

Title: 'Finding Time for the Old Stone Age: A History of Palaeolithic Archaeology and Quaternary Geology in Britain, 1860-1960'

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Finding Time for the Old Stone Age explores a century of colourful debate over the age of our earliest ancestors. In the mid nineteenth century curious stone implements were found alongside the bones of extinct animals. Humans were evidently more ancient than had been supposed - but just how old were they? There were several clocks for Stone-Age (or Palaeolithic) time, and it would prove difficult to synchronize them. Conflicting timescales were drawn from the fields of geology, palaeontology, anthropology, and archaeology. Anne O'Connor draws on a wealth of lively, personal correspondence to explain the nature of these arguments. The trail leads from Britain to Continental Europe, Africa, and Asia, and extends beyond the world of professors, museum keepers, and officers of the Geological Survey: wine sellers, diamond merchants, papermakers, and clerks also proposed timescales for the Palaeolithic. This book brings their stories to light for the first time - stories that offer an intriguing insight into how knowledge was built up about the ancient British past.