Biology Curators Group Newsletter

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the advantages of the project have been felt by the wider natural history movement as well as by this Museum.

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THE WILLIAM BEAN SHELL COLLECTION - WOOD END MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, SCARBOROUGH

William Bean (1787-1866) inherited land known as Bean's Gardens (a mixture of market garden and pleasure garden situated between Huntriss Row and Pavilion Square, Scarborough) from his father but took little interest in their maintenance. By 1816 the gardens no longer existed, having been sold for building purposes, and Bean presumably became financially secure as a result of their sale. There is no evidence that he had any other occupation - in 1814 on joining the Old Globe Lodge he was described as 'Gardener' but shortly after that date he was described as 'Gentleman' or 'Naturalist' - and after 1816 he seems to have devoted himself to the study of natural history and public service as a long serving member of the Town Council, Alderman and leader of the local Liberal party for many years.

In his early years he seems to have been particularly interested in entomology and botany. No entomological collections seem to have survived but his botanical specimens were donated to the Yorkshire Museum, York by his son Eugene in 1923. In 1824 Bean started his geological collection which was sold to the British Museum in 1859 for £500. However his collection of shells remained in the family until Bean's last surviving son Eugene died in 1926 when they were bought by the Scarborough Philosophical and Archaeological Society. Because of lack of space in an already crowded museum, the contents of four of the seven cabinets purchased were merged into the others.

The collection is made up of Land, Freshwater and Marine species of mollusca collected on a world wide basis. It is again housed in seven cabinets as well as a large number of storage boxes and has at some time been amalgamated with the collections of J. Linton, Old Mill House, Normanby, Northallerton; William Gyngell of Scarborough and Mr. Laverack of Malton, North Yorkshire. There are also numbers of specimens presented by such collectors as Charles Oldham, John W. Tayler, Sir R. Nawson, Ferrussac, Dr.Turton and Captain and Mrs. Hartley.

The Britsh Land and Freshwater specimens are typical of most British collections of the day, and contain a number of interesting specimens. The most important is, perhaps, the specimen of sinistral Lymnaea peregra collected from a pond at Hackness, Scarborough. Other interesting specimens are the Psidium moitessierianum collected by Charles Oldham from Cheddington, Bucks; the decollated Lymnaea glabra from Lady Ediths Drive, Scarborough; Myxas glutinosa collected by M. C. Peck of Scarborough; the Vertigo pusilla from the wall near Ayton Castle, West Ayton North Yorkshire and a very interesting Anodonta cygnaea from the Deighton Grove fish pond at York collected by A. Smith of York. The collection does, however, have a large number of gaps and judging by the old records a number of the more controversial records have been removed sometime in the past years.

The Placostylus, a group of land mollusca from the Phillipines, are perhaps the most interesting group in the Tropical Land and Freshwater series. A number of specimens have printed labels with them suggesting that they were bought from a dealer, probably Sowerby and Fulton. Other interesting groups are the Cochlostyla and the collection of land mollusca from North America.

The bulk of the Tropical Marine Bivalves are of little interest being in general the larger and more common species found in most collections. There is however a large collection of specimens from Mazatlan on the west coast of Mexico. This is part of a very famous collection held at the British Museum. The collection was brought from Mazatlan by P. P. Carpenter and sold in sets to several museums and he acknowledged Bean's assistance in his preparation of the Reigen Catalogue of Mazatlan mollusca.

The Tropical Marine Gastropods are the typical collections of Cones, Cowries, Murex, Olives etc. The most interesting is a specimen of Cypraea aurantia, a fairly valuable shell.

The Freshwater Bivalves of North America may be of special interest as they have more information with regard to the rivers in which they were found than is usual. Also some of the original collecting grounds have long since been lost due to river pollution.

The British Marine Molluscs are perhaps the most important part of the collection. Almost all the British species are represented although there are some obvious gaps. A list of figured specimens is given below and other interesting species are Adula simpsoni from Shetland; a large number of sinistral and distorted specimens of Buccinum undatum from Blackpool and a sinistral Nucella lapillus

from Scarborough that was exhibited by W. Gyngell at the Jubilee Meeting of the British Conchological Society in 1926.

The collection was completely reorganised and brought up to date by Adrian Norris of Leeds City Museums in 1969 and is (quote) "perhaps the most interesting collection in Yorkshire".

Figured Specimens

1. Hanleya hanleyi (Bean 1844) Holotype

   A single specimen stuck on a card slip and labelled in Bean's hand "Chiton Hanleyi Bean. Scarboro. This specimen figd. in Hanley's Marine Conchology".

   Note: the reference is to British Marine Conchology by Charles Thorpe, 1844. The Systematic Index of pp. XVII-IX is stated to be by S. Hanley. Chiton Hanleyi is figure No. 57.

2. Chiton pictus Bean 1844 ?Syntypes

   In a circular glass-topped box (labelled Callochiton achatinus (Brown) is a small disk of thin blue card labelled 34641. 4. 5. 6 and bearing three chitons. Two are small, the central one about $\frac{1}{2}$" long. This agrees with Bean's statement (Thorpe's British Marine Conchology p. 264) that he had only taken three specimens and the dimensions quoted length $\frac{1}{2}$" breadth $\frac{1}{4}$" agree with those of the largest (central) specimen on the card.

   A synonym of Tonicella marmorea (Fab), Fide Jeffreys, British Conchology Vol. III, p. 227.

3. Beringius turtoni (Bean 1834) Holotype

   A fine live-taken specimen labelled Beringius, Dall (-Fusus) turtoni W. Bean, Scarborough. The label is not in Bean's hand as he always seems to have used Scarboro not Scarborough as on present label.

   Full reference is Bean W., 1834 Magazine of Natural History Vol 7 p. 493, fig. 61. Forbes and Hanley comment (History of British Mollusca, Vol. 3, p. 433) 'added to our fauna by Mr. Bean, who obtained it from deep water on the Doggerbank, off the Yorkshire coast'.

4. Nucella lapillus (L)

The famous sinistral specimen. A bandless white shell numbered on the lip 546. 41.1 with an old label in Bean's hand 'Purpura lagillus Sinistral Var. Found by Jessy Bean Scarboro'.

5. Cantharidus clelandi (Wood 1828)

Box of specimens and more in plastic bag with an old label in Bean's hand "Trochus millegranus, Ireland, Philippi. The large specimen Figd. in Hanley's Marine Conchology".

The shell figured probably came from J. D. Rose-Cleland of Bangor, County Down, Northern Ireland who first found the species in Britain but it is not now possible to identify the actual shell figured. The box of specimens has an old label (whose ?) with it "Trochus millegranus Oban Bay 25F."

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VERTEBRATE RECORDING SCHEMES AT SHEFFIELD MUSEUM

A common problem shared by a number of local biological records centres involves the accumulation and dissemination of information on vertebrates other than birds. Whilst many districts or counties are well endowed with enthusiastic botanists, ornithologists, and to some extent entomologists actively involved in fieldwork and recording projects, the number of field mammalogists, herpetologists and ichthylogists tends to be relatively low. Such a situation existed in the Sheffield area less than a decade ago, when any attempt to assess the status of our local mammals, reptiles, amphibians and fishes was based on scant and sometimes misguided information. However, owing to determined efforts by the staff at Sheffield City Museum, and members of the Sorby Natural History Society (S. N. H. S.) and their close working relationship, this situation has now been reversed.

In the hope that other B. C. G. members who are at the same stage now as we were ten years ago, may be encouraged to tackle these groups, I have outlined the methods used to gather and publish data, with particular reference to the relationship between the museum