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Cover illustration: Cast of an Ediacaran sea floor from Charnwood Forest, Leicestershire, U.K., showing current-aligned specimens of *Charnia* (top) and *Bradgatia*. In this part of the *Proceedings*, Howe *et al.* recount the history of early observations of the globally important Ediacara fossils from Charnwood Forest, dating from as far back as the mid 19th Century. It was Ford's 1958 paper published in the *Proceedings* (Vol. 31, 211–217), which described and named *Charnia masoni*, that changed the accepted scientific interpretation of comparable fossils from elsewhere in the world, as Howe *et al.* explain. Reproduced by permission of the British Geological Survey. © NERC. All rights reserved. CP12/126.