

Doctor Cuthbert Collingwood

25 December 1826 - 20 October 1908

By Samuel Stephenson

(Edited by Douglas Fix)

Cuthbert Collingwood was the fifth of six sons born in Greenwich, England to Samuel Collingwood, architect and contractor.(1) Cuthbert Collingwood received his initial education at King's College School and later matriculated from Christ Church, Oxford on 8 April 1845, where he received his BA in 1849, his MA in 1852, and his MB in 1854.(2) He studied broadly within the natural sciences, focusing on medicine and biology.(3) After receiving his MB, Collingwood went on to study at Edinburgh University and then at Guy's Hospital (under the guidance of Dr. Addison), after which he continued his research at medical schools in Paris and Vienna.(4)

From 1858 to 1866, Collingwood served as a lecturer on botany at the Royal Infirmary Medical School in Liverpool. During this time, he also lectured on biology at the Liverpool School of Science, publishing his first major work in 1865: "Twenty-one Essays on Various Subjects, Scientific and Literary."(5)

In early 1866, as a volunteer surgeon and naturalist under the sanction of the Admiralty, Collingwood undertook a scientific voyage for the study of marine zoology aboard the *H.M.S. Rifleman* and the *H.M.S. Serpent*, visiting China, Formosa, the Pescadores Islands (off the coast of Formosa), Borneo, Labuan, Sarawak, the Philippines and Singapore.(6)

Traveling aboard the *H.M.S. Serpent* with Commander Bullock, Collingwood first arrived in Takao on 6 May 1866, where he met Dr. Maxwell and William Gregory, whom he credited for providing a good deal of aid. Collingwood was struck by the poverty of Takao, and took particular notice of the differences in ethnicity and customs between the Chinese and aborigines. From there, Collingwood and Bullock sailed by Taiwanfoo (which failed to impress Collingwood), and then to Tamsui, where he explored the local rice trade and exchanged banquets with the resident Chinese mandarin. From Tamsui (Tamsuy), he also made a brief trip up river (about ten miles) to Bangka (Mangka); his published works record comments on the local trade here, suggesting means for improvement. Collingwood then sailed to Kelung (Keelung),

where he became acquainted with local coal mining operations (though he received a "less than cordial" greeting from the coal merchants); he commented on the primitive manual labor at the mines and performed a technical evaluation of the quality of the coal. Finally, Collingwood traveled to Sauo (Sano) on the northeast coast to see some "native color." He was very taken by the natives and learned a bit of their language but found no evidence of indigenous religion or written script.(7)

After this extended expedition, Collingwood returned to Liverpool, where he became the senior physician at the Northern Hospital and was intimately involved in the intellectual and religious life of the city.(8) Collingwood became a prominent Swedenborgian (member of the 'New Church') and remained a member of that order for the rest of his life.(9) During this period of his life,(10) Collingwood served as the Honorable Secretary of the Literary and Philosophical Society and as Vice-President of the Field Club; he was an Honorable Lecturer on Zoology and Botany at the School of Science and a Professor of Physiology in the original Queen's College. Collingwood also proved very prolific, writing some forty papers on natural history in scientific periodicals, as well as publishing many expositions on his religious beliefs (in both verse and prose) during the course of his lifetime.(11)

From 1876 to 1877, Collingwood journeyed to Palestine and Egypt, and at some date thereafter (perhaps after his return from Egypt) moved to Paris, France, where he died on 20 October 1908.(12)

Selected Publications:(13)

"Twenty-one essays on various subjects, scientific and literary." *Scientific and Literary* (1865).

"A boat journey across the northern end of Formosa, from Tam-suy, on the west, to Kee-lung, on the east; with notices of Hoo-wei, Mangka, and Kelung." *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society* 11 (1867): 167-173.

"The sulphur-springs of northern Formosa." *The Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society of London* 23 (1867): 382-384.

"On the geological features of the northern part of Formosa and of the adjacent islands." *The Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society of London* 24 (1868): 95-98.

"On some sources of coal in the eastern hemisphere, namely Formosa, Labuan, Siberia, and Japan." *The Quarterly Journal of the Geological Society of London* 24 (1868): 98-102.

"Visit to the Kibalan village of Sano Bay, north-east coast of Formosa. Including a vocabulary of the dialect." *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London* n.s. 6 (1868): 135-143, 362-363.

Rambles of a naturalist on the shores and waters of the China Sea: Being observations in natural history during a voyage to China, Formosa, Borneo, Singapore, etc., made in Her Majesty's vessels in 1866 and 1867. London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1868.

The travelling birds. London, 1872.

"A vision of creation: A poem with an introduction." *Geological and Critical* (1872).

"New studies in Christian theology." (1883).

The Bible and the age: Principles of consistent interpretation. (1886)

"From Beyrout to Bethlehem."

Honors and Memberships:

Elected fellow of the Linnaean Society (1853) and served on their council (1868); Honorable Secretary of the Literary and Philosophical Society; Vice-President of the Field Club; For. [?] member of the Royal Physico-Economic Society of Königsberg; member (and Chairman, 1896) of the Oxford Graduates' Club; honorable member of the Literary and Philosophical Society, Liverpool.(14)

Notes:

1. *The dictionary of national biography*, Second Supplement (New York: Macmillan Company; London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1912), Vol. I, p. 385.

2. *Ibid.*; *The concise dictionary of national biography, From earliest times to 1985* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), Vol 1, p. 610.

3. Otness, Harold M., *One thousand westerners in Taiwan, to 1945: a biographical and bibliographical dictionary* ([Taipei]: Institute of Taiwan History, Preparatory Office, Academia Sinica, 1999), pp. 32-33; Carrington, George Williams, *Foreigners in Formosa 1841-1874* (San Francisco: Chinese Materials Center, 1978), p. 63; *The dictionary of national biography*, Vol. I, p. 385; *Who was who*, Vol 1, 1897-1916 (London: A. and C. Black; New York: MacMillan Company, 1920), p. 148; Kirk, John Foster, *A supplement to Allibones' critical dictionary of English literature and British and American authors* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1900), Vol 1, p. 365; *The concise dictionary of national biography, from earliest times to 1985* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), Vol 1, p. 610.

4. *Who was who*, Vol 1, 1897-1916, p. 148; *The dictionary of national biography*, Vol. I, p. 385; Kirk 1900, p. 365.

5. *The dictionary of national biography*, Vol. I, p. 385.

6. Kirk 1900, p. 365; *Who was who*, Vol 1, 1897-1916, p. 148; *The dictionary of national biography*, Vol. I, p. 385; Carrington 1978, pp. 63, 66, 107, 117-124, 176; Otness 1999, pp. 32-33. These sources do not, however, make clear the order in which Collingwood visited these places.

7. Carrington 1978, pp. 63, 66, 107, 117-124, 176; Otness 1999, pp. 32-33.

8. *The dictionary of national biography*, Vol. I, p. 385.

9. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 385; *The concise dictionary of national biography*, Vol 1, p. 610.

10. Probably from 1867 to 1876, though perhaps later, nearer the time of his death, when he was in Paris. The timing of his move to Paris from Liverpool is unclear. Based on *Who was who*, Vol 1, 1897-1916, p. 148; *The dictionary of national biography*, Vol. I, p. 385.

11. *The dictionary of national biography*, Vol. I, p. 385; *Who was who*, Vol 1, 1897-1916, p. 148; Kirk 1900, p. 365; *The concise dictionary of national biography*, p. 610.

12. *The dictionary of national biography*, Vol. I, p. 385.

13. Kirk 1900, p. 365; *The dictionary of national biography*, Vol. I, p. 385; *Who was who*, Vol 1, 1897-1916, p. 148; *The concise dictionary of national biography*, p. 610.

14. *The dictionary of national biography*, Vol. I, p. 385; *Who was who*, Vol 1, 1897-1916, p. 148; *The concise dictionary of national biography*, p. 610.