LYELL STREET NAMED AFTER

CHARLES LYELL (1797 - 1875)

Born in Kinnordy, Forfarshire, Scotland, on the 14th November 1797 he was the eldest of ten children and his father spent a lot of time helping to educate him in the sciences, and particularly nature.

Charles Lyell graduated from Oxford in 1821, and joined the bar in 1825. However, as time went on his eyesight began to worsen and he soon realized that his ambitions were more towards the sciences, so, in 1827, he finally chose geology over the law.

The first volume of his legendary book “Principles of Geology” was published in 1830. The third and last volume was published three years later. It is considered to be a work of synthesis, supported by his own personal observations on his travels.

In 1832, he married Mary Horner, the daughter of a colleague in the Geological Society of London. The couple had no children but instead spent their time traveling all over the world as Charles observed the Geology and wrote his field changing works.

Lyell’s primary belief was that all the past changes of the earth can be detailed by the forces now acting. The notion became the fundamental basis of modern geology. It is very difficult to explain how odd it appeared at that time.

His other work, “Antiquity of Man”, was published in 1863, and discussed the proofs of the long existence of human beings on the earth. Lyell’s geological approach tends to be an assessment of evolutionism in the wider sense. He was one the earliest men to embrace Darwin’s theory of natural selection in biology.

Lyell’s geological contributions ranged from volcanoes and geological dynamics through stratigraphy, palaeontology, and glaciology to subjects that would now be considered as parts of prehistoric archaeology and palaeoanthropology.

In 1866, Charles Lyell was made a foreign member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.

Lyell died on the 22nd February 1875 aged 77 and is buried at Westminster Abbey.