



DARWIN WROTE ONE OF THE GREATEST SCIENTIFIC BOOKS EVER.



YOU COULD SAY THAT WE UNDERWROTE IT.

Charles Darwin was already well known in Victorian society when he began writing *On the Origin of Species*. Following publication of the journals he wrote aboard HMS Beagle, he had become, in today's parlance, a star.

Yet even as his theories emerged in his study, he was plagued by a certain anxiety. Society was more conservative then. The suggestion that humans share ancestors with apes would, he feared, be branded as heresy.

With so much on his mind, it is remarkable that he was able to write anything at all. But write he did, thanks in part to the wonderful seclusion he achieved at Down House in Kent. And thanks also, we believe (though, admittedly in much smaller part) to the protection he received from us.

From 1844 onwards, the buildings at Down House and all their contents were insured by the Sun Fire Office. His many books, his journals

and even his paper and pens – all were underwritten by the company that would become RSA.

Ours was not a significant contribution to the biggest idea in the science of life. Of that we are in no doubt. But in the year that we celebrate our 300th birthday, we hope we deserve this small liberty.

As for the eventual reaction to his work, Darwin need not have worried. On the day it was published in 1859, *On the Origin of Species* sold out. Controversial though it was, his book was acknowledged immediately as an outstanding contribution to the canon of scientific thought. Which leads us to conclude that in business, as in life, it is those best equipped who will prosper.

From the epic to the everyday, we continue to help the world's people and businesses move forward. To learn more, visit RSA300.com

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