

Volunteers wanted for transcription project

Members of the public are being asked to help transcribe notebooks by early 19th-century scientist Sir Humphry Davy, as part of a project to shed light on his unpublished work

Sir Humphry Davy (1778-1829) discovered more chemical elements than any individual has before or since. His achievements saw him rise up through society's ranks from relatively modest origins to become, just over 200 years ago, president of the Royal Society.

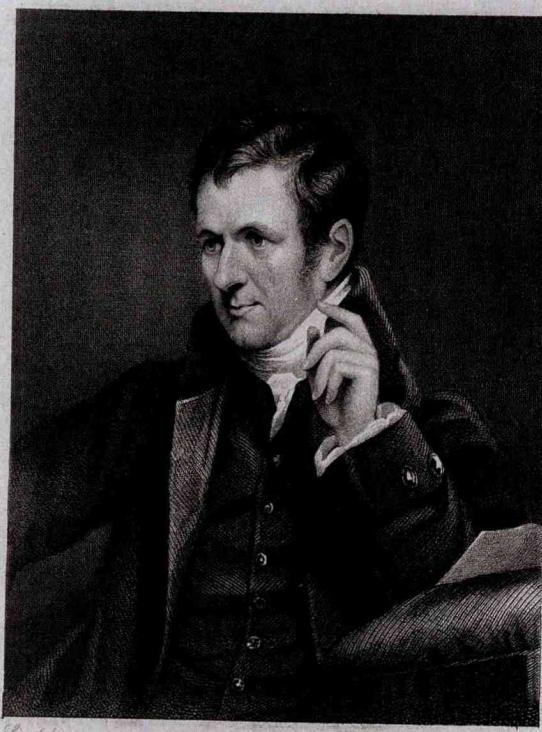
In 1815, he invented a miners' safety lamp that came to be known as the Davy Lamp, saving countless lives in Britain and Europe, and vastly improving the nation's industrial capability.

The £1 million project, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and led by Lancaster University with the University of Manchester and UCL, will use the crowdsourcing platform Zooniverse to bring to light Davy's notebooks – the documents he used to work out scientific ideas alongside lines of poetry, philosophical musings, geological drawings, and accounts of his life.

Davy kept notebooks throughout his life, but most of the pages of these notebooks have never been transcribed before. Most entries have yet to be dated or considered in the light of what they tell us about Davy and his scientific discoveries.

Following on from the successful pilot project, during which more than 500 participants from around the world transcribed 626 notebook pages in under 20 days, the project team will now crowdsource transcriptions of Davy's entire 75-strong notebook collection. To take part, or for more information, visit <https://familytree.davy>

With thanks to ScotlandsPeople, who featured this project in their January e-newsletter.



Humphry Davy

Volunteers are being asked to help transcribe notebooks written by Sir Humphry Davy