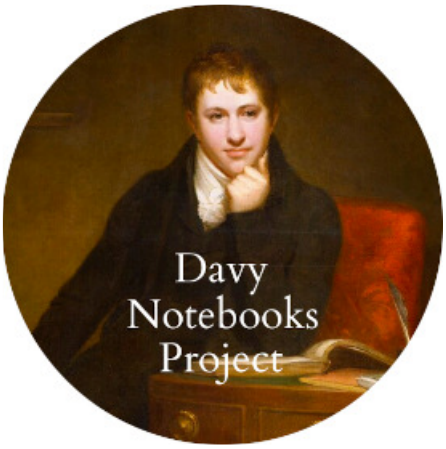
Humphry Davy Chronology (Full)



Davy's age	Date	Event
0	17 December 1778	Born in Penzance to Robert and Grace Davy (née Millet).
	22 January 1779	Baptised.
10-13	1789 to 1792	Attends Penzance Grammar School (under the Revd George Coryton).
14	January to December 1793	Attends Truro Grammar School (under the Revd Cornelius Cardew); the cost is borne by a family friend, Dr John Tonkin.
15	10 December 1794	His father, Robert Davy, dies.
16	10 February 1795	Apprenticed for five years as an apothecary-surgeon to John Bingham Borlase of Penzance.
18-19	Autumn 1797 to spring 1798	Tom Wedgwood and Gregory Watt winter in Penzance. Davy forms close friendships with them, especially the latter who lodges with the Davy family. They inspire Davy with an interest in chemistry and geology.
19	June 1798	Composes 'An Essay on Heat, Light, and the Combinations of Light', which criticises French chemistry and proposes an unorthodox theory instead. Nevertheless, it results in the politically radical (Jacobin) physician Thomas Beddoes offering him the position of Superintendent of the new Medical Pneumatic Institution at Clifton, near Bristol.
	1 October 1798	Borlase releases Davy from his apprenticeship.
	2 October 1798	Davy leaves Cornwall for Bristol, arriving five days later.

20	Early January 1799	Travels to Birmingham where he meets many of the leading industrialists and their families who have supported the Medical Pneumatic Institution.
	February 1799	Davy publishes his theoretical ideas in Beddoes's *Contributions to Physical and Medical Knowledge*; he later regrets doing so.
		Probably meets Robert Southey around this time and later contributes poems to his *Annual Anthology*.
	April 1799	Discovers physiological effects of nitrous oxide.
	15 to 22 October 1799	Meets Samuel Taylor Coleridge who inhales nitrous oxide and with whom he forms a close friendship.
	Late October to November 1799	Returns to Cornwall.
	December 1799	First visit to London; meets William Godwin and Coleridge again.
21	Mid-1800	Hears of Alessandro Volta's invention of a device that he soon renames the electric battery and begins research on electricity.
	July 1800	Publishes *Researches, Chemical and Philosophical; Chiefly Concerning Nitrous Oxide, or Dephlogisticated Nitrous Air, and its Respiration*.
	Second half of 1800	At Coleridge's request helps see the second edition of William Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads* through the press in Bristol.
	25 September 1800	Hints to his mother that he is considering leaving the Medical Pneumatic Institution.
	Early October 1800	Visits the Wye Valley and Tintern Abbey.
22	January 1801	Discussions held about possibility of Davy moving to the Royal Institution in London.
	February 1801	Visits London where he is appointed (16th) Assistant Lecturer (to Thomas Garnett) at the Royal Institution.
	11 March 1801	Arrives in London to take up position at the Royal Institution.
	25 April 1801	Delivers first lecture at the Royal Institution.
	1 June 1801	Appointed Lecturer at the Royal Institution.
	3 June 1801	Garnett resigns from the Royal Institution.
	Mid-July to September 1801	Visits Cornwall.

23	21 January 1802	Delivers his *A Discourse, Introductory to a Course of Lectures on Chemistry* in the Royal Institution.
	31 May 1802	Appointed Professor of Chemistry at the Royal Institution.
	22 June 1802	Publishes, with Tom Wedgwood, a paper that anticipates what is later known as photography.
	Late July to September 1802	Visits Derbyshire and Wales.
24	10 May 1803	Delivers his first lecture to the Board of Agriculture.
	27 May 1803	Appointed Professor of Chemistry to the Board of Agriculture.
	Mid-June 1803	Visits Holkham.
	Early July to early September 1803	Visits Cornwall.
	First half of October 1803	Visits Sussex.
	17 November 1803	Elected Fellow of the Royal Society of London.
25	18 June 1804	Attends Woburn sheep-shearing.
	3 July 1804	Admitted Fellow Commoner at Jesus College, University of Cambridge.
	July to September 1804	Visits northern England and Scotland.
	Late September to early October 1804	Stays at Hampden.
26	Late June to late August 1805	Visits Wales, Ireland (including Giant's Causeway), and northern England; climbs Helvellyn (14 August) with William Wordsworth and Walter Scott.
	Late August to end of September 1805	Visits Penzance.
	30 November 1805	Awarded Copley Medal of the Royal Society of London.
27	June to August 1806	In Ireland, geologising.
	20 November 1806	First Bakerian Lecture read to the Royal Society of London.
28	22 January 1807	Elected junior Secretary of the Royal Society of London.
	July to August 1807	Visits Cornwall.
	19 October 1807	Isolates potassium, as he later names it, and shortly afterwards identifies sodium.

	12 November 1807	Second Bakerian Lecture read to the Royal Society of London.
28-29	Late November 1807 to early January 1808	Following a visit to inspect the ventilation at Newgate Prison, taken very seriously ill.
29	June and July 1808	Isolates magnesium, calcium, strontium, and barium.
	20 to 22 August 1808	Visits Tonbridge to fish and to experiment with John George Children's large battery.
	15 December 1808	Third Bakerian Lecture read to the Royal Society of London.
30	29 August to 8 September 1809	Visits Tonbridge to fish and to experiment with John George Children's large battery.
	16 November 1809	Fourth Bakerian Lecture read to the Royal Society of London.
31	3 March 1810	Delivers lecture on the future of the Royal Institution changing it from a proprietorial to a membership organisation.
	June and July 1810	Demonstrates chlorine is a chemical element which he thus names.
	October to mid-December 1810	Visits Ireland to deliver courses of lectures at the Royal Dublin Society.
	15 November 1810	Fifth Bakerian Lecture read to the Royal Society of London.
32	19 January 1811	Commences Royal Institution lecture course for the season attended by the widow Jane Apreece; they meet socially and start courting.
	15 July 1811	Takes Apreece to see William Herschel's forty-foot telescope at Slough.
	Mid-September to mid-December 1811	Visits Ireland to deliver further courses of lectures at the Royal Dublin Society; Trinity College Dublin awards him an honorary doctorate.
33	End of March 1812	Visits Northampton to ask Apreece's uncle for permission to marry her.
	9 April 1812	Knighted by the Prince Regent.
	10 April 1812	Delivers final lecture at the Royal Institution.
	11 April 1812	Marries Apreece followed by honeymoon at Beechwood; Lord Byron composes a risqué skit on their nuptials.
	11 May 1812	Steps down from his paid positions at the Royal Institution but takes on honorary roles; also resigns his positions at the Royal Society of London and the Board of Agriculture.

	Mid-July to October 1812	Visits northern England and Scotland.
34	1 March 1813	On his recommendation, Michael Faraday is appointed laboratory assistant in the Royal Institution.
	Second half of April 1813	Visits West Country (without Lady Davy).
	July to September 1813	Visits Scotland.
34-36	13 October 1813 to April 1815	Leaves with Lady Davy, her maid, and Faraday for tour of France, Italy, Switzerland, and southern Germany. In Paris, establishes the elemental nature of iodine; in Florence, shows that diamond is made of carbon; climbs Vesuvius.
36	Mid-July to early October 1815	Visits Northampton and Scotland. At Melrose, receives a letter from Robert Gray asking him to find a way of lighting coal mines safely. Visits Newcastle on return journey to investigate the problem.
36-37	October to December 1815	Working with Faraday in the Royal Institution laboratory, develops miners' safety lamp made of wire gauze.
36	Mid-November to early December 1815	Visits Cornwall.
37-40	1816 to 1818	Bitter priority dispute with George Stephenson over the originality of the lamp and priority in invention.
37	9 January 1816	Prototype gauze lamps tested successfully in Hebburn Colliery.
	Second half of March 1816	Visits north-east England to oversee lamp testing.
	August and September 1816	Visits northern England to oversee lamp testing.
	October to early December 1816	Visits Bath for the sake of Lady Davy's health.
	30 November 1816	Awarded Rumford Medal of the Royal Society of London.
38	April 1817	Visits Paris.
	June 1817	Becomes involved in project to unroll papyri excavated from Herculaneum.
	Mid-July to mid-October 1817	Visits Scotland and north-east England; mine-owners present him (11 October) with a silver service of plate worth more than £1000 for inventing the lamp.

	20 November 1817	Royal Society of London issues statement supporting Davy's claims to the miners' safety lamp.
39	24 May 1818	Audience with the Prince Regent who commands him to go to Naples to unroll the Herculaneum papyri.
39-41	June 1818 to June 1820	Visits Flanders (to inspect the safety lamps there), Austria, and Italy (to work on unrolling the Herculaneum papyri).
39	20 October 1818	Created a baronet.
41	April to June 1820	Return journey to England.
	June to November 1820	Following death of Banks (19 June), Davy successfully campaigns to be elected President of the Royal Society of London (30 November).
	Early August to mid-October 1820	Visits the Midlands, northern England, and Scotland.
42	Second half of October 1821	Commences work on electromagnetism, with Faraday's assistance.
	Mid-July to mid-September 1821	Visits (without Lady Davy) Ireland, Scotland, and north-west England.
43	Second half of December 1821	Makes last visit to Cornwall.
	Mid-July to mid-October 1822	Visits northern England and Scotland (without Lady Davy).
44	21 January 1823	Invited by Navy Board to investigate to how to protect the copper bottoms of Royal Navy ships, a project that occupies his attention for the next three years.
	6 March 1823	From the Presidential chair of the Royal Society of London, accuses Faraday of not acknowledging the work of others in his discovery of electromagnetic rotations.
	May 1823	Opposes Faraday's election as a Fellow of the Royal Society of London; nevertheless, Faraday elected (8 January 1824).
	End of July to mid-September 1823	Visits Ireland and Scotland.
	23 November 1823	In exchange of correspondence with John Wilson Croker, suggests the establishment of a new elite club (later The Athenaeum Club, with Faraday as first unpaid secretary).
45	19 to 20 February 1824	Visits Portsmouth to inspect his method of protecting ships' copper.
	1 April 1824	Proposes to Board of Longitude project to improve optical glass; during the rest of the decade, it involves Faraday in an enormous amount of unproductive work.

	Early July to mid-August 1824	Voyages to Norway, Denmark, and Germany to test his method of protecting ships' copper.
46	1825	Severely criticised in private and in public for the practical failure of his method of protecting the copper bottoms of naval vessels.
	Mid-July to early October 1825	Visits Ireland, north-west England, and the Midlands.
47	Early July to mid-September 1826	Visits Ireland, Scotland, and north-west England.
	30 August 1826	Addresses the James Watt meeting in Greenock.
	3 September 1826	Mother dies.
48	Late December 1826	Suffers stroke.
	Late January to early October 1827	Visits Italy and Carniola (modern Slovenia) (without Lady Davy); becomes increasingly ill as journey progresses.
	1 July 1827	Resigns as President of the Royal Society of London.
	30 November 1827	Awarded Royal Medal (which he helped to establish) of the Royal Society of London.
49	Late March to October 1828	Travels with John James Tobin (but not Lady Davy) to Austria, Carniola.
49-50	November 1828 to April 1829	Visits Italy.
50	20 February 1829	In Rome, suffers a second stroke and is joined by John Davy.
	30 April 1829	Begins return journey to London.
	28 May 1829	Arrives in Geneva and is joined by Lady Davy.
	29 May 1829	Dies in Geneva, around 3am in the morning.
	1 June 1829	Buried with full civic honours in the cemetery of Plain-Palais.

By Frank James, with some (very minor) input from Andrew Lacey

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