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**The Reverend Philip Pearsall Carpenter (1819-1877)**  
**Locating His Legacy In North Of England Museums**  
**- R A Baker: School of Biology, University of Leeds**

Two present day memorials in Warrington commemorate and summarise the life of Philip Carpenter. A drinking fountain dedicated to his work in the town stands in Bank Park and reads, "In memory of Philip Pearsall Carpenter - Born Bristol November 4 1819 - died Montreal Canada May 24 1877"; and a memorial tablet in Cairo Street Unitarian Chapel, Warrington, includes the words, "A student of nature, a servant of God, and a lover of mankind". He was minister of this Unitarian congregation for sixteen years (1846 to 1861) and spent his life both in the service of God and of shells becoming one of the most important figures in nineteenth century Conchology. Carpenter was also a founder of the Warrington Co-operative Society and a pioneer in public health. Family faith meant that he was brought up and trained as a Unitarian but in later life in Canada, he converted to Anglicanism. His father was Lant Carpenter, an important Unitarian minister, and his brother William Benjamin became a significant scientist and university administrator; his sister Mary achieved fame for work to help destitute children.

Apart from his expertise in Conchology, Carpenter was also knowledgeable about fish, fossils and minerals and was a respected part time curator, a post he held at the Warrington Museum. In 1848, two years after Carpenter arrived in the town, one of the earliest local authority museums and the first rate-supported public library in the country were opened in temporary accommodation in Warrington. In 1855, the foundation stone was laid for the present building, which was opened in 1857 as a combined library and museum, and it was in this building that Carpenter spent much of his time. Carpenter was always on the look out for material for this museum. He collected and later donated, a large amount of both molluscan and non molluscan material to the museum; the latter today includes about 300 geology specimens (fossils and minerals) and 12 ethnographic objects (Rolf Zeegers pers. comm. 2002). Carpenter's donations, mainly of shells, books and fossils were in the 1850' and 1860's, some after he had emigrated to Canada and the last apparently was of Crustacea in 1867. Indeed, from the 'Donor cards' held at the museum, it appears that several members of his family donated material between the 1840's and 1850's, including his sisters, Mary and Susan and brothers William and Russell. These items included books, shells, echinoderms, corals, minerals, fossils, Rhizopoda, maps, pamphlets and newspaper cuttings (Colin Taylor pers. comm 2003).

Carpenter began taking an interest in shells when he was a teenager in Bristol and was further helped and encouraged by J.E.Gray, then Keeper of Zoology at the British Museum. As a naturalist, his name will always be associated with shells and in particular with the Mazatlan collection. In the early 1850's, Philip Carpenter purchased a very large collection of shells from the west coast of Mexico, the famous Mazatlan shells. They were collected between 1848-1850 by a Belgian, Frederick Reigen, and went on sale after the collector's death. The collection was purchased by Carpenter in Liverpool from a well known natural history dealer named George Hulse and up to that point (with the exception of Hugh Cuming's material) it was the greatest collection of shells ever taken to Europe (Palmer, 1958).

Having purchased the shells, Carpenter devoted an enormous amount of time and energy to this collection and published a large volume of work based on these molluscs. Living in a small industrial town, without easy access to major libraries and museums, Carpenter began to study this enormous collection and had to rely heavily on the help of other workers. However, he was never afraid to ask for assistance, as the letter (Figure 1) shows. Later, several sets were donated or sold to museums in Britain and North America.

Carpenter travelled to North America for the first time in 1860 and subsequently parts of the collection were deposited in several museums there, notably those at the Albany Museum, State of New York and the Redpath Museum, McGill University, Montreal (Baker and Bayliss, 2003). In North America, Carpenter is recognised as a major figure in nineteenth century Conchology where much work has been published on him and on the Mazatlan shells (Baker and Bayliss, 2004, Palmer, 1951 and 1958). He emigrated to Canada in 1865 and died in Montreal.

### Mazatlan shells in U.K. Museums

The main Mazatlan shell collection in Britain is held at the Natural History Museum in London. Carpenter presented this 'set' to the museum in 1857 and prepared a catalogue (Carpenter, 1857) which was published in the same year. "692 species were enumerated or described of which 215 were new. The total number of specimens in the collection amounts to about 8800... and as a geographical series are of considerable importance" (Smith, 1906). Carpenter had unique ways of mounting specimens. In the case of small specimens the shells were often stuck to small strips of card attached to cork stoppers and protected inside specimen tubes (Figure 2). Some of his specimens were mounted on a glass plinth, and labelled on the glass using white paint or ink.

In the north of England, Mazatlan material can be found in museums at Bolton, Liverpool, Newcastle, Scarborough and Warrington. No doubt other museums in Britain also house Mazatlan shells.

### Bolton

Hancock (1976) wrote a description of the zoological collections of note at the Bolton Museum, which included the Mazatlan shells, recording "another duplicate series". This series was purchased from Carpenter in 1854 but was not catalogued until relatively recently. There are about 150 species and 799 shell specimens from Mazatlan. Two species have been marked as possible syntypes, *Cyrena olivacea* and *Fissurella alba* (pers.comm. Kathryn Berry, 2003). Hancock, referring to the collection, wrote, "It is highly likely that many of them will prove to be type material as over 222 species were described by Carpenter". Carpenter also produced a report in 1861 on Dawes' collection of minerals and fossils in the Bolton Museum.

### Liverpool

Although shells labelled Mazatlan are present in the collections their origin is unclear (Ian Wallace, pers.comm, 2002). However, according to the British Association report for the meeting in Liverpool in 1854 (British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1855), Carpenter stated that a wholesale naturalist and dealer, Mr George Hulse, presented "a series of Mazatlan shells to the Free Museum" (in Liverpool). Dean (1936) also cites this.

### Newcastle

Carpenter donated 160 molluscs to the Hancock Museum in May 1855 (Davis and Brewer, 1986). No further information is available.

### Scarborough

The molluscan collection at Wood End Museum, Scarborough was rearranged and recatalogued by Adrian Norris in 1969/70. This is an important collection of about 34000 specimens, worldwide and includes Mazatlan material. Amongst this William Bean (1787-1866) collection there is "a large collection of specimens from Mazatlan on the west coast of Mexico. This is part of a very famous collection held at the British Museum" (Massey, 1978). Since the shells were acquired, many of the cabinets have been merged and "many labels lost or misplaced" (Hartley et al, 1987). Laura Turner (pers.comm), 2003 located 87 specimens of Mazatlan shells in the museum and there are probably many more, but none of them appear to be in their original boxes, although the very small specimens are mounted on card. Carpenter acknowledged Bean's assistance with the Caecidae in his preparation of the catalogue of Mazatlan molluscs (Carpenter, 1857).

### Warrington

Hancock and Pettitt (1981) recorded marine molluscs from Mazatlan (donated or purchased c. 1860) at the Warrington museum. At the present time, the shell collection (apart from the small amount on display, which includes some large specimens) consists of three cupboards with eighteen drawers in each, and gives interesting clues to the Carpenter period. Although the molluscan collections are now all combined into one, there is material labelled Mazatlan, for example *Cardium elatum* Sow (4247a). Other material has a Smithsonian Institution label, such as *Fissurella aspera* Esch (3534a) and *Fissurella volcano* Rve (3531a). Some material (including species of *Paludina* and *Navicella*) is labelled "named by the late H. Cuming Esq. for the Smithsonian Institution". It is known that Carpenter worked on Smithsonian shells in Warrington after his first visit to North America. Dean (1936) states that Carpenter and the Smithsonian Institution presented shells that included two series from the collections of Charles Baker Adams collected from Panama and the British West Indies. Carpenter also obtained other collections (cited in Dean, 1936) of American and Canadian shells for the Warrington museum, the latter via Professor William Hincks of the University of To-

