GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

HISTORY
OF
GEOLOGY
GROUP
Newsletter

No.5 January 1997

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"Publishing and the World of Print in the Making of Geology"

HOGG meeting at the Geological Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London on Wednesday **19th March 1997**

10.30 Coffee
11.00 Jim Secord "The Stone Book": Geology and the Industrial Revolution of Publishing
11.45 Hugh Torrens "Practical Geology: Problems in its Printed record for its Proponents
12.30 Lunch in local restaurants
1.45 HOGG Annual General Meeting
2.00 Nicholas Rupke "Illustrating the Cosmos: the "Justus Perthes Verlag" in Gotha"
2.45 Brian Dolan "Charles Babbage, the "Temple of Serapis", and the uniform representation of Geological Change"
3.30. Tea
4.00 Stuart Baldwin "Lyell and the Extraordinary Publishing History of his Works"
4.45 Jonathan Topham "As Much a Newspaper Subject an an Horrible Murder": William Buckland's Bridgewater Treatise
5.30 Wine and savouries (£2.00 payable at the door)

Anyone interested in the role of publishing and printing in the development of the earth sciences is welcome to attend. Please return the slip at the end of this newsletter by **12 March 1997 .** Any questions about the meeting should be addressed to the convenor: Dr J.A.Secord, Department of History & Philosophy of Science University of Cambridge, Free School Lane, Cambridge CB2 3RH; fax 01223-334554; e-mail jas1010@cam.ac.uk

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...and the September HOGG meeting:

In celebration
of
the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Palaeontographical Society
a one-day symposium is being organised
on

THE HISTORY OF PALAEONTOLOGY IN GREAT BRITAIN

at
the Dept. of Earth Sciences, University of Cambridge, Downing Street, Cambridge CB2 3EQ
on
Wednesday 24th September 1997
by
The Palaeontographical Society & the History of Geology Group of the Geological Society of London
If you would like to attend, offer a paper, or would like further details please contact the convenor:
Stuart A. Baldwin, Fossil Hall, Boars Tye Road, Silver End, Witham, Essex, England, CM8 3QA (tel: 01376 583502; fax 01376 584480)

...and the previous HOGG meeting

This meeting, held at Bristol University on 25th September 1996, was the first HOGG meeting to be held without a specific theme. Approximately 30 people listened to five papers, then had the chance to see some of the splendid works in the Eyles library housed at the University.

The first paper was given by Charles Copp, who spoke on "Charles Moore, the 19th century Somerset geologist" :

Charles Moore was born in Ilminster on 8 June 1814. His father was in the business of printing journals so Charles grew up among books and learning. He attended the local grammar school but left at the age of 14 - not unusual then! The period was one of change. Hutton's theory of uniformitarianism was propounded in 1785, Murchison was born in 1792, slave trade was abolished in 1807 and the Battle of Waterloo took place in 1815. In Somerset Buckland & Conybeare were active geologically and the local Mesozoic rocks were exposed for roadbuilding and house repairs. Moore collected ammonites from the exposures. In 1807 the Geological Society was founded and in 1837 Moore moved to Bath to work for a publishers, but his father's death in 1844 bought him back to Ilminster to run the printing business with his sister. His interest in geology was re-excited when walking past the old commercial school he saw children rolling a nodule which split to reveal a fossil fish. It took a long time for him to find where the nodule originated but his persistence stood him in good stead later on. From the bed of nodular limestone he was able to collect hundreds of fossils including fish, crocodiles, belemnites with ink sacs and ammonites with aptychi. He developed skills in preparation and showed the material about 1847 at the first meeting of the Somerset Archaeological & Nat.Hist.Soc, at which he met the aged Buckland. He made further contacts and became interested in beds at the top of the Triassic, a system only recognised as distinct in 1834. Near Bere Croakham he found a good section of the

top beds and collected a vast number of fossils. Between 1844 and about 1853 he developed a great knowledge of the Lias, and he then looked for a way to give up some business work to concentrate on geology. There was a general radical move in the air at the time - Carl Marx wrote his manifesto in 1848-, and Moore considered himself religious but radical, belonging to the unitarian church, only made legal in 1813. In about 1852 he wrote to Owen for a testimonial as he wanted the job of distributor of stamps for Somerset. He didn't get it, and settled instead for marriage, to Eliza Dear, moving to Bath 1853. This gave him independent means and he concentrated on geology in fashionable Bath. The local Philosophical Society was at low ebb in 1853, but Moore offered them his collection as a museum, and this opened about 1855 for 5 out of 6 working days. He pioneered bulk collecting and micropalaeontology, collecting tiny brachiopods in the sandy formations of Dundry Hill. In about 1859 he saw some yellowish rocks containing fish teeth, in a pile for road building. He searched for weeks for the source, eventually finding it at Holwell. From this he collected 3 tons of sandy material, which he sorted grain by grain to reveal over 1 million fossils!! Other notable finds included new species from Whateley previously only known from the Continent, and 'volcanic rock' from the Mendips which prompted the idea that the Mendips were raised by volcanic activity - there was no continental drift then ! The high-point of his life came in 1864 when the British Association came to Bath and Moore showed his collection and lectured to audiences of 2000 people ! In 1881 he was hit by some rocks at Murder Coombe (near a place called Dead Womens Bottom!), which punctured his lung, and he died a week later on December 7th in an unheated dark room looking at trace fossils. The collection was purchased by the Society but has had a chequered history since then.

(from notes by the editor)

Next it was Mick Cooper on "Early 19th century Mineral Dealers and Collectors":

The peak period for mineral dealers in this country was in the 1850s and this matches the peak output from mineral mines. Many were centred in places like Cornwall or Devon or Cumberland where the major mines were situated, but the more important of them migrated to London. One of the most intriguing, and the one around which most of the talk centered was Bryce McMurdo Wright Junior. He was supposed to be a native of Caldbeck (Cumbria) but was in fact born in Dumfries, later moving to Caldbeck to work in the copper mines. He had a house in Hesketh Newmarket, but moved to Liverpool where he opened a shop in about 1842, and married a woman from the Isle of Man. His children later helped in the shop, and in 1850 they moved to London where he sold minerals, shells, archaeological items and ethnographia (one of the first to do so); it was very successful. He became very well known and respected, having an oyster named after him (Spondylus Wrightianus, Crosse). The Bryce Wright name though is usually associated with sharp practice, although his father who died in 1844, appears to have been honest. When he started he was not well versed in mineral nomenclature and correspondence shows the use of such names as WAVERLITE (for Wavellite), BRUCESTERITE (brucite), ALANCIENE (analcime) and SALAMALANE (for psilomelane, a pseudonym which was only revealed after an Australian pronounced it.....). Bryce Wright took over the business, then next door but one to the BM in Great Russell Street, London (and also no.36 opposite, now the Museum Bookshop). He was a flamboyant character, and his letterheads show exhibition medals, a Royal Crest (meaning nothing), the letters FRGS, FR Hist.St., Member of the Malacological Society of Belgium etc. He went bankrupt at least twice, moved to Regent Street, then Saville Row and finally Wardour Street which then had a reputation as a home to second-hand/antiques dealers of dubious reputation. He died at the age of 45 leaving no will, and his collection disappeared overnight.

Another of the notable names from this period was that of J.R.Gregory, who founded the

company now known as Gregory, Bottley & Lloyd, still trading in London. The company was owned by A.F.Gregory, who wasn't particularly intereted in such things as the Hawkins collection of Cornish minerals. It was J.R.Gregory who introduced tiger eye (fibrous crocidolite asbestos replaced by brown iron-stained silica) into Great Britain. In 1931-32 E.P.Bottley took over and called the company Gregory, Bottley & Co. He bought material extensively from many of the dealers then around including T.D.Russell, Richard Talling, F.H.Butler, G.H.Richards, Robert Henson, Eliza M. Henson , Samuel Henson, James Tennant, and John & Sarah Mawe.

(from notes by the editor)

John Wyatt's paper, "On Wordsworth and the Geologists" was an introduction to the themes of his recent book "*Wordsworth and the Geologists*", Cambridge University Press, 1995 (ISBN 0521 47259 8). Wordsworth is usually considered to be a poet who had little interest in science and indeed had directly castigated geologists in "The Excursion". In fact there is evidence that he was not only widely read in natural history in his younger days, particularly from travel accounts, but also had a close friendship in the second half of his life with senior British geologists such as Adam Sedgwick and William Whewell. The study falls into two parts: evidence in Wordsworth's writings about geological information, and then consideration of the philosphical and value systems that the geologists shared with him. John Wyatt's particular interest in the former topic is in the way that Wordsworth, like the early geologists developed an analytical eye for the landscape. This quality is particularly noticeable in the prose work "A Guide to the District of the Lakes".

The talk then moved to the values that are revealed in the notebooks and non-geological writings of early nineteenth-century geologists, particularly in those of Greenough, Sedgwick, and Whewell. Wordsworth's later poetry (usually considered to be unimportant in literary criticism) demonstrates the themes that raised the study of geology for many of its participants to a level of nobility and high purpose . Poetry was an admired, shared experience because of a common education and also because the Geologists found Wordsworth's poetry reassuring. They also shared with the poet views that valued clarity, order, and what they called distinctness. Other shared themes were the concept of the "universality" of nature, and the closeness of geology to history. Geology for this generation was a passionate and poetic subject and Wordsworth acted as the guide for many of the first generation of the Geological Society. His influence percolated into many of their prose effusions. The talk finished with examples of Wordsworthian prose from the geologists.

(Dr John Wyatt)

Next, Roger Vaughan gave a paper on "Edwin Witchell and the Cotteswold Naturalists' Field Club":

Edwin Witchell (1823-1887) F.G.S., geologist and solicitor, was born on the 24th June 1823, at Nympsfield, near Stroud, Gloucestershire. He was one of the fourteen children of Edward Witchell (1797-1873) who married Elizabeth (nee Mills) in 1816. Edward was a baker, an innkeeper and later a Yeoman.

After a legal training with Mr Paris, a solicitor at Stroud, he became the managing clerk and took over the practice in 1847. In 1858 he was clerk to the trustees of the Stroud & Gloucester Road and was clerk to the local Board of Health from 1875. He had wheaten coloured hair, blue eyes, a full beard and had a friendly, compassionate nature. He married Caroline (c.1829-1904), the daughter of Joseph W.Clutterbuck, a Civil Engineer of Rodborough , near Stroud, in 1851. They lived at "the Acre", Stroud, and had six children; the youngest son Charles Adolphus Witchell (c.1862-1906) published works on natural history.

He joined the Cotteswold Naturalists' Field Club in 1860 contributing 11 papers, and became their treasurer He was elected F.G.S. in 1861. Dr J.Lycett named Trigonia Witchelli in his honour in "Memoir of the British Fossil Trigoniae", S.S.Buckman named a genus of ammonite, Witchellia in his "Monograph of the Ammonites of the 'Inferior Oolite Series'" (1887-1907), and also a brachiopod Waldheimia (Zeilleria) Witchelli in the "Proceedings of the Cotteswold Naturalists' Field Club", vol IX, (1886). He was the president of the Stroud Natural History and Philosophical Society in 1880. In 1882 he wrote a small book *"The Geology of Stroud"* drawing together his lifetime's knowledge of the area.

He suffered from angina pectoris in 1884, but was able to carry on and was elected a vice president of the Cotteswold Naturalists' Field Club during the last year of his life. He died while collecting fossils at Swifts Hill near Stroud, on 20th August 1887 and is buried at Stroud cemetary, Bisley Road.

(Roger Vaughan)

Finally among the talks, was Norman Higham "On Henry Clifton Sorby":

Henry Clifton Sorby was born on 10 May 1826 at Woodbourne near Sheffield.Initially, he attended school in Harrogate, but returned at age 11 to the new Collegiate School in Sheffield, leaving at age 15 to have a private tutor, the Reverend Walter Mitchell. His father, a master cutler, died when Henry was 21. From an early stage he had a deep interest in science, and this was influenced by a prize he received from the school for mathematics. The prize was a book *Readings in Science* which explained the principles of natural philosophy in simple language and with illustrations. He was elected a member of the Literary & Philosophical Society in December 1846, and most of his career was developed against the background of this society. His first published paper was presented to the Chemical Society on 7th December 1846, on the amount of sulphur & phosphorus in various agricultural crops. Just before, in August 1846, Clement Sorby, a relative, had presented Henry with a copy of Playfair's *Illustrations of the Huttonian Theory of the Earth*. As a result, Henry dropped agricultural chemistry and became a geologist. One day, whilst sheltering in a quarry from the rain he noticed "current structures", structures produced in stratified rocks at the time of their deposition. In the local rivers the Rother and Don, he set up apparatus to measure the flow & deposition of silt. By chance when travelling on a train between Scarborough and York probably in 1848, Sorby met a young man in conversation. He turned out to be William Crawford Williamson, who was looking at foraminifera from the Bridlington Crag, but more importantly had developed the method of thin sectioning bones and teeth as a physician in Manchester. Williamson taught Sorby how to do it, and Sorby realised its importance to the study of rocks. Sorby was not the first to make thin sections, but he supplied the impetus. In December 1849, Sorby read a paper to the Lit & Phil Society on the geology of the Malvern Hills; this was the first paper to use thin sections as a method of looking at the rocks themselves (rather then the life forms within them), and to make deductions of geological processes from them. Sorby's first major paper on the subject was read before the Geological Society in May 1850. In 1851 Sorby saw papers by Daniel Sharpe on slaty cleavage, a problem then attributed to either chemical, electrical or mechanical effects. Sorby showed, using thin sections that it was mechanical action which caused the cleavage. He published further papers on the subject and this led him to be accepted into London's scientific society, and more importantly to be elected an FRS in 1857. Just previously, in 1855, Sorby met Alexander Bryson of Edinburgh, who had inherited William Nicol's large collection of sections of fossils and minerals. In some of these Sorby noticed fluid inclusions, and realised their importance and was able to apply the method of thin sectioning which he knew so well. This culminated with his paper to the Geological Society in 1857 "On The Microscopical Structure of Crystals, Indicating the Origin

of Minerals and Rocks"; the Chairman, Sir Leonard Horner found it incredible, but Sorby was championed by Prof. John Phillips of Oxford, and later by many others. Sorby had opened up an entirely new field for geologists. In 1860 he went to Paris with his mother and lectured on the use of the microscope in geological observations. A year later he went to Germany, again with his mother, where he met Ferdinand Zirkel, then a young student. Whilst sitting on top of the Drachenfels, Sorby outlined how to make thin sections and advised Zirkel to follow that kind of investigation. Zirkel did and became the leading European petrologist of the 19th century. Sorby though wanted new vistas and by 1862 he was moving away from geology. He turned his attention to polished slices of meteorites, working out their histories from their structures. He also prepared the surfaces using acids, and did the same with samples of artificial iron & steel. This took him increasingly into the world of metallography. By 1865 he published papers on impressed limestone pebbles, meteorites, states of preservation of fossil shells, & the detection and age of blood stains.He continued to work in a number of fields right up to his death on 9th March 1909.

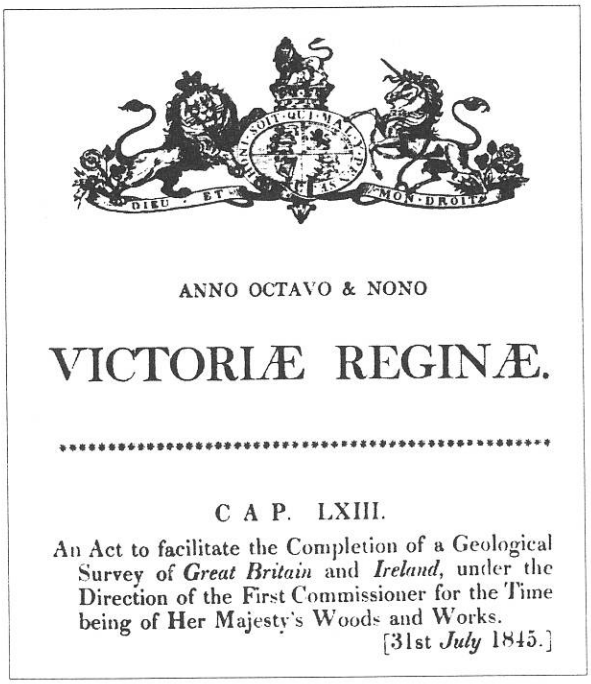
(from notes made by the editor)

(Editor's note: Anyone wishing to learn more of the remakable Henry Clifton Sorby should read Norman Higham's book, "A Very Scientific Gentleman", Pergamon Press, 1963)

Following the excellent series of talks and a welcome cup of tea, there was the chance to see a superb display of geological literature assembled by Nick Lee, from the Eyles Collection.
Alas though, the time went so quickly and it was soon time for some of us to board the train back to the Metropolis. The HOGG committee would like to thank Bob Savage for organising the venue, Nick Lee for preparing theextraordinary display from the Eyles Library, and the staff of the University who put up with us for the day.

Sir Henry De la Beche Bicentenary

Henry De la Beche was born two hundred years ago, in 1796, and this important anniversary was celebrated in style at the Natural History Museum on 11th November. An afternoon meeting and dinner were jointly organised by The Geological Society, Imperial College and the Museum, three organisations which owe a great deal to De la Beche and his work. More than 100 delegates were present in the Flett Theatre [of the Natural History Museum] to hear Stephen J. Gould and Jim Secord give us the historians' view of De la Beche, followed by Peter Cook and Ron Oxburgh with a geological view of current work at BGS and Imperial College. The lectures were backed up by a display of manuscripts, books and drawings relating to De la Beche drawn from the archives of the three sponsoring institutions, and the day finished with a candle lit dinner on the ground floor of the Earth Galleries, underneath that famous



ANNO OCTAVO & NONO

VICTORIÆ REGINÆ.

CAP. LXIII.

An Act to facilitate the Completion of a Geological Survey of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, under the Direction of the First Commissioner for the Time being of Her Majesty's Woods and Works.
[31st *July* 1845.]

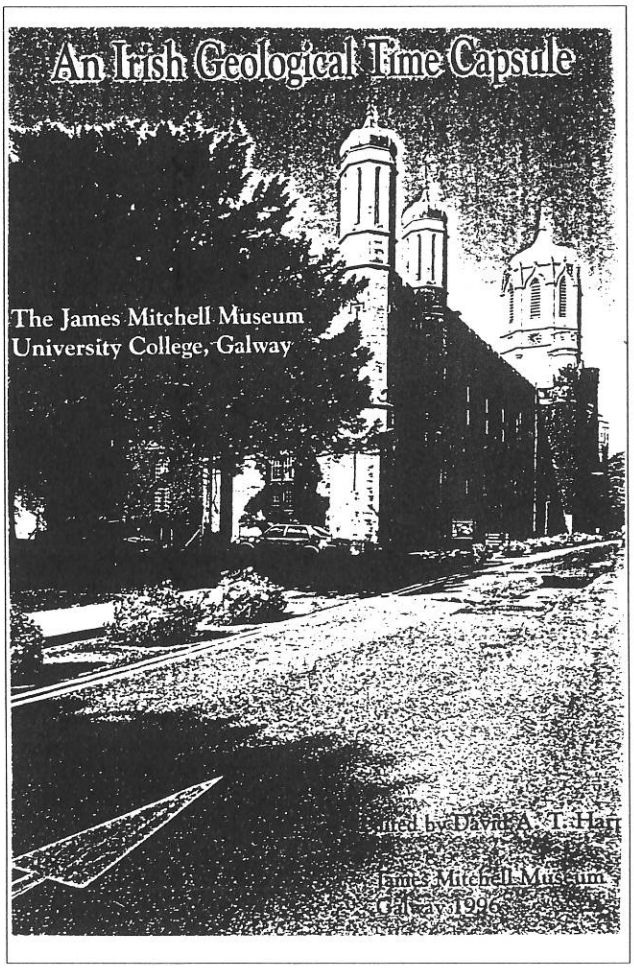
escalator. As a souvenir of the day BGS have published a facsimile of the coloured copy of De la Beche's cartoon *Duria Antiquor*, which is preserved in Murchison's scrapbook in their archives. Copies are available from the British Geological Survey, Keyworth, Nottingham, price £25.

INHIGEO? . ..WHAT IS INHIGEO?....

Although it might sound like a nasty tropical disease, in truth INHIGEO has much in common with HOGG. INHIGEO is the International Commission on the History of Geological Sciences, and is governed by by-laws approved by the Council of the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS), of which INHIGEO is a Commission. The overall objectives are to promote studies in the history of geological sciences and to stimulate and co-ordinate the activities of national & regional organisations that have the same purpose. Also, to encourage the holding of national, regional and international symposia, and the publication of individual & collective works on the history of the geological sciences. INHIGEO currently has nearly 150 members in 36 countries, and is one of the co-sponsors of the Hutton / Lyell Bicentenary Conference in 1997 (see elsewhere in this Newsletter). In 1996 it sponsored 3 symposia at the International Geological Congress in Beijing. Beyond 1997, there will probably be an important meeting in Rio de Janeiro in 2000 (in association with the 31st IGC), and a possibility of a meeting in Ireland in 2002 on the theme of 'Geological Travellers'. Anyone interested in finding out more could (in the UK) contact the current president.... Dr Hugh Torrens (phone (44)-(0)1782-58-3183; fax (44)-(0)1782-71-5261; e-mail gga10@keele.ac.uk. The Committee and membership of HOGG would like to congratulate Hugh on his election to this post.

For Your Bookshelf...?

"An Irish Geological Time Capsule", edited by David A.T.Harper, pub. James Mitchell Museum, Galway, 1996.

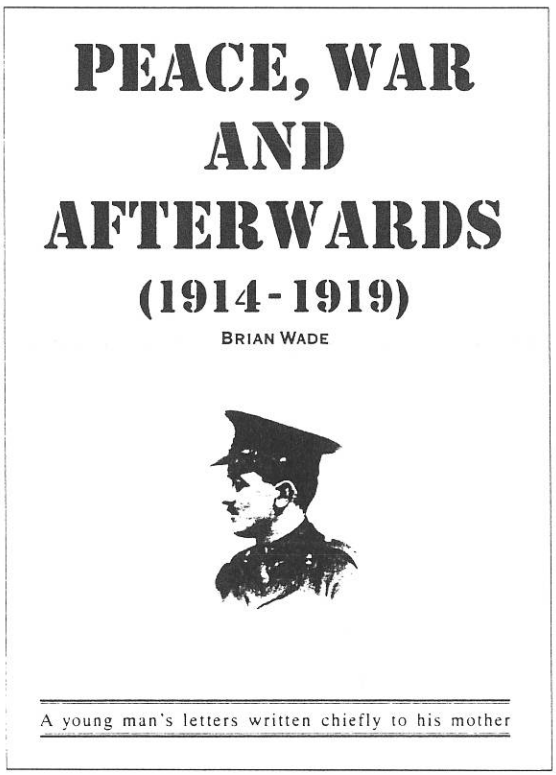


The James Mitchell Museum in the Department of Geology, University College, Galway was established in 1852 as the Queen's College Museum, one of a number of museums attached to various Queens Colleges across Ireland. Although once much larger than it now is, it occupies an important position on the corner of the quadrangle of UCG, built in 1848, and includes a facsimilie of Christopher Wren's 'Tom's Tower' at Christ Church College, Oxford. It was established from funds for the chairs of Natural History and Geology; these were amalgamated in 1833 to form the Natural History Museum. It was split again in the early years of this century during the turbulent times in Irish history. It was finally designated the James Mitchell Museum in 1977 after Prof. James

Mitchell who held the chair of geology and Mineralogy from 1921 to 1966. Notable among the collections are those of William King (1809-1886) especially his entire collection of material relating to his monograph on Permian fossils of NE England (including hand-written catalogues), and those relating to the problematic Devonian coral Pleurodyctium. Also the Eleanor Miles & Dave McDougall mineral collections. The book traces the history and especially the resurrection of the museum from its dismal appearance in the 1980s, and the less-than-encouraging Doughty report on its future.

"Peace, War and Afterwards" (1914-1919); A youngs man's letters written chiefly to his mother, by Brian Wade", pp115, pub. 1996 by Sentinel Projects, 63 Stones Drive, Sowerby Bridge, Halifax HX6 4NY, England (Price: £5 post paid)

Frederic Brian Wade was rather disillusioned as a Junior Surveyor at Brakpan, South Africa, in December 1914 when he decided to set off to join the British Forces to serve King and Empire during the first World War. He trained with the King Edwards Horse at Bishops Stortford and the Curragh in Ireland. He was commisioned as a 2nd lieutenant in the 7th (City of London) Battallion, The London Regiment which formed part of the 47th Division. Generally serving in the transport section, he served at the Somme & Ypres. Medically dicharged due to illness, he returned to South Africa, and then went on to Colonial Service in formerly German-held Tanganyika, arriving in December 1918. About 10 pages of text deals with his arrival in Tanganyika and his taking over of the mica mine administration at Morogoro, Wilhelmstal and Kihurio. The book contains Wade's letters home from the War, and the military sections of this material were written subject to the censorship restrictions of the time. The main focus of the book is of Wade's war-time experiences, very little of which is combat related. Although the narrative of this volume ends in July 1919, Wade was the last officer to leave Morogoro after having disposed of all stocks of mica and stores on Government account. Shortly afterwards he was appointed as Assistant Geologist to Dr E.O.Teale, and together they returned to East Africa where he spent most of his adult life until the outbreak of the second World War. He finished his service with the Colonial Office as Chief Geologist and Chief Inspector of Mines, and retired on a full pension in 1941. Wade was the author of *"A Stratigraphic Classification and Table of Tanganyika Territory"*, Bull.Geol.Surv.Tanganyika, 9., 62pp (1937).



(Barry Fowler)

Editor's note: This book is included here because it contains some information about Brian Wade's geological exploits, but it should be noted that it is primarily a record of his army life.

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"Geologists and the History of Geology: An International Bibliography", compiled by W.A.S.Sarjeant, 3 additional volumes (Supplement II); pub. Krieger, 2,386pp, 1996.

This covers works on geological history between 1985 & 1993. The first Supplement (in 2 vols) of 1,691 pages was published in 1987, & the original 5-volume 6,217 page bibiography from the origins to 1978 has also been republished by Krieger, and the entire 10-volume work now totals 10,294 pages!

"Thomas Moran: The Field Sketches, 1856-1923" , by Anne Morand, Univ.of Oklahoma Press, 325pp, (1996).

This is a catalogue of Moran's field sketches with 849 b/w illustrations & 82 colour plates. It traces the artist's 71 year career, a chronological, stylistic & geographic survey of his fieldwork, & an illustrated checklist of the 1,080 Moran sketches to be found in public collections.

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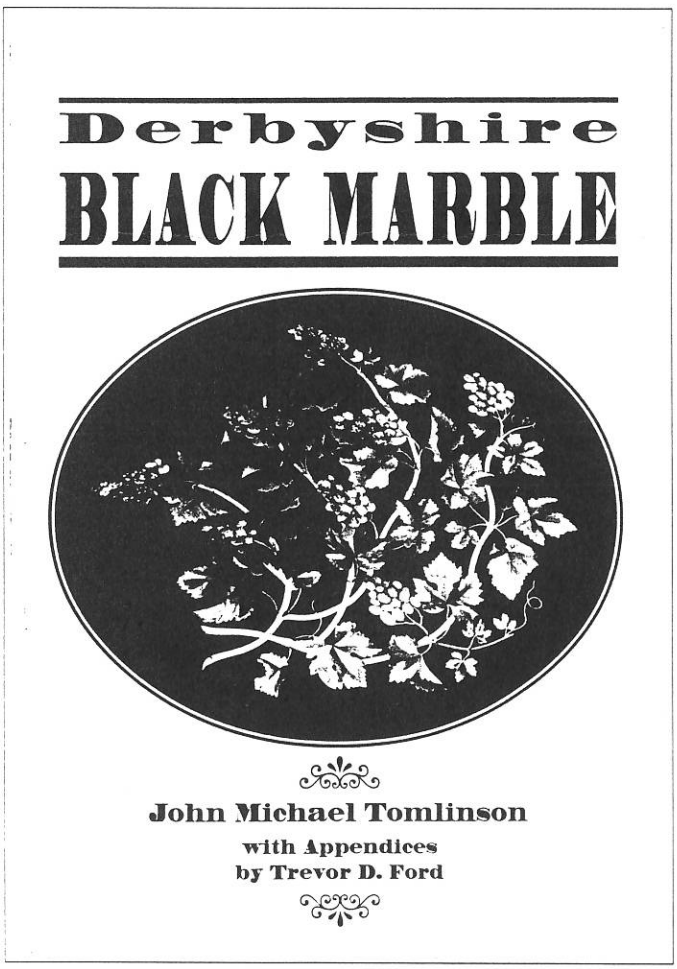
"Derbyshire Black Marble" by John Michael Tomlinson, pub.Peak District Mines Historical Society Ltd, Peak District Mining Museum, Matlock Bath, Derbyshire DE4 3NR. £9.95.



Anyone interested in antiques who has visited sales of 'objects of vertu' at the larger auction houses has probably seen examples of fine inlay of coloured stone on a black background. Much of this is Italian, but some may be the traditional original Derbyshire black marble. Most of the best and most intricate dates from the middle of the 19th century, and many places in Derbyshire (Buxton & Derby Museums, Hardwick Hall, Bolsover Castle, and especially Chatsworth House) have fine collections on public display. The book traces the history and methods of making the various objects and and is written by a man whose great grandfather and two great uncles were involved in the 'marble' business. There is a chapter on the Tomlinson family, as well as on the Great Exhibition of 1851 which featured much black marble, and three appendices by Trevor D. Ford on the Black Marble mines, the Ashford Marble Mill and White Watson and his geological tablets. There are many illustrations including a number in colour showing the splendour of the workmanship.

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"Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory: The Development of the Aesthetics of the Infinite" by Marjorie Hope Nicholson, Univ. off Washington Press, 432pp, (1996 - reprint of 1959 original)

This work considers the intellectual renaissance of the late 17th century to be the cause of the shift from the view of mountains to be ugly protuberances, to the romantic view of mountains in the 18th & 19th centuries.

"The Black Hills Journals of Colonel Richard Irving Dodge", ed. Wayne R.Kline, Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 288pp (1996).

This is the daily journal of Dodge's 5-month 1875 millitary escort of geologist Walter P Jenney's expedition into the Black Hills to determine the truth of rumours of gold, initiated by Custer's explorations in the summer of 1874, events which precipitated the Great Sioux war of 1876.

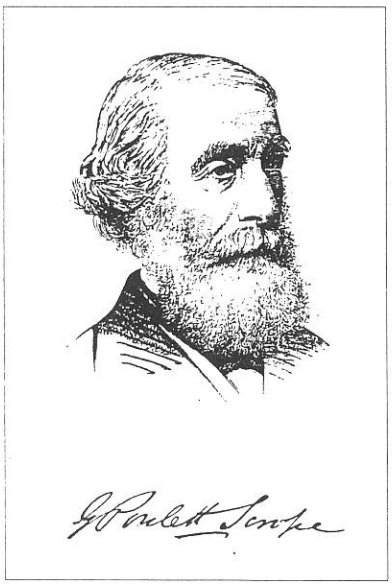
"Saussure's Manuscript Oration of Earthquakes & Electricity (1784) Influenced by William Stukeley & Benjamin Franklin", by A.V.Carozzi & J.K.Newman, in *Archives de Science Geneve,* vol 48., fasc.3., pp209-237 (1995).

...other events in 1997

SCROPE BICENTENARY

George Julius Poulett Scrope (1797-1876): Geologist and political economist

The 1997 bicentenary celebrations of the death of James Hutton (1726-1797) and of the birth of Charles Lyell (1797-1875) should not allow us to forget another important bicentenary - the birth of Geoge Julius Poulett Scrope, probably the most able of 19th century vulcanologists.



He was born in London in 1797, the son of J Poulett Thomson, head of the mercantile firm of Thomson, Bonar & Co., of London and St Petersburg. He was educated at Harrow; then at St John's College, Cambridge. There he came under the influences of Professors E.D.Clarke, mineralogist, and Adam Sedgwick, geologist, both of whom encouraged him to pursue his interest in volcanic forces and volcanic rocks, then almost undervalued as an area for research. This interest had been aroused on a family visit to Naples in the winter of 1816-17, and he returned in 1818 to renew his study of Vesuvius. In 1819 he visited Etna and the Lipari Islands.

He changed his name from Thomson in 1821 when he assumed his wife's surname on marrying a lady who was the heiress of the ancient family of Scrope of Castle Combe in Wiltshire. In June of that year he paid his first visit to the ancient volcanic districts of Central France and then went on to Italy where he witnessed the paroxysmal Vesuvius eruption in October 1822. This was the subject of his first published paper in the "Journal of Science" (Vol XV, 1823). In 1824 he joined the Geological Society and became one of its joint secretaries in 1825. His fellow secretary was Charles Lyell with whom he formed a lasting friendship.

In 1825 he published the first edition of his book *Considerations on Volcanos.* He later improved this and changed the title to *Volcanos* for the second (1862) edition. He was always

opposed to the Wernerian doctrine of the aqueous precipitation of basalt and other rocks we now know to be igneous, and his work together with that of Lyell greatly assisted that notion being superseded by a view based on better field observations. His *Memoir on the Geology of Central France, including the Volcanic Formations of Auvergne, the Velay and the Vivarais* (1827) was greatly altered for the 1858 (2nd) edition and retitled *The Geology and Extinct Volcanos of Central France*. This, which is still read today, did much to establish his supremacy as a vulcanologist.

Like Lyell he was a Uniformitarian, yet he did not agree with Lyell's more extreme views on the uniformity of the Earth's processes:...".the series of geological mutations to which the earth is subject, is a progressive, not a stationary or recurring series....our planet, like every individual form within it, is subject to the law of integration and disintegration; has had a beginning, and will have an end..." In this he was ahead of both Lyell and Hutton, and ahead of his time.

In 1833 he became an MP. The 1832 First Reform Bill gave him the opportunity to offer himself for election and he became the member for Stroud, Gloucestershire, a seat he held until his 1868 retirement. He was very aware of the need for political reform, wrote many political pamphlets, and in 1835 published a very forward looking book *The Principles of Political Economy*. This among other things advocated a necessary revision of the ancient, and at that time, grossly misused Poor Law.

Yet he never deserted geology completely and continued to write important geological papers and to join in geological controversies. He also stimulated and assisted, sometimes financially, younger workers in his field of expertise.

He died at Fairlawn, near Cobham, Surrey on the 19th January 1876, and was buried at Stoke d'Abernon. He had survived his friend Lyell by less than a year.

(Richard Wilding)

XXth International Congress of the History of Science, 20-26 July, 1997, in Liege, Belgium

This will include a symposium on "Development & Cultural Influence of Geological Sciences in an age of Technological & Industrial Expansion", devoted to the two themes of Geology & Mining in the Old and New Worlds, and Use of non-written sources for the history of Geological sciences. Anyone wishing to attend, or to present a paper, should contact in the first instance, the Congress Office at Centre d'Histoire des Sciences at des Techniques, 15 Avenue des Tilleuls, B-4000 Liege, Belgium (tel: 32-041-66-94-79, fax: 32-041-66-95-47; e-mail chstulg@vm1.ulg.ac.be)

HUTTON / LYELL BICENTENARY

To celebrate the bicentenary of the 1797 death of James Hutton & the 1797 birth of Charles Lyell, the Geological Society is hosting a conference in London (July 30-August 3, 1997) and the Royal Society of Edinburgh a continuation of it (5-9 August 1997). The programme includes:

July 30th: a New Forest and Barton excursion (*)
July 31st : sessions on the Life & Times of Lyell, Stratigraphy & Palaeoenvironments, & Regional Geology.
August 1st: sessions on Surface Processes & Climate, Active Tectonics, & Man and the Environment.
August 2nd & 3rd : field excursion to the western Weald and Hampton Court
August 4th: coach transportation to Edinburgh
August 5th : sessions on Hutton's *Theory of the Earth,* & Fluxes of the Earth
August 6th : sesion entitled "Kindling Fires in Little Crucibles", & afternoon excursion to Hutton's classical geological sites in Edinburgh
August 7th : sessions on Uniformitarianism & Catastrophism - Ancient & Modern, and Hutton & Lyell and our Dynamic Earth
August 8th : field excursion to Hutton's Siccar Point unconformity (*)
August 9th : field excursion to Hutton country (Glen Tilt granites & Scottish Highlands) **or** to Lyell country (Kinnordy House, Kirrimor & Cortachy, as well as the chance to visit Glamis Castle). (*)
(*) Numbers of participants on field trips are restricted **so early booking is essential**

Contact the conference office, Geological Society of London, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V0JU (Tel: 0171-434-9944; fax: 0171-439-8975; e-mail cons@geolsoc.cityscape.co.uk)

No detailed information is available on the following events:

Conference on the History of Latin American Mining, at San Luis Potosi, Mexico, 14-18th July

Contact: Innes Herrera, Rina Ortiz or Alma Parra, National Institute of Anthropology & History, Annexo al Castillo de Chapultepec, Mexico D.F., C.P. 11580 (e-mail: smithers@servidor.unam.mx)

Centennial Celebration of the Alaskan Gold Rush, Fairbanks, Alaska
International Symposium on the History of Mining, 9-14th September 1997
Contact: Dr William R. Wood, Festival Office, 514 Second Avenue, Suite 102, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701, USA.

Medical Aspects of Mining History
A theme at the Annual Conference of the Australian Medical History Society (no date).
Contact: Prof. Donal Simpson, NH & MRC Road Accident Research Unit, University of Adelaide, GPO Box 498, Adelaide, South Australia 5007 (tel: (08)-3035997; e-mail unit@raru.adelaide.edu.au)

...have you seen it?

I have had a request for any information on the possible present whereabouts of a very large specimen of molybdenite from Knaben mine, Norway , which was sent originally to Sheffield

(apparently most or all Knaben molybdenite went to Sheffield, presumably for the cutlery industry), and was then shown in London in about 1914. The block of solid molybdenite is said to weigh 200kg!!, so is not likely to be overlooked at the back of a drawer ! If anyone has any information about the eventual fate of this block, could they please contact the Editor at the address on the front page.

....information sought

Is anyone working on glaciation in North Wales, as perceived in the 1840s especially by Buckland & Darwin ? If so, Michael Roberts would like to speak with you, as he is doing the same. He can be contacted by phone on 01691-778519, or by letter at Chirk Vicarage, Trevor Road, Chirk, Wrexham LL14 5HD. Incidentally, he tells me that Darwin's first girlfriend is buried in the crypt of the church.....

Publishing and the World of Print in the Making of Geology

Name .....
Address.....
.....

--------I will be attending the meeting on 19th March 1997 on Publishing and the World of Print in the Making of Geology

-------- I will be staying for wine and savouries afterwards

Return to: J.Thackray c/o Geological Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London

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'Contribution to the Newsletter'

As the new year dawns, it is once again time for HOGG to collect its annual 'Contribution towards the newsletter' . Due to careful management of funds we are once again able to keep the contribution to £7. Please make cheques payable to "**History of Geology Group**" and send them to **J. Thackray, c/o The Geological Society, Burlington House, London WV1 0JU.**

NAME:.....

Address:.....
.....
.....

NOTE: Anyone paying their contribution for 1997 AND attending the meeting on the 19th March 1997, can include both slips in the same envelope.