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## CHARLES DOOLITTLE WALCOTT

### PALEONTOLOGIST—1850-1927

CHARLES DOOLITTLE WALCOTT, of Shropshire and New England ancestry, was born on March 31, 1850, at New York Mills, New York, and died of apoplexy at Washington, D. C., on February 9, 1927. Standing about six feet two inches in height, slight, but of athletic build, he had a commanding presence that attested a magnificent physique. Confident, quick of decision, with a matter-of-fact face, Walcott suggested the administrator rather than the savant, and yet he "achieved in scientific circles an exalted position attained by few."

Walcott's first paper, on a new species of trilobite, appeared in 1875, and his last one, on the Cambrian, two months after his death. His strictly paleontological and geological bibliography appears to have over 170 titles, and of these about 110 have to do with the Cambrian. The list of his complete writings will rise into the hundreds.

Walcott's education was that of the local public schools, and then of the academy at Utica, an institution in which other leading geologists received their first lessons in science. As a paleontologist and geologist, however, he was virtually self-educated, first by direct contact with nature, and then from books and colleagues. In 1868 he left the academy and during the following two years was a clerk in shops. In 1871, at Indianapolis, he met the state geologist, Professor E. T. Cox, who restimulated him to take up the study of paleontology, which had been dear to him ever since his fourteenth year, when he found his first fossil. The actual meaning of fossils, however, came to him through meeting in 1864 Colonel E. Jewett, one of New York's earliest paleontologists, who advised him and helped him to obtain books.

Following Cox's advice, Walcott took up residence in 1871 on a farm near the picturesque and highly fossiliferous region of Trenton Falls, which is about 15 miles to the northeast of his birthplace, and between times he collected the fossils turned up by the plow and quarried for others. In the course of two years he had amassed a large collection of Trenton specimens that was wonderfully rich in trilobites. This collection he sold in September, 1873, to Louis Agassiz, and now he came directly under the magnetic influence of that great man. Among the trilobites, there was a specimen of *Isotelus platycephalus* that showed, even if imperfectly, some of the ventral

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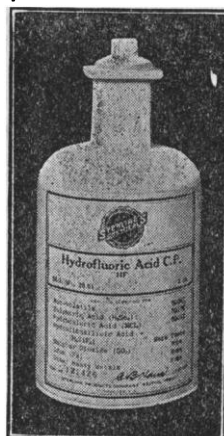
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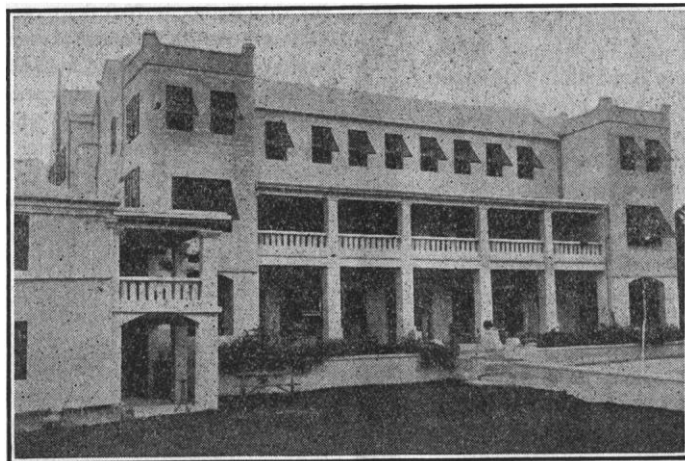
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