

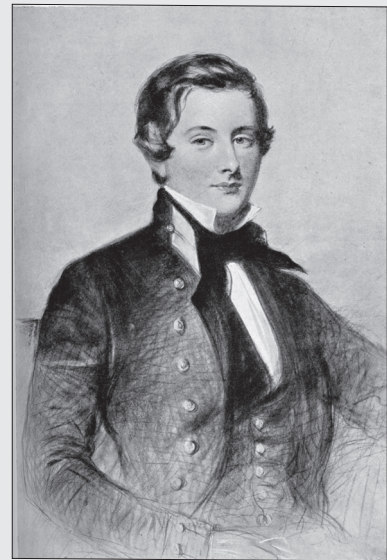
Dr. J. Scott Keltie, late Secretary  
of the Royal Geographical Society

**Sir Clements R. Markham**  
1830-1916

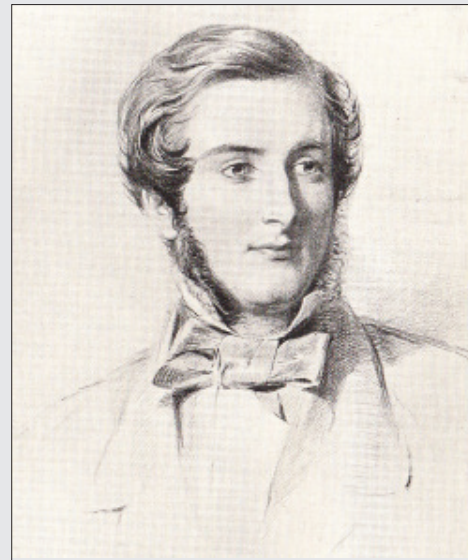
**BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**



Naval cadet, aged 14.



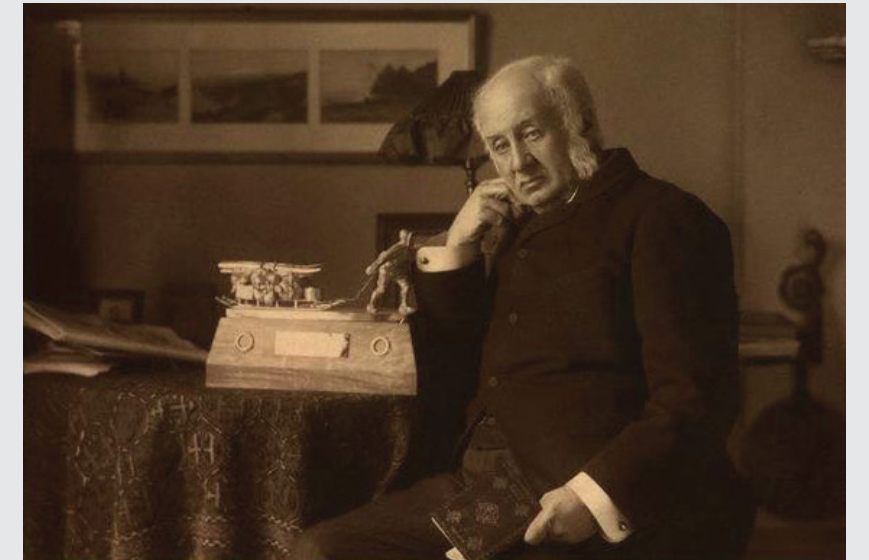
Midshipman, aged 18.



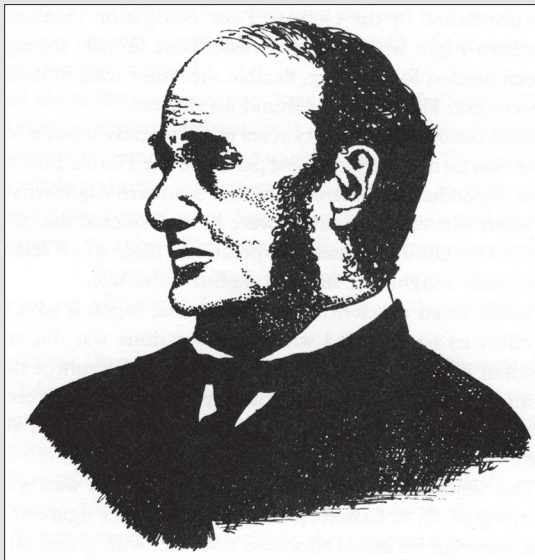
Aged 25.



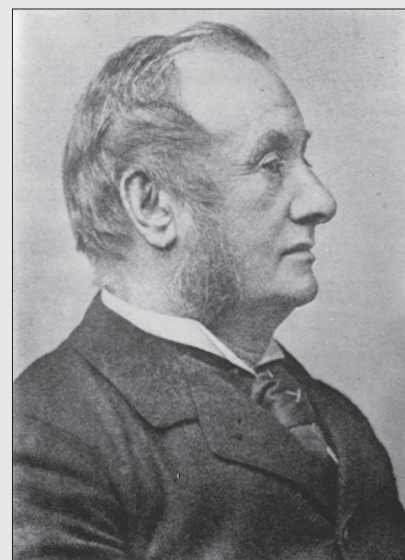
With the Scotts, aged 80.



In the collections of the National Portrait Gallery.



In middle age?



In middle age.



Around aged 70, probably older.



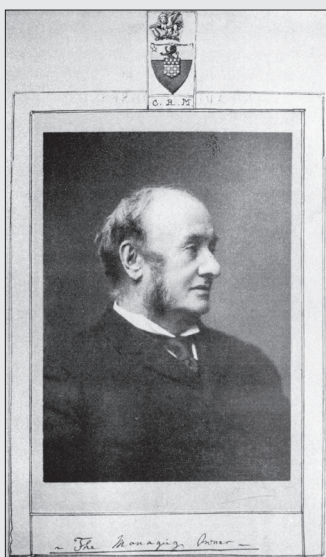
Portrait at the RGS.



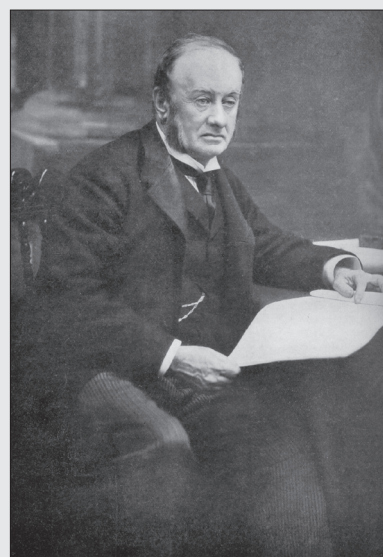
Around aged 84. SPRI



From his RGS obituary.



Aged early 70s.



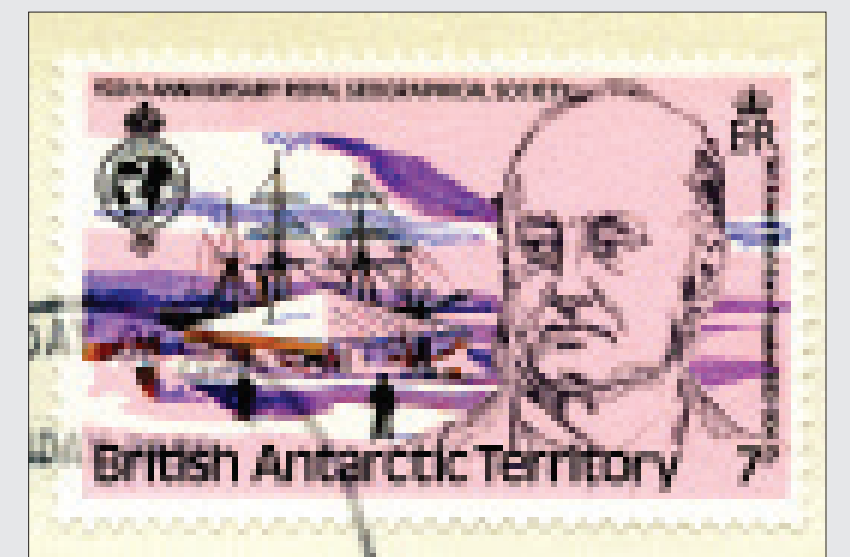
Around aged 70.



Around aged 75.



Bust in front of the RGS.



Stamp issued for 150th RGS anniversary.

Sir Clements R. Markham  
Biographical Sketch

*By*

Dr. J. Scott Keltie, late Secretary of  
the Royal Geographical Society.



Sir Clements Markham with Kathleen  
and Robert Scott aboard *Terra Nova*.

Copy        of 25.

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Vol. XLVII, No. 3.

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for distribution to those attending a luncheon at the Naval Club, London,  
on May 16, 2016, one hundred years following Markham's death.

May 2016

## Sir Clements R. Markham BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

Dr. J. Scott Keltie, late Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society.

**B**Y THE DEATH of Sir Clements Markham on 30 January 1916 the Society has lost a Fellow of over sixty years' standing, and one who, for the greater part of the last half-century, had been one of its most eminent and devoted officers. He was everywhere recognized as the leading representative of British Geography. His Fellowship goes back to a period when several of the more distinguished founders of the Society were still alive and active. When he joined the Society in 1853, the Earl of Ellesmere was President, and he was associated during his Fellowship and his long-continued honorary secretaryship with such men as Sir Roderick Murchison, Admiral Beechey, Earl de Grey, Lord Ashburton, Sir Henry Rawlinson, Sir Bartle Frere, Sir Rutherford Alcock, Lord Dufferin, Lord Northbrook, Lord Aberdare, and Sir Richard Strachey. He long survived all those with whom he was so intimately associated. To his many later friends all over the world his death will be regarded as a personal loss.

Clements Robert Markham was born at Stillingfleet, in Yorkshire, on 20 July 1830, the year in which the Society was founded. He was the son of the Rev. D. F. Markham, vicar of Stillingfleet and Canon of Windsor, and of Catherine, daughter of Sir William Mordaunt Milner, Bart., of Nunappleton. The great-grandfather of Sir Clements was Archbishop of York, and on both his father's and his mother's side he was connected with some of the oldest families in England; he could trace his ancestry back to a very remote period. One of his favourite hobbies was genealogy and heraldry, and with his wonderful memory he could tell at once of the relationships of almost everyone of our historic families.

Sir Clements was educated at Cheam and at Westminster School. To the latter he remained strongly attached to the end of his life, in late years being one of its governors, and a trustee of Dr. Busby's charities. The Markhams had been more or less of a naval family for generations, and young Markham entered the service in 1844 at the age of fourteen, and retired in 1852. During the period of his service as naval officer he had some exciting experiences in hunting Riff pirates in the Mediterranean. Comparatively short as his period of service in the Navy really was, it made a deep and lasting impression upon him; throughout his life he was ever ready to help and befriend young naval officers. He was so convinced of the utility of naval

discipline that for the Polar expeditions in which he was deeply interested he always endeavoured to procure the services of naval officers and men. Before he retired from the Navy he had his first experience of exploring work as a member of the Franklin Search Expedition of 1850-51 under Captain Austin. He was then a midshipman, and sailed in the *Assistance*, under the command of Captain Ommanney, with Leopold McClintock, Sherard Osborn, and Vesey Hamilton as fellow-officers. He was the last survivor of all the members of the expedition, officers and men. A few months after his return from the Arctic young Markham, then only twenty-two years of age, published the story of his experiences under the title of 'Franklin's Footsteps.'

In the year in which Markham retired from the navy, 1852, he visited Peru, mainly to inquire into the remains of the Inca period. He spent two years exploring the country and investigating its remains, the result being a volume entitled 'Cuzco and Lima,' published in 1856, which threw considerable light upon a perplexing problem. Sir Clements maintained a keen interest in Peru, and indeed, in South American exploration and ethnology, up to the end of his life, and as recently as 1910 published a volume on 'The Incas of Peru.' The knowledge of Peru thus acquired by Markham was, a few years later, utilized in what has proved a priceless service to humanity. In 1859 he was entrusted by the Secretary of State for India with the superintendence of the necessary arrangements

for the collection of the cinchona plant, and for its introduction into India. With this object he again visited South America in 1860, accompanied by a collector and three other companions, and with complete success arranged for the transmission of the invaluable plant to India. In carrying out this great undertaking Sir Clements and his companions had many adventures and ran some risks while penetrating into remote parts of Peru, which had probably never been visited by Europeans before. Thus the cinchona plant was introduced into India and cultivated there so successfully that the price was reduced from something like 20s. to a few pence an ounce. Sir Clements himself went to India to superintend the introduction of the plant, and the result was another interesting volume, covering a much wider field than the collection of cinchona, 'Travels in Peru and India, 1862.' Three years later he again visited India as well as Ceylon, to report on the Pearl Fisheries. Besides the works already mentioned, his continued interest in Peru was manifested by various publications in later years, such as his 'Quichua Grammar and Dictionary,' 1865 and 1908, 'Ollanta, a Quichua Drama,' 1871, 'Peruvian Bark,' 1880, and 'The War between Chili and Peru,' 1879-81. Moreover, it was through his initiation that the Society in 1910 published the first sheet, embracing part of Peru and Bolivia, of a new map of South America which, it is hoped, may be completed when more prosperous times arrive.

The next important enterprise of Sir Clements was the part which he took in the Abyssinian War of 1868 as the geographer to the expedition. He was present at the storm and capture of Magdala, and it was he who discovered the body of King Theodore. On his return he published a history of the Abyssinian Expedition. It was on this expedition that he first met the late Sir Henry Stanley, who accompanied it as correspondent for the *New York Herald*. Sir Clements had some interesting reminiscences of Stanley, who was then quite unknown.

At the date, of the Abyssinian expedition Sir Clements had been Honorary Secretary of the Society for five years, having been elected in 1863. This position he held for a quarter of a century, retiring from it in 1888, when the Society awarded him the Founder's Medal. It was a stirring period in the history of the Society and in the history of Geography. A year after Markham became Honorary Secretary, the position of Assistant Secretary became vacant, and no doubt it was greatly through his influence that the

services of the distinguished South American explorer and naturalist, Mr. H. W. Bates, were secured for that post. They became fast friends, and the two worked together devotedly for the interests of the Society, even after Markham's retirement from the post of Honorary Secretary in 1888. It was during the period of his secretaryship that the exploration of the great blank in the centre of Africa was being carried out with ever-increasing vigour. Markham thus became intimately associated with the work of Livingstone, Burton, Speke, Grant, Cameron, Baker, Thomson, Stanley, Selous, and others whose names are written large across the heart of Africa. No one was more ready than Sir Clements to encourage these pioneer explorers and to help them in every way as far as the resources of the Society would permit. His hospitality was catholic and generous, and he probably did more than any other man, since the time of Murchison, to raise the Society's reputation to the high standard which it has attained.

As Secretary, he was naturally keenly interested not only in the exploration of Africa, but in the work which was being carried out in other continents, especially Asia. In the exploration of Asia he was intimately associated with the work of such well-known men as Palgrave, Rawlinson, Yule, Trotter, Carey, Strachey, Wallace, Montgomerie, Blakiston, Hayward, Ney Elias, Gill, Hooker, Baber, Littledale, Holdich, Rockhill, and his distinguished successor Lord Curzon. A glance through the volumes of the old *Journal* of the Society, the *Proceedings* and the *Journal* as it now exists will show the vast amount of work of a high character which was carried out under the auspices or by the encouragement of the Society during the forty-two years of Markham's tenure of office either as Secretary, as Vice-President, or as President. It will there be seen that it was not only exploration, in the ordinary sense, with which the Society had to deal, but that even in those earlier years the scientific aspect of geography was already recognized. It was while Markham was still an Honorary Secretary of the Society that this aspect of the subject received more distinct encouragement by the institution of series of lectures by distinguished scientific men on their special subjects. This feature may be regarded as the forerunner of the Research Department of the Society's work, which Sir Clements established soon after he became President in 1893, and which has now been at work for many years, with satisfactory results.

Sir Clements Markham had also much to do with the attempt to raise the position of Geography in English education by offering medals in an examination in the subject open to pupils from the principal public schools. When after a trial of twenty years this scheme proved not so successful as might have been hoped it was decided, in 1884, to abandon it and institute an inquiry into the position of geography in universities and schools on the Continent and in America, and to send abroad a delegate for this purpose. The report he brought back was carefully considered by the Council, and it was determined to appeal to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge to found Schools of Geography, and the appeal was supported by an offer of pecuniary grants-in-aid. This appeal was successful, and in all the subsequent negotiations and co-operation involved in founding and fostering the new schools Markham took an active part, serving at various times on the Geographical Boards of both Universities. The movement thus initiated may now be regarded as having attained its purpose in raising geographical teaching and research to a level approaching that which it has so long achieved in Continental countries.

In other ways Sir Clements did much to add to the efficiency of the Society. He was, for example, keenly interested in the improvement of our library and map collections, both of which during his time received immense additions, both in new publications and works of historical value. He was also active in promoting the enlargement of the collection of photographs begun during his term of office. Another department, the growth and success of which was largely due to Markham's zeal, is that for instruction in surveying, which before the war broke out had grown to almost embarrassing dimensions. During the many years that this department has been at work a very large number of men, military officers, travellers and colonial officials, have been sent out with a practical knowledge of surveying, many of them having taken the Society's Diploma testifying to the holders' qualifications as trained surveyors.

The foregoing statement may afford some idea of the very varied and important work carried out by the Society during Markham's tenure of office, and largely through his intelligent and never-tiring exertions. The result of all this energy was the obvious necessity of a change in the Society's house. Not only did our various collections increase to such an extent that No.1, Savile Row became quite inadequate in

accommodation, but the work of the Society also grew to such an extent that by the time Markham retired from office the Staff had had to be trebled. It may be noted here in passing that it was during his secretaryship that the Society had made its first move from Whitehall to Savile Row.

As might have been expected Sir Clements' intense interest in polar exploration led to important practical results during his long period of office as Secretary and President. After the Franklin Search Expeditions the British Government ceased for many years to interest itself in polar exploration. But Sir Clements could not allow the matter to rest there, and it was partly through his persistent advocacy that the last official Arctic Expedition (1874-6) was equipped and placed under the command of Sir George Nares, with Commander (now Admiral Sir) A. H. Markham as Commander of the *Alert*. Sir Clements accompanied the expedition as far as Godhavn, while Commander Markham succeeded under almost insuperable difficulties in reaching 83° 20' 26" N., the record latitude reached up to that time. For many years Sir Clements with untiring persistency advocated the renewal of Antarctic exploration on a large scale, and he must be accorded the credit of having been the initiator of the vast amount of Antarctic work that has been accomplished during the last fifteen years. His zeal was amply rewarded when he succeeded in obtaining from Col. Longstaff and other private subscribers, from the Society and from the Government, a sum approaching £100,000 for the equipment of an expedition under Capt. R. F. Scott, which in 1901-4 in the *Discovery* attained memorable results and set an example which has been followed by great achievements. The death of Capt. Scott, whom Sir Clements loved as a son, on his journey back from the South Pole in 1911, was probably the most grievous blow that Markham had ever experienced.

Throughout his long official connection with the Society, Sir Clements kept himself in close touch not only with what may be called its external activities but with its internal organization, in which he took a proud interest. By his friendly, genial and considerate relations with every member of the staff he secured their loyal devotion not only to himself but to the Society, so that the hardest work in carrying out the Society's objects and in maintaining its reputation became a pleasure and not a task. He took a special interest in the younger members of the staff, who

were ever eager to gain his approval. Indeed, one of his striking characteristics was his love for the company of young men—Westminster boys, naval cadets, aspiring explorers, and others preparing for their career in life. There are hundreds of men all over the world, not only old boys from the *Worcester* and other training ships, but men in many walks of life, who will admit that their intercourse with Markham was an inspiration and an incentive to do their best and bravest. In such company he was himself again a young man, and nothing pleased him more than to have naval cadets or Westminster boys to lunch and to accompany them after to the theatre or the Zoological Gardens. Hence the widespread feeling of personal loss in his death.

Space forbids our going into further details with regard to Sir Clements' long connection with the Society, and all he did to promote its interests and the objects for which it was founded. He lived to see its membership grow from something well under 1000 to 5300 and its income quintupled. He left it admittedly the greatest Geographical Society in the world, publishing the leading geographical periodical, and in a position to render important services in the gigantic struggle which is being waged for the Empire's existence.

Sir Clements' interest and activities were not confined to the Society or to Geography. He was Secretary to the Hakluyt Society from 1858 to 1887 and President from 1889 to 1909. Everyone cognisant of the career of that Society is aware that its success in publishing such a magnificent series of ancient voyages and travels has been largely due to the unceasing devotion and the sympathetic and inspiring influence of Sir Clements. He himself was responsible for something like thirty volumes of the Society's publications, and to the very end he had others in preparation. Besides this he edited two volumes for the Navy Record Society and one for the Roxburghe Club.

In July 1854 Markham was appointed to what was known as the Board of Control of the East India Company and served in the Secret Department through the time of the Persian War and Indian Mutiny. From 1858 to 1862 he served in the Revenue Department of the India Office, and it was during that period that he was deputed to proceed to South America for the purpose of collecting cinchona plants and seeds and introducing them into India. From July 1861 to August 1863 he acted as Private Secretary to

Mr. F. G. Baring (Under-Secretary of State for India) who eventually became Lord Northbrook and Viceroy of India. It was about this time that on the suggestion of Colonel H. L. Thuillier, the Surveyor-General of India, Markham was entrusted with the charge of the geographical business of the India Office. One of his first labours was the preparation of the original "Memoir on the Indian Survey," a work which had a good circulation and which was translated into the French and Dutch languages. He also strongly advised the preparation of similar Memoirs for all the Departments of the India Office, but though the idea found several supporters in the office the proposal failed to obtain general favour. The resumption of Marine Surveys in India, which had been abandoned after the abolition of the Indian Navy, was strenuously advocated by Markham and eventually sanctioned; and the creation of a Central Meteorological Department for the purpose of collating and utilizing the scattered observations was another matter which he continued and with eventual success to press upon the attention of the Government. Another task entrusted to Markham was the preparation of the Moral and Material Progress Statement required by Act of Parliament to be laid before Parliament. Mr. (later Sir Mountstuart) Grant Duff, who had obtained the introduction of the section in the Indian Councils Act, providing for the report in question, and who was Under-Secretary of State in 1872, was desirous that a genuine interest should be aroused in Indian affairs by the annual presentation of a thoroughly readable volume. The reports for 1871-2 and 1872-3 were great improvements on their predecessors and gained general approbation, Count von Moltke amongst others having specially expressed his admiration of the book. The discovery of the journals and other papers of George Bogle who was sent on a mission to Tibet by Warren Hastings, and of Manning, the only Englishman who up to that time had ever visited Lhasa, was due to Markham's research, and the Secretary of State sanctioned their being printed and published at the Government expense. An admirable introduction was prefixed giving an account of Tibetan geography and history and the journals were annotated throughout by Markham.

Sir Clements' interests and activities were as we have shown widespread and altogether he was author and editor of half a hundred works, besides numerous papers and memoirs in the publications of the Geographical and other Societies. In addition



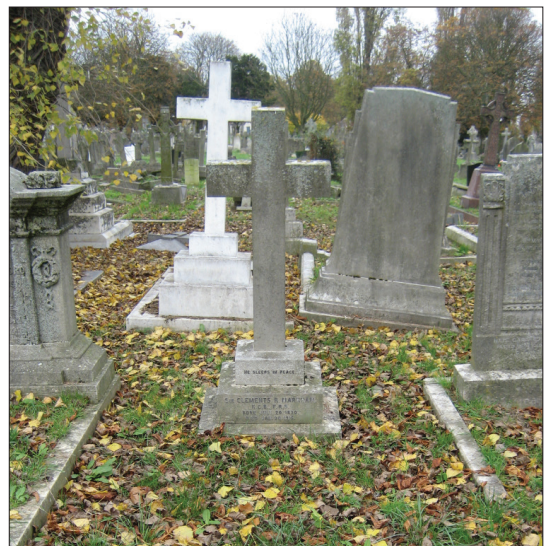
to the works already mentioned, reference may be made to his 'Threshold of the Unknown Region,' probably the best summary of Arctic exploration. Among volumes with a geographical interest were his Lives of Columbus, John Davis, Major Rennell, and Sir Leopold McClintock. Other biographies were 'Life of the Great Lord Fairfax,' 'The Fighting Veres,' 'The Paladins of Edwin the Great,' 'Richard III., His Life and Character;' in the last he tried to acquit Richard of the murder of the two princes. Then we have his 'History of Peru,' and 'History of Persia.' Sir Clements had the pen of a ready writer. The facility and rapidity with which even to the end he could turn out work was marvellous. He was too wedded to old ways to dictate or type-write, and his small, clear, angular penmanship was characteristic, the clearness remaining to the last. His almost phenomenal memory was of great assistance to him as an author. He had the history of Polar exploration, of the exploration of Tibet, and other fields, such as certain periods and genealogies, by heart, as well as the minutes of council of the Society, and the great episodes in its career, in minute detail.

Underneath a somewhat abrupt and detached manner Sir Clements concealed strong feelings and a warm and sympathetic heart. He was the staunchest of friends and the indomitable champion of any cause he made his own. Naturally conservative, he was specially jealous of any departure from the traditions of the Society, but as facts show he did not hesitate to welcome new departures which contributed to the promotion of its objects. As might have been expected he had his prejudices and dislikes, but even these, strong as they may have been sometimes, were frequently overcome by an appeal to his better judgment and his heart. Without ostentation he helped many a needy man. He had led the fullest of lives, and had it not been for the misfortune which ended in death, there was every hope that he would have had still several years of life and activity before him.

Sir Clements was the recipient of many honours. He was made K.C.B. in 1896, and orders were conferred upon him by the Sovereigns of Portugal, Brazil, Sweden, and Norway. He was elected Fellow of the Royal Society in 1873, and was Honorary Member of various Academies, and of all the Geographical Societies of Europe and the Americas. Cambridge conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Science.

In 1857 Sir Clements was married to Minna, daughter of the Rev. James Hamilton Chichester, Rector of Arlington, North Devon, who, with a daughter, Mary Louisa, born in 1859, survives him.

Sir Clements was buried in Kensal Green Cemetery, on February 3, and at the service at St. Michael's, Chester Square, which preceded his funeral, Earl Curzon of Kedleston represented the Society in the unavoidable absence of the President. Other members of Council present were Admiral Sir Lewis Beaumont, Col. Sir Th. H. Holdich, Sir Everard im Thurn, Mr. Reginald Smith, Mr. Somers Cocks, Dr. H. N. Dickson; with Dr. J. Scott Keltie, Mr. E. Heawood and Mr. E. A. Reeves representing the staff. There were also present at the service Lady Markham, Admiral Sir Albert Markham and other relatives, the Colombian and Peruvian Ministers, Dr. Gow, head master of Westminster School, Admiral Sir Arthur Moore, Admiral the Hon. Sir E. R. Fremantle, Sir George Dashwood, Admiral Sir James Bruce, Admiral Sir N. Bowden Smith, Dr. Arthur Schuster (Royal Society), Dr. Smith Woodward (Geological Society), Mr. Albert Gray and Mr. J. A. J. De Villiers (Hakluyt Society), Dr. J. H. Guillemard (Cambridge University), Capt. D. Wilson Barker (Worcester Training Ship), Lady Mary Scott, Miss Scott (sister of Captain Scott), Lieut. Rupert G. England, R.N.R., Mr. Cyril Longhurst (the late Captain Scott's secretary).



Markham's gravesite at Kensal Green Cemetery, London.

## A M A R K H A M T I M E L I N E

- 20 JULY 1830.** Clements Robert Markham born at Stillingfleet Vicarage, Stillingfleet, North Yorkshire.
- 1838.** Markham family moves to Great Horkesley in Essex.
- 1839?-April 1842.** Student at Cheam School, Cheam, Sutton.
- MAY 1842.** Enters Westminster School, London.
- 28 JUNE 1844.** Enrols as a Naval Cadet.
- 20 JULY 1844.** Sets sail on HMS *Collingwood* for a four-year tour of the Pacific Station, calling at Chile, Peru, Sandwich Islands, Tahiti, Brazil, The Falklands, and Mexico.
- 28 JUNE 1846.** Advances in rank to Midshipman.
- 4 MAY 1850.** Sets sails aboard HMS *Assistance* for the Arctic.
- OCTOBER 1851.** Returns home from the Arctic.
- 24 DECEMBER 1851.** Resigns from the Navy.
- 1852-53.** Undertakes expeditions to Peru to study both its geography and the history of the Incas.
- 1853.** Enters the civil service.
- 27 NOVEMBER 1854.** Elected a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.
- 23 APRIL 1857.** Marries Minna Chicester
- 1858.** Begins twenty-nine year term as Secretary of the Hakluyt Society.
- 1859.** The Markham's only child (Mary Louise or May) born. (She died in 1926.)
- DECEMBER 1859.** Travels to Peru to collect cinchona trees.
- APRIL 1861.** Appointed private secretary to the Secretary of State for India.
- 1863.** Made Honorary Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, serving to 1888.
- 1867-68.** Engaged as geographer to the British military expedition (Magdala campaign) to Abyssinia.
- 17 MAY 1871.** Created a Companion of the Bath.
- 1873.** Elected a Fellow of the Royal Society.
- 29 MAY 1875.** Set sail with the Arctic expedition under the command of Captain George S. Nares, leaving the expedition at Disko Island and returning aboard the tender *Valorous*.
- 1877.** Leaves the India Office.
- 1889.** Begins twenty year term as President of the Hakluyt Society.
- 13 NOVEMBER 1893.** Elected President of the Royal Geographical Society, serving until 1905.
- 1896.** Knighted (KCB) in recognition of his geographical work.
- 6 AUGUST 1901.** *Discovery* sails for the Antarctic.
- 10 JUNE 1915.** Reads his last paper before a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society.
- 30 JANUARY 1916.** Sir Clements Robert Markham dies in his 86th year in his house at 21 Eccleston Square, London.

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