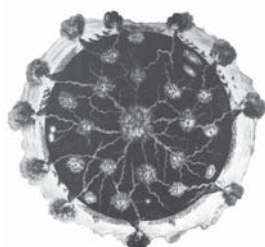
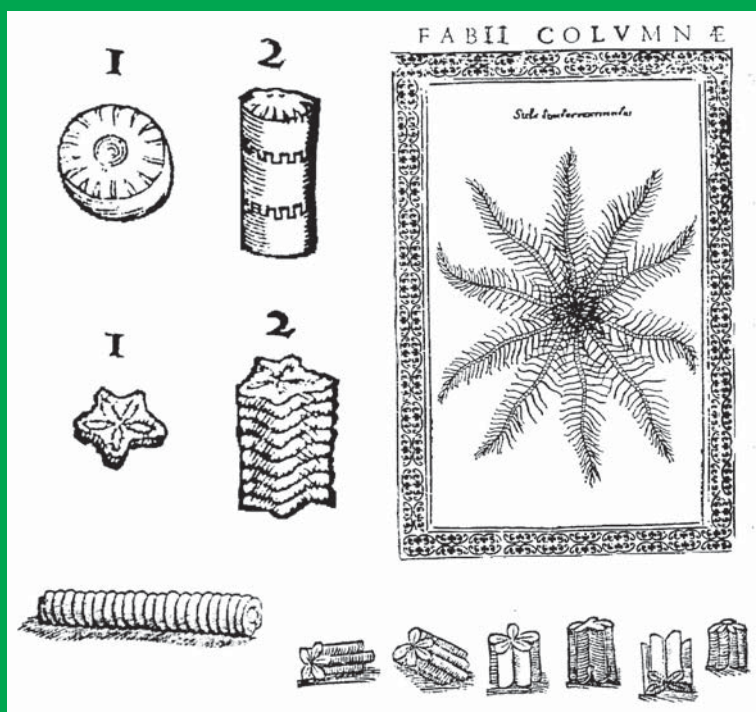


EARTH SCIENCES HISTORY

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EDITORIAL

CRINOIDS, CHRONOLOGY, METEORITES AND STABILITY

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Continuity and evolution

This issue of *Earth Sciences History* sees a number of changes, some obvious some not so. After six years at the tiller Greg Good has stood down as Editor, and I have taken over—I look forward to serving the Society, and hope that I can continue the excellent tradition established by my predecessors, Gerry Friedman, Mott Greene, and Greg. You will all agree that Greg has done a super job in guiding the journal during his tenure and increasing the scope of its contributions. It is a truly international journal, and I want to build on his efforts to make it the premier journal for the historian of earth sciences.

The first immediate and noticeable change is to the cover, where it now comes in a split green/white colour, and carries a circular logo. The colour aims to enhance the visual impact of the journal when seen on a library shelf, and I hope that this will encourage readers to take it down and browse through its pages. The logo, which is from Athanasius Kircher's view of the subterranean fires of the Earth, taken from his *Mundus Subterraneus* published in 1678, was adopted at a meeting of the Council members present at the Geological Society of America meeting in Denver in November 2005. It is a useful device in that it is instantly recognisable to earth science historians, unusual enough for non-historians to wonder about it, and its use on the title page of articles acts as a visual identity tag to the journal from where they came—this is important when papers are being distributed as off-prints or as a pdf version.

You will have noticed that the dimensions of the journal are slightly different from those of recent years – 24/1 is approximately 10 mm shorter. This is because the journal is now being printed in Ireland, and the use of stock US paper sizes as against Imperial sizes would have added approximately \$700 to the cost of the print run. I think the loss of 1 cm for a saving of \$700 is something I can accept. Inside there is no appreciable loss of actual print area.

For some time the Committee of HESS has been worried about the rising costs of producing *Earth Sciences History*, and so in order to make significant savings we have moved to new typesetters and printers. The typesetting of this issue has been done 'in-house' by me, and this has some advantages in that typesetting is now effectively free and the changes made at proof stage which hitherto were costly, have now been eliminated. This scheme will see a quicker turn-around time at proof stage as I can generate proofs as pdf versions which are e-mailed those authors with on-line connections for correction. This procedure was begun with this issue where most authors corrected the proofs electronically and returned them to me via e-mail within a day or so.

The journal is now being printed by Colour Books of Dublin, the largest printer of books and academic journals in Ireland, with whom I have had a twelve-year association: they print my other editorial responsibility *The Geological Curator*. I am confident that with these changes quality will not be compromised. We are most grateful to Allen Press for all their work with the journal since its inception.

Reading through the articles and book reviews you will see that stylistically nothing has altered. References, citations, footnotes, archival listings remain as they were previously, and the Guidelines for Contributors established by Greg will not be changed. This gives continuity to the journal that is important to maintain.

Crinoids, meteorites and geophysical observatories

This issue contains seven articles, an essay review, some book reviews and Gerry Friedman's comprehensive listing of recent 'Interesting Publications'. John Fuller shows that contrary to popular belief Archbishop James Ussher was not responsible for the insertion of the marginal date of Creation found in editions of the Authorised Bible printed after 1711. Debra Lindsay unravels the scientific debate that focussed on the enigmatic fossil plant from the Devonian of Canada; a conflict that pitted the geologist J.W. Dawson against the botanist William Carruthers in the 1870s. Julie Newell sheds light on the publication history of Gerard Troost's manuscript monograph on fossil crinoids from Tennessee. Continuing with the echinoderm theme, William Ausich and Gary Lane provide an illuminating paper on early sixteenth century literature pertaining to crinoids. Howard Plotkin pieces together the story behind the Rochester geological dealer Henry A. Ward's acquisition of the Santa Rosa Meteorite from Columbia. This has a similar resonance to another, but recent, episode concerning a meteorite from South America. Douglas Mawson was one of the giants of polar exploration and an Australian geologist of major significance. Jim Jago. Mark Pharaoh and Clive Wilson-Roberts discuss Mawson's first geological expedition, which he undertook to the New Hebrides in 1903 when he was only twenty years old. The last paper concerns the development of geomagnetic laboratories in Portugal, in which Isabel Malaquias, Emília Vaz Gomes and Décio Martins concentrate on the institutions at Lisbon and Coimbra.

Endnote – a plea

We, the readers and membership of HESS, *may* think it that *Earth Sciences History* is the premier journal but is it the first journal that potential authors of suitable articles think of when considering where to publish? We have to strive to ensure that it is, and so I appeal to you all to talk to your colleagues and friends about the journal, and encourage or coerce them to join the Society (you will find a Membership form on page 151 of this issue). In these days of financial belt-tightening many libraries are cutting back on their holdings—nevertheless seek out your Institution's librarian and ask them to take out a subscription. It is imperative that the journal ends up on shelves in many libraries where it will be consulted for decades to come. Please buy any back issues that you may be lacking (see order form on page 152), and ask your institution to do likewise.