

The great auk : a record of sales of birds and eggs by public auction in Great Britain, 1806-1910 : with historical and descriptive notes ... / by Thomas Parkin.

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THE GREAT AUK.

A Record of Sales of Birds and Eggs by
Public Auction in Great Britain, 1806-1910.

With Historical and Descriptive Notes
and five Plates.

*Extra Paper to Part 6, of Vol. I., Hastings and
East Sussex Naturalist.*

BY

THOMAS PARKIN, M.A., F.L.S., F.Z.S.

(Member of the British Ornithologists' Union).

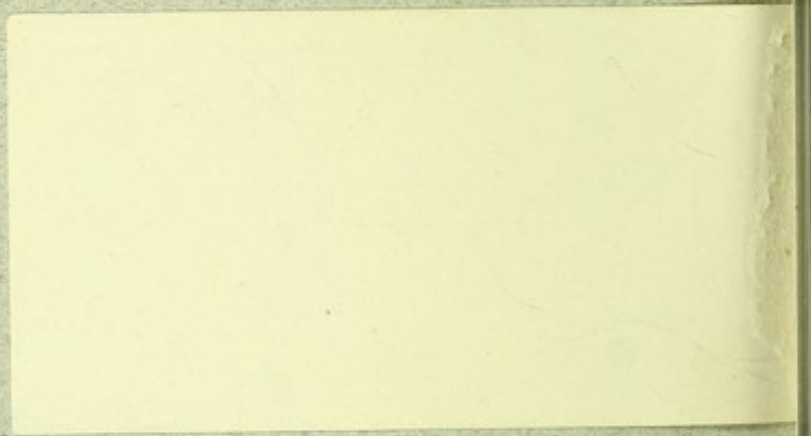


HASTINGS:

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MCMXI.

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Sale of a Great Auk's Egg, the property of Mr. Evelyn Shirley, at J. C. Stevens' Auction Rooms, 38 King Street, Covent Garden, on June 7th, 1910. The Egg was obtained by Mr. E. L. Armbricht with a bid of 250 guineas

The Library of the Royal College of Surgeons
from the author.

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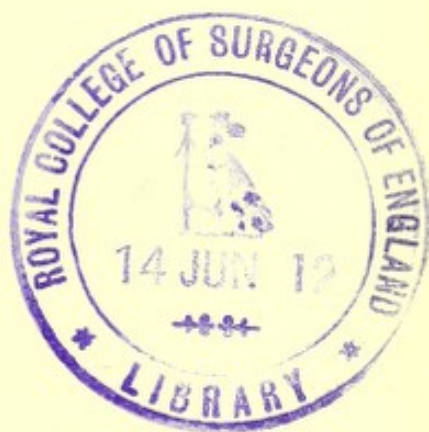
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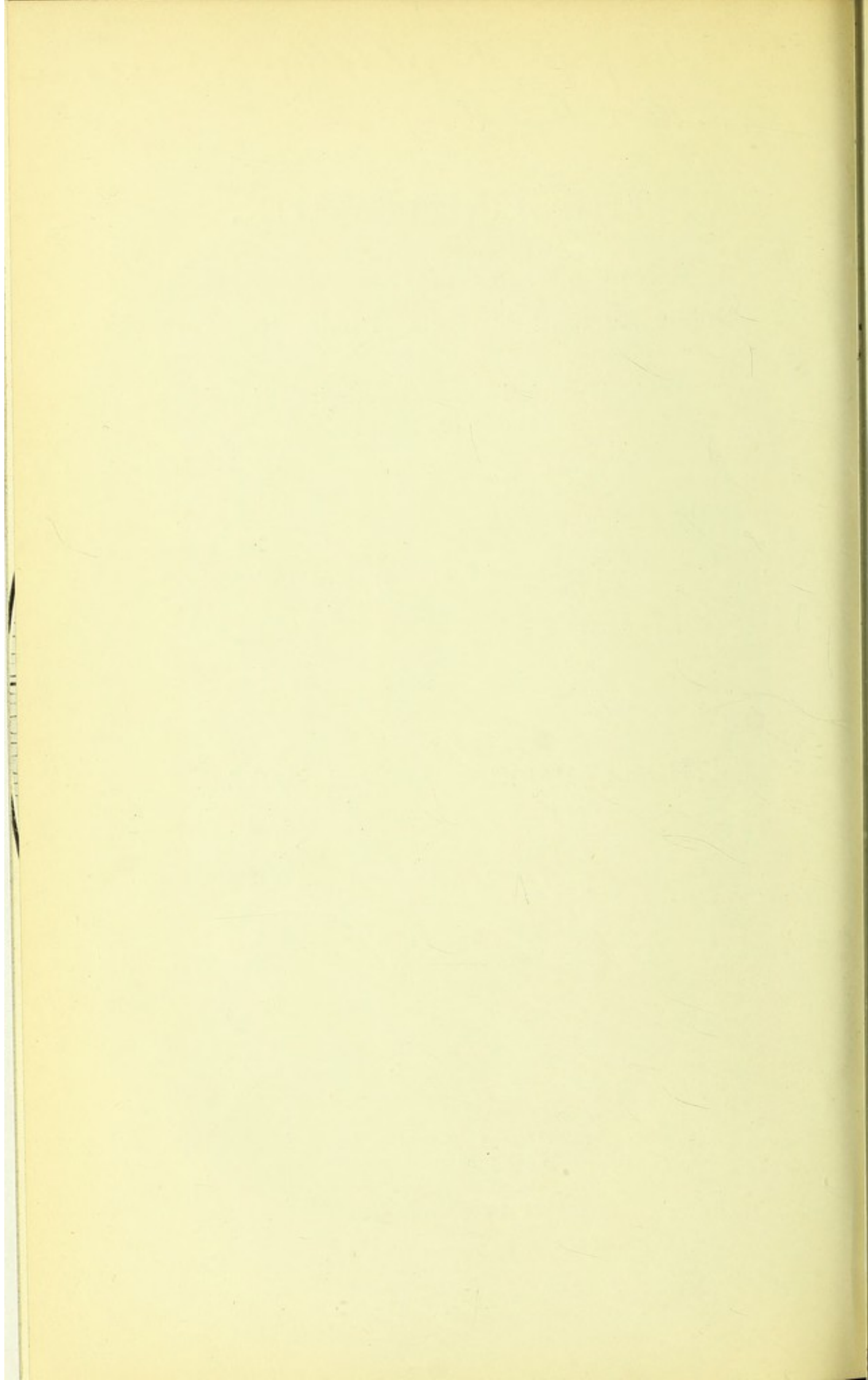


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INTRODUCTION.

The following notes are intended to place on permanent record the particulars as to date, ownership, price and name of purchaser of the various specimens of the Great Auk (*Plautus impennis*), and of eggs of this species, which have come to public auction at 38 King Street, Covent Garden, London, and at other Auction-rooms in Great Britain. The Great Rooms, at 38 King Street, Covent Garden, were established in 1760, and afterwards became the business premises of Mr. John Crace Stevens, and will be referred to as Stevens' Rooms throughout, as by this name they are so well known to ornithologists, oologists and collectors of objects of Natural History.

There have been—so far as I am able to ascertain, 31 sales in which specimens of the Great Auk or its eggs have been put up for auction, and at these sales five individual mounted specimens and twenty-six different eggs have been under the hammer, but, as many of the specimens have come before the public on more than one occasion, and as, with the exception of one bird and two eggs, every specimen mentioned in my brochure, has at one time or another appeared at these Rooms, I think it best to deal first of all with the sales there, taken in chronological order, and then with the sales by public auction, which have taken place elsewhere.

The first sale that I have been able to trace in which a Great Auk or an egg of this species came to the hammer by public auction, is that of a mounted specimen of the bird, once the property of Sir Ashton Lever, disposed of at the sale of the Leverian Museum, in the museum building on the Surrey side of Blackfriars Bridge, on May 5th, 1806. The bird was bought by Mr. Edward Donovan, for his Museum in Catherine Street, Strand; and the first specimen of the Great Auk, or of an egg, sold by auction at Stevens' Rooms, is, curiously enough, the same bird bought by Mr. Donovan at the Leverian Museum

sale, and which was then disposed of by auction at the dispersal of Donovan's Museum, at the above-mentioned Rooms, in 1818.

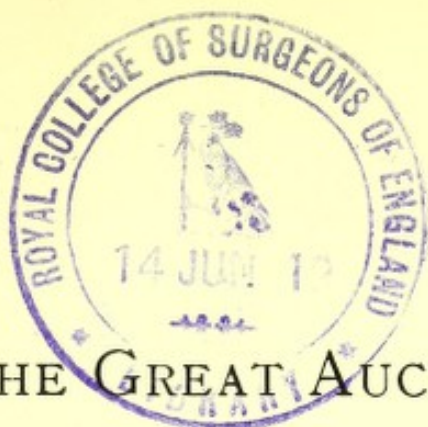
In this brochure I make no attempt to give a history of the Great Auk and its eggs, confining myself simply to historical descriptions—so far as possible up-to-date—of the specimens which have from time to time been put up for sale by public auction.

I have found it necessary to quote somewhat freely from Mr. Symington Grieve's "Great Auk or Garefowl, Its History, Archæology and Remains," and also from his "Supplementary Notes," which appeared in the "Transactions of the Edinburgh Field Naturalists and Microscopical Society," Vols. II. and III. (1887-8 and 1897-8), as any notice dealing with the Great Auk and its eggs would be incomplete and valueless without reference to Mr. Grieve's exhaustive researches.

I here wish to acknowledge my great indebtedness to Mr. Edward Bidwell, for kindly lending me his complete set of Stevens' catalogues, dealing with the sales of which I write, priced and with names of purchasers, also for the picture of Mrs. Wise's egg, sold on March 12th, 1888. (Pl. III.); and for much kind help in the preparation of this little work. My best thanks are also due to the authorities at the University Museum of Zoology, at Cambridge, for giving me access to the—I might say—unique set of Leverian and Bullock Museum Guide Books and Catalogues, once the property of Professor Alfred Newton, F.R.S.—which had, under the Newton Bequest, been taken over with the late Professor's library and papers.

To Mr. Henry Stevens I am particularly obliged for allowing me the use of his photograph of the bird and egg (the property of Sir William Milner, Bart.) sold at his Auction Rooms, on April 23rd, 1895 (Pl. IV.), and for giving me permission to have a photograph taken at the sale of the egg belonging to Mr. Evelyn Shirley, on June 7th, 1910, which forms the frontispiece of this pamphlet (Pl. I.). My best thanks are also due to Mr. W. H. Mullens, for drawing my attention to the Leverian and Donovan sales, to Mr. Rowland Ward for information about the Champley eggs, and to Dr. Norman F. Ticehurst and Mr. L. A. Curtis Edwards, for going through the proof sheets.

Fairseat, High Wickham,
Hastings, July, 1911.



SALES AT THE GREAT AUCTION ROOMS

38, KING STREET, COVENT GARDEN, LONDON.

MOUNTED SPECIMEN I. (Sale number one.)

A mounted specimen of the Great Auk, on May 6th, 1818.

At the sale of the contents of *Mr. Edward Donovan's Museum—known as the "London Museum and Institute of Natural History," Mr. King being the auctioneer. The sale lasted from April 30th to May 6th, the bird coming to the hammer on the latter date, being described in the sale catalogue as :

Bird I. - "Lot 6,494. GREAT AUK (*Alca impennis*).
Extremely rare, in the most remote Scottish islands: this is a British specimen, and the original bird described by Pennant, Dr. Latham, and all later authors."

No record is given either of price obtained, or name of purchaser, in Professor Newton's sale catalogue, the only one I have been able to get access to, and the late Professor in his note book on the "Garefowl," writes of this specimen "I know not at present what became of it." It seems to have completely disappeared, and I should be glad to get some further trace of it.

This is the bird which was obtained by Mr. Donovan at the sale of the contents of the Leverian Museum, in the Museum Building, on May 5th, 1806, when it formed Lot 47 in the sale catalogue (*cf.* Sales otherwise than at Stevens' Rooms, p. 30). Donovan figures this specimen in his *British Birds*, Pl. CCXLIII., and the letterpress, which is unpagged, states that "Our figure of this scarce and interesting bird is copied from the well-known specimen originally in the collection of Sir Ashton Lever, and which was obtained by purchase for our Museum at a price not very inconsiderable," a foot-note recording "Ten guineas at the public auction."

* Mr. Donovan in the preface to his sale catalogue states that "The formation of this Museum has been the labour of nearly thirty years, the proprietor having commenced his course of collecting before the year 1788. The formation of the Establishment, including every expense attendant, has cost the proprietor upwards of £15,000 sterling."

EGGS I. and II. (Sale number two.)

Two eggs of the Great Auk, on May 24th, 1853.

Described in the sale catalogue as from "The Collection of Birds' Eggs formed by Thomas H. Potts, Esq., of Kingswood Lodge, Croydon, including two specimens of the Great Auk."

Egg I. . . . "Lot 50, Great Auk."

Sold to Lord Garvagh, of Garvagh Hall,
Londonderry, Ireland, for £30 0 0

Egg II. . . . "Lot 100, Great Auk."

Bought in at - - - - - £29 0 0

For previous history, *vide* p. 20.

EGG II. (Sale number three.)

An egg of the Great Auk, on April 7th, 1854.

The catalogue stated that the sale was of "a Collection of Birds' Eggs, it includes a specimen of the Great Auk."

Egg II. . . . "Lot 101. The Great Auk."

Purchased by Lord Garvagh, of Garvagh Hall,
Londonderry, Ireland, for £20 0 0

This is the egg that was "bought in" at Mr. Potts's sale on
May 24th, 1853,

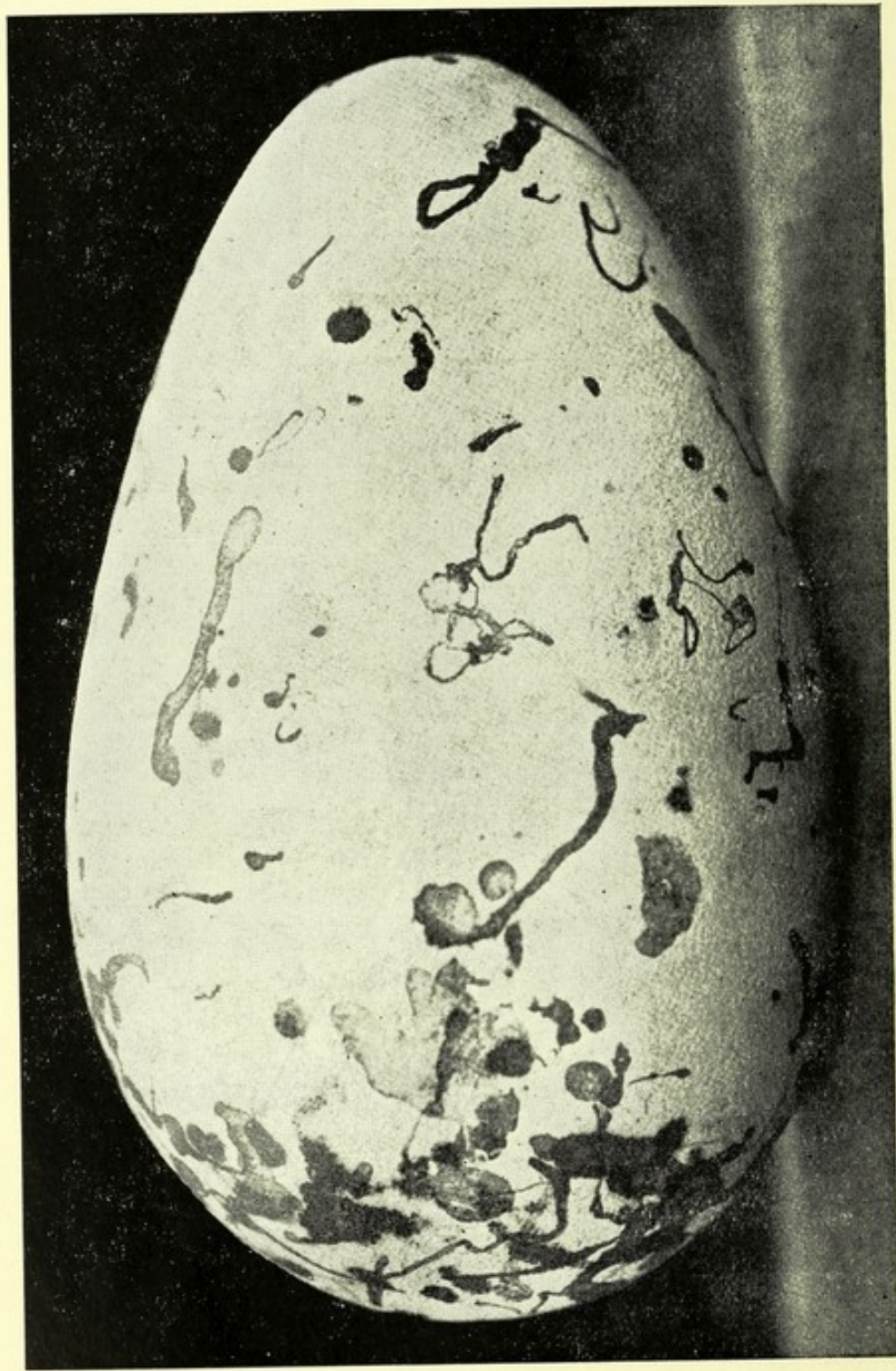
The late Mr. Alfred Newton, F.R.S. (Professor of Zoology and Comparative Anatomy at the University of Cambridge) made a note to this effect, in his copy of the sale catalogue, "I was present at the sale : Lot 101 was said to have been Lot 100 in Mr. Potts' sale."

After the death of Lord Garvagh in 1871, these two eggs were sold to Mr. G. Dawson Rowley, of Brighton (who died on November 21st, 1878), and with another purchased by him at Stevens' on July 11th, 1865 (Egg V. p. 7) formed three out of a collection of six eggs of the Great Auk, which were inherited by his son Mr. G. Fydell Rowley.

Lord Garvagh died possessed of three Great Auks' Eggs, the above two now owned by Mr. Fydell Rowley and another, which came to the hammer in these Rooms on May 19th, 1904. The full history of this egg is given on pp. 26 and 27.

Besides these two eggs of the Great Auk Mr. Potts owned another which he took with him when he left this country and went to live at Ohinitahi, Canterbury, New Zealand. After his death in 1888 this egg came back to England and was sold at Stevens' on April 13th, 1897. *vide* p. 20.



EGG OF THE GREAT AUK (*Plautus impennis*).

This Egg of the Great Auk is one of the ten discovered in the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, London, on December 12, 1861. It was put up for auction at J. C. Stevens' Rooms, 38 King Street, Covent Garden, on July 11, 1865, and was then bought for £29 by the Rev. G. W. Braikenridge, of Clevedon, Somerset, after whose decease, the egg was sold on May 18, 1884, to Mr. Edward Bidwell, of Fonnereau House, Twickenham, who disposed of it in April, 1911, to Mr. Thomas Parkin, of Fairseat, High Wickham, Hastings. The egg is depicted the natural size.

EGG III. (Sale number four.)

A Great Auk's egg, on December 5th, 1856.

According to the sale catalogue, from "Collections of objects of Natural History, etc., of the late William Yarrell, Esq., V.P.L.S., F.Z.S., Birds' Eggs, amongst them, one of the Great Auk."

Egg III. - "Lot 399, The Great Auk."

Bought by Mr. James Gardner, for Mr. Frederick Bond, F.Z.S.,
of Kingsbury, Middlesex, afterwards of Staines, for **£21 0 0**

This egg again came to the hammer in these rooms on February 22nd, 1894, when it realised £315—*vide* pp. 12-14, where its previous history will be found.

EGGS IV., V., VI. and VII. (Sale number five.)

Sale catalogue No. 2478.

Four eggs of the Great Auk, on July 11th, 1865.

Egg IV. - "Lot 140. A very fine and beautifully marked example of the egg of the Great Auk very rare."—[*vide* Pl. II.]

Bought by the Rev. G. W. Braikenridge,
of Clevedon, Somerset, for **£29 0 0**

After his death in 1882, the egg became the property of his sister who sold it in 1884 to Mr. Edward Bidwell, of Fonnereau House, Twickenham, in whose possession it remained for twenty-seven years, when it was disposed of in April, 1911, to Mr. Thomas Parkin, of Fairseat, High Wickham, Hastings.

Egg V. - "Lot 141. Another differently marked."

Purchased by Mr. John Gould,
for Mr. G. Dawson Rowley, of Brighton, for **£33 0 0**

Now (1911) in the possession of Mr. G. Fydell Rowley, being one of six eggs inherited by him from his father, Mr. G. Dawson Rowley.

Egg VI. - "Lot 142. Ditto."

Bought by the Rev. Henry Burney,
of Wavendon Rectory, Bucks, for **£31 10 0**

This egg was again sold at Stevens' rooms on December 13th, 1887, when £168 was given for it—*vide* p. 11.

Egg VII. - - "Lot 143. Ditto."

Purchased by Mr. A. W. Crichton,
of Broadwater Hall, Shropshire, for **£29 0 0**

This egg passed afterwards into the collection of his brother-in-law, Thomas, 4th Baron Lilford, and formed one of the five eggs which were at one time in Lord Lilford's possession. *For a further account of two others of these eggs *cf.* sale on July 2nd, 1880, pp. 9 and 10.

The late Professor Newton's copy of the sale catalogue contains a note in his handwriting, stating that "the four eggs at the above sale were from the set of ten eggs discovered in the Royal College of Surgeons."

These ten unrecorded eggs of the Great Auk, were discovered in the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, London, on December 12th, 1861, by Professor Newton. When or how they came into the establishment, there was no record. The College of Surgeons retained three, three of the eggs were sold or exchanged to Mr. Robert Champley, of Scarborough, and the remaining four formed the above sale in these rooms.

EGG VIII. and MOUNTED SPECIMEN II. (Sale number six.)

An egg of the Great Auk, and a mounted specimen of the bird, on April 27th, 1869. It is stated in the sale catalogue No. 3187 that they were "from the well-known Collection of British Bird Skins and Eggs formed by N. Troughton, Esq., of Coventry."

Egg VIII. - "Lot 253. The Great Auk, a magnificent Specimen."

Sold to Lord Garvagh, of Garvagh Hall, Londonderry,
Ireland, according to Mr. Bond, for **£60 0 0**
according to Professor Newton for **£64 0 0**

I am quite unable to say which of the two amounts is the right one. Mr. Frederick Bond's copy of the sale catalogue (now in Mr. Edward Bidwell's set) mentions sixty pounds as the price paid for the egg, and Mr. Bond was present at the sale and bought some of the smaller lots. Professor Newton, however, who was well known for his extreme accuracy in all matters of detail, records the price as sixty-four pounds. Mr. Henry Stevens is unable to throw any light on the matter, informing me that when he took over the business, now many years ago, he found the old records of the sales in such a dilapidated condition from damp and neglect, that he was forced to have them destroyed.

*[I have an interesting picture (a photograph) of these 5 eggs, grouped together, which I purchased of Rowland Ward, Ltd., Piccadilly, London.—T. P.]

This egg (No. VIII.), according to Mr. Symington Grieve, was supposed to have been accidentally destroyed. This however was not so, as it again appeared for sale at these auction rooms on May 19th, 1904, when its full history, so far as is known, was recorded in the sale catalogue. The egg was then bought in for £200, and was put up for sale for the third time on March 16th, 1895, when it realized £210—*vide* pp. 26 and 27.

Sale Catalogue as above "BIRDS IN CASES."

Bird II. - "Lot 627. The Great Auk in fine condition."

Bought by Mr. Thomas Cooke, of 513 New Oxford Street,
(afterwards of Museum Street), London, for **£94 10 0**

A note in Professor Newton's copy of the sale catalogue also says: "sold by him [Thomas Cooke] to Professor D. G. Elliott, for the New York Museum."*

In 1837 this Bird was in the possession of Mr. Tucker, a dealer in the Quadrant, Regent Street, who, as I am informed by Mr. E. Bidwell, exchanged it with Mr. A. D. Bartlett for some other natural history specimens. Mr. Bartlett sold it the same year to Edmund Maude, Esq.

In 1852 Mr. A. D. Bartlett sold to N. Troughton, Esq., the Great Auk and egg formerly belonging to Edmund Maude, Esq.—*vide* p. 26.

EGGS IX. and X. (Sale number seven.)

Two eggs of the Great Auk, on July 2nd, 1880.

Advertised in the sale catalogue No. 5644 as "two genuine eggs not previously recorded, discovered in an old private collection in Edinburgh, and some of the leading Naturalists are of opinion they may be the *last unrecorded specimens that ever will be found.*"

Egg IX. - "Lot 200A. One fine specimen."

Bought by Lord Lilford, of Lilford Hall,
Oundle, Northamptonshire, for **£100 0 0**

* *cf.* "The Auk," Vol. III., No. 2, p. 263.

† Several more eggs, have, however, come to light, since the above was written, now over thirty years ago.

Egg X. "Lot 200B. Ditto."

Also obtained by Lord Lilford for - - - - - **£107 2 0**

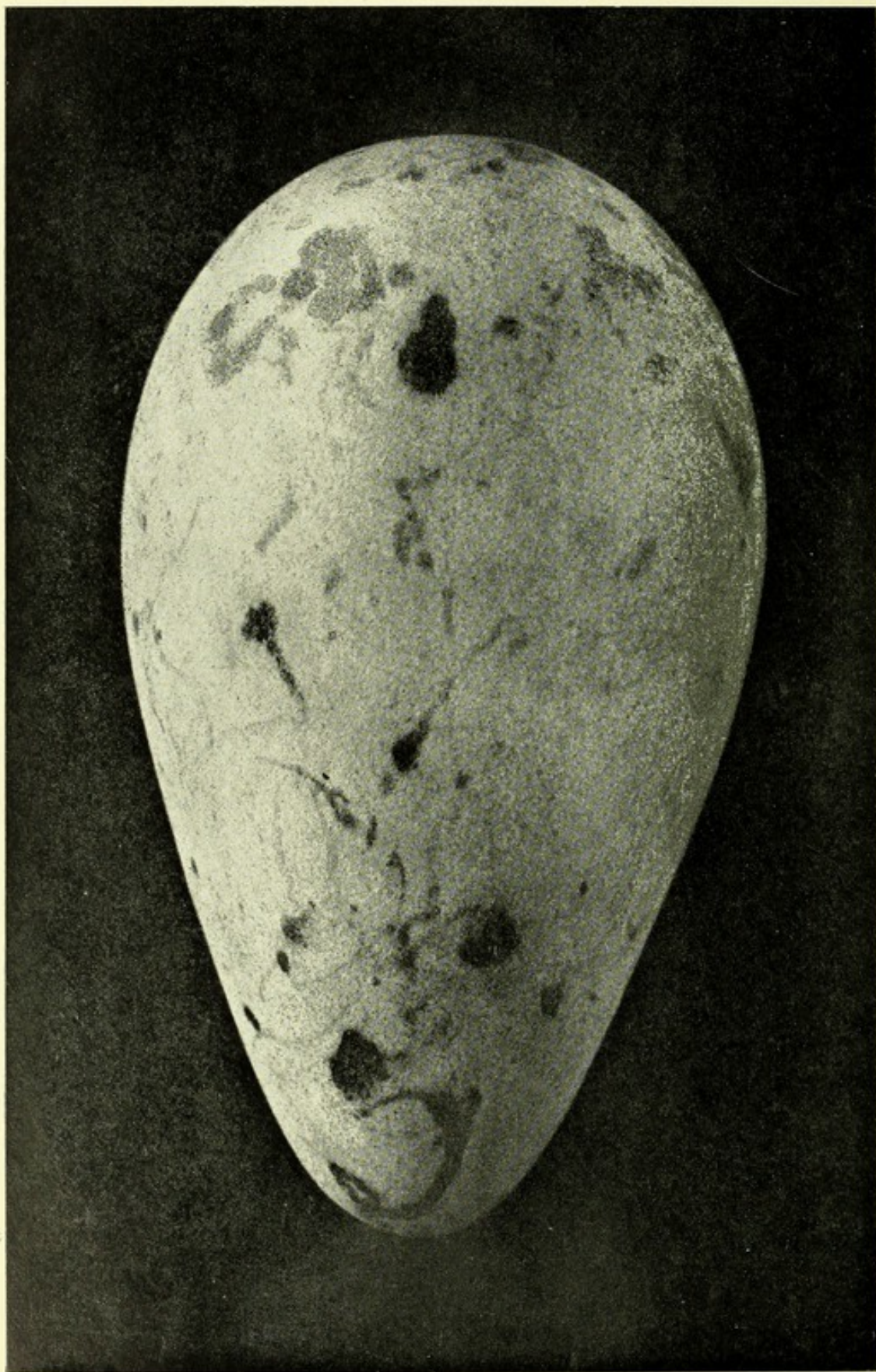
These two Eggs were sent up to Stevens' Rooms by Mr. Robert Small, a dealer in natural history wares, of George Street, Edinburgh, who bought them for thirty-two shillings at Dowells' Rooms in that town, about two months previously—*vide* "Sales otherwise than at Stevens' Rooms," pp. 32 and 33.

Lord Lilford had in his possession at one time five eggs of the Great Auk. He gave four of them, including these two, to Professor Alfred Newton, of Magdalene College, Cambridge. The eggs are now in the collection of the University Museum of Zoology. The late Professor in *Oötheca Wolleyana*, p. 377, gives the following interesting account. "These two eggs [Nos. IX. and X.] of four given to me by Lord Lilford, were bought by him in Mr. Stevens' auction room, 2nd July, 1880, whither they had been sent for sale by Mr. Small, of Edinburgh, who himself had bought them for thirty-two shillings at a miscellaneous sale of the property of a Mr. W. Cleghorn Murray, of 3 Clarendon Street, in Mr. Dowell's auction room in that city, 8th May, 1880, no one else present having any notion of their value. The first intimation I had of the discovery of these specimens, hitherto unknown to naturalists, was contained in a letter from Colonel (then Captain) Feilden, who by mere chance was prevented from being present. He lost no time in attempting to trace the history of these eggs and therein was materially assisted by Mr. Harvie-Brown. As usual the investigation was beset by many difficulties. At first it appeared that a former possessor had been a Mr. Little, a literary gentleman, who some thirty years before lived in Lauriston Lane in Edinburgh, where according to a Mr. Stillie, a bookseller, he had a most 'extraordinary collection of eggs'; but subsequently Mr. Harvie-Brown made out that these eggs had undoubtedly belonged to a Mr. Joseph Moule, from 1820-40 President of the Post Office at Edinburgh, one-half of whose collection containing these specimens was sold to Mr. Murray, the possessor of them until 1880, though Mr. Grieve in his monograph ('The Great Auk or Garefowl,' etc., London, 1885, p. 109) declares that Mr. Murray bought them of a Mr. Lister. The question of the intermediate ownership of these eggs is comparatively unimportant. I have been informed that on their acquisition by Mr. Small, the word "Pingouin" was plainly visible upon each, but that he (for some reason unknown to me) did his best to efface it, so that it is no longer legible, but he fortunately left upon them the mysterious inscription "Egal" or "Egale"—whatever that may mean. These words plainly indicate that the eggs had passed through French hands, and one can hardly help connecting them with the two eggs some years since found to exist in the Edinburgh Museum, which are known to have come from *Dufresne's collection bought by the

*The 'Ibis,' 1860, pp. 358-60, contains an interesting letter from Col. [then Captain] H. W. Feilden, C.B., on the purchase in 1818, by the Edinburgh University of a portion of the Dufresne collections.

Dufresne was originally a dealer in natural history specimens and had also been for some time Conservator of the Cabinet of Natural History belonging to the Empress Joséphine, but in 1815 or the following year he entered the Museum of Paris, as Aide-naturaliste, in which capacity it was that he parted with the collection obtained by the University of Edinburgh, and it remained the property of the University till it was transferred to the newly-established Museum of Science and Art at Edinburgh.





This Egg was formerly in the possession of M. Theibant de Berneaud, of Paris. On October 6th, 1851, Mr. Lancelot Holland purchased it from Williams, of Oxford Street, for £18, and gave it to his daughter—afterwards Mrs. Henry Wise, who sent it for sale to Stevens' rooms, where it was disposed of on March 12th, 1888, to Mr. James Gardner, of Oxford Street, for £225. It afterwards came into the collection of Sir J. H. Greville Smyth, Bart., of Ashton Court, Somerset, after whose death it was presented by Lady Greville Smyth, to the Bristol Museum. The Egg is depicted the natural size.

University of that capital in 1818. The present specimens, from their broken condition, may have been thought unworthy of a place in the Museum, and been accordingly rejected, when they may have fallen into Mr. Moule's hands. This of course is but conjectural, though it seems likely enough, for Dufresne is known to have had two or three specimens. If so, there cannot be much doubt that these eggs like others which we know to have existed so long in collections, must have come from the Newfoundland seas—as it is almost impossible that they could have been brought from Iceland.”

EGG VI. (Sale number eight.)

An egg of the Great Auk, on December 13th, 1887, Sale catalogue No. 7573.

Egg VI. - “Lot 200A. *A very fine example of the extremely rare EGG OF THE GREAT AUK.*”

Bought by Mr. Leopold Field, of Harlesden,
Middlesex, for **£168 0 0**

This egg—one of the ten discovered in the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1861—formed Lot 142, at the auction in these rooms, on July 11th, 1865, when it was purchased by the Rev. Henry Burney for £31 10 0—*vide* p. 7.

The egg is now in the collection of Mr. Herbert Massey, of Didsbury, Cheshire.

EGG XI. (Sale number nine.)

An egg of the Great Auk, on March 12th, 1888.

A notice in sale catalogue No. 7636 reads as follows:—“The Collection of Eggs, the property of Mrs. Wise, including a fine example of the Great Auk, in splendid condition.”

Egg XI. - “Lot 213. *A very fine example of the Egg of the GREAT AUK.*”

Bought by Mr. James Gardner, of Oxford Street, for - **£225 0 0**

Mr. Bidwell informs me that this Egg was formerly in the possession of M. Theibant de Berneaud, of Paris, during which time a drawing was made of it by M. Moquin-Tandon. On Oct. 6, 1851, Mr. Lancelot Holland purchased it from Williams, of Oxford Street, for £18, and gave it to his daughter—afterwards Mrs. Henry Wise, of Brockham, near Reigate, and subsequently of Charlton Court, Steyning. Williams obtained the egg from Paris—Mrs. Wise's Egg Register says “from the Museum,” but it is believed that it came from Lefevre, a dealer in Paris.

The egg afterwards passed into the collection of Sir J. H. Greville Smyth, Bart., of Ashton Court, Somerset, and after his death, was presented by Lady Greville Smyth to the Bristol Museum—together with the late Sir Greville's collection of eggs.

The figure of the Egg on Pl. III. is from a photograph kindly lent to me by Mr. Bidwell, the owner of the copyright. The egg is depicted of the natural size.

EGG III. (Sale number ten.)

Sale catalogue No. 8937. An egg of the Great Auk,
on February 22nd, 1894.

Described in the catalogue as from "a Collection of Eggs the property of Baron d'Hamonville, which includes a very fine egg of the Great Auk."

Egg III. - "Lot 112. GREAT AUK, formerly in the collection of the late William Yarrell, V.P.L.S., F.Z.S. etc., after whose decease it was purchased in 1856, by the late Frederick Bond, F.Z.S., etc., who sold it to the present owner. It was figured in *Hewitson's British Oology."

Bought by Sir Vauncey Harpur Crewe, Bart.,
of Calke Abbey, Derbyshire, for **£315 0 0**

The record price up to this time given for an egg of the Great Auk.

Mr. Frederick Bond gave £21 for this egg, at an auction in these rooms, on December 5th, 1856—*cf.* p. 7—and sold it afterwards to Baron Louis d'Hamonville, of Manonville, Meurthe-et-Moselle, in France. It thus became one of the four eggs which were at one time in the Baron's collection, all of which eventually came "under the hammer" at Stevens'.

An account of these four eggs is given by Baron d'Hamonville in an article entitled "Note sur les quatre œufs d'*Alca impennis*, appartenant à notre Collection Oölogique," which appeared in the "Mémoires de la Société Zoologique de France," for 1888, pp. 101–104. Concerning the egg just sold, the Baron writes as follows:—"Cet œuf provient de M. Yarrel [*sic*] chez lequel nous l'avons vu en 1851. En nous le montrant, M. Yarrel [*sic*] nous dit avec une certaine fierté: 'C'est un œuf anglais,' ce qui nous fit présumer qu'il avait été capturé aux Orcades ou aux Hébrides. Après la mort de son propriétaire, il fut vendu en 1856 à M. Bond, qui nous l'a cédé avec sa collection en 1875." A coloured picture of the egg is shown on pl. V., figure A, in the Society's Memoirs.

About the other three eggs in his collection—which I have already stated also came for sale at these rooms—Baron d'Hamonville further remarks, "Il y a environ 40 à 50 ans que M. de Baracé a acquis ses trois œufs de Pingouin brachyptère. Nous pensons qu'ils doivent

*British Oology, by William C. Hewitson (1831-38). Vol. II., pl. CXLV.

provenir des îlots déserts qui avoisinent Terre-Neuve. Nous savons en effet que M. Hardy s'en est procuré plusieurs de cette région et nous croyons qu'en 1852 lors d'un séjour que nous fîmes chez lui à Dieppe, il nous cita M. de Baracé comme l'un des heureux auxquels il avait cédé cette rare espèce. Ces œufs sont restés dans sa collection jusqu'à sa mort. Nous en avons fait l'acquisition en mars, 1887."

These eggs are figured as D on pl. V., and B and C on pl. VI. in the Baron's article.

I have given Baron d'Hamonville's short history in full, and now append a translation.

"Note on the four eggs of *Alca impennis* belonging to our Oological Collection," by the Baron d'Hamonville, "Memoirs of the Zoological Society of France," 1888, pp. 101-104. Plates V. and VI.

"This egg came from Mr. Yarrell, in whose possession we saw it in 1857. When showing us the egg, Mr. Yarrell remarked with a certain amount of pride, that it was an English egg, which made us suppose that it had been taken either in the Orkneys or the Hebrides. After the death of its owner, it was sold in 1856 to Mr. Bond, who in 1875 disposed of it to us, together with his egg collection." . . .

"It is now between 40 and 50 years ago that M. de Baracé became the possessor of these three eggs of the Great Auk. We are of opinion that they came from the lonely islands off the coast of Newfoundland. We know for a fact that M. Hardy procured several from this quarter, and think it was in 1852, during a visit that we paid him at Dieppe that he spoke of M. de Baracé as one of the happy mortals to whom he had handed over eggs of this rare species. These eggs remained in M. de Baracé's collection till his death. They came into our possession in March, 1887."

I here reproduce some further remarks about this egg by Baron d'Hamonville, which appeared in his "Addition à une Note (cf. *tom cit* 1888, pp. 101-104, pl. V., fig. A) sur les quatre œufs du Pingouin brachyptère," published in the Bulletin de la Société Zoologique de France, pour l'Année, 1891, p. 34. "Ce spécimen provient de la collection Yarrel [*sic*], où je le vis en 1851. J'avais présumé qu'il devait, être originaire des Orcades, parce qu'en me le montrant son propriétaire m'avait dit: 'C'est un œuf anglais' Mais il paraît qu'il n'en est rien, et M. Newton m'a fait remarquer que l'expression de M. Yarrel [*sic*] signifiait, non pas qu'il avait été capturé en Angleterre, mais simplement que cette espèce faisait partie de la faune anglaise. Son histoire est d'ailleurs bien connue, et voici comment M. Newton me la racontée dans une de ses lettres: -- Feu M. Yarrel [*sic*] était une de mes plus anciennes relations ornithologiques, je le voyais très souvent, et toujours il m'a répété qu'il avait acheté cet exemplaire en France, à Paris, je crois, chez un petit vendeur qui le tenait dans sa boutique enfilé en chapelet avec d'autres œufs d'oiseaux ordinaires. Reconnaisant à l'instant l'espèce à laquelle il appartenait, il entra dans la boutique en demandant le prix du tout. On lui répondit: 1 fr. la pièce, sauf le plus grand, qui, en raison de sa taille, vaut 2 fr. Il paya, et emporta l'œuf d'*Alca impennis* dans son chapeau.

M. Hewitson, dans la *British Oology*, (1838), en a donné, planche CXLV., une figure très fidèle, mais prise sur la face opposée à celle que j'ai donnée moi-même."

TRANSLATION. Bulletin of the Zoological Society of France, 1891, p. 34. 'Addition to a note on four eggs of the Great Auk, by Baron Louis d'Hamonville':—“ This specimen came from the collection of Mr. Yarrell, where I saw it in 1857. I presumed that it came from the Orkneys, because when showing it to me, its owner said: 'It is an English egg.' This however is not so and *Mr. Newton has informed me that the expression used by Mr. Yarrell meant, not that it had been taken in Great Britain, but that the species was included in the English fauna. The history belonging to the egg is also well known, and I reproduce what Mr. Newton wrote me in one of his letters:—'The late Mr. Yarrell was one of my oldest ornithological friends, I saw him constantly, and he often repeated to me the story about this egg, how he had bought it in France, in Paris, I believe, from a small shop-keeper, in whose window he had seen it hanging on a string in company with some other commoner birds' eggs. Recognizing at once the species to which it belonged he entered the shop and asked the price of the eggs as a lot. He was told that the eggs were a franc each, but that the larger egg would be two francs on account of its size. He paid the money and carried off the Great Auk's egg in his hat.

Mr. Hewitson in his *British Oology* (1838) figures this egg on pl. CXLV, a faithful representation, but from the opposite side to which mine was taken.”

In the translation which I have made, I have thought it best to spell Mr. Yarrell's name properly.

Mr. Symington Grieve in “*The Great Auk or Garefowl*,” gives on p. 105, another account of how Mr. Yarrell acquired this egg.

“The following curious story, which is well-known to ornithologists, is so remarkable that we repeat it and give a copy of Mr. R. Champley's original note, dated 1st June 1860 :—“ Mr. Bond says to R. C., that Yarrell told him that walking near a village near Boulogne, he met a fishwoman having some guillemots' eggs, he asked her if she had any more, she said she had at her house. He went, when he saw hanging over the chimney piece four wild swans', with a Great Auk's hanging in the centre. She asked two francs each for them. He bought the Great Auk's and the two swans'. She said her husband brought it from the fisheries' . . . Copied by R. Champley at Mr. Bonds' by whom the history was told.”

Professor Newton's account is however, almost certain to be the true one. He had, as he states in his letter to Baron d'Hamonville, heard the story repeated to him on several occasions by Mr. Yarrell himself.

* The late Professor Alfred Newton, F.R.S

EGGS XII. and XIII. (Sale number eleven.)

Two eggs of the Great Auk, on April 24th, 1894.

Sale catalogue No. 3971, in which the eggs are described as "Recently discovered."

Egg XII. - "Lot 74. A REMARKABLY FINE EGG OF THE GREAT AUK. This egg, which is one of the very finest of its type, has been most carefully blown. It is slightly *cracked, but the fracture is almost imperceptible. The colour and markings are so beautiful, that it must be seen to be appreciated."

Bought by Mr. Herbert Massey, of Ivy Lea,
Didsbury, Cheshire, for **£273 0 0**

Egg XIII. - "Lot 75. A DITTO. This specimen is of an entirely different type, and almost unique in its markings. It is also somewhat damaged, but this is not noticeable when it is lying in a cabinet."

Purchased by Mr. Henry Munt,
of 83 Kensington Gardens Square, London, for **£183 15 0**

This egg was again put up for sale in these rooms on June 20th, 1900, when it fetched £189—*vide* p. 23.

These two eggs were the property of Mr. Wallace Hewett, who had bought them, a month previously, for a few shillings at an auction in Kent.

The following interesting account of these newly-discovered eggs appeared in the "Ibis," 1894, pp. 422-3, from the pen of Mr. Edward Bidwell:—"At the disposal by auction of the contents of the Little Hermitage, near Rochester, on the 14th March last [1894], one of the lots, which was described as 'a collection of shells and fossils,' was purchased for 36 shillings by Mr. Wallace Hewett, of Newington, Kent, who previous to the sale, in looking at the fossils, had recognized an egg of the Great Auk lying amongst them. After the auction, upon obtaining possession of his purchase, he was surprised at finding a second egg of this bird at the bottom of the box. To make assurance doubly sure, Mr. Hewett took these two eggs to the Natural History

*When on a visit to Mr. Massey at Ivy Lea, in May, 1895, in order to inspect his fine collection of Eggs of British Birds, including three eggs of the Great Auk, I saw and examined this egg, the slight crack had been so carefully repaired that I failed to discover it. T. P.

Museum [South Kensington], and submitted them to Dr. Bowdler Sharpe, who confirmed his identification, and kindly sent him on to me."—*cf.* p. 33.

The two eggs were exhibited by Mr. Bidwell at the meeting of the British Ornithologists Club at Frascati's Restaurant, Oxford Street, on April 18th, 1894.

MOUNTED SPECIMEN III. and EGG XIV. (Sale number twelve.)

Pl. IV.

A mounted specimen of the Great Auk, and a Great Auk's egg, on April 23rd, 1895.

The sale catalogue No. 9159, announces "A magnificent specimen of the GREAT AUK AND EGG, from the collection of the late Sir William Milner, Bart. The property of Sir F. Milner, Bart., M.P."

Bird III. - "Lot 260. GREAT AUK.

This specimen was sold to Sir W. Milner by Graham, of York, who stated that it was taken in the Orkneys. Professor Newton believes that it was originally given by Gardner to the Rev. R. Buddicorn, of Smethcote, Shrewsbury, and purchased from him by Graham; also that it comes from the Rock of Eldey, off the coast of Iceland.

It is a magnificent specimen in summer plumage. It has recently been re-stuffed by Mr. Cullingford, of Durham, who states that it is a genuine specimen throughout, and that there is not a single false feather in it."

The reserve price not being reached at the public sale, it was purchased afterwards for the Royal Scottish Museum,
Edinburgh, for **£350 0 0**

The above descriptive statement in the sale catalogue is incorrect, though copied from the label on the case.

Professor Alfred Newton, in a letter (dated from Cambridge, 22nd April, 1895) to Mr. W. Ruskin Butterfield—curator of the Hastings Museum—wrote as follows:—"I never believed that it was given by



Great Auk and Egg, formerly the property of Sir William Milner, Bart. Sent for sale at Stevens' rooms, 23rd April, 1895. The Bird was bought for £350, for the Royal Scottish Museum at Edinburgh, and the Egg was purchased by Mr. T. G. Middlebrook, for £189.



Gardner to *Mr. Buddicom (not Buddicorn as the name is printed). I do not know, but have reason to think that Mr. B. bought it of Shaw, of Shrewsbury, to whom it was sold in September, 1844, by Mr. A. D. Bartlett, who bought it of a stranger as a Northern Diver."

The following letter, however, kindly given to me by Mr. Edward Bidwell, from Mr. W. S. Buddicom (son of the Rev. R. J. Buddicom), gives a different history of this bird.

TICKLERTON COURT,
CHURCH STRETTON,
SHROPSHIRE,

Dec. 24th, 1897.

DEAR SIR, —

The Great Auk originally belonged to the late William Pinches, Esq., who died in 1849, and subsequently passed into my father's possession, but I have no record how Mr. Pinches got it. My father married Miss Pinches — Mr. Pinches' sister — for his second wife, and she became her brother's heir, or shall we say, heiress, and so my father got the Bird. I well remember this bird from early childhood, and, to tell you the truth, was very sorry it was sold, but no doubt my father had no idea the Great Auk would ever become so valuable; my father's memorandum says (speaking of the Great Auk), 'Sold to Sir H. Milner.' These are the exact words. I never heard my father in his life mention Graham, of York, and believe my father (who was very exact) did, as he more than once told me, sell the bird direct to the Baronet, whose initial my father has put as Sir H. Doubtless this was a slip of the pen, and it should have been Sir W. Milner. Sir Frederick Milner was only a child when his father, Sir W., got the Bird in 1856. I can absolutely vouch for *my* particulars as follows:—

The bird belonged —

First, to Mr. Pinches.

Secondly, to his sister — my stepmother.

Thirdly, to my father.

Fourthly, to the Baronet.

But, as I said before, I have [no] trace of how Mr. Pinches got it.

With best Xmas wishes,

I remain, yours very truly,

[Signed] W. S. BUDDICOM.

To E. Bidwell, Esq.

Mr. Symington Grieve, in his "Recent Notes on the Great Auk or Gare Fowl" (Trans. Edin. Field Nat. and Micro. Soc., Vol. II., pp. 107-8), gives an account which is somewhat erroneous and at variance with both those of Professor Newton and of Mr. W. S. Buddicom.

This specimen, with the rest of the Milner collection of British Birds, had been on loan at the Leeds Museum for some years. The bird was badly mounted, but the case, fortunately perhaps, came to grief when on the railway journey from Leeds to London and it was then decided to have the bird re-mounted by Cullingford of Durham, and so well was the work done, that the specimen is now one of the finest.

*The Rev. Robert Joseph Buddicom was Rector of Smethcote, Salop, from 1842-62.

8 SPRING GARDENS, DONCASTER.

26 July, 1860.

"DEAR SIR, -I never had but one egg of *Alca impennis* in my possession. I had the above from Mr. Friedrich Schultz, of Dresden, in Saxony. I sold it to Mr. Tuke, of York, now banker, London (now Hitchin). I received it in 1841, May 23rd. I sold it for £2 6s. to that gentleman; it is now worth £28 or £30. . . .

HUGH REID."

EGG XVII. (Sale number fifteen.)

Sale catalogue No. 9609. An egg of the Great Auk, on April 13th, 1897.

Described in the catalogue as a "Fine egg of the Great Auk."

Egg XVII. "Lot A. Egg of the Great Auk. *A very fine and perfect one.* The above egg was bought with a specimen of the Great Auk from Mr. Field. The bird having been sold separately, the egg is now offered."

Bought by Mr. T. G. Middlebrook, of the "Edinburgh Castle," Camden Town, London, for **£294 0 0**

This egg was one of the three formerly in the possession of Mr. T. H. Potts, and was the one taken by him to New Zealand, (cf. p. 6). The following interesting history of this egg is given by Mr. Grieve in his 'Supplementary note on the Great Auk or Garefowl,' (Trans. Edin. Field Nat. and Micro. Soc., Vol. III., 1896-7, pp. 261-2). "The egg which was in the collection of the late Mr. T. H. Potts, who died very suddenly in 1888, was seen by me at the house of his widow, at Christchurch, New Zealand, who told me she was anxious to dispose of it. It was some years afterwards, about the beginning of 1891, purchased by Mr. Henry O. Forbes, then curator of the Canterbury Museum, Christchurch, N.Z., it was said for a friend in England. This is perhaps the only egg of *Alca impennis* that has ever been in the Southern Hemisphere, and it has now found its way back to England. It was in the collection of Mr. Leopold Field, 25 Brodrick Road, London, S.W. He sold it to Mr. Rowland Ward, F.Z.S., 166 Piccadilly, London."

Mr. Rowland Ward kindly informs me, he purchased the bird and egg from Mr. Field for 600 guineas, and that he subsequently repurchased the egg from Mr. Middlebrook, and disposed of it to Col. John E. Thayer.

Mr. Bidwell writes me, that these three eggs (Nos. I., II., and XVII. in this pamphlet), after being in the collection of the Vicomte de Barde for some thirty years, in 1825 passed with his collection to the Boulogne Museum. The curator exchanged them for an ostrich skin with Mr. James Gardner, Jun., who sold them on his arrival in London to Mr. T. H. Potts.

EGG XV. (Sale number sixteen.)

Sale catalogue No. 9647. An egg of the Great Auk, on July 27th, 1897.

Egg XV. - "Lot A. EGG OF THE GREAT AUK.
Taken in Iceland about 1830, by a
shipowner of St. Malo, who bequeathed it
to the Comte Raoul de Baracé, whose
collection was purchased by the Baron
d'Hamonville.

This specimen (slightly cracked), which, in
colouring and texture, is unique, was
figured in the Memoirs of the Société
Zoologique de France, in 1888, plate 6,
fig. C, and additional notes on its history
appeared in the Bulletin of the Société in
1891."

Bought by Mr. T. G. Middlebrook, of the
"Edinburgh Castle," Camden Town, London, for **£168 0 0**

This is the egg that was bought in these rooms by Messrs. Jay &
Co., on June 25th, 1895, for £173 5s. For an account of its previous
sale and history *cf.* pp. 18 and 19. It will be noted that the description
in the sale catalogue is copied word for word from that of June 25th,
1895.

The egg was afterwards obtained by Col. J. E. Thayer, through
Rowland Ward, Ltd., 166 (now 167) Piccadilly, London.

EGG XVIII. (Sale number seventeen.)

Sale catalogue No. 10,029. An egg of the Great Auk
on July 19th, 1899.

Egg XVIII. - "Lot 157. EGG OF THE GREAT AUK
(*Alca impennis*).

This is one of the three eggs formerly in the
collection of Comte Raoul de Baracé.

This specimen (slightly cracked) was figured
in the Memoirs of the Société Zoologique
de France, in 1888, plate, figure and
additional notes on its history appeared
in the Bulletin of the Société in 1891."

Bought by Mr. T. G. Middlebrook, of the
"Edinburgh Castle," Camden Town, London, for **£315 0 0**

This egg was depicted as fig. B, Pl. VI., in Baron d'Hamouville's "Note sur les quatre œufs d'*Alca impennis* appartenant à notre Collection Oölogique," (Mémoires Soc. Zool. de France, 1888, pp. 101—104), and the following remarks on the egg were given by the Baron in his "Addition à une note sur les quatre œufs du Pingouin brachyptère" (Mémoires Soc. Zool. de France, 1891, p. 35). "Planche VI., figure B. Cet œuf provient, comme les deux suivants de la collection du feu Raoul de Baracé. Il porte, presque au sommet du gros pôle une bande transversale, ayant environ six millimètres de largeur, de couleur roux pâle, et presque circulaire. En raison de cette régularité et de sa nuance rouille, je croyais tout d'abord que cette tache était accidentelle; aussi, l'ai-je omise sur la planche; mais M. Edward Bidwel [*sic*], spécialiste expérimenté, qui est venu d'Angleterre en Lorraine, exprès, pour visiter mes collections, pense, au contraire, qu'elle est naturelle, et quelques essais tentés avec des réactifs m'ont prouvé qu'il doit avoir raison. Je signale donc cette omission dans la planche qui, pour tout le reste, est absolument exacte. Ce spécimen, et celui désigné sur la lettre C viennent d'Islande, comme M. de Baracé nous l'apprend dans une lettre adressée par lui, le 13 janvier, 1867, à M. Rowley, où il lui dit les avoir reçus, plus de trente ans auparavant (soit vers 1834 ou 1835), d'un armateur qui habitait Saint-Malo. Dans mon premier article, j'ai dit que j'avais lieu de croire que c'était M. Hardy, armateur de pêche à Dieppe, et ornithologue distingué, qui devait avoir fourni ces œufs à M. de Baracé; mais comme il m'a été impossible de m'assurer si M. Hardy avait été, dans sa jeunesse, armateur à St.-Malo avant de l'être à Dieppe, ce point, sans grand importance d'ailleurs, ne peut être exactement élucidé."

TRANSLATION. "Addition to my note on the four eggs of the Great Auk in my collection which appeared in the Bulletin of the Zoological Society of France for 1888, *cf.* the Society's Bulletin for 1891, p. 35."

"Plate VI. figure B. This egg came as did the next two [depicted as figures C. and D.] from the collection of the late Raoul de Baracé. It has on the larger end a transverse band, nearly six millimetres in breadth, and of a pale red-brown colour and almost circular. On account of this regularity and its rust-coloured look, I thought at first that the mark might be accidental, so I omitted putting it in the figure: Mr. Bidwell, however, who has special knowledge of such matters, and who came from England to Lorraine, on purpose to see my collection, thinks that it is natural. I therefore beg to notify this omission in the figure of it on the plate, [VI. fig. B.], the markings, however, on the rest of the egg are absolutely correct. This specimen and the one marked C, [on the same plate] came from Iceland, as M. de Baracé informs us, in a letter written by him 13th January, 1867, to Mr. Rowley, in which he says he received them more than thirty years ago (1834 or 1835), from a shipowner of St. Malo. In my first article [Bull. French Zool. Soc. 1888] I said that I had reason to believe that it was M. Hardy, owner of a fishing vessel at Dieppe, and a well-known ornithologist, who had furnished M. de Baracé with these eggs, but I cannot be sure if M. Hardy had been in his younger days a shipowner at St. Malo before going to Dieppe, this is of little consequence, and the matter cannot be decided with any certainty."

I have been informed by Mr. Bidwell, that the above remarks by the Baron d'Hamouville with regard to the transverse band are not quite correct.

Mr. Middlebrook thus became the possessor of four eggs of the Great Auk, all of them purchased in these rooms, and three of them at consecutive sales; the price paid for them was £189, £239, £168 and £315, in all a sum of £911.

After the death of Mr. Middlebrook, this egg was disposed of by auction, by Messrs. Debenham, Storr and Sons, Ltd., of 26 King Street, Covent Garden, at the dispersal of the *Middlebrook Museum, when it failed to find a higher bid than £110, at which price it became the property of Rowland Ward, Ltd.,—*vide* p. 33 (Sales by auction otherwise than at Stevens' rooms)—who disposed of it to Col. John E. Thayer, for the Thayer Museum, Lancaster, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

EGGS XIX. and XIII. (Sale number eighteen.)

Two eggs of the Great Auk, on June 20th, 1900.

The first of the two eggs (lot A) is described in the sale catalogue No. 10,204 as "probably the finest ever offered for sale."

Egg XIX. - "Lot A. An unrecorded egg from a French collection. This is the finest specimen known of this special type of marking."

Bought by Mr. James Gardner, of Oxford Street, for **£330 15 0**

Mr. Bidwell tells me that he has every reason to believe that this is the egg referred to by M. Léon Olf-Galliard—*vide* "Ibis," 1862 p. 302—as the measurements and description agree exactly, and it was sent from Lyons, though the owner's name was never disclosed.

Egg XIII. - "Lot B. Egg of the Great Auk. This egg formed Lot 75 at the sale in these rooms on April 24th, 1894. It was one of the two eggs purchased in a box of fossils at an auction in Kent."

Purchased by Mr. James Gardner, of Oxford Street,
London, for **£189 0 0**

Both these eggs became the property of the late Sir J. H. Greville Smyth, Bart., of Ashton Court, Somerset.

At the sale in these rooms on April 24th, 1894, Mr. Henry Munt had given £183 15 0 for the second egg—*vide* p. 15.

*The Eggs were on show for some time at Middlebrook's Free Museum in the "Edinburgh Castle," Mornington Road, Regent's Park, N.W. I have in my possession an illustrated handbook [2nd edition] to this museum, which contains on p. 18, a picture of the owner standing beside a table or stand with four shelves, the lower one having on it his four eggs of the Great Auk.—T. P.

EGG XX. (Sale number nineteen.)

A Great Auk's egg, on October 29th, 1901.

Sale catalogue No. 10,422.

Egg XX. - "Lot 235. A splendid specimen of the Great Auk's egg, being the last of four belonging to the late Baron d'Hamonville."

Bought by Mr. Herbert Massey, of Ivy Lea,

Burnage, Didsbury, Cheshire, for **£252 0 0**

Mr. Edward Bidwell exhibited this egg at the meeting of the British Ornithologist's Club on 13th February, 1901. The Bulletin of the Club, No. LXXVII., p. 49, states that "Mr. E. Bidwell exhibited, on behalf of Mr. Henry Stevens, an egg of the Great Auk (*Plautus impennis*)," and gives the following history of the specimen. 'This egg was in 1855 in the collection of M. le Baron Henri de Vèze, who had purchased it of Parzudaki of Paris. In 1858, it was sold, through the agency of Fairmaire of Paris, to M. le Comte Raoul de Baracé, of Angers, and after his death it was purchased with the Baracé collection in March, 1887, by M. le Baron Charles d'Hamonville, whose decease last year has again brought the egg into the market.' "

MOUNTED SPECIMEN IV. and

EGG XXI.

(Sale number twenty.)

A mounted specimen of the Great Auk, and also an egg of the bird, on April 17th, 1902. Sale catalogue No. 10,502.

Bird IV. - "Lot C. Fine specimen of the Great Auk, under glass shade."

Bought by Mr. J. B. Nichols, of Parliament Mansions,

Victoria Street, London, for **£315 0 0**

The bird was from the collection of the late Mr. Robert Champley, of Scarborough. Mr. Symington Grieve ("Great Auk or Garefowl," App. pp. 21-22) states that "Professor Newton wrote to Blasius a short while ago as follows:—'Mr. Champley has only a single skin of *Alca impennis*. It was bought along with an egg, direct from Mecklenburg (as I think in 1860). I have good reason for believing that both skin and egg came originally from Iceland.' "

Egg XXI. - "Lot D. An egg of the Great Auk."

Bought by Mr. William Stirling, of Fairburn,

Muir-of-Ord, N.B., for **£252 0 0**

The egg like the bird was from the collection of the late Mr. Robert Champley, of Scarborough.

The following history of this egg is from an account furnished by Mr. Robert Champley to Mr. Symington Grieve ("Recent Notes on the Great Auk," *Trans. Edin. Field Nat. and Micro. Soc.*, Nov. 23, 1887, p. 115). The egg was the fifth in Mr. Champley's series of nine eggs of the Great Auk, and was bought by him in 1864, of Ward, the naturalist, in Vere Street, for £25. It had been offered to Mr. Champley by Fairmaire, of Paris, but owing to absence from home, the letter did not reach Mr. Champley till some time after it was written, and Fairmaire not receiving an answer, disposed of the egg to Ward. It is described in the Champley 'Egg-Register' as "perfect and well-marked."

EGG XXII. (Sale number twenty-one.)

An egg of the Great Auk, on May 15th, 1902.

Sale catalogue No. 10,515.

Egg XXII. - "Lot A. A specimen of the Great Auk's egg. One of the most beautiful and richly marked specimens ever offered for sale."

Knocked down to "Mr. Macgregor" for **£304 10 0**

The egg was not however, really sold, the reserve price not having been reached.

This egg was one of the nine Great Auks' eggs, at one time in the possession of the late Mr. Robert Champley, of Scarborough. Its history, like that of Mr. Stirling's egg (No. XXI.), is taken from Mr. Champley's letter above quoted to Mr. Symington Grieve, and it is described as being the first specimen procured by Mr. Robert Champley. The history reads thus:—"No. 1, figured by Thienemann.—The above egg and the first I obtained, came into my possession in the following singular manner. I had written to Mr. Newman, the editor of 'The Zoologist,' a letter asking him if he could inform me what had become of the egg that belonged to the late Mr. Yarrell, I received no reply; but my letter to Mr. Newman, unknown to myself, was inserted on the outer cover of 'The Zoologist.' Some months after I received a letter from Kunz, Leipzig. He informed me he had seen my query respecting Yarrell's egg, and said he had an egg for sale. Would I have it? He wrote a second letter giving the price, £18 (July, 1859). Five letters refer to this transaction. The egg, from its beautiful shape, is the finest known. This egg was purchased

When at Scarborough in the summer of 1880, I called at 13 The Crescent, and the late Alderman Robert Champley kindly showed me his nine eggs of the Great Auk, together with the mounted specimen of the bird, they were kept in a huge safe. On the decease of Mr. Champley, the bird and eggs became the property of his daughter, Miss Champley. Seven of the eggs were eventually acquired in 1902 by the firm of Rowland Ward, Ltd., Piccadilly, London.—T. P.

from Theodore Schultz, in 1857, he then residing at Neuhaldensleben, Saxony, (a short description of which appears in 'Cabanis,' January, 1860). Schultz purchased it from a person of the same name then residing at Leipzig. He received it with six others from Iceland."

This egg is now in the collection of Mr. Hugh Gurney Barclay, of Colney Hall, Norwich.

EGG VIII. (Sale number twenty-two.)

An egg of the Great Auk, on May 19th, 1904.

Sale catalogue No. 10,825.

Egg VIII. - "Lot A. An Egg of the Great Auk."

Bought in for - - - - - £200 0 0

This egg the property of Mr. Heatley Noble, of Temple Combe, Henley-on-Thames, was put up for auction at Stevens' on April 27th, 1869. As the historical description of the egg given in the above catalogue of the first portion of Mr. Heatley Noble's collection had some slight errors in it, subsequently corrected at the sale of the final portion of the collection on March 16th, 1905, I have thought it better to defer recording its history until the latter sale.

EGG VIII. (Sale number twenty-three.)

An egg of the Great Auk, on March 16th, 1905.

Described in the sale catalogue No. 10,964 as "a fine specimen of the Great Auk's egg."

Egg VIII. - "Lot A. GREAT AUK'S EGG.

This egg was acquired by the late Mr. A. D. Bartlett from either Dunn or Mr. Hoy, about 1838. It was sold by him in 1842 to Mr. E. Maude for £2, and repurchased in or about 1851; after which it was sold to Dr. Nathaniel Troughton in 1852, for £5 (with a bird for £28); on April 27th [1869] Dr. Troughton's collection was sold at Stevens' Auction Rooms, and the egg was bought by the second Lord Garvagh for £64, Lot 253. After Lord Garvagh's death in 1871, the egg passed into the possession of the Dowager

Lady Garvagh, who died in 1891, when it became the property of her daughter, the Hon. Emmeline R. Canning, who died on February 9th, 1898, and at whose residence, 50 Belgrave Road, Mr. J. E. Harting found it. On April 7th, 1898, it was purchased by Mr. H. Noble. This specimen was erroneously supposed by Grieve (*Hist. of the Gt. Auk*, p. 106) to have been broken to pieces through the carelessness of a servant. At the time of his death, Lord Garvagh possessed three eggs, two of which he had purchased from Mr. Potts in 1853, and it was one of these (now in the possession of Mr. G. F. Rowley) that had been broken, to replace which he bought this egg in 1869. The Troughton egg had simply been lost sight of, and remained undiscovered for more than twenty-five years. Mr. Bidwell has a water-colour sketch, made in 1861, before it became the property of Lord Garvagh, which places its identity beyond doubt."

Bought by Mr. William Stirling, of Fairburn,
Muir-of-Ord, N.B., for **£210 0 0**

EGG XIV. (Sale number twenty-four.)

Sale catalogue No. 11,095.

An egg of the Great Auk, on January 17th, 1906.

Egg XIV. "Lot A. AN EGG OF THE GREAT
AUK. A finely marked egg in perfect
condition, blown with a small hole at each
end."

Bought in at **£210 0 0**

This egg, the property of Mr. T. G. Middlebrook, was formerly in the collection of Sir William Milner, Bart., it afterwards became the property of Sir F. Milner, Bart., who sent it for sale at Stevens' on April 23rd, 1895, when it was bought by Mr. Middlebrook, for £189—*vide* p. 18.

EGG XXIII. (Sale number twenty-five.)

An egg of the Great Auk, on February 9th, 1909.

Described in sale catalogue No. 11,579 as "a fine specimen of the egg of the Great Auk."

Egg XXIII. - "Lot A. AN EGG OF THE GREAT AUK. From 1847 to 1865 this egg was in the collection of the well-known French ornithologist, Mons. J. Hardy, of Dieppe. It then passed by will into the possession of his son, Mons. M. Hardy, of Perigueux, who in turn bequeathed it to his daughter, Madame Ussel, of Eu, who has sent it here for sale."

Bought by Mr. R. Hay Fenton, of 6 Lombard Street,
London, for **£199 10 0**

The egg was exhibited at the meeting of the British Ornithologists' Club, on June 17th, 1908, by Mr. E. Bidwell, who pointed out that it bears an inscription in ink 'Pingouin,' the French name for the bird; this is believed to have been made by Dufresne, the keeper of the King's Cabinet in Paris, as an egg in the Edinburgh Museum, which undoubtedly passed through his hands, is similarly marked.

EGG XXIV. (Sale number twenty-six.)

An egg of the Great Auk, on June 7th, 1910.

Described in the sale catalogue No. 11,820 as a "beautifully marked egg."

Egg XXIV. - "Lot A. The property of Mr. Evelyn Shirley. EGG OF THE GREAT AUK. This beautifully marked egg, the very finest of its type, formed part of a Natural History collection, which was the property of Mr. W. Sheppard, of Bristol, in 1807, and was purchased by Mr. Shirley, of Ettington, about 1820."

Bought by Mr. E. L. Armbricht, of Duke Street,
Grosvenor Square, London, for **£262 10 0**

Mr. Symington Grieve, in his Supplementary Note (Trans. Edin. Field Nat. and Micro. Soc., Vol. III., 1896-7) wrote on page 263:—"Stratford-on-Avon: Ettington Park, Mr. S. E. Shirley.—This egg is said to have

been formerly in a large collection of natural history specimens belonging to Mr. Shepherd, of Bristol, and, having been labelled as the egg of a penguin, remained unnoticed for some eighty years. Writing me on 18th December, 1896, Mr. S. E. Shirley says: 'My egg has been here many years, and is believed to have formed part of a large collection of birds, eggs, heads, feet, etc., bought by my grandfather early this century, but the catalogue of the collection marked 'Catalogue of the Collection 6 of W. Shepherd, Bristol, 1807,' does not include the Great Auk egg; but it is badly done and other eggs are also omitted. The egg is a very fine one, boldly and richly marked, and of good size, quite perfect, with the exception that it is blown with a rather large hole. I fear this is all I can tell you about it. It was originally in a small cardboard case with a glass lid, and was stuck to the back of the case in quite the primitive style of egg-collectors.'

A photograph of this egg was taken by Mr. Bidwell, in July, 1891, when at Ettington, and he also exhibited the egg at a meeting of the British Ornithologists' Club, on 25th May, 1910, when it was described in the Bulletin of the Society (No. CLXI., p. 115) as "one of the finest zoned specimens richly streaked with black" and "the property of Mr. Evelyn Shirley."

A picture of the Great Auction Room at 38 King Street, Covent Garden, London, while Mr. Henry Stevens was selling this egg, forms the frontispiece of this pamphlet - *vide* Pl. I.

On June 15th, 1902, an egg of the Great Auk (from the Champley collection) was advertised for auction at Stevens' Rooms, but as it was not sent up for sale it was "passed."

Sales by Public Auction of Mounted Specimens and of Eggs of the Great Auk, which have taken place elsewhere in Great Britain than at 38 King Street, Covent Garden (Stevens' Rooms).

MOUNTED SPECIMEN I.

(Sale number twenty-seven.)

A mounted specimen of the Great Auk, on May 5th, 1806, at the dispersal by public auction of the contents of the Leverian Museum, in the Museum Building, on the Surrey side of Blackfriars Bridge. Described in the sale catalogue as :

Bird I. - "Lot 47. LARGEST AUK *Alca impennis*."

Bought by Mr. Edward Donovan, for his Museum
(*cf.* p. 5) at Catherine Street, Strand, for £10 10 0

("The Leverian Museum was the property of Sir Ashton Lever, a Lancashire gentleman of old family, long settled near Manchester. Begun by him in his youth, it soon reached enormous proportions, and though a man of fortune he found himself greatly embarrassed by the amount he had spent. In hopes of making some profit he removed his collection to London, to a house in Leicester Square, supposed to have been that which is now known as Saville House. It was thrown open to the public on payment of an admission fee in or about 1775, and became for some years a fashionable resort. After a time its popularity decreased and people neglected poor Sir Ashton's Museum, which it is said cost him £30,000 to form. His creditors became clamorous and he was anxious to sell. I have heard that it was offered to the Trustees of the British Museum, but the government of the day would not look at it. Finally a private lottery (those were the days of lotteries) was arranged for its disposal, and in 1785 the prize was drawn by Mr. James Parkinson, a dentist, who took not the least interest in Natural History Museums. A building was however put up for it on the Surrey side of Blackfriars Bridge, but it failed to draw, owing to the unsuitableness of the spot. Things grew worse and worse with Mr. Parkinson, and at last in 1806 the Museum was sold by auction piecemeal. The sale went on at intervals from the 5th May to the 19th July, lasting for 62 days, and the number of lots was 7,524 [about the same number as in the Bullock sale]. Among the names of the buyers are several which are well known as those of the chief naturalists of the time—Pennant, Latham, Hawath, Macleay, Donovan, and "Thompson," under which name a good many purchases were effected for the then Lord Stanley, who afterwards became thirteenth Earl Derby and President of the Zoological Society, and formed that magnificent collection which at his death in 1851, he bequeathed to the town of Liverpool. There also occurs very frequently the name of Fichtel, a naturalist, who acted as commissioner for the Emperor Francis I. of Austria, and secured a large number of specimens for the Imperial Museum of Vienna, where as Herr August Von Pelzeln has informed us [*ibis*, 1873, p. 14] most of them still remain. But there was no representative of the British Museum, and this is the more to be regretted since the Leverian Museum contained the greater part of the specimens, whether Zoological or Ethnological, that were collected on the three memorable voyages of Captain Cook, specimens which were of inestimable value, and are (for fortunately some of them still exist) very properly so regarded by their present custodians,

the curators of the Museums of Liverpool and Vienna, to which we can almost alone look for the scanty remnants of all the labours of Cook and his companions. The prices obtained were by no means high, and indicate that there was little competition. I have not been at the trouble of adding up the amount, but I should at a guess, say that the lots did not average five shillings each, which would come to something less than £1,900 for a collection that is said to have cost £30,000." This account is taken from the late Professor Newton's *Notes on some Old Museums*, a paper read by him before the Museums Association, at their meeting at Cambridge, in 1891. The old Museum building in the Blackfriars' Road—known as the Rotunda—is still standing.)

MOUNTED SPECIMEN V.,
EGGS XXV. and XXVI.
(Sale number twenty-eight.)

A mounted specimen of the bird, and an egg, on May 6th, 1819.

At the sale of Mr. William Bullock's collection—The London Museum, or Pantherium, in the Egyptian Temple (or Hall as it came to be called), 22 Piccadilly, London. The bird and egg were sold together, and described in the sale catalogue (5th day's sale) as :

Bird V. - "Lot 43. Great Auk (*Alca impennis*), male; a very fine specimen of this exceedingly rare bird, killed at Papa Westra, in the Orkneys. The only one taken on the British coast for many years: and an Egg XXV. - Egg, in a glass case."

Bought by Dr. Leach (Keeper of the Zoological Department of the British Museum) for **£16 15 6**

Egg XXVI.

Described in the same sale catalogue (21st day's sale) on June 3rd, 1819, as

"Lot 123. Egg of the Great Auk *Alca impennia* [*sic*] and other rare British eggs."

Also bought by Dr. Leach (of the British Museum) for **17s.** or **12s.**

Professor Newton, in his copy of the sale catalogue, has 12s. marked as the price paid for Lot 123, but Dr. R. Bowdler Sharpe ("History of the Collections contained in the Natural History Departments of the British Museum," Vol. II. p. 234) puts the price paid by Dr. Leach at 17s.

Both the bird and the two eggs are in all probability those in the National Collection. Mr. Eugene W. Oates, in his "Catalogue of the collection of Birds' Eggs in the British Museum," Vol. I. p. 165; writes that "The British Museum possesses two eggs of the Great Auk. These two examples were glued down to boards and exposed to view

in the general gallery for many years: they are consequently bleached and valueless. Their history is doubtful. I quote Mr. Symington Grieve's account ('Great Auk or Garefowl,' App. p. 29) of these two specimens:—"British Museum. These two eggs probably came from Bullock's collection. At the sale of Bullock's collection in 1819, two eggs were included in the catalogue (one on p. 31 and the other at p. 131). Both were bought by Leach, the keeper of the Zoological portion of the British Museum, and these are presumably the two eggs now in the Museum. One of them was actually packed in the same box in which Bullock's bird from Papa Westra was; but that does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that the egg came from Papa Westra. To judge from its age, Newfoundland is probably the place of its origin."

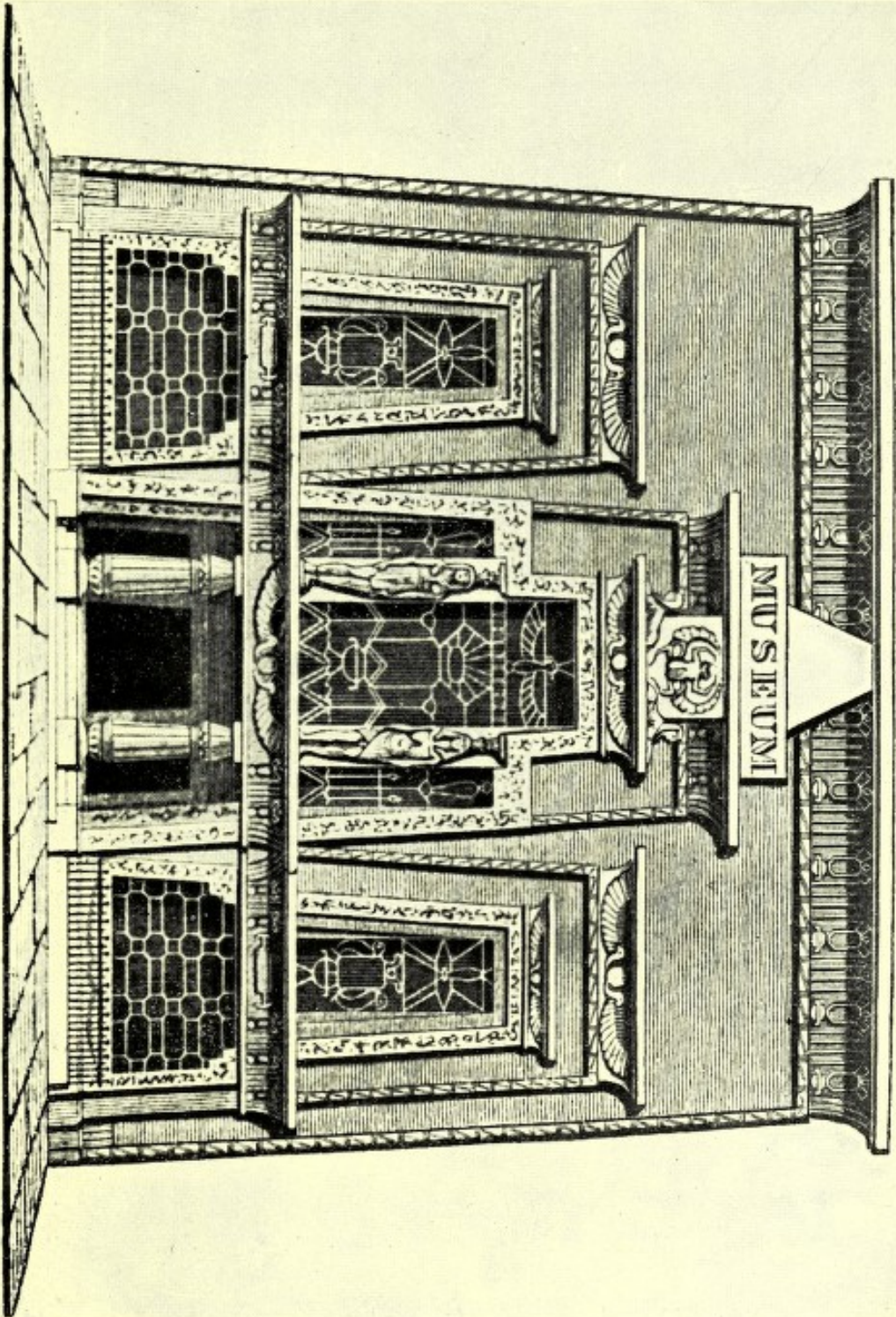
(The Egyptian Hall having been lately* demolished I give on Pl. V. a picture of it as it appeared in one of the many editions of Mr. Bullock's Guides or "Companions to the Museum." I am indebted to Professor Newton's paper "Notes on some Old Museums," for the following information. "Everyone in London knows the Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly but probably very few know that it was built for a Museum, and was so used for the best part of ten years by the once celebrated William Bullock (jeweller and silversmith to H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester), of Church Street, Liverpool, where for many years he had an exhibition called the Liverpool Museum. In 1812 Bullock moved his vast collection to the Egyptian Temple, 22 Piccadilly, which had been built for its reception. In some of the many editions of the guide book or 'Companion' to Mr. Bullock's London Museum and Pantheon, it is stated that the objects on view were 'collected during 17 years of arduous research and at the expense of £30,000 [the sum that was said to have been spent on the Leverian Museum] and now open for public inspection in the Egyptian Temple, just erected for its reception in Piccadilly, London.' In 1819 Mr. Bullock determined to sell the contents of his Museum, which now comprised nearly 15,000 objects, which for the purpose of sale by auction were made up into 7,500 lots: the sale took place in the Egyptian Temple (or Hall as it came to be called). Mr. Bullock was his own auctioneer. The sale lasted twenty-six days, beginning on the 29th of April and ending on the 11th of June. The sale was a great success. Such prices had certainly never been obtained before, and perhaps have never been obtained since. The competition was keen. There were present at the sale Dr. Leach from the British Museum, Dr. Adams attended for the Edinburgh Museum, Professor Temminck for Leyden, Mr. Fichtel for Vienna, while Baron Laugier represented Paris, and Professor Lichtenstein, Berlin. Among other buyers occur well known names—Lord Stanley, Sir Walter Scott, Sabine, Swainson, Vigors, Dr. Goodall, Sir Thomas Ackland, Capt. Browne, Lord Temple, and amongst the dealers Leadbeater, Warwick, etc.")

EGGS IX. and X. (Sale number twenty-nine.)

Two eggs of the Great Auk on May 8th, 1880.

Eggs IX. & X. Two eggs of the Great Auk were sold at Mr. Dowell's auction rooms in Edinburgh, on May 8th, 1880. They were bought by Mr. R. Small, a dealer in natural history wares in that city, for thirty-two shillings,

*Mr. J. M. Maskelyne (Maskelyne and Devant) in answer to my enquiries, kindly informed me that he "vacated the Egyptian Hall in December, 1904, after an occupation of nearly 33 years, and that the building was demolished the following spring."



THE LONDON MUSEUM, IN PICCADILLY, ERECTED A. D. 1812.



and were sent by him a few weeks later to Stevens' rooms in London, where they were both purchased at the sale on July 2nd by Lord Lilford, who gave £100 for one egg and £107 2s. for the other—*vide* pp. 9 and 10.

EGGS XII. and XIII. (Sale number thirty.)

Two eggs of the Great Auk on March 14th, 1894.

Eggs XII. & XIII. Two eggs of the Great Auk were disposed of by auction at a sale of the contents of the Little Hermitage, near Rochester, in Kent, on 14th March, 1894. They formed part of a lot in the sale catalogue, described as "a collection of shells and fossils," which was knocked down to Mr. Wallace Hewitt for thirty-six shillings. They were afterwards sent for sale to Stevens', when one egg was bought for the sum of £273 0s. 0d. and the other for £189 15s. 0d., a total of £456 15s. 0d. For fuller account, *vide* pp. 15 and 16.

EGG XVIII. (Sale number thirty-one.)

Messrs. Debenham, Storr & Sons, Ltd., sold a Great Auk's egg at their rooms, 26 King Street, Covent Garden, London, on January 30th, 1908, at the dispersal of the contents of the "Middlebrook Museum."

It was described in the sale catalogue as "of more than average size."

Egg XVIII. "Lot 131. This is one of the three eggs formerly in the collection of Comte Raoul de Baracé, and which afterwards became the property of Baron d'Hamonville. It was offered for sale by auction on July 19th, 1899, when it realised the sum of £315.

The specimen (slightly cracked) was placed on record in the memoirs of the Société Zoologique de France, plate, figure and additional dates [*sic*] on its history, appeared in the Bulletin of the Société in 1891."

Bought by Rowland Ward, Ltd., Piccadilly, London, for **£110 0 0**

This is the egg which the late Mr. T. G. Middlebrook purchased for £315, it was thus knocked down for a little more than a third of its former price.

For history of this egg, *vide* pp. 21, 22 and 23.

A SHORT SUMMARY OF THE SALES AT STEVENS' ROOMS.

The eggs and birds are arranged in chronological order of sales; and when the same egg is offered for sale a second or third time, it appears under its original number.

SALE OF EGGS AT STEVENS' ROOMS.

No. of Sale.	No. of Egg.	Date of Sale.	Name of Purchaser.	Price given.		
				£	s.	d.
2..	I...	24 May, 1853..	Lord Garvagh.....	30	0	0
...	II...	.. ..	..Bought in for	29	0	0
3..	II...	7 April, 1854..	Lord Garvagh.....	20	0	0
4..	III...	5 Dec., 1856..	Mr. Frederick Bond	21	0	0
5..	IV...	11 July, 1865..	Rev. G. W. Braikenridge ..	29	0	0
...	V...	.. ..	..Mr. G. Dawson Rowley	33	0	0
...	VI...	.. ..	..Rev. Henry Burney	31	10	0
...	VII...	.. ..	..Mr. A. W. Crichton.....	29	0	0
6..	VIII...	27 April, 1869..	Lord Garvagh.. for 60 0 0 or 64 0 0			
7..	IX...	2 July, 1880..	Lord Lilford	100	0	0
...	X...	.. ..	.. .. ..	107	2	0
8..	VI...	13 Dec., 1887..	Mr. Leopold Field	168	0	0
9..	XI...	12 Mar., 1888..	Mr James Gardner	225	0	0
10..	III...	22 Feb., 1894..	Sir Vauncey H. Crewe, Bart.	315	0	0
11..	XII...	24 April, 1894..	Mr. Herbert Massey	273	0	0
...	XIII...	.. ..	..Mr. Henry Munt	183	15	0
12..	XVI...	23 April, 1895..	Mr. T. G. Middlebrook	189	0	0
13..	XV...	25 June, 1895..	Messrs. Jay & Co.	178	5	0
14..	XVI...	20 April, 1896..	Mr. William Newall.....	168	0	0
15..	XVII...	13 April, 1897..	Mr. T. G. Middlebrook	294	0	0
16..	XV...	27 July, 1897..	Mr. T. G. Middlebrook	168	0	0
17..	XVIII...	19 July, 1899..	Mr. T. G. Middlebrook	315	0	0
18..	XIX...	20 June, 1900..	Mr. James Gardner	330	15	0
...	XIII...	.. ..	.. .. ..	189	0	0
19..	XX...	29 Oct., 1901..	Mr. Herbert Massey	252	0	0
20..	XXI...	17 April, 1902..	Mr. William Stirling.....	252	0	0
21..	XXII...	15 May, 1902..	Bought in at	304	0	0
22..	VIII...	19 May, 1904..	.. .. ..	200	0	0
23..	..	16 Mar., 1905..	Mr. William Stirling	210	0	0
24..	XIV...	17 Jan., 1906..	Bought in at	210	0	0
25..	XXIII...	9 Feb., 1909..	Mr. R. Hay Fenton	199	10	0
26..	XXIV...	7 June 1910..	Mr. E. L. Armbrecht	262	10	0

SALE OF MOUNTED SPECIMENS AT
STEVENS' ROOMS.

No. of Sale.	No. of Bird.	Date of Sale.	Name of Purchaser.	Price given.		
				£	s.	d.
1..	I...	6 May, 1818..	.....	.....	.....	.....
6..	II...	27 April, 1869..	Mr. Thomas Cooke.....	94	10	0
12..	III...	23 April, 1895..	Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh..	350	0	0
20..	IV..	17 April, 1902..	Mr. J. B. Nichols	315	0	0

SALES BY PUBLIC AUCTION, ELSEWHERE
THAN AT STEVENS' ROOMS.

No. of Sale.	Eggs and Birds.	Date of Sale.	Where sold.	Name of Purchaser.	Price given.
27..	Bird I.	5 May, 1806..	At the Leverian Museum, Blackfriars, London	Mr. E. Donovan	10 10 0
28..	Bird V. and Egg XXV.	6 May, 1819..	At the Egyptian Temple, Piccadilly, London	Dr. Leach, for the British Museum	16 15 6
..	Egg XXVI.	3 June, 1819..	do.	do.	12/- or 17/-
29..	Eggs IX. & X.	8 May, 1880..	Messrs. Dowell's Rooms, Edinburgh	Mr. R. Small	1 12 0
30..	Eggs XII. & XIII.	14 Mar., 1894..	The Little Hermitage, near Rochester	Mr. Wallace Hewett..	1 16 0
31..	Egg XVIII.	30 Jan., 1908..	Messrs. Debenham, Storr & Son, London	Rowland Ward, Ltd.	110 0 0

The question is so often asked as to the number of skins (this of course includes mounted specimens) and eggs of the Great Auk that may be said to be still in existence. No one can answer this question better than Mr. Edward Bidwell, and in reply to a letter of mine, he has kindly informed me, that so far as he knows, there are 80 skins, and 73 eggs. Of these eggs he has photographs of 71 taken to scale under his personal supervision.