

# Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh Archives

## **Finding Aid - Set of photographs of Palms and Bamboo in Sri Lanka associated with Frederick Orpen Bower (BOF)**

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Generated by Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh Archives on April 16, 2025

Language of description: English

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# **Set of photographs of Palms and Bamboo in Sri Lanka associated with Frederick Orpen Bower**

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## Summary information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh Archives
<b>Title:</b>	Set of photographs of Palms and Bamboo in Sri Lanka associated with Frederick Orpen Bower
<b>Reference code:</b>	BOF
<b>Date:</b>	1880 - 1925 (creation)
<b>Physical description:</b>	12 photographs
<b>Physical storage:</b>	Box: Photograph Collections Box A3-1
<b>Language:</b>	English

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## Scope and content

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12 black and white photographs that appear to have once been the property of Frederick Orpen Bower, four of them being used as figures in his 1925 publication 'Plants and Man'. The photographers appear to be mainly Skeen and Scowen of the Colombo Apothecaries Co. Ltd, Ceylon [Sri Lanka].

Descriptions of the photographs are as follows:

- Peradeniya Gardens; 'No. 20'; marked 'Frontispiece' with annotated instructions for reproduction in 'Plants and Man' by Bower; photo credited in the publication as being 'Bases of the stems of the Giant Bamboo (*Dendrocalamus*), in Peradeniya Gardens, Ceylon, with a garden-coolie standing at their foot. Photograph by Mr. Skene.' [Skeen]. Photograph glued to contemporary stiff board.
- *Corypha umbraculifera* (Talipot); marked with C.A. Co. (?) Ceylon and stamped with [Apothe]caries Co. Photographers, [Colombo,] Ceylon; '218' glued to reverse; annotated with printing instructions; edited version used as Fig.22A (p.48) in 'Plants and Man' as 'A Talipot Palm (*Corypha umbaculifera*) in the flowering state'; photograph credited to Mr Skene [Skeen]. Photograph glued to contemporary stiff board.
- *Corypha umbraculifera*. The last stage of the Talipot; marked with '& Co. Ceylon' - name obscured, and stamped with 'Botanical Department, University Glasgow.' and 'Apothecaries Co. Photographers, Colombo, Ceylon'; edited version used as Fig.22B (p.49) in 'Plants and man' as 'The same Palm after fruiting. The photographs were taken by Mr. Skene [Skeen], Ceylon.' Photograph glued to herbarium sheet.
- Bamboo Stems; stamped with 'Botanical Department, University Glasgow.' and 'Apothecaries Co. Photographers, Colombo, Ceylon'; '217' glued to reverse, annotated with printing instructions; edited version used as Fig.86 (p.215) in 'Plants and man' as 'Photograph showing the Bases of Bamboo Stems which may grow over 100 feet high. The stems are marked by rings, each of which is a leaf insertion, and the hollow stem is there supported by a hard transverse plate or septum. Note that at the base, where the leverage will be greatest, the septa are nearest together, so that the resistance will be greatest there. One of the young conical shoots has been cut so as to show the septa, crowded before the shoot has elongated.' No photography credit given.
- 'Nos 19 and 20, Giant Bamboos'; this photo marked 'No.19'; '219' glued to reverse; annotated with printing instructions, including 'Schimper, make block from this, not from book'; used as Fig.87 (p.217) in 'Plants and man' as 'Group of Giant Bamboos (*Dendrocalamus giganteus*) in the Royal Botanic

Garden, Peradeniya, Ceylon. Note the man at the foot of the clump which gives the scale : also the successively shorter internodes at the base of the stems, and the curvatures above. (After Schimper.) Compare Frontispiece, and Fig. 86'. Photograph glued to contemporary stiff board.

- *Corypha umbraculifera*; young Talipot palms, No.519; marked with C.A. Co. Ltd, Ceylon, but other letters seem to have been scored out; stamped with 'Botanical Department, University Glasgow.' and 'Apothecaries Co. Photographers, Colombo, Ceylon'; photograph glued to herbarium sheet.

- *Caryota urens* (Kitul) 144; marked with C.A. Co. Ltd, Ceylon; stamped with 'Botanical Department, University Glasgow.' and 'Apothecaries Co. Photographers, Colombo, Ceylon'; photograph glued to herbarium sheet.

- *Caryota urens*. Branches of the Inflorescence of the Kitul Palm shewing development of fruit. marked with Scowen & Co. Ltd (almost scored out), Ceylon; stamped with 'Botanical Department, University Glasgow.' and 'Apothecaries Co. Photographers, Colombo, Ceylon'; photograph glued to herbarium sheet.

- *Oreodoxa regia*; Avenue of Cabbage Palms, Peradeniya Gardens; further annotated with 'Cabbage Palms, Peradeniya Gardens (Scowen); marked with Scowen & Co. Ltd? (scored out), Ceylon; stamped with 'Botanical Department, University Glasgow.' and 'Apothecaries Co. Photographers, Colombo, Ceylon'; photograph glued to herbarium sheet

- *Cocos nucifera*; Cocoa-nut Palm, 143; marked with C.A. Co. Ltd, Ceylon; stamped with 'Botanical Department, University Glasgow.' and 'Apothecaries Co. Photographers, Colombo, Ceylon'; photograph glued to herbarium sheet.

- *Lodoicea seychellarum* – Double Cocoa-nut Palm, 125; marked with Scowen & Co. But scored out so it reads C.A. Co. Ltd; stamped with 'Botanical Department, University Glasgow.' and 'Apothecaries Co. Photographers, Colombo, Ceylon'; photograph glued to herbarium sheet.

- *Ravenala madagascariensis* (Traveller's Palm) 557?; marked with Scowen & Co. But scored out so it reads C.A. Co. Ltd, Ceylon; stamped with 'Botanical Department, University Glasgow.' and 'Apothecaries Co. Photographers, Colombo, Ceylon'; photograph glued to herbarium sheet.

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## Notes

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### Immediate source of acquisition

Unclear, but the photographs may have been transferred to the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh along with the University of Glasgow Herbarium.

### Restrictions on access

Collection is open to researchers by appointment, see (right click, open link in new tab:) <https://www.rbge.org.uk/science-and-conservation/library-and-archives/visiting-the-library/>

### Conditions governing use

Permission required from RBGE.

### Other notes

- **Publication status:** published

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## Access points

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- Photographs (documentary form)
- Sri Lanka (place)

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## Bibliography

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Four of the photographs appear in 'Plants and man : a series of essays relating to the botany of ordinary life' by Bower, Frederick Orpen 1855-1948; 1925, Macmillan and Co. , London.  
(right click, open link in new tab) [https://rbge.koha-ptfs.co.uk/cgi-bin/koha/opac-detail.pl?biblionumber=95122&query\\_desc=an%3A43815](https://rbge.koha-ptfs.co.uk/cgi-bin/koha/opac-detail.pl?biblionumber=95122&query_desc=an%3A43815)