagner, Fritz (1873-1938)**

Austrian-Hungarian entomologist, born in Steinamanger [Szombathely, Hungary]; 5 letters, typewritten, in German; 10-i-1928 to 13-viii-1928

Wagner requested publications from Ris and offered him half of his Odonata specimens collected in Asia Minor. He added that [Erich] Schmidt in Berlin-Dahlem would obtain the other half of the collection.

### **Walker, Edmund Murton (1877-1969)**

Canadian entomologist, employed since 1904 at the University of Toronto, Canada; 12 letters, some typewritten, in English; 20-xi-1910 to 05-xii-1929

Apparently the exchange started after Ris sent exuviae of *Aeshna juncea* to Walker and on 20-xi-1910 Walker replied, listing exuviae and imagines which he could offer

to Ris. Based on the correspondence the exchange evidently involved exuviae and imagines mainly from the genera *Somatochlora*, and *Leucorrhinia*, as well as of some Aeshnidae. Walker also sent a photograph of himself with Calvert at the latter's home (Fig. 33; 26-viii-1926).



**Fig. 33: Photo showing Walker (right) together with Calvert (left) at the latter's home at Cheyney, Philadelphia, USA, sent with a letter on 26-viii-1926. Photo: Unknown, perhaps Amelia Calvert.**

On 04-xii-1919 Walker wrote that he had got some “Eskimo boys” to collect for him at Labrador, Canada and they sent him 72 specimens including an undescribed *Somatochlora*.

Concerning the discovery of *Aeshna subarctica* in Europe Walker responded on 06-x-1926 to a letter from Ris, who sent the European specimens of *A. subarctica* to Walker to confirm their identity. Walker referred to some characters and commented that “The occurrence of *A. subarctica* in Europe is certainly one of very great interest”. Further Walker sent a male *Aeshna caerulea septentrionalis* (Burmeister, 1839) to Ris and asked Ris for his opinion because there were slight differences compared to the European *A. caerulea*.

Walker also referred to some records of European Odonata: On 12-iii-1927 he noted that he captured *Leucorrhinia dubia* in Württemberg, Germany years ago and on 06-ix-1928 Walker noted some records from Bohemia: *Sympetrum fonscolombii* at “Wiesen” [Vižňov], Czech Republic and *Sympetrum striolatum*, *Sympetrum danae*, *Sympetrum flaveolum* (Linnaeus, 1758), *Aeshna juncea* (“apparently”), *Aeshna cyanea* (Müller, 1764) and perhaps *Lestes barbarus* (Fabricius, 1798) from the surroundings of “Halb-stadt” [Meziměstí], Czech Republic. On 01-xi-1928 Walker mentioned a specimen of *Aeshna subarctica* from the “Schwarzwald” [Black Forest] which Ris had sent to him in 1927 [possibly a specimen captured by Rosenbohm, quod vide].

According to a letter sent from Bohemia [likely written in August 1928] Walker enjoyed the mountains and exercised his hobby painting landscapes. On 20-viii-1928 Walker wrote to Ris from Bohemia that he [Walker] would like to meet Ris in Rheinau. According to a letter dated 16-ix-1928 and written in London they met each other, and in London Walker also met Morton – Walker “... enjoyed meeting my two principal European correspondents ...”. He also studied the type of *Somatochlora nasalis* Selys, 1874 [currently considered a jun. syn. of *Somatochlora semicircularis* (Selys, 1871)] in the Natural History Museum London. Walker commented that the type is mouldy and lacks appendages. Further he stated that it is neither *S. semicircularis* nor *Somatochlora albicincta* (Burmeister, 1839) and that “It is quite unlike any known species and the name must undoubtedly be retained.”

The last letter, dated 05-xii-1929, deals with some records from Ontario, Canada: Walker had captured a male *Somatochlora incurvata* Walker, 1918 at Lake Nipissing and noted that it is “... the first one to be taken since the capture of the type and the paratypes in northern Michigan [USA]”. A he also captured *Enallagma clausum* Morse, 1895 (“... the first specimens from Ontario ...”) as well as a male *Nasiaeschna penthacantha* (Rambur, 1842; “... my second specimen and the first in about twenty years”). Further Walker noted that he observed *Calopteryx aequabilis* Say, 1839 ovipositing under water.

### van der Weele, Herman Willem (1879-1910)

Dutch entomologist, born in Jakarta, Java, Indonesia; 24 letters, in German; 20-viii-1905 to 24-iv-1910

In the first letter van der Weele thanked Ris for his hospitality when he visited Rheinau. Further van der Weele noted that he should borrow the types of Jules Pierre Rambur

(1801-1870), Pierre André Latreille (1762-1833) and Guillaume-Antoine Olivier (1756-1814) from the Muséum national d'histoire naturelle in Paris for study [probably only the types of Neuroptera]. Generally, van der Weele and Ris exchanged specimens and van der Weele sent Odonata, e.g. collected in Borneo and New Guinea, for examination to Ris. Ris could keep some duplicates. On 08-ii-1906 van der Weele noted that he had received a specimen of *Trithemis subhyalina* Förster, 1898 some time ago. That specimen is labelled »*subh.* n. sp.« in Förster's handwriting – so presumably van der Weele had a "Cotype". In a letter dated 21-i-1907 van der Weele stated that, with regards to the content, he does not much like Martin's work on the Cordulidae [Martin 1906]. He notes that the *Macromia* species especially appeared not to have been studied very critically by Martin.

### **Wesenberg-Lund, Carl Jørgen (1867-1955)**

Danish entomologist; 14 letters, in German; 10-i-1911 to 12-iv-1920

Wesenberg-Lund and Ris exchanged publications.

### **Whitehouse, Francis Cecil (1879-1959)**

English born Canadian entomologist; 3 letters, in English; 06-vi-1917, 14-viii-1917, and 09-iv-1918

According to the heading Whitehouse lived in Red Deer, Alberta, Canada and was member of the Alberta Natural History Society. With the first letter Whitehouse sent Odonata specimens to Ris and stated that the "... most interesting dragonfly here [in Red Deer] is *Somatochlora hudsonica* [(Hagen, 1871)] ... Dr. Walker states mine are the first specimens taken since the types where captured ...". On 14-viii-1917 Whitehouse reported on a trip to Nordegg, Alberta, Canada where *Coenagrion interrogatum* (Hagen, 1876) was common and he captured seven *Somatochlora* species in nine days. He noted that he was preparing a manuscript about it [Whitehouse 1918]. He also shipped a pair of *C. interrogatum* to Ris and a list with Odonata [perhaps of species he collected at Nordegg].

### **Williamson, Edward Bruce (1877-1933)**

US-American banker, entomologist, and botanist; 170 letters, some typewritten, in English; 29-vii-1901 to 29-ix-1930, and 23-iv-1931, 07-v-1931

Williamson and Ris had a very extensive exchange of Odonata specimens, expertise, publications, and photographs. Even during World War 1 both continued their exchange of letters and specimens, several times Williamson added some notes and thoughts about the war and he "... hope[s] sincerely that an early end of this terrible madness that threatens the Caucasian race will permit the Odonatologists of the world to again renew their correspondences and exchanges" (09-vii-1917). Williamson commented on 10-xii-1902 about the specimens he got from Ris: "I have never seen specimens more beautifully preserved and labelled than those received from you."

Generally Williamson collected large series of dragonflies during his trips; on 16-iv-1906 he commented that "I should much prefer the freedom of an Indian village on one of



those tropical streams down there and nothing to do but watch the living dragonflies and catch, catch, catch, them all day.” Six years later Williamson stated that his “... worked up collection now contains 8900 specimens, 867 species and 211 genera. My unworked material is probably not less than 15 000 specimens” (19-x-1912). On 18-vi-1913 Williamson noted that “[*Diastatops*] *dimidiata* [(Linnaeus, 1758)] is (...) the most aggravating dragonfly I ever tried to catch. (...) They split not of the brush along a treacherous muddy creek and at the slightest move back they go were only a snake can follow.” In the same letter discussing the behaviour of dragonflies he said “To me they are almost human, and I can almost tell what *Orthemis* [Hagen, 1861] thinks when he crooks his head around at me when I miss him with the net.”

Williamson reported on his collecting trips in several letters. For example, he collected nearly 700 dragonflies – representing about 70-75 species – during his first trip to Guatemala (17-iii-1905), and during a second trip in 1909 he captured about 500 dragonflies (26-vii-1909). Williamson also sent an itinerary of the 1909 Guatemala trip to Ris. On 19-x-1912 he sent Ris an itinerary of the 1912 trip to British Guiana and Trinidad, and on 9-vii-1917 he reported on a trip to Colombia where he collected 150 species and 8500 specimens. Further he noted that one of the Colombian Gomphinae is the “... freakiest dragonfly I ever caught (...) I want you to see it ... before I describe it. (...) It also will have to wait till the war is over.” [he meant *Archaeogomphus hamatus* (Williamson, 1918); fig. 34]. In 1923 Williamson and his cousin J.H. Williamson worked up the the latter’s collection from Brazil. On 17-ii-1923 Williamson wrote that his cousin’s collection contained more than 225 species, several of them undescribed, and probably 1500 unstudied specimens of the genus *Argia*. Williamson mailed a species list of the collection to Ris on 14-iii-1923 and in the same letter he commented that “The *Argia* collection from Brazil is not so large, as compared with the collections we have made of this genus. I believe unworked Central American, Guianian, Trinidadian, Venezuelan and Colombian material will run over 6000 specimens and may run 10,000.” On 26-iv-1924 Williamson noted that his cousin J.H. Williamson collected about 3500 Odonata specimens in Mexico.



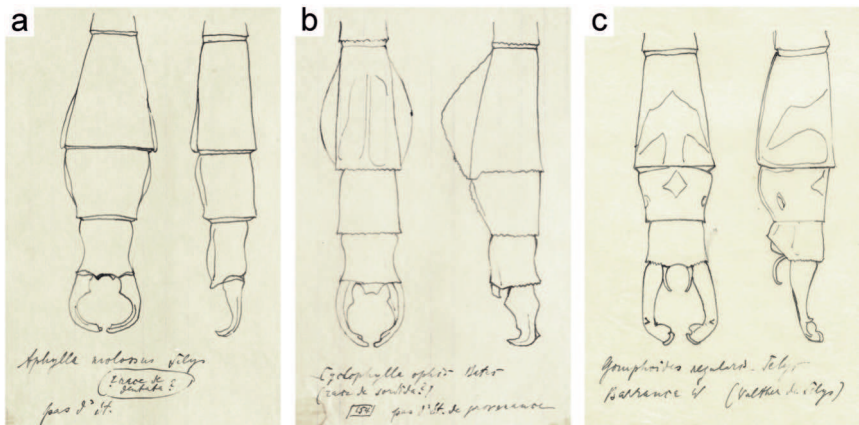
**Fig. 34: Male *Archaeogomphus hamatus*, collected by J.H. & E.B. Williamson in Colombia, Magdalena Department, Fundacion, ca. 10.5214° N, 74.1867° S, 10-i-1917. Photo: Rosser W. Garrison.**



Williamson noted on 16-x-1927 regarding the genus *Perithemis* that "Your [Ris'] collection in Europe and my collection in the U.S. contain the largest series of *Perithemis* I suppose in the world." Williamson added that his specimens "... should certainly be correlated with your [Ris] paper to avoid confusion or misinterpretation in the future." Therefore, Williamson shipped all the specimens to Ris and asked him to relabel them in his own handwriting.

Williamson requested several drawings by the Belgian artist Menger via Ris. On 16-ii-1915 he requested drawings of the types of *Argia* species in Selys' collection [according to a letter written by Ris on 05-viii-1915 to Williamson, Menger's bill was 330 francs] and later that year he asked also for drawings of *Heteragrion petiolatum* Selys, 1862 [currently *Oxystigma petiolatum*], *Heteragrion icterops* Selys, 1862 and males of the genus *Neoneura* Selys, 1860 as well as requesting the addition of the colour pattern to a sketch by Kennedy of *Somatochlora ensigera* Martin, 1906. In January 1916 Williamson stated that he received the drawings and on 22-i-1916 Williamson noted that Menger's bill was 54 francs, including 9 francs for the *Neoneura* specimens and 14.50 francs for the *Heteragrion*. Williamson requested Ris to ask Menger "... to check the 3 [*Neoneura*] species he drew carefully to see that [Friedrich] Foerster made no repair, possibly putting abdomens of one species in bodies of another species. Such switching is entirely possible. An amazing example secured recently at Cornell where Kennedy found the abdomen of an *Anax junius* (...) attached to the thorax of *Tachopteryx thoreyi* [(Hagen, 1858)]."

In 1919 Williamson requested and received further drawings of *Cyclophylla* Selys, 1854, *Gomphoides* Selys, 1854 and *Aphylla* Selys, 1854 (Figs. 35a-c) specimens from Selys' collection. On 18-x-1920 Williamson stated that Séverin and Menger are apparently no longer in good terms and Menger refuses to go to the Museum. On 19-iv-1922 Williamson noted that he heard from Séverin that Menger is dead and he added that it is "... sad that his last days were hard and bitter. He was a wonderful artist."



**Figs. 35a-c: Examples of the drawings by Séverin requested by Williamson a: (a) *Aphylla molossus*, 1869, (b) *Cyclophylla ophis* Selys, 1869 [currently *Phyllocycla ophis*], and (c) *Gomphoides regularis* Selys, 1873 [currently *Phyllocycla regularis*].**

Even three years later Williamson gave respect to Menger, on 5-iii-1925 he stated that "The author [of a potential *Hetaerina* Hagen, 1853 paper in the future] should preferably be an artist who can make good wash drawings – Menger, poor chap, could have done them justice."

In several letters Williamson mentioned Förster. On 15-iv-1916 Williamson reported his experience with Förster as follows:

"In several years he [Förster] kept me sending him material with the understanding that he was accumulating material there for me (...) he was welcome to what I sent without any exchange, but at the last I sent him some valuable Burmanese material for study and return – and from that day (...) I have never heard from him. I have continued to send him papers and specimens (...) His [Försters] early letters to me were filled with hints of "bad men" who bothered him (...) I am godfather to one of his children because he knew of no honest man in his neighbourhood. Surely the man is a rascal (which I do not wish to think) or is decidedly pathological (which I believe)."

Williamson wrote to Ris on 30-viii-1924 that they have the Förster collection in Ann Arbor now but "... pests were rapidly reducing it to dust. In fact a considerable percentage were entirely destroyed." Further he noted that Kennedy is doing a critical study of the types and that some are certainly wanting. "Of 6 *Argia*'s described in one paper I [Williamson] could locate types of only 3. He [Förster] was very careless, apparently very hasty in his decisions, and reckless in his labelling." Williamson wrote of some examples to Ris concluding with "... or he [Förster] was crazy when he did the whole thing." On 04-x-1924 Williamson commented that "Neither Kennedy nor I nor anyone else could adequately describe the involved and unsatisfactory condition of the Förster collection."

Some of Williamson's letters contain passages about René Martin. On 02-xii-1914 Williamson noted that Martin had four sons in the army and that one had already been wounded [according to a subsequent letter written by Williamson on 02-i-1919 one of Martin's sons died in World War 1] – "... this generation throws away its civilization as an aftermath." Williamson stated on 28-vi-1918 that he was sorry to hear that Martin was in financial trouble. He added that Martin was his first foreign correspondent and that he received the first letter from Martin in autumn 1898. On 29-v-1920 Williamson reported that Martin was going to Chile and that he offered his collection for sale, but Martin referred to the probably poor condition of the collection.

There are some further little topics in the letters, e.g. Williamson noted that he hopes that Ris will publish the Libellulidae of Selys' collection [Ris 1909-1919] in French because he found French to be "... easy and plain ..." compared to German (06-v-1909). On 26-x-1909 Williamson added to this topic "I believe you cannot appreciate the difficulty a foreign language presents to us inland Americans. We never hear a foreign language, practically, and our own vocabulary is comparatively small (...) we are land-locked – and language-blocked."

On 17-xii-1929 Williamson wrote to Ris that the Wells County Bank failed and "... at one clean sweep I lost my money, my job, and my profession." He reported that he was working at Ann Arbor as research associate in the Division of Entomology now and that he has moved his collection and library to the Museum. Williamson stated that

he has probably over 7000 unworked *Argia* specimens and he invited Ris to work together on the collection – “You and I have corresponded for nearly thirty years and have never met. We are entitled to a little visit together. You bring your *Argias* (anything else you wish) and come to Ann Arbor and we'll have one glorious time working the stuff over.”

Two letters were sent to Ris' sister Elisabeth Ris after the death of her brother. Williamson thanked her for sending papers and a photograph of Ris as well as for the return of specimens. He added “I think few of his colleagues really realized until now how much we relied on him as a court of final appeal in critical cases. Odonatology needs many Dr. Rises; it had only one, and now he is gone. You miss him in the home; the world wide brotherhood to which he belonged misses him no less sorely.”

### **Williamson, Jesse Hunter (1884-1964)**

US-American entomologist, cousin of E.B. Williamson; 2 letters, one typewritten, in English; 09-vii-1927, and 26-viii-1927

Williamson referred in his letters to the health of E.B. Williamson. He reported that [E.B.] Williamson is still making collecting trips on Sundays and that “These trips are real recreation for him and do him more good than any medicine or treatments that he has taken.” On 26-viii-1927 Williamson noted that they did a collecting trip for ten days to the upper Michigan Peninsular, USA and that it was a benefit to [E.B.] Williamson's health.

### **Zerny, Hans (1887-1945)**

Austrian entomologist, from 1915 employed at the Natural history Museum at Vienna, from 1922 as a curator; 3 letters, in German; 11-iv-1924 [arrival postmark »Rheinau«], 16-iv-1924, and 03-vii-1928

On 11-iv-1924 Zerny affirmed that he received the Odonata shipment. Ris requested a wing character of the type of *Metacnemis robusta* Selys, 1886 [currently *Mesocnemis robusta*] – Zerny sent the information and offered to loan the specimen. Further Zerny reported that he had observed *Lestes macrostigma* at “Zicklacke”, Lake Neusiedl, Austria in 1923 – “[they] were sitting in thousands on the reeds which appear spotted with blue” [translated from German]. He added that with this record the distribution of the species had been extended to the north. On 16-iv-1924 Zerny shipped the type of *M. robusta* to Ris and in 1928 he shipped specimens of *L. macrostigma* collected at the Lake Neusiedl to Ris. Further Zerny noted that he had been at Lake Neusiedl with [Erich] Schmidt in the beginning of June [1928], but that at that time *L. macrostigma* was not observed. But Schmidt found three specimens of *L. macrostigma* in the collection of the Natural History Museum Vienna collected by Peter Kempny at Gutenstein.

### **Zikán, Josef Franz [Jose Francisco] (1881-1949)**

Czech entomologist; 3 letters, in German; 19-iii-1924, 19-xii-1926, and 13-iii-1927

According to the heading Zikán at that time lived at Barao Homen de Mello, Rio de Janeiro State, Brazil. Apparently Ris requested Odonata from Brazil and Zikán answered on 19-iii-1924 that he could send some. In addition, Zikán asked Ris for determination

of Odonata of his own collection and that Ris could keep duplicates. There is a handwritten notice by Ris that he offered 30 francs for Odonata. In 1926 Zikán thanked Ris for the determination and the 30 francs. Zikán shipped the collected Odonata to Ris, according to a list in Ris handwriting these were 92 specimens of 27 species. On 13-iii-1927 Zikán stated that he received the cheque for 50 francs and that he will send new Odonata as soon as he had collected enough. Zikán also reported a dragonfly migration which “his boy” observed on 23-ii-[1927]. It was more than ½ km wide and they flew in a dense cloud low above the open field to the east. Unfortunately “his boy” had no net and so could not capture specimens.

## Discussion

The correspondence of Ris is a journey through time and around the world. It provides insights into the ways of exchanging material, information and expertise, into the personalities of the correspondents, and how odonatology developed over that time. Chronologically the first letter was mailed by Selys on 28-xii-1884, the last letters were posted just two days apart by Laidlaw (26-i-1931), and Sömme (28-i-1931) – so the correspondence covers 53 years of entomological exchange. There are no copies or drafts of Ris' own letters at the SMF, these might be studied in the respective collections of their recipients. Ris' letters to [E.B.] Williamson and Kennedy are at least partly archived at the University of Michigan (Hintz 2007; Ken Eldredge, pers. comm.). The letters to Calvert are archived at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University in Philadelphia (Jessica M. Lydon, pers. comm.) – according to Calvert (1931) Ris sent him 65 letters between 22-xii-1886 and 23-ix-1931. The letters to Selys are archived at the Institut royal des Sciences naturelles de Belgique at Brussels (Marcel Wasscher, pers. comm.; the first letter by Ris was written on 26-xii-1884), and two postcards to Morton written on 10-vii-1906 and 07-xi-1913 are held at the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh, United Kingdom (Ashleigh Whiffin, pers. comm.). Needham's correspondence including letters from Ris is located at the Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections of the Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York (<https://rmc.library.cornell.edu/EAD/htmldocs/RMA00479.html>, download 01.06.2023).

Many manuscripts and letters of deceased entomologists are kept at the Natural History Museum in London, including papers of Ris' correspondents Fraser, Kirby, McLachlan, and Mosely (Harvey et al. 1996). But no letters of Ris to the above correspondents were found; there were only letters by Ris to the Dutch entomological dealer Jan Hendrik Jurriaanse (1867-1940), and to the German ornithologist Ernst Johann Otto Hartert (1859-1933), at that time curator of birds at the Walter Rothschild Zoological Museum in Tring, United Kingdom), and at these lack odonatological content (Harvey et al. 1996, Dan Hall, pers. comm.). The letters of Ris to Walker are not held at the University of Toronto Archive (Tys Klumpenhower, pers. comm.), or at the Royal Ontario Museum Reference Libraries (Charlotte Chaffey, pers. comm.). The whereabouts of Ris' other letters also remain unknown, but further research in the archives of Museums may yield positive results.

Reading Selys' letters we can witness the early development of Ris' knowledge of Odonata. The sentence of Selys – “Unfortunately at my age (78!) I will not have the chance

of having the satisfaction of seeing you reaching the high point that your dedication promises for the future" – shows Selys' point of view, and indeed Ris attained a position of pre-eminence among World odonatologists. The dedication of *Selysiothemis* to honour Selys and the plan for a simultaneous publication apparently was the pinnacle of their collaboration. Interestingly, both mentioned that the type of Pierre Léonard Vander Linden (1797-1831) was in Selys' collection – although, according to Ris mss, wrongly repaired with a head and abdomen of *Sympetrum sanguineum*. This clue is important because the location of Vander Linden's collection is apparently unknown (Wasscher et al. 2016). However, there are a few hints that at least some of Vander Linden's specimens could be in Selys' collection. Careful examination could bring more evidence of this.

It was highly interesting to read about the collegiality of workers at that time. They formed an informal global community to which almost every notable odonatologist in the world was connected. In this context it was striking that no correspondence is available by the German entomologists Förster and Krüger, as well as only one inconsequential letter by Karsch. However, the explanation was to be found within the correspondence of the others: Apparently all three were said to be loners, or even monomaniacs, and not interested in corresponding. Förster especially fell into disfavour: Kennedy, Morton, Muttkowski, Tillyard, Martin and [E.B.] Williamson all expressed their disregard for him, and both Séverin and Calvert comment that Förster did not return specimens borrowed from the Selys collection. Surely scientific work thrives on discussion and exchange of expertise – but particularly at that time it was probably most important to maintain personal contacts to obtain publications and preferably also specimens, to stay up to date and conduct serious research. That explains the strong displeasure when a scientist, like Förster, apparently disdains correspondence but continues to describe species.

A further famous odonatologist at that time of whom no correspondence was to be found is the Austrian Friedrich Moritz Brauer (1832-1904). Currently it is uncertain if Ris and Brauer never had contact or if letters are missing.

It was a great pleasure to find letters of the Russian odonatologist Bartenev in Ris correspondence. Since Medvedev et al. (2013) we know that almost all of Bartenev's type specimens are lost – but a pair of *Leucorrhinia intermedia* was found in Ris' collection, and the male was designated as lectotype by Medvedev et al. (2013). Now we can add the date of the shipment of these specimens to Ris (16-xii-1910), and inspired by Bartenev's letters MS searched for further Bartenev specimens in Ris' collection in 2022: he found three specimens of *Aeshna gigas* (= *Aeshna crenata*) collected at Tomsk, Siberia, Russia [so not from the type series]; all three were heavily damaged, probably by dermestids (see photo in Wildermuth 2022: 96), and also two males of *Sympetrum vulgatum* collected at Kuban, Russia [north Caucasus], and Tscheljabinsk, Ural, Russia in 1906. Additionally, due to Morton's correspondence to Ris it is proven that the former also corresponded with Bartenev, and the latter sent at least a pair of *Leucorrhinia intermedia* to Morton as well. These specimens, held at the National Museums Collection Centre in Edinburgh, are likely from the original series. Unfortunately the labelled locality "East Siberia" disallows certain assignment (cf. fig. 15).

From today's viewpoint it appears careless how normal it was to send even type material across Europe, and to the USA and Australia – however it was (and still is) certainly



necessary to compare species, and at that time it was not possible to provide high quality photos of details like it is today. It appears astonishing that the loss of two boxes containing specimens from Selys' collection due to the shipwreck of the "S.S. Wiltshire" in 1922 apparently was the only major loss regarding Odonata. To date it is uncertain which types of *Cordulegaster* had been lost with the shipment to Tillyard, but a study of the remaining specimens in Selys' collection could probably clarify it. Regarding *Chlorogomphus magnificus* the lost type specimen was not a holotype, Fraser (1929) lists a male type from the "Leyden Museum", and Lieftinck (1971) designated a female as lectotype. Fraser (1929) stated that specimens of Selys' collection were lost with the sinking of "S.S. Egypt" of P & O (the original Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Company). The "S.S. Egypt" was on its way to India in May 1922 when it was struck by the French cargo steamer "S.S. Seine" in heavy fog near Ouessant ["Ushant"], France. Perhaps Fraser confused the two accidents. The statement of Calvert to Séverin and Ris – "... Please do not send any specimens of the Selys collection to me or to any one else" (22-viii-1922) – appears to be a reaction to this loss.

Illiger (1802) introduced the spelling "Aeschna" instead of *Aeshna*, which led to discussions until the mid 20th century. He supposed that the origin could be "Aeschyna" from "shamefaced". Savard (1997) interpreted the root of "Aeschna" rather as "shy" instead of "shamefaced", and stated that Illiger and Fabricius might have had contact with each other. Several letters to Ris from Tillyard (in 1908), Muttkowski (in 1910), and Morton (in 1928) discuss the correct spelling of *Aeshna* – interestingly none of them suggested the original syntax and today's notation of which the derivation remains unknown (Fliedner & Endersby 2019: 94). But all three have different interpretations: Tillyard suggested that in Fabricius manuscripts the name "Aechma" would be found, Muttkowski argued for "Aeschna" (regarding to Morton's letter on 10-vi-1928 this was also supposed by Archibald Henry Sayce) and Morton suggested "Aeshma".

Regarding the illustrations of *Cyclophylla* sent by Séverin to Ris in 1919 a further confirmation with the descriptions and given numbers of Bates' mss was found. Severin added to the illustration of *Cyclogomphus ophis* Selys, 1869 [currently *Phyllocycla ophis*] the no. »154«, this is the number of the description of "*Diastomma ophis* Bates" (compare figs. 35b and 36a,b) as noted by Seehausen (2022).

Some unpublished information could be found in the correspondence. For example, the first records of *Lestes macrostigma* at the Lake Neusiedl, Austria in 1923 by Zerny and the addition of quantities regarding *Somatochlora arctica* captured by Morton during his 1904 trip to Switzerland (Morton 1905). Certainly further information be recovered, but at this point we are just giving an overview of the letters' contents. Details could be extracted by odonatologists working on special themes or biographical topics. It is also noteworthy that *Calopteryx splendens* was a species of special interest for Ris. From 1912 on he requested specimens from several correspondents, and Ander, Campion, Dziędzielewicz, Fudakowski, Lieftinck, [Otto H.] Müller, le Roi, [Erich] Schmidt, and Scholz tried to capture and/or sent specimens to him [in Ris' collection there are nine boxes of specimens of *C. splendens* ssp.].

Beside the scientific data there were private topics to be found. However Ris' loss of the left eye in February 1907 was only remarked on by Calvert (1931). But the correspon-

No 154 *D. ophis* ♂ Length 2in. excl. append.  
 ♀ Length 2in 8.

General colour dark castaneous. Face pallid-greenish.   
~~Forehead with~~ <sup>Forehead having its upper</sup> ~~margin~~ <sup>margin</sup> edge not elevated, forming a faint ridge   
 lower than the tumid upper surface of the vertex: Occiput   
 terminating behind in a sharp edge fringed with black cilia.   
 Thorax pallid beneath, sides with three oblique stripes pallid   
 greenish yellow; upper surface in front with a broad stripe on   
 each side & a central one between the wings extending to the   
 basal 2 abdominal segments, bright clear yellow. Abdomen   
 slightly thickened at the base, thence very slender to the 8<sup>th</sup>   
 seg<sup>n</sup>, whose lower edge is <sup>dilatated</sup> ~~expanded~~ into a large, deflexed, triangular   
 expansion, the dilatation beginning from the base of the segment &   
 the apex of the triangle being about the middle: lateral process of 2<sup>nd</sup>   
 seg<sup>n</sup> somewhat quadrate with a cluster of numerous crowded denticulating   
 colour uniform. Wings clear, nervures black, Pterostigmata   
 palish ash brown, membranes wanting; triangle of fore wing   
 nearly equilateral, traversed by one <sup>nerve</sup> ~~nerve~~ or divided into 3 areoles,   
 discoidal areoles in 2 series. <sup>Femora</sup> ~~Legs~~ <sup>Femora</sup> tibiae tarsi   
 black.

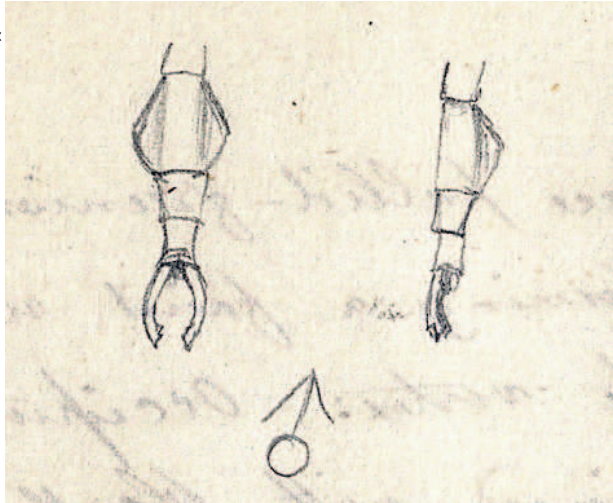
Anal processes <sup>pin-shaped</sup> slightly <sup>irregularly</sup> curved outward, & approximating at their   
 tips, very broad in the perpendicular section concave within, broad   
 perpendicularly at the tips & truncated; upper edge forming a slight   
 tooth before the apex & lower edge a similar one near the base. Lower   
 appendage wanting. Anal valves small, rounded.

Fig. 36a. Description of »No. 154 *D.[astomma] ophis*« by Bates. Extracted from Bates mss.

dence of Calvert, Morton and Williamson includes letters with best wishes for recovery.

It was fascinating to read these letters from different points of views regarding World War 1. Doubtless Ris was able to act as a go-between due to the neutrality of Switzerland. He forwarded at least the publication by Schmidt (1915) to "enemy territory" (see Ernst Waldemar Schmidt) and organized drawings from Menger in Brussels to ship

**Fig. 36b.** Figures of »No. 154 *D.[iastomma] ophis*« by Bates. Extracted from Bates mss.



them to Calvert and Williamson. During First World War Ris was able to keep his neutrality and to stay in contact with the patriotic German le Roi on one side and for example the British Tillyard – not less patriotic – on the other side. Also he corresponded with [Erich] Schmidt who as a soldier in the German army was based in France and East Prussia, as well as with Martin whose sons were at the front defending France against invading German troops.

Basing on the content of some letters there had been more correspondence and doubtless some letters are lacking. Currently it is uncertain if this correspondence is truly lost or perhaps just awaiting discovery in the archive of the Senckenberg Museum or within other archives including private papers of Ris.

Because there is less published about Ris's relatives we searched for some information. Thanks to Urs Weibel of the Museum zu Allerheiligen in Schaffhausen as well as the Landesarchiv Glarus, Switzerland (pers. comm.) we are able to present biographical information on Ris' parents Friedrich Ris (1834 –1895), married on 25-ix-1862 with Maria Schmid (1842 – 1931), and Ris' siblings Christof (1865 – 1947), Victor (1868 – 1943), and Fanny Elisabeth (1872 – 1959).

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bohm – our sincere thanks go to all of them. Further we like to sincerely thank Jost Mergen, Andy Reymann, and Fritz Geller-Grimm for the transcript of the German cursive handwriting of the letters of Pagenstecher; Ashleigh Whiffin and Milo Phillips for studying the Coll. Morton in Edinburgh regarding specimens, and correspondence of Bartenev and providing photographs of *Leucorrhinia intermedia*; Marek Wanat for providing photographs of *Calopteryx splendens tuempeli* and the Odonata collection in the University Wrocław; Reiner Richter for providing the photo of *Diphlebia nymphoides*; James Lundberg for providing the photo of *Calopteryx splendens ancilla*; Michael Frank for providing the cover photo of *Calopteryx splendens*; Urs Weibel and the Landesarchiv Glarus, Switzerland for biographical information on Ris' parents and siblings, as well as Wouter Dekoninck, Jérôme Constant, Marcel Wasscher and Karin Verspui for scanning and providing the paintings of Selys; Marcel Wasscher also provided images of the first letter of Ris to Selys. Finally we thank Tys Klumpenhouwer, Jessica M. Lydon, Ken Eldredge, Dan Hall, and Charlotte Chaffey for their help in locating letters of Ris in their respective collections, as well as Matti Hämäläinen and Albert Orr for their reviews and correction of the English expression.

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