

**CAVERN RESEARCHES, OR, DISCOVERIES  
OF ORGANIC REMAINS, AND OF BRITISH  
AND ROMAN RELIQUES, IN THE CAVES  
OF KENT'S HOLE, ANSTIS COVE,  
CHUDLEIGH, BERRY HEAD**

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Cavern researches, or, Discoveries of organic remains, and of British and Roman reliques, in the caves of Kent's Hole, Anstis Cove, Chudleigh, Berry Head by J. MacEnery & E. Vivian

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**J. MACENERY & E. VIVIAN**

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DISCOVERIES OF ORGANIC REMAINS,

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BRITISH AND ROMAN RELIQUES, IN THE CAVES OF KENT'S  
HOLE, ANSTIS COVE, CHUDLEIGH, AND BERRY HEAD :

BY THE LATE

REV. J. MACENERY, F.G.S.,

Hon. Member of the Yorkshire, Bristol, &c. &c. Phil. S. S.

Edited from the original Manuscript Notes,

BY

E. VIVIAN, Esq.,

Member of the Sub-Committee appointed by the Geological Society, and Torquay  
Natural History Society, for conducting the Excavations in Kent's Cavern,  
and the newly-discovered Cave at Brixham.

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## P R E F A C E.

The following Memoir is compiled from the original manuscript notes of the late Rev. J. MacEnery, for many years Chaplain at Tor Abbey, by whom the cavern was first explored. From the Prospectus it appears, that, when completed, it was to have been illustrated with thirty plates, by Scharf, representing the fossil remains of the natural size, with sections and ground plans of the principal caverns, "the limited circulation of works of this nature, however, being by no means equal to the expenses attendant upon the execution of so large a series," the Author, after a second appeal was compelled to abandon his design. At his death the vast and invaluable collection of fossil remains was sold by auction, and, unhappily, dispersed; the manuscript was purchased in a lot of sermon notes and other papers by the late Mr. Lear, of Lawrence Place. It was for many years overlooked and supposed to be altogether lost to science. This circumstance and the value attached to Mr. MacEnery's labours are thus referred to by Professor Owen, the highest authority on these subjects, in his *History of British Fossil Mammalia*—"Perhaps the richest cave-depository of bears hitherto found in England is that called Kent's Hole, near Torquay. It is to the assiduous researches of the Rev. Mr. MacEnery that the discovery of the various and interesting fossils of this cave is principally due, and some of the rarest and most valuable of this gentleman's collection have been recently acquired by the British Museum. \* \* Mr. De Blainville frequently cites a 'Description of the Cavern of Kent's Hole, Devonshire,' which he supposes to have been published by Mr. MacEnery, but which he regrets that he had not been able to procure." I have been assured by Dr. Buckland that Mr. MacEnery never published such a work, but it is most probable that the drawings or lithographic impressions shewn by Mr. MacEnery to Professor De Blainville were those designed to illustrate the forthcoming second volume of the

*Reliquiæ Diluviana.* Having accidentally discovered that the greater portion of the Memoir was in the possession of Mr. Lear, I published some extracts in the "Torquay Directory" with reports of Lectures which I delivered before the Natural History Society. It was subsequently purchased, with Mr. Lear's cabinet of fossils, by W. Long, Esq., F.G.S., who most liberally presented it to me with a view to its publication. The manuscript is in a very imperfect state, consisting of fragments of the original notes, a portion being re-written several times with considerable alterations. In order to preserve the freshness of first impressions, and the exact statement of Mr. MacEnery's views I give it, as far as possible, verbatim, scrupulously making no addition, and only omitting those passages which are in duplicate or irrecoverably mutilated, and re-adjusting the whole, as far as practicable, in a connected series. The notes upon Berry Head Cavern, referred to in the title page, are entirely lost. It was explored by the late Rev. F. Lyte in conjunction with Mr. MacEnery, and afforded similar results with the other caverns; also some human remains, supposed to be those of the Roman garrison.

Of the plates above referred to, sixteen were executed at the expense of the late lamented Dean of Westminster, and by the liberality of his son, F. Buckland, Esq. (2nd Life Guards), I have been permitted to have some proof impressions taken, to illustrate large paper copies.

The profits of this edition will be placed at the disposal of the Torquay Natural History Society, who, by permission of the proprietor, Sir L. V. Palk, Bart., propose to resume their explorations of Kent's Cavern. I take this opportunity of stating that as this will be effected by a special fund, donations will be very acceptable. The researches in the newly-discovered cavern at Brixham, by a grant from the Royal Society, cause the subject to be now more than ordinarily interesting, and a careful comparison of the results obtained from each, will, it is hoped, throw much light upon this most interesting page of Geology and earliest human antiquities.

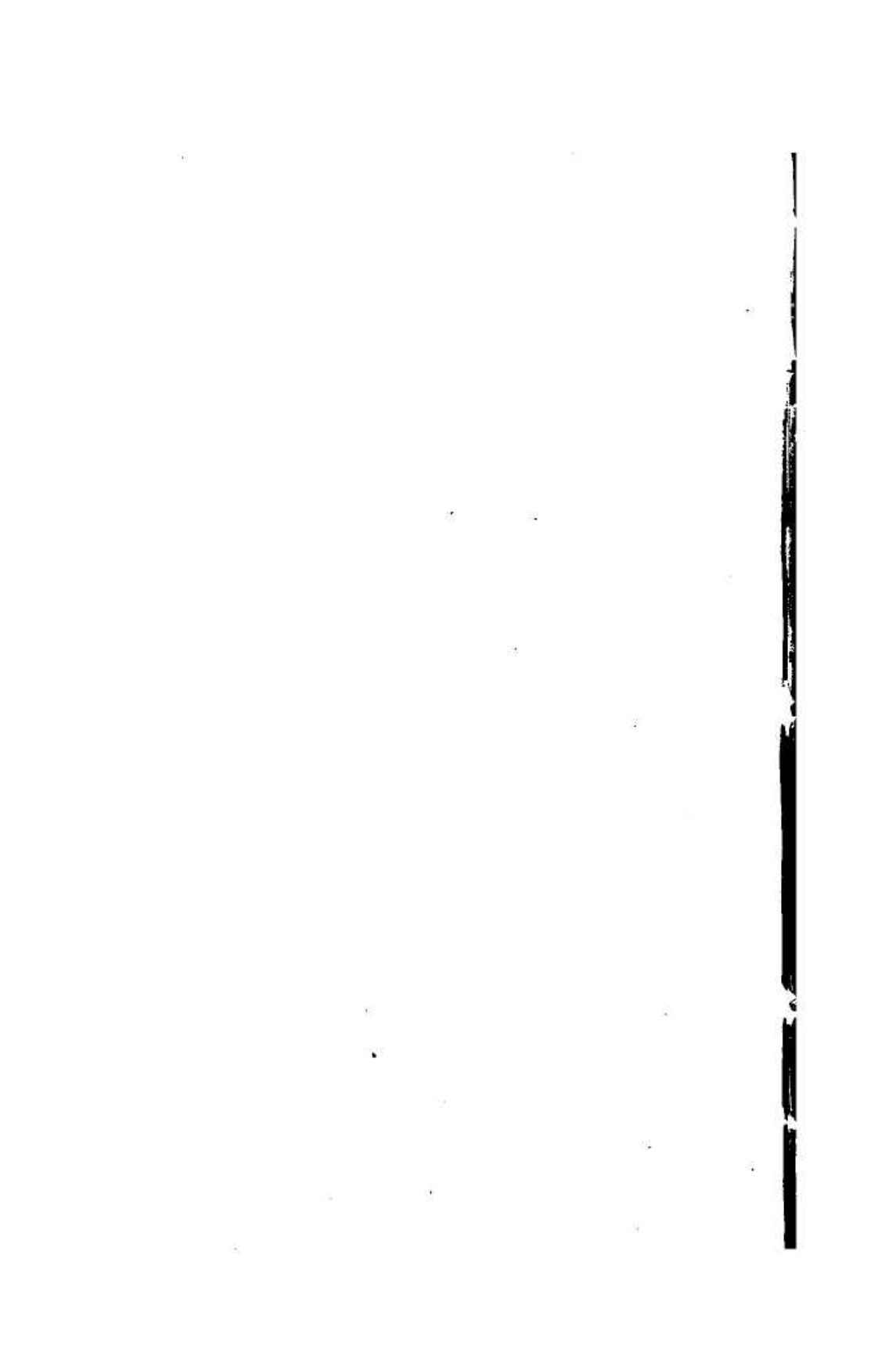
E. VIVIAN.

WOODFIELD, TORQUAY,  
1st Jan. 1850.



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#### ORIGIN OF CAVERN RESEARCHES.

Researches of this nature do not date far back in this country. Except as places of popular resort, caverns attracted little notice before their fossil contents were brought to light. Had this event occurred at an earlier period, they would, doubtless, have been regarded with the same feelings that those were in which bones were first discovered in Germany. There they were generally reported to be the sepulchres of fabled animals, and styled after them the "Dragon's Grottoes."

As their relics were presumed to possess supernatural virtues, they were sought for as charms and cures; and in course of time rose into such estimation, as a sovereign specific, that they finally took their station in the materia medica, under the designation of the *Liquor fossilis*. Nothing more was wanting to make them an object of speculation, to supply the demands for which, the mountains were ransacked for caverns, and the caverns for bones, a circumstance to which may be traced the discovery of both one and the other over a large tract of the Continent.

From the people, as happens in most cases, the subject passed into the hands of men of science. It now became important to ascertain if these mysterious relics were the remains of the animal to which popular belief assigned them. It is not difficult to conceive how the multitude, ever prone to the marvellous, should have been led astray by their imagination, but that the learned should have persisted in attributing them to a chimera, whose prototype, it was gravely contended, still existed in Transylvania, it is not so easy to comprehend. Others saw a resemblance to a hippopotamus, but it could only apply to its bulk.

In this posture stood the controversy when comparative anatomists interposed, with the immortal Cuvier at their head, and having first shewn from the immutable laws observed in nature, in the structure of her works, that no such monster could have proceeded from her hands, and that it was purely a creation of the fancy of painters and poets, they transferred the disputed remains to an extinct species of bear, essentially different from the modern in its form and size.

A similar misapprehension prevailed with respect to the nature of