

THE MINERAL COLLECTION OF LADY HENRIETTA ANTONIA CLIVE

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Lady enrietta Antonia Clive (1758-1830), was, until recently, a largely unknown character in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Wales known mainly through her portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds (illustrated on the back cover). However, research by staff in the Department of Geology at Amgueddfa Cymru has shown that, through her interests in geology, she assembled one of the earliest systematic mineral collections in Britain.

In 1929, a mineral collection was donated to the National Museum of Wales by George Charles Herbert (1862-1952), 4th Earl of Powis. At that time its history and consequently its importance, was not realised. When the Earl donated the collection he was unsure who had assembled it. Initial correspondence suggested that a catalogue accompanied the collection, but that it had become mislaid. A short time later, the Earl came across two handwritten catalogues in his sitting room, at Powis Castle, and forwarded them to the Museum where they appear to have remained unknown for nearly eighty years. In a letter accompanying the catalogues the Earl remarked, that he recognized the handwriting as belonging to “Henrietta Countess of Powis, wife of the second Lord Clive and first Lord Powis, and Lucy Countess of Powis, wife of the second Earl of Powis”. Unfortunately, that information was not documented and the collection was registered as belonging to the ‘Earl of Powis’, thus disguising the true significance of the collection.

In 2008, two handwritten catalogues, both dated 1817, were discovered serendipitously within a safe in the Department of Geology. The catalogues record details of a collection of minerals in the possession of the Countess of Powis. As suspected by the Earl, the Countess of Powis at that time was Lady Henrietta Antonia Clive, née Herbert.

Henrietta was born into a titled and landed family: her parents, Henry Arthur Herbert, 1st Earl of Powis (c.1703-1772) and Barbara Herbert (1735-1786) owned several large estates in Shropshire and Mid-Wales as well as property in London. Their principal residence was Oakly Park

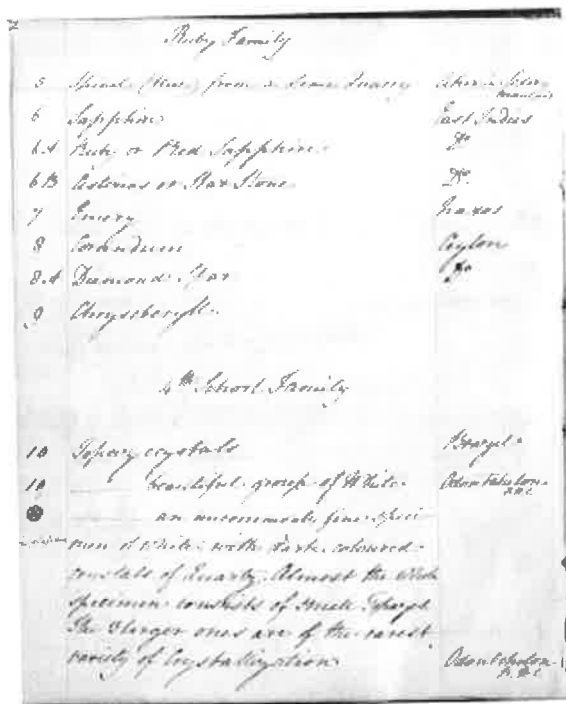
at Bromfield, near Ludlow, where Henrietta was born. However, by 1771 financial problems had forced her parents to sell the estate to their neighbour, Lord Robert Clive, made famous (and incredibly wealthy) by his exploits in India. Henrietta’s family relocated to the Herbert’s ancestral home, Powis Castle, which was by now in a poor state of repair.

Henrietta’s father died a year later, in 1772. Her brother, George Edward Henry Arthur Herbert (1755-1801), inherited the Powis title and estates, but also his father’s debts. Henrietta lived for a time with her brother, much to the disapproval of their mother. Family relationships became strained to the point that, when, in 1784, Henrietta married Edward Clive, son and heir to the late Lord Robert Clive (who had died of apparent suicide in 1774), Henrietta did not invite her mother to the wedding. Their marriage (which had apparently been discussed by their father’s many years earlier) was mutually beneficial, uniting the prestigious Herbert name with the enormous wealth of the Clive family. The couple lived at Walcot Hall, near Bishop’s Castle, one of the many properties acquired by Edward’s father. They had four children, Edward, Henrietta (Harry) Antonia, Charlotte (Charly) Florentia and Robert Henry.

In 1798, Edward, following in his father’s footsteps, took on the role of Governor of Madras. Henrietta, eager to see new sights and discover new cultures accompanied him to India with their daughters while their sons remained at college in England. During

their three years in India, Henrietta, and in particular her daughters, endured terrible fevers and illnesses as a result of the tropical climate. Henrietta grew disconsolate with having to be kept indoors in Madras, but in 1800, she managed to fulfil one of her great desires with an 8 month tour of southern India.

Precisely when Henrietta developed an interest in mineralogy and geology is not known, but letters and diaries from her journey to India (reproduced by Nancy Shields in *Birds of Passage: Henrietta Clive’s Travels in South India*, published in 2009) demonstrate that she was already fascinated by many aspects of natural history, including geology. In a letter to Lady Douglas dated 24 August 1798 she reported: “I am building a room in the garden and a laboratory for all sorts of odd rocks and works and shall endeavour to fancy myself in England”. She educated her two daughters, Harry and Charly, with daily lessons in Indian plants, rocks and shells, as well as animals, birds and butterflies.



Catalogue page from Vol. 1: Earthy Minerals

Henrietta's mineral collection is typical of the style of other collections dating from the early nineteenth century. The minerals are arranged by chemistry into Earthy Minerals (Volume 1) and Metallic Minerals (Volume 2). Both catalogues illustrate a clear systematic approach to collecting - one of everything - and show real detail and order.

Henrietta employed a numbering system within the catalogues to identify each specimen. Small numbered labels corresponding to those in the catalogues were affixed to the specimens. Although many of the labels have become detached, some still remain on her specimens enabling them to be matched to the entries within her catalogues.

When the collection was donated to the museum, it was recorded that many of the old handwritten labels had become damaged by mildew. Fortunately some still remain with their intended specimens. It is unclear whether these labels were produced by Henrietta, but it is likely that they were written by a previous owner from whom Henrietta acquired the specimens. One set are believed to have been written by the famous nineteenth century mineral dealer, John Henry Heuland (1778-1856), who specialized in Russian minerals. Another set match with a series of South American minerals listed in the catalogues as from Col. Cuninghame. This is believed to be Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander Cunningham (d. 1832), his majesty's consul in Rio de Janeiro in 1816.

Indeed, one aspect of the collection of particular importance is the attention to detail of the catalogue entries. Henrietta frequently recorded the names of people from whom she acquired specimens. This information enables one to establish the social circles within which minerals were being distributed. The names include: Dr John MacCulloch (1773-1835), a famous Scottish geologist who is known to have lectured to the East India Company; James Sowerby (1757-1822), author of *British Mineralogy*; and the Countess of Aylesford (1761-1832), a well known mineral collector. Henrietta's children are also recorded in the catalogues, as: R.H.C. (Robert Henry Clive); Lady H. W. Wynn [her eldest daughter, Henrietta, who married Sir Watkins Williams Wynn III 5th Baronet (1772-1840) in 1817]; and the Duchess of Northumberland [her youngest daughter, Charlotte, who married Baron Hugh Percy (1785-1847) in 1817].

Henrietta's catalogues contain entries for over one thousand specimens. Only 237 samples are registered in the museums collection. This discrepancy remains unexplained, but could be the consequence of a number of factors: firstly, and perhaps most importantly, no record was kept of the original number of specimens which entered the museum - it was simply accessioned as "a collection of mineral". It was noted that due to mildew many labels were damaged or destroyed and therefore the full collection may not have been taken by the museum; secondly, many of the specimens that were accessioned were recorded as "unprovenanced", either because the original catalogues were not consulted, or because the labels were missing and the specimens could not be matched to de-

scriptions within the catalogues. As a result some material might not have been registered within the main museum collection. It is known that specimens entered the unregistered education collection, and some registered specimens were used in schools service sets during the 1960s, some of which did not return. Identifying those that did is also a very difficult task.

Additionally, there are a small number of specimens in the collection that are not recorded in Henrietta's catalogues. These include a suite of pegmatite minerals, including aquamarine and smoky quartz, from the Mourne Mountains, Ireland. This suite is likely to have been added to the collection after the catalogue was produced and probably after Henrietta had died. The reasoning for this is that the earliest references to beryl (aquamarine) from the Mourne Mountains appear in the early 1830s. These specimens may have been added by Lady Lucy Clive, née Graham (1793-1875), Countess of Powis. This would explain why, when the 4th Earl of Powis donated the collection, he thought that it had belonged to Lucy, Countess of Powis.

Despite the missing specimens and considering its age, Henrietta's collection is remarkably complete. It is now considered to be one of the most important historic mineral collections at Amgueddfa Cymru.

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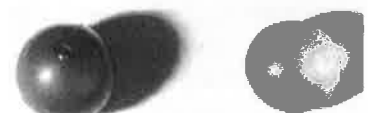
WITCH-BOTTLES AND HEALING CHARMS

Ever wondered what you should do if you were bitten by a mad dog or cursed by a witch? In Wales it was a common practice, as late as the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in some parts, for people to use various kinds of charms for healing or protection against witchcraft. These could be in the form of prayer-like words, which were recited or written on a piece of paper to be safely hidden, while objects such as shoes or stones were also believed to cure illnesses and bring good luck.

Snakestones

The most renowned stone charms in Wales are the *Maen Magl* or *Glain Nadredd* (snakestones). In 1695 Edward Lhuyd described these as *Cerrig y Drudion* (Druid stones).

The belief was that they were created when snakes joined their heads together, forming a kind of bubble about the head of one snake. This 'bubble' is similar to a glass ring like the one found at Twyn-y-tila, Caerleon, and was thought to bring good luck to whoever found it. It was also believed to be a remedy



Adder stones from Pentyrch, Glamorgan



Epidote (7 cm across), given to Henrietta by James Sowerby together with its label

17 Epidote, with Copper Pyrites — — — — — Guffstaffelberg
 — — — — — a fine specimen of crystallized — — — — — Cornwall
 Sowerby



Olivine on quartz from Cornwall (9 cm long), given to Henrietta by the Countess of Aylesford together with its label

224 — — — — — or Olivine ore, foliated. — — — — — Cornwall
 225 — — — — — fibrous — — — — — do