

The five specimens of *Conus gloria maris* in the Netherlands
by

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The history of conchological cabinets in Holland since the end of the 17-th century has been an elaborate and agitated one with various good examples of keen amateur-collectors who did not only idolize the charming shells in their own museum-drawers, but who also promoted conchological science by embodying their observations in costly engravings and verbose reports.

It is, however, grievous to see how many of these private cabinets became scattered after the death of their owners. Only a minor part succeeded to reach a corner of permanent security: a public museum whence there is no alienation.

One of the most valued shells was the Glory of the Sea, *Conus*

gloria maris, Chemnitz 1777, not only sought after for its exquisite beauty, but also — more perhaps — for its rarity. At the present day, according to the modern conspectus by Azpeitia Moros, not more than 22 specimens are known, some of these even only as a figure and not in the body.

In the Netherlands there are 5 specimens nowadays; and we know of 3 others which have formed part of a Dutch collection, but which have been lost sight of after the death of their owner. Five of these do not occur in the account of Azpeitia Moros.

In the following lines I will give an account of these 8 shells and their history. They are numbered I—VIII, the actually present ones in heavy type, the other in ordinary type. By the courtesy of their possessors I have been allowed to photograph the 5 specimens in Holland and to include their portraits in this paper.

I. forming part of the collection of Pierre Lyonet (born at Maastricht in 1706, deceased at The Hague in 1789). He was a collector since 1749 and his famous collection was sold at The Hague in 1796 ("Mémoire par lequel on offre de vendre en masse le Cabinet de Coquilles de feu Monsieur Pierre Lyonet, en son vivant Secrétaire des Chiffres de L.H.P. les Seigneurs Etats Généraux des Provinces Unies", etc. — Notice of 4 pages, commending highly of the beautiful pieces in the Cabinet, *Conus gloria maris* at third page, — no date; "Catalogue raisonné du célèbre Cabinet de Coquilles de feu Pierre Lyonet etc., p. 56).

It is unknown what has become of Lyonet's specimen. As far as I could ascertain it did not pass into the hands of Mrs. de Bandleville at Paris, although this lady obtained other items from the Lyonet sale (fide Lamy, 1930, Les Cabinets d'Histoire Naturelle en France au XVIII-e siècle et le Cabinet du Roi (1635—1793) p. 22 and 28 footnote no. 1). It was not present either at an auction of 1885 ("Catalogue de la précieuse et superbe collection de Coquilles etc., formée par M. Lyonet, et augmentée par M. D. Tobias à Amsterdam" etc.). This Tobias Collection was bought by the Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie at Leiden.

Lyonet himself bought his *gloria maris* for 120 guilders at a Dutch sale previous to 1780 (vide J. S. Schröter, Journal f. die Liebhaber des Steinreichs und der Konchyliologie, Bd. 6, 1780, p. 497, who had desired to buy it himself, but „Herr Lionnet in Haag erhielt sie”), but later than 1777, the year in which the species was introduced into science.

II. forming part of the collection of John Raye, sold in 1827 after his death (“Catalogue du Cabinet célèbre et très renommé d’objets d’Histoire Naturelle, consistant en . . . coquilles, . . . delaissé par le feu très noble Sieur Joan Raye, Seigneur de Breukelerwaert, etc., p. 128, no. 197, 1 *Conus Gloria Maris*”). This specimen (and many other objects of the same sale besides) has been purchased by the Rijksmuseum introduction of the just quoted Catalogue of Horst and Schepman, Catalogue systématique des Mollusques, Muséum d’Histoire Naturelle des Pays Bas, 1898, p. 33). In an interleaved catalogue of the auction (now in the Library of the Royal Zoological Society Natura Artis Magistra at Amsterdam) the prices of each separate number were checked together with the names of the buyers. For the *Conus gloria maris* is noted 250 guilders and this is confirmed in the introduction of the just quoted Catalogue of Horst and Schepman, p. VII. It is not known whence Raye had his shell himself. Dimensions of this spec.: length 132, max. diam. 50 mm. Pl. II, fig. d.

III. in the Museum of the Rotterdamsche Diergaarde at Rotterdam, probably presented in 1869 (vide A. A. van Bemmelen, Jaarb. Rott. Dierg. 1868—1869, p. 51) together with a large collection of other shells from the Netherlands Indies by Mr. N. P. van den Berg and 16 other gentlemen. This *gloria maris* has already been mentioned by Melvill as no. 9, and he rightly settled its presence in Rotterdam (not in the Amsterdam Museum, as was told now and then, and as was unfortunately echoed by R. W. Miner, Natural History, Vol. 23, 1923, p. 328). It is no. 9 of the list of *Azpeitia Moros*. Dimensions: length 135.7, max. diam. 53 mm. Plate I, fig. a.

IV. forming part of the collection of Madame F. J. M. Rethaan Macaré, née Ontijd, sold at Utrecht after her death in 1888 ("Catalogue de la précieuse et superbe Collection de Coquilles etc., délaissé par Madame la Douairière F. J. M. Rethaan Macaré, née Ontijd, p. 52, no. 4588, *Gloria maris*, très rare, très bel exemplaire"). According to pencil annotations in the catalogue by Jonkheer W. N. M. van de Bloquery, then curator of mollusca of the Roy. Zool. Soc. Natura Artis Magistra who attended to the auction and who bought several species for Artis, this *gloria maris* has been bought for f 230.— by a certain Mr. van Doorn. It is uncertain whether this refers to a private collector Van Doorn, or whether it can stand for the name of the notary, Mr. E. C. U. de Balbian van Doorn who might have bought it in charge of a customer. I have not been able to trace what has become of it. The specimen has been mentioned by Melvill as No. 8 of his list as "a very poor small ex.", and by Azpeitia Moros as no. 8 of his list as "un pequeno ejemplar de poco mérito", which sounds far less enthusiastic than the high-pitched praise in the catalogue. How Madame Macaré obtained her *gloria maris* herself escapes my notice.

V. in the Rijksmuseum of Natuurlijke Historie at Leiden, presented in 1892 by Prof. Dr. K. Martin, and collected in the Bay of Piroe, S-coast of Ceram Id. Dimensions: length 93, max. diam. 34 mm. Plate II, fig. e.

VI. forming part of the collection of Mr. L. Muller, secondary school teacher of English at Bussum. It is a fine specimen of rich colour, secured off Wahaai, N-coast of Ceram Id. in 1896 by Mr. P. Wijnga, military surgeon. It has been sold to Mr. Muller in 1932, together with various other shells from the same locality. Dimensions: length 107.7, max. diam. 44 mm. Plate I, fig. b.

VII. in the School-Museum of the Municipal Lyceum, Stokroosplein, The Hague. It has been found at Amboina where it belonged to a dentist surgeon who afterwards bequeathed it to the municipality of The Hague. Dimensions:

length 86, max. diam. 33.2 mm. Plate I, fig. c.

VIII. once belonging to the Vice-Admiral P. A. van Rees (1817—1902) at The Hague (Catalogue de la Collection de Coquilles etc. délaissée par le Vice-Admiral P. A. van Rees, La Haye, 1900, p. 26) The greater part of the collection has been bought by Mr. G. B. Sowerby (Journ. of Conch. Vol. 16, 1921, p. 214), probably including the *Conus gloria maris*. Whence Mr. van Rees had obtained his specimen I have not been able to ascertain.

Literature.

J. Cosmo Melvill, Notes on the Subgenus Cylinder (Montfort) of *Conus* (Mem. Manchester Lit. Philos. Soc. (3) Vol. 10, 1887, p. 76—90).

J. Cosmo Melvill, A. revision of the textile Cones, with description of *C. cholmondeleyi*, n. sp. (Journ. of Conch. Vol. 9, 1900, p. 303—311).

F. Azpeitia Moros, Noticia de un nuevo ejemplar de *Conus gloria maris* y revisión de los ya conocidos con seguridad, y de otros cuya existencia es más o menos incierta (Rev. Real Acad. Cienc. Madrid, Vol. 23, 1927, p. 511—530).

Samenvatting.

De vijf in Nederland aanwezige exemplaren van *Conus gloria maris* worden afgebeeld en hun historie opgespoord, voor zoover dat mogelijk was. Deze ex. zijn met een vet gedrukt nummer aangegeven. Van drie andere is bekend, dat zij eenmaal tot een Nederlandsche collectie hebben behoord, maar niet, waar zij zich thans bevinden.