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Biology Curators Group Newsletter

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North West Collection Research Unit

At the two day meeting in Liverpool, "The Function of Local Natural History Collections" in September, it was proposed by Bill Pettit of Manchester Museum, that the Curators of Zoological material in the area get together. The pursuance of the present location, condition and importance of named collections in museums was seen as of primary interest to museum curators, even when these collections were not in manned institutions. It is a collective responsibility which could not be ignored. As this was endorsed by others present at that gathering, arrangements were made and an ad hoc meeting was arranged in Manchester, on 13 October 1977 to which 14 natural history curators were invited from nine institutions.

The objectives were that a list of all the Zoological collections in the North West be prepared and published. It was hoped that this would be a lead to other regions in the country and be the forerunner of a national scheme. Support to this idea was solicited from the North Western Art Gallery and Museum Service and this was granted. They were able to provide assistance in printing standardised forms for recording data and had contact with all the likely institutions which house material of potential interest.

The method was adopted whereby a two stage approach could be made to achieving full data. Firstly, a survey to establish the whereabouts of collections, and secondly a detailed assessment of them. The chairman, elected from those present, Geoff Hancock, had a manuscript giving details of several institutions and some of the named collections contained in them, this being the paper read at the Liverpool meeting. Using this as a basis, with some additions, the members present agreed to visit all the museums in the area at least once before the end of February.

The editing of the final work would be done at Bolton, with considerable assistance, probably by discipline, from others. It was thought that this would be a complete work, in that it would not require up-dating to any great extent. Information is requested from anyone in possession of material they know to be of relevance or to originate in the north west. It may be, for example, that a small undocumented collection of shells is housed in the north west, and that a large herbarium is elsewhere by the same collector with complete field note books or a catalogue delineating the facts pertaining to the former. Please contact the Chairman if you possess any collections of possible relevance, or better still, form your own regional collection research unit.

E. Geoffrey Hancock.

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North Western Museum and Art Gallery Service

Director Marian M Kershaw FMA



MBD/JBD

The North Western Museum and Art Gallery Service has recently agreed to give help and support to the North West Collections Research Unit, a working group made up of natural historians employed in museums within the North West area.

The group, under the Chairmanship of Mr. G. Hancock of Bolton Museum, aims, within the next two years or so, to complete a full catalogue of the Natural History collections within the area. As so many museums have no specialist Natural History Departments in this field, we hope that an initial step can be made in carrying out a survey of all existing collections within museums and you will be contacted directly in the near future. We hope that this knowledge will then enable us to ask appropriate subject specialists to look at the relevant collections.

As nothing of this kind has ever been undertaken in the past, we hope that you will give us, and the Unit, every support in making this a successful venture.

Director.

NORTH WEST COLLECTION RESEARCH UNIT
(NUMERICAL ASSESSMENT FORM)

Institution _____

Address _____ Tel. No: _____

Curator or person in charge to contact for future visits _____

Compiler(s) _____ Date _____

	British	Foreign	Figured & Cited	Types	TOTALS
1. Protozoa (Foraminifera, etc.)					
2. Parazoa (Sponges)					
3. Coelenterata					
4. Platyhelminthes, Nematodes, etc.					
5. Annelids					
6. Crustacea (itemize orders if necessary)					Crustacea subtotal
7. Myriapods (Centipedes, Millipedes)					
8. Insects:					
Orthoptera _____					
Coleoptera _____					
Lepidoptera _____					
Diptera _____					
Hymenoptera _____					
Ephemeroptera _____					
Odonata _____					
Plecoptera _____					
Dermoptera _____					
Neuroptera _____					
Trichoptera _____					
Siphonaptera _____					
Mallophaga _____					
Hemiptera _____					
other orders (specify)					Insect- subtotal

	British	Foreign	Figured & Cited	Types	TOTALS
9. Arachnida					
Spiders _____					
Mites _____					
Opiliones _____					
Scorpions _____					
others _____					
10. Mollusca					
Gasteropods _____					
Lamellibranchs _____					
Cephalopods _____					
others (specify) _____					
11. Brachiopods					
12. Bryozoa (Polyzoa)					
13. Echinoderms					
Asteroids _____					
Echinoids _____					
Ophiuroids _____					
others (specify) _____					
14. Fish					
15. Amphibians					
16. Reptiles					
17. Birds					
Skins _____					
Mounts _____					
Eggs _____					
Nests _____					
18. Mammals					
Mounts _____					
Skins _____					
(itemize if necessary)					
TOTAL					

Manuscript/Archival sources available? Yes/No if so, where? _____

Accession Register/Stock books present Yes/No if so, where? _____ What date periods do they cover? _____

Donor Index Yes/No if so, where? _____

Published References to collections Yes/No (list separately or obtain copies) _____

Is there material elsewhere? _____

Has material been disposed of in the past? Yes/No if so, how _____ (exchange, removal to other museums, destruction, etc.)

Any other information of relevance _____

NORTH WEST COLLECTION RESEARCH UNIT
(INDIVIDUAL COLLECTION FORM)

MUSEUM, INSTITUTION, etc. _____ IRGMA Code _____

Name of Individual supplying information _____

1. Name of COLLECTOR COLLECTION EXPEDITION	
2. PERIOD collection formed or Biographical dates	
3. SUBJECT of Collection	
4. GEOGRAPHICAL Region	
5. Approximate NUMBER of Specimens or Drawers	
6. Information on Collection &/or Present Location	
7. Method of Acquisition	
8. Collection maintained separately? YES/NO	
9. MSS material etc. available? YES/NO	
10. LITERATURE REFERENCE to Collection	
11. BIOGRAPHICAL Reference to Collector (e.g. obituary, biography, etc.)	
12. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	

Please use reverse side of this form if there is not enough space available in any one category.

Please complete a SEPARATE form for EACH COLLECTION of Importance.

Return forms to: North Western Museum & Art Gallery Service,
Griffin Lodge,
Griffin Park,
Cavendish Place,
BLACKBURN.
BB2 2PN