

# WILLIAM SMITH'S FOSSILS REUNITED

**Peter Wigley (editor) with Jill Darrell, Diana Clements and Hugh Torrens**

William Smith is considered by many to be the Father of English Geology and is best remembered for his remarkable geological map of England and Wales, made in 1815.

From an early date, Smith recognized that many of the strata which he showed on his map were characterized by the fossils they contained. In 1816 he started a book called *Strata Identified by Organized Fossils* which, although unfinished, was a fundamental work in establishing the science of stratigraphy. In this book Smith figured fossils from each stratum. The fossil plates were exquisitely engraved by the renowned illustrator, naturalist and mineralogist, James Sowerby, from fossils provided by Smith.

Although a brilliant geologist, Smith was an unlucky business man and because of his precarious financial position he was forced to sell his extensive fossil collection to the British Museum. In *William Smith's Fossils Reunited*, the authors have included new photographs of fossils from Smith's Collection, now housed at the Natural History Museum. These photographs have been arranged next to the original engravings, and in some cases, Smith's sketches. Smith's original texts for both *Strata Identified* and a later work *Stratigraphical System of Organized Fossils*, which catalogued the fossils, have been reprinted within the book. As Smith roamed the English countryside collecting fossils he was careful to note the exact geographical location of each fossil and also the rock layer from which it came. In this book these locations are shown on copies of Smith's own geological maps.

With a Foreword by Sir David Attenborough, *William Smith's Fossils Reunited* is intended both for the William Smith enthusiast and also for those with a more general interest in the work of this remarkable pioneering geologist. The fossil illustrations and maps in this exquisite volume are aesthetically pleasing in their own right and demonstrate the extraordinary skill of early nineteenth-century engravers and map makers.

**Peter Wigley** (editor) has a BSc in Geology and a PhD in Carbonate Sedimentology, both from University College London. Since 1973 he has worked as a consulting petroleum geologist engaged on numerous geological projects in the North Sea, Mediterranean, Africa, Middle East and SE Asia. He has received Distinguished Service Awards from both The Geological Society and the American Association of Petroleum Geologists. He has a long-standing interest in William Smith's maps. In 2007 he produced a DVD of his maps and is also the Editor of the WILLIAM SMITH'S MAPS-Interactive website ([Strata-Smith.com](http://Strata-Smith.com)). He has published articles on William Smith in AAPG and the Geological Society of America.

**Jill Darrell** is a curator in the Earth Sciences Department of the Natural History Museum, London where she has worked since graduating from Kingston Polytechnic (BSc Hons Geology) in 1975. She is responsible for the Cnidaria (corals etc.) collections and the William Smith Collections of fossils and rocks.

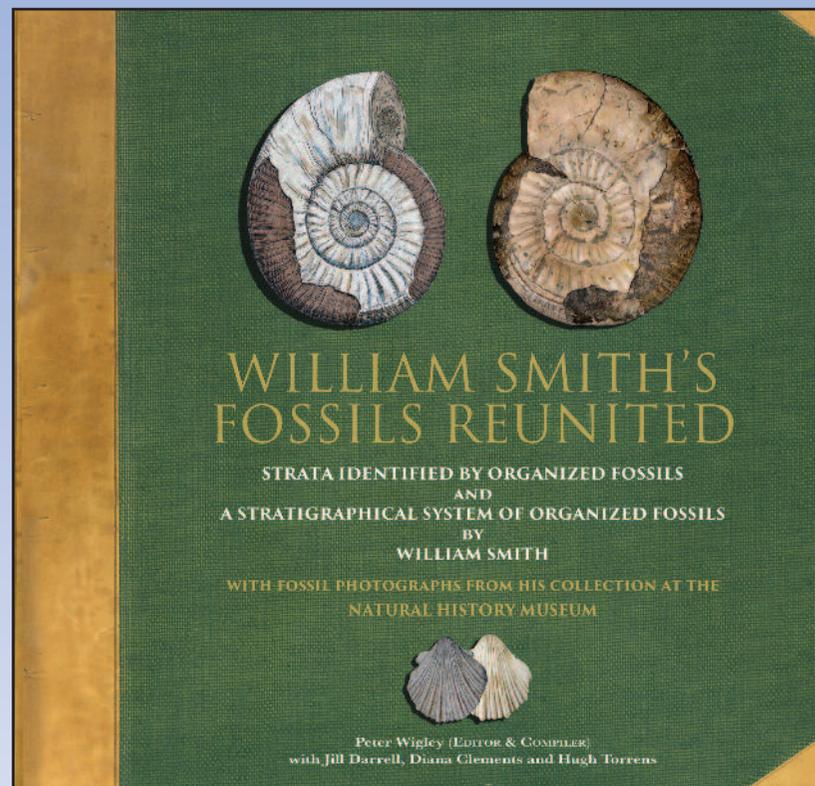
**Diana Clements** has worked part-time in the Department of Palaeontology in the Natural History Museum for over 25 years. In 2015 she worked with Jill Darrell to select the fossils figured by Smith for four of his strata for a display to celebrate 200 years since the publication of his map. Together they ran workshops on Smith's plates using comparable material. Diana is General Secretary of the Geologists' Association and compiled the GA Guide to the Geology of London.

**Hugh Torrens** is Professor Emeritus of History of Science and Technology at Keele University, and is a leading authority on William Smith. Through decades of painstaking research, Hugh reconstructed the early mapping endeavors of Smith, and uncovered personal vignettes from Smith's life that captured public attention. He has more than 200 books, papers and articles to his credit.

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Example of a double-page spread.



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