

CORRESPONDENCE

ORIGIN OF PICRITE BLOCKS NEAR WELLS

SIR,—In 1904 Mr. H. E. Balch discovered some pieces of picrite scattered over a field at Ebbor Rocks near Wells, Somerset. They were examined by Professor S. H. Reynolds and Dr. J. S. Flett and were found to be identical with the picrite of Menheniot Cornwall. All attempts to discover the material in situ failed and it was suggested that it had been carried to Ebbor by an iceberg.

In 1922 it was brought to my notice by Mr. A. T. Davies of Keynsham that picrite had been used to repair the road leading to the G. W. R. goods yard at that village and when, in 1948, Dr. F. S. Wallis gave me a specimen of Ebbor picrite, it proved to be very similar in thin section to the rock from Keynsham. A letter to the G.W.R. brought a reply from Mr. H. A. Alexander, Divisional Engineer, Bristol, dated 25th October, 1948, in which he says "Ballast for the track not only on the Cheddar Valley Branch, but on many sections of the line comes from the Menheniot Quarries . . .". Thus there is a potential source of Menheniot picrite at Wookey Station, just over one mile from the field in which it was discovered. A recent attempt however to find picrite at this goods yard failed, the ballast and the road being at present composed of Carboniferous Limestone, together with a small proportion of various igneous rocks and slags.

When the field in question was under plough soon after the war, I was able to find on it pieces of broken brick, tile, and clinker and as all the specimens of picrite discovered at Ebbor (some 200 odd) were of about the size of road stone, being rarely more than 2½ inches long, I think we may conclude that the Ebbor picrite was probably carried to the spot where it was found, from Menheniot by human agency.

It may perhaps be worthwhile pointing out that it seems unlikely that an iceberg would freeze up pebbles in Cornwall, float north and melt them out and also that there is no known instance of ice-born rocks being found in the Mendip area.

I have to thank Dr. F. S. Wallis for placing some of this rock at my disposal and for much helpful discussion and criticism and I would also express my obligation to the Amalgamated Roadstone Corporation, Ltd. for going to considerable trouble to send me specimens of their Clicker Tor picrite from a part of the quarry believed to be in work about the turn of the century. I would also like to thank Mr. H. A. Alexander for the information he gave me.

REFERENCES

- REYNOLDS, S. H., 1906. *Brit. Ass. (York) Trans.*, Sect. C, p. 581.
REYNOLDS, S. H., 1920. *Geol. Mag.*, lvii, 224.

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DIMENSIONS OF ASYMMETRICAL FOLDS

SIR,—In regions of highly folded rocks overturned folds may be encountered on scales that range from microscopic to regional. For descriptive purposes a semi-quantitative measure of scale is required, but the mathematical terms amplitude (A) and wavelength (λ) commonly used to specify symmetrical folds cannot be readily applied in the field to asymmetrical folds. A need for a more precise measure of the scale of such folding has arisen out of my work for the Falkland Islands Dependencies Survey. I am indebted to Mr. W. B. Harland for discussion resulting in the following proposals which have been adopted by the Survey.