

## Extracts from *Proceedings of the Geological Society of Glasgow*

---

### **Session 8 (1865-1866)**

Extracts from the Proceedings for 1865-1866

#### **Meeting held on March 22, 1866**

Mr. JAMES FARIE, the Secretary, exhibited a specimen of "Wulfenite," or Molybdate of Lead, from the Lochantyre mine, near Gatehouse, Kirkcudbrightshire, a mineral which he believed to be hitherto unknown in Britain. Mr. Farie exhibited also, from the same mine, a specimen of Vanadate of Copper, new to Britain, and stated in recent works, such as Bristow's and Dana's, to be found only in the Urals.

The SECRETARY read a communication from Mr. James Croll "On the reason why the Change of Climate in Canada since the Glacial Epoch has been less complete than in Scotland". (*This paper can be seen [here](#).*)

*In the Proceedings for the year 1866-1867 (Session 9) it was recorded that, at the meeting of February 7 1867, James Croll was elected an honorary associate.*

### **Session 33 (1890-1891)**

Extract from the Proceedings for 1890-1891

#### **Meeting held on January 16, 1891**

Mr. JOSEPH SOMMERVILLE called attention to the death of a distinguished Honorary Associate of the Society, Mr. James Croll, LL.D., and paid a feeling tribute to the memory of the deceased gentleman. The Chairman said the members of the Society owed it as a duty to themselves, and to the memory of the deceased member, to adopt such a motion as that shadowed forth by Mr. Sommerville. Dr. Croll had done much special and original work which was not yet fully recognised and acknowledged as it ought to be by the world of science. Mr. John Young, F.G.S., corroborated the Chairman's remarks and spoke of Dr. Croll's early association with Glasgow, and his first connection with the Society. The Chairman then moved, and Mr. Dugald Bell seconded, a motion that an expression of deep regret at the decease of Dr. Croll should be recorded in the Society's minutes, from which an extract should be forwarded to Mrs. Croll.

### **Session 58 (1915-1916)**

*During 1916, two papers were presented on the controversial topic of The Auld Wives' Lifts, a sandstone feature situated north of Glasgow; an excursion to the site also took place. The archive shows that the debate about The Auld Wives' Lifts continued within the society beyond 1916.*

Extracts from the Proceedings for 1915-1916

### Meeting held on May 11, 1916

Mr. MACNAIR exhibited a series of specimens got from the ancient bed of the Clyde in the course of digging the foundations of the new Dalmarnock Power Station. The specimens consisted of hazel nuts, twigs, and timber, and the epidermis of pearl mussels. The pearl mussels had lost all trace of the calcareous shell, through the action of percolating water, and only the chitinous epidermis remained, resembling dead leaves in brittleness and form. Mr. Macnair pointed out that the occurrence of such relics had been recorded about half a century ago in proximity to the present course of the Clyde, and there could be no doubt that they came from the same bed, which also contained human relics in the shape of dug out canoes.

Professor J. W. GREGORY then read a paper on "The Auld Wives' Lifts: a Pseudo-Megalithic Tor." [1] He described the position of the well-known stones and referred to the traditional explanation of their origin, which ascribes them to a trial of strength between three witches of the district. For long the stones had been regarded as an example of a cromlech erected by the race which has dotted the country with megalithic structures. Careful examination, however, had shown that the group is purely the result of natural processes of denudation isolating a portion of the gritty sandstone of the district which had been dismembered, and the fragments thrown into their present attitude by slipping along joints and bedding-planes. It was shown that this could be proved by the fact of the existence, on the lines of fracture, of prominences corresponding with hollows on the opposite block.

Mr. LUDOVIC M'L. MANN pointed out that although the erection of the blocks could not be ascribed to man and the structure differed in some respects from the typical cromlech, there could be no doubt that it had been adopted by the early inhabitants of the district. He believed that the upper surface of the capstone had been levelled by the prehistoric process of "knapping," and had then been sculptured, the traces being quite evident to the trained eye. Other evidence also showed that the district had been one of special interest to the early inhabitants, and was now of importance to the archaeologist.

1. Scot. Geog. Mag., vol. xxxii., pp. 279-82, 1916. (This paper can be seen [here](#).)

*The second paper on the The Auld Wives' Lifts was presented at the December 1916 meeting of the society (during Session 59) by James Neilson, a council member. This paper was discussed at the February 1917 meeting and, as late as 1920, James Stark (another council member) published a paper which took the discussion further. Both of these papers were published in "Transactions of the Geological Society of Glasgow". (Details of how to access the Transactions can be found [here](#).)*

### Excursions in 1916

To the Geological Department of the University and the Hunterian Museum on Saturday, 18th March. The party was conducted through the Museum by Professor J. W. Gregory and Mr. W. R. Smellie, and numerous interesting specimens, including the type-specimen of *Apractocleidus teretipes*, were exhibited. The Laboratory of the Geological Department was also visited, and the methods of slide-making and the uses of various instruments such as the Goniometer, the Sclerometer, the Westphal Balance and so forth were demonstrated.

To Dalry, on Saturday, 15th April—Mr. G. V. Wilson, conductor. The volcanic neck near Holmbyre was examined. The material of the neck is a dark grey ash containing abundant crystals of biotite, fragments of various types of basalts and specimens of *Euphemus* and

brachiopods such as *Productus*. The sections of the Upper and Lower Limestones on the Caaf Water were also visited.

To the Kames of Carstairs, on Monday, 24th April (Spring Holiday)— Professor J. W. Gregory, conductor. The party proceeded from Cleghorn to Stonebyres, where the pre-glacial valley of the Mouse Water was indicated, and then walked along the Kames to Carstairs. Sections, showing fluvio-glacial gravel and sand, were examined and the super position of the Kames on the boulder clay was pointed out.

To Bridge of Weir, on Saturday, 13th May—Mr. H. R. J. Conacher, conductor. The general structure of the district was explained by the leader, and then a visit was paid to a glacial pit north-east of the station, where Mr. Ludovic Mann discussed the probable origin of the gravels and their points of archaeological interest. The sections of volcanic rocks of Calciferous Sandstone age and the sediments of the Lower Limestone series, exposed in the Gryfe as far down as Crosslee, were afterwards examined and their leading features indicated.

To Dunfermline, on 23rd May (King's Birthday)—Messrs. R. Dunlop and P. Macnair, conductors. The party proceeded from Dunfermline Station to Woodmill for the purpose of examining the outcrop of highly fossiliferous shales which have been described by Mr. Dunlop (*Transactions*, vol. xv., p. 167, 1915). The party then visited the fine section in the Lower Limestone series exposed at Charleston and Mr. Macnair explained his correlation of the different strata with the Hurler sequence in the West of Scotland.

To Gourrock, on Saturday, 3rd June—Messrs. P. A. Leitch and J. L. Begg, conductors. Craigmushet Quarry was first visited and the keratophyric rocks noted, a number of minerals, including fluorspar, barytes, quartz, and tourmaline, being collected from the geodes. The section westwards along the shore, comprising Calciferous Sandstone sediments and Old Red Sandstone conglomerate, was then examined. Two volcanic necks near the Cloch were pointed out and also a fresh basalt of the Markle type in the quarry north of Lunderston Bay.

To the White Loch, on Saturday, 27th June—Dr. A. Scott, conductor. The dependence of the topography of the district on the underlying rocks was first indicated and then the party traversed the sequence of Calciferous Sandstone lavas from Patterton to the White Loch. The volcanic rocks seen included basalts of various types as well as more acid mugearitic and trachytic rocks. The basaltic plug of Duncarnock was examined and also the series of lavas south-east of Neilston.

To the Auld Wives' Lifts, on Saturday, 14th October—Professor J. W. Gregory, conductor. The party proceeded from Milngavie to the Auld Wives' Lifts, where Professor Gregory pointed out the evidence in favour of the view that the "tor" had been formed by the weathering, *in situ*, of a block of the local sandstone.

## **Session 83 (1940-1941)**

*The archive material for the war years is understandably rather sparse. The talk by Dr M. Macgregor on February 11, 1941 has obvious relevance to the war and the need for resources.*

Extracts from the Proceedings for 1940-1941 (Session 83)

Meeting held on February 11, 1941

The President intimated that the Murchison Medal of the London Geological Society had been awarded to Dr. M. Macgregor and the Murchison Fund to Dr. J. Weir.

Dr. M. Macgregor gave an address on "The Ironstone Resources of Scotland." He pointed out that these had been fully investigated by the Geological Survey during the last war and were dealt with in volume XI of the series of *Special Reports on the Mineral Resources of Great Britain*. This volume, "The Iron Ores of Scotland," was published in 1920. Since then further research on potential resources had been carried out and was being prosecuted at the present time. The lecturer outlined the results so far obtained and gave an account of the mode of occurrence of the different types of iron ore found in Scotland, under the headings of sulphides, oxides, silicates and carbonates.

## **Session 108 (1965-1966)**

Extract from the Proceedings for 1965-1966 (Session 108)

Meeting held on February 10, 1966

The President expressed the regret felt in the Society over the death of Dr. Murray Macgregor and the Society's gratitude to him, particularly for his work on the Transactions and, latterly, the Arran Guide.

*Murray Macgregor (1884-1966) joined the Geological Survey in 1909. Throughout most of his life thereafter, he was involved in the survey of coal, ironstone, oil-shale, limestone, and of many other resources that were essential to the Scottish economy, especially during the two world wars and their aftermath; in particular, his work made a significant contribution to the development of the coal-mining industry. He is also celebrated for his work on the Carboniferous stratigraphy of Scotland.*

*His association with the Geological Society of Glasgow spanned 55 years; he was President of the society from 1926-29, and he was editor of the Transactions from 1937-58.*

*To the wider public, his name is well known through the 1965 "Excursion guide to the geology of Arran", of which he was the author.*

*Murray Macgregor's obituary was published in the Proceedings of the Geological Society of Glasgow for Session 108. It can be found [here](#).*

## **Session 133 (1990-1991)**

Extract from the Proceedings for 1990-1991 (Session 133)

The annual **Members' Night** was held on 14 February 1991. The following illustrated talks were presented:—

**Mr. A. Herriot** — Refractometry for Beginners;

**Dr. J.G. Todd** — The Costa Del Clyde, 9000 B.C.;

**Miss. R. McGill** — North Island, New Zealand, a Geothermal Tour;

**Miss. L. Ferguson** — A Geologist in China;

**Mr. A. McKelvie** — The Hidden Depths of Kloof Gold Mine, R.S.A.;

**Dr. T. Fallick** — The Scottish Universities Isotope Geology Unit: what is it, and what does it do?, and

**Dr. C. Burton** — Jellyfish and other Monsters from Trearne Quarry.

Both before and after the talks, members had the opportunity to view the following exhibits in the laboratory beside the lecture theatre:—

**A. Herriot** — Refractometry - try for yourself;

**C. Burton & N. Clark** — Jellyfish and other Monsters from Trearne;

**J.G. Todd** — Fossils and Microfossils from the Clyde Beds at Linwood;

**D. Hollis** — Carboniferous Fossils from the Johnstone By-Pass;

**J. Jocelyn** — Selected Mineral Specimens and Thunder Eggs;

**A. Roberts** — L.A. Necker's 'Geological Map of Scotland, 1808';

**M. Kennedy** — Rocks and Minerals of Aberdeenshire, Part II, and

**R. McGill** — East Kirkton.

In addition, there were photographs and a video display relating to the Society's field trip of the previous summer to Durham and the north of England.