

A Brief Chronology of Dr. Heinrich Bürger

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The personal history and achievements of Heinrich Bürger who engaged in the study of Japan as an assistant of Von Siebold have not yet been cleared up in Japanese historians' circle. The studies of his career are published in many fragmentary reports in Japan, but not in perfect forms. But, while I was investigating many Dutch literatures about Japanese natural history, I fortunately happened to know the life of Bürger by the kind help and suggestions of Dr. Prof. C. G. G. J. van Steenis, director of Rijksherbarium at Leyden, and Mrs. van Steenis.¹ In this report, I will summarize the results of my study in a brief chronology, based on the materials.

1806 (*Bunka 3*)

Was born at Hameln in Weser (Hanover), on the 20th of January as the seventh son of ten brothers among Samuel Bürger and Eva Meyer are German having Jewish blood. His father was a merchant at Hameln, but he lost his father in his childhood. (There is a version that he was born in the beginning of 1804 at Hameln in Weser,² but his birth was not recorded clearly in the church register of Hameln, so it has no distinct source. Therefore I intend to regard the truth that he was recorded in the note of enrollment).

1821 (*Bunsei 4*)

25 Oct. Was admitted to enter the Göttingen University as a student of the mathematics course.³

1822 (*Bunsei 5*)

Oct. Changed his speciality from mathematics to astronomy.⁴

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¹ cf. "Hosei-Sigaku" Mar, 1970 Journal of Hosei Historical Society in Hosei University No. 22 p. 95-113.

² [Blumea] vol. XI, No. 2, 1962 "Contribution to the History of Botany and Exporation in Malaysia" M.J. van Steenis-Kruseman. p. 499.

³ cf. Götz van Selle, Die Matrikel der Georg-August Universität zu Göttingen 1734-1837 No. 28978 and 29536, p. 660.

⁴ cf. *ibid.*, p. 676.

1823 (*Bunsei 6*)

6 Sep. Left Amsterdam for Java and became an apprentice pharmacist at the hospital in Djakarta.⁵

1825 (*Bunsei 8*)

14 Jan. Was promoted to the 3rd class pharmacist.⁶ In this year, Von Siebold filed an application requiring two assistants for his work to the Governor-General of Dutch East Indie, to satisfy the above request, Dr. Heinrich Bürger and Carolus Hubert de Villeneuve, a painter arrived at Dezima, Nagasaki, Japan. In December, he was advanced to the 2nd class pharmacist and worked remarkably in the study of physics, chemistry, pharmacology and mineralogy as an assistant of Von Siebold.⁷

1826 (*Bunsei 9*)

From 15 Feb. to 7 Jul. Followed the annual Edo government courtesy visiting voyage with Joan Willem de Sturler, the chief of Dutch firm and Von Siebold as a clerk.⁸ Presented "BATTAGLIA DI ARCOLO" in Italian and a personage picture with an Italian eulogy was written to Katsuragawa Hoken whose name was known as a Botanist at Nagasakiya, Edo;⁹ Was presented Mino paper from Mizukuri Gempo.¹⁰ The results and the effects resulted from the following researches which he performed in the above voyage were summarized later.

- (1) Measured Japan physically in 1826 and in consequence made contribution to the development of geography.¹¹
- (2) Measured Japan geognostically on his way from Nagasaki to Edo in 1826.¹²
- (3) Researched Japan on mineralogy, mine engineering and capital.¹³

In the same year, he translated the treatise with the title "Nippon Kodaishi-Kō" which was given to Von Siebold from his pupil, Mima Junzō, into German under the title of "Chronologie des Japanischen Reiches."¹⁴

⁵ General State Archives, The Hague, Koloniën 2479, resolution Governor General No. 6. 1823, No. 3.

⁶ Itazawa Takeo "Siebold" Zinbutsu-Sōsho Yoshikawa-Kōbunkan Shōwa 35, p. 67, cf. *ibid.* Koloniën 2480, resolution Jan, 14, 1825, No. 1.

⁷ cf. *ibid.*, p. 67.

⁸ cf. Kure Shūzō "Siebold Edo Sanpu Kiko" Ikoku-Sōsho Shunnansha Shōwa 6, p. 90.

⁹ cf. Imaizumi Genkitsi "Rangaku no Ie Katsuragawa no Hitobito" (Zokuhen) Shinozaki-Shorin Shōwa 43, p. 226-227, p. 514.

¹⁰ cf. Kure Shūzō "Siebold Sensei Sono Shōgai Oyobi Kōgyō" 3. Tōyō Bunko Heibonsha Shōwa 43, p. 166.

¹¹ cf. (6) *ibid.*, p. 81.

¹² cf. *ibid.*, p. 82.

¹³ cf. *ibid.*, p. 85.

¹⁴ cf. Nichi-Doku Bunka Kyokaihen "Siebold Kenkyū" Iwanami Shoten, Shōwa 13, p. 206.

1827 (*Bunsei 10*)

2 Jul. Practised the western clinics as an assistant of Dr. Ph. Fr. Von Siebold for the first time. The patient was a son of Noguchi Gihei, a retainer of the Lord Hosokawa in Higo province, Ritsubei, a twelve-year-old boy. And his illness was the cephalic tumor.¹⁵ In that year, summarized the report concerned with analysis of mineral spring in Japan.¹⁶

1828 (*Bunsei 11*)

Sep. Occured the Siebold event. During the period approximately from 1826 to 1828, he translated the "Liu-Kyu-Dan" written by Morishima Chūryō into German under the title of "Beschreibung von Liu-Kyu."¹⁷

In September of that year, as Siebold was expired from his duty, he was requested to be a successor to Von Siebold by the Governor-General of Dutch East Indie. However, this succession was temporarily postponed due to the occurrence of Siebold event.¹⁸ So that in the mean-while he assisted Von Siebold's study of Japan.¹⁹

1829 (*Bunsei 12*)

25 May. Was presented the plants "Cephalotaxus drupacea utiemprioris" (Nomen japon, Inugaja) being collected by Kumakichi in Nagasaki a day laborer of Von Siebold²⁰ and this plant was later distributed to the botanical gardens in European countries.²¹

1 Oct. of that year Heinrich Bürger was commissioned to be a successor to Von Siebold by the Governor-General of Dutch East Indie in public.²² His position is a government official with the physical research in Japan (Ambtenaar belast met het natuurkundig onderzoek te Japan.)²³

In the same year, he forwarded the following collection list in Japan to the Governor-General of Dutch East Indie. List of dried plants sent to Batavia. List of some living plants sent from Dezima to Batavia for cultivation in Java.²⁴

¹⁵ cf. (2) *ibid.*, p. 494.

¹⁶ cf. (12) *ibid.*, p. 82.

¹⁷ cf. (14) *ibid.*, p. 248-249.

¹⁸ cf. (15) *ibid.*, p. 497.

¹⁹ cf. (10) *ibid.*, 1, p. 354.

²⁰ I received a letter (on the Kumakichi) from Prof. Dr. C. G. G. Van Steenis (Director of Rijksherbarium).

²¹ cf. (19) *ibid.*, p. 211.

²² cf. Kure Shūzō "Siebold Sensei Sono Shōgai Oyobi Kōgyō" (Otsuhen) Tōhōdō Taishō 15, p. 305.

²³ cf. Itazawa Takeo "Nichi-Ran Bunkwa Kōshōshi no Kenkyū" Yoshikawa-Kōbunkan Shōwa 36, p. 342.

²⁴ cf. (18) *ibid.*, Addendum.

1830 (Tempō 1)

Jan. Germain Felix Meijlan, the chief of Dutch firm filed an application to Ohgusa Notono-Kami, a magistrate of Nagasaki province to make Heinrich Bürger accompany with him on the anual Edo government coutesy visiting voyage. However, this application was refused with an intention of the supreme court in the Edo government because he had already joined in the above voyage with Von Siebold in 1826.²⁵ Consequently, Germain Felix Meijlan started for Edo with Carolus Hubert de Villeneuve, a painter, on his voyage in February of that year.²⁶ In the same year, he forwarded the following collection list in Japan to the Governor-General of Dutch East Indie. List of living Japanese plants for the botanical garden at Buitenzorg. List of Japanese fishes, stuffed mammals and birds, to be sent from Dezima to Batavia 1830, with Chinese and Japanese characters.²⁷

1832 (Tempō 3)

May. Left Dezima, Nagasaki and reached Java with a lot of seeds and seedling of plants or vegetables. He was commissioned to cultivate them on the experimental farm, Krawang (Het Etablissement van Landobow).²⁸

1833 (Tempō 4)

9 June. Participated in the exploration of mineralogy at Padang Uplands located of the west coast of Sumatra as a member of the natural science committee. This research was continued until the end of the year.²⁹

27 June of that year He was appointed to the inspector of plants cultivated at Krawang.³⁰ The exploration of Sumatra was reported on the newspaper published by *Verhandelingen van het Bataviasch Gemootschap*. He was a member of the above newspaper office. He also indicated the quantity of copper retained and the amount of copper production in Japanese copper mines on the above mentioned newspaper "Ene beschrijving der Japanische Kopermijnen, en de bereidig van het Koper".³¹

1834 (Tempō 5)

17 Jan. Left Java and rearched Dezima, Nagasaki, Japan and engaged again in the research of Japan (chiefly studied zoology and botany). He forwarded the data collection in Japan to Batavia.³²

²⁵ cf. (9) *ibid.*, p. 514.

²⁶ cf. (21) *ibid.*, 1. p. 379, (23) *ibid.*, p. 125, "Edo Saiziki" Kan 1. "Koutsyu-Manroku" Dai 9 hen.

²⁷ cf. (24) *ibid.*, Addendum.

²⁸ cf. (26) *ibid.*, 1. p. 212.

²⁹ G. S. A. Koloniën 2550 resolution June 9. 1833, No. 8.

³⁰ G. S. A. Koloniën 2550 resolution June 27, 1833, No. 2.

³¹ cf. (27) *ibid.*, p. 498.

³² G. S. A. Koloniën 2557, resolution Jan. 17, 1834, No. 1.

Sep. of that year Was recognized his distinguished services on the study of Japan and was given a decoration as a member of natural science committee (Naturkundige Commissie). Became "Ridder in de Orde van de Nederlandsche Leew".³³

1835 (*Tempō 6*)

June. Completed his study in Japan and left Dezima, Nagasaki and reached Java.³⁴ His study in Japan was succeeded by J. Pierot.

1837 (*Tempō 8*)

Month is unknown. Married with Anna Cornelia van Daalen (1799–1874).³⁵ Was requested to study Japan more by the Governor-General of Dutch East Indie. However, he refused this request.³⁶

1839 (*Tempō 10*)

30 Sep. Reappointed to a member of the natural science committee.³⁷ Von Siebold filled an application so that a bounty would be granted to Heinrich Bürger to the Government of Holland.³⁸

1840 (*Tempō 11*)

Boarded the ship, "Cornelis Hautman" to leave Java. After arriving at Holland, settled down in Amsterdam.³⁹

1842 (*Tempō 13*)

Year is not exact. Met a German poet, Heinrich Heine (1797–1856) through the introduction of H. Wermann in Paris and this meeting was noted in his remembrances title "Geständnisse" of H. Heine.⁴⁰

1843 (*Tempō 14*)

30 June. The application filed by Von Siebold to grant the bounty of Heinrich Bürger was approved.⁴¹ In that year, he was ordered to work in Java by the government of Holland and he served for the governor-general of Dutch East Indie until 1850.

³³ G. S. A. Koloniën 3954, royal decree Sep. 16, 1834, No. 61.

³⁴ G. S. A. Koloniën 2855, resolution June 14, 1835, No. 4.

³⁵ cf. (31) *ibid.*, p. 499.

³⁶ cf. (35) *ibid.*, p. 499.

³⁷ Letter from the Minister of the Colonies to the Governor-General date Nov. 30, 1839, No. 4/7676.

³⁸ cf. (35) *ibid.*, p. 500.

³⁹ cf. (38) *ibid.*, p. 499.

⁴⁰ cf. Doi Yoshinobu, Heine Senshū 14 "Kokuhaku, Kaiso, Yuigon" (Geständnisse) Kaihōsha, Shōwa 23, p. 100–101.

⁴¹ G. S. A. Koloniën 2646, resolution Jun. 30, 1843, No. 9.

The work was to encourage the horticulture under the direction of Von Siebold and C. L. Blume.⁴²

1844 (*Kouka 1*)

Engaged in the transportation of rice, supplying of rice and oil to Büttenbezittingen (Outer Possession, i.e. the island outside Java), the work of insurances, the management of mining industry or sugar manufactory.⁴³

1845 (*Kouka 2*)

Published the treatise "Grundriss der Geographie" Breslau and "Hülfs und Nachweisungstafeln" Breslau.⁴⁴

1850 (*Kaei 3*)

Returned temporarily to Amsterdam and came back to Java again.⁴⁵

1852 (*Kaei 5*)

Published the treatise "Physikalischer Atlas van 95. Karten" Gotha.⁴⁶

1854 (*Ansei 1*)

Published the treatise "Die Baudenkmäler aller Völker der Erde" Brüssel und Leipzig 2 vol.⁴⁷

1855 (*Ansei 2*)

18 Dec. Was authorized to be a naturalized citizen in Dutch.⁴⁸

1857 (*Ansei 4*)

Jul. Worked remarkably as a resident of Batavia.⁴⁹

1858 (*Ansei 5*)

25 Mar. Closed his life when he was 752 year old in Indramaju, Protectorate of England. His wife Anna Cornelia van Daalen settled down there until 1874, the year of her death.⁵⁰

As for the plants, fishes in the Flora Japonica, Fauna Japonica, Bürger's part takes still a great place. His name is often used in honour of his works in these

⁴² cf. (39) *ibid.*, p. 499.

⁴³ cf. (42) *ibid.*, p. 500.

⁴⁴ cf. Catalogue de la Bibliothèque, Apprtee au Japon : Mr. Ph. F. de Siebold pour servir à l'étude des sciences physiques, géographiques, ethnologiques et politiques et de guide dans les recherches et d'écouvertes scientifiques dans cet Empire Dezima imprimerie néelandaie 1862.

⁴⁵ cf. (43) *ibid.*, p. 499.

⁴⁶ cf. (44) *ibid.*

⁴⁷ cf. (46) *ibid.*

⁴⁸ Law of Dec. 18, 1855, Staatsblad 153 (Justitie inv. No. 4862).

⁴⁹ cf. (45) *ibid.*, p. 500.

⁵⁰ cf. (49) *ibid.*, p. 500.

fields as follows.

(A) *The botany of Japan*⁵¹

- (1) *Aquilegia Buergeriana* Sieb. et zucc. (Nomen japon. Yamaodamaki)
- (2) *Buergeria stellata* Sieb. et zucc. (Nomen japon. Sidekobushi)
- (3) *Acer Buergerianum* Miquel (Nomen japon. Toukaede)
- (4) *Cephalotaxus Buergeri* Miquel (Nomen japon. Chyosenmaki)
- (5) *Fimbristylis Buergeri* Miquel (Nomen japon. Ōtentsuki)
- (6) *Lespedeza Buergeri* Miquel (Nomen japon. Kihagi)
- (7) *Prunus Buergeriana* Miquel (Nomen japon. Inuzakura)
- (8) *Rubus Buergeri* Miquel (Nomen japon. Fuyuichigo)
- (9) *Vaccinium Buergeri* Miquel (Nomen Japon. Usunoki)
- (10) *Desmodium Buergeri* Miquel (Nomen japon. Shibahagi)
- (11) *Ilex Buergeri* Miquel (Nomen japon. Shiimochi)
- (12) *Polypodium Buergerianum* Miquel (Nomen japon. Nukaboshikuriharan)
- (13) *Cephalotaxus drupacea* Sieb. et zucc. var *Buegeri* Maximowicz. (Nomen japon. Chyosenmaki)
- (14) *Gentiana scabra* Bunge. var *Buergei* Maximowicz. (Nomen japon. Hosobarindou)
- (15) *Maachia amurensis* Ruper. var *Buergeri* Schneid (Nomen japon. Enju)
- (16) *Viburnum Japonicum* Spreng. (= *Viburnum Buergeri*) (Nomen japon. Hakusanboku)

(B) *The animals of Japan*⁵²

- (1) *Dictyosoma burgeri* van der Hoeven (Nomen japon. Dainangimpo)
- (2) *Entatretus burgeri* Girard (Nomen japon. Nutaunagi)
- (3) *Halaelurus burgeri* Miller. et Henle (Nomen japon. Nagasakitorazame)
- (4) *Rhacopharus burgeri* Schlegel (Nomen japon. Kazikagaeru)

⁵¹ Makino Tomitarō, *Makino Nippon Shokubutsu Zukan* Hokuryūkan, Shōwa 32, (An Illustrated Flora of Japan, with the Cultivated and Naturalized plants. By Tomitaro Makino, Dr. Sc.).

⁵² "Shin Nippon Doubutsu Zukan" (A New Illustrated Encyclopedia of the Fauna of Japan) Gekan, Hokuryūkan Shōwa 44.