

[GOVERNMENT OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, 1859]

[22 Victoria]

**Royal Charter of Incorporation  
to the  
ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON,  
1859.**

[1] **V**ictoria, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith, To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting.

**W**HEREAS Sir *Roderick Impey Murchison*, Knight, and others of our loving subjects did, in the year one thousand eight hundred and thirty, establish a Society, by the name of *The Royal Geographical Society*, for the advancement of Geographical Science, and of which Society we have become the *Patron*:

AND WHEREAS it has been represented to us that the same Society has since its establishment sedulously pursued such its proposed object, by collecting, registering, digesting, and, from time to time, publishing an annual *Journal* of Transactions, which have contributed to the progress of geographical knowledge; by carrying out, at its own expense, various important Expeditions in every quarter of the Globe, and by assisting other Expeditions with grants of money and otherwise; and that distinguished individuals in foreign countries, as well as British subjects, have availed themselves of the facilities offered by the same Society for communicating important discoveries, greatly extending geographical knowledge:

AND WHEREAS the same Society has, in aid of its objects, collected a large and valuable *Library* of Scientific Works, Atlases, Maps, Charts, Plans, Views, and Instruments, to which fresh accessions are constantly being made; and the said Society has hitherto been supported by Donations, and annual and other Subscriptions and Contributions to its Funds:

AND WHEREAS, in order to secure the property of the said Society, to extend its operations, and to give it a more permanent establishment among the scientific Institutions of our Kingdom, we have been besought to grant to the said Sir *Roderick Impey Murchison*, Knight, and to those who now are, or shall hereafter become, Members of the said Society, our *Royal Charter of Incorporation* for the purposes aforesaid.

NOW KNOW YE, that *We*, being desirous of encouraging a design so laudable and salutary, of our especial *Grace*, certain knowledge, and mere motion, have willed, granted and declared, and Do, by these Presents, for *us*, our *heirs*, and *successors*, will, grant and declare, that the said Sir *Roderick Impey Murchison*, Knight, and such other of our loving subjects as now are Members of the said Society, or shall from time to time be elected *Fellows* thereof, according to such Regulations, or Bye-Laws as shall be hereafter framed or enacted, and their successors,

shall for ever hereafter be, by virtue of these *Presents*, one body politic and corporate, by the name of "*The Royal Geographical Society*;" and for the purposes aforesaid, and by the name aforesaid, shall have perpetual succession and a *Common Seal*, with full power and authority

to alter, vary break, and renew the same at their discretion, and

by the same name, to sue and be sued, implead and be impleaded, answer and be answered unto, in every court of us our *heirs* and *successors*, and be for ever able and capable in the law, to purchase, receive, possess, hold and enjoy, to them and their successors, any goods and chattels whatsoever; and

also to be able and capable in the law (notwithstanding the *Statutes of Mortmain*), to take,

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[1] Source: JSTOR: *The Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London*, Vol. 28 (1858), pp. v-xi. Published by: Wiley on behalf of The Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers). Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1798312>; Accessed: 02-07-2017 15:38 UTC

purchase, hold and enjoy, to them and their successors, a *Hall or House*, and any such messuages, lands, tenements, or hereditaments whatsoever, as may be necessary for carrying out the purposes of the Society. The yearly value of which, including the site of the said Hall or House, shall not exceed in the whole the sum of eight thousand pounds, computing the same respectively at the rack rent which might have been had or gotten for the same respectively at the time of the purchase or acquisition thereof; and

to act in all the concerns of the said Body politic and corporate, as effectually, to all intents and purposes, as any other of our liege subjects, or any other body politic or corporate, in our said Kingdom, not being under any disability, might do in their respective concerns.

[2.] AND we do hereby grant our especial licence and authority, unto all and every person and persons, bodies politic and corporate, otherwise competent to grant, sell, alien, and convey in Mortmain, unto and to the use of the said body politic and corporate, and their successors, any messuages, lands, tenements, or hereditaments, not exceeding such annual value as aforesaid.

[3.] AND our will and pleasure is, and we further grant and declare, that there shall be a General Meeting, or General Meetings of the Fellows of the said Society, to be held from time to time as hereinafter mentioned;

and that there shall be a *Council* to direct and manage the concerns of the said body politic and corporate,

and that the General Meetings and the Council shall have the entire direction and management of the same, in the manner and subject to the regulations hereafter mentioned.

[4.] AND we do hereby also will, grant and declare, that there shall be a President, Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, and Secretaries of the said body politic and corporate;

and that the Council shall consist of the President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer, Trustees, Secretaries, and not more than twenty-one, nor less than twelve other Fellows of the said Society.

AND we do hereby further will and declare, that the said Sir *Roderick Impey Murchison*, Knight, shall be the first President of the said body politic and corporate;

and the other persons now being the Vice-Presidents, Treasurer, Trustees, Secretaries, together with twenty-one Members of the Council, shall be the first Members of the Council, and shall continue such until the election of Officers shall be made in pursuance of these presents.

AND we do hereby further will and declare, that it shall be lawful for the Fellows of the said body politic and corporate hereby established, to hold a General Meeting once in the year, or oftener, for the purposes hereinafter mentioned, namely,

That the President, Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer, the Secretaries, and other members of the Council, shall be chosen at such General Meeting, and

that the General Meetings shall from time to time make and establish such Bye Laws, and vary and alter, or revoke the same, as they shall deem to be useful and necessary

for the regulation of the said body politic and corporate,

for the admission of Fellows and of Honorary and Foreign Members, and

for the fixing the number of the Presidents, Officers, and

for the management of the proceedings, and the estates, goods, and business of the said body politic and corporate,

so that such Bye Laws be not repugnant to these presents, or to the Laws and Statutes of this our realm,

and shall and may also enter into any resolution and make any regulation respecting the affairs of the said body politic and corporate that may be necessary and proper.

AND we do further will and declare that the General Meetings shall take place at such time as may be fixed by the said Council,

and that the present regulations of the said Society, so far as they are not inconsistent with these presents, shall continue in force until the same shall be altered by a General Meeting.

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[8.] AND we further will, grant and declare, that the Council

shall have the sole management of the income and funds of the said body politic and corporate, and the appointment of Secretary, Librarian, Curator, and such other officers, attendants, and servants, as the Council shall think necessary or useful, as also the entire management and superintendence of all the other affairs of the said Society, and

shall and may, but not inconsistently with or contrary to the provisions of this our Charter, or any existing Bye Law, or Laws and Statutes of this our realm, do all such acts and deeds as shall appear to them necessary for carrying into effect the objects and views of the said body politic and corporate.

[9.] PROVIDED always, and we do will and declare, that the Council shall from time to time render to a General Meeting a full account of their proceedings,

and that every Fellow of the Society may, at all reasonable times, to be fixed by the said Council, see and examine the accounts of the receipts and payments of the said body politic and corporate.

[10.] AND we further will, grant and declare, that the whole property of the said body politic and corporate shall be vested, and we do hereby vest the same solely and absolutely in the Fellows thereof,

and that they shall have full power and authority to sell, alienate, charge, and otherwise dispose of the same as they shall think proper;

but that no sale, mortgage, incumbrance, or other disposition of any messuages, lands, tenements, or hereditaments belonging to the said body politic and corporate shall be made, except with the approbation and concurrence of a General Meeting.

[11.] AND we lastly declare it to be our *Royal Will and Pleasure*, that no Resolution or Bye Law shall on any account or pretence whatsoever be made by the said body politic and corporate in opposition to the general scope, true intent, and meaning of this our Charter, or the Laws or Statutes of our realm,

and that if any such Rule or Bye Law shall be made, the same shall be absolutely null and void to all intents, effects, constructions, and purposes whatsoever.

IN witness whereof we have caused these our Letters to be made Patent.

WITNESS Ourself at our Palace at *Westminster*, this eighth day of February, in the twenty-second year of our reign.

By Her Majesty's command.

(Signed) EDMUNDS.