

Archives in the History of the Geological Sciences

This new series will present short overviews of Archives from around the world that are relevant for research in the History of the Geological Sciences in order to highlight their existence and help foster scholarly interest in their content. We hope to thus encourage the use of these fundamental resources by INHIGEO members worldwide and underline the key importance of this historical-scientific heritage for studies of the global development of the geological sciences. In this issue of the INHIGEO circular we present the **History of Science Collections of the University of Oklahoma**.

Archive: History of Science Collections, University of Oklahoma Libraries.

Host Institution: University of Oklahoma. Norman, Oklahoma, USA.

Brief Overview:

Holdings include more than 100,000 print volumes representing every chronological period, geographic region, and subject area in the history of science. Geology, meteorology, astronomy, physics, natural history, and technology are traditional areas of strength. Historic scientific journals include many of geological interest. Areas of recent concentration include women in science, Islamicate science, and Asian science. Holdings of major figures like Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, or Darwin are well known, yet holdings in geology are equally rich and deep. Illustrative examples include the study of petrified wood by Prince Federigo Cesi, Kepler's book on the snowflake, or an account of earthquakes in Japan (Jishin nendai-ki, 1855). These are online along with William Smith's 1815 map and Smith's annotated copies of two of his books. Recent acquisitions include hundreds of books from the libraries of Hugh S. Torrens (related to Smith and Mary Anning), Martin J. S. Rudwick, and Kenneth L. Taylor, as well as their papers. Other archives in the history of geology (<https://archives.libraries.ou.edu/repositories/4/resources?>) include correspondence of mainly 19th-century figures such as Lyell, De La Beche, Murchison, Darwin *et al.* (<https://archives.libraries.ou.edu/repositories/4/resources/12173>). The Collections works closely with the Department of the History of Science (<https://www.ou.edu/cas/hsci>). Holdings of the Western History Collections are of interest for environmental science and geology and natural history in the American West (<https://libraries.ou.edu/locations/western-history-collections>).

Availability/Accessibility:

All items are available for consultation on site in the Duane Roller Reading Room on the 5th floor of Bizzell Memorial Library. The new digital library at repository.ou.edu contains over 100 rare geological works. Dozens more are ready to go online after a platform upgrade scheduled for summer 2025, including several early modern earthquake pamphlets, the Paris edition of William Hamilton's *Campi Phlegraei*, two early states of Henry De La Beche's lithographs "Duria Antiquior" and "Awful Changes," and additional maps of William Smith to bring the total of online Smith titles up to 16 items. All images are released into the public domain with no publication fees, with high resolution versions available at no charge. Open-access collaborations include the Darwin Online project of Cambridge University; the Galileotheka digital library of the Museo Galileo in Florence, Italy; and Edition Open Sources with the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin.

Travel Awards:

A travel fellowship program endowed by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation supports short-term use of the Collections by visiting scholars (1-8 weeks, up to \$4,600); see <https://www.ou.edu/cas/hsci/collections-overview/mellon-travel-fellowships>. Fellowships are also available through the Consortium for the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine (<https://www.chstm.org/fellowships>). Fellows are invited to present their research in the colloquium series of the Department of the History of Science, Technology, and Medicine.

Website: <https://libraries.ou.edu/locations/history-science-collections>

Online catalogue: Search the holdings using the online catalogue advanced search, limited to special collections: <https://libraries.ou.edu/> (cf. <https://guides.ou.edu/hscisearching>).

Bibliography: *The Catalogue of the History of Science Collections of the University of Oklahoma Libraries*, 2 vols., compiled by Curator Duane Roller and Librarian Marcia Goodman and printed in 1976, listed 40,000 bibliographic records. Although it is still referenced as “Roller-Goodman” in the literature, the holdings have more than doubled since that time. The online catalogue is the only accurate guide to the Collections’ holdings.

Contact: A link to a contact form is found in the upper right on the Collections’ web pages (<https://libraries.ou.edu/content/contact-fifth-floor-special-research-collections>).



Image:

OU-HOS-
DuriaAntiquior.jpg
Henry De La Beche,
“Duria antiquior”
(lithograph, early
state, [London,
1829-1830]).