

EARTH SCIENCES HISTORY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial	
Mott T. Greene	1
Letter to the Editor	2
Suggestions for Contributors to Earth Sciences History	3
Articles	
The Decline of the Use of “Lower Silurian” and the Rise of “Ordovician in U.S. Geologic Literature	
Ellis L. Yochelson	4
On the History of Science. Professor N. A. Koudryavtsev (1893–1971) and the Development of the Theory of Origin of Oil and Gas	
P. N. Kropotkin† Introduction by Thomas Gold	13
Falsifying Priority of Species Names: A Fraud of 1892	
Malcolm P. Weiss	21
Notes	
Mary Buckland (née Morland) 1797–1857	
Martina Kölbl-Ebert	33
Charlotte Murchison (née Hugonin) 1788–1869	
Martina Kölbl-Ebert	39
G. G. Simpson as Sam Magruder: Concession to the Ineluctable	
Léo F. Laporte	44
Book Reviews	
Edited by Gretchen Luepke	50
Interesting Publications	
Edited by Gerald M. Friedman	66
Treasurer’s Report for 1996 by Dorothy Sack	72
History of Earth Sciences Society Officers—1997	
Ronald Rainger	73
Announcements	74

THE DECLINE OF THE USE OF “LOWER SILURIAN” AND THE RISE OF “ORDOVICIAN” IN U.S. GEOLOGIC LITERATURE

ELLIS L. YOCHELSON

United States Geological Survey (Emeritus) and Department of Paleobiology
National Museum of Natural History, (Research Associate)
Washington, DC 20560

ABSTRACT

During the 1880s and 1890s, the term “Lower Silurian” was in common use in United States geologic literature, whereas use of “Ordovician” was exceedingly rare. The few comments regarding Ordovician which appeared were mostly based on concepts of priority and advocated usage of Lower Silurian. J. D. Dana, author of the most significant textbook of the time, consistently opposed adoption of the term. However, by the early 1900s, Ordovician was widely used in the literature and in 1903 it was adopted for use by the U.S. Geological Survey. There is no record of public discussion of the move away from Lower Silurian. C. D. Walcott, employed by the USGS throughout this interval, may have played a pivotal, but private, role in this change of stratigraphic nomenclature.

ON THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE

PROFESSOR N. A. KOUDRYAVTSEV (1893-1971) AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE THEORY OF ORIGIN OF OIL AND GAS

BY P. N. KROPOTKIN'

ABSTRACT

At a symposium on the inorganic origin of oil and gas, organized by the Moscow Society for Nature Research, a comprehensive discussion was held on the contribution of Nikolai Alexandrovich Koudryavtsev towards the solution of this problem. In three fundamental works published between 1959 and 1973, based on the most recent data in this field, he had convincingly proved the theory of the inorganic origin of oil and gas.

FALSIFYING PRIORITY OF SPECIES NAMES: A FRAUD OF 1892

MALCOLM P. WEISS

Department of Geological Sciences, Preston Cloud Research Laboratory,
University of California, Santa Barbara, CA 93106

ABSTRACT

In 1891-92, N. H. Winchell and Charles Schuchert were preparing a chapter on Minnesota brachiopods for the Winchell Survey's Final Report on the geology of Minnesota. At the same time, C. W. Hall's Masters degree candidate, E. W. Sardeson, was finishing his thesis, which included some new names of brachiopods. Sardeson had told Schuchert that he would not publish first, but Hall required him to attempt to do so because some of Sardeson's species were from biozones described in a forthcoming paper of which Hall was senior author.

In order to beat Sardeson, Winchell had E. O. Ulrich prepare a short article on new brachiopod names for *The American Geologist*. A dummy preprint, dated 1 April 1892, was given to Sardeson on that date by Ulrich, who said that they had been mailed out. The article suppressed six of Sardeson's brachiopod names. At Hall's instigation, Sardeson's publication was mailed out on 6 April. Although the 1 April preprint had not been mailed out, a “corrected” preprint of the same, dated 21 April, was.

Sardeson's six species names are therefore still valid, although Winchell's trickery quickly prevailed in the literature. Hall used Sardeson to try to confound Winchell, whom he disliked greatly, but with Ulrich's help Winchell won out anyway.

MARY BUCKLAND (NÉE MORLAND) 1797-1857

MARTINA KOLBL-EBERT
Geologische Staatssammlung
Luisenstr. 37
80333 München
Germany

“His prose, corrected by his wife Mary Morland, was very fine indeed, and probably superior to that of any of his colleagues.”

Rupke on William Buckland and his wife'

CHARLOTTE MURCHISON (N&E HUGONIN) 1788-1869

MARTINA KOLBL-EBERT
Geologische Staatssammlung
Luisenstr. 37
80333 München
Germany

‘I . . she had studied science, especially geology and it was chiefly owing to her example that her husband turned his mind to those pursuits in which he afterwards obtained such distinction.’

Mary Somerville on Charlotte Murchison'

G. G. SIMPSON AS SAM MAGRUDER: CONCESSION TO THE INELUCTABLE

Léo F. LAPORTE
Crown College
University of California
Santa Cruz, CA 95064

“He did, in fact, leave a communication on the wild chance that it might come to other human eyes. It did so, but not until any return communication with him was out of the question.”

ABSTRACT

In a posthumously published work of science fiction (*The Dechronization of Sam Magruder*, St. Martin's Press, 1996) the American paleontologist George G. Simpson (1902-1984) tells the story of Sam Magruder, a “chronologist” living in 2162 A.D, who was experimenting on the “quantum theory of time-motion” when he suffers a “time-slip” that puts him back in the Late Cretaceous of New Mexico. Helplessly lost in time and with no hope of returning to the present, Magruder ekes out a primitive existence for some years until a fatal accident befalls him. Before his death Magruder manages to chisel out his experience and philosophy of life on eight rock slabs that are recovered many millions of years later, and so his story becomes known and discussed by several Everyman characters.*

Simpson spins a reasonably engaging tale, but its main interest is the degree to which Magruder's philosophy of life may reflect Simpson's own feelings toward the end of his life. Always more comfortable in expressing his views in writing than in speaking, Simpson appears to use this work of science fiction to reveal his own, mostly melancholy, views about life's meaning and purpose, the importance of adapting to the here-and-now, and how historical contingency controls subsequent outcomes. Is Simpson speaking for himself when Magruder declares “My real purpose in engraving these slabs is a search for comprehension I am exploring my own nature”?