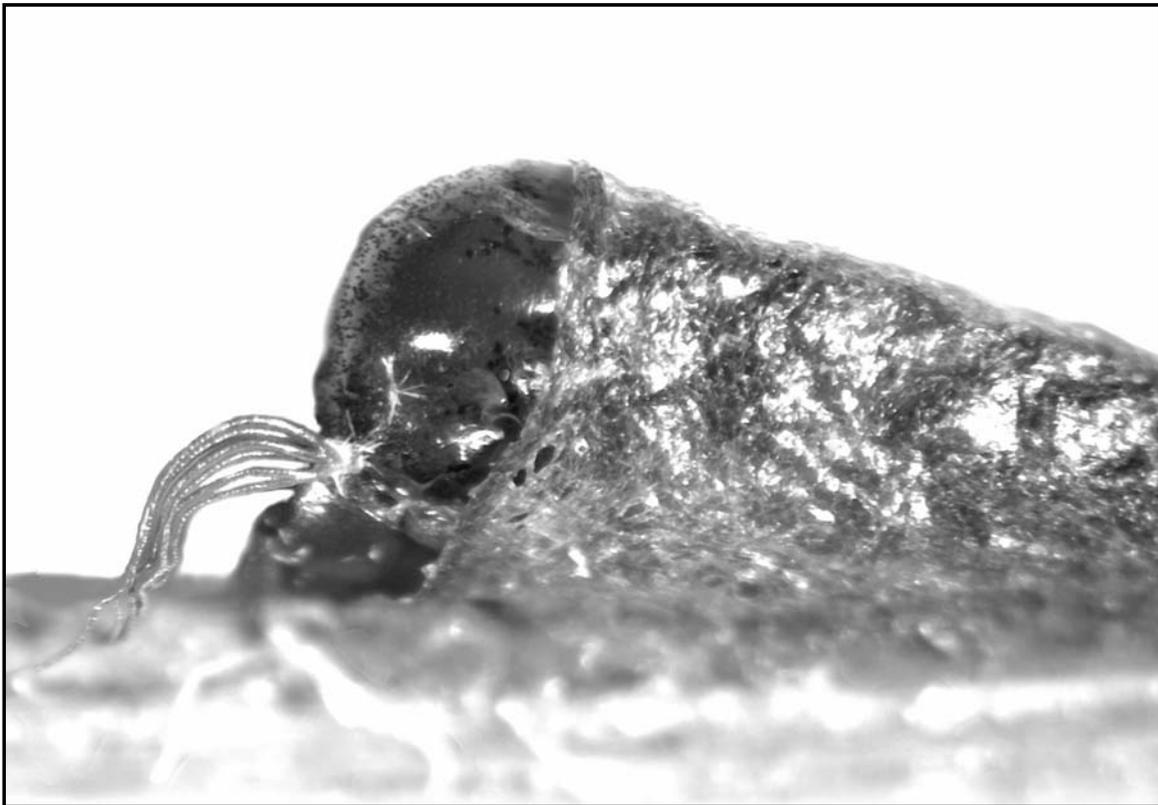


The British Simuliid Group Bulletin

Number 31

February 2009



THE BRITISH SIMULIID GROUP BULLETIN

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Cover Image: Simulium tuberosum pupa; image by JC Day.

FROM THE EDITOR

This 31st *Bulletin* follows the very successful 3rd International Simuliidae Symposium held in Vilnius in September 2008, and therefore contains a brief description of the meeting. It is also accompanied by a slightly condensed version of the Abstract Book containing the authors' abstracts of both the oral presentations and posters. It is your Editor's opinion that the general standard of the papers was high, and because most of the delegates were housed in the conference hotel, there was close social contact as we all met over breakfast and lunch. For me, a life-long controller of Simuliids, the most significant event was the presentation of two papers by Cheke, Traore and colleagues and a video film of the eradication of the Bioko form of *Simulium yahense* from the island of Bioko off the west coast of Central Africa, thereby halting the transmission of river blindness on that island. The symposium also highlighted the increasing numbers of scientists from central Europe who are interested in the Simuliidae. We also welcome eight new members to the BSG.

This *Bulletin* introduces a new idea for a proposed series of articles under the overall heading of "Who was...?" It is hoped that from time to time papers will appear under various authorship in the same way as the long running "Travellers' Tales". Many of the Simuliidae have been named after people. Apart from a handful of well known simuliidologists, who were these others that authors considered sufficiently important that they should be remembered? Were they fellow scientists, providers of material, technical or field assistants, or was it a case of flattering the boss? From what is known about some of the names, there were some interesting characters involved whose stories make fascinating reading. We feel that their biographies should be recorded before it is too late and the knowledge disappears from public memory. Published below is a sample containing mini-biographies of four persons with species named after them, sufficient to show the style that is in mind. There are several hundred "honorific" names in blackflies so we shall never have mini-biographies for everybody involved but I invite readers to contribute pieces for future *Bulletins*. Any comments on the idea behind the mini-biographies would be very welcome.

John Davies

In Memoriam

Shortly before going to press we received the sad news of the deaths of Eugenie Kachvoryan and Alexandre Fain. Further details will be given in the next *Bulletin*.

MEETINGS

30th Meeting of the British Simuliid Group 18th September 2009

Simuliidologists are invited to register interest in attending the 30th meeting of the British Simuliid Group which is being organised by the Natural History Museum, and it is hoped to hold it in the newly built entomology building (called Darwin Centre II) on Friday 18th September 2009; 10:00-16:00h. There will be no charge for attending the meeting, although there will be a small charge for lunch (which will be provided in the Museum). On the evening of Thursday 17th there will be an informal á la carte meal in a nearby restaurant for anybody (partners/spouses/etc are welcome) who wants to come.

People who might want to attend are asked to register their interest by writing to:

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The format will be the same as usual, a series of talks and posters. Please contact Rory Post with offers of presentations. Length of talks is flexible, and the presenter should say how long he/she wants up to a maximum of 30 minutes (including discussion).

A notice with the programme will appear in due course on www.blackfly.org.uk. Follow the link under "meetings" or "notices".

The 3rd International Simuliidae Symposium 2008

The 3rd International Simuliidae Symposium, including the 29th meeting of the British Simuliid Group and the 7th European Simuliidae Symposium, was held in the conference room of the Ecotel Hotel near the centre of Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, 9-12 September, 2008.

The scientific meeting was preceded by the registration of participants during the evening of Thursday 9th September, and was accompanied by a buffet supper and drinks, during which participants were able to meet old acquaintances and make new ones.

The following day, the Scientific Sessions were opened by Professor Vincas Būda of the Institute of Ecology of Vilnius University who introduced welcoming addresses from:

Assistant Professor Linas Balčiauskas

The Minister for the Environment, Salomonas Pūltaniavičius

The Representative of the Southern Districts, Romas Balčius

The President of the Lithuania Entomological Society, Dr. Dalius Dapklas.

The Scientific Programme did not differ greatly from the provisional programme published in Bulletin No. 30, and a slightly modified version of the Symposium Abstract book accompanies this Bulletin as a Supplement.

The first day's presentations were followed by a guided excursion on foot through the Old City of Vilnius.

The Scientific Sessions concluded on Thursday with a short business meeting during which the venue for the 4th Symposium to be held in 2010 was discussed. Tentative proposals to host the symposium were offered by representatives from Turkey and Russia (Novosibirsk). Dr John Davies agreed to coordinate and keep delegates informed of any progress.

In the evening the Conference Dinner was held in the atmospheric cellars of the Žemaičiai restaurant where the food was served on wooden platters, and the meat on pitchforks. Music was provided by a local folk group and some adventurous members attempted to dance the Charleston.

The final day was devoted to a coach excursion to Grutas Park with its museum and collection of massive Soviet statuary arranged in forest glades. After an opportunity to collect simuliids at the Nemunas River in Merkinė we

continued to visit the Church at Liskiava with its interesting mural and ceramic decorations, as well as an unusual crypt containing the mummified bodies of past monks. We then stopped at the spa town of Druskininkai by a river and close to the borders of Poland and Belarus, where we had lunch. On the return journey a stop was made at the junction of the large Merkys and smaller Skroblus rivers, sited in a very attractive pine forest where some of us collected edible fungi. Finally the group was returned to the hotel tired but happy.

Thus ended a most successful and informative symposium. I am sure all delegates join me in thanking Rasa and the organizing committee for making such excellent arrangements and for being such exemplary hosts.

John B. Davies

CORRIGENDUM

Bulletin No. 30, July 2008

The Editor regrets that several typographical errors in the last Bulletin escaped his eagle eye. They were:

Page 2, heading: 'Memorium' should be 'Memoriam'.

Page 3, line 8: '1967' should be '1976'.

Page 4, first reference: 'Similiidae' should be 'Simuliidae'.

Page 5, line 6: 'Aerial' should be 'Aerial'.

Page 5, caption to Plate 1: 'Walsh' should be 'Walch'.

Please make these alterations.

WHO WAS ...?

A look at honorific names in blackflies

John B. Davies¹ and Roger W. Crosskey²

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On looking over the *British Simuliid Group Bulletin* since it began seventeen years ago we were struck by the fact that nowhere in the contents is there anything about the honorific names of blackflies, i.e. those specific (and in a few cases supraspecific) names based on the names of people. This is not for want of such names! Authors on the Simuliidae have been lavish in creating them and at present there are 728 names in the family that were proposed as honorifics - 26% of the 2725 or so total of specific names. The majority of these names have been dedicated to clearly identified individuals, that is to say their creation is 'explicit', but in some instances there is no stated dedication in the description of the species and identity of the person honoured has to be inferred (it is 'implicit' rather than explicit). Only rarely, however, does this create an ambiguity.

But who are all these people and on what grounds did each deserve memorializing with a scientific name? In practice all of us merely use the honorific names like any other names, as handles without consideration of the meaning that lies behind them. But each begs the question "Who was ...?" Some of the answers when we know them are most interesting and well worth a little digging to find out. Potentially the answers provide a new feature which, we think, might appeal to a significant part of the *Bulletin* readership. We visualize publicising some answers to "Who was ...?" as 'Mini-Biographies' which could appear in batches from time to time, much as the Travellers' Tales feature has put in an occasional appearance in various issues of the *Bulletin*.

To start things off we are showing here examples of the kind of biographical sketch that we have in mind. For this we have chosen four honorific names, two relating to the fauna of Europe (including Britain) and two relating to the Afrotropical fauna. The persons concerned represent four nationalities: Nöller of *Simulium noelleri* (German), Tömösváry of *Prosimulium tomosvaryi* (Hungarian), Schouteden of *Simulium schoutedeni* (Belgian) and Wood of *Simulium woodi* (English). Not every reader will be familiar with all four of these names so we note the following about the species concerned: (a) *noelleri*,

this is the lake outfall species well known in Britain through Roger Wotton's researches; (b) *tomosvaryi*, this is a pan-European species best known to those who have worked with *Prosimulium*; (c) *schoutedeni*, this is a species familiar to those who have collected in West African streams; (d) *woodi*, this is a crabphoretic species involved in human onchocerciasis transmission in eastern Africa.

Do we have volunteers who would like to prepare 'mini-biographies' for the honorifics involved in North or South America, Russia, Far East and Japan, Australia etc.? Don't all rush at once. (At present the active area is the Afrotropical, for which there are 81 honorific names to be covered. RWC is tackling these.)

Mini-Biographies

noelleri Friederichs (1920) - *Simulium*

Named (explicit) for Wilhelm Nöller (1890-1964), German parasitologist and veterinarian, born in Thuringia. A country farmer's son, he attended a succession of schools before qualifying for university entrance (1910). In boyhood he acquired an enthusiasm for freshwater plankton, good grounding for the protozoological studies he pursued at Berlin Veterinary College (1910-1912). Moving to Munich Veterinary College he developed his main research theme, trypanosomes and their modes of transmission. His doctorate from Munich University followed (1914). Come the First World War Nöller was drafted into an army veterinary unit where he successfully combatted the problem of mange in horses. The war over, Nöller became head of protozoology at Hamburg Institute of Tropical Medicine and, soon afterwards (1921), head of pathological anatomy at Berlin Veterinary College. Restive times were soon to follow politically, and Nöller, a staunch Social Democrat, was dismissed when the Nazis took power (1933), it seems because he had permitted a Jewish zoologist to work in his department and been a member of the Social Democratic Party. He was banned from leaving Germany and was thereby blocked from accepting offers of employment from Britain or elsewhere. Embittered, and denied research opportunities from the age of 43, Nöller returned to Thuringia and in his later years worked quietly in veterinary practice. He died following a road accident in September 1964. The blackflies that Friederichs used to describe *S. noelleri* were collected by Nöller in 1920 at Paulinzella in Thuringia. Obituary: *International Journal for Parasitology* 21: 391-393, portrait (1991).

tomosvaryi Enderlein (1921) - *Prosimulium*

Named (explicit) for Tömösváry Ödön (1852-1884), Hungarian zoologist born in Magyaró, Maros-Torda County of eastern Hungary (now Romania). After school at Kolozsvár Calvinist College he attended the University of

Kolozsvár (now = Cluj, capital of Transylvanian Romania), starting his studies there in 1877 and graduating summa cum laude four years later, in zoology, botany and mineralogy and obtaining (also 1881) a teacher's diploma in natural history and geography. Influenced by school and university mentors Tömösváry became interested in anatomy and histology of lesser known arthropods such as scorpions and pseudoscorpions, but above all in the Myriapoda - a group on which he was robbed of his greatest work by his death from pulmonary tuberculosis at the early age of 32. Still, in a short but productive life he published over fifty works between 1878 and 1884. His incursions into the Insecta were quite few, but include papers on Thysanura and chironomids and a small series of works published in 1884 on the Golubatz fly of the Danube (*Simulium colombaschense*). It was in recognition of the latter works that Enderlein named *Schonbaueria Tömösváryi* (now = *Prosimulium tomosvaryi*). Tömösváry died in Déva (then in Hungary and now Romania). Obituary: *Rovartani Lapok* 2 (1): 1-14, portrait (1885)

schoutedeni Wanson, 1947 - *Simulium*

Named (explicit) for Henri Schouteden (1881-1972), Belgian zoologist and entomologist, born in Brussels. Attracted early on to natural history, Schouteden graduated Doctor of Sciences from the Université Libre de Bruxelles in 1905. From then on he devoted himself to African zoology and in 1911 (aged 30) founded the *Revue zoologique africaine* (later renamed *Revue de Zoologie et de Botanique africaines*). Entomology was as much his field as mammalogy and ornithology and he was an authority on the Hemiptera, especially the pentatomid bugs. Throughout his career he was associated with the Musée du Congo Belge (later the Musée Royal de l'Afrique Centrale at Tervuren) of which he was for many years director and for which he undertook various missions to the Belgian Congo. He held (1926-1952) a professorship in entomology at the Institut de Médecine Tropicale, at first when it was in Brussels and later after its move to Antwerp. Obituary: *Revue de Zoologie et de Botanique africaines* 86: 193-195, portrait (1972).

woodi De Meillon (1930) - *Simulium*

Named (implicit) for Rodney Carrington Wood (1890-1962), English naturalist, colonial settler and amateur entomologist who spent most of his life in Africa. Son of a wealthy English wine merchant, he was educated at Harrow school but did not go on to university. However, enjoying independent means, he travelled widely as a young man, notably to Rhodesia, before settling as a pioneer farmer in Nyasaland (now Malawi). With the coming of the First World War he saw service in the German East

Africa (Tanganyika) campaign. His scouting skills drew him to game hunting and he was a sometime Game Warden and Tsetse Officer. The years 1934-1936 he spent in South Africa, teaching French and natural history at a school in Natal. A keen naturalist and lepidopterist he collected for museums, among his material being the original females of *Simulium woodi* obtained at Cholo in Malawi. The hawk and emperor moths were his special enthusiasm, and these along with his other Lepidoptera were donated to the National Museum of Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in 1946. He died on Cerf Island in the Seychelles, where he had studied marine life and had a second home. Obituary: *Zimbabwe Rhodesia Science News* 13: 242, portrait (1979).

Acknowledgements: We thank Doreen Werner for supplying a copy of the Nöller obituary, and Csaba Deák for guidance on the Tömösváry obituary (which is in Hungarian).

TRAVELLERS' TALES

Margaret Fountaine meets Arthur Pomeroy

Recounted by R.W.Crosskey

In *Bulletin* 26 Doug Craig¹ has told the story of Lucy Evelyn Cheesman and *Simulium* in the Pacific. Tucked away in the diaries of Margaret Fountaine is a quite different kind of reference to *Simulium* which, though very minor, deserves to be captured at least for novelty value. Born in mid-Victorian times (1862), Margaret Elizabeth Fountaine was, like Cheesman, one of those fearless women who would and did step anywhere armed only with the dread force of personality and an insect-net. But there were differences between them. Evelyn, as she called herself rather than Lucy, collected all insects that came her way, wrote books of her experiences and travelled alone; Margaret Fountaine was exclusively a lepidopterist and a private diarist who usually had the company of a dear friend. He was Khalil Neimy, a Syrian whom she first met in 1901 in Damascus when he became her guide and they committed to a relationship that was, as the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography² delicately puts it, 'marriage in all but name'. Though much Margaret's junior, Khalil's passion was long-lasting and he brought to her a much-valued companionship. Largely owing to their joint travels in several continents Margaret assembled a worldwide

collection containing over twenty thousand butterflies.

On some of her travels, Khalil ('the one who should have been my husband') was not with her and it was on one of these occasions, in 1925 when she was already over 60, that Margaret went alone to Nigeria for butterfly collecting. On the voyage out to Lagos, on shipboard between Southampton and a stopover at the Canary Islands, she happened to meet among her fellow passengers, A.W.J. Pomeroy³, a government agricultural entomologist returning from leave to his posting in Nigeria. By 1925 the three works that Pomeroy published on Simuliidae were behind him but it is clear he retained a soft spot for blackflies and evidently saw his meeting with Margaret Fountaine as a great chance to lay hands on material from the Canaries⁴. Here is her journal account of their meeting⁵:

"As soon as we got clear of the Bay of Biscay things assumed a more favourable aspect, and everybody began to come up like so many rabbits out of their holes. Mr Pomery [sic], a government entomologist in Nigeria, gave me information, while I on my part undertook during my stay in the Canary Islands to try and breed sandflies (*Simulium*) for him and preserve specimens of them in their various stages; he described how I was to procure them, their larval and pupal states being passed in running water. The work would be something quite new to me, and though not without considerable difficulties, I was quite looking forward to the task. On Tenerife one day I found myself in a Hudson motor-car in company with eight young Spaniards, flying at headlong speed over the mountains back to Santa Cruz; one of them spoke English and was most friendly; and what a relief it was to know that his attentions were merely prompted by a desire to impart knowledge, and to show off his English, which was really quite passable; and when he chanced to remark conversationally that he was a 'naturalist', I became quite interested, seeing at once the possibility of obtaining some information that might help with the elucidation of the *Simulium* problem, but he quickly corrected himself, saying he had meant to say 'vegetarian', whereupon my interest flagged. However, he continued to keep me posted up with any information he thought might be of interest to me, while we sped along at a furious rate, racing every other car on the road to the imminent peril of pedestrians, various donkeys, mules and bullocks, not to mention an occasional camel, which we encountered on the way. Was I frightened? the young man enquired. No, indeed, I could most truthfully assure him that I was not, though it was rather a unique position for an old woman over 60 to be in, rushing madly over a mountain pass in a car packed to overflowing with young men, and I could not help thinking it would not be altogether pleasant to die messed up with all those Spaniards!" [In fact she died fifteen years later in Trinidad following a heart attack while catching butterflies. Khalil had died in 1929.]

Unfortunately for Margaret Fountaine not only did Pomeroy's notion come to naught but her experience of Lagos was not too wonderful either, her butterfly collecting being something of a failure:

"The heat in Lagos was really terrific, and there was no cool hour before the dawn when, in the shades of my still dark bedroom, two dusky figures would creep noiselessly in, with my chota hazri - in African language 'small chop'. Lagos was surrounded with mangrove swamps, enveloped day and night with a heavy, stagnant heat, and at first I did feel that I had this time struck a climate which I should not be able to stand. On the days I went out for a few hours I certainly felt the heat very much less, but unfortunately there was little doing among the butterflies"

Notes

1. See Craig, D. (2006). Lucy Evelyn Cheesman and the 'Scourge of the Pacific'. *British Simuliid Group Bulletin* 26: 12-21
2. See Blodgett, Harriet (2004). Fountaine, Margaret Elizabeth 1862-1940. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* 20: 556-557.
3. Arthur W. Jobbins Pomeroy in papers published in 1920 and 1922 described many species that are basic components of the Afrotropical simuliid fauna. Although his name is well known he has no obituarist, a pity as he was an entomologist of wide experience and considerable talent. However, Peter Adler and Roger Crosskey aim to rectify the omission with a 'life and works' account of Pomeroy once some of the key points about him have been established. Here it is enough to note that his early adult years were passed in the United States (where he published an excellent paper on American blackflies), that in the first half of the 1920s he was a government agricultural entomologist in Nigeria, and that in the second half of the 1920s he was government medical entomologist in the Gold Coast (Ghana). In the First World War he volunteered for military service and received (1919) the MBE for his major contribution to the reduction of malaria among the troops and nursing auxiliaries in East Africa.
4. Pomeroy was unduly optimistic. For natural and man-made reasons running water is at a premium in the Canaries. Simuliid larvae were not found there until 1970, as it happens in Tenerife (more recently in some other islands).
5. Miss Fountaine's journal was condensed by W.F. Cater into two books. The passage above is from the second (1986): *Butterflies and Late Loves - The further Travels and Adventures of a Victorian Lady Margaret Fountaine*. 141 pp., Collins.

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The British Simuliid Group Bulletin is an informal publication intended to disseminate information about the Simuliidae. It is published twice each year and is distributed free to all members of the British Simuliid Group.

Content covers papers presented at the Group's Annual Meeting, which is usually held in September, short research notes, notices and accounts of meetings, and articles of anecdotal or general interest that would not normally be found in international journals. Geographical cover is world-wide, and is not restricted to the British Isles. Reports of research carried out by graduates, young scientists and newcomers to the subject are particularly encouraged. It is an ideal medium for offering new ideas and stimulating discussion because of the very short interval between acceptance and publication.

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THE BRITISH SIMULIID GROUP

The British Simuliid Group (BSG) is an informal gathering of scientists of any discipline, from many countries, who have an interest in the Simuliidae. The group's members include entomologists, parasitologists, environmentalists, ecologists and medics, with interests in ecology, bionomics, taxonomy, cytotoxicology, disease transmission, freshwater biology etc. Our aim is to assemble as diverse a group as possible in order to encourage a wide interchange of ideas and information.

At present the BSG has about 130 members in the UK, Europe, Africa, Australia, New Zealand and the Americas. Membership is FREE - if you are not already a member of the BSG all you have to do is give us your name and postal and e-mail addresses. Annual meetings have been held at different locations in the UK since 1978. Abstracts of papers presented are published in our Bulletin which is sent to all members of the group.

The Group also runs an electronic news list with the name "Simuliidae" which is now on JISCmail. To join "Simuliidae" send the following command as one line of text in an e-mail message without subject heading- join Simuliidae your-firstname lastname to: jiscmail@jiscmail.ac.uk. Membership of "Simuliidae" does not automatically make you a member of the BSG. You have to join each separately. The Simuliidae list owners are the Hon. Secretary and the Editor of the Bulletin. Recent back numbers of the Bulletin can be viewed on the World Wide Web at URL:

<http://www.blackfly.org.uk>.

Inquiries about the Group and its activities should be made to John Davies: address inside front cover and e-mail daviesjb@liverpool.ac.uk

Notes for Contributors

To avoid copy-typing, the editor (address above) would prefer to receive contributions on disc or by e-mail, or typewritten. Details as follows:-

1. Via conventional mail on CDROM or IBM PC formatted 720Kb or 1.4Mb 3.5 inch diskettes, as unmodified word processor files (most common DOS or Windows word processor formats are acceptable) or as RTF, PDF, ASCII or DOS text files (We usually have to change pagination and heading format, anyway). Mark the disc with the format, word processor name and file name(s). Complicated tables and figures can be accepted as separate graphics files (not OLE embedded, please!) but we may ask for a hard copy as a check that all detail has been retained. Remember that figures should have legends and small detail drawn large enough to be visible when reduced to 100mm by 70mm. Diskettes will be returned on request.
2. By electronic mail via the Internet. Send your file in MSWord .DOC or in .RTF or .PDF format or as an ASCII file (also known as DOS or txt File), and e-mail it either as part of the message or preferably as an attachment to: daviesjb@liverpool.ac.uk.

If neither of the above methods are available, then post to me printed copy on A4 paper (210x297 mm), single spaced, ready for scanning. Heading styles as in the Bulletin. Format for References is flexible. Please refer to the Bulletin for the form appropriate to your article. Scientific Communications should quote the full title and journal name, but Notes and Abstracts may optionally omit titles and show only the abbreviated journal name.