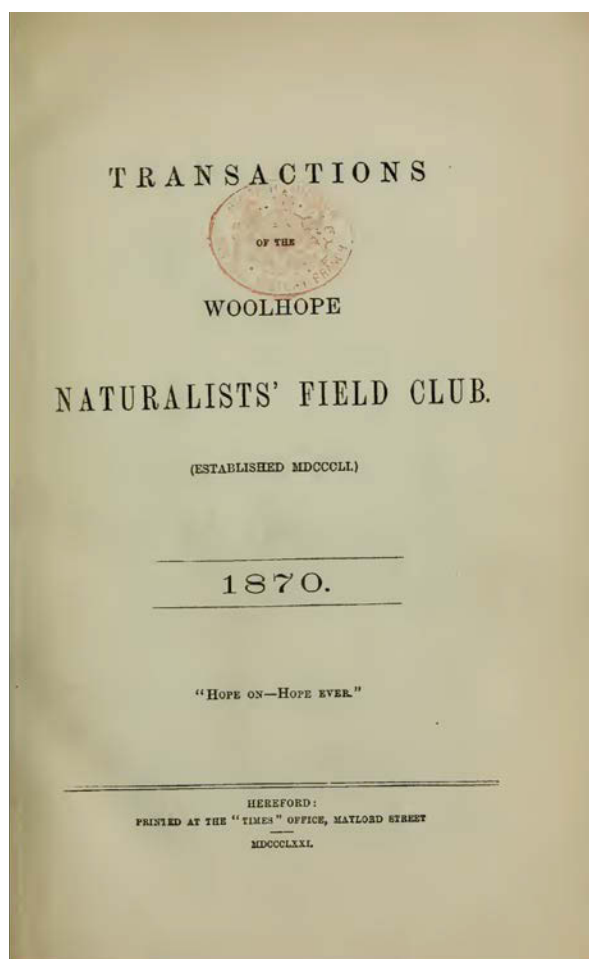


Item 5.4020

Anon. (1870). **The Longmynd Hills**

Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club. Acks. William Marler 20160424



The Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club.

THE LONGMYND HILLS.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 19, 1870.

A friendly meeting of the Woolhope and Caradoc Field Clubs took place on Friday last in the beautiful valley of Church Stretton. A more interesting trysting place could scarcely be found. The narrow valley itself is rich and fertile, and the surrounding hills afford a fine field for botanical, geological, and archaeological research. On one side are those bold hills Ragleath, Lawley, and Caer Caradoc, whose lofty and precipitous sides are surmounted by entrenchments which tradition attributes to Caractacus; and on the other side the valley is closed in by the fine range of the Longmynd hills, which it was the object of the day to explore.

The members of the Caradoc Club met their visitors at the station, and under the guidance of George Cocking, Esq., the route was taken from the railway station over the line and along the ancient Watling-street-road leading to Wroxeter (Uriconium, the principal city of the Cornarvii) to Kenchester (Magna castra) near Hereford. The little cluster of "Strettons," or "Street-towns" derive their names from their proximity to this old Roman road. On the present occasion it was followed for about a mile and a half to Little Stretton in pleasant discourse on things in general, and science in particular, with stoppings here and there, now to admire the scenery; now to discuss the formation and contents of a gravel-bed exposed by a railway cutting; or again to listen to a few remarks by the Rev. J. D. La Touche on the general contour of the Longmynd hills as resulting from glacial action, in illustration of the paper he was about to read on their summit.

At Little Stretton a Wych Elm on the road attracted attention. It was a fine luxuriant tree, and at five feet from the ground it measured 14ft. 2in. in circumference.

was widely reflected, and immediately in the foreground the colour and shapes of the rocky shoulders of the hills, as receding in the distance they overlapped each other, completed a picture of mountain scenery that will not readily be forgotten by those who sat quietly by these murmuring streams to enjoy it.

A little diversion was now made by a few of the more scientific members to those beds of rock which are remarkable for preserving the traces of the *Arenicola* or Sand-worms, from that remote period of time when these hard rocks were soft sand. The traces are very abundant and there was no difficulty in procuring good specimens. Raindrop marks, too, are to be recognised by the faithful, and on one stone was the outline of what might seem to be a trilobite though it wasn't.

Leaving the paleontologists at work the members now began to ascend the mountain side, so steep, dry, and slippery, that they were only too glad to avail themselves of any portions of rock projecting through the surface, and willingly stopped from time to time to admire their purple colour, with a zeal for geological observation that anyway had its immediate reward in the restoration of breath and courage. By dint of perseverance the broad undulated service so characteristic of the top of the Longmynd range, "the table land" of Talford, was reached, and the "Pole"—a veritable pole—which marks the highest point, became visible. About half a mile of thick heather and whinberry bushes, knee deep, yet intervened, and by the time this was passed over, a higher appreciation was felt for the labours of the renowned Mr. Briggs on "his native heath." A lease of black game was flushed, and several brace of grouse were actually walked up from the heather, as they were enjoying their mid-day siesta. Hawks were observed too wheeling round high in the air, and Master La Touche caught sight of some ring ousels that breed in the dingles of the Longmynds.

The view from the Pole is very varied and extensive, but since on the present occasion, the distance was not very clear, we prefer to give a few hard facts presented by the Ordinance Survey.

The summit of the Longmynd itself is pronounced to be 1680 feet above sea level, and the principal hills seen from it, with their several heights, are as follows :—

FEET.		
Malvern	Worcestershire.....	1,395
Stowe Hill.....	Herefordshire	1,417
Cleeve Hill.....	Gloucestershire ...	1,134
May Hill.....	Ditto	973
Ashley Heath	Staffordshire.....	803
Axedge	Derbyshire	1,751
Mow Cop	Cheshire.....	1,091
Bardon Hill.....	Leicestershire	853
Cradle Mountain	Brecknockshire.	2,630
Brecon Beacons	Ditto	2,910
Radnor Forest.....	Radnorshire	2,166