

## MEMORIAL OF GEORGE LETCHWORTH ENGLISH

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George Letchworth English who passed away on the morning of January 2, 1944, at his winter residence, Winter Park, Florida, was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, June 14, 1864, to John A. and Amanda Evans English. All of his earlier years were spent in that city where his father was a publisher of theological books. On June 17, 1890, he married Louise T. Baltz. They had three children; Gwendolyn, Henry Rowland, and Katherine Louise. Mrs. English died on March 10, 1920, and on March 29, 1923, he married Jane Parsons Hanna, Head of the Chemistry Department, East High School, Rochester, New York. He is survived by Mrs. English, his son, Professor Henry Rowland English, and his daughter, Mrs. John K. Burleson.

Mr. English attended the Philadelphia Friends Central School, graduating in June 1881. It was while he was employed by a Philadelphia Insurance Company from 1881 to 1887 that he became intensely interested in minerals and decided to enter the business of collecting and selling mineral specimens. In 1887, with a partner, Edwin C. Atkinson, he opened a store in Philadelphia. His stock consisted of Arizona wulfenites, vanadinites, azurites, and malachites in addition to fine crystallized Franklin fowlerites. Expeditions which he took in 1887, '88, and '89 to Europe, Canada, and the Eastern and Western States kept his establishment well supplied with magnificent specimens. In 1890, with a third partner, William Niven, George L. English and Company moved their business to 64 East Twelfth Street, New York City. Two years later he acquired full control of the business.

He traveled extensively and a visit to Laurium, Greece, in his trip to Europe in 1891 resulted in his discovery of the mineral penfieldite, and in addition he procured an assortment of minerals which was said to have been the finest ever imported into this country at any one time.

Mr. English's exhibit at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition in 1893, which consisted of a \$20,000 collection of gems and mineral specimens, was so outstanding that he was awarded special diplomas and medals. In 1894 and 1896 other trips to European and American localities resulted in additional stocks of magnificent specimens.

In 1905 Ward's Natural Science Establishment purchased his business and stock of minerals. The period from 1887 to 1905 has frequently been referred to as the golden age of mineral collecting, largely because of the fact that newly opened mines in the lead-zinc region of Joplin, Missouri;



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lead and copper mines in the southwest; Michigan copper mines; Franklin, New Jersey, zinc mines; in addition to numerous other discoveries of new mineral localities in various sections of the country, were producing a profusion of showy mineral specimens. It can be safely asserted that these earth treasures would not have been preserved for scientific study and for posterity if it had not been for Mr. English, and men of like vision. Also by years of hard work he proved that constant striving and seeking would produce the minerals needed to meet the demands of museums and colleges.

From 1903 to 1913 Mr. English left the mineral business and was retained by the National Light and Thorium Corporation to locate monazite deposits in North and South Carolina. In 1913 he became manager of the Mineral Department of Ward's Natural Science Establishment and from 1922 to the time of his retirement in 1934 served as their consulting mineralogist. A brief outline of some of his major accomplishments and collections that he secured during this period follows.

In 1917 he purchased the 6000 specimen collection of Mrs. Leontine A. Lowe, wife of Professor T. S. C. Lowe of Pasadena, California, formerly of Norristown, Pennsylvania. In 1918, arrangements were completed with the owners of the Virgin Valley Nevada opal mines to place on the market specimens of the beautiful precious opal of this district. Many hundreds of opals now became available to collectors. Also the T. E. H. Curtis mineral collection of 800 specimens was purchased that same year.

In 1919 the Michael Bradley, Chester, Pennsylvania, collection of 2000 specimens was acquired. In 1920 the R. W. Forbes superb mineral collection of 2500 specimens was secured. The John Graves collection of North England minerals was also imported. Mr. English made a trip to Europe this same year and bought the Otto Vautier, Geneva, collection of Swiss minerals. He also visited England, France, Italy, Austria, and Germany. Likewise the collection of Mr. K. Broadbent, Broken Hill, New South Wales, was purchased.

In 1922 another collecting and purchasing trip was made to Europe. The Dr. Robert Herzenberg of Hamburg, Germany, collection was one of the purchases. In 1923 he had the first importation of the Grootfontein descloizites, and the purchase of the G. M. Swindell collection of Bisbee minerals.

In 1924-25, as the result of another European trip, beautiful wire silver specimens were obtained at Kongsberg, Norway, in addition to specimens from the old English collections of John Ruskin, Baroness Burdett-Coutts, J. H. and Henry F. Collins, and Philip Rashleigh. The same year saw the importation of the Belgian Congo uranium minerals from the

Katanga District. Also large shipments were obtained of Russian minerals. Tasmania crocoite was likewise received.

In 1926, a trip to localities in the western states resulted in the purchase of the C. R. Winn collection of Butte, Montana, minerals and in the same year, the Rochester Collection of Meteorites was acquired. In 1927 Mr. English again sailed for Europe on a scientific collecting expedition that took him around the world. Europe, South Africa, Southwest Africa, Rhodesia, Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand, California, and Arizona were visited and minerals valued at \$100,000 were acquired. In December, 1928 Mr. English exhibited and offered for sale in New York City mineral specimens valued at \$40,000. This exhibit included many choice specimens obtained on the expedition mentioned above. In 1930, the Dr. Bela Fülöpp collection of Rumanian minerals was purchased.

In 1933 Mr. English introduced to museums and to collectors the NiCo lamp for producing fluorescence in minerals. This stimulated an interest in fluorescence that persists to the present time. In June 1934, Mr. English retired from active service to devote his time to the writing of his very popular book "Getting Acquainted with Minerals," which is generally considered one of the best texts for the elementary student and collector. In 1902 and 1903 Mr. English lectured on mineralogy before the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, and also in the New York City Board of Education course. In 1903 the Encyclopedia Americana invited him to become associate editor and he wrote the section on Mineralogy for the 1904 edition.

He was a member of the New York Mineralogical Club, Philadelphia Academy of Natural Science, Rocks and Minerals Association, Mineralogical Society of Great Britain and Ireland, Fellow of the American Mineralogical Society, and in 1927 its Vice-President. He was also a life member of the Rochester Academy of Sciences, and its President from 1919 to 1921.

He recognized as new minerals penfieldite, graftonite, pyroxmangite, and skemmatite, and referred them to investigators for detailed descriptions. A rare hydrous phosphate of calcium, potassium, and aluminum from near Fairfield, Utah, was named *Englishite* in his honor.

His paper on "The scientific valuation of minerals" (*American Mineralogist*, 12, 197-209, 1927) is still extensively used as a basis for the evaluation of mineral specimens.

In addition to being the author of the popular scientific book "Getting Acquainted with Minerals," he also wrote in 1939 "Descriptive List of the New Minerals 1892-1938." This book gives a brief summarized de-

scription of nearly 2000 minerals. He was also the author of numerous articles on minerals written for the layman.

Mr. English was an enthusiastic collector of unusual skill and ability. He will be remembered as a cultured gentleman zealous in his efforts to conserve for the scientist minerals that represent the treasures of the earth. A master of his chosen science, he took great delight in conveying to others his love for minerals. The hospitality of his home was known to men in all walks of life including many distinguished scientists, for here he found great delight in exhibiting his remarkable large collection of mineral micro-mounts. Such a visit inspired many to collect and study minerals, but his great enjoyment was to see a particularly fine mineral specimen, that he had procured, find its place in a permanent collection.

His business associates always found him very appreciative and sincere and he won their friendship, respect, and loyalty by his high regard for them.