

## RETIRING EDITOR'S REPORT

This report is at once a first and a last - the first that will be published in the "Mercian Geologist", following a recent Council decision, and the last that will be produced by myself as Editor. Since I have been responsible for all but one of the issues to date (one being produced by Dr. W.A. Cummins during my absence in Oklahoma), it seems appropriate to briefly review, in this report, what we have attempted and what we have achieved with our journal.

Our principal policy has been to attempt to cater for the interests of all members, by presenting articles or features of professional standard in terms of content, but written and presented lucidly, so that the amateur geologist with only a fair knowledge of his subject can read and comprehend them. It was also, however, visualised from the outset that the "Mercian Geologist" should become the Society's main product and publicity vehicle. At the time that the East Midlands Geological Society was formed, the Midlands was in some ways a geologically neglected area; it was hoped that the existence of a journal designed to present papers on Midlands geology might not only result in the publication of research already done, but also be a stimulus for new research.

The contents have been as follows:

- i) Presidential Addresses and Foundation Lectures.
- ii) Original Papers on aspects of the geology of the Midlands as a whole, here visualised as extending from the North Sea to the Welsh border, with a southern boundary north of the Thames and a northern boundary in south Lancashire and south Yorkshire.
- iii) Review Papers on geological topics considered of potential interest to members.
- iv) Editorials feature in some early numbers and were mostly designed as a means of acknowledgement of services rendered by members and others in the preparation of the journal. Such acknowledgement will henceforward be made in the "Editor's Annual Report."
- v) Reports on Field Excursions. These are included from three viewpoints:-
  - a) As a record of the activities of the Society.
  - b) As a service to participating members, who may wish for a record of the meeting and might find it helpful in specimen labelling, etc.
  - c) As a service to non-participating members, in that they provide itineraries for private or group excursions.These have proved, in fact, to be an extremely popular feature of the journal.
- vi) Reviews of geological works (books and journals) devoted to the Midlands or of general interest to members. Critical, essay-type reviews have been generally featured, in the view that these are likely to be more informative and interesting than mere book-notices.

- vii) Secretary's Report
- viii) Correspondence is, in principal, acceptable for publication, provided it is considered suitable in content (*i.e.* informative or critical, but not abusive!) In practice only one letter for publication has ever been received!
- ix) Bibliographies of aspects of Midlands geology.
- x) Obituaries.
- xi) A Council List for the information of members.

An analysis of the contents of past issues is presented below:-

ANALYSIS OF CONTENTS OF "THE MERCIAN GEOLOGIST"

(up to and including Vol. 3 no. 3)

Original papers (Including Presidential Addresses and Foundation Lectures)	..	73	%
"Bibliography of Peak District Geology"	.. .. .	10	%
Excursion Reports	.. .. .	10	%
Book Reviews	.. .. .	3	%
Other (Secretary's Reports, Editorials, Obituaries etc.)	.. .. .	4	%

Analysis of Original Papers

Stratigraphically :	Carboniferous	.. .. .	34	%
	Quaternary	.. .. .	28	%
	Permo-Triassic	.. .. .	19	%
	Jurassic	.. .. .	13	%
	Other Systems	.. .. .	6	%
Geographically:	Derbyshire	.. .. .	28	%
	Nottinghamshire	.. .. .	26	%
	Leicestershire	.. .. .	11.5	%
	Cheshire	.. .. .	11.5	%
	Staffordshire	.. .. .	6.5	%
	Lincolnshire	.. .. .	6.5	%
Other Counties	.. .. .	10	%	
By subject matter :	Stratigraphy	.. .. .	21.5	%
	Palaeontology	.. .. .	20	%
	Sedimentology	.. .. .	20	%
	Mineralisation, economic geology etc.	.. .. .	14	%
	Historical, Societies and Museums	.. .. .	11.5	%
	Geomorphology	.. .. .	6	%
	Other matters	.. .. .	6	%

*Continued*

By authors :	T.D. Ford .. .. .	7 papers
	W.A.S. Sarjeant .. .. .	5½ "
	A.J. Rundle .. .. .	4½ "
	F.M. Taylor .. .. .	4½ "
	W.A. Cummins .. .. .	3½ "
	R.E. Elliott .. .. .	3 "
	P.G. Morris .. .. .	3 "
	H.E. Sadler .. .. .	3 "
	D.A.E. Spalding .. .. .	3 "
	P.C. Stevenson .. .. .	3 "
	33 other authors .. .. .	Less than 3 papers each

Total number of papers 74

Contributed by Nottingham University, Geology Department 21½

^ ^ ^ ^ ^ ^ ^ ^ ^ ^

I think we can fairly say that the "Mercian Geologist" has succeeded in contributing significantly to the knowledge of Midlands Geology. It is also interesting to note that, though members of the Nottingham University Geology Department have done their share in supplying papers for the journal, the greater number of contributions have come from outside contributors, with amateur geologists playing a prominent role.

I believe we can also say with confidence that the journal is both a valuable publicity vehicle for the Society and an effective means of disseminating information. 800 complete copies of each issue plus a variable (and sometimes large) number of offprints of individual articles, are now produced: copies circulate to 523 countries. Complete runs are in increasing demand and stocks of back numbers are dwindling fast.

Equally, I believe that the existence of this journal has provided a very real stimulus to research on East Midlands geology, especially by amateurs. A paper describing work undertaken on a section in the little-studied Rhaetic Beds of Nottinghamshire, published in the latest "Mercian Geologist", is the product of such a project; and there have been at least a dozen other works published in previous issues which would certainly not have been produced, had not this Society and its journal provided the impulse for their preparation.

The format adopted has been generally considered satisfactory. Popular features have been the changing cover and the abundance of illustration: the quality of the plates was initially rather variable, but this has improved considerably of late, and standard of reproduction of text-figures and maps has been consistently high. The number of pages (between 95 and 105, in general) and of plates (usually 8-10 per issue) has been consistently substantial: and, we have consistently produced two issues per calendar year since the inception of the journal. Production costs have been relatively modest, because of the method of reproduction adopted; full printing, though tempting, would greatly increase costs and seems hard to justify.

The earlier issues were professionally collated; but, for many issues now, the collation has been done by members under the guidance of Dr. Frank Taylor, who has in so many ways rendered tremendous services to this Society. Many members have helped, but perhaps Mrs. Morrow and Mr. John Travis merit especial mention. Also deserving of mention are those

members and non-members, who have, anonymously and unrewarded, served as referees and thus helped to enhance the quality of the contents. Proof-reading has long been a shared burden, with many members helping: but, in the last while, my wife has done much in this direction. Mrs. Morrow has produced the indexes for the completed volumes and has "ghost-written" excursion reports on two occasions. The help of Mrs. Brewster of Nottingham University's Printing and Photographic Unit, has been so great in the preparation of manuscripts and in determining detailed layout of pages that this process has come to be known as "brewsterising," thus adding a new verb to the geological vocabulary! Finally, I must acknowledge the consistent support afforded to the Society in so many ways, from permitting use of rooms to finding financial backing, by Lord Energlyn of Caerphilly.

I believe the journal can be said to be in an extremely healthy state as I pass on its running to my successor: and I wish it enhanced vigour in the future.

William A.S. Sarjeant.