

Field Meeting Report: Mow Cop to the Keysall – a traverse of the Shropshire Plain, led by John Stanley 12th July 1987

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GIBSON, S. (1988). Field Meeting Report: Mow Cop to the Keysall – a traverse of the Shropshire Plain, led by John Stanley 12th July 1987. *Proceedings of the Shropshire Geological Society*, 7, 16. The purpose of the field meeting was to undertake a traverse of the Shropshire Plain.

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The group assembled for a joint meeting with the Manchester Geological Society, assembling on the somewhat bleak summit of Mow Cop on a cold Sunday morning, making a group of fifteen in all.

The hill made a superb view point to begin the trip. To the east the west flank of the Pennines were seen, to the south were several very obvious tips that marked the position of collieries, past and present. The hill itself is part of a plunging syncline, the apex of which lay to the south.

The most obvious rock type was a coarse 'gritstone' of Namurian age, with a few shale bands. Near the summit were some spectacular slickensides, with well-developed calcite. All around the hill were quarries displaying good cross-bedding. Several of these had been 'enhanced' with artificial cross-beds and mill stones half cut from the walls. This was, presumably, associated with the folly on the summit of Mow Cop, but was confusing for a geologist! In many places the less resistant feldspars had been weathered from the rock giving it a very open structure.

From Mow Cop we moved on to the Winterley area, just north-east of Crewe. Here there is a small nature reserve based on Sandbach Flashes. This is a wetland, and haven for birds, formed overlying an area of salt subsidence. The evidence for the continued subsidence was very clear, trees had recently been swallowed by the waters and overhead gantries on a nearby railway line were mounted on adjustable bases sometimes several feet high. Canals in the area had spectacular hump bridges over them as their level had gradually sunk.

The final stop of the day was a by-pass on the A54 at Kelsall. This was cut into the Triassic sandstones and marls and displayed some fairly large faults.

Disclaimer - The information contained in this account has been prepared from notes taken during the field meeting. Its sole aim is to provide a record of what was seen and provide an insight into the diversity of geology exposed on across the Shropshire Plain. It should not be used for any other purpose or construed as permission or an invitation to visit the sites or localities mentioned.

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