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Gray, John Durbin (1845 – 1925).
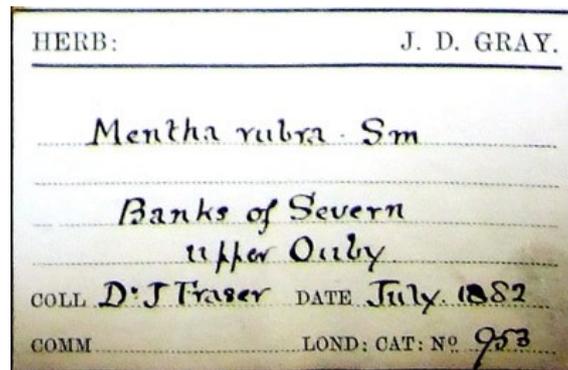
Posted on April 22, 2012 by Chris

John Durbin Gray (1845 – 1925) was the son of John Durbin Gray, sometime vicar of Abbotsley (Huntingdonshire) and Rector of Market Weston (Suffolk). Rev John Durbin Gray (Senior – born 1822) was educated at Balliol College, Oxford (1839 – 43) and there is a possibility that he also collected – there are a few sheets at H@H that are very early. He died in Clifton in 1887.

John Durbin Gray (Junior) was educated at Clare College, Cambridge (1865). He was sometime Curate at St Leonard's, Colchester and later Vicar at Nayland, near Colchester. Later he lived at Undercliffe, St Leonards. He died in March, 1925.

His personal herbarium was extensive.

In 1908, he donated some 5000+ sheets to the herbarium at Cambridge – which were noted in the herbarium records as follows

"almost complete with regard to the British Flora …. and works and papers on Systematic Botany, including Hanbury's Hieracia and Fryer's Potamogenaceae".

Gray helped with the fieldwork to W M Hind's "Flora of Suffolk, *a topographical enumeration of the plants of the county, showing the results of former observations and of the most recent researches* ", and his contribution is acknowledged in the introduction to this work.

He is also credited with finding *Floating Water Plantain* * in the Llangollen Canal in 1883. Apart from his botanical collections, he was interested in various archaeological remains and wrote on neolithic artefacts and culture.

NAYLAND.—Mr. F. J. Bennett and Dr. J. S. Holden have found palaeolithic implements in the drift sands and gravels of this neighbourhood. The Rev. J. D. Gray has also found palaeolithic implements here. Neolithic implements have been found in considerable numbers, including convex and concave scrapers, borers, fabricators, chisels, knives, &c.

Besides the Creswell Crags [1] and Sherborne engravings, [2] the figure of a goat had been detected by Mr. Lewis Abbott on a pebble from Nayland, Suffolk, in the collection of Rev. J. D. Gray, by whose permission it was exhibited to the meeting. Illustrations of it were published in *Journ. Suffolk Institute of Archaeology*, xv (1913), p. 3, and the *Sphere* of 31st January 1914, p. 132.

* The conservation value of Shropshire's canals by Alex Lockton; Shropshire botanical Society Newsletter – Spring 2000 – pages 9-14

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