

Okano, who very kindly undertook to collect specimens for one of us. It will be figured in a revision of the *Euhadra herklotsi* group soon to be published.

JESSE WEDGWOOD MIGHELS

To those interested in the study of Mollusca, especially of the species found in New England, the name of Mighels is very familiar, but this is the first time that we have been able to present to our readers some of the interesting facts pertaining to his life.¹

J. W. Mighels was born in Parsonsfield, Maine, July 6, 1795. "On reaching the age of eighteen he had acquired sufficient learning to teach a common school. Aspiring to become a physician, he sought the aid of Dr. James Bradbury of his native town, who found so much of promise in young Jesse that he gave him encouragement and instruction for some time, notwithstanding the fact that the young man had no academic training. Mighels later attended 'medical lectures' at Dartmouth College, from which he received the degree of M. D., August 20, 1823."

"He settled immediately in Minot, Maine, where he built a house and began the practice of medicine, winning an enviable reputation. On December 12, 1826, he married Miss Evelina Augusta Rust, daughter of Capt. Henry Rust, Jr. Two sons were born to them. Dr. Mighels remained nine years at Minot, and in 1832 moved to Portland, Maine, where he continued the practice of his profession for about fifteen years, and it is said won a reputation for his skill in surgery. It has been said that he

¹ His name is pronounced *Miles*. We are indebted to Mr. Arthur H. Norton for a most interesting account of his life published in "The Maine Naturalist", Vol. VII., pp. 63-74, June, 1927. From this I have selected those parts pertaining to his conchological work. I am also indebted to Mr. Norton for the accompanying portrait.

moved to Portland in order to better gratify his tastes for scientific pursuits."

"Four years after he moved to Portland there was organized in the place the 'Maine Academy of Science' (1836), which had a brief career, and now is all but forgotten."

"This Academy, though entirely distinct from, was the forerunner of the Portland Society of Natural History, and the name of Dr. Mighels appears among those who signed the call for a meeting for the organization of the latter to be held December 19, 1843. Two preliminary meetings had been held, one on November 24, and the other December 1 of the same year. At the latter Dr. Mighels was added to the committee which had been chosen to 'draft a constitution'. The first election of officers was held December 20, 1843, and Dr. Mighels was elected corresponding secretary, which office he held continuously by re-election until his removal to Cincinnati in 1847. He was one of the most active members of this young society, serving on various committees and occasionally lecturing at its public meetings."

"It is due to his work as a conchologist that Dr. Mighels won for his name a lasting place among the pioneer naturalists of America. A memorandum in one of his books states, that he commenced to study shells in 1837 and sold his collection of shells to the Portland Society of Natural History, March 13, 1846."

"What is now known of the extent and disposition of that collection is here taken from Dr. Mighels' own handwriting, or in other words from the subscription paper through which the collection became the property of the Portland Society of Natural History; the preamble is as follows: 'Dr. J. W. Mighels proposes to dispose of his entire collection of shells to the Portland Society of Natural History for the sum of \$1000. The collection consists of more than 3000 species and 6000 to 10000 specimens, embracing many rare and interesting varieties, with all the species that are known to inhabit the State of

Maine. He proposes also to include in the sale all the duplicate specimens for which he is now negotiating in Europe, Africa, Sandwich Islands, etc., with no extra charge, excepting the expense of postage and freight, which will not probably exceed 8 or 10 dollars.'

" 'In case the sale is effected, Dr. Mighels agrees to arrange and label the whole collection, so far as the species are known to him, without any compensation, whenever the Society shall furnish suitable cases and place them in the hall of the Society at their own expense. In order to purchase the collection of shells above named, that they may be placed in the hall of the Portland Society of Natural History, as a donation from ourselves, we the subscribers agree to pay the sums annexed to our names whenever the sum subscribed shall amount to one thousand dollars.' "

"At that time (1843-1854) the Society was quartered in an upper room of the Exchange Building; this building was otherwise occupied as a business block, by the U. S. Court and by the Post Office. It was located on the corner of Middle and Exchange streets, where the Post Office building of the present day stands. On January 8, 1854, the Exchange Building was totally destroyed by fire, with all of its contents, including the entire collection of the Natural History Society."

After hearing of the fire Dr. Mighels wrote: "Is it possible that my beautiful collection of shells is destroyed? The work of nine years of delightful enthusiastic industry—is it all gone? How is it possible to replace the deep water species of Maine and the Gulf of St. Lawrence? The species from Europe, East and West Indies, Sandwich Islands, from the Nile, India, South America and Oregon! What a loss! Money and books and goods and buildings can be replaced, but that collection, I fear never!"

"That Dr. Mighels was not only a collector but a patient student of his chosen subject, is shown no less by his books than by his few published papers. A number of books from his library became the property of William Willis,

the historian, as appears by his signature; they descended to his son Henry Willis, vice-president of the Portland Society of Natural History, and were finally presented to the Society by his widow, in accordance with his wishes."

"The first of these books to claim attention is one 9½ by 8 inches, made of heavy unruled paper suitable for drawing, and with tissue fly leaves. It was evidently made and bound to order. On the first or title page is written, 'Lamarck's System of Conchology, Illustrated. From Crouch and Brooke and from Nature.' Not only is the text more or less fully copied but also two hundred and forty-three figures. This portion of the book is followed by seven figures of 'miscellaneous shells' with names, and 'Shells of Portland', with eighty-six figures; these are followed by seven species of Maine shells critically described and illustrated with nineteen figures; habitats and remarks are also given. There are also figures of shells from Porto Cabello, Alabama, and eighteen figures of *Achatinella*. The last thirty figures are drawn on cards which are glued to the pages of the book. Among the beautiful figures of *Achatinella* Dr. Mighels reached the climax of his skill as a portrayer of shells."

"Another book, evidently John C. Jay's Catalogue (though lacking the title page) consisting of ten printed plates, with fifteen pages of printed text, is augmented by fourteen additional plates, containing one hundred and two figures drawn by Dr. Mighels. Thomas Wyatt's Manual of Conchology after Lamarck and Blainville, in two volumes, 1838, is rebound, and interleaved and increased to the extent of one hundred and ninety-two figures with considerable written text, including a number of his new species."

"He continued to live in Cincinnati until 1856 or 1857. On leaving a dimly lighted courtroom where he had been needed as a witness, he fell down an open shaft or stairway, sustaining severe injuries from which he never fully recovered."

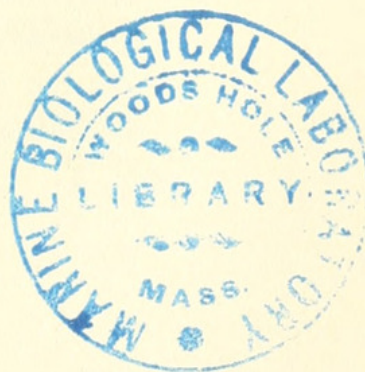
"As a broken down sufferer, in 1858 he returned to

Maine, living at Norway until death claimed him, September 1, 1861. His remains were laid in the Rust family tomb, in the Rustville Cemetery, Norway, Maine."

CONCHOLOGICAL PUBLICATIONS OF J. W. MIGHELS

- 1841. Catalogue of the Marine, Terrestrial and Fluvial Shells of Maine. Published by the author.
- 1842. With C. B. Adams. Descriptions of twenty-four Species of the Shells of New England. Journ. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., IV; 37-54, p. 4.
- 1843. With C. B. Adams. Descriptions of twenty-five new Species of Shells. Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., 1, 48-50. This is an abbreviation of the preceding paper.
- 1843. Catalogue of the Marine, Fluvial and Terrestrial Shells of the State of Maine and Adjacent Ocean. Journ. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., IV, 308-345.
- 1843. Description of six Species of Shells Regarded as New. Journ. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., IV, 345-350, pl. 16, figs. 1-6.
- 1843. Descriptions of seven Species of Shells Regarded as New. Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., I, 129, without plate. This is an abbreviation of the preceding paper, six species are described.
- 1844. Dr. Gould communicated on behalf of Dr. J. W. Mighels some specimens of Shells with descriptions. Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., I, 187-189. Eleven species are described as new.
- 1845. Descriptions of Shells from the Sandwich Islands and Other Localities. Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., II, 18-25. Fifty-one species are described as new.

C. W. J.





Johnson, Charles Willison. 1927. "Jesse Wedgwood Mighels." *The Nautilus* 41, 65–69.

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