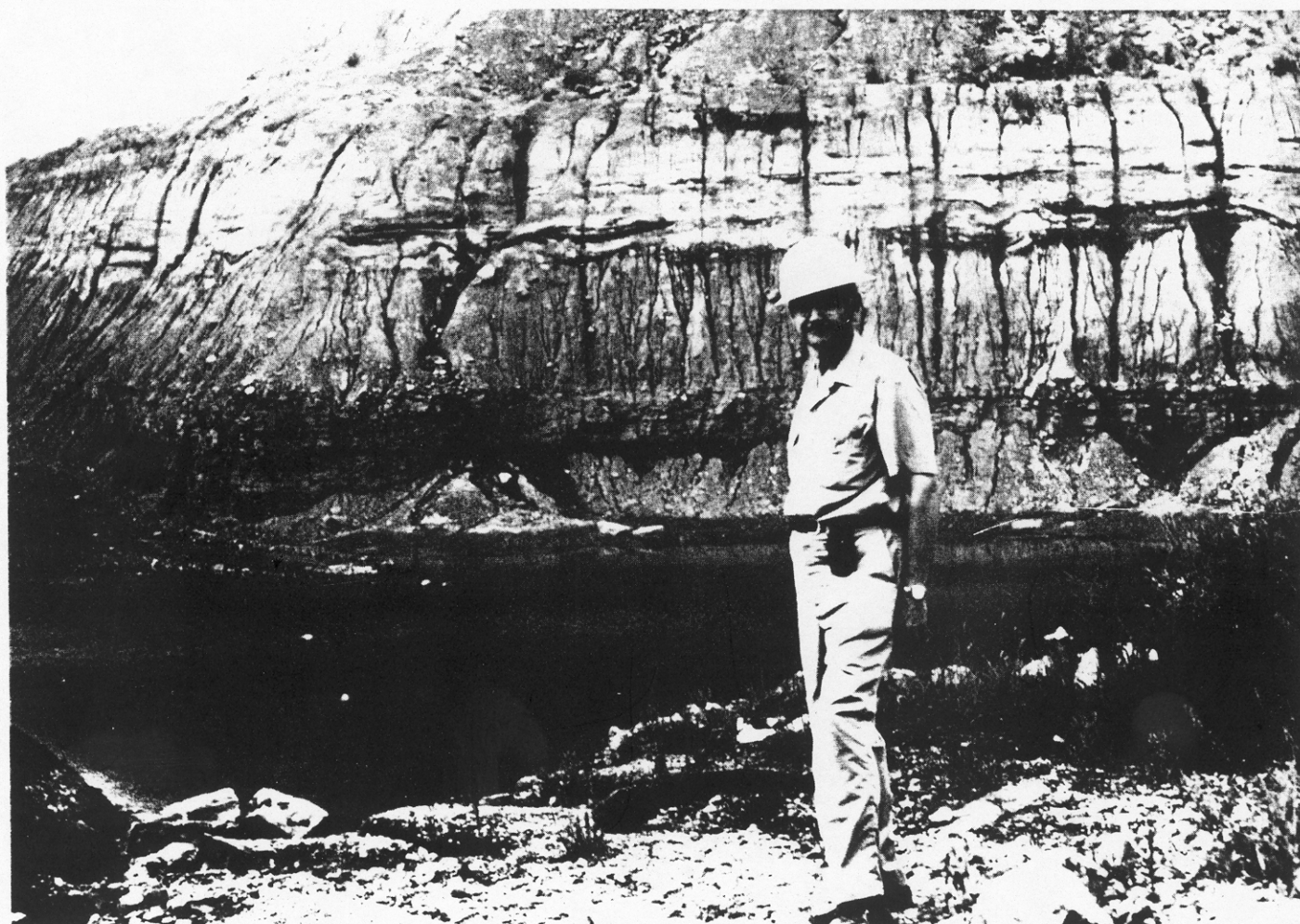


EARTH SCIENCES HISTORY

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GEORGE W. WHITE ISSUE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication	i
Tribute to George W. White <i>Albert V. Carozzi</i>	1
Some Eminent Newtonians and Providential Geophysics at the Turn of the Seventeenth Century <i>James E. Force</i>	4
Speculations About The Earth: The Role of Robert Hooke and Others in the 17th Century <i>Ellen T. Drake and Paul D. Komar</i>	11
Reaction of British Colonies in America to the 1755 Lisbon Earthquake: A Comparison to the European Response <i>Marguerite Carozzi</i>	17
Commentaries on the Huttonian Theory of the Earth from Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, 1805-1815 <i>Peter W. Bretsky</i>	28
Extracts from Agassiz's Lectures on Geology and Paleontology (1856-1861) <i>Ralph W. Dexter</i>	35
Time-Space Patterns: The Natural Laws of Geology <i>Ralph Rogers</i>	38
Heinrich Wettstein (1880), A Swiss Forerunner of Global Mobilism <i>Albert V. Carozzi</i>	41
Nineteenth Century Earthquake Investigations in California <i>Peter U. Rodda and Alan E. Leviton</i>	48
Geology and the Wheeler Survey <i>Peter L. Guth</i>	57
Walcott's Discovery of Middle Ordovician Vertebrates <i>Ellis L. Yochelson</i>	66
Where is Cope's Face? <i>T.D. Stewart</i>	76
Book Reviews	78
Report of Secretary for 1982	88
Report of Treasurer for 1982	88
Constitution	88
Announcements	89
Calendar of Events 1983	90

EARTH SCIENCES HISTORY
Journal of the History of the Earth Sciences Society

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DEDICATION

This issue of Earth Sciences History is dedicated to George White. Although he was not in a strict sense one of the founding fathers of the History of Earth Sciences Society, he certainly was its American grandfather. This is not to say that George is not an internationalist for he has promoted a love of history of natural history wherever he has travelled.

It seemed particularly appropriate that this enthusiasm which George generated in others, be somehow turned around to honor him. Thus the fledgling History of Earth Sciences Society suggested that their second issue might be dedicated to him, but the finances of this new group left it a bit in doubt when this second issue might take place. At that point the Alumni Office of the University of Illinois stepped in to assist. A mailing to alumni of the University of Illinois, Geology Department, of which George had been Head for many years, was sent out.

The concept was that a few of the former students might be willing to contribute a bit to partially defray the cost of this dedication issue. There were two miscalculations in this approach, both pleasant. First, the appeal for funds raised about four times as much as had been anticipated, so that virtually all the cost of printing this issue has been underwritten. Second, many persons not directly linked to the Geology Department at Urbana heard of the project. They contributed, stating that if there was to be a tribute to George they wanted to be included.

It is difficult to draw a common denominator among those who replied. Almost all responded within two weeks of being asked and most just placed a check in an envelope without even a note. It has been possible to identify two distinguished emeritus professors and two former state geologists among the contributors. However, perhaps the best summary of this drive was given by one contributor who wrote on his check "George is great!" The enthusiastic response that allowed the publication of this dedicatory issue of Earth Sciences History is appropriate. Without George White's long and energetic interest in the history of Earth sciences, it is unlikely that either the Society or this journal would have existed.

John Hower
Head, Geology Department
University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign



GEORGE W. WHITE

It seems impossible to add anything to the reputation George W. White already has. A former dean of this university said that George served as a guide, philosopher, and friend to most of us; that he was more than a respected colleague, but a resource, even an institution. George inspired and encouraged countless people in this country and abroad, even after his retirement, and perhaps even more than. A newspaper editor wrote: "If you want a lesson in intellectual exuberance, go to Room 419 in the Natural History Building." Anybody who has ever worked with him knows how difficult it is to match his energy and enthusiasm.

This remarkable man was born in North Lawrence, Ohio. He earned his bachelor's degree at Otterbein College, Westerville, Ohio, and his master's and doctor's degree at Ohio State University. After one year as Instructor at the University of Tennessee, he rose between 1926 and 1941 from Instructor to Department Head at the University of New Hampshire. His success was certainly partly due to Mildred Kissner whom he met and decided "that was it." They were married three days before Christmas in 1928. Between 1941 and 1947 George was Professor of Geology at Ohio State University. Then he decided to move to another state and become head of the Department of Geology at the University of Illinois.

George is famous in two fields. When he came to this university he was already well known in the field of glacial and groundwater geology. With his book "Geology of Holmes County, Ohio" (1949), he developed a longtime research project on glacial deposits of adjacent areas. In a pioneer manner, he and his coworkers applied systematically the basic principles of lithostratigraphy hitherto used only for the pre-Pleistocene record. Last September, after nearly fifty years of work, the Geological Survey of Ohio published Bulletin 68, a monograph and maps of fifteen northeastern Ohio counties. It was also in Ohio where George's interest in the history of geology was kindled by Dr. John W. Wells who shared with him his collection of early works. When George arrived at this university, Robert B. Downs, Dean of Library Administration, asked his cooperation in helping to build the geology section of the history of science collection. From then on George lived in two different worlds, in one as a glacial geologist, consultant, and head of the Geology Department, in the other as an historian-librarian in geology. He was successful in both. By the time he relinquished the headship in 1965, the faculty had grown from three to twenty-three and the department had produced 177 doctorates. Furthermore, through George's efforts, the geology library had grown to its present size and fame as being particularly rich in early publications and classics in geology. George's enthusiasm for the history of geology made him spend part of his first sabbatical leave in 1953/54 at the Princeton Library where he studied rare collections of early publications. He decided to embrace a whole new field in the history of geology, namely, the period before 1800 in North America. Consequently, he published numerous papers on early American geologists. His reputation in that field led to his participation at the meeting of the International Committee for the History of Geology at Yerevan (Russian Armenia) in 1967. There he gave a paper on early geological observations in America and was elected Vice President for History of Geology, v.2, no.1, 1983, pp. 1-3

North America. At home he became in 1970 chairman of the U.S. National Committee for the History of Geology. In 1975, he contributed to the organization of the History of Geology division of the Geological Society of America. George's energy in organizing meetings, symposia, and conferences was unlimited.

In the interest of the history of geology he persuaded publishers to reprint the classics of geology. He edited the 9 volume series of "Contributions to the History of Geology" published by Hafner Publishing Company. Then he was on the editorial board of Arno Press which published reprints of many more important works in early geology. Last but not least, as far as I am concerned, he found rare books that needed translation and editing. Indeed, George motivated my interest in the history of geology under the most unusual circumstances when in 1958 I was lying flat for several months, a victim of back troubles. He visited me one day and said: "Here is something to keep you busy and alleviate your pains." He handed me a book in German he had recently purchased. It was a copy of Werner's "On the external characters of minerals" (1774) bound with a blank sheet intercalated between each printed page. Every page and every blank sheet was covered by hand-written annotations in German Gothic. It turned out to be Werner's personal annotated copy that he had prepared, but never finished, for a second edition. George persuaded the University of Illinois Press to give me the opportunity to get the English translation of Werner's second edition in print. The best cure for back-ailments.

George and Mildred traveled a lot. Whether she liked it or not the greatest part of these travels were spent in the search of booksellers. For instance, in 1967 he visited sixty: in Amsterdam, Guernsey, London, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Munich, Stuttgart, Frankfurt, Brussels, Antwerp, Edinburgh, Geneva, Neuchâtel, and finally Milan, Florence, and Rome. When he visited Russia, he saw of course the library of the Academy of sciences of the USSR and the Leningrad State Library, to examine their collections of early books on geology. They would not sell I presume. Nevertheless, every bookseller in the world must have met George, as I learned in several places. For instance, the most famous bookseller in Neuchâtel, Mrs. Eugène Raymond, dealt mostly with early books in science and travels which crowded every available space of a three story patrician mansion in the old town. About twice a year she published an enticing catalogue of her holdings, illustrated with reproductions of title-pages or characteristic illustrations of the most spectacular books she offered for sale. However, when I visited her she always said: "All I have left is what Professor White has not purchased." As a matter of fact, not much was left. The reason is George's efficient buying techniques. At times he bought books before they were even listed in the catalogue, often he bought from galleys of catalogues, and always he ordered books by cable immediately upon receipt of the catalogue.

Last year George was the recipient of the Geological Society of America Award for distinguished contributions to the history of geology at its 93d Annual Meeting at New Orleans October 17. He is the first to receive this award which in the future will be given on an annual basis. He is an honorary life

member of the Society for the Bibliography of Natural History in London and holds honorary degrees in Science from Otterbein College, the University of New Hampshire, and Bowling Green State University in Ohio. In 1980 he gave the Annual History of Science George Sarton Memorial lecture at the Annual Meeting of the A.A.A.S. on History of very early American Geology. As you all know, I could go on with listing honors received by George. The second issue of this publication is another one. George was in favor of this new Society as he had supported with rare enthusiasm any studies in the history of geology. Thanks George.

Albert V. Carozzi
President-elect of HESS

PUBLICATIONS ON THE HISTORY OF GEOLOGY

by George W. White

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- 1951, Lewis Evans' contributions to early American geology-1743-1755: Ill. Acad. Sci. Trans., v. 44, p. 152-158.
- 1952, Thomas Hariot's observations on American geology in 1588: Trans. Ill. Acad. Sci., v. 44, p. 115-120.
- 1953, Early American Geology: Sci. Monthly, v. 76, p. 134-141.
- 1953, Geological observations of Captain John Smith in 1607-1614: Trans. Ill. Acad. Sci., v. 46, p. 124-132.
- 1956, Editor, Illustrations of the Huttonian theory of the Earth by John Playfair. Urbana, Univ. of Ill. Press, 528 p. (facsimile of 1802 edition with editorial introduction).
- 1956, Lewis Evans (1700-1756), a scientist in Colonial America: Nature, v. 177, p. 1055-1056.
- 1956, John Josselyn's geological observations in 1672-1674: Ill. State Acad. Sci. Trans., v. 48, p. 173-182.
- 1958, (with J. W. Wells), Biographies of geologists: Ohio Jour. Sci., v. 58, p. 285-298.
- 1962, (with B. Slanker), Early geology in the Mississippi Valley--an exhibition of selected works held in the University of Illinois Library at Urbana, Nov. 1962. Urbana, Univ. of Ill. Library, 26 p.
- 1963, Reference books for history of geology: Stechert-Hafner Book News, v. 18, p. 29-30.
- 1965, Early discoverers XIX: Early description and explanation of kettle holes, Charles Whittlesey 1808-1886: J. Glaciology, v. 5, p. 119-122.
- 1966, Engineering geology in construction of the National Road--1825: Engineering Geologist, v. 1, p. 11-14.
- 1966, Dr. Stuckey does write about geologists: J. Geol. Educ., v. 14, p. 136-137.
- 1967, Armenian meeting on history of geology: Geotimes, v. 12, p. 16-17.
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- 1967, (With T. P. Schlunz, R. M. Sutton) An annotated bibliography of observations on Illinois water resources 1673-1850: U. of Illinois Water Resources Center Research Report, v. 12, 77 p.
- 1968, John Keill's view of the hydrologic cycle, 1698: Water resources research, Am. Geophysical Union, v. 4, p. 1371-1374.
- 1968, Editor, The American Mineralogical Journal, conducted by Archibald Bruce, M.D., introduction by John C. Greene. Contributions to the history of geology, v. 1, New York, Hafner Pub. Co., Inc., 270 p. (facsimile of 1814 edition, with editorial foreword).
- 1968, Editor, A view of the soil and climate of the United States of America, by C. F. Volney (translated with occasional remarks by C. B. Brown). Contributions to the history of geology, v. 2, New York, Hafner Pub. Co., Inc., 446 p. (facsimile of 1804 edition, with editorial foreword).
- 1968, Editor, The Prodomus of Nicolaus Steno's dissertation concerning a solid body enclosed by process of nature within a solid (an English version with an introduction and explanatory notes by John Garrett Winter, with a foreword by William H. Hobbs). Contributions to the history of geology, v. 4, New York, Hafner Publ. Co., Inc., 114 p. (facsimile of 1916 edition with editorial foreword).
- 1969, Editor, The Monthly American Journal of Geology and Natural Science, conducted by G. W. Featherstonhaugh. Contributions to the history of geology, v. 3, New York, Hafner Publ. Co., Inc., 576 p. (facsimile of 1831-1832 edition, with editorial foreword).
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- 1970, Announcement of glaciation in Scotland, William Buckland (1784-1856), Early Discoverers, XXVII: J. Glaciology, v. 9, p. 143-145.
- 1970, Editor, James Hutton's System of the earth, 1785; Theory of the Earth, 1788; Observations on granite, 1794; together with Playfair's Biography of Hutton. Contributions to the history of geology, v. 5, Darien, Conn., Hafner Publ. Co., 203 p. (facsimile of originals, with editorial foreword).
- 1970, Editor, Travels through the Western Country in the summer of 1816, by David Thomas. Contributions to the history of geology, v. 6, Darien, Conn., Hafner Pub. Co., 338 p. (facsimile of 1819 edition, with editorial foreword).
- 1970, Early American publications on the history of geology, 1803-1835. History of Geology Papers, Constituent Assembly of Internatl. Comm. on History of Geology, Acad. of Sci. of the Armenian SSR, Yerevan, 1967, p. 114-129 (in Russian, with English summary).
- 1970, William Maclure was a Uniformitarian and not a real Wernerian: J. Geol. Educ., v. 18, p. 127-128.
- 1971, Biography of Lewis Evans (1700-1756): Dictionary Scientific Biography, New York, Chas. Scribner's Sons, v. 4, p. 492-493.
- 1972, Stratigraphic reminiscences - Guest Editorial: New York Glaciogram, v. 7, p. 1-9.
- 1972, Editor, An essay about the origin and virtues of gems, by Robert Boyle, with an introduction by A. F. Hagner. Contributions to the history of geology, v. 7, New York, Hafner Publ. Co., 185 p. (facsimile of 1672 edition, with editorial foreword).

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- 1974, Biography of William Maclure (1763-1840): *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, New York, Chas. Scribner's Sons, v. 8, p. 615-617.
- 1974, Biography of Jedidiah Morse (1761-1826): *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, New York, Chas. Scribner's Sons, v. 9, p. 537-538.
- 1974, Biography of David Dale Owen (1807-1860): *Dictionary of Scientific Biography*, New York, Chas. Scribner's Sons, v. 10, p. 257-259.
- 1976, Glacial Geology in 1874--the end of an era: *Ohio Journal of Science*, v. 76, p. 51-56.
- 1976, (With C. J. Schneer) *Lyell's Life and Works* reviewed: *Geotimes*, (21 March 76), p. 16-17.
- 1976, Editor, *The Wernerian Theory of the Neptunian origin of rocks*, by Robert Jameson, introduction by Jessie M. Sweet. Contributions to the history of geology, v. 2, New York, Hafner Publ. Co., Inc. 368 p. (facsimile of 1808 edition, with editorial foreword).
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