



# Hugh's News

Magazine of  
The Friends of Hugh Miller

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## THE MARTIN GOSTWICK WRITER'S RESIDENCY

By Lara Reid

The Friends of Hugh Miller committee are delighted to announce *The Martin Gostwick Writer's Residency*, in honour of our late founder and much-missed friend. The residency will support a writer or poet with a strong interest in either Hugh Miller or Scottish geology more widely to spend one week in Cromarty. The residency has been organised in collaboration with the Cromarty Arts Trust and the Hugh Miller Birthplace Cottage and Museum.

The chosen writer will spend a fully funded week at the self-catering residence managed by the Cromarty Arts Trust, Ardyne House. In return, the writer will produce a short piece of writing for publication in *Hugh's News* / on the Friends of Hugh Miller website, as well as working on their own studies and writing of their choice.

We are very pleased to announce that our first writer in residence for 2023 will be Anna Fleming, former first prize winner of the Hugh Miller Writing Competition 2020, and author of *Time on Rock* (Canongate, 2022). Anna will be giving a talk at the Friends of Hugh Miller AGM on Sunday May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, in Cromarty. (See full AGM details overleaf).

Martin Gostwick founded the Friends in 2006, and his passion and enthusiasm for Hugh Miller shone through in all that he achieved. Martin was a prolific writer himself; a renowned journalist – he spent many years working for various titles in England before moving to the socialist newspaper the *Morning Star* (as Parliamentary correspondent and later as their Scotland correspondent). It was fate that brought Martin to Miller - when his wife Frieda Gostwick was appointed custodian of the Hugh Miller Birthplace Cottage by the National Trust for Scotland, and the couple moved to Cromarty in 1992. Martin sadly died in July 2021, and the Friends committee wish to honour his memory with this new residency, which we believe Martin would have been excited to be involved in.



*Martin on the Leader, Cruise of the Betsey voyage*



*Anna Fleming, at work*

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# Walk with Hugh Miller

**Sunday 28th May 10am-12 noon**

**Leaving Old Brewery, Cromarty at 10am sharp.**

FREE guided walk led by Bob Davidson MBE, FGS (Chair of Friends of Hugh Miller), taking in the Cromarty shoreline before heading back round the loop via the Coal Heugh Well to the historic St Regulus' graveyard.

**All welcome - including families and children!**

And then do join us at The Royal Hotel for:

- 2.30pm Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Hugh Miller**
- 3.30pm Special Guest Speaker: Anna Fleming - author of Time on Rock - shortlisted for The Wainwright Prize and the Boardman Tasker Award for Mountain Literature.**

Free coffee/tea and shortbread will be provided during the afternoon.

**The Friends of Hugh Miller - [www.thefriendsofhughmiller.org.uk](http://www.thefriendsofhughmiller.org.uk)**

**[membership@thefriendsofhughmiller.org.uk](mailto:membership@thefriendsofhughmiller.org.uk)**

# Fossils named for Hugh Miller over the years

By John Armstrong

**“Fossil hunter, folklorist, man of faith, stonemason, geologist, editor, writer and social justice campaigner – Hugh Miller was one of the great Scots of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.”** Source: <https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/hugh-millers-birthplace>

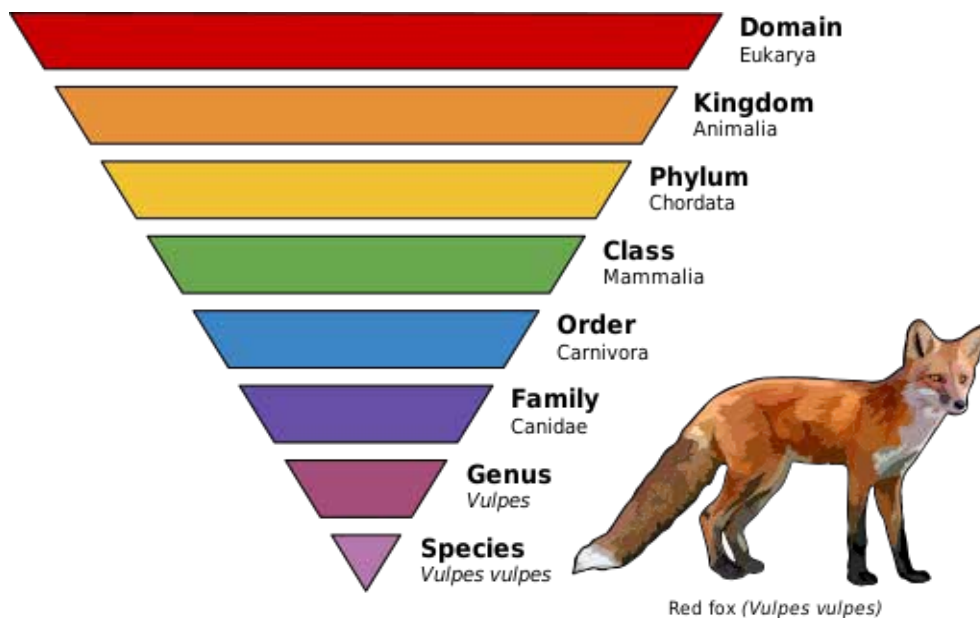
Hugh Miller was indeed a true polymath, who not only became an authority on each of these diverse subjects, but also wove them seamlessly together in his writing, managing to cross-fertilise and magnify his thoughts for a wide and multi-disciplinary audience. However, as an amateur palæontologist and Miller devotee, I wanted to write something for *Hugh's News* that highlights Hugh Miller's place in the pantheon of palæontological “greats” (where he certainly resides). There are, of course, many texts and wonderful articles already in existence that explain Miller's place in science, but I thought it would be instructive (and fun!) to try and also represent this photographically by looking at the fossils that have been named for Hugh Miller over the years by the global scientific establishment.

Hopefully, I will show that Hugh Miller is a continuing influence and inspiration to geologists and palæontologists – even to the present-day.

## What's in a name? A few notes on Taxonomy....

Before talking about the fossils named for Miller, I'm sure fellow Friends are well-versed in taxonomic matters, but it still might be worth doing a quick piece of revision around the naming of species and the use of taxonomy.

Taxonomy is the scientific study of naming, defining and classifying groups of biological organisms based on shared characteristics. Organisms are grouped into taxa (singular: taxon) and these groups are given a taxonomic rank. The principal ranks in modern use are domain, kingdom, phylum (*division* is sometimes used in botany in place of *phylum*), class, order, family, genus, and species. Here is a graphical representation of the taxonomy of the Red Fox:-



Credit: Annina Breen, Own work. This file was derived from: Rotfuchs.svg (2015, sourced on Wikipedia, 2023)



Above: Huge head-shield of *Trewinia magnifica* – scale bar = 15mm - one of only two ever found at Spittal Quarry, Caithness.

Credit: Phillipe Janvier & Michael J. Newman, *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh*



*Pterichthyodes milleri*.

Credit: <https://scotlandsnature.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/pterichthyodesmilleri.jpg>

So, the basic ranks are species and genus. When an organism is given a species name it is assigned to a genus, and the genus name is part of the species name. The species name is also called a binomial, that is, a two-term name.

So for example, the zoological name for Miller's most famous fish fossil is *Pterichthyodes milleri*. This is usually italicized in print or underlined when italics are not available. In this case, *Pterichthyodes* is the generic name and it is capitalized; *milleri* indicates the species and it is not capitalized.

It is of course also possible, but increasingly rare, for a whole Genus or a Family to be named for a person. A relatively recent example occurred when Michael Newman (a fellow Friend of Hugh Miller), erected the Genus *Trewinia* for our former Chair Nigel Trewin. Michael was redescribing an extremely rare (and large!) osteostracan (extinct bony-armoured, jawless) fish. The original species name of *magnifica* remained and I remember that Nigel was extremely pleased that the new name for this fish thus became *Trewinia magnifica*!

Finally, it should be highlighted that one cannot name any creature after oneself! – That is purely in the gift of the describer (i.e. the person writing the paper that describes the new species). What follows is a list of those fossils named for Hugh Miller and a few notes on the various palaeontological luminaries who so-honoured him.

Thanks to Friends members Chris Moore and Roger Jones for allowing the use of photographs of their beautifully prepared fossils. It is worth remembering that Miller did not have the leading-edge preparation techniques available today, making his task of researching, interpreting and recording anatomical detail so much more difficult. It is amazing that much of his observations still hold true today.

### “Miller's Fish”: *Pterichthyodes milleri*

Friends will be very familiar with this classic image of “Miller's Fish” preserved in a typical Cromarty nodule. For an excellent and instructive explanation of how these nodules were formed around fossil fish, I refer the reader to our Chair, Bob Davidson's excellent Youtube video “*Hugh Miller and his Winged Fish*”. However, *Pterichthyodes* (translates in Greco-Roman to “Winged Fish”) is also found in Orkney and Shetland with the best-preserved examples coming from the flagstone layers of Caithness. On the following page are two further examples.

Unsurprisingly, Miller's *Pterichthyodes* initially caused much discussion and controversy as it did not look like a fish. Its box-like body-armour and its ball-and-socket armoured pectoral fins led many an eminent scientist to suggest that it was more like a turtle, or even a beetle! One eminent scientist



who also struggled with this question was Louis Agassiz. In modern-day parlance, Louis Agassiz was a global scientific superstar of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Like Miller, Agassiz was a polymath, holding doctorates in Philosophy and Medicine, moving from his native Switzerland to Paris, before settling in the United States (Harvard) in 1846. Agassiz' subsequent American career, including being the prime mover in Glacial and Ice Age Theory, even led to various American Lakes and Mountains being named for him.

Even given Agassiz' stellar status, he knew Miller well by reputation if not in person. Miller had sent samples and descriptions of fossil fish of the Scottish Old Red Sandstone to Agassiz and it was Miller's outstanding work in discovering, collecting and describing these fish which received Agassiz' respect. Agassiz visited Britain (and Scotland) twice, in 1834 and 1840. Although it is thought that Miller met Agassiz in person during his second trip (in Glasgow), it was Miller's fossil fish – especially his “winged-fish” that intrigued Agassiz. It was during that second visit to Scotland that Agassiz finally agreed with Miller that this little box-like creature was indeed a fish.

Agassiz' subsequent revision of fish classification in 1845's *Monographie des poissons fossiles du Vieux Grès Rouge, ou Système Dévonien (Old Red Sandstone) des Îles Britanniques et de Russie (Monograph on Fossil Fish of the Old Red Sandstone, or Devonian System of the British Isles and of Russia)* formalised the bond between Agassiz and Miller by the inclusion of the new fish *Pterichthyodes milleri*.

### *Homostius milleri*

*Homosteus milleri* is the largest placoderm or armoured fish from the Old Red Sandstone. The fish has a flattened shape with the eyes on top of its head. In life it was possibly a filter feeder, processing the surface waters of a lake for algae and small arthropods such as freshwater shrimps. Another possibility is that it was a bottom-dwelling scavenger. It is assumed that the fish had a soft tail and fins, but they have never been found preserved.

The fish in the photograph to the left is 66cm long and 40cm wide, and was found by quarry workers at Spittal Quarry, Caithness in 2010. They contacted our late chairman Nigel Trewin, who arranged for its preparation by Friend member Chris Moore. It took Chris 6 months of preparation effort, but the results are incredible (the full story may be found in *Hugh's News 31*, the Spring 2017 issue). Although a large fish species, this example may well be the largest ever found. The species features in '*Footprints of the Creator, or The Asterolepis of Stromness*' published in 1849 by Hugh Miller. Miller actually confused parts of two unrelated fish, thinking they both belonged to his 'Asterolepis', but we now know that the scales and jaw he described in the book do not be-

Top: *Pterichthyodes milleri* from Achanarras, Caithness (with one arm tucked-in and the other spread).

Credit: Chris Moore Collection

Middle: *Pterichthyodes milleri* from Achanarras, Caithness

Credit: Roger Jones Collection

Bottom: *Homostius milleri* from Spittal Quarry, Caithness

Credit: Chris Moore Collection

long to his 'Asterolepis'. The fish was eventually redescribed as a species of *Homostius* in 1888 by Ramsay Traquair FRSE FRS (30 July 1840 – 22 November 1912), and given the specific name *milleri* in honour of Hugh Miller. Traquair, another palæontological "great" of his time, held posts as Professor of Natural History and Professor of Zoology in England and Ireland, before returning to his native Edinburgh to take up a post at the Museum of Science and Art.

### *Gyroptichius milleri*

Moving on into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, in Sweden, Erik Jarvik (30 November 1907 – 11 January 1998) was Head of the Palæozoological department of the Swedish Museum of Natural History in Stockholm from 1960. Jarvik devoted his career to the study of Osteolepid fishes (family name Osteolepididae), because these lobe-finned fishes gave rise to the first tetrapods around 375 to 385 million years ago and eventually became capable of terrestrial locomotion. In 1948, Jarvik produced a huge work, classifying all of the Scottish Osteolepid species, "*On the Morphology and Taxonomy of the Middle Devonian Osteolepid Fishes of Scotland*". In it, he identified two species of *Gyroptichius* and named one *Gyroptichius milleri* and the other *Gyroptichius agassiz*, which I believe aptly links these two great men together in perpetuity.

*Gyroptichius* was a fast predator with an elongated body about 30 centimetres long. All its fins - except the pectorals - were moved to the back of the body, which gave the fish great acceleration when chasing prey.



*Gyroptichius milleri* from Caithness  
Credit: Roger Jones Collection



*Gyroptichius milleri* from Caithness  
Credit: Chris Moore Collection

### *Millerosteus minor*

We see Miller's name still echoing through the academic institutions of Europe in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 1963, the world-renowned distinguished Swedish palaeontologist Professor Erik Stensiö, (who preceded Jarvik as Head of the Palaeozoological department of the Swedish Museum of Natural History in Stockholm from 1923 to 1959), named a small fossil placoderm fish from Caithness and Orkney for Miller, *Millerosteus minor*. *Millerosteus* is a common fish fossil in the Middle Devonian flagstones around Caithness.



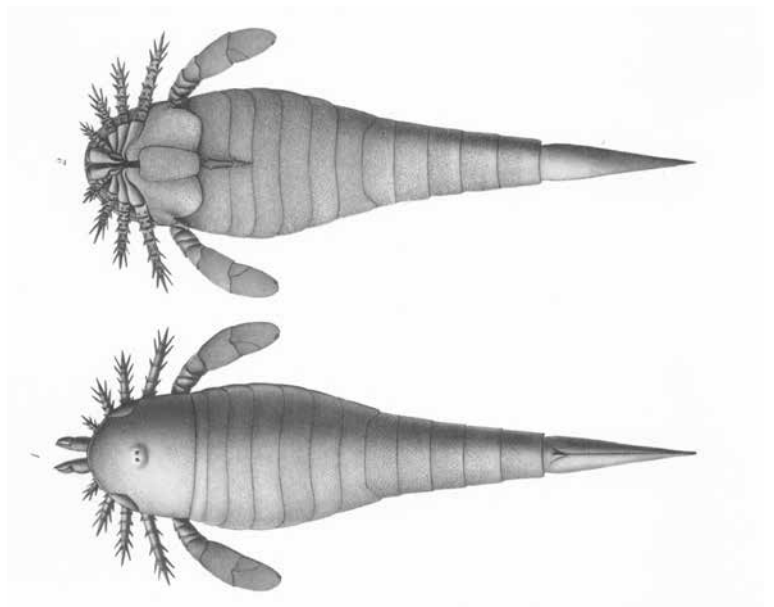
*Millerosteus minor* from Caithness (exceptional preservation and preparation)  
Credit: Chris Moore Collection

### The Family *Hughmilleriidae*

*Hughmilleriidae* is a family of eurypterids, an extinct group of aquatic arthropods which lived in the Silurian period between 442 and 419 million years ago. The family name *Hughmilleria*, was erected in 1903 in honour of Hugh Miller by Clifton J. Sarle, an American Palaeontologist from New York State, who knew Miller had been an early collector of eurypterid fossils.

*Hughmilleriid* eurypterids ranged in size from 6 to 20 centimetres (2 to 8 inches) representing a group of relatively small eurypterids found globally (in the UK, China and the United States). *Hughmilleriids* would be dwarfed by some of their more "advanced" relatives, especially the *pterygotids* which would surpass lengths of 2 metres and become the largest known arthropods to ever live.

Two additional Eurypterid genera also named for Hugh Miller are Parahughmilleria and Nana-hughmilleria.



*Hughmilleria Socialis* – reconstruction by John Mason Clarke and Rudolf Ruedemann (1912)  
Credit: *The Eurypterida of New York. Volume 2. New York State Museum Memoir 14, plate 59 (1912); sourced on Wikipedia, 2023*

### Other fossils named for Hugh Miller

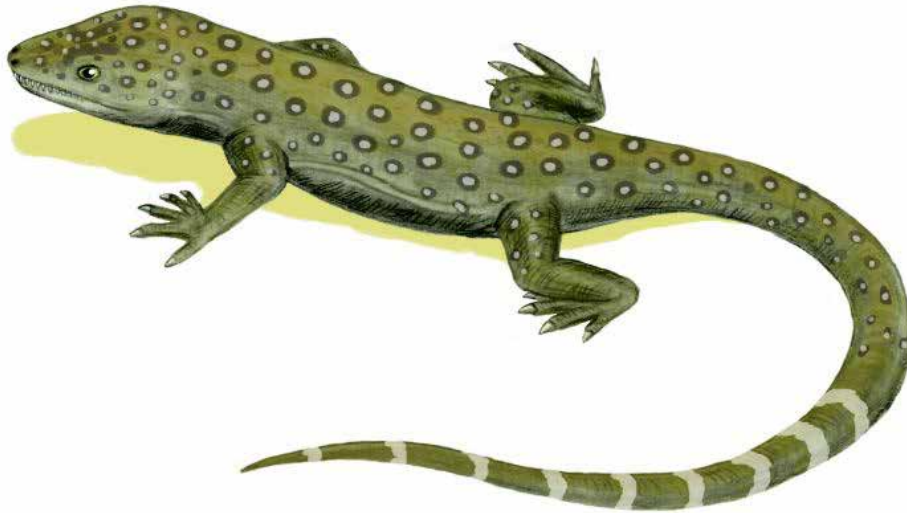
*Hughmillerites* is a genus of fossil cypress tree, found in the Late Jurassic of Scotland and Early Cretaceous of Canada. The genus name *Hughmillerites* was erected in honour of Hugh Miller, who found the original fossils of the cones of this tree in the Jurassic rocks of Eathie near Cromarty (species name *Hughmillerites juddii*). A second species was discovered on Vancouver Island (*Hughmillerites vancouverensis*).

*Milleretta* is an extinct genus of lizard-like animal from the Late Permian of South Africa. It lived around 251 million years ago. *Milleretta* (meaning "Miller's little one") was a lizard-like animal, about 60 centimetres in length. *Milleretta* was



*Hughmilleria*  
Credit: Roger Jones Collection

named for Hugh Miller by Robert Broom FRS FRSE in 1947. Broom was a British-South African doctor and palaeontologist. He was born and brought up in Paisley and studied at the University of Glasgow before settling in South Africa, becoming a professor of zoology and geology and keeper of vertebrate palaeontology at the South African Museum, Cape Town. Like many before him, Broom thus honoured Miller in this way. But in this case it would maybe seem that Broom's Scottish roots may have influenced him?



Milleretta

Credit: Nobu Tamura, 2007 (CC BY 2.5) © N. Tamura.

## Gardening with Hugh Miller in the Shrubbery

By Sherri Donaldson

Since late 2017, I've been volunteering a couple of days each month at the National Museums Scotland Collection Centre in Granton, Edinburgh, working on accessioning their historic Hugh Miller Collection. How did I become inveigled into volunteering on this specific collection? Back in September 2017 whilst at the University of Aberdeen, I saw an advert for a conference in Cromarty, organised by Bob Davidson, MBE, entitled "*The Old Red: Hugh Miller's Geological Legacy*". As a geological undergraduate at the time, I was excited to learn about Scottish fossils and, having a keynote delivered by someone from my childhood hometown in Australia (Prof John Long), I had a gut feeling that it was going to be a unique and special event that I needed to attend – and I was right. I must confess to you now that I didn't really know who Hugh Miller was, nor the importance of his work, but wow, I certainly got an education in all things poetical and palaeontological during that weekend.

I got speaking with Dr Andy Ross, Principal Curator Palaeobiology at the National Museums Scotland, about collec-



*Hugh Miller specimen ready on a foam lined base for processing, with tools of the trade: new specimen boxes, hand lens, head torch and archival marker pen.*



tions and he said that there was always a need for volunteers to help with transcribing catalogues as well as getting specimens listed on paper registers into digital systems. As we chatted I understood I had all the curatorial skills required – including the ability to read cursive, which I realise now is quite niche – and before the year was out I was heading down the road to get behind the scenes in the palæo store. My primary aim was to curate and accession Hugh Miller's collection of invertebrate and plant material, and I was really excited to get started.

Fast forward to February 2020, and by this time I had catalogued, re-boxed and accessioned over 1,200 invertebrate specimens from the collection. These records were uploaded to the NMS's publicly searchable database, complementing the several hundred specimens already online. Then, in March 2020, the pandemic hit. Of course, no one knew how long we'd be under lockdown and that collections would be completely inaccessible to not only volunteers but staff too. Despite volunteers being welcomed back last year, I was focussed on my doing my Masters in Palæontology at the University of Edinburgh, which meant (much to my feigned chagrin) that my fossiling was put on hold until I had submitted my dissertation.

Almost three years since I was last in the collections, January 2023 saw me head down the road to reacquaint myself with Hugh's fossils. Signing in and going through the heavy doors of the Palæo Store in Granton and seeing the rolling racks containing over a quarter of a million fossils, I felt right back at home. Fossiling in Hugh's "Shrubbery" of botanical specimens was now at the top of my to do list, and I was back in my happy place.

Being a volunteer curatorial assistant in the physical role of curating a collection is fantastic, intricate and varied work. Take a meticulous eye for detail, a dash of detective, good data entry techniques, healthy curiosity, a systematic and logical approach, and then add in palæontology, and geology. Top it off with care and respect for not only the past but the future, and voila... you now have an idea of what's involved!

I approach each day in the store systematically – well, most days! The store is windowless and houses a floor to ceiling rolling rack system – half of the room contains vertebrate specimens, and the other half contains invertebrates, plants and teaching specimens. I usually start by finding a trolley, picking up a stack of archive quality specimen boxes in differing sizes, grab my head torch, hand lens, pencil case, and laptop, and roll through the racks until I find the ones I need. My first task is to work through an opened pair of racks, containing up to 320 drawers, looking for Hugh Miller specimens – not 'quite' like field work, but it is rewarding to rediscover important fossils from the past (in a lovely,



*A tray of Hugh Miller specimens ready for curation.*



*A rack full of drawers – time to go fossiling!*

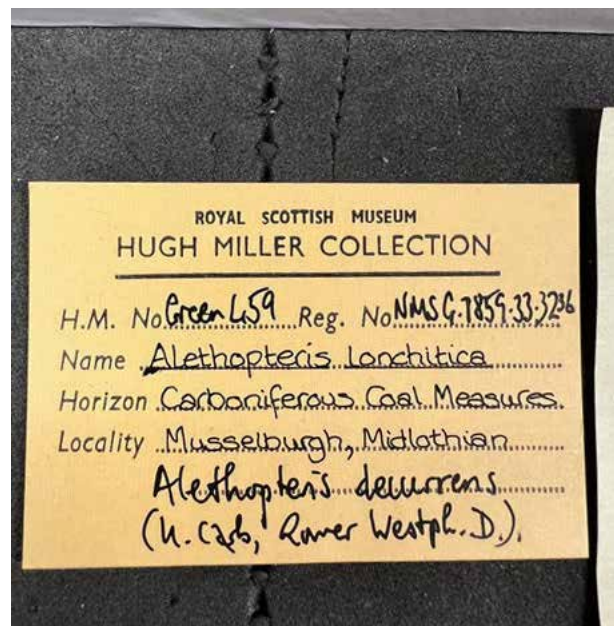
climate controlled environment). Unusually

(and thankfully), many of the Hugh Miller specimens have a printed, manilla coloured card tag, which makes finding them in unidentified drawers a little easier. Once I have an idea where the specimens are in the store, I pull out a drawer and start to assess the contents.

This assessment is intricate; I re-box each specimen, checking for and noting any damage. I capture all information from every tag, label, and sticker into the spreadsheet. For specimens with stickers but without the manilla card tags, I write up new tags using information from the catalogues. For specimens without a current accession number – the unique museum identification number which, once assigned, is never changed – I have been given permission to assign new accession numbers. For interest, Hugh Miller's collection is prefixed with 'G.1859.33...'. Additionally, I note the rack and drawer location details of each specimen so it can be found in the future. Due to the age of the collection itself, specimens may have any combination of labels; some original adhesive dots (in different colours) written up in pencil; an occasional piece of paper/makeshift label affixed with glue; while subsequent curators have added larger stickers with hand-written text as the organisation has changed names – the most common being 'Edinburgh Museum of Science & Art' and 'Royal Scottish Museum'. Some specimens have all the labels whilst others may only have one – the tiniest piece of identifying information is kept and cross-referenced back to the catalogues. With many labels well over 150 years old, I often have to use my hand lens and head torch to try and pick up faded lead-pencil numbers which I can then cross reference to one of two catalogues: Hugh's original hand-written catalogue, or the master catalogue written up when the collection was acquired.

Despite my continued excitement and wanting to make great progress, this project is not about speed – some days I can accession 40+ specimens, while other days are spent looking at orphan labels and trying to find their corresponding specimen (this can occur when specimens are returned from display or from loan and put away with their temporary labels). On some days I spend time looking up details from Hugh's writings and other sources for the spreadsheet. I always aim to take great care; handling each specimen once and ensuring accuracy of my recording.

Over the coming months I have the opportunity to volunteer over consecutive days which keeps the rhythm of the



G.1859.33.3236 *Alethopteris lonchitica* from the Carboniferous Coal Measures, Musselburgh, Midlothian. Label, front and back views.

process going and the systematic nature of the tasks in focus. I am about half way through Hugh's Shrubbery, which has some stunning specimens, and which I'd love to share in future editions of *Hugh's News*.

As Hugh famously said "Learn to make a right use of your eyes" – with these guiding words I continue my journey through geological time.

# New Research into Hugh Miller's Printing and Publishing Activities and the Chaotic Publication of *Testimony of The Rocks*

By Michael Taylor

Research Associate, National Museums Scotland, & Honorary Fellow, School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester

Some years ago, the late Nigel Trewin spotted something odd about Hugh Miller's book *The Testimony of the Rocks* (*Hugh's News* 26). Some copies of the first edition were issued by the firm of Shepherd & Elliot, but others added Thomas Constable & Co. to the title-page as a second Edinburgh publisher (all had Hamilton, Adams & Co as the London publisher). This should not be happening. It was also worrying: it's academically pretty fundamental to know when your references were published, and if they are the same or different books. But it was also intriguing, given *Testimony's* historical importance in the debates of the time about science, religion and humanity's position in the cosmos. So, Ralph O'Connor of the University of Aberdeen, Leslie Overstreet of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C., and I investigated in a recently published paper (M. A. Taylor, R. O'Connor and L. K. Overstreet 2021. Dating the publication of Hugh Miller's *Testimony of the Rocks* (1857). *Archives of Natural History* 48, 310–324).

*Testimony* was printed by Miller & Fairly, which published Miller's newspaper the *Witness*. Demand was (sadly) greatly boosted by the publicity around Miller's suicide on 23<sup>rd</sup>/24<sup>th</sup> December 1856, after he completed the book's last proofs. Alas, the many illustrations would not print properly on Miller & Fairly's steam-powered machinery, and the book had to be produced on slower hand presses. Publication was postponed again and again until enough copies, it seems nine thousand, accumulated to meet all the booksellers' orders at once (to put this into some sort of context, one thousand was a more usual print run). The book finally appeared in late March 1857, by when Shepherd & Elliot had evidently fallen into a cashflow crisis, and Constable had been brought in to share the load: hence the two different title-pages.

It is natural to infer, as Nigel did, that the copies with Shepherd & Elliot (but not Constable) comprise the first issue. This is because they include surviving presentation copies of the book, inscribed to friends and colleagues (such as that to the Duke of Argyll recently acquired by Friend's committee member, Sidney Johnston). But, in fact, this first issue came out at the same time as the second issue, which had both Shepherd & Elliot and Constable on its title-page. Things evidently continued chaotic for a while before settling down. Even so, later in 1857, the firm of Shepherd & Elliot was dissolved. Remarkably, despite sitting on this publishing goldmine, Shepherd was bankrupted and went off to retrain as a doctor (though happily Elliot carried on in Edinburgh publishing for many years). This left Constable as sole Edinburgh publisher of *Testimony*, providing yet a third combination of publishers for the first edition.

These copies of *Testimony* each cost 7s. 6d (today nominally £0.37, in real terms more like £50–£100). An extra 3s. got you, perhaps uniquely for the time, a second frontispiece of an actual print (not a photomechanical reproduction) of a pho-

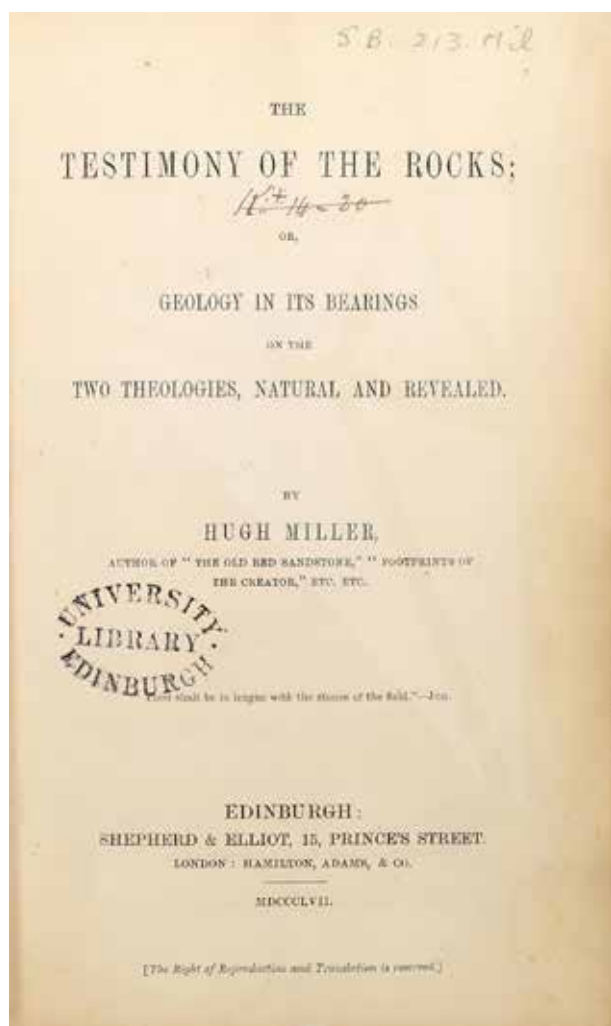


Figure 1. Title-page of the inferred first issue of the first edition of *The Testimony of the Rocks*, showing Shepherd & Elliot as the sole Edinburgh publisher. Shelfmark S.B.213, Special Collections, University of Edinburgh Library, kindly provided by and © The University of Edinburgh, 2021, CC BY 4.0 (cropped TIFF).



Figure 2. A copy of the inferred first issue of *Testimony* in its deluxe version, with the optional photographic print of Hugh Miller by J. G. Tunny. Shelfmark S.B.213, Special Collections, University of Edinburgh Library, kindly provided by and © The University of Edinburgh, 2021, CC BY 4.0 (cropped TIFF).

The only known photo which gives a reasonable view of the once grand house on the left, formerly part of the Miller & Fairly printing establishment, in Guthrie Street, Edinburgh, c.1895–1906, from a cheap undated Collins edition of *My Schools and Schoolmasters*.

tograph of Miller. Copies we have seen seem all to be of the Shepherd & Elliot first issue, tying in nicely with Elliot's known interest in photography.

Gould & Lincoln of Boston, Massachusetts, published their own first United States edition in April 1857, using casts of the same illustration-blocks as the Edinburgh issues. Back in Edinburgh, Constable continued to publish more issues. One, in 1860, was newly typeset afresh, making it a true second edition. However, Constable just called it the "twenty-seventh thousand", probably because they felt that that had more marketing clout. Perhaps they also feared that "second edition" would put people off, given the implication of changes to Miller's original writing.

In a further paper in the same issue of the same journal, I had a look at the history of Miller & Fairly itself and the firm's 'printing office' in what is now Guthrie Street and almost on the Cowgate, round the corner from today's National Museum of Scotland in Chambers Street (M. A. Taylor 2021. *The unusual printing and publishing arrangements of Hugh Miller (1802–1856)*. *Archives of Natural History* **48**, 298–309). We'd call this a workshop, as the editorial office was up on the High Street, today marked by a plaque opposite the High Kirk of St Giles. The printing office was originally set up in 1839, complete with steam machinery, to produce the *Witness* by the publisher John Johnstone and the printer Robert Fairly, till a part-management-buy-out by Miller in 1844: whence Miller & Fairly. The original workshop was in the former gatehouse of Minto House and expanded next door into the former upmarket town house of the 18<sup>th</sup> century physician Dr John Clerk of Listonshiels – yes, this part of the Old Town really had come down in the world.

There is plenty more in both *Archives of Natural History* papers (and I have also given an informal account of the printing workshop in *Conversations in Stone*, eds. L. Reid & E. Pancioli (2019)). But we could not answer one obvious question. Miller's books were often printed by Miller & Fairly, which continued to operate after his death, the family taking over his share, till 1864, when the firm was dissolved. Was he also taking on the financial risk and profit of publication? – in which case the "publishers" were simply doing the distribution. It is suggestive that Shepherd & Elliot came unstuck over *Testimony of the Rocks* after Miller died, at which point Miller's assets would have been frozen till the legal formalities were completed. So perhaps Shepherd & Elliot found themselves unexpectedly having to raise the capital. But this is only a guess. It remains possible that Shepherd & Elliot were always planning to fund the book, and simply found their available credit overstretched by circumstances. An unexpectedly massive print run, with associated printers' bills, and an equally unexpected delay before the books could be sold and money started to come in, would have been a lethal combination.

# A website refresh for the FoHM

By Lara Reid



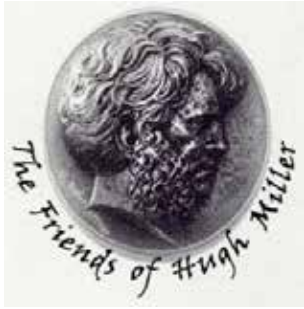
I was pleased to be able to spend time over the last few weeks updating and refreshing our Friends website. Many people may have noticed that our old site was looking a little tired, and also that it really didn't work well on different devices, particularly mobile phones and tablets. I was keen to ensure that the website reflected up to date information and the most recent news related to Miller, the Birthplace Cottage and Museum, and the work of the Friends.

There are several new additions to the website, and more content will follow shortly. I am keen to include more details about Miller's fascinating and varied legacy – if anyone has any suggestions for articles or content for the new site, do get in touch! We are also very keen to update our news section regularly with details of events and exciting stories related to Scottish geology and landscapes, and social history and folklore related to Cromarty, the Black Isle, and the North-East of Scotland. You can email me directly on [editor@thefriendsofhughmiller.org.uk](mailto:editor@thefriendsofhughmiller.org.uk)

I am very grateful to Garve Scott-Lodge at Plexus Media, Cromarty, who took time to help me move the content from our old site – he also updated some of the pages including our local walks page.

You can take a look at our updated site on the same address:

<https://www.thefriendsofhughmiller.org.uk/>



# The Friends of Hugh Miller MEMBERSHIP FORM

I/We wish to become (a) member (s) of the charity, The Friends of Hugh Miller  
Please download and complete the forms below then email to the Membership Secretary at:  
[membership@thefriendsofhughmiller.org.uk](mailto:membership@thefriendsofhughmiller.org.uk)

Annual subscription categories and rates, please mark with a cross whichever applies:

Single	£15	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family (1 adult and up to 3 children under 18)	£15*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Couple	£30	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family (2 adults and up to 3 children under 18)	£30*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Junior (under 18)	£5	<input type="checkbox"/>			

Name.....

Address.....

Postcode..... Phone.....

Email address.....

### GIFT AID Declaration for past, present and future donations

Gift Aid is reclaimed by The Friends of Hugh Miller from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

In order for us to claim Gift Aid on your donation you must complete the form and the box below

Title ..... First name or initial(s)..... Surname:.....

Home address (if different from above): .....

.....

Postcode:..... Date:.....

Signature (optional):.....

**I give my consent to The Friends of Hugh Miller to claim gift aid on all donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years**

(put an X in the consent box)

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Stephanie Kulesza, Membership Secretary can be reached at:  
[membership@thefriendsofhughmiller.org.uk](mailto:membership@thefriendsofhughmiller.org.uk) or 07879614005

The Friends of Hugh Miller is a registered charity: SC037351