

**A POPULAR GUIDE TO THE
FREE MUSEUM
AND CORPORATION ART
GALLERY OF CARDIFF**

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A popular guide to the Free museum and corporation art gallery of Cardiff by J. Storrie

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J. STORRIE

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A POPULAR GUIDE
TO THE
FREE MUSEUM
AND
CORPORATION
ART GALLERY
OF CARDIFF,

BY THE CURATOR.

Printed by order of the Free Library Committee.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

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## PREFACE.

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It is desired that this Museum *should be* a place where examples of all that is valuable for the training of the mind, the eye, and the hand of man can be found, where it can be well and easily seen, quietly studied, and carefully preserved for the benefit of future generations.

2nd. A permanent place of safety for all local objects of antiquity, where they may be referred to at any time, and where proper safeguards may be made for their preservation.

Many objects of great interest are found from time to time which singly may be of no great importance, but when carefully collected and preserved may throw great light on the early history of our district, and of mankind generally. These, it is hoped, will be deposited as soon as found, and a permanent and exact record made of all the circumstances connected with their finding.

3rd. A complete collection of the indigenous plants of the district, the local vertebrate and invertebrate animals, especially such as are either useful to man or are injurious to his crops, property, etc.

This is a matter of great importance, as it will be found that very few people we meet in every-day life know anything about our commonest pests, and again and again great panic and loss is caused, simply from the ignorance generally prevailing about common things.

4th. A complete local collection of the record of the Rocks of the district, with the best specimens of all the remains of animal or vegetable life, as well as all minerals, crystallizations, concretions, and other substances of any kind whatever found in them.

5th. That the Art Gallery should contain as complete a series of Works of Art as possible, showing the methods resorted to by Artists of all ages to depict the scenes, events, and notabilities of their time, and a means of allowing Students facilities for the study and imitation of all that is valuable in those examples, without allowing them to degenerate into servile copyists.

J. STORRIE,  
*Curator.*



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## HISTORY OF THE MUSEUM.

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The earliest Collection exhibited to the public of Cardiff seems to have been that belonging to the Old Athenæum and Mechanics' Institute, which stood in High Street, on the site of the entrance to the High Street Arcade, and of which Dean Conybeare of Llandaff, the great geologist, and Whitlock H. Nicholl, Esq., were promoters. After a time, however, this Institution fell into difficulties and was broken up, and a number of Specimens were removed to the Glamorganshire and Cardiff Library and Scientific Institution (of which Lord James Stuart was president), next door to the Free, now National School in Crockherbtown, while a considerable number went a-missing altogether. In 1865 the Cardiff Naturalists' Society was instituted, one of the objects of which was to resuscitate the Museum, and Mr. Peter Price, J.P., the present Chairman of the Free Library Committee, in whose custody the Athenæum Specimens then were, handed them over for that purpose. The late Mr. William Adams, C.E., who was then president of the Naturalists' Society, and a number of other gentlemen, some of whom were members, and some non-members, gave contributions of Specimens, and a Room was set aside for Museum purposes by the free Library Committee. Subscriptions were collected by Mr. Adams and others, and a Mineral Collection was purchased from Robt. Etheridge, F.G.S., and a Collection of Stuffed Birds and Insects from Lord James Stuart.

In 1870 an Exhibition was held in the Drill Hall, Cardiff, and about £250 was spent in cases, &c., which were afterwards handed over to the Museum, and are now in use. Owing to some doubt or difficulty about the objects which the promoters had in view, about £1,000 of the money raised by this Exhibition is still lying in the hands of trustees, and may some day be used for Museum purposes.

After the Exhibition, the Cases, &c., were removed to the Room above the Free Library, and the Collection laid out and opened to the public from Seven to Ten o'clock on Wednesday and Saturday evenings. As time went on, it was opened longer hours, and many new specimens added and arranged, and in 1878 a Curator was appointed for a short time. The Coins were arranged by Rev. W. E. Winks, and in 1879 the Committee appointed M. A. Cochrane, F.C.S., Curator, and the hours of opening were extended from 6 to 24 hours per week. On his leaving the town, A. C. Cruttwell, F.G.S., took office, and remained till July, 1881, when the present Curator was appointed.

The Committee finding the St. Mary Street premises too small for Library, School, and Museum purposes, determined to erect the present building in Trinity and Working Streets, and appropriate the upper part for a Museum and Art Gallery. The foundation of the New Building was laid on the 27th October, 1880, and on the same date of the year 1882 the Museum part of the premises was opened to the public, the objects and cases having in the meanwhile been moved from St. Mary Street. The Art Gallery was opened on the 23rd October, 1883.

In 1881 an Exhibition of Works of Art, Machinery, &c., was again held in the Drill Hall, which realized a considerable sum, about £250 of which was devoted to the purchase of Specimens of Modern Art, and in September of that year Sir Edward Reed, K.C.B., M.P. for Cardiff, presented his large Picture "Noon on the Surrey Hills," by Vicat Cole, R.A., which was soon followed by the gift of 38 Pictures by William Menelaus, J.P., Manager of Dowlais Iron Works. This donation comprises many very High-class Pictures. Other donors, among whom were B. S. Marks, Esq., R.C.A., R. Short, R.C.A., E. Seward, R.C.A., and Mr. Wood gave Pictures; and Messrs. J. Milo Griffiths, Evan Thomas, and later still William Goscombe John have presented Pieces of Statuary; and Messrs. A. E. Richards, F. W. Harris, C. S. Mann, Dr. Thomas, Rev. W. E. Winks, Messrs. R. Drane, J. W. Lucas, J. E. Ollivant, T. H. Thomas, Dr. Taylor, Dr. Vachell, and numerous others, presented objects of more or less value.

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## The Museum and Art Gallery

Is approached from Trinity Street by a Staircase leading from the Free Library Corridor, and occupies the whole of the Top flat of the Free Library Buildings; the Lower flat being occupied by the Lending and Reference Libraries and Reading Rooms, and the Middle flat by the Science and Art Schools in connection with the Science and Art Department, South Kensington.

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### STAIRCASE.

*On the First Landing* is a large specimen of Cannel Coal, the full thickness of the celebrated bed at Wigan, and the thickest Cannel Coal that occurs in England.

Three large specimens of Travelled Boulders, from the glacial clay deposit near St. George's, showing ice striations, of which better small examples are seen in the Museum.

Cast of part of the Stem of *Sigillaria*, a fossil tree from the ironstone beds at Ebbw Vale.

Two large Vases, decorated in Potichomanie, which act as receptacles for dusters and cleansing apparatus.

An Oak Case, containing the Materials employed in the Manufacture of Iron and Steel at Dowlais Works, and a few samples of the finished produce. This is interesting as containing samples of Welsh Mine, Llantrissant Ore, Aluminious Ore from Belfast, Hydrous Oxide of Iron from Arklow, and Titaniferous Ore from Norway, all of which were once extensively used in the manufacture of iron in the South Wales District, but have now been completely superseded by the Spanish and Elba Ores now imported. Samples of the Coal and Fluxes used, with a series of specimens showing the Cinder or Slag from the blast furnace, the puddling furnace, and the mill furnace, the White Pig used in making puddle bar, the Grey Pig used in making tin plate, the Bessemer Pig used for making Bessemer steel, the Refined Metal, the Puddle Bar itself, and Merchant Bar, with various sections of steel and iron rails, girders, &c., the produce of these extensive Works.

A small Case containing samples of the Wire Ropes manufactured by the firm of Sir George Elliot & Co., Bute Docks, Cardiff, and comprising specimens of pit winding ropes, and ropes for shipping purposes; lightning conductors, &c., are also shown.