

Between Tide Pools and Politics: Wimereux and the ‘Station Movement’

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The late nineteenth century witnessed the rise of a so-called ‘station movement’, in which researchers of various stripes pleaded for the establishment of new research infrastructures in the field. In contrast to urban laboratories, these field stations were to enable the study of nature *in* nature. Alfred Giard’s station in Wimereux, opened in 1874, was one of the very first of these stations to be established. While it certainly fitted trends that were general to the late-nineteenth century ‘station movement’ more widely, it also had its peculiar characteristics. In my contribution, I will highlight what made the early Wimereux station stand out. I will do so by looking into the ecological features of its location, the ambiance enabled by its (makeshift) building, the scientific and political agenda of its director, and the social relations between its international visitors. As such, my contribution will situate the station in its local, national and European context.