

many published drawings and sometimes provided substitute plates in later volumes. In 1839, he published expanded versions of volumes one and two which had revised plates and new accounts, surreptitiously using the original title-pages, a fact that went undiscovered until 1976 when the reprint of his second edition was issued. By the time volume four was published (1840), Holbrook had become so thoroughly dissatisfied with the whole project that he abandoned it in favor of a new edition (1842), with 147 handcolored plates, in which the whole was properly organized taxonomically. Even then, however, he continued to authorize new and better plates, which were freely substituted over the years that this edition was in print. Thus, rarely do two copies agree in all particulars.

• *References*: "A Memoir of Dr. John Edwards Holbrook," by T. L. Ogier, Med. Soc. South Carolina, Charleston, 13 pages, 1871; ["Eulogy on Dr. J. E. Holbrook"], by L. Agassiz, Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., 1870-1871: 347-351, 1872; "Biographical Memoir of John Edwards Holbrook, 1794-1871," by T. Gill, Biogr. Mem. U.S. Natl. Acad. Sci., 5: 47-77, 1905; "John Edwards Holbrook," by H. L. Clark, Dict. Amer. Biogr., 5: 129-130, 1932; "John Edwards Holbrook, Father of American Herpetology," by R. D. Worthington and P. H. Worthington, p. xiii-xxvii. *In* Holbrook's North American Herpetology, repr. ed., Soc. Study Amphib. Rept., Athens (Ohio), 1976. • *Portrait* (after 1865): Courtesy Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University (see also frontispiece). • *Signature* (1837): Adler collection (see also page 4). • *Note*: The year of Holbrook's birth has been in dispute. Some authorities give 1796 or even 1795. The Worthingtons, Holbrook's most recent biographers, followed Ogier in accepting 1796 and cited as supporting evidence the date given on Holbrook's tombstone. The date on the tombstone probably originated with Ogier, Holbrook's closest friend, and thus it may not be independent confirmation. Holbrook had no children and his wife had died in 1863; thus, there were no immediate family in Charleston at the time of his interment there to confirm his date of birth. Ogier also gave the day of birth incorrectly as 31 December. As Gill has pointed out, Ogier seemed to confuse Holbrook's date of birth with that of his younger brother, Silas Holbrook (born 1796). All but one of the biographies of Holbrook published during his lifetime gave his birthdate as 1794. Moreover, it seems more likely that he would have graduated from undergraduate college at the age of 20 and from medical school at age 23 (if born in 1794), rather than two years younger in age. Independent evidence is provided by dates in the Holbrook family bible, which gives Holbrook's birth date as "Born December 30, 1794" (recently confirmed for me by Claire Holbrook Cowell and Bertram Holbrook Holland, who are Holbrook's great, great niece and nephew).

GRAY, John Edward (1800-1875).

Gray is justly regarded as founder of the zoological collections at the British Museum. Although having broad interests in natural history, he gave particular attention to reptiles. Gray was born at Walsall, Staffordshire, on 12 February 1800, and began medical training at the age of 16 at St. Bartholomew's and Middlesex hospitals in London.



John Edward Gray

His early interest was botany, but piqued by his rejection for membership in the Linnean Society he turned to zoology. He gave up his medical practice in 1823 and was hired in 1824 by J. G. Children, Keeper of the Zoological Collections at the British Museum, to catalogue the reptiles. Thus began Gray's lifelong association with the museum from which he retired only in the December before his death, in London, on 7 March 1875.

Gray eventually succeeded Children as keeper (1840) and during his tenure it is said that the museum added one million specimens to its collection, for which accomplishment the University of Munich awarded Gray an honorary Ph.D. in 1852. The building of this collection was the great work of his life and it was Gray also who began the important series of catalogues of the museum's specimens. He published nearly 1200 titles, mainly on zoology, but these were often uncritical and repetitious in content. He was also an inveterate coiner of scientific names, many of which have no meaning in any language. Gray was a leading member of the London scientific establishment and was a founder or officer of several of its societies; he was elected Fellow of the Royal Society in 1832. In addition, he took an active part in questions of social and educational reform, and apparently was the first to propose a uniform rate of postage to be prepaid by means of stamps.

Gray published numerous books partly or wholly on herpetological topics. He described many new species from