

JAMES FREDERICK CROUCH (1809-1888)

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This is one in a series of articles about prominent British and Irish field-bryologists of the past. The author would be very pleased to learn of any information which supplements its content.

A Social and Biographical History of British and Irish Field-bryologists is also available on-line at <http://britishbryologicalsociety.org.uk/>

Bryological career

Crouch studied bryophytes, lichens and vascular plants, as well as geology. He was the first to explore and evaluate the flora of north Herefordshire, and added many species to the known bryoflora of Herefordshire, thus considerably assisting Augustin Ley, as he compiled records for his *Flora of Herefordshire* (1889).

Crouch's herbarium is at Hereford Museum.

Family background and biography

James Frederick Crouch was born on July 26th, 1809 at Clophill, near Higham Gobion, Bedfordshire, a son of James Crouch (died 1853), gentleman and farmer, and Alice (*née* Wing). James Crouch senior was himself a son of James Crouch of Clophill.

James Frederick had six siblings: Abraham Wing Crouch (died 1865); Alice Maria; Edward; Elizabeth; Richard Leonard; and the Reverend William Crouch (1818-1846) of Cainhoe, Bedfordshire, and who botanised in Bedfordshire. James Frederick's nephew Charles Crouch (1855-1944) also botanised in Bedfordshire, where he was a farmer.

James Frederick began his education at Dr. Simpson's school at Baldock, and then went up to Oxford and trained for the priesthood, graduating Bachelor of Arts in 1840, and Bachelor of Divinity in 1841. He became a don and bursar of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He joined the Botanical Society of London in 1847.

In 1849 he was inducted as rector of Pembridge, Herefordshire, and spent the remainder of his life there. 1849 was also the year in which he married Elizabeth Stephens Wardale (1820-1888), daughter of John Reynolds Wardale (died 1858) of Hitchin, Hertfordshire. The couple lived in the nearby village of Eardisley. Elizabeth's brother was the Reverend John Wardale of Datchworth, Hertfordshire. In addition to being rector of Pembridge, Crouch was also prebendary of Hereford Cathedral, Rural Dean of Leominster, and justice for the peace in the county of Hereford.

