

**A CHAPTER IN THE
HISTORY OF
METEORITES**

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A Chapter in the History of Meteorites by Walter Flight

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WALTER FLIGHT

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HISTORY OF METEORITES

BY THE LATE
WALTER FLIGHT, D.Sc. Lond., F.R.S.

WITH SEVEN PLATES AND SIX WOODCUTS.

[Reprinted from the GEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE with some additional Notes
by the Author.]

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H. Adlard. Sc.

VO VINU
ANSONIAO
Chladni's.

In Memoriam.

WALTER FLIGHT, D.Sc. (LOND.), F.R.S., F.G.S.

WALTER FLIGHT was the son of William P. Flight, of Winchester, in which city he was born on the 21st of January, 1841. He was sent, after a period of pupilage at home, to Queenwood College, Hampshire, in the days when George Edmondson was Head Master, and Tyndall and Debus were the teachers of science. Here he had the good fortune to attract the notice of Prof. Debus, who encouraged the youthful chemist, and in after years remained his constant friend.

From Queenwood Walter Flight went to the University of Halle, to pursue his scientific studies, and in the laboratory of Prof. Heintz he specially applied himself to the study of chemistry during the winter session of 1863-64.

In 1864 and 1865 he entered the University of Heidelberg, where, in the laboratories of the celebrated Professors Bunsen, Kopp, and Kirchhoff, he devoted himself earnestly to acquire that thorough knowledge of the various branches of theoretical and practical chemistry, and that marked facility for overcoming experimental difficulties, which characterize the practised and careful worker.

From Heidelberg Flight passed to the University of Berlin, where he remained until 1867, studying and working in Prof. Hofmann's laboratory, and for a time filling the office of his Secretary and Chemical Assistant.

Returning to England in 1867, he graduated D.Sc., in the University of London, and in the following year was appointed by the Senate to the office of Assistant-Examiner under Prof. Debus, F.R.S. (his former teacher at Queenwood).

On the 5th September, 1867, Dr. Flight was appointed an Assistant in the Mineralogical Department of the British Museum, where, under the direction of Professor Nevil Story Maskelyne, M.A., F.R.S., the Keeper of Mineralogy, he carried on a series of researches into the chemical composition of the mineral constituents of meteorites and the occluded gases they contained.

Many of the methods by which he carried out these investigations were originated by him in the course of his researches, and displayed in a remarkable degree his skill and ingenuity in chemical manipulation.

Shortly after this date he was appointed Examiner in Chemistry and Physics at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, and in 1876 Examiner to the Royal Military Academy, Cheltenham.

For several years Dr. Flight served on the "Luminous Meteors Committee" of the British Association, to which he gave much valuable assistance.

Between the years 1864 and 1883 he was author of numerous original papers; that relating to the Cranbourne, Rowton, and Middlesborough Meteorites appeared in the Philosophical Transactions: his researches were also referred to by Prof. Story Maskelyne in two papers on the mineral constituents of the Busti, Manegaum, and Breitenbach Meteorites, read before the Royal Society between 1870-71.

In January, 1875, he commenced to publish in the Geological Magazine a series of articles, entitled "A Chapter in the History of Meteorites," of which twelve appeared in that year; nine supplemental essays followed in 1882, and a final one in February, 1883. These articles form the substance of the present work, some slight additions only having been made by the author to the first part printed in 1875.

In 1880, Dr. Flight married Miss Kate Fell, daughter of Dr. Fell, of Ambleside.

He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society on June 7th, 1883.

In 1884 he was seized by illness which prostrated his mental powers and rendered it needful for him to resign his appointment in the British Museum in June, 1885; but notwithstanding all that medical skill or the affection of friends could devise, he succumbed on the 4th of November, 1885, leaving his widow and three young children to deplore his early loss.

Dr. Flight enjoyed the regard and esteem of a very large circle of scientific men, with many of whom he was on terms of intimate friendship. It is to these more especially that this little Book is dedicated as the last Memorial of a life full of promise, but all too early brought to an abrupt conclusion.

LIST OF PAPERS
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- Ueber Darstellung und Zusammensetzung des jodsäuren Kalks.—*Zeitschr. Gesammt. Naturwiss.* Halle, 1864.
- Ueber die thermoelectrische Spannung verschiedener Mineralien.—*Ann. Chem. Pharm.* Bd. 135, and *Phil. Mag.* vol. 30, 1865.
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- [With Prof. N. S. Maskelyne.] Mineralogical Notices: No. 1, On the Formation of Basic Cupric Sulphates. 2, Opal from Waddela Plain, Abyssinia. 3, Francolite from Cornwall. 4, Epidote and Serpentine from Iona. 5, Vivianite. 6, Cronstedtite. 7, Pholerite.—*Journ. Chem. Soc.* vol. ix. 1871.
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- [With Prof. N. S. Maskelyne.] Ueber die Destillationsmethode zur Bestimmung Kieseläure. Read before the *Naturforscherversammlung*, held at Wiesbaden, September, 1873.
- [With Prof. N. S. Maskelyne.] Ueber die Farbe der Diamanten. Read before the *Naturforscherversammlung*, held at Wiesbaden, September, 1873.
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- Two New Mineral Species, Evigtokite and Liskeardite.—*Journ. Chem. Soc.* vol. xliii. 1883.
- Examination of the Meteorite which fell on the 16th February, 1883, at Alfanello, in the district of Verolannova, in the province of Brescia, Italy.—*Proc. Roy. Soc.* vol. 35, 1883.
- [With Mr. George Murray.] Examination of Mr. A. Stephen Wilson's "Sclerotia" of *Phytophthora infestans*.—*Journ. of Botany*, 1883.

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