

Hans-Joachim Schlieben*, collector extraordinary

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ABSTRACT

Hans-Joachim Eberhardt Schlieben was born in Germany in 1902. Between 1930 and 1935 he collected plants in Tanzania and since 1955 in Southern Africa, on Madagascar, the Mascarenes, the Comoro Islands and the Seychelles. Almost 400 of the approximately 13 000 numbers which he has collected have been described as new.

Résumé

HANS-JOACHIM SCHLIEBEN, RECOLTEUR EXTRAORDINAIRE

Hans-Joachim Eberhardt Schlieben est né en Allemagne en 1902. Entre 1930 et 1935 il a récolté des plantes en Tanzanie et depuis 1955 en Afrique australe, à Madagascar, aux Mascareignes, aux Comores et aux Seychelles. Pres de 400 nombres parmi les 13 000 qu'il a ainsi récoltés ont été décrites comme nouvelles.

"Captivating travel accounts, lessons in geography and biology and, not least, philately stirred in me, even as a schoolboy the desire to visit distant lands and their people, especially the old German colonies with their lush primeval forests and sun-drenched steppes". Thus he wrote in 1938 in a booklet on his Mt Kilimanjaro experiences looking back over the travels of his youth and the historical plant collecting expeditions in East Africa.

Hans-Joachim Eberhardt Schlieben was born at Waldheim, Saxony, Germany on 26 May 1902, the son of a medical doctor. After obtaining a horticultural diploma, he gained experience in practical gardening in Holland, England, France and Algeria, which he visited between 1923 and 1928. During the next two years he studied at the Horticultural College at Geisenheim/Rhein and obtained a further diploma. He continued his travels in central and southern Europe and the Mediterranean countries visiting many botanical gardens and horticultural establishments. His keen interest in photography and writing resulted in numerous illustrated articles in journals devoted to gardening. The royalties he received helped to finance further travels.

In 1930 his childhood dreams came true (Fig. 2) when he journeyed to Tanganyika Territory (Tanzania) to collect plants for the Botanical Museum Berlin-Dahlem which was then under the directorship of Dr L. Diels. He also collected for several other European herbaria and thus ten or even more duplicates were gathered of the majority of his numbers.

In Tanzania he met up with his only brother who had left for Africa in 1926 and who had later settled in East Africa as a farmer. His only sister accompanied him on his expeditions from 1930 to 1932. Schlieben collected widely in Tanzania (Table 1) and included in his journeys areas such as the Uluguru Mountains, the Mahenge Plateau and the Lindi District which were botanically virtually unknown. During 1933 and 1934 he lived on Mt Kilimanjaro for seven months and collected almost 1 000 numbers. Here he was visited by Peter Greenway who was working at the Agricultural Research Station at Amani at the time. The last months of his stay in Tanzania were spent in the Lindi District in the south of the country. In August 1935 he returned to Germany via Rhodesia and South Africa where he paid short visits to the Botanical Gardens at Kirstenbosch and Stellenbosch.

TABLE 1. Schlieben collections (1930-1935)

Coll. No.	Dates	Region
1-1533	2.12.30-30.11.31..	Iringa Distr. (Lupembe: grassy highlands with remnants of primeval forest).
1534-2270	1.12.31-31.5.32...	Mehenge Distr. (Lupembe to Mahenge, Mahenge Plateau, Upogoro Mountains).
2271-2692	1.6.32-24.8.32....	From Mahenge via Ulanga-Utete to Mafia Island.
2693-4262	4.9.32-1.9.33.....	Morogoro Distr. (Uluguru and Nguru Mountains).
4263-4288	15.9.33-20.11.33..	Motor safari via Uganda-Keja to Mt Kilimanjaro.
4289-5783	27.11.33-1.6.34...	Moshi Distr. (Mt Kilimanjaro).
5784-6610	20.8.34-15.7.35...	Lindi Distr. (Lake Lutamba, Rondo and Makonde Plateaux).
6611-6932	Aug. 35-Dec. 35....	Zaire, Rhodesia, South Africa, West Africa.

During his five years in Tanzania Schlieben collected close on 7 000 numbers and more than 50 000 specimens. Most of his first set in the Berlin-Dahlem Herbarium was destroyed during World War II. Fortunately duplicates of most of his collections are preserved in other herbaria such as Kew, British Museum, Paris, Brussels, Geneva, Zürich, Madrid, Lisbon and other institutes including the National Herbarium, Pretoria. The most complete set of his Tanzanian collections is housed at Kew. Until 1955 he remained in Germany where he worked for several years at the Forestry Institute at Hamburg/Reinbek. Here he investigated germination and seedling development of tropical trees and started a collection of wooden utensils which he curated.

Throughout these years he continued writing articles and giving illustrated lectures. In 1941 he published a book on his travels in East Africa entitled "Deutsch Ost-Afrika einmal ganz anders." It consists of 436 pages, is illustrated by 182 of his own photos and three maps and was published by Neumann, Berlin. Together with K. Helbig he wrote a book on Australia based on the diary of Ludwig Leichhardt, one of the first explorers of central Australia between 1844 and 1847. This work was published in 1959 by Brockhaus, Leipzig under the title "Schicksal im australischen Busch". His experiences on Mt Kilimanjaro are related in a booklet "Im Banne des Kilimanjaro", which appeared in 1938 through the Neuer

* After this article had gone to press, news was received that Schlieben died on 14th July 1975 in Essen, Western Germany.

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FIG. 1.—Hans-Joachim Schlieben.

Buchverlag, Dresden. On 16 December 1943 he married Klara Schulte, a school teacher and daughter of an ophthalmologist. Three daughters were born from this marriage.

But the cold northern latitudes held too few attractions for him and in 1955 he emigrated with his family to South Africa to join his brother who had, in the meantime, settled on a farm in the Soutpansberg, Transvaal. On 1 February 1956 he was appointed as Technical Officer in the National Herbarium, Pretoria and he held this position until 31 January 1973. During these years he continued collecting in his official capacity, mainly in the Transvaal, Karoo, Bushmanland and South-West Africa, while his long vacations were spent on collecting expeditions to Madagascar, the Mascarenes, the Comoro Islands and the Seychelles. In 1971 he set out on a sentimental journey to his old hunting grounds in Tanzania. In the best collectors' tradition one of the main aims was to rediscover *Aloe schliebenii*, which he had found in a remote region of the Nguru Mountains in 1933 and which had not yet been described. In Nairobi he renewed acquaintances with Peter Greenway and in the Uluguru Mountains again met some of his old assistants and porters (Fig. 3), who recalled many of their past experiences and some of whom still remembered his Kiswahili name "Bwana Maúa"—Mr Flower. Old friends of the plant kingdom were also found again, including *Aloe schliebenii* (Fig. 4).

Schlieben was among the first philatelists specializing in stamps with botanical subjects. Several medals won on South African and international exhibitions bear witness to his rich collections and his neat presentations. Philately and gardening occupy much of his time at present and he pursues these hobbies with great enthusiasm and dedication.

He has more than 170 publications to his credit, mainly illustrated articles on plants, travels and philately published in German horticultural journals.

To date, he has collected close on 13 000 numbers and more than 70 000 specimens. Some 400 of his collections have been described as new and almost 100 of these have been named in his honour. The name of Hans-Joachim Schlieben will be remembered as long as scientists study plants from the eastern parts of Africa.

UITTREKSEL

Hans-Joachim Eberhardt Schlieben is in 1902 in Duitsland gebore. Vanaf 1930 tot 1935 het hy in Tanzanië plante versamel en sedert 1955 in Suider-Afrika, op Madagaskar, die Maskarene, die Comoro-eilande en die Seychelle. Bykans 400 van die amper 13 000 nommers wat hy versamel het, is as nuut beskryf.



FIG. 2.—Collecting in the Iringa District, 1931. Mr Schlieben is holding a fruit of the woody climber *Entada scandens*. The porters each carry four plant presses.



FIG. 3.—Reunion in the Uluguru Mountains, 1971.



FIG. 4.—Rediscovery of *Aloe schliebenii* in the type locality in the Nguru Mountains, 1971.

