

# Edgar S Cobbold, geologist, of Watling House

The Wilding family dominated All Stretton Society for many generations until the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Their first home was Lower House, and at some time, probably shortly before 1800, they expanded this property by building a new house on the end of Lower House. This extension became home to a succession of gentleman tenants; among them Edgar S Cobbold, a prominent geologist. By that time the extension had become a separate property by the name of Watling House.



*Dr and Mrs Cobbold having a picnic up the Batch*

Edgar Sterling Cobbold was one of the most prominent of All Stretton's residents in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. He was a nationally

important geologist with a particular interest in the Cambrian period.

Edgar and his wife Alice née Shorting moved to All Stretton in 1886. They had married in 1872 but Mrs Cobbold's health was damaged by the birth of a child who only survived a few days. Edgar was a trained civil engineer but retired from his work to devote his time to caring for his wife. She was often seen being pushed around in a bath chair by her husband. They lived at Watling House until her death in 1925, and he continued to live there and work and publish his studies until he died in 1936. The garden at Watling House was also an interest and included rare and unusual specimens collected by friends from many countries.

Edgar's work in geology was inspired by the local geological landscape and resulted in a number of publications for societies including the Caradoc and Severn Valley Field Club and the Geological Association. He also contributed to the first study of Church Stretton published from 1899-1904 and edited the volume on archaeology of the area which was another interest of his. Visitors from all over the world came to see him in All Stretton and to share his knowledge of geology. It is fascinating to think that our village was the centre of such intellectual life during this period.

## Looking Ahead

Although the LHI funded project is now almost complete, a variety of resources will remain for the village to use and enjoy. These include the equipment purchased for the project comprising a laptop computer, powerpoint projector, scanner and digital camera.

The project has also created a range of local history resources including copies and transcripts of the 1841-1901 census returns, transcripts from the Church Stretton parish registers, electoral registers and trade directories as well as copies of photographs and post cards. These will all be stored in the village hall and available for research. All the original archive and photographic material generated by the project or inherited from the All Stretton Records Trust will be deposited with Shropshire Archives in Shrewsbury to ensure its long term preservation.

Last but not least, the website created by the project at [www.allstrettonhistory.org.uk](http://www.allstrettonhistory.org.uk) will be maintained and developed. Work on researching the history of the village will continue. We hope to increase our knowledge of the history of the village especially regarding the properties we were not able to include in the book. If anyone is interested in joining in please contact Ivar Romo on 01694 723804 or email [ivar\\_romo@hotmail.com](mailto:ivar_romo@hotmail.com).



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