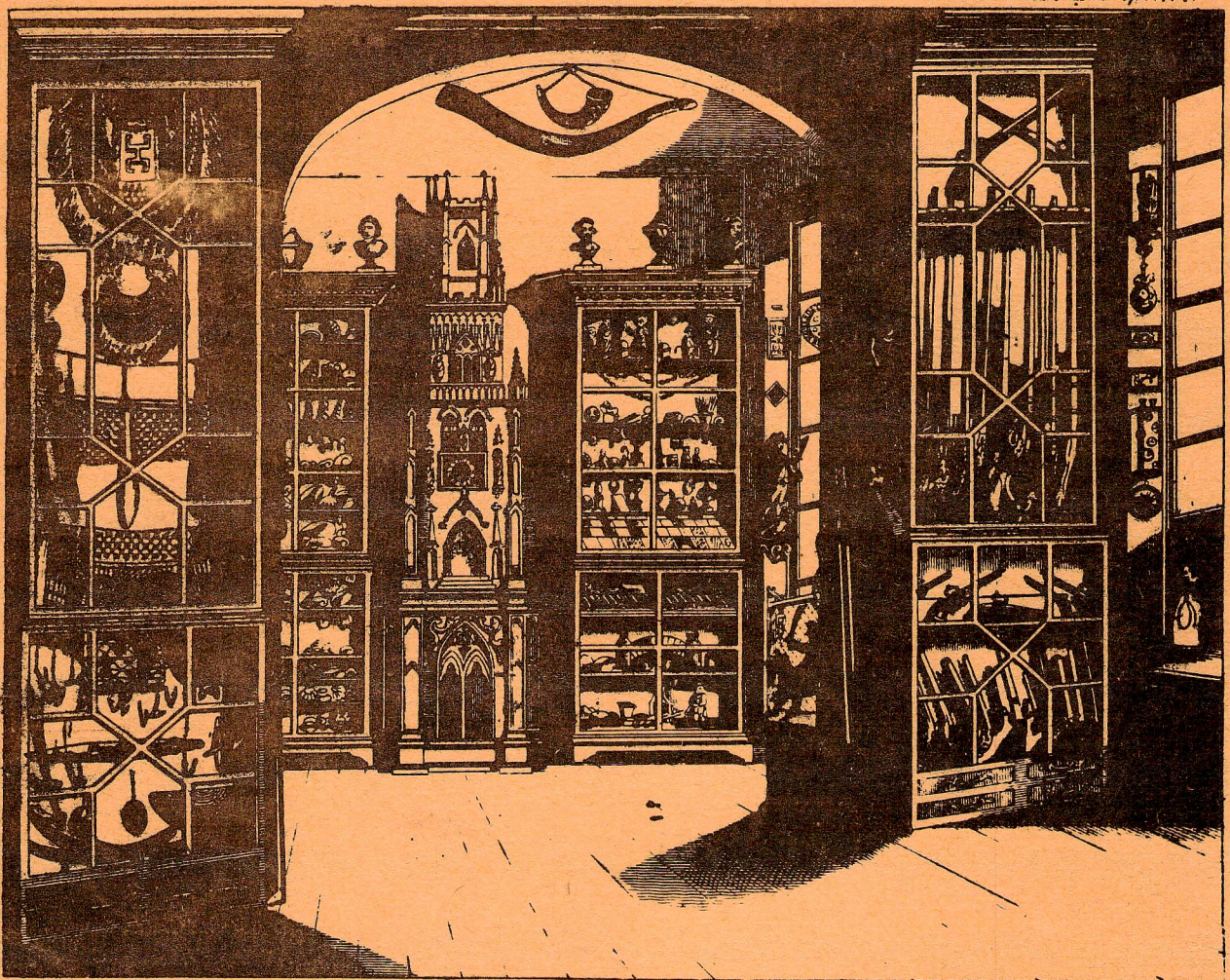


GCCG

NEWSLETTER
OF THE
GEOLOGICAL
CURATORS
GROUP

NUMBER 1

SEPTEMBER 1974



View of Dr. Greene's Museum at Lichfield.

DR. GREENE'S MUSEUM LICHFIELD IN 1788

"Sir, I should as soon have thought of building a man-of-war as of collecting such a museum"
Samuel Johnson.

GEOLOGICAL CURATORS GROUP

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EDITORIAL

This first issue of the Newsletter is inevitably limited in the number of its contributors. The Newsletter should be the mouthpiece of the Group and it must have something to say; it should be more than just a series of interesting articles. It must be a source of information; a disseminator of ideas and techniques; a vehicle for discussion and argument. It will achieve these purposes in direct proportion to your contributions, Members of the Group.

Please contribute to our future issues. We need articles of interest and scholarship. In particular we need to publish your appeals for information and material and the responses to these appeals.

This publication is for your use. I cannot urge you too strongly to "Use It".

Editor

Brian Page.

2.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

In contrast to many of the other recently formed geological specialist groups, GCG will need a sense of participation and involvement from its membership in order to achieve the aims stated in its Constitution. To my mind there are many problems in urgent need of solution with regard to this Country's geological collections. I believe it is a sense of this need that has helped foster the formation of our Group, and has been behind the great interest and goodwill that has been expressed, even before we have become active. Noting this, and with a membership standing at over sixty (even at this early stage), I feel confident of a lively group emerging.

In order to encourage this sense of involvement, your Committee has planned that some of our meetings will be of the discussion or seminar type on certain aspects of geological curatorial concern. Our first meeting of this type will be held on 13th December at the AGM when the subject for discussion will be accessioning procedures.

Details of what I term the data acquisition activities of the Group are still being finalised. This side of our activities will be co-ordinated by Philip Doughty acting as the Group's "Recorder". Here too widespread participation by the Group as a whole will be needed.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, and as Brian Page has already stressed in his editorial, the Newsletter will live, or merely survive (perhaps) depending on our sense of involvement as members of the Group. To those of you, who like me, sometimes feel somewhat isolated in our "ivory basements", here is your means of communication!

Chairman

Roy Clemence

PROGRAMME:

One-day meetings have been arranged for 18th October at The Geological Museum, 13th December at the Geological Society and 21st March at Sheffield Museum. Further details regarding these will be sent out with the Newsletters.

17th May, 1974.

The meeting was held in the Geological Society's premises in Burlington House with Mike Jones (Leicester Museums) in the chair. Fifty five people attended the meeting and there were 22 apologies for absence.

1. Minutes The minutes of the Leicester meeting were approved.

2. Affiliation Mike Jones reported on the work of the sub-committee set up at the Leicester meeting. They had approached the Specialist Groups Committee of the Geological Society to investigate the possibility of affiliation. As a result of this meeting:

a). The Committee had expressed sympathy with the aims of the Group.

b). The Committee accepted that there would be no serious clash with the work or policy of the Geological Information Group.

c). The Committee wished to be assured of the viability of the Group, especially in terms of its strictly geological membership, its relation to the Museums Association and the extent of its support within the museum profession.

d). Until such time as these provisions were resolved, the Committee would recommend to Council that the Group be allowed use of the Society's apartments and its Newsletter for business purposes. (This recommendation had been accepted by Council on 14th March).

Mike also stressed the desirability of the Group's close association with the Museums Association, and mentioned that Colin Sizer was attending the meeting on the Association's behalf.

3. Constitution The provisional constitution was discussed at some length, revealing some basic divergences of view among those present. One suggestion was that there should be two classes of membership:

Professional members - those concerned with the curation and conservation of specimens;

Non-professional members - others interested in the aims of the Group.

The feeling of the meeting was, however, that this was complicating things unnecessarily in view of the probable small size of the Group.

4.

At the other extreme, fears were expressed that interested parties (school teachers in charge of collections were cited in this respect) might be deterred from joining by the requirement that applicants must be proposed and seconded by members of the Group. It was suggested that paragraph 3 be amended to conclude: "Candidates for membership shall have their application approved by the Committee". This amendment was carried.

The amended constitution was finally adopted with the proviso that, once a committee had been elected, they should draft additional paragraphs to cover:

- 1). the procedure for amending the constitution;
- 2). the disposal of funds in the event of the Group's dissolution

4. Officers & Committee A strategically placed tea-break having allowed ample time for wheeling and dealing, the following were elected:

Chairman: Roy Clements (Leicester University)
Secretary: Mike Jones (Leicester Museums)
Treasurer: Ann Pennington-George (Doncaster Museum)
Minute Secretary: Geoff Tresise (Merseyside Museums)
Committee: Phil Doughty (Ulster Museum)
 Brian Page (Keele University)
 Tir Riley (Sheffield Museum)
 Hugh Torrens (Keele University)
Co-opted Member: Colin Sizer (Wellcome Museum)

5. Group Activities After a general discussion the consensus view seemed to be that the Group's activities should include:

- 1). Seminars at different centres. Each visit to include an examination of the geological collections.
- 2). Reports on the state of museum collections, especially those in museums which had no professional curator. It was suggested that working parties might be set up to carry out rescue operations at such museums.
- 3). The visiting of geological sites (including conservation sites).
- 4). Meetings aimed specifically at geological technicians.
- 5). A quarterly newsletter.

6. Annual Subscription An annual subscription of £1.00 was agreed.

GEOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS AND COLLECTORS OF NOTE

It was thought that a series of articles on Museums and collections of importance might be of interest to members of the Group.

1. LICHFIELD MUSEUMS (pre 1850)

1 Attention to the former existence of important geological collections at Lichfield, Staffordshire, was first drawn through reading John Whitehurst's classic "An Inquiry into the Original State and Formation of the Earth" 1st ed. 1778.

In this (P.158 2nd ed. 1786) "fossil crocodiles" were recorded from Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Yorkshire. In those days fossil crocodiles or whales were not infrequently cited in the literature, referring to Jurassic ichthyosaurs or plesiosaurs. The surprise was finding such animals recorded for Derbyshire in which no Liassic sediments are known, whereas they are in the other counties. Clarification came from William Martin's "Petrificata Derbiensia", 1809, in which Whitehurst's Derbyshire 'crocodile' is shown to have been an orthocone cephalopod misidentified as the tail of a crocodile! The quarrymen where the specimen was found then still called these cephalopods 'crocodiles tails'. Martin also mentions that Whitehurst's original specimen was purchased by a foreign collector and passed "into the cabinet of one of the German princes".

White Watson also discusses the crocodile in his "A Delineation of the Strata of Derbyshire etc.", 1811 p. 43 and records that crocodiles do not occur in the (Carboniferous) Compact Shell-Limestone of Derbyshire as Whitehurst had said. More interesting is the record by Watson "That the Gangetic (Ganges) crocodile is probably peculiar to the Pouzzolanian Limestone (i.e. Blue Lias) found at Bath. A very fine petrified skeleton five feet nine inches in length imbedded in this limestone is now in the possession of Mr. Wright, Surgeon, Lichfield; found 30 feet below the surface at Wilmcote near Stratford-on-Avon in 1810".

This shows that fossil ichthyosaurs were common knowledge in the Bath area before Mary Anning's much overrated discovery at Lyme Regis, Dorset in 1811. John Walcott had figured an ichthyosaur femur and vertebra from near Bath in 1779. Mary Anning has too often been credited with the first discovery of an ichthyosaur but the specimen was found in 1810 by her brother (she was then only eleven) and was by no means the first specimen. Edward Lhwyd had figured vertebrae in 1699 from the Lias of Pyrton Passage, Glos. and the first English skeleton recorded was described in 1719 from Lincolnshire.

Richard Wright's skeleton thus had considerable historical interest as being another pre-Anning specimen recorded in print. Additional interest was supplied by the fact that the quarry at Wilmcote was probably that which yielded lithographic stone from the White Lias to Redman, an English pioneer of lithography in this country, which was supplied to him by William James, who owned the quarry. James was an early friend of William Smith - the father of English geology - and an early railway promoter.

Hunting for information about Mr. Wright, Surgeon, revealed that a Richard Wright M.D. was elected FGS in 1817 (Woodward 1907 p 279). The British Museum Catalogue of Printed Books also recorded a book published in 1805 "An Account of the (early) Life of Dr. Samuel Johnson" by a Richard Wright, Surgeon at Lichfield. Keele had a copy of this rarity and on the title page the editor was recorded as "Proprietor of the Museum of Antiquities, Natural and Artificial Curiosities etc., Lichfield".

This was where the ichthyosaur from Wilmcote found a home. Finding out what happened to the Museum is a sadder story.

The Lichfield Museum was founded by another surgeon, Richard Greene 1716-1793 (DNB). About 1742, when he was 26, he started collecting objects of interest. They were deposited in the room shown on our cover (Gents Mag. 1788 opp. p.847). Lichfield was the birthplace of Elias Ashmole, the founder of Oxford's Ashmolean Museum, and Greene may have gained some inspiration from him.

Greene's collection built up, with the aid of many benefactors, until, in 1774, Samuel Johnson visited it. Two years later, on another visit, Boswell recorded the wonderful collection with the neat labels printed on Greene's own press.

In 1773 the first printed catalogue was issued (copy in BM), followed by a second edition in 1782 (copy in Salt Lib. Stafford) and a third in 1786 (copies BM and Salt). These gave details of the contents of the Museum and the various additions. The contents of the cabinets shown in the cover illustration can be identified from this. Note the large half ammonite in the bottom half of the right hand cabinet in the farthest room. In the geological sphere the collection contained fossils, minerals, ores, crystals, spars, marbles, fluors, incrustations and petrefactions. (Notice early use of word fossil to denote anything dug up and petrefaction for what we today call fossils). Many other spheres of interest other than geological were represented.

Not surprisingly, in view of the date, little scientific information is given with the fossils and minerals and not always is even the locality recorded. Sheppey, Bath and Derbyshire are however conspicuous. In the 1782 cat. is a fascinating eight page list of

"Benefactors to the Museum". The major benefactor to whom the catalogue is dedicated is Sir Ashton Lever, who himself built up a fine Museum in London. Also included are at least six members of the famous Lunar Society of Birmingham namely:-

- 1). Matthew Boulton of Soho, Birmingham.
- 2). Erasmus Darwin of Radbourne near Derby (formerly of Lichfield).
- 3). Thomas Day of London.
- 4). James Keir of Soho, Birmingham.
- 5). John Whitehurst of London (formerly of Derby).
- 6). William Withering of Birmingham.

The Lunar Society consisted of only 14 members, who lived not only round Birmingham but also in Derby, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Lichfield and met once a month at the home of a member on the Monday nearest the full moon to allow them moonlight to travel home by. Naturally enough this activity led to their being named the Lunatics and to them being satirised by William Blake. Robert Schofield, in his study of "The Lunar Society of Birmingham" 1963, discusses the society, its membership and its activities on so many fronts ushering in the Industrial Revolution. Schofield nowhere mentions Greene's Museum but there seems a very obvious connection. Sadly the catalogues do not normally record exactly what each benefactor's gift was. One of John Whitehurst's gifts was a triangular pyrometer invented by the "ingenious Mr. Whitehurst of Derby". This confirms Whitehurst's interest in this field, which the Wedgwoods were pioneering as well as Whitehurst. (Schofield 1963 p.170) Whitehurst, who died in 1788, was the most important geologist of the group and, in his book cited above, made significant contributions to the development of stratigraphy and the idea that fossils characterised strata, as well as the recognition of igneous rocks (Challinor 1947). Whitehurst had been working on his book the "Inquiry" since before 1763 and may well have contributed geological specimens to Greene's Museum as well.

Other possible geological benefactors include, by 1782, the late Joshua Platt of Oxford FRS and author of a penetrating paper on belemnites published in 1765. Little is known about Platt except that he was born in 1699 and is last heard of in mid 1773 writing to the Gentlemans Magazine about fossils. Sherborn, 1934, records him as a curiosity-monger but he seems to have been a lot more scientific than that phrase might imply. Greene's list records him in 1782 as the late Mr. Platt, so he must have died between 1773-1782.

Both those who inspired Gilbert White's "Natural History of Selborne" were benefactors; Thomas Pennant (1726-1798) of Downing, Flintshire, and Daines Barrington (1727-1800) of London. Both were keen natural historians and contributed to palaeontology by building

collections or publishing scientific articles. Pennant's collections went to the BM (NH) in 1912.

In 1793 Greene died and his son continued to keep the Museum open "at all times except Sundays" for a few years. In 1799 his son sold the collection of fossils and minerals to Sir John St. Aubyn for £100. St. Aubyn lived 1758-1839 (DNB) and amassed a fine collection of minerals some of which were later given to the city of Devonport. Greene's entire Museum is supposed to have fetched £1000 and the majority of it was purchased in December 1800 for £600 by Walter Honeywood Yate of Bromsberrow near Gloucester. He was then 21 and married only five months. One wonders if the marriage dowry was spent on the Museum! Yate obviously worked hard at building up the Museum and, in 1801, published "A Concise and Descriptive Catalogue of all the Natural and Artificial Curiosities in the Museum" (Copy in Salt Lib.) This was Richard Greene's collection with many additions made by Yate and did contain geological specimens contrary to Sherborn's claim (1940 p59). This catalogue similarly contains a list of the Museum's benefactors (8 pages) many are the same as in Greene's 1782 list but one new name is that of the Rev. Benjamin Richardson, of Bath. It was Richardson who, in 1799, had taken down from William Smith's dictation the famous first "Table of English Strata" so often reproduced. It would be interesting to know which specimens Richardson, who was very generous with his collections, had donated, but we will never know.

The Museum did not stay long in Yate's ownership for, by 1805, Richard Wright was proprietor of the Museum once again in Lichfield. He had purchased the Museum from Yate sometime before this and set it up in Lichfield Close.

Some interesting and libellous details about Yate are recorded by S.G. Perceval 1838-1922 (See Min. Mag. 20 267-8 for obituary). He wrote to the librarian of the Salt Library in 1881 for information about Greene's Museum and on 7th December, 1881 sent a note about W.H. Yate. Perceval lived at Henbury near Bristol and made some enquiries via some connections in Glos. whence he wrote "Mr. Yate, having dissipated his property and been obliged to live latterly on the charity of his friends, his memory is not held in much favour by his heir and representative, the Rev. H.D.Y. Scott of Tibberton near Gloucester - He appears to have been a very weak - vain individual "an intellect so weak that in present state of the Lunacy Laws he would have been deemed incapable of managing his own affairs"!

Hardly an ideal Museum Curator.

Wright was Richard Greene's grandson and probably regretted the collection leaving Lichfield. When he purchased it from W.H. Yate he kept it in his house and added his own extensive collections of minerals, fossils and shells including his ichthyosaur. It was pilfered a little by his sons and some coach-wheel sized ammonites were even left propped up outside his house. Wright died in 1821 and, as so often happens, his collections dispersed by auction.

This took place in the Lichfield Guildhall over August 1st to 10th 1821, conducted by Mr. Harris. The printed sale catalogue survives in the Library of the Royal College of Surgeons (J.M. Chalmers-Hunt kindly found this for me). Prices realised were lamentably small, many lots reaching merely 6d. or 9d. Adam Sedgwick made a special journey to the auction after geological work in the south of England and "was fortunate in obtaining some very valuable specimens at what he considered a reasonable price. They were conveyed to the (Sedgwick Museum, Cambridge) in one very large case". (Clark and Hughes 1890 1 p233).

Perhaps the Sedgwick acquired the ichthyosaur for Justin Delair tells me (in lit. 18/8/74) that the collections here now include uncrushed portions of toothed ichthyosaur jaws Reg. no. SM J 47003 recorded from the Lias "near Lichfield" - where there is no Lias. Possibly the source was instead Wright's collection. What happened to the remainder of the collection and all the non-geological material is not known. Another Cambridge contemporary of Sedgwick, the Rev. Dr. William Webb, 1775-1856, a man of antiquarian interests purchased some of the specimens according to S.G. Perceval's letter quoted above and some of these are now in the British Museum (Blommsbury). Some objects were purchased by Hewitt of Lichfield and were passed to the present Lichfield Museum founded in 1859. Other objects were untraceably scattered, a sad end to a collection built up over nearly eighty years.

H.S. Torrens

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

I am deeply grateful to the Librarian and Staff of the William Salt Library of Stafford for permission to quote from S.G. Perceval's letters, and allowing use of their splendid collections.

J. Delair, J.M. Chalmers-Hunt and the Lichfield Library Staff most kindly provided information in correspondence.

10.

REFERENCES:-

(Other than those sufficiently cited in the text).

J.W. CLARK and T.M. HUGHES 1890

Life and letters of the Rev. Adam Sedgwick Vol. 1 C.U.P.

J. CHALLINOR 1947

From Whitehurst's Inquiry to Faley's Derbyshire. A chapter in the History of English Geology.

Trans. N. Staffs. F.C. 81.

DNB =

Dictionary of National Biography.

R. SCHOFIELD 1963

The Lunar Society of Birmingham O.U.P.

C.D. SHERBORN 1934

An early bill for fossils from Joshua Platt of Oxford 1772.
1882 Naturalist May 113 - 117.

C.D. SHERBORN 1940

Where is the collection.
C.U.P.

H.B. WOODWARD 1907

The History of the Geological Society of London.
Geol. Soc. Lond.

Australia has one geological museum less since the Geological Survey of Victoria handed over their collections to the Melbourne Museum.

The Survey museum, formerly open to the public, consisted of a series of display cabinets in galleries and corridors which also housed the storage cabinets containing the Survey's reference collections. The galleries appear to have been completely unpatrolled and, although the storage drawers were locked, the locks were of a type that could readily be forced with the blade of a knife.

On 1st May, 1973, the police were called to the museum after a member of staff reported seeing a teenage boy acting suspiciously on one of the galleries. When questioned by the police, the boy admitted removing specimens from the museum over a period of several months. In his opinion anything not on display was not really needed and was therefore unlikely to be missed. He had acted on this assumption to such effect that about one cwt of the Survey's fossils were subsequently recovered from his home.

Even after the theft was discovered the Survey appear to have been unable to determine exactly what specimens were missing and are by no means certain that all their material was in fact returned. The collections have now been transferred to Melbourne Museum where a complete check is under way.

Meantime the boy and his family returned to England early this year. He then visited Merseyside Museum (unaware that his fame had preceded him) and told us that he had in his possession a number of Australian fossils, including a fossil platypus. At one stage he offered to donate these to the museum, but later 'remembered' that he had given them to a friend before leaving Australia.

In recent weeks we have lost track of him and believe that he may have joined the Army. Should any curator be offered Australian fossils by a personable young private, we should be most interested to hear of it. Please telephone Merseyside Museum (051-207-0001) where Geoff Tresise or Philip Phillips can provide further information.

LOCATING AND IDENTIFYING COLLECTIONS OF PALAEOLOGICAL MATERIAL

H.S.T.

Almost every major palaeontological monograph of recent years will contain a statement to the effect that "This species described by Smith 1819 cannot be interpreted properly until the type material is discovered or if lost, replacement type specimens chosen". Such is the importance of the type specimens of taxonomic units; they are irreplaceable.

If everyone had the foresight of one Smith in 1819 taxonomists would have fewer problems, for William, the Father of British geology, had by then sold his fossil collections to the British Museum where the majority are still available for study. Smith's example however is hardly one of foresight for in 1819, apart from describing several new fossil species, Smith spent ten weeks in a debtor's prison and he had other reasons to sell his collections apart from any foresight.

Far too many collections have not survived at all and one has the strong impression that Alfred, Lord Tennyson was writing with geological and other curators in mind when he wrote in
In Memoriam 1850

'So careful of the type?' but no
From scarp'd cliff and quarried stone
She cries 'A thousand types are gone
I care for nothing, all shall go'.

Locating particular collections of geological specimens is never easy. These notes are offered as some help.

The only primary source of information known to me is:-

C.D. Sherborn

Where is the ----- collection

Cambridge University Press. 1940. 149 pages but every other one is blank to allow annotation. This is not in print but is a simple matter to photocopy (illegally). It is scarce only 500 copies having been printed. This is an account of the various Natural History Collections which Sherborn came across between 1880 - 1939. It is not exhaustive or always accurate but contains an immense amount of information. Furthermore it is often fascinating reading.

e.g. a) Weaver Thos.

"Coll. was used to form hard core of a urinal at Bewdley".

Weaver was a pupil of Werner and published some important papers.

b) Weeks - (formerly Cox)

"Had the mechanical spider" (!?)

c) Groom Chas. Ottley

"said to be dead many times was a notorious rogue and thief tried to kill Thomas Davies by dropping a boulder upon him from a high ladder in Tennant's shop in the Strand".

C.D. Sherborn was a man of many interests. His biography by J.R. Norman 1944 Squire. Memories of C.D. Sherborn - Harrap & Co. London is also equally entertaining reading. His primary interests were geological and palaeontological so there is a useful bias towards these collections in his book. In his biography it is recorded that "Where is the damned collection", as he called it, had amazingly to be published at his own expense.

In 1966-1967 Dr. D.A. Bassett of the National Museum of Wales conducted a survey of geological collections in the U.K. Museums by means of questionnaires. This information is to be incorporated in a second edition of Sherborn's book currently in preparation under the editorship of Ron Cleevely of the BM (NH) under the aegis of this Museum and the Society for the Bibliography of Natural History. We aim in this newsletter to have a regular feature to help people seeking collections or to report collections which have been located.

The "History of the Collections contained in the Natural History Departments of the British Museum" is also a useful source not only for BM (NH) collections but others. Volume 1 published 1904 includes a list of the more important contributions to the collection of fossils pp 260-340 up till the end of 1900.

Other Museums give details of collections of especial value which they contain. Several British Museums have also produced printed catalogues of type and figured geological material. Dr. M.G. Bassett of the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff, CF1 3NP. (Dept. of Geology) has prepared "A Bibliography and index of catalogues of type figured and cited fossils in museums in Great Britain and Ireland", for publication. He would be most grateful to receive direct any information from museum curators with publications to add to his list.

A further source of information about the disposal of collections is in auction sale catalogues. Many of these were noted by Sherborn in his book. A "Register of British Natural History Auctions 1700-1927" is being prepared by J.M. Chalmers-Hunt, 1, Hardcourts Close, West Wickham, Kent, BR4 9LG, and will be published in a limited edition by the London auctioneers Sothebys. Mr. Chalmers-Hunt is still eager for any information as to the

- i) Whereabouts of any Auction Sale Catalogues of this period involving the sale of Natural History Specimens.
- ii) date and place of any auctions that were held in this period so that catalogues can be located.

Two catalogues currently sought are those of the James PARKINSON sale. Parkinson's (1755-1824) matchless collection was sold at auction in London in April 1827 at very low prices. Purchasers included the Sowerby's (colls in BM (NH))

Thos Image of Bury St. Edmonds (his coll. now in the Sedgwick)

Matthew Wright of Bristol (his collections to Bath, Bristol and BM (NH))

Lord Enniskillen (colls in BM (NH) and GSM)

G.W. Featherstonhaugh (collection later destroyed by fire in the U.S.A.)

G.A. Mantell (collection now in BM (NH))

A. Sedgwick for the Sedgwick Museum who acquired "a large collection of very magnificent fossils".

Museums in addition containing ex Parkinson material are Oxford University, Haslemere.

Edward DONOVAN or O'DONOVAN (1768-1837). Donovan was a man of private means who published on many aspects of natural history. He formed a "London Museum and Institute of Natural History" of which a catalogue was published in 1807 (BM (NH)) the same year James Parkinson enthusiastically recommended the Museum's fossil collections. The Museum's sale was announced in 1817 and took place at the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, London, over April 30th - May 6th, 1818. Sadly, no copy of this important sale catalogue can be located.

Copies of these must have survived somewhere. Will curators and others please hunt and report any successes to the Newsletter for publication.

Biographies and obituary notices of geologists and palaeontologists also often provide valuable details of where their collections went or where they may be expected to have gone. The major work in this field is an almost ignored book by three Germans published in 1938.

K. LAMBRECHT, W. AND A. QUENSTEDT - Palaeontologi (Palaeontologists) Catalogus bio-bibliographicus (Bio-bibliographic catalogue) published by W. JUNK - Gravenhage. 1938. 495 pages as part 72 of the irregular periodical Fossilium Catalogus pars 1: Animalia.

This may still be in print but is certainly worth getting as it contains a mass of information with no bias at all towards non British geologists.

Lambrecht was a palaeo-ornithologist and W. and A. Quenstedt, a husband and wife team, he being the grandson of the famous German palaeontologist F.A. Quenstedt (1809-1889).

The book is written in German but in such a form that only the minutest knowledge is needed to use it.

Other useful sources of biographical material are for English speaking geologists.

J.W. WELLS 1947 - A list of books on the personalities of Geology. Ohio Journ. Sci. 47 192-200

J.W. WELLS and G.W. WHITE 1958 - Biographies of geologists Ohio Journ. Sci. 58 285-298

MRS. SUSAN THACKRAY 1972 - A bio-bibliography of British Geologists who died between 1850 and 1900. Science Museum Library Bibliog Gen. 801 16 p.

E. de MARGERIE 1896 - Catalogue des bibliographies Geologiques Paris. pp 313-338 has a list of bio-bibliographic notices for geologists from Great Britain. These are continued in:-

E.B. MATHEWS 1923 - Catalogue of published bibliographies in Geology 1896-1920. Bull. Nat. Research Council 6 no 36. pp 186-210 (Bibliographies and obituaries).

Geologists are included in the "Archives of British Men of Science" (who flourished 1870-1950) ed. R.M. MacLEOD and J.R. FRIDAY 1972 Mansell, London (published index to microfilm) but I have found this most disappointing.

Otherwise obvious sources like The Dictionary of National Biography and Dictionary of Scientific Biography must be tried.

Portraits of geologists are included in:-

O'DONOGHUE F. 1908-14. Catalogue of engraved British Portraits preserved in the Dept. of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum. 4 vols. published by order of the Trustees. also vols. 5 1922 (Groups) and vols 6 1925 (Supplement and Indexes)

Since so many British geologists had also botanical and palaeontological interests the following are often also useful in providing biographical data.

A.B. RANDLE 1931 - A biographical index of deceased British and Irish botanists - 2nd edition Taylor and Francis, London. 1st edition in 1893 by J. BRITTON and G.S. BOULGER.

J.H. BARNHART 1965 - Biographical notes upon botanists. 3 vols. G.K. Hall, Boston, Mass.

For British conchologists:-

A.E. SALISBURY 1945 - Work and Workers on British Mollusca Journ. Conch. 22 136-145 149-165 is useful although not dealing with works concerning only fossil shells

An innovation well worth wider application in Museums is to build up a handwriting collection. A fine collection of this sort is available at the British Museum of Natural History. In working through an old Museum collection one is often forcibly struck by the number of labels in one particular hand. These may well be those of a previous curator who has misguidedly 'improved' the collections without preserving all original labels. If the original labels are available comparison of them with the specimens of known handwriting will often confirm or refute suspicions of provenance. Locating specimens of handwriting of collectors known or suspected to be represented in a particular museum is thus well worthwhile. The National Register of Archives in London is an obvious place to try.

Other publications I have found useful include:-

F.C. SAWYER 1971 - A list of MSS and original drawings in the British Museum (Nat. Hist.) Bull. B.M. (Nat. Hist) Historical 4 no. 2 87-203.

P. HEPWORTH 1971 - Select Biographical Sources. Library Association, London.

It is hoped the Newsletter will be used for a Lost and Found collections feature in each issue. The information gained will be published in a later issue and then passed to Ron Cleevely at the BM (NH) for incorporation in the central register being formed by him for publication. The success of this venture will depend on people responding to appeals for information. Please send replies in the first place to Dr. H.S. Torrens of Keele University who is co-ordinating such information.

COLLECTIONS CURRENTLY SOUGHT

1). S.R. Pattison (1809-1901)

In C.B. Sherborn's "Where is the Collection" 1940, page 105, there is a reference to repeated unsuccessful attempts being made to locate the collection of S.R. Pattison.

Approximately 100 of his fossils have now been located in the collections of Leicestershire Museums, four accessioned in 1891 and the remainder in 1893. I would be extremely grateful for any information regarding the significance of his material as the reference by Sherborn to 'repeated search' implies that it is of some importance. A complete list of specimens is available for anyone wanting further details.

Mike Jones, Keeper of Earth Sciences, Leicestershire Museums, New Walk, Leicester. LE1 6TD. Tel. 539111 Ext. 280.

2). John Walcott (1754 or 5-1831)

William Smith's work in the Bath area has led to Bath being described as the 'Cradle of English Geology'. An earlier work dealing with the fossils of Bath is by Walcott published in 1779. His collection was stated by C.D. Sherborn 1949 p 137 "Supposed to be in Bristol Museum but not identified". This has not been achieved since Sherborn wrote and it seems unlikely that Walcott's collection did go there. Walcott was a man of private means, he lived in Bath from 1776-1783 and afterwards in Devon, London, Bristol, Gloucestershire and Hampshire, dying in Bath. His collection may be anywhere. His son, W.H.L. Walcott lived in Worcester and Southampton, took an active interest in natural history and is known to have had some of his father's manuscripts so may have had his collections also.

H.S. Torrens, Keele University.

3). Joseph Townsend (1739-1816)

William Smith's friend and author of an early description of the stratigraphy of Britain 1813 under the title "The Veracity of Moses established as a historian".

He studied at Cambridge and Edinburgh. He became rector of Pewsey, Wiltshire in 1764 and also had a house in Bath in his later years. A writer to the Gentlemans Magazine in 1816 after his death wondered what would become of his "Extensive, exquisitely beautiful and scientifically arranged collection of Minerals and Organic Remains". It's fate is still unknown.

H.S. Torrens, Keele University.

4). Benjamin Heywood Bright (1787-1843)

A palaeontological collection made by Bright was used by Murchison in his "The Silurian System" 1839. When the railway from Malvern to Ledbury was made a cutting provided many fossils kept by Bright at Brand Lodge, Colwall, Nr. Malvern (see Murchison 1839 p 414) There were several Bright collections and much of them came to the British Museum in 1873. The History of the BM (NH) Collections Geology p 271-272 gives full details of the family and its collections but the specimens Murchison used have not been found.

The trilobite material figured by Murchison on pl. 14, figs. 8 and 9 as "Paradoxides bimucronatus" is especially sought. This material is the type series of Didrepanon bimucronatus (Cheirurus bimucronatus (pars) of many authors)

The following collections have been tried without success:-

British Museum (Natural History), I.G.S., Birmingham University Museum, Bristol University Museum, Herefordshire County Library, Malvern College, Mr. Rowlands (present owner of Brand Lodge), National Museum of Wales, Sedgwick Museum.

P.D. Lane, Keele University.

5). Wyville Thomson 1830-1882)

The material figured by Wyville Thomson (1857. "On some species of Acidaspis from the Lower Silurian Beds of the south of Scotland".

Q. Jl. Geol. Soc. Lond., 13, pl. 6) is sought.

Royal Scottish Museum, Hunterian Museum, I.G.S., Belfast City Museum, Irish National Museum (Dublin), British Museum (N.H.), Sedgwick Museum have been tried without success.

Thomson was born in 1830 in Linlithgowshire, went to Edinburgh University.

In 1851 he was lecturing in botany at Aberdeen University, in 1853 Prof. of Natural History at Queen's College, Cork, in 1854 Prof. of Geology at Belfast, in 1860 Prof. of also Botany and Zoology at Belfast, in 1870 Prof. of Natural History at Edinburgh, knighted in 1876. Died 1882. (see Centenary Vol. Belfast Natural History Phil. Soc. (of which he was a prominent member) 1924 pp 109-110)
P.D. Lane, Keele University.

6). W.F. Whittard

The non-type, non-figured material used by Whittard (1938. "The Upper Valentian tribolite fauna of Shropshire". Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist., (11), 85-140, pls. 2-4) has not been located.

British Museum (Natural History), I.G.S., Sedgwick Museum, Bristol University Museum, Bristol City Museum, Shrewsbury Museum, Imperial College London, have been tried without success.

P.D. Lane, Keele University.

In addition, he is always interested in hearing of any collections, however small, of Silurian trilobites from the Welsh Borders and the Girvan region.

CORRIGENDA

- Page 1 For 7RA read 7RH (Dr Clements' address)
- 2 For Clemence read Clements (Chairman)
- 10 For Faley read Farey
- 12 For British read English (line 7)
- 14 For Bury St. Edmonds read Bury St. Edmunds
- 16 For palaeontological read palaeobotanical (line 7).
- 21 For Fauna read Faunal
- 26 After Carboniferous add Corals (line 31)

DERBY MUSEUM

Ipswichian mammalian fauna from the Beeston Terrace at Boulton Moor,
near Derby

The remains of seven mammalian species indicative of an interglacial were found in July 1973 during excavations for a foul sewer on Boulton Moor, 5Km south east of Derby (SK 382 317). The isolated teeth and bones, which were well preserved, occurred in a series of fluvial sands and gravels at a depth of 3-5 metres below ground level. These deposits form part of the Allenton Terrace of the Derwent Valley which has been correlated with the Beeston Terrace of the Middle Trent Basin (Shotton 1973).

The species represented are hippopotamus, Hippopotamus amphibius L., elephant, ? Palaeoloxodon antiquus (Falconer), rhinoceros, ? Dicerorhinus hemitoechus (Falconer), brown bear, Ursus cf. arctos L., Hyaena, Crocuta crocuta (Erxleben), red deer, Cervus elaphus L., and Bos sp. or Bison sp. This faunal assemblage is characteristic of the last (Ipswichian) interglacial (Sutcliffe 1960).

A short paper reporting on the significance of the find has been accepted for publication in the Geological Magazine and will appear later this year.

Shotton, F.W. 1973. The English Midlands, in Mitchell et al.,

A correlation of Quaternary deposits in the British Isles.

Geol. Soc. Lond., Special Report No. 4.

Sutcliffe, A.J. 1960. Joint Mintor Cave, Buckfast Leigh..

Trans. Torquay. Nat. Hist. Soc., 13, 1 - 26.

Peter F. Jones
Geology Division
Derby College of Art & Technology
Kedleston Road
Derby.

Michael F. Stanley
Dept. of Natural History
Derby Museums & Art Gallery
The Strand
Derby.

We are trying to locate British Ipswichian vertebrate sites with which to correlate the Boulton Moor fauna. I would be most grateful to receive information on the species represented, site and references to publications from colleagues with relevant material in their collections.

A GLACIAL FAUNA FROM THOR'S CAVE, MANIFOLD VALLEY

Early in 1973 a schoolboy brought to the Museum small mammal and bird bones found by him in a cave breccia in Thor's Cave. Subsequent identifications by Don Bramwell suggest that the bones date from the Devensian Stage (Late Pleistocene) of the Quaternary.

The remainder of the cave breccia in the fissure was excavated in early November 1973 before it could be destroyed by random fossil hunters. Subsequent laboratory work at the Museum using a 15% solution of Formic Acid has released the bones from the limestone/bone/calcite/Breccia. They are at present being identified by Don Bramwell and it is hoped that a paper describing the site and its fauna will appear in the near future.

THOR'S CAVE - FISSURE (ROOF)

Fauna Identification to 13.6.74.

I Mammals (Names & Arrangement after Van Den Brink, 1967).

Sorex minutus
Sorex araneus
Chiroptera sp.

Lepus timidus anglicus
Lemmus lemmus
Clethrionomys glareolus
Arvicola sp.

Microtus arvalis
Microtus ratticeps
Microtus gregalis
Apodemus sylvaticus
Vulpes vulpes
Mustela erminea
Mustela nivalis
Rangifer tarandus

Pygmy Shrew
Common Shrew
Bat, cf. Selysius mystacinus
Whiskered bat
Blue hare
Norway lemming
Bank vole
Water Vole or Ground Vole (Arvicola amphib/Terrestris)
Common Vole
Root Vole
Siberian Vole
Wood Mouse
Red Fox
Stoat
Weasel
Reindeer

II Birds (arranged after Fisher, 1966)

Podiceps sp.
Melanitta sp.
Bucephala clangula
Falco tinnunculus
Lagopus lagopus
Lagopus mutus
Tetrao terix
?Perdix perdix
Charadrius sp.
?Clidris canutus
?Gallinago gallinago
?Alauda arvensis
Delichon urbica
Motacillidae sp.
Tudinae sp.
?Phoenicurus phoenicurus
?Oenanthe oenanthe
?Turdus pilaris
?Turdus iliacus
?Turdus viscivorus
Paridae sp.
?Loxia curvirostra
Fringillid sp.
?Pyrrhocorax sp.
Corvus monedula

Grebe
Scoter
Goldeneye
Kestrel
Grouse
Ptarmigan
Black Grouse
Partridge
Plover c. Ringed plover size
Knot
Snipe
Skylark
House Martin
Pipit/Wagtail type
Thrush sp.
Redstart
Wheatear
Fieldfare
Redwing
Mistle Thrush
Tit sp.
Crossbill
Finch sp. of large size
Chough
Jackdaw

Rana sp.
Pisces spp.
Mollusca sp.
Charcoal fragments

Frog sp.
Fish spp.
Snail sp.

The material deserves further checking. It is important homogeneous late glacial fauna as far as we can see. Lack of sufficient reference specimens (bird skeletons) is causing delay.

Don Bramwell
Fulwood
Baslow Road
Bakewell
Derbyshire, DE4 1AA

Michael F. Stanley
Dept. of Natural History
Derby Museums & Art Gallery
The Strand
Derbyshire

We would be most grateful to receive European species (in flesh) extraneous to requirements; Ringed Plover - Charadrius hiaticula and Snow Finch - Mont. fringilla nivalis are particularly desired. Discarded mounted specimens yield a few useful bones. Any species, in flesh or mounted of rarer European, especially waders, ducks and buntings, would be greatly appreciated. For a full list of species required or unwanted specimens please write or ring Mick Stanley, Derby 31111 ext. 782.

DONCASTER MUSEUM is desperately short of ANY trilobite and graptolite material; also zoned carboniferous corals. If any Museum etc., has any 'spare' specimens which are good enough for teaching purposes would they please contact Mrs. P.A. Pennington-George (Assistant Keeper - Geology) Museum and Art Gallery, Chequer Road, DONCASTER, DN1 2AE. Telephone 62095 and 60814.

KEELE UNIVERSITY. Specimens of mica-lamprophyres other than from the Channel Isles, would be welcomed by Mr. G. Lees.

BOOK REVIEW

Geological Laboratory Techniques - M. Allman & D.F. Lawrence 1972
Blandford £8.50p

This is a must for any Geological Department where even the most basic of techniques are carried out. Mr. Allman and Mr. Lawrence were Chief Technicians at Queen Mary College. Like so many of us they found a lack of helpful literature condensed into one volume. They decided to do something about it and produced this magnificent book. It covers step by step all the techniques likely to be used by a technician and a great many more sophisticated ones. The text is clear and precise. The book is of constant use for reference for it contains useful addresses, tables, mixture proportions - almost everything; over 300 pages packed with information and references. 200 illustrations many in colour. For many years there has been a need for such a book. Here it is.

TECHNICALA SYSTEM OF COLOUR CODING

Where Geological Collections are primarily used by students the problem arises of specimens "straying" - an Ordovician fossil in a Jurassic drawer - an Oxide in a Sulphate drawer - and so on. It is a time-consuming and laborious task to check through several hundred specimens to verify their position within the various collections.

A system of colour coding simplifies the essential numbering of the specimen and makes it very easy for a "stray" specimen to be spotted by even a non-Geologist. It also enables staff with very little knowledge to extract and return specimens correctly.

Instead of a uniform white paint as a backing for the accession (or other number) Humbrol quick-setting enamel paints may be used, which are available in a range of contrasting colours - extendable by intermixing exact proportions of different colours. The same colour is used both on the specimen and on the card. The various colours are indicative of major groupings. In the two Palaeontological collections at Keele one grouping employed is Stratigraphic; here Cambrian specimens are numbered in a Brown background, Silurian on a Green, the Jurassic subdivision because of volume of material, so that Bajocian, Bathonian, etc. have their own colours.

In the Mineralogical Department the major divisions are based on Chemical composition; thus Oxides are grouped together with a red base colour - Silicates with a green and so on.

In the Petrological collections division is into the major types e.g. Granite, conglomerates, gneisses; with prefix subdivision, and each type has its unique colours.

The system is flexible and adaptable. Groups of specimens based on regions may also be colour-coded as may specimens allocated to separate teaching and reference collections. Specimens on loan to other Departments and Sections are readily spotted when due for return.

Numbers on the Examination Collection have a white base - the only specimens which have. Again these are easily spotted should they be used for other purposes.

To further assist the user of a collection all drawers are numbered and the drawer labels colour coded to correspond with their contents. All trays are numbered with the drawer number and cards within them colour-coded also. Thus it is very easy to put specimens back where they belong and equally easy to spot any out of place tray or specimen - and it does not require an expert, except for initial

identification. A card indexing system is incorporated for reference i.e. to allow a student seeking Leicester Syenite to find it without searching all Syenites.

The System has been in partial operation (it is not yet complete) for some two years. Students enjoy using it and it considerably accelerates both the assemblage and the dispersal of demonstrations by academic and technical staff.

B.W. Page

FOSSIL REPRODUCTIONS

Until the mid 1960s the major demand for fossil reproductions or casts was for inter-museum and research exchange with a minimal requirement for teaching and other educational purposes. During the last decade there has been an unprecedented increase in the attention paid to geology, throughout the British educational system. This is illustrated in secondary and adult education by the development of courses such as those of the Schools Council Integrated Science Project, Nuffield Secondary Science and The Open University. As a direct result, the demand for good specimens, particularly for teaching and examination has far exceeded the supply. The position has also been aggravated by a decline in the number of geological sites available, coupled with increasing conservation pressures on those sites remaining.

In an attempt to fulfil this need, many museums have responded by establishing or extending their schools services in geology. All too often however, this has not been possible or else there have been insufficient specimens to meet all local needs.

This disparity between supply and demand is now being overcome by the provision of a casting service, linking the museums with the teaching profession. Such a service has not been possible previously because the wide range of specialised expertise required has precluded commercial viability. For most museums the labour-intensive nature of the work involved in producing satisfactory casts in commercial quantities (e.g. specimen collection, identification, preparation, moulding and casting), is rarely compatible with the resources available.

What then are the benefits to museums that have enabled an expanding venture to make available within three years, a range of more than 500 different items?

1). REDUCTION OF MUSEUM WORKLOAD

Preparation, moulding and casting of specimens can often be undertaken at minimal or no cost to the museum, thereby releasing staff for more essential duties.

The pressure on specimen identification services can be greatly

relieved by making accurate reproductions of local fossils identified by experts, available to the general public.

2). SCHOOLS SERVICES

Multiple copies of a wide range of exhibition quality specimens, can be made available to enhance the level of schools services. The use of an exceptionally hard, tough, dense plaster, minimises loss by damage, wear or misuse and avoids potential damage to the original specimens. By the use of casts it is often feasible to establish a reservoir of specimens suitable for examination purposes.

3). PUBLIC INTEREST

A number of museums are now obtaining a very favourable reaction from the public, by means of sales of reproductions of popular identified fossils accompanied by suitable illustrated literature. In addition to stimulating local interest in natural history, such sales, if required, can provide a source of additional revenue.

Museum lectures and demonstrations are often of far greater interest to visitors when they are allowed to see and handle reproductions.

4). EXCHANGE SERVICES

Reciprocal inter-museum exchange of specimens (e.g. for display), is facilitated by the ready availability of reproductions of valuable or special-interest items.

5). SPECIMEN SECURITY

Copies of type or other important specimens can be made to protect the interests of future workers..

Consider for example the great losses suffered by many museums due to neglect or the last war.

As a corollary to the development of reproductions, it has been a natural progression to produce ancilliary aids and services, e.g. illustrated literature, wallcharts, models, special requirements, and preparation and identification services. As some of these are still at an early stage of development, their future and indeed the supply of reproductions is largely dependent upon the continuous feedback of data relating to the specific needs of users - museums, the teaching profession and the public.

OTHER SOCIETIESSociety for the Bibliography of Natural History

Easter Meeting, Linnean Society of London, Burlington House, London W.1.
3rd and 4th April, 1975.

A meeting open to all interested in the history and bibliography of natural history.

The four sessions making up the meeting will be on the following topics:

Manuscripts and Natural History: the location of natural history manuscripts; curation and administration of natural history archives; historical and scientific researches based on studies of manuscript collections and individual items.

Natural History and Exploration: biographies of explorers and the scientists who accompanied them; collections, manuscripts, and books associated with voyages of exploration; the bibliography of exploration.

Descriptive Bibliography: publishing, printing, binding and illustration of natural history books; the publishing history and bibliography of individual books.

New Trends in the History of Natural History: developments in the historiography of science; studies which throw light on the history of the animal, plant, or Earth sciences from a new angle.

It is hoped to arrange an informal gathering on Wednesday evening, before the meeting, and a formal reception on Thursday evening.

All correspondence regarding the meeting should be addressed to the Easter Meeting Secretary, Mrs. J.A. Diment, Department of Palaeontology, British Museum (Natural History), Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD.

PUBLICATIONSRoyal Scottish Museum Information Series

A catalogue of fossil vertebrates in the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh.

Part one/Actinopterygii. I.G.C. Henrichsen. Dec. 1970.

Part Two/Agnatha. I.G.C. Henrichsen. Aug. 1971.

Part Three/Actinistia and Dipnoi. I.G.C. Henrichsen. Aug. 1972.

A catalogue of Carboniferous in the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh, I.F. Sime. Dec. 1972.

The Information Series is issued free. Any bona fide demand for parts of the series from institutions, libraries or individuals will be considered subject to availability. Exchange publications from institutions would be welcome. Applications should be sent to: The Librarian, Royal Scottish Museum, Chambers Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1JF.