

Aubrey Strahan M.A., K.B.E., D.Sc., F.R.S.

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Timeline

Date	Details
1852	Born April 20th in Sidmouth, South Devon. Educated at Eton and St. Johns College, Cambridge.
1874-1875	Graduated in Natural Science Tripos.
1875	Appointed Assistant Geologist on Geological Survey under Ramsay, Field work in South Lancashire then Cheshire, Lower Carboniferous of Flintshire, Silurian of Clwydian range, Trias of Vale of Clwyd.
1883	Transferred to Lincolnshire to assist in completing last of Ordnance Survey 1 inch maps.
1884-1885	Sent to Kendal and Sedburgh.
1886	Revised mapping of Coal Measures, Cambrian and Pre-cambrian near Nuneaton. Examined mines in Derbyshire for 2nd edition of North Derbyshire Memoir. Began 6 inch survey of south part of Isle of Wight.
1887	Continued work into Purbeck.
1891	Began re-survey of South Wales Coalfield, continued till completion, Memoir with W. Pollard.(Isle of Man (1892) and Cumberland Coalfield (1894)).
1894	Wollaston Fund.
1896	Geologist.
1901	District Geologist.
1903	Elected F.R.S.
1904	President Section C, British Association at Cambridge.
1905	Reported on Coalfields of Lancashire, Cheshire and North Wales for the Royal Commission on Coal Supplies, also made a report to Royal Commission on Arsenic Poisoning.

- 1909 Promoted to Assistant to Director.
British Association meeting at Winnipeg.
- 1910 Attended International Geological Congress at Stockholm.
- 1913 Contributed British section to Canadian volumes on the "World's Coal Resources" at International Congress at Toronto. Vice-President at Congress.
Received Honorary LL.D. from Toronto University.
- 1912-1914 President of Geological Society.
- 1914 Appointed Director of Geological Survey.
- 1919 Made K.B.E. Received Wollaston Medal.
- 1920 Retired.
- 1928 Died March 4th at Goring, Berkshire.

Biographies and obituaries

[VII. The Geological Survey under Sir Aubrey Strahan, 1914-1920](#) From: Flett, J.S. 1937. The History of the Geological Survey of Great Britain. London: His Majesty's Stationery Office.

[1914 Strahan promoted Director](#) From: Bailey, Sir Edward. Geological Survey of Great Britain. London: Thomas Murby, 1952.

Obituary - Sir Aubrey Strahan, K.B.E., Sc.D., F.R.S. (1852-1928). Geologists Magazine. Whole Series. v. 65 p.239. 1928

Gregory, J.W. Obituary - Sir Aubrey Strahan, former President. [In Anniversary Address.]. Proceedings of the Geological Society in Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society. v. 85 p.lviii-lix. 1929

Nature (March 24th, 1928) p. 461

[Aubrey Strahan](#) — Wikipedia article

[Eminent Living Geologists: Aubrey Strahan.](#) Geological Magazine. New Series, Decade VI, Vol II (V): 193-198. 1915.

Strahan, Aubrey. Who's Who. Vol. 59. 1907. p. 1691.

Flett, J.S. (1928). Sir Aubrey Strahan 1852-1928. Proceedings of the Royal Society B. 103: xvi-xx.

[Geological Survey under Sir Aubrey Strahan, 1914-1920](#) In Flett, J. The first hundred years of the Geological Survey of Great Britain

Publications

Geological Magazine (1915) p. 196-8.

Memoir: Rhyl (1885)

Memoir: South Wales Coalfield, part XI

Memoir: South Wales Coalfield, part X

Memoir: South Wales Coalfield, part VIII
Memoir: South Wales Coalfield, part VII
Memoir: South Wales Coalfield, part VI
Memoir: South Wales Coalfield, part V
Memoir: South Wales Coalfield, part IV
Memoir: South Wales Coalfield, part III
Memoir: South Wales Coalfield, part II
Memoir: South Wales Coalfield, part IX
Memoir: South Wales Coalfield, part I
Memoir: Coals of South Wales (1915)
Memoir: Flint (1882)
Contributed to: Kendal 2nd edition (1888).
Contributed to: Thicknesses of Strata (1916)
Contributed to: Lincoln (1888)
Contributed to: Ingleborough (1888)
Contributed to: Mallerstang (1891)
Contributed to: North Derbyshire 2nd edition (1887)
Contributed to: Isle of Wight 2nd edition (1889)
Special Report: V. Potash, Feldspar (1916)
Special Report: VII. Mineral Oil (1920)
Special Report: XIII. Iron Ores (1920)
Special Report: . Lead and Zinc (1923).
Guides to Model: Thames Valley and Goring (1924).
Guides to Model: Ingleborough (1910)
Guides to Model: Purbeck (1906)

[**145 works listed in the BGS Library catalogue**](#)

BGS archives

Ref No	Title	Description
GSM/DR/Bc/S/7	Geological Notes' H T De la Beche, published 1830 with annotations by De la Beche. Note at front by A.Strahan, 1917.	
GSM/DR/Ge/A/5	Correspondence on various matters: letters to J.Craik, J.Evans, F.H.Hatch, J.Horne, D.R.Irvine, B.N.Peach (225 items); C.W.Peach, A C Ramsay, T.Reeks, F.W.Rudler, A.Strahan, W.Topley, and W.W.Watts; also some letters to Geikie.	
GSM/DR/St	Aubrey Strahan	Strahan joined the Survey in 1875, replacing Woodward as Assistant Director for England and Wales in 1909 and was appointed as Director in 1914. He saw the Survey through the difficult war years and is chiefly remembered for his new series of 'Special Reports on the Mineral resources of Great Britain'.
GSM/DR/St/A/1	Out Letters of A.Strahan as Assistant Director	
GSM/DR/St/A/2	Strahan's correspondence re Parliamentary enquiry on the Halkyn Drainage Tunnel. Request that Director attend enquiry and Strahan's refusal.	
GSM/DR/St/A/23	Inviting Dr Strahan to become a member of the Sub-Committee on "Raw Materials for Glass and Glass-making"	
GSM/GL/Cn/1	Correspondence with other geologists; letters to H.A.Allen, C.H.Dinham, Flett, Kitchin, J.Pringle...	
GSM/GL/Di/4	Correspondence with other geologists; letters to H.A.Allen, C.H.Dinham, Flett, Kitchin, J.Pringle, Rudler, Strahan and H.H.Thomas.	
GSM/GL/Gb	W Gibson	Walcot Gibson joined the Survey in 1893 following early geological work in Africa. He was closely associated with work on coalfields and began his Survey career working with A.Strahan in South Wales. He then moved to North Staffordshire in 1897. He became District Geologist in 1913. In 1920 he published 'Coal in Great Britain' and in the same year he replaced John Flett as Assistant Director for Scotland. He retired in 1925 and was replaced by MacGregor.
GSM/GL/Jn/1	Correspondence: letters to E.E.L.Dixon, T.N.George, F.L.Kitchin, W.F.P.McLintock, W.J.Pugh, A.Strahan and H.H.Thomas	

GSM/GL/Th/2	Correspondence as Chief Petrographer and other letters to Strahan.	
IMB/A/18	Typescript minutes of IMRB Committee	Minutes and papers with copy of first report, corrected and amended by A Strahan.

Sir Aubrey Strahan

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Aubrey Strahan as Director of the Survey

Extract from: From: Wilson, H.E. Down to earth - one hundred and fifty years of the British Geological Survey. Edinburgh:Scottish Academic Press, 1985. [In all directions: developments under Sir Henry's fourteen successors In all directions: developments under Sir Henry's fourteen successors]

When Teall retired in 1914 he was succeeded by Aubrey Strahan (1852-1928) who had been on the staff since 1875 — and had been one of the victims of Geikie's promotion trap, having been a 'Temporary Geologist' for twenty-one years. He was clearly a respected chief, but, as with Teall, there is little personal legend about him. His was a difficult period, with a large proportion of his small staff in the army and pressing demands for information on the indigenous mineral resources of the Kingdom. His response, the new series of *Special Reports on the Mineral Resources of Great Britain*, was the first serious attempt by the Survey to react quickly to a national need.

Strahan retired in 1920 and was succeeded by a very different character — John Smith Flett (1869-1947), known to his staff as 'Black John'.

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