

## Wenlock Edge Mapping Project

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JONES, G. (1983). Wenlock Edge Mapping Project. *Proceedings of the Shropshire Geological Society*, **3**, 15-17. Mapping in the vicinity of Wenlock Edge has been conducted with the aim of locating alternative sites to the oft-visited localities quoted in the literature, and to provide some variation in the exposures located. The area covers from Brockton to Bourton on the B4378, from Easthope cross-roads on the B4371 to Presthope.

It has been possible to locate several fairly accessible sites which certainly would warrant closer attention than time at present has allowed, the *piece de resistance* being the famous J. Krause “heads here and tails there” trilobite site.

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Beginning with a Field Excursion on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1983, and being followed with three well attended evening field trips, the Society has begun to study in close detail the geology of a section of Wenlock Edge. [*N.B. Keen hammerers generally included two or more of the following: the Chairman, the Field Secretary and the Past Chairman, who got to know each other quite well. These were not secret meetings, and other members would have been very welcome!*]

The Edge itself, being a beauty spot for the ordinary man in the street, is subject to a lot of use and abuse. Likewise, sites of geological interest tend to be much over-subscribed, the larger and perhaps more interesting sites because of their mention in publications. Our aim is therefore to examine the area of the Edge and its environs to record exposures both new and old which may relieve the burden on the major known sites. With the acquisition of much of Wenlock Edge by the National Trust, it is of very great importance that we are able to express the Society's knowledge of the area, and its concern over the changes which may take place as the National Trust become involved in the management of their new territory.

We have chosen at the present time to limit our mapping, purely because of the physical extent of Wenlock Edge, and to provide some variation in the exposures located. The area covers from Brockton to Bourton on the B4378, from Easthope cross-roads on the B4371 to Presthope. This forms a roughly rectangular area bounded by four roads. Our explorations have also taken us along the disused railway line running from Church Stretton to Much Wenlock, the section being observed is that immediately under the scarp at Easthope cross-roads along to the tunnel at Presthope.

Finally, Hughley Brook and its tributaries have been examined.

In geological sequence we have been able to form a cross-section from Lower Brook Farm [GRID 555 969] to Brockton [GRID 578 937]. At Lower Brook Farm in the stream bed we have located much Kenley Grit, which has been carried downstream together with material from the Pentamerus Beds full of brachiopods in good state of preservation. The stream cuts through the glacial till and some thin clay beds can be seen on the bankside. The Pentamerus Beds are overlain by the Hughley Shales, which have to date eluded our eye; these are overlain by the Wenlock Shales which we have located at several points under the scarp of Wenlock Edge.

At the western end of the Presthope Tunnel are exposures of the Tickwood Beds, a subdivision of the Wenlock Shales. The Tickwood Beds are interbedded grey siltstones with limestone nodules and form part of the change from the Wenlock Shales to the Reef Facies which lie immediately above them and form the backbone of the Edge proper. Further on in the succession we located the Lower Ludlow Shales in the Easthope Valley, between Easthope and Brockton, followed by the Upper Ludlow Shales.

We have been able to locate several fairly accessible sites which certainly would warrant closer attention than time at present has allowed, the *piece de resistance* being the famous J. Krause “heads here and tails there” trilobite site. We have pinpointed various exposures in the area of Brockton to Bourton in the Upper and Lower Ludlow Shales which are quite fossiliferous and hope to be able to locate graptolite zones in the Hughley Shales at a later date.

A fair amount of “yomping” has been carried out by members who we understand are about to apply to the Ministry for posts vacant for the building of the New Airport at Port Stanley. We claim a record as no one has been lost at any of the meetings, and no known geological hammers have met geological thumbs. It has proved an interesting

study, which for those unable to attend this year will be resumed next year.

The author would like to express his thanks to the willing helpers and look forward to more additions to the field meetings to come.

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