

FIELD MEETING IN SHROPSHIRE

Leader: I.D. Sutton.

Sunday, 3 June 1973

The excursion here reported (by the leader) was the second East Midlands Geological Society excursion to Shropshire. Previously a week-end excursion took place in May 1969. [Sutton and Sarjeant 1970].

The journey to Shropshire was one of sunshine and showers but approaching Much Wenlock the skies cleared and the day promised to be kind to the party. The main purpose of this visit was to examine the Upper Ordovician and Silurian fossiliferous shelf facies in the area from the Wrekin to south of Church Stretton.

The first stop was made at Shadwell Quarry (SJ 626007) just outside Much Wenlock. This quarry was visited on the previous excursion but since then a great deal of quarrying has taken place. A wide variety of fossils were obtained including the tabulate corals *Favosites* sps, *Heliolites* sps, *Halysites* sps, *Thecia swinderniana*; the rugose corals *Kodonophyllum* sp, *Phaulactis* sp, *Acervularia* sp, the brachiopods, *Atrypa reticularis*, *Camarotoechia nucula*, *Leptaena rhomboidalis*, *Rhipidomella* sp. and *Plectodonta* sp. In addition stromatoporoids, gastropods, bryozoans and crinoids were also abundant. The lithological variation of the limestone was shown very well in the quarry faces with thin bedded argillaceous limestones, massive bedded purer limestones and also the small reef structures known locally in Shropshire as "Ballstones".

After lunch in Much Wenlock the party took the Ludlow road out of Much Wenlock crossing over the Aymestry Limestone which could be seen well separated from the Wenlock Limestone. In Corve Dale are a large number of exposures in the Upper Ludlow and two were visited by the party.

The first was a small quarry behind the school at Brockton (SO 578939) where the typical brachiopod fauna of *Camarotoechia nucula* and *Protochonetes ludloviensis* was well displayed with additional lingulids and orthoceratid nautiloid fragments. These fossils were found in a lithology of siltstones with coarser sandstone bands and where the brachiopods were abundant they were responsible for the development of thin limestone bands.

Further along the Ludlow Road a second exposure of the Upper Ludlovian near Broadstone Farm (SO 543898) was looked at quickly. This was a small roadside exposure which exhibited a very similar fauna to that at Brockton.

From here the party travelled to Craven Arms and then along the main A49 road northwards towards Church Stretton where two exposures in the Upper Ordovician (Caradocian) sequence were visited. The first was in a small roadside cutting near to Marshbrook (SO 442898). Here the Cheney Longville Flags yielded typical Upper Ordovician trilobites, brachiopods, crinoids and tentaculites.

The Harnage Shales are exposed on the south side of Ragleth Hill SO 446915) resting uncomfortably on the Pre-Cambrian. The fauna in the shales was rather sparse but the nature of the relationship with the underlying rocks and structures within the shales themselves provoked some discussion.

The ensuing journey from Ragleth Hill to Church Stretton and then to Much Wenlock took us through some delightful country. Initially with the Longmynd to the west and the volcanic hills of Caer Caradoc and its neighbours on our east, and then the journey along Wenlock Edge was in conditions suitable to show us the full glory of the limestone escarpment and the relationship of the topography to the south easterly dipping Silurian Strata.

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pp. 249-250.

The last stop of the day, after negotiating many diversions due to road works was made at Maddock's Hill Quarry on the Wrekin (SJ 645087) where an intrusion of camptonite into the Tremadocian Shineton Shales can be seen. Time was rapidly running out and in the limited amount available members were able to collect specimens of *Dictyonema* sp. from the shales together with one complete but unidentified trilobite, and quickly look at the intrusion.

The return journey to Nottingham was uneventful and everyone returned dry and refreshed at least by the Salopian air.

On a one day excursion of this nature a considerable amount of time is taken in travelling and really to make the trip worthwhile and allow suitable time to be spent at the various exposures an earlier start would be a great advantage.

Reference

SUTTON, I.D., and
SARJEANT, W.A.S.

Week-end excursion to Shropshire. *Mercian Geol.*
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