

*L. Mandelli*

DARJEELING  
TEA PLANTER  
AND  
ORNITHOLOGIST

FRED PINN

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*L. Mandelli*

( 1833 — 1880 )

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LONDON 1985





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## INTRODUCTION

LOUIS MANDELLI was first brought to my attention several years ago by Major John Poole, his great-grandson. At the time we were actually pursuing a different Louis Mandelli who had been a stationmaster at Darjeeling in the 1890s; but apart from the fact that the family had a long-standing connection with the hill station we knew little else.

Our field of enquiry was extended by a note in Dozey's "DARJEELING PAST AND PRESENT" on a William Mandelli, tea planter and ornithologist. The information contained in the long paragraph was fascinating and posed a number of questions to which no answers could be found.

Then—in March 1985—fate was kind and during some research on mangroves at the Natural History Museum, South Kensington, by a series of strangely interrelated events, I suddenly had a pile of 48 Mandelli letters before me which are kept at the Zoology Library. With tremendous help from the two Librarians, Mrs. Datta and Mrs. Warr, not a day passed without some new information being added to our scanty knowledge. A Mandelli-family tree from Major Poole with several vital dates made it possible at last to sort out the various members of the family and, incidentally, prove most of Dozey's "facts" to be incorrect, garbled or quite simply made up as will be shown in due course.

The letters themselves are, of course, invaluable as they throw light on the author's ornithological activities, his work as tea garden manager, his hopes and ambitions, and his relationship with other people. His enthusiasm for birds, which at times looks suspiciously like an obsession, fills every letter. Above all, one cannot be but impressed with this extremely hard-working man who in the course of fifteen years—doing the work of three managers—ruined his health to such an extent that at the age of 43 he already feels "old age creeping upon" himself "fast".

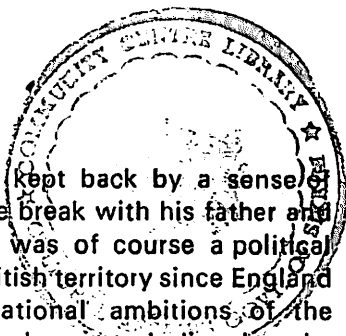
The letters are well supplemented by names and figures from "THACKER'S BENGAL DIRECTORY", though they do not answer our remaining questions. The rest is conjecture and speculation.

## CASTEL NUOVO — MANDELLI

A few dates, a little family tradition and a few dubious statements is all we have to go by for the beginning of our story. By deductions and references to historical personalities and events it is, however, possible to construct at least a plausible account of happenings which, because of their hypothetical nature, are of course subject to many changes if documentary evidence should ever prove our assumptions to be wrong. We thus begin with JEROME.

Jerome was born about 1808 as the son to Count Castel Nuovo, descendent of an ancient Maltese aristocratic family. The Castel Nuovos may have had property in both Malta and Italy, but around the 1830s they resided in Milan where Jerome may have grown up in an atmosphere of Italian nationalism inspired by Mazzini's vision of an independent and united Italy. He became a fervent admirer and supporter of Garibaldi, and when the latter had to escape for his life in 1836 to South America, Jerome, now aged about 28, followed his hero. He committed his wife and toddler son Louis to his father's care and went to fight in the Italian Legion formed in Montevideo for the freedom of Uruguay. In June 1848 he returned with Garibaldi to Italy, by which time "our Louis" was a boy of 15. For unknown reasons—possibly political—he fell out with the older generation of his family and in disgust or protest he gave up his patronym and adopted the name of his mother's family, henceforth calling himself MANDELLI.

At the end of 1849 Garibaldi escaped for a second time to America, but apparently without Jerome Castel Nuovo — Mandelli, who may have become disillusioned with his leader and his policy, or had completely given up his revolutionary ideals. It



could even be assumed that he was kept back by a sense of responsibility for his own family. The break with his father and the dangerous political situation—he was of course a political “suspect”—made Jerome retreat to British territory since England was then actively supporting the national ambitions of the Italians: he took his wife and son and went to India where he settled down about 1850. Exit Jerome. . .

But where did he go? Two courses of events present themselves by reason of a puzzling circumstance: The name Mandelli is conspicuous by its absence in all the “Registers of Inhabitants” of the three Presidencies: Bengal, Bombay and Madras. It is therefore possible that Jerome spent little time in British India and made his way to one of the princely states like some famous Italians before him, or — he never came to India at all!

If we dismiss Jerome Mandelli as the patriotic fighter and accept Dozey’s statement that it was son Louis Castel Nuovo who changed his name to Mandelli, the Garibaldi connection could still be possible, though only just: In 1849 Garibaldi escaped to America once again, and it is now that Louis, aged 16, could either have joined his idol or followed him in the course of the next five years, but it seems improbable. The likely truth is that Louis Mandelli never saw any part of America.

If we are still inclined to consider the Garibaldi connection this could only have been made after the latter’s return to Italy in 1854 by which time Louis was 21. The big question of course is: what did Louis do for the next eight years? Did he march about Italy with his hero or was he sometimes in Milan and sometimes joined the odd battle? There is impregnable darkness until it gets lighter again at the beginning of the 1860s when a last opportunity presents itself for a Mandelli association with the great man.

In 1862 Garibaldi was marching with the regular army on Rome and was taken prisoner at Aspromonte at the end of August. He was liberated by an amnesty and retired to his island home of



Caprera (bought in 1854) condemned to inactivity. In the many ups and downs in Garibaldi's progress it is during this period that Louis Mandelli, a young man of 30, might well have been politically involved as one of his followers. Thinking that Garibaldi's defeat and humiliation was the end of his career, profoundly disappointed and possibly politically compromised, Louis left Italy either soon after the debacle at the end of 1862 or at some time in 1863. These dates would link up neatly with his appearance on the "Register of Inhabitants" compiled in 1864 and published at the end of the year. We are at last in a position to follow his career with accurate certainty, since Thackers had made it their business to provide the commercial world of India with detailed information on all the tea estates, their owners, managers and assistant managers in their "BENGAL DIRECTORY", issued annually. Mandelli's whereabouts are now well established until the end of *his life and the year* when he is suddenly referred to as "the late L. Mandelli".

\* \* \*

## RESIDENCE AT DARJEELING

On the assumption that the "DIRECTORIES" were checked and compiled before the end of each year, Louis Mandelli could have been at Darjeeling as early as January 1864. He would then have had a whole year looking around for "suitable employment" and at the same time acquiring the basic knowledge of tea culture and the running of a tea garden. There is, at any rate, no trace of his having been engaged in any "gainful" activity in the town. One thing is certain: before the end of 1864 he had landed a contract with the Lebong & Minchu Tea Company as manager of the garden (350 acres) of the same name.

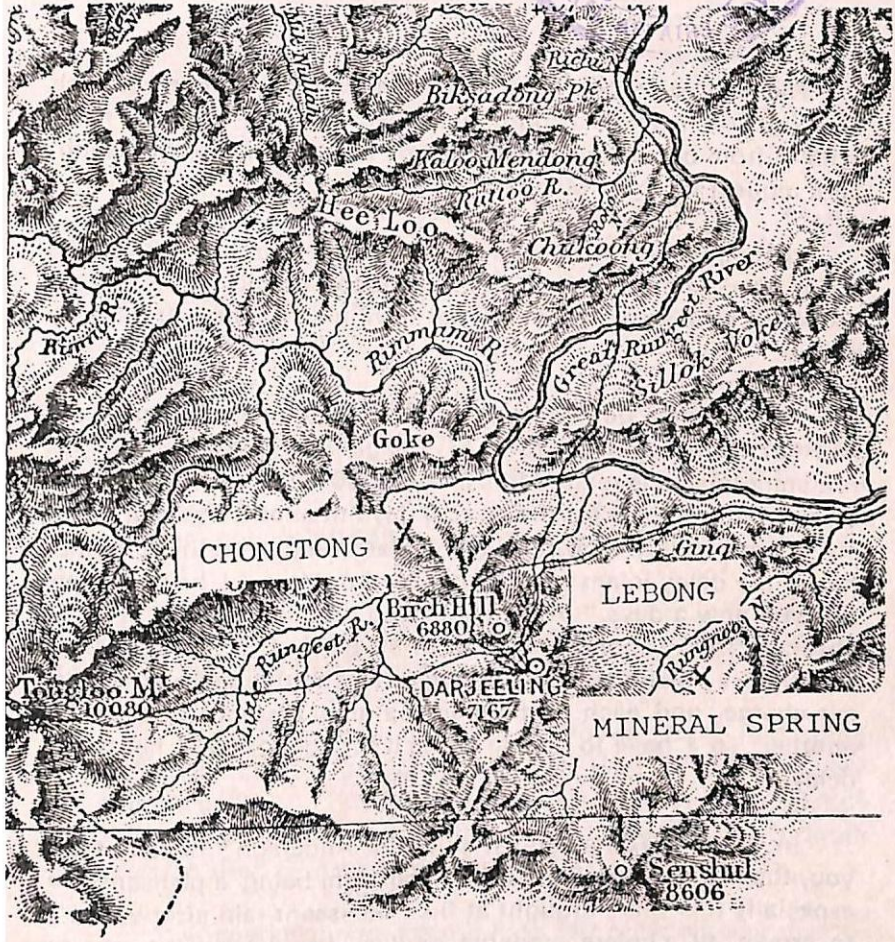
His managerial appointment must have made him a most eligible bachelor and he got promptly married to Ann Jones at Darjeeling on 21st January 1865 at the R.C. Church. As there is no "Jones" on the list of Darjeeling residents of any description, it seems most likely that Ann had been brought up from Calcutta for the occasion.

In 1868 (or at the end of 1867) the garden was taken over by the Land Mortgage Bank of India, and a second garden, Mineral Spring (250 acres) was added to Mandelli's responsibility, bringing the total area to 600 acres.

By 1870 he was no longer a "resident" of Darjeeling, but had probably moved to Lebong from where many of his letters to Anderson were dated.

In 1872 another tea garden of 750 acres, the Chongtong Tea Estate, was put under Mandelli's management, bringing the total to 1350 acres (!). This additional duty must have substantially increased his salary, and he was able—before the end of 1873—to return his family to Darjeeling, acquiring perhaps at this time the property later (1880) called "Mandelligunge", and to remain on the list of residents until 1878.





Sites of tea gardens



## THE TEA ESTATE MANAGER

The task of supervising three separate tea gardens of such an extensive acreage cannot have been an easy one as is quite evident from occasional remarks made in the letters to Anderson. To a request for eggs Mandelli answers :

"I shall be very glad to procure eggs for you, but I cannot do it this year, as my multifarious works won't permit me to do so." (20-4-73.) In an apology for not having sent a box of birds he writes :

"I have three gardens to look to, & large ones, & I am in the midst of manufacturing." (3-5-73) The gardens also did not always run smoothly as is related in a letter of 30-5-73. : "I have been away from my place for the last 20 days to another garden under my charge as my Assistant there was doing everything wrong, hence the delay in answering your kind notes. . . I have no time to spare now a days." A further explanation is given for his long absences from Lebong in a letter of 29-6-73. : ". . . I could not find time. . . being so busy looking after the three gardens under my charge, and each of them is at a great distance from one to another, so I have to remain at each for days & days, hence the delay."

In June 1876 he sums it all up for Anderson : "I can assure you, the life of a Tea Planter is by far from being a pleasant one, especially this year : drought at first, incessant rain afterwards, & to crown all, cholera amongst coolies, beside the commission from home to inspect the gardens, all these combined are enough to drive any one mad." (25-6-76)



## THE TEA ESTATE PROPRIETOR

Before the end of 1871 Mandelli had advanced his fortune to the extent that he had become a part-owner of a tea garden. The entry in "THACKER'S DIRECTORY" reads :

"Bycemaree (Silligoree), Proprs. L. Mandelli & W.R. Martin, 70 acres."

There are several references to this property in the correspondence with Anderson :

"I have no old tea just now, but I shall send you, say in September, a good size box from my own garden. In the mean time I have sent Khubar to have it packed at once, so to get a little old by the time you receive it. — No charges made at this shop. — I am not allowed to sell tea from the Company's gardens." (30-7-73.)

A "thank you" letter from Anderson and an offer to pay for the tea prompted this charming answer :

"Don't mention about the Tea.— Do you think that being a Tea Planter it would be right on my part to sell Tea to friends? Of course, being so, I have the satisfaction to oblige my friends with the produce of my own garden.— Certainly this it is of more value to me than all payments." (19-8-73.)

His managerial duties cannot have left Mandelli any time to attend to his own property. This made him into what is called a "sleeping partner" who had to rely on his business partner for the efficient running of his tea garden, in this case, W.R. Martin, who is listed in the "DIRECTORY" as "Proprietor-manager";



Darjeeling, 7<sup>th</sup> January 1873



My dear Anderson

Yes, I have been very ill, but thank God, I am on my legs again. For this reason, I could not send you birds before, but I have done so at last.

You will find in the box about 600 skins of Birds, also a small box of Tea, & hope you will like Darjeeling Tea.

How are you getting on about collecting? I hope well, as no doubt I shall come in for my share too. Please collect for me everything you care, especially Larks, Partridges & Quails & Ducks &c. also Raptors that you have not sent before.

Of course I shall on my part enrich your collection, as much as you do mine, in due time.

Owing to sickness I could not name all the birds - but you will find the names of the most part of them on the wrapper - Please reject all the bad birds, if there are any: & I shall send you other

## WILLIAM EDWIN BROOKS

Edwin Brooks was Mandelli's much admired and perhaps first mentor in ornithology. The letters to Andrew Anderson contain frequent references to him expressing either veneration or deep concern for health :

" He wrote me a few lines saying he was going for a few days to Massourie for a change. I hope fervently the change will do him good". (30-7-73).

On the occasion of a consignment of eagles being sent to him, Mandelli writes how much he is looking forward to being able to study the birds "so that I may see and understand this eagle controversy now going on with the swell Ornithologists at home. I see they must give in, & Brooks will have the best of them—a great honour no doubt to him & to yourself [Anderson] as you have contributed also in a great measure to solve this entangled matter". (29-6-73.)

Three years later Brooks is again in a bad way and Mandelli sounds thoroughly alarmed and almost panicky when he reports to Anderson :

"Our mutual friend Brooks wrote to me about his health: I hope to goodness he will be better soon so as to prevent his taking leave to England. I would miss him as much as you, as his letters are a treat to me — I have invited him up to Darjeeling: I only hope he would come up." (28-1-76.) And a few days later he writes :

"I am very sorry about poor Brooks: I hope nothing serious will be the matter with him & that he will be soon himself again." (7-2-76)



In 1881 Brooks retired to Canada and on his death in 1899 his career was summed up in "THE IBIS" in the following obituary:

"Formerly well known for his excellent work on the birds of British India, a member of the British Ornithologists' Union, and a frequent contributor to this journal, (William Edwin Brooks) died at his residence, Mount Forest, Ontario, Canada, on the 18th of January last (1899). Brooks was born in Ireland, near Dublin, on the 30th June 1828, but his parents were from North-humberland, and he spent his boyhood in that county. He was a civil engineer by profession, and was engaged for many years in the service of the East Indian Railway Company. From 1868 to 1880, during which period he was mostly resident at Etawah, in the North west Provinces of India, Brooks devoted all his leisure time to observing and collecting birds, and was one of Mr. Hume's most valued coadjutors having contributed 27 papers to "STRAY FEATHERS" from 1873 to 1880. At the same time he was sending frequent communications to the "PROCEEDINGS" of the Asiatic Society of Bengal and to this journal. In 1881. Brooks retired from the Company's service and emigrated to Canada where he resided until the time of his decease mostly in the Province of Ontario, though at one time he moved over to British Columbia. One of Brooks' latest communications to the "IBIS" in 1894 related to the species Phylloscopus on which difficult group he was recognised as a special authority." (IBIS, seventh series 1889, p, 468)

\* \* \*







## ANDREW ANDERSON

A few words must be said about Andrew Anderson, the recipient of the 48 letters which have revealed so much of the character of their writer. There had at first been some confusion as to the identity of "My dear Anderson", and the pardonable assumption had been that the correspondence was directed to John Anderson, the Director of the National Museum in Calcutta. However, directions not to send boxes via Calcutta, but direct to Darjeeling and a later reference to a box to "Futtehgarh" solved this problem: the correspondent was, in fact, Andrew Anderson, another well-known ornithologist and collector of the period. The two had been brought together by Edwin Brooks so frequently mentioned in the correspondence. In his second letter to Anderson Mandelli writes: "I am very glad to have made your acquaintance through our mutual friend, if not for the present "in propria persona", at least in writing, and I hope at a future time to meet you or in Darjeeling, if ever you come up, or at your present abode, if I have the opportunity to go to the plains." (29-3-73.) In spite of many charming invitations from Mandelli the two never met, for, alas, either Anderson was too ill to undertake the long journey, or the season was wrong for Darjeeling; but their friendship lasted until Anderson's death in 1878.

The obituary in "THE IBIS" provides the information required in the Mandelli context:

"Andrew Anderson, an able and zealous Indian ornithologist and a member of our Union, who died in July of the present year (1878), spent most of his life in India, in the Civil Service. At the time of the Indian Mutiny he was one of the twelve gallant civilians who so successfully defended the Billiard Room at Arra against the mutineers. In 1869 he came home on furlough, and

before returning to India in October 1871 he became a Fellow of the Zoological Society of London and a member of the British Ornithologists Union. On his return to India he became District Judge at Futtegarh, which post in the service he held until his death. At Futtegarh he found ample field for his ornithological pursuits; and that he made good use of his opportunities is evinced by his able and careful papers contributed to "THE IBIS" and to the Zoological Society between 1871 and 1878.

All his letters to his various naturalist friends in this country showed the enthusiasm with which he entered into this congenial work, and the extreme care he always bestowed upon minute details in his observations – an important qualification in an accurate field naturalist.

In June 1877 he came again to England, but this time in bad health; and for many weeks he was an invalid and confined to his room. He temporarily recovered and was able occasionally to visit his friends, and during the short time that elapsed before his death took as keen an interest as ever in his natural-history pursuits."

Mandelli's last letter to Anderson is very touching as he is obviously trying to cheer up the invalid and make him look forward to his return to India :

"My dear Anderson,

I am in receipt of your two kind notes, & I am sorry to see you are still suffering from the effects of the Indian climate, but I sincerely hope you will be better when this reaches you.

To appease your great desire of having something in the shape of birds & eggs I shall start off by the next mail some eggs for you: these I must take out of my own collection, & a poor one it is at present, as during last year I never got an egg or a bird, having discharged all my shikarees in March last, owing to their rascality during last winter. . .





## THE ORNITHOLOGIST

Louis Mandelli's importance lies in his contribution to Indian and world ornithology. At least five birds still carry his name as author or are named in his honour "mandellii". His generous consignments to other ornithologists and a variety of institutions enabled scientists to map ornithologically the Darjeeling region of the Himalayas, including moreover the much larger area of Sikkim and the adjacent parts of Tibet, Bhutan and Nepal. From our meagre records we know that his beneficiaries included at least four museums (Darjeeling, Calcutta, the British Museum and the Milan Museum). And the occasional mention of numbers of birds sent to ornithologists with whom he exchanged puts A. O. Hume in the lead with over 5000 bird skins to be followed by Anderson with 2500 to 3000 and, no doubt, an equally large number to his friends and tutors Brooks and Blanford, rising to a breath-taking 10, 15 or 20 000 (or more)!

There is no indication that Mandelli took an interest in birds before he came to Darjeeling, but a comment in 1875 (25-9-75.) puts the date of the beginning of his collecting activities to 1869. In one of his first letters to Anderson in 1873 he writes: "I am as yet a very poor ornithologist and quite "Kutcha" about Raptores. Brooks is teaching me "in epistolis" a good deal about small birds, and I dare say in due time I shall know the Birds of Prey also." (29-3-73.) In his next letter he mentions other bird families: "I am very poor in Grallatores, Natatores & Raptores, & to tell you the truth I know very little about them. I am going to study the Raptores when you send me yours." (20-4-73) It is indeed astonishing to see how Mandelli in the space of less than ten years became an authority on birds considering the little reference material he had at his disposal: "Except Jerdon's "BIRDS OF INDIA" and few pamphlets given to me by Stoliczka





## MANDELLI VERSUS HUME

Mandelli's unhappy relationship with Hume is not too difficult to explain. But before we go into the causes for so much resentment a note on Hume might be found useful.

Allan Octavian Hume is to ornithologists the collector par excellence. He not only collected himself but engaged a full staff of qualified naturalists who helped to assemble one of the largest collections of birds and eggs ever. He also incorporated other ornithologists' collections such as Mandelli's. His bequest after his death enriched the British Museum by 82 000 specimens! It was considered "one of the most splendid donations ever made to the Nation". Hume also brought out a journal "STRAY FEATHERS" in which he published the results of his own efforts and those of his colleagues.

But this major contribution was only a hobby with Hume, who in his official capacity was Commissioner of Customs and Secretary to Government in Calcutta and as such was one of the "heaven-born" Indian Civil Servants and one of the busiest and highest ranking officers at that. (It was of course the salary that went with such an appointment which enabled him to collect on this vast scale.)

Apart from ornithology, Hume was greatly interested in Indian politics and held very advanced and liberal views. After his retirement from Government he was free to support the Civil Service agitation and urged the graduates of Calcutta University "to organize an association for the mental, moral, social and political regeneration of the people of India." It is a little known fact that he — an Englishman — became the actual founder of the Indian National Congress. And when the at first favourable attitude of

## THE LAST TWO YEARS

In 1879 the name Mandelli disappears for the second time from the list of Darjeeling residents, though Louis is still in charge of the three tea gardens. By the end of the year, however, he was removed from management and all gardens had a new manager each. The "DIRECTORY" gives "Mandelligunge" as the "Residences: Mandelli L. & Martin W.R.", so he at least appears to have had a home for his wife and five children (two boys and three girls). The rest, alas, is open to speculation. Something had gone so drastically wrong that he was driven to commit suicide in February 1880. The "DIRECTORY" in January 1882 provides the sad information: "Bysemaree (Silligoree) Proprs. W R. Martin & Estate of late L. Mandelli."

What had gone wrong? There are a number of ominous remarks which at least hint at a combination of factors which may have led to the tragedy.

As far back as 1875 Mandelli writes: "I hope by end of next year I shall be my own master, & retire on the income of my own gardens; then I shall have time." (18-7-75.) The gardens were, of course, either Bycemaree and Munjha or Bycemaree and Kyel.

Another hint is given in a letter of April 1876:

"I have been to Calcutta & back as I was called there by the Superintendent of the Land Mortgage Bank on business connected with it.

This year will be a very busy one for me as the Board at home has decided to alter the articles of the Company into a Tea Company & leave off altogether banking business.



To this effect a deputation is coming from home to inspect all the gardens here, Assam & Cachar, value them, report on them etc. etc. You may imagine all the bother I shall have.

By the latter end of May they will be here & remain here perhaps for two months. So you see I shall have very little leisure time to attend to birds while they are here. Is it not provoking?" (11-4-76.)

Two months later, in June '76, Mandelli writes one of his longest letters to Anderson, pouring out all his troubles :

"Such a year for sickness and bad weather lately experienced, I never saw before . . . drought at first, incessant rain afterwards, & to crown all, cholera amongst coolies, beside the Commission from home to inspect the gardens, all these combined are enough to drive any one mad. . . Beside I was very nearly losing my wife : she had an attack of cholera, or choleric diarrhoea, as the Doctor calls it, & you may imagine what an anxious time I had passed : thank God, she is out of danger now & recovering fast." (25-6-76.)

In August the cholera had disappeared from the gardens, but no doubt on account of it he was "awfully behind in sending away tea to the Market." (8-8-76.)

In March 1877 a single sentence reveals a whole range of possible calamities past, present and future : "I have now satisfied all my creditors." Had he owed money for Bycemaree or Kyel or "Mandelligunge"? Had he overspent on his bird collecting? It certainly explains why he had not been able to retire in 1876 as he had hoped to do.

Next, Mandelli increasingly complains of ill health. In December '76 he writes : "I have been very unwell and feel I am getting old very fast — This year has been a very bad one indeed for me, both for health and collecting." (24-12-76.) The following March he seems distinctly worse : "For the last two or three



## THE "INVENTORY"

Louis Mandelli died intestate and the Administrator General for Bengal took over: "Administration No. 7257 dated 29th March 1881 — Estate of Louis Mandelli". The "Account for 1 year from date of administration" makes fascinating reading. This account for the first year of "Administration" is by no means a complete inventory of Mandelli's property as, for instance, there is only a reference to the "valuation and survey of the house and premises Mandelligunge belonging to this Estate. Rs. 64" without mention of the value. But in spite of incomplete evidence one thing emerges very clearly: apart from being a devoted ornithologist, Mandelli was also a speculator and investor of no mean calibre and an astute businessman; and although all the sums quoted were money invested and he might possibly have had an occasional "cash problem", it can hardly have been serious enough to create a situation of desperation. The puzzle of the suicide becomes even more puzzling when one reads the final figures at the end of the accounts, not including Mandelligunge or Bycemari:

(debit) Rs. 11 200 (credit) Rs 30640-10-2.

The following quotations are just a few examples extracted for their special interest:

1881  
May 11 th To cash paid Registry fee for returning lease of house Mandelli-gunge belonging to this Estate... Rs. 0-4-9  
June 11th To... for the valuation of Kyel Tea Garden belonging to this Estate Rs. 50-12-0



## THE "DOZEY VERSION"

Mandelli, William — Ornithologist — was the son of Count Bastel-Nuovo, an ancient Maltese family. On joining the forces of Garibaldi, he fell out with his family and ever after adopted the maternal name of Mandelli. He formed a unit in the force sent by that General to S. America, and as that project ended in a fiasco, and rather than face the jibes of his family, he worked his way to India where his attainments soon attracted the attention of the leading scientists, including the famous Dr. Jerdon.

While Superintendent of the Land Mortgage Bank's gardens, which on the one hand covered the whole of the east slope of the Lebong Spur and on the other extended up to Dewai Pani (mineral springs) he found the time to devote to his pet hobby and established in a short time a museum containing specimens of the fauna of the district so unique that it attracted world wide reputation; and after his demise drew purchasers from England, and even Europe. Some of the specimens, notably a very rare snow-pheasant, named Ornithocus Mandelli after him, were bought by the 'Crystal Palace' where they are to be seen to this day.

He once owned Mandelli Gunge on which the following shops now stand in Commercial Row—The Senchal Dairy Farm, J. Burlington-Smith, Mitchell & Co., Hall & Anderson, Ltd., Frank Ross & Co., Ottewill's Millinery Establishment, White-away Laidlaw. Ltd., J. Boseck & Co., Smith-Stanistreet, and York Villa on the Post Office Road.

He left three daughters who still reside in the station.

### Cemeteries.

1878—Mr. Mandelli, ornithologist, appointed by the Italian Government to report on birds of the eastern Himalayas.

## THE BRITISH MUSEUM'S APPRECIATION

L M A N D E L L I (1833 — 1881)

In the British Museum collection  
13 birds from Sikkim (78-3-29; 6-18)

“When I first began to work at the Museum I found the series of birds from our Indian Empire to be a very poor one, both as regards the number of species and the condition of specimens, and I wrote to Mandelli to beg for a few of the Flycatchers necessary for my work in the fourth volume of the “CATALOGUE OF BIRDS”. He promptly sent me the 13 specimens recorded above, which were most useful at the time, and added five species to the Museum, viz. *Nitidula hodgsoni*, *Musicapula sapphira*, *Erythrosterna pusilla*, *Cyornis magnirostris* and *C. unicolor*.

Mandelli employed a number of native collectors and amassed a fine series of birds from Sikkim, Native Sikkim, the adjacent portions of Tibet and the Butan Doars. So particular was he as to the condition of his skins that he made a point of throwing away any which were not well preserved. The unfortunate man ultimately took his own life and his collection was purchased by Mr. Allan Hume and came to the British Museum with the rest of the Hume Collection in 1885. It was one of the features of this wonderful collection.”

From: “THE HISTORY”  
OF THE COLLECTIONS CONTAINED IN THE NATURAL  
HISTORY DEPARTMENTS OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM”,  
Vol. II, British Museum (Nat. Hist.), 1906



PELLORNEUM RUFICEPS MANDELLI BLANFORD 1871  
SPOTTED BABBLER



PELLORNEUM MANDELLI

"W T. Blanford (received and read 6th September 1871)

Mr. L. Mandelli of Darjiling has sent to me for determination a most interesting collection of Sikkim birds, together with a few obtained from the plains near the base of the Himalayas. The birds sent are from various elevations, some being evidently from considerable altitudes. Strange as it may appear, after this chosen land of the feathered tribes had been explored and ransacked for years by such ornithologists Hodgson, Jerdon, Tickell and many others, it yet yields novelties to so energetic a collector as Mr. Mandelli. Amongst the birds sent is a sixth Himalayan species of *Propasser*, indicated, it is true, some years since by Mr. Blyth, but not hitherto described, and the male of which was previously unknown. There is also a new *Pellorneum*, and apparently one or two undescribed warblers. Two other birds are additions to the fauna of India, and new localities are furnished for a few others. . . ."

From: JOURNAL OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL,  
Vol. 41, 1872, Pt. II—No. II, p. 152

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