Science in a Somerset Quaker community: Alfred Gillett (1814-1904) fossil collecting and kinship networks in and around Street

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SCIENCE IN A SOMERSET QUAKER COMMUNITY: ALFRED GILLETT (1814-1904), FOSSIL COLLECTING AND KINSHIP NETWORKS IN AND AROUND STREET

MICHAEL A. TAYLOR AND CHARLOTTE BERRY

SUMMARY

Alfred Gillett (1814-1904) was a son of John Gillett, a Langport shopkeeper, and his wife Martha, part of a complex network of families which formed the core of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in eastern and south-eastern Somerset. He went into trade as an ironmonger. In 1841 he became a partner in the business of Hannam & Gillett in Yeovil, which was sold to John Petter in 1865 and eventually gave rise to Westland Aircraft Ltd. About 1869, Gillett retired to the village of Street, where he had many relatives, notably amongst the Clark and Clothier families. He took over his deceased parents' home at Overleigh House and spent his time in horticulture and geology. Gillett was a significant late-19th-century collector of fossil marine reptile skeletons from the Lower Liassic rocks of the early Jurassic Period in and around Street. He did not publish geological research, but was hospitable to visiting geologists and excursion parties. His help and friendship were valued by his relatives Horace B. Woodward of the Geological Survey and Henry Woodward, Keeper of Geology of the British Museum (Natural History), to which institution he donated an exceptionally elegant ichthyosaur. Although never a public figure, Gillett conforms to current research on Quaker life and beliefs in his business, religious and charitable activities and his family links. His enthusiasm for horticulture and geology is consistent with recent studies of the interaction of Quaker beliefs and science, especially the doctrine of enlightenment coming in part through personal experience of divine creation. Gillett's male Quaker relatives also demonstrate interest in

Fig. 1 Street as Alfred Gillett knew it c. 1860, looking along the High Street to Glastonbury Tor from what is now the Orchard Road/Vestry Road crossroads. Street was still a scene mostly of thatched cottages and farmland, at the start of the village's late 19th-century growth using stone from the local quarries which Gillett explored. One such development was the British School front left, completed 1859 (despite the 1854 date on the drawing). Copyright and courtesy Graham Tazewell.[2]

sciences such as geology, meteorology and botany, further confirming this model. However, this is not so obvious for his female relatives and possible reasons are discussed. Gillett's lasting achievement was the establishment of a museum in the new Crispin Hall in 1887. A collection of local fossils thereby remained in the village, and is now in the care of the modern Alfred Gillett Trust.

INTRODUCTION

The village emblem of Street in Somerset is an ichthyosaur, commemorating the 19th-century discoveries of Jurassic marine reptiles in the district. These fossils were found in local quarries which exploited the blue lias stone for building, paving, roadstone, and lime-burning, as the village grew with the expansion of the shoemaking firm of C. & J. Clark Ltd (Figs 1, 2).[1] Together with similar finds elsewhere, notably from Lyme Regis and Whitby, these fossils contributed to the new science of palaeontology, and yielded specimens for public display in museums. Amongst the earliest scientifically important finds from Street was the first described plesiosaur head, collected by the naturalist Thomas Clark jr. (1793-1864), a member of the extended Clark family of Street and beyond. Thereafter, Street reptiles were acquired by museums and collectors

Fig. 2 Street's emblem of an ichthyosaur, on the village sign, Somerton Road/Slugg Hill junction, May 2009. Copyright M. A. Taylor.

Fig. 3 Alfred Gillett in old age, 1899, presumably in his garden at Overleigh House (Photo: J. B. Clark. Image courtesy of the Alfred Gillett Trust, PHOTO 1/4/4/8, WHT 10/71)

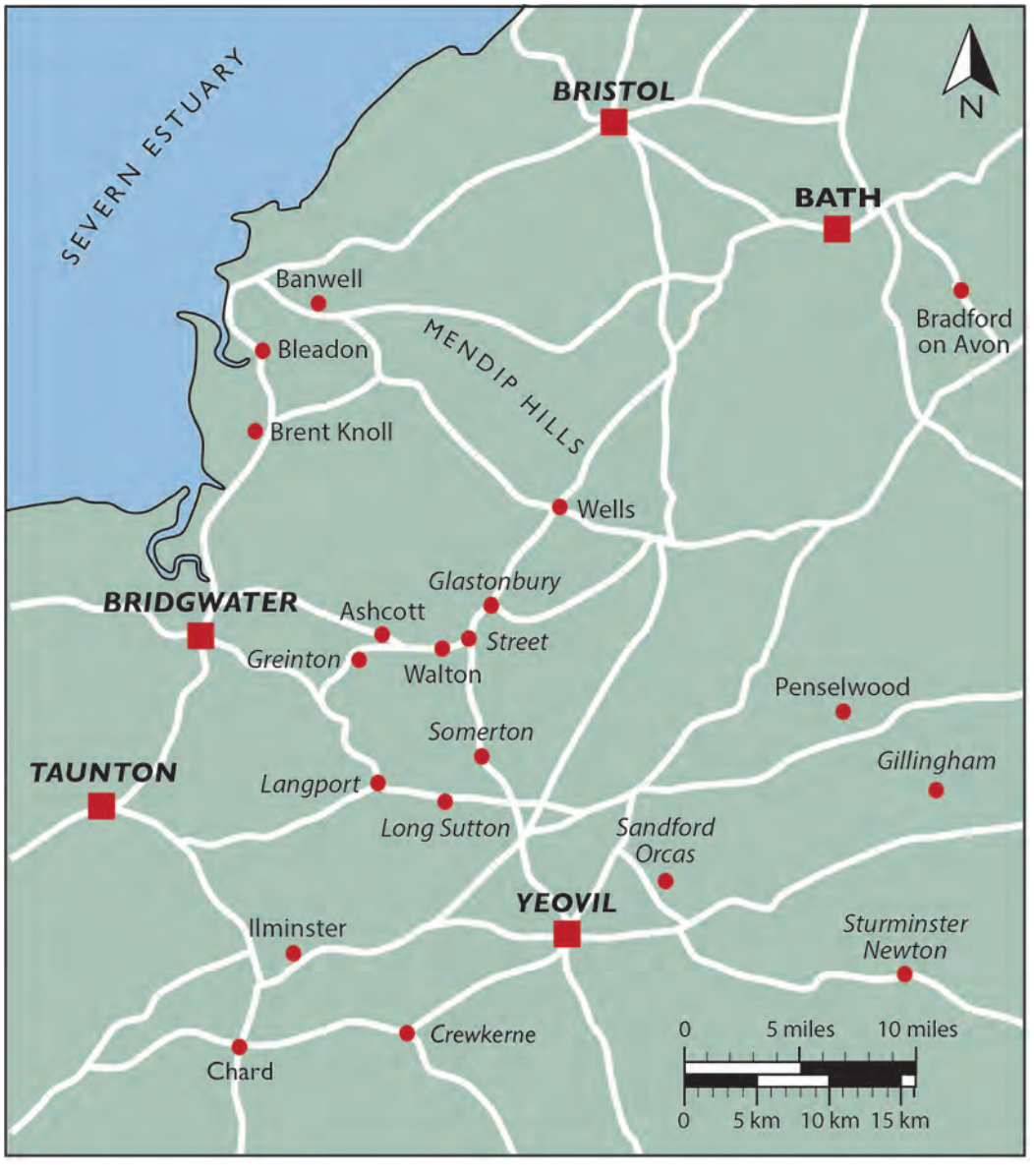
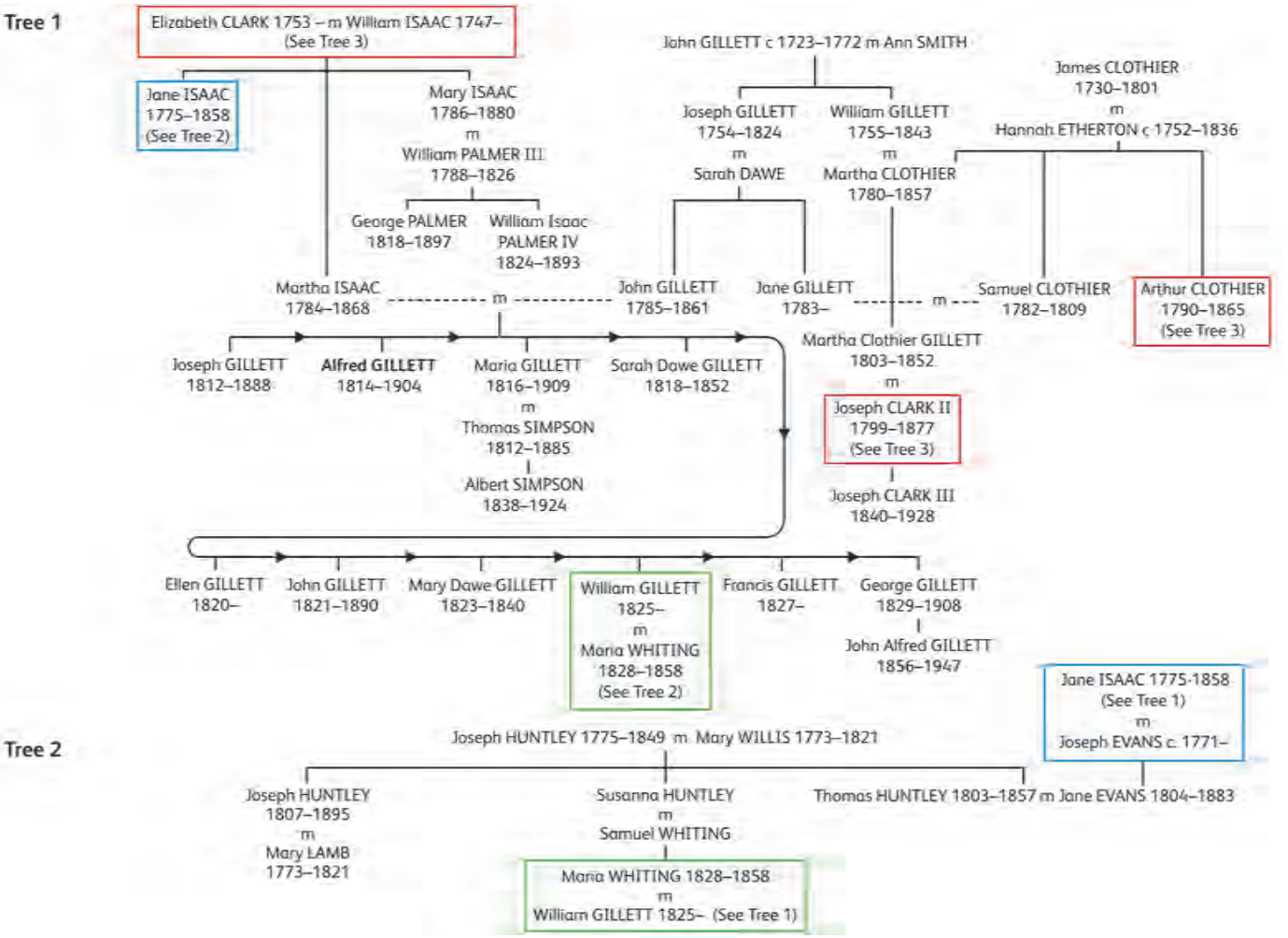


Fig. 4 The area around Street showing the breadth of the Society of Friends network. Place names in italics indicate the locations of Friends discussed in this paper.

such as Thomas Hawkins (1810-89), until the supply was cut off by the early 20th-century decline of quarrying.[3]

The last significant collection of Street's fossils was made by Thomas Clark's relative, Alfred Gillett (1814-1904). In this paper, we outline Alfred Gillett's life in the context of his membership of the Religious Society of Friends, the Dissenting denomination informally known as Quakers, and their kinship and business network extending throughout Somerset and beyond. We examine Gillett's geological activities in the context of the science of his day, and how he and his Street relatives exemplify the characteristic Quaker interaction of science and belief. We also briefly outline Gillett's lasting achievement, the establishment in Street itself


Tree 1
Elizabeth CLARK 1753 – m William ISAAC 1747–
(See Tree 3)
Jane ISAAC
1775–1858
(See Tree 2)
Mary ISAAC
1786–1880
m
William PALMER III
1788–1826
George PALMER
1818–1897
William Isaac
PALMER IV
1824–1893
Martha ISAAC
1784–1868
m
Joseph GILLETT
1812–1888
Alfred GILLETT
1814–1904
Maria GILLETT
1816–1909
m
Thomas SIMPSON
1812–1885
Albert SIMPSON
1838–1924
Sarah Dawe GILLETT
1818–1852
Ellen GILLETT
1820–
John GILLETT
1821–1890
Mary Dawe GILLETT
1823–1840
William GILLETT
1825–
m
Maria WHITING
1828–1858
(See Tree 2)
Francis GILLETT
1827–
George GILLETT
1829–1908
John Alfred GILLETT
1856–1947
John GILLETT c 1723–1772 m Ann SMITH
Joseph GILLETT
1754–1824
m
Sarah DAWE
William GILLETT
1755–1843
m
Martha CLOTHIER
1780–1857
John GILLETT
1785–1861
Jane GILLETT
1783–
m
Martha Clothier GILLETT
1803–1852
m
Joseph CLARK II
1799–1877
(See Tree 3)
Joseph CLARK III
1840–1928
James CLOTHIER
1730–1801
m
Hannah ETHERTON c 1752–1836
Samuel CLOTHIER
1782–1809
Arthur CLOTHIER
1790–1865
(See Tree 3)
Tree 2
Joseph HUNTLEY 1775–1849 m Mary WILLIS 1773–1821
Joseph HUNTLEY
1807–1895
m
Mary LAMB
1773–1821
Susanna HUNTLEY
m
Samuel WHITING
Maria WHITING 1828–1858
m
William GILLETT 1825– (See Tree 1)
Thomas HUNTLEY 1803–1857 m Jane EVANS 1804–1883
Jane ISAAC 1775-1858
(See Tree 1)
m
Joseph EVANS c. 1771–

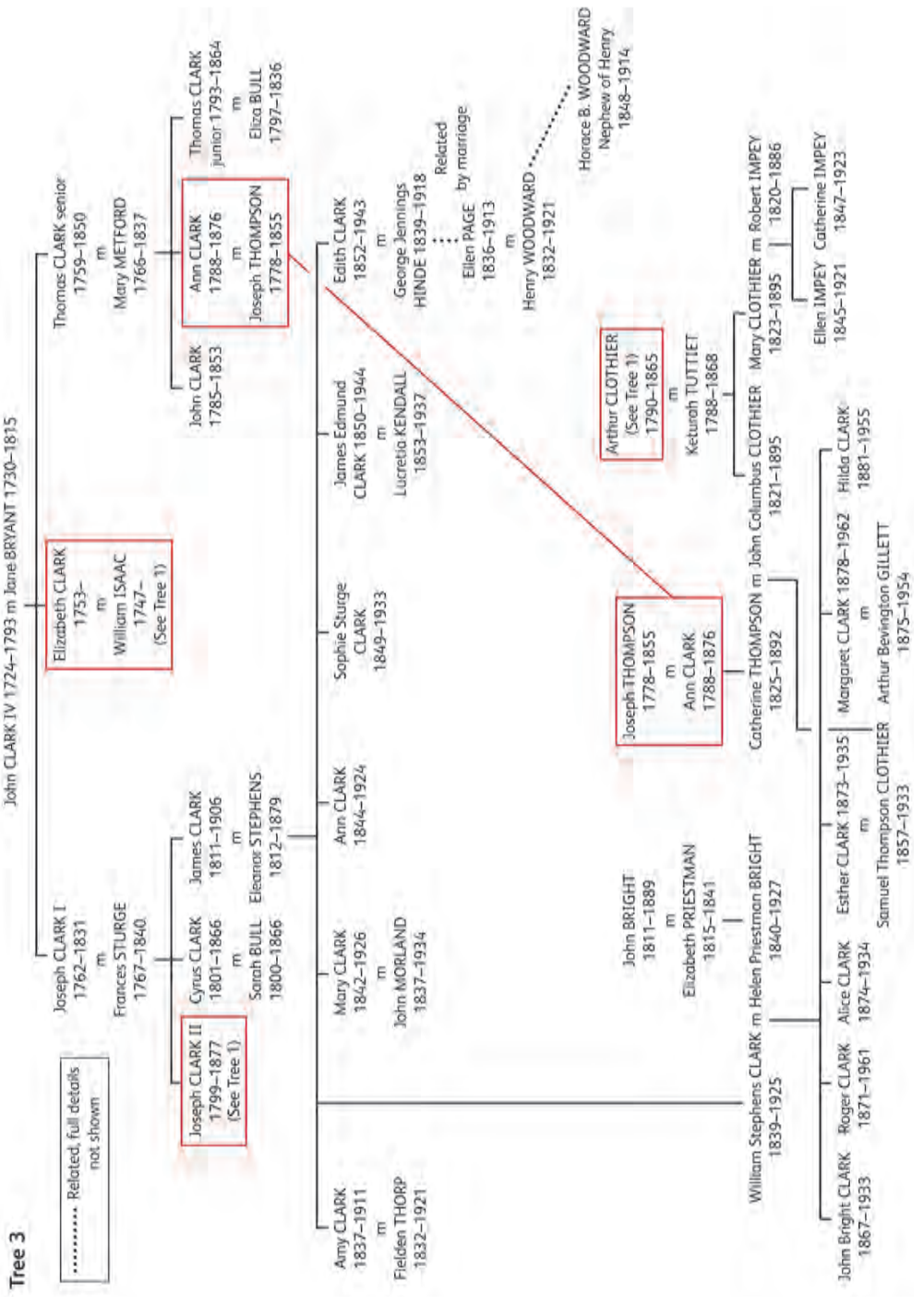


Fig. 5 Family trees for Alfred Gillett and selected relatives (not all family members are shown).

of a collection of local fossils, now held by the modern Alfred Gillett Trust. We intend to examine this Street museum in a subsequent paper.[4]

Supporting information is given in a supplementary file available online at https://sanhs.org/proceedings-volume-164-2020.

THE GILLETT FAMILY AND THE QUAKER KINSHIP NETWORK IN SOMERSET AND BEYOND

Alfred Gillett was born on 12 February 1814, the second of ten known children of the Quakers John Gillett (1785-1861), shopkeeper of Langport, and his wife Martha *née* Isaac (1784-1868) (Figs 3, 4). Martha was first cousin to the brothers Cyrus (1801-66) and James Clark (1811-1906) who founded the rugmaking and later slipper- and shoemaking partnership of C. & J. Clark at Street in 1825. A further link was that Cyrus and James's brother Joseph II (1799-1847) was married to Martha Clothier Gillett (1803-52), cousin of Alfred Gillett's father John (Fig. 5).[5]

The Gillett family thus had strong links to the Clarks and Clothiers of Street, and their relatives the Morlands, families which played a major role in the key local businesses of C. & J. Clark; Clark, Son & Morland; and the Avalon Leatherboard Company during the 19th and 20th centuries. Alfred's brother-in-law Thomas Simpson (1812-85) helped to reorganise C. & J. Clark during a financial crisis in 1863 and the subsequent recovery, when the firm's management was taken over by James's son William Stephens Clark (1839-1925).[6] Further afield, Alfred Gillett's maternal aunt Mary Isaac (1786-1880) was married to the Long Sutton farmer William Palmer III (1788-1826), parents of George Palmer (1818-97) and William Palmer IV (1824-93), partners in the Reading biscuit-manufacturers Huntley & Palmer (Fig 6).[7]

Those links exemplify the distributed Quaker network of Somerset and beyond. Such remarkably close-knit family clans in town and countryside arose from Quaker traditions.[8] Notably, Quakers were forbidden to marry outside the membership of the Society of Friends until 1859. This restriction of spousal choice often resulted in complex kinship connections within a small number of local families. Marrying relatives who lived close by was apt to reinforce relationships still further; marrying relatives who lived far away reinstated ties which might otherwise have loosened over time. The bride typically left her parents to set up a new home and family within an existing network elsewhere, so that the wider web continued to ramify and to grow, often across large geographical areas. Such intermarriages enabled the menfolk in particular to benefit from multiple connections with family businessmen, helping to offset the disadvantage of exclusion from most university education and certain professions. Those links helped set younger relatives up in business through the contacts, and perhaps also financial support, of older relatives. They also served to assist family concerns in difficulties.

The male and, increasingly, also female members of these large and extended but tightly knit Quaker families were often prominent in local government, and their kinship connections additionally included important political and social reformers active in national as well as local government. In particular, William Stephens Clark was married to Helen Priestman Bright (1840-1927). Her father was the Radical Member of Parliament John Bright (1811-89) who was prominent in politics and governance at the national level. Sophie Sturge Clark (1849-1933), William's younger sister, and herself a teacher, was one of the first women elected to public office as a member of the local School Board in Street. Sophie's eldest sister Amy Clark (1837-1911) married Fielden Thorp (1832-1921), an evangelical Quaker minister and later headmaster of the Quaker Bootham School in York. Another sister, Mary Clark (1842-1926), married the Glastonbury businessman John Morland (1837-1934). Together with Helen and William Stephens Clark, the Morlands had a shared political interest in building up the local Liberal Party organisation.[9]

Quite apart from those formal political organisations, the notable campaigning by Clarks and their relatives against alcohol abuse during the 19th century, and increasingly on behalf of education and public health into the 20th century, exemplified the Society of Friends within Britain as a whole, especially the Friends' concern about workers' conditions. This reminds us that, as well as in mainstream politics, Quakers operated extremely successfully within equally significant but often more informally created networks and organizations, which they had built up organically through their kinship connections. The women from across the wider Clark-Clothier-Gillett clan in Somerset constitute an excellent example. The members of this Street-based network had the financial security and the high level of education characteristic of female Quakers, giving them the time and interest to become involved in a wide range of social causes. For instance, William Stephens Clark's younger sister Annie Clark (1844-1924) became one of the first female British medical practitioners, followed by William's daughter Hilda (1881-1955), and both were pioneers of public health for their times. William's wife Helen Priestman Bright Clark and their daughter Alice Clark (1874-1934) were active in national movements for women's suffrage. This followed in the reformist tradition of Helen's own maternal kin from the North of England, and her paternal aunt the anti-slavery campaigner Priscilla Bright (1815-1906), who married Scottish Liberal politician Duncan McLaren MP

Fig. 6 The complex Quaker network was mediated in large part through their womenfolk and their marriages. Gillett's mother Martha at Overleigh House (centre), her sister Mary Palmer (left), mother of the Palmer brothers, Reading biscuit manufacturers, and a younger woman (right), identified by a later family member as 'her granddaughter (?) Jennie Gillett'. The older women are in characteristically simple and old-fashioned Quaker dress, probably in sober greys and blacks, but possibly of rich material such as satin. The younger woman's dress is more fashionable, not unusually in less strict Friends, though it was perhaps grey rather than coloured. The style and her slightly more up-to-date hairstyle date the image to 1860-65 (Sarah Levitt pers. comm. 2021). Image courtesy Alfred Gillett Trust, BC/277/11.

(1800-86). Priscilla's own aunt Margaret Wood (1783-1859) was a prominent businesswoman in her own right in early 19th-century Rochdale. Helen's grandmother Rachel Priestman (1791-1854) was a Newcastle Quaker minister of some repute and standing, and Helen's two aunts, Anna Maria Priestman (1828-1914) and Margaret Wheeler, later Tanner (1817-1905), were keenly interested in radical politics and suffrage. Catherine Impey (1847-1923), a member of the Clothier family in Street, was also influential in international campaigns for racial equality and the abolition of slavery.[10]

The complexity of those links amply demonstrates how Alfred Gillett's family was part of the wider 18th-century network of Quaker families in and beyond eastern and south-eastern Somerset, including particularly 'Clothiers and Clarks at Street [...], Palmers at Long Sutton, Gilletts at Somerton, [...] and Isaacs at Yeovil',[11] and how this continued beyond his death in 1904. As we will show, this Quaker network was of great benefit to Gillett's working life, and arguably influenced his geological activities even in quiet retirement in Street.

ALFRED GILLETT'S UPBRINGING AND WORKING LIFE

It is not known where Alfred Gillett went to school.[12] He was sent to Long Sutton to learn farming with a Mr Palmer, a Quaker and perhaps an uncle of his.[13] At some point Gillett changed course. At the start of 1841, he went into formal partnership with the established Yeovil ironmonger Josiah Hannam (1797-1874), a prominent Quaker originally from Gillingham in Dorset. Hannam was a distant relative of Gillett's through his sister Martha (1804-78), wife of Isaac Stephens (1806-95), sailcloth manufacturer and flax spinner variously of Bradpole (in Dorset) and Bristol, whose sister Eleanor (1812-79) was married to James Clark.[14]

Hannam & Gillett seems to have been a typical country market town ironmongery selling a range of wares, some probably bought in as components or finished goods but stamped with their trademark, and others cast and fabricated in their workshops. In the engraved header for a bill of sale made out in 1843, the partnership described itself as 'Furnishing Ironmongers, Tin Plate Workers and Braziers' and highlighted its trade in 'bar iron, steel, nails etc.' and iron fencing, railing and gateways for parks, as well as domestic fireplaces. The shop was on the south side of the Borough, an expansion of the High Street. Behind it were a smithy, warehouses and store for wooden patterns for metal fabrication and casting. The partners evidently lived above the shop, with a housekeeper and general servant. The 1851 census records three resident assistants including (almost certainly) Gillett's brother Francis (b. 1827); the business employed 13 men in all. The 1861 census shows two assistants and an apprentice resident; 17 men and eight (?) boys were employed.[15]

In a notice signed on 1 August 1865, the day of the formal dissolution of their partnership, Hannam & Gillett announced the sale of the business to John Petter who, in an accompanying advertisement, referred to its 'smithery, plumbing, [and] gas fitting' work, and called it a 'depot for agricultural implements' (suggesting the original route for Gillett's move from farming). Hannam & Gillett's business was thus the nucleus that gave rise, under Petter's family, to Westland Aircraft Limited and thence to Westland Helicopters.[16]

Fig. 7 Overleigh House, date uncertain. Image courtesy of the Alfred Gillett Trust, JBC8.

RETIREMENT TO OVERLEIGH, STREET

John Gillett had retired from his 'drapery, grocery, and drugs' business in Langport and moved to Street sometime around 1831, undoubtedly reflecting the family links outlined above.[17] John bought and rebuilt an old house just south of Street proper, which he renamed Overleigh House (Figs 7, 8).[18] When he died in 1861, his estate was valued at under £9,000, which, of course, does not allow for transfers during life, such as when a child married or set up in business. His will gave his widow Martha the use of his property for life, and the assets would then be mostly divided between Alfred and three siblings, with provision for the support of their brother John. Martha died on 17 July 1868, and Alfred must soon have bought Overleigh House (he might already have been the owner, perhaps to release funds for her maintenance and John's). He was certainly named as the owner in occupation when the house and its 'tastefully laid out grounds', with gardens and fruit and timber trees, were advertised for sale on 13 August. The advertisement also noted the dining and drawing rooms, library, seven bedrooms and two attics, with stables,

Fig. 8 Sketch map of Street in the 1880s, based on 25 inch to the mile Ordnance Survey mapping. The village proper lies to the north, built along the main north-to-west road, with the three Leigh hamlets to the south. Quarry locations are approximate; some may have been open but inactive at that time.

coach-house, and cottage. The property covered about 27 acres. The land 'which for the most part surrounds the Residence' included orchard, arable and pasture, and much was underlain by 'Valuable beds of Blue Lias Paving and Building Stone'. 'Good roads' were said to surround the property. Martha's executors ordered a separate auction of Martha's household furniture, silverware, and other items including a phaeton and trap and two dairy cows. The house was again offered for sale by private contract with successively smaller areas of land in October, and in February 1869, when just nine acres of farmland were offered beside house and garden, which we may guess corresponded to the area within the Overleigh road loop, most of which John Gillett had owned in 1841-3 (Fig. 9).[19]

It is not clear what Alfred Gillett had been doing after the sale of Hannam & Gillett, but he was certainly settled into Overleigh by 1869-70.[20] Here he lived, with a housekeeper

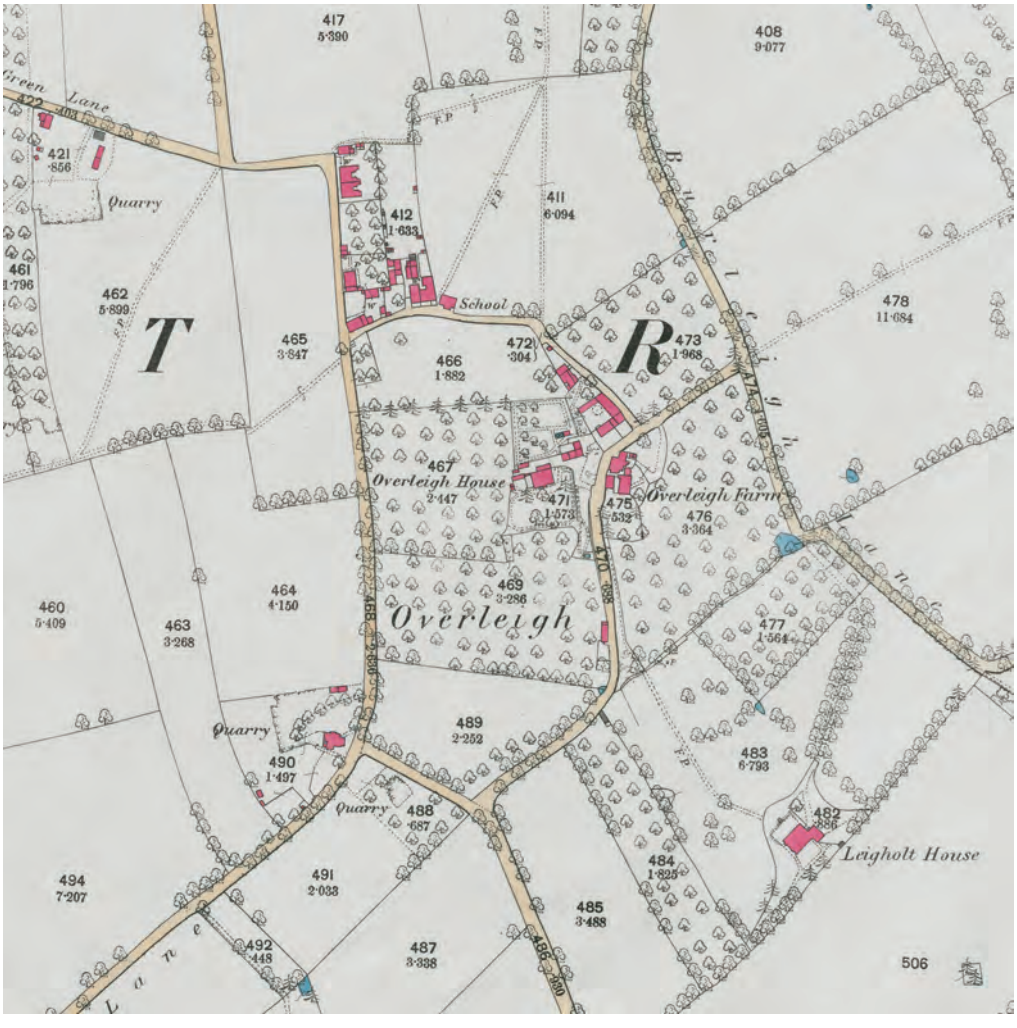


Fig. 9 Overleigh in the 1880s, north to top. Each land parcel is numbered and its acreage given. Gillett's Overleigh House, garden and 'nine acres' probably comprised most of the area within the roadway loop. Orchards are drawn with regular arrays of trees. Overleigh House also has a walled garden with a greenhouse (blue-hatched) to the north. Four quarries are visible on this map. Ordnance Survey 1st edition 1:2500 County Series, published 1889. Reproduced under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC-BY-NC-SA) licence with the permission of the National Library of Scotland.

and a maidservant in the house, and a gardener-manservant in a house nearby.[21] Some of the nine acres were orchard but the rest would support a household milch-cow or two, and perhaps a horse or two for a vehicle.[22]

Alfred Gillett seemingly lived quietly, with few reports of his doings to be found in currently online searchable newspapers or accounts of Street. Nevertheless, Joseph Clark III (1840-1928), his second cousin, described Gillett as something of a joker in his younger days, for instance concerning Clark's parents' marriage in 1836:

> *the late Alf[d] Gillett was to be father's 'best man': well! We know what a joking sort of man he was, & unfortunately he so annoyed one of the Miss Clothiers by one of his funny speeches, that she declared if AG was 'best man' she would not come! So arrangements were hastily made for Aubrey Clark to act […]*[23]

Gillett evidently retained his humorous predilections into middle age. Clark remembered Gillett's organising an enjoyable outing by train and horse-drawn brake to the 'famous Pen-pits', whetstone quarries of Cretaceous age near Penselwood, on 12 August 1884.[24] This was almost certainly for the benefit of the fossil sponge researcher George Jennings Hinde F.G.S., F.R.S. (1839-1918), to whom Gillett had previously showed a whetstone containing sponge remains. Hinde was so delighted with his wayside finds that Gillett mischievously passed him off to puzzled passers-by as a lunatic afflicted with an interest in worthless stones. This did not stop Hinde (discussed further below) from acknowledging Gillett's help when he published the results.[25]

But Gillett was principally remembered as an amiable bachelor who 'devoted his time to science and the hobby of gardening'.[26] He certainly had space and money, while the descriptions of Overleigh in the advertisements of 1868-9 point to already well-established gardens, trees and orchards, presumably due to his father or mother, or both. In August 1890, a Geologists' Association party visited Overleigh:

> *Entering the grounds by a pathway bordered by flowers and shrubs, the Members assembled on the lawn in front of the house. There the fine trees, the beds gay with 'old-fashioned' flowers, and the picturesque arrangement of the garden, devoid of all formality, made the scene one of a most charming nature.*[27]

The *Wells Journal* noted that 'American and other foreign trees flourished as in their native soil, and the many-hued flowers were almost of tropical luxuriance'.[28]

And in 1899, William Stephens Clark's son Roger (1871-1961) and his American fiancée Sarah Bancroft (1877-1973) were planning married life at Overleigh Farm, soon to be renamed Whitenights. He wrote to her:

> *I […] went to call on Alfred Gillett. He was very friendly and said he wished we would go and live with him instead of across the road – which might suit me very well but I fear not thee – or thy mother! The garden is so charming there; I took his invitation as a great compliment from an old bachelor of 85.*[29]

Alfred Gillett died of 'Senile Decay and Cardiac ~~disease~~ failure' at Overleigh House on 24 January 1904.[30] He is buried at Street Meeting House, a reminder of the continuity of his family links with the Friends (Fig. 10). The only known obituaries are in the *Central Somerset Gazette*, and the brief notice in the *Geological Magazine* quoted in full below.[31] His will, made a little before his death, is a simple listing of cash bequests to relatives and servants, apparently on the basis of an up-to-date valuation of his house. He left a substantial estate valued at £29,070 (perhaps some £3,000,000 in 2021 terms).[32] To this has to be added whatever, if anything, he gave during life. Of course, he was a bachelor with a small household and no children. Even so, this is a substantial sum. Perhaps Gillett was simply a good businessman and a canny investor of the proceeds from selling up. Of course, as was common with Quaker businessmen,[33] his success was almost certainly founded on pre-existing family prosperity. His parents, and perhaps other relatives and friends, probably provided much of the capital to buy into the Yeovil ironmongery.

Overleigh House and its contents were put up for sale by private contract and auction respectively. The house was bought by Roger Clark's brother John Bright Clark (1867-1933), furthering the area's transformation into a sort of collective family landed estate, including also Whitenights and the Clothier family's Leigh Holt (Fig. 11). Reading a paper at a 1939 meeting of the Street essay society in Overleigh House itself, Roger commented that the house was 'radically altered and reconditioned' from the times

> *when it was dwelt in by the kind and hospitable old bachelor Cousin Alfred Gillett – that as soon as he opened the front door (now the garden door) to you, and you stepped down into the flagged passage covered with cocoa nut matting – such a characteristic smell of heaving lias paving, of dampish cocoa nut matting and rarely opened windows met your nose as from nowhere else; and in spite of all the light and grace that was brought into the old house that year [1904] we must confess to an occasional nostalgia for the old smell and the darkish stiffly furnished rooms […].*[34]

Fig. 10 Alfred Gillett is buried at the Friends' Meeting House, Street, demonstrating the kinship linkages discussed in this paper. Inset, Gillett's headstone. Main image, the burying ground, showing the Quaker headstones' characteristic uniformity. Copyright M. A. Taylor.

ALFRED GILLETT AS GEOLOGIST

Gillett became interested in geology long before his retirement to Street. William Stephens Clark commented at the opening of the Street museum in 1887 that 'they all knew what pains [Gillett] had been taking all his life to get together a most interesting and complete geological collection'.[35] Indeed, the area around Langport and Somerton also yields Liassic fossils such as marine reptiles.[36]

It is not known who or what originally sparked Gillett's interest in geology: perhaps the plesiosaur head-discoverer Thomas Clark jr., or his idiosyncratic brother John Clark (1785-1853) of Bridgwater. As well as wearing an open-necked shirt and shorts, John was notable for inventing, amongst other things, air-beds and a Latin Verse Machine which automatically generated hexameter verse. What suggests (but does not quite prove) an interest in geology is his donation of an ichthyosaur head to the Bristol Institution for the Advancement of Science, Literature and

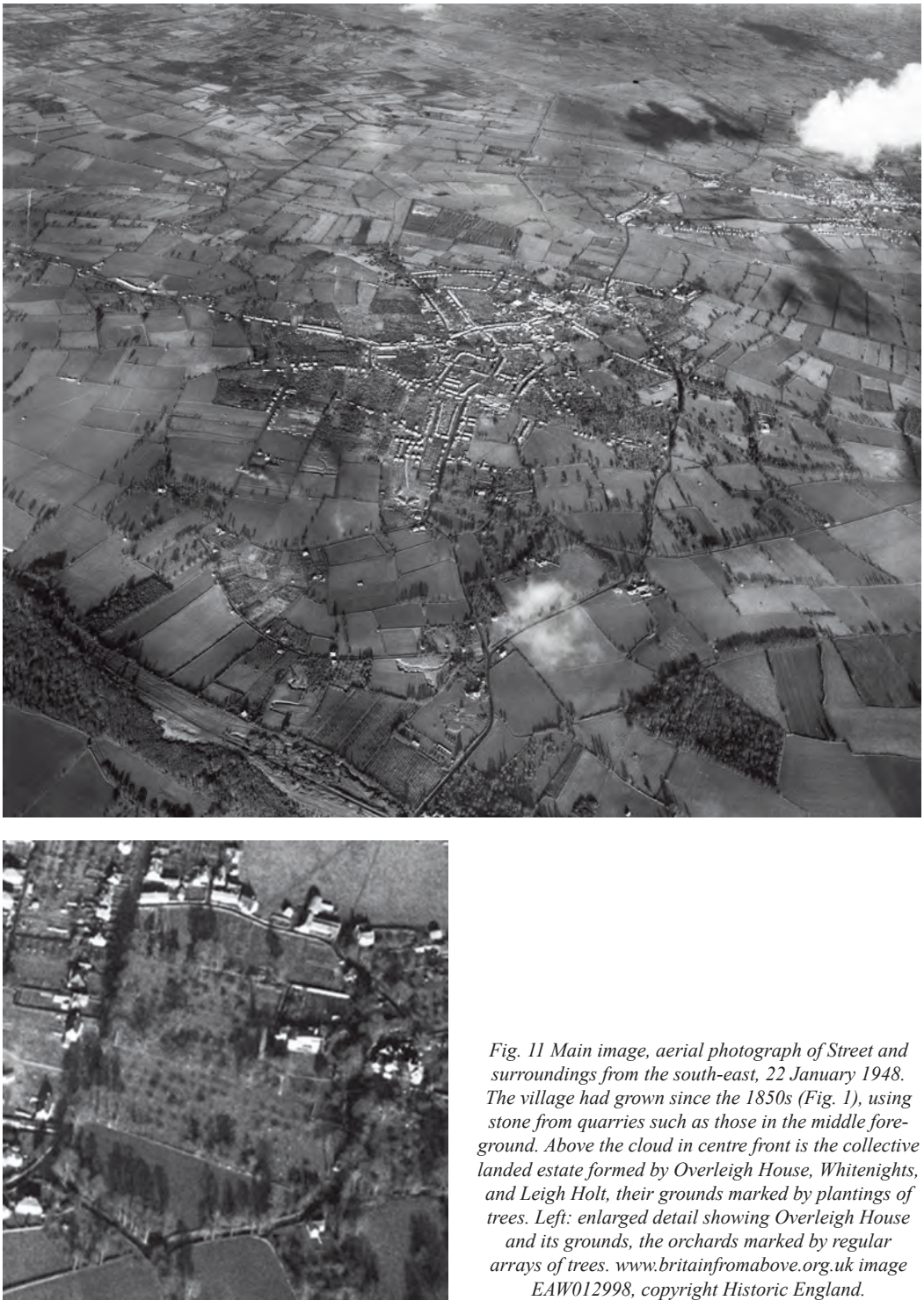


Fig. 11 Main image, aerial photograph of Street and surroundings from the south-east, 22 January 1948. The village had grown since the 1850s (Fig. 1), using stone from quarries such as those in the middle foreground. Above the cloud in centre front is the collective landed estate formed by Overleigh House, Whitenights, and Leigh Holt, their grounds marked by plantings of trees. Left: enlarged detail showing Overleigh House and its grounds, the orchards marked by regular arrays of trees. www.britainfromabove.org.uk image EAW012998, copyright Historic England.

the Arts in 1836. The brothers' father Thomas sen. lived at Overleigh Farm from (presumably) 1793 till 1837. However, the brothers moved to Bridgwater before 1810, and it is unclear whether Gillett lived in Street before the 1860s. But they surely met when visiting relatives in Street – or if Gillett learnt his ironmonger's trade in Bridgwater.[37]

In 1861, the annual meeting of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society (SANHS) was held at Langport. At the temporary museum, 'Mr Gillett, of Langport' displayed 'a very perfect specimen of Plesiosaurus; a head of Ic[h]thyosaurus, from Street; and a clock, said to be 300 years old'. This might be Alfred (who of course no longer lived at Langport), or his younger brother William, who had returned to Langport to trade as a draper and grocer.[38]

Our subject was presumably the 'Mr Alfred Gillett' who had previously contributed 'a case of shells, &c.' that is, modern molluscs, to the temporary 'museum' at the 1853 meeting of the SANHS at Yeovil.[39] Gillett does not feature in the report of the Society's 1859 outing to Street, where he did not then live.[40]

Retirement to Street would have made it easier for Alfred Gillett to collect fossils from that area. Around 1881, he

> *[…] observed in a quarry of the Lower Lias near his residence […] a number of broken slabs of shaly limestone, containing portions of the skeleton of an Ichthyosaur. These slabs, which had been cast aside by the workmen, were fitted together by Mr. Gillett, who finally succeeded, after the expenditure of great pains, in skilfully developing from them an almost entire example of the skeleton of* Ichthyosaurus tenuirostris *[...].*[41]

Gillett 'laboured for a twelvemonth in chiselling out the remains of this reptilian gem'.[42]

> *With his usual liberality Mr. Gillett presented this remarkably beautiful specimen to the Geological Department of the British Museum (Natural History) in 1884, where it is now exhibited […] one of the most striking objects in the fine series of Reptilian remains from the English Lias.*[43]

This truly graceful skeleton is preserved with its forefins spread out (Fig. 12).

In 1885, William Stephens Clark built the Crispin Hall in Street as a 'Working Men's Club and Institute', complete with a museum room. Apparently at Clark's suggestion,

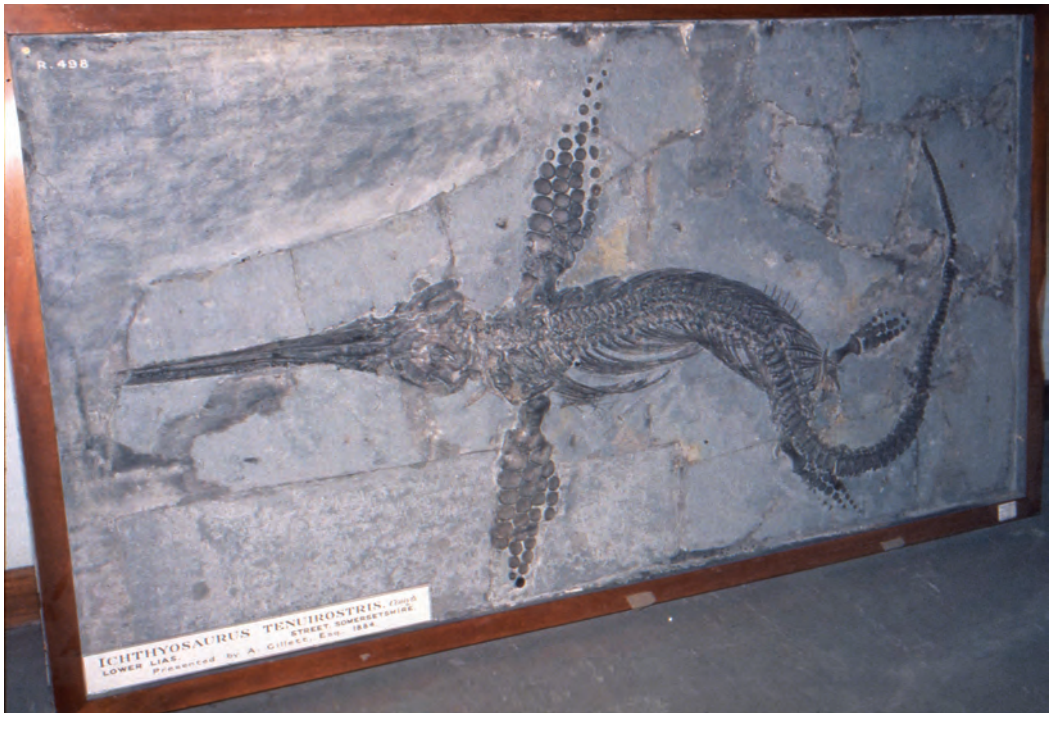


Fig. 12 Gillett's exquisite ichthyosaur Leptonectes tenuirostris *from the Lower Lias of Street, Natural History Museum, London, c. 1989 (specimen number NHMUK PV R 498). Copyright M. A. Taylor, courtesy of Natural History Museum.*

Gillett now donated 'my collection of Geological specimens, shells and minerals', and set up the displays in the new museum which was formally opened in 1887. Despite what has sometimes been believed, however, only a portion of the collections in the museum came from Gillett.[44]

Gillett helped visiting geologists and societies. Horace B. Woodward F.R.S., F.G.S. (1848-1914) of the Geological Survey visited Street in 1868 with his colleagues J. H. Blake and W. A. E. Ussher, and later remembered Gillett's assistance, and his feeding them the Overleigh apples.[45] In an informal piece on Mendip geology, in 1874, Woodward mentioned Gillett's previous finds of flint arrowheads at a hillfort at 'Dolberry' and 'the hill above Bathford'.[46] When Woodward visited Brent Knoll in 1885, to identify its constituent strata, he was accompanied by his cousin Martin F. Woodward (1865-1901), William Stephens Clark's brother J. Edmund Clark (1850-1944), and Alfred Gillett.[47] In 1893 Woodward's important Survey review of the Jurassic rocks of England and Wales referred explicitly to Gillett's exquisite ichthyosaur, and Gillett's finds of 'Fish-remains, including species of *Amblyurus*, *Dapedius*, *Leptolepis* and *Pholidophorus*' at Street, and an '*Ammonites Dudresseri*' at Northover. Woodward also noted Gillett's and George Jennings Hinde's recovery of useful zonal fossils from temporary excavations in Mead's Batch, Street, in 1891 – one classic role of the amateur geologist on the spot. Gillett also provided information on the provenance of specimens of the so-called Ammonite Marble of Marston Magna.[48]

Hinde, mentioned above in connection with the Pen Pits outing, must be considered another geologically minded member of the extended Clark family, for, in 1881, apparently as the result of a chance meeting in 1879 independently of their various geological relatives, he married Edith Clark (1852-1943), youngest surviving daughter of James and Eleanor Clark, making him Alfred Gillett's relative by marriage. Hinde was an important researcher into fossil invertebrates such as sponges and conodonts. Latterly of independent means, he frequented the British Museum (Natural History), whose fossil sponges he catalogued. He was also related to Ellen Page (1836-1913), wife of Dr Henry Woodward F.G.S., F.R.S. (1832-1921), the Museum's Keeper of Geology, who was also the uncle of Horace Woodward of the Survey. Henry Woodward was therefore another distant relative of Gillett's by marriage, as well as a 'dear friend'. It is not clear when they actually got to know each other, as Gillett knew Woodward's nephew Horace by 1868 at the latest. Amongst other scientific members of the Woodward family, Henry's son Martin (of the Brent Knoll outing) was, from 1885, assistant demonstrator and, later, demonstrator in biology at the Royal School of Mines and Normal School of Science in London. He was a regular summer guest of Gillett's, and a 'cheerful charming friend of our youth', apparently of John Bright Clark and Roger Clark (so perhaps c. 1875-85?). Plainly Gillett had links to significant figures in science.[49]

The first public mention of Gillett's fossil collection may have been an 1878 report of him lending fossils for a temporary display at the Working Men's Club in support of J. Edmund Clark's public lecture on 'The Street quarries, and what are to be found in them'. The 'Excursion' of the SANHS's annual meeting in August 1880, at Glastonbury, included the Street Lias quarries. At 'the residence of Mr Gillett, [...] some fine specimens of saurians and other fossils were examined, and explained' by W. Boyd Dawkins (1837-1929), later Professor of Geology at Owens College, Manchester. This was topical as Dawkins was on a British Association for the Advancement of Science committee to decide whether ichthyosaurs gave birth to live young rather than laying eggs.[50]

In August 1886 the Bristol Naturalists' Society excursion saw Gillett's collection and garden with 'some choice plants' and were treated to luncheon, before visiting the Crispin Hall with its 'nucleus of a geological museum'.[51]

Gillett was a member of the Geologists' Association, and on 7 August 1890 welcomed an excursion party of some 40 members who were spending some days on and around the Mendip Hills. After a visit to the new Street museum, the party was driven to Overleigh where

> *A tent had been erected in the paddock adjoining the lawn, and thither Mr. Gillett conducted the Members, who found a very excellent repast prepared for them. It required no persuasion to do ample justice to this substantial mid-day meal. The Director [H. B. Woodward] briefly thanked Mr. Gillett for his kind hospitality, remarking that their host had long laboured in a quiet and unostentatious way in the pursuit of science, gathering stores of information and fossils which he freely placed at the disposal of others. During the progress of the Geological Survey in 1868, he had visited Street in company with his colleagues, J. H. Blake and W. A. E. Ussher, and he had lively reminiscences of Mr. Gillett's kindness at the time, and likewise of the fruit which they had gathered (not without permission) from his orchard.*[52]

Unsurprisingly, the visitors paid particular attention to 'Mr Gillett's workshop, furnished with hammers, and chisels, and other tools which geologists delight in, and specimens in course of being cut out from the lias'.[53] Gillett exhibited the 'big, though fancifully-written book', *Memoirs on Ichthyosauri and Plesiosauri,* by Thomas Hawkins.[54] The party then visited 'Seymour's quarry' where, apparently, Gillett had 'lately' obtained a specimen of the ammonite '*A*[*mmonites*]. *angulatus*'.[55]

They continued to the crest of the Polden Hills, then:

> *Returning along a footpath to Street, under the guidance of Mr. S. T. Clothier, another Lias quarry was visited, and here a sharp anticlinal was seen to disturb the beds at one point, a feature which had been preserved through the influence of Mr. Gillett, so that the members might have the opportunity of seeing it.*[56]

This 'preservation' was presumably only temporary, for the meeting. The 'anticlinal', i.e. anticline, is a distortion of the strata caused by crustal movements within the deep earth, showing an upward convexity when seen in section in the quarry. This type of structure is known in the Lower Lias of Somerset where it occurs as a small tight fold or as a minor fault with very little displacement.[57] The guide, Samuel Thompson Clothier (1857-1933), informally called 'Tom', was variously quarry owner, stone merchant, surveyor, architect and builder (and had studied chemistry in London). He was a close neighbour and Quaker kin of Gillett through his grandfather, and through his marriage to William Stephens Clark's daughter Esther (1873-1935) (Fig. 13).[58]

Fig. 13 Samuel Thompson Clothier, Alfred Gillett's relative and neighbour, and variously surveyor, builder, architect, and quarry owner. Image courtesy of the Alfred Gillett Trust, ACC2014/A25.

This excursion report, and the Mead's Batch finds of 1891 noted earlier, comprise Gillett's last known geological activity in the field. In 1904, the *Geological Magazine* was edited by Henry Woodward with G. J. Hinde and H. B. Woodward as two of the three assistant editors. In its February issue appeared this brief unsigned notice:

> *In memory of ALFRED GILLETT, an excellent geologist, and a very dear friend of many years, one of the founders of the Street Geological Museum, who died at his residence, Overleigh, Street, Somerset, on the 24th January, 1904, in his 90th year.*[59]

If one goes by formal academic publications or learned society business, Gillett is not a significant figure. Of the three obvious societies to join, he was a member of the Geologists' Association, and from 1880 to 1902 the Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society (as were some of his relatives), but not the most formal and scientifically prestigious, the Geological Society of London.[60] He is not known to have published on geology, or to have been active in relevant societies, except when helping their excursions to Street. Yet our study has shown that Gillett was connected by marriage and friendship with two key institutions in British geology and palaeontology: the Geological Survey and the British Museum (Natural History). He was a keen local geologist, helpful to professionals and specialists. Just as importantly, Gillett collected the local fossils, and we now return to this aspect.

ALFRED GILLETT AS COLLECTOR

Horace B. Woodward observed of Street:

> *That the beds have proved so rich in Saurian-remains, is no doubt partly due to the extensive workings for stone, but it is partly due to the energy of local observers.*[61]

And Richard Lydekker's account of the British Museum ichthyosaur stressed:

> *The fortunate rescue of this interesting specimen by Mr. Gillett affords a good instance of the value of local observers in preserving rare fossils which would be otherwise totally lost.*[62]

Collecting ichthyosaurs was not as simple as it might sound. They were rare and, in hand-worked quarries, it was the quarrymen who had the best chance of finding them. This gave rise to an unusual industry, the production of ichthyosaurs and occasionally

plesiosaurs. This activity at Street has had little attention from modern historians compared to its equivalent at Lyme Regis in Dorset, but some points are clear. It had to be worth the quarrymen's time to extract such large fossils and set them aside carefully, even as crude unprepared slabs. Someone had to tip them and thank, or pay, the quarry operator before taking the skeleton home to prepare excess stone from the fossil and embed it in plaster or cement in a neat wooden frame, as some collectors preferred to do, like Gillett with the ichthyosaur. Alternatively the quarry operator, for instance Josiah Seymour, or some middle man, might add value by doing this preparation and mounting, an investment of effort which itself implies a reasonably predictable market. Visitors and outside dealers would take some finds, but Gillett had an advantage. Being on the spot, he was in a good position to learn of finds as they were made, perhaps by regular visits, or being told by his contacts. Those contacts could include quarry operators as well as workmen. It is an interesting question whether Gillett reserved the right to the fossil reptiles in quarries on any land which he sold or leased. However, we cannot answer this without a full understanding of quarrying within the patchwork of land ownership and leasing in and around Street.[63]

How important was Gillett as a Somerset marine reptile collector? One measure is to count complete or partly complete associated skeletons. As noted above, Gillett contributed most of the reptile skeletons in the original Street museum: perhaps about 14, presumably mostly from Street. So far as is known, he gave none to other museums other than the British Museum. If one considers individual collectors rather than institutions (which often acquired such personal collections anyway), then Gillett was surpassed by Thomas Hawkins, originally of Glastonbury and Sharpham Park near Street, and briefly later Ashcott,[64] and Charles Moore (1815-81) of Ilminster and latterly Bath.[65] Gillett's collection is comparable to that of Joseph Chaning Pearce (1811-47), a medical man of Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire, whose collection contained about nine or ten mounted ichthyosaurs, including a notable gravid female, or possibly cannibal, ichthyosaur 'from Somerset'.[66] Other local collectors with smaller collections than Gillett's include the Reverend David Williams F.G.S. (1792-1850), Rector of Bleadon,[67] and W. Ayshford Sanford (1818-1902) of Nynehead, retired Colonial Secretary of Western Australia and active in SANHS.[68] Thomas Bellerby Wilson (1807-65) donated several Somerset reptiles to the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, acquiring them through his brother Edward (1808-88); interestingly, the brothers were of Quaker extraction but reportedly no longer Friends, although Thomas remained sympathetic.[69] But by the time Gillett retired to Street almost all of those people had ceased collecting through death, or Hawkins's departure in 1868.[70] No doubt Gillett was glad not to compete with the difficult Hawkins. He may have had some competition from Moore, perhaps,[71] and certainly from outside dealers and sporadic purchasers whether personal or institutional.[72] However, Gillett undoubtedly saved a proportion of the reptiles found in the last few decades of active quarrying at Street by being on the spot and helping to maintain the local trade in fossils.

ALFRED GILLETT THE QUAKER

Alfred Gillett's life is strikingly Quakerly.[73] He was a member of the Society of Friends by birthright and (so far as is known) all his life, and was buried in the grounds of Street Meeting. We do not know whether he espoused the evangelicalism which dominated the Society during the mid-19th century, and which his brother George (1829-1908) adopted.[74] In fact, Alfred's obituary stated that he had 'never taken a prominent part in the working of the community', this last apparently meaning the Society of Friends, although he was a 'pious and God-fearing man, his religion being of the deepest and most sincere inward kind'. The lack of an obituary in the main Quaker periodicals tends to confirm that he was not notably active in Society business or doctrine.[75] Perhaps he sympathised with the earlier Quakerly quietism, or the more liberal and modernising tendency which succeeded evangelicalism around 1890 and was more positive about Darwinism and science.

Gillett's life as an embryo farmer and then ironmonger, 'straight-forward and upright in business',[76] was characteristic of Quakers, who were excluded from official appointments and learned professions because they could not swear the necessary oaths, including those to enter the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Gillett's extended family exemplifies how the Quakers were forced by necessity to form their own networks and to enter occupations which were free of such constraints. The need to marry within the Society, to avoid the risk of being disowned if one married outside, also strengthened those kinship connections, the women often moving on marriage to join their new husbands elsewhere. The Friends could thus cover quite large geographical areas in this way, at the same time as they actively pursued family and religious connections.

Quakers also tended to be quite well off, so could afford travel more easily than most, even to North America (Roger Clark, for instance, met his future wife there, and his aunt Edith Clark met her future husband George Hinde on a transatlantic crossing). Those networks were naturally exploited for business, as in Alfred Gillett's training as a farmer, and establishment in Hannam & Gillett. A further business advantage was

the Quakers' reputation for probity, for a cheater or bankrupt (much the same, in their eyes) was very likely to be disowned by the Society of Friends. Therefore relatives often stepped in when a Quaker's business was failing, to safeguard the community's reputation and, most of all, to avoid shame on the family. Alfred was a trustee in his brother William's failure in 1861, and a surety in the bankruptcy of their ironmonger brother Francis in Coventry in 1867.[77]

The size of Gillett's house was a little excessive for this bachelor quite to meet the Quaker ideal of frugality, but we suspect that he really bought it for the garden and grounds, and convenience for the surrounding quarries (and possibly to resolve his father's estate and release funds for his siblings). However, he evidently did not spend much on modernising it, or on a large household staff. And Gillett's early retirement in his mid-fifties is also Quakerly. The Friends professed a horror of accumulating wealth for its own sake. Money, rather, was the means to financial independence and security, and of no inherent merit once one had an adequate sufficiency.[78] Of course, retiring early to immerse oneself in activities one loved, if one had the chance, was hardly unique to Quakers (as shown by Moore).[79] But Gillett's recreations in retirement also turn out to be highly characteristic of the Quaker worldview, and we now turn to this issue.

SCIENCE AND THE QUAKERS OF STREET

The 18th- and 19th-century Quakers were famously interested in science and technology. This was not just for the economic benefits.[80] The Friends valued sciences such as botany and horticulture as rational recreations bringing the participant into personal experience of God through the divinely created world of nature. This was, of course, broadly the approach to natural science taken by many other Christians, from liberal Anglicans to Scottish Presbyterians such as Hugh Miller.[81] The Unitarians, perhaps closest to the Quakers amongst the free churches of Great Britain, had their keen amateur scientists such as Gillett's fellow ichthyosaur-collector Charles Moore, and the Taunton minister W. Arthur Jones, both involved with SANHS.[82] But there was a special element in Quaker belief: the Inward Light doctrine that God spoke direct to the heart of the believer. This doctrine, albeit downplayed by evangelical Quakers, emphasised the role of each individual Friend's personal beliefs and experience of divinity, in which last the contemplation of nature had a valuable role. The more empirical and experiential sciences such as botany and meteorology were particularly favoured. They were also of obvious utility. Alfred's brother William was evidently a keen gardener in Langport. Their brother George in Cirencester grew flowers and ferns, and his 'love of nature' helped him to 'appeal to others to see God in the beauties of His creation'. Thomas Clark jr. was a keen botanist, as was his cousin's son John Aubrey Clark. William Stephens Clark much enjoyed botany and horticulture. He, his brother J. Edmund Clark and his nephew Joseph Clark III were keen meteorologists. The first two were Fellows of the Royal Meteorological Society, and J. Edmund was active in that society and in the Yorkshire Philosophical Society as Honorary Curator of Meteorology at its Museum.[83]

In Britain more generally, and for much the same reasons, many Quakers were interested in geology from the science's earliest days; they contributed three of the Geological Society's 13 founder-members.[84] At Street, with its quarries, geology (as elsewhere) easily had intellectual and, to many Christians, moral as well as economic meaning. Alfred Gillett himself (and possibly his brother William), and Thomas Clark jr. (and probably his brother John), have already been noted. James Clark had a five-foot-long ichthyosaur to show off beside (presumably) Alfred's specimens in the temporary museum for the SANHS's annual meeting for 1880, at Glastonbury:

> *Saurian and Fish remains, Plants and other fossils, from the quarries at Street, by Mr. JAMES CLARK and Mr. GILLETT.*
>
> *Flint implements found at Street, Glastonbury, &c., by Mr. JAMES CLARK.*[85]

James had already shown, to a previous SANHS excursion of 1859 to the Street and Somerton district, 'an ichthyosaurus in Mr Clark's own collection, which was found at Ashcott, and a smaller one from the Street quarries', as well as other fossils.[86] It is not clear how many specimens he had, and how deep his interest in geology was. Nevertheless, in his capacity as a major investor in the Somerset & Dorset Railway, he had noticed a bed of limestone near Gurney Slade, while walking the unfinished line in 1873. This led to the purchase of extra land to work the stone, in a nice example of the utilitarian value of geology.[87]

G. J. Hinde, although probably not an actual Friend, may be allowed an honorary mention for his family links and undoubted scientific eminence.[88] There is no doubt about Gillett's Brent Knoll companion J. Edmund Clark F.G.S, F.R.Met.S, although he perhaps only counts as a Street Quaker scientist by family origin, as he was a master at Bootham School in York from 1869, and Science Master from 1875. He was founding joint editor of the Quaker *Natural History Journal*. He

held a BSc first class honours degree in Geology and Palaeontology (1875) from the University of London (nominally obtained by 'private study' as an external student, but presumably benefiting from Clark's studies at Heidelberg in 1873-5). He carried out research on glacial geology, meteorology and phenology (the study of seasonal phenomena such as the dates of flower opening or bird migration). At Bootham and in the *Journal*, he showed an interest in Darwinian thought characteristic of post-evangelical Quakerism. We do not know what Gillett himself thought about Darwinism; perhaps he was one of the many late Victorian naturalists, Quaker and otherwise, happy to enjoy and classify nature's diversity without worrying too much how that diversity arose.[89]

J. Edmund Clark's history, and his position at Bootham School (which substituted gardening for organised sport), also show how Quakers in Somerset as elsewhere were far more apt than their contemporaries to encounter, and encourage, science at all levels of education, for both its practical and moral value. For instance, Esther Clark qualified as a secondary school teacher at the Durham College of Science in 1897. Her uncle John Morland (and sometime vice-president of SANHS), was an 'analytical chemist' with a fine record at the Royal School of Mines in the 1850s. Geologists needed a general scientific background, so, despite its name, the School in practice functioned to some extent as a specialist college for science (and would be a forebear of Imperial College of Science and Technology). Chemistry was of obvious relevance to leatherworking and dyeing, though it is not clear that Morland actually anticipated this when choosing his studies. It was only rather later, in 1870, that he became a partner with James Clark and William Stephens Clark in the new firm of Clark, Son & Morland. William himself studied chemistry for some months in the laboratory at St Thomas's Hospital, London, around 1857, even publishing a note on an improved piece of chemical apparatus. The obvious assumption is that he studied chemistry for its relevance to leather-processing. But it may be significant that the chemistry lecturer, Robert Dundas Thomson, was noted for his research into such things as public health, water supply, the effects of alcohol, and meteorology – all reflecting William's later interests and civic and social concerns. William also sent his (somewhat reluctant) son Roger to Victoria College, Leeds, in 1890-2, to study leather-processing and dyeing.[90]

The most obvious gap in this discussion of science comprises the women of the Street Quaker community. The Street women arguably included two further scientists, the medical doctors Annie Clark and (stretching the 19th century a little) her niece Hilda Clark. Annie, who spent most of her professional career in Birmingham, was one of the first British female doctors, related to another female medical pioneer and missionary Agnes McLaren (1837-1913), stepdaughter of Priscilla Bright McLaren. Medical training then required a broad foundation in the sciences, and Annie was professionally trained, making her arguably the most qualified scientist amongst the 19th-century Street Quakers, female or male, beside her brother J. Edmund (although both had to move elsewhere for their careers).[91] Even so, there was something of a scientific gender gap at Street, and it was probably real rather than a statistical fluke, if only because it was universal in 19th-century British science. It was undoubtedly partly enforced by the frequent exclusion of women from formal participation in scientific societies (indeed, Hinde pushed strongly but unsuccessfully for the admission of women to the Fellowship of the Geological Society of London when the question came up in 1889). The Quaker respect for education of females is surely reflected by the enthusiasm of young Quaker women for attending public lectures, and, later in the century, entering the new women's colleges associated with the University of Cambridge. One of these latter women, Margaret Crosfield (1859-1952) from Reigate, later became the first female Fellow of the Geological Society of London. Even so, the gender gap in science remains evident amongst British Quakers of the 19th century, despite the Society of Friends' best efforts to promote equality of the sexes.[92]

One reason might be that geological and natural-historical fieldwork were particularly problematical, involving physical labour in sometimes messy and isolated locations, incompatible with contemporary perceptions of socially acceptable behaviour and dress, and the need for females to be chaperoned by approved males. Those issues would particularly affect middle-class women. The wealthy could get round them to some extent, by spending money, and the working class, such as Mary Anning (1799-1847), professional fossil collector of Lyme Regis, could not afford to pay much attention to them. And 19th-century Quaker women were apt to be very middle-class and concerned to behave appropriately in public (partly to protect their family's reputation, and perhaps that of the Society of Friends too). Imagine fossil-hunting in a muddy quarry in the dress the young woman wears in Fig. 6. Yet she could hardly wear anything less formal in public and be decent, in the decades before women could buy somewhat more practical outdoor clothing that was socially acceptable.

It is likely that some Quaker women were scientifically active behind the scenes, concealing their activity through a horror of unfeminine self-promotion, and giving the results to their menfolk who got the credit (as often happened with women in science generally). One wonders how many would have shown themselves as keen scientists of all kinds, had they been allowed to join

the relevant societies, in the way that William and Joseph Clark reveal themselves with their Fellowships of the Royal Meteorological Society.[93] Quaker women might also, of course, feel they had better or more urgent things to do, perhaps domestic or political, than fossil-hunting. They might even be in employment; Alice Clark ran her own department at C. & J. Clark as the firm's first female manager. And, as noted earlier, some were prominent in local education, even if not paid for their work.

Another possibility is that Quaker women tended to an interest in botany rather than other sciences. Again stretching the 19th century somewhat, Margaret Clark (1878-1962), daughter of William Stephens Clark and Helen Priestman Bright Clark, graduated from Newnham College, Cambridge, in Moral Sciences (Philosophy, Psychology and Economics) in 1901, and married Arthur Bevington Gillett (1875-1954), one of the Gillett bankers of Oxford. As a result of visiting South Africa during her charitable work with Boer women, she became an amateur botanist (and, in turn, her son Jan Bevington Gillett (1911-95) a professional botanist). Her status is clear from plants named in her honour such as *Acacia gillettiae*, and the designation of 'Gillett' as the formal shorthand for her name in botanical nomenclature.[94] The problem is that a less specialist interest in botany, comparable to that which we suggest for James Clark and his fossils, would be hard to pick out from the common domestic interest in horticulture and gardening generally. This also means that we might well miss any interest that Alfred Gillett had in formal botany. In contrast, geology and meteorology stand out much more clearly from the normal course of domestic life, as when one reads through family correspondence and biographical memoirs. A plant in the garden can be anything: an ichthyosaur on the study wall can only be what it is. Perhaps light will be thrown on those issues by further research into the archives held by the Alfred Gillett Trust, given the work done on cataloguing and access in recent years.

An interesting question is how far scientific activities acted to bridge over social and religious divisions. Indeed, during the 19th century, religious tensions affecting science were increasingly neutralised by adopting a façade of naturalism, a tacit agreement not to bring religion into scientific discourse.[95] The SANHS must, one hopes, have been such a venue, for its active members included a number of Street Quakers as well as the Unitarians Moore and Jones. Scientific friendships could cross divides, too. J. G. Hickley (c. 1817-1905), Rector of Walton-cum-Street from 1850 to 1886 and then Walton to 1889, was 'a great friend of an old Quaker, who was a very intellectual man, fond of astronomy and of botany, two of the Rector's hobbies'. This might have been Alfred's father John Gillett, given his presumed interest in gardening.[96]

Hickley's predecessor Lord John Thynne (1798-1881), Rector for 1823-50, was also sub-Dean of Westminster Abbey from 1835, making him deputy to the noted geologist William Buckland (1784-1856) from 1845. Like Buckland's wife Mary *née* Morland (1797-1857), Thynne's wife Anna *née* Beresford (1806-66) was interested in geology and marine natural history. She notably invented the self-sustaining marine aquarium in the 1840s. But Lord John was a pluralist, and it is unclear what proportion of their time the couple spent at Walton Rectory and whether Anna was able to take an active interest in science there, including the local fossils.[97]

William Stephens Clark's interest also exemplifies the role of Quakers and other dissenters in promoting science in provincial England, where they had a much better chance of being members of the local elites than they would in the metropolis. In particular, science fed into the dissenter elites' wider philanthropic and moral concerns, such as education, public health, and the promotion of alternative recreations in the fight against alcohol abuse. Drink and education were important motives when Clark built the Crispin Hall in 1885 to give Street an institute for the working classes. Gillett's support for the integral museum was clearly a contribution to these aims.[98] Otherwise we can say little about how Gillett fulfilled his Quakerly duty of charity, simply because he 'was not given to ostentation, but his charities were many, and he did good by stealth, and there are many at Overleigh who will regret Mr Gillett's decease'.[99]

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Alfred Gillett's story is plainly not the conventional tale of someone neglected by the metropolitan scientists of the great museums and state institutions: far from it, for they recorded their thanks to him. Even so, Gillett was almost forgotten as the 20th century drew on, although his memory has made a comeback within Street itself in recent years, with wider knowledge of the local fossils promoted by events supported by the eponymous Alfred Gillett Trust.

Historians are apt to neglect people who did things, rather than write about them. It is easier to study people who leave libraries of publications, journals of sermons, and archives of manuscripts, than people who do practical things such as collecting fossils and setting up museums.[100] This approach also discriminates against informal links and private activity, rather than the formal public relationships of scientific (and other) employment and society memberships. Gillett was (so far as we know) mainly active in the later 19th century, by which the modern notion of amateur versus professional scientists had begun to take shape.[101] He

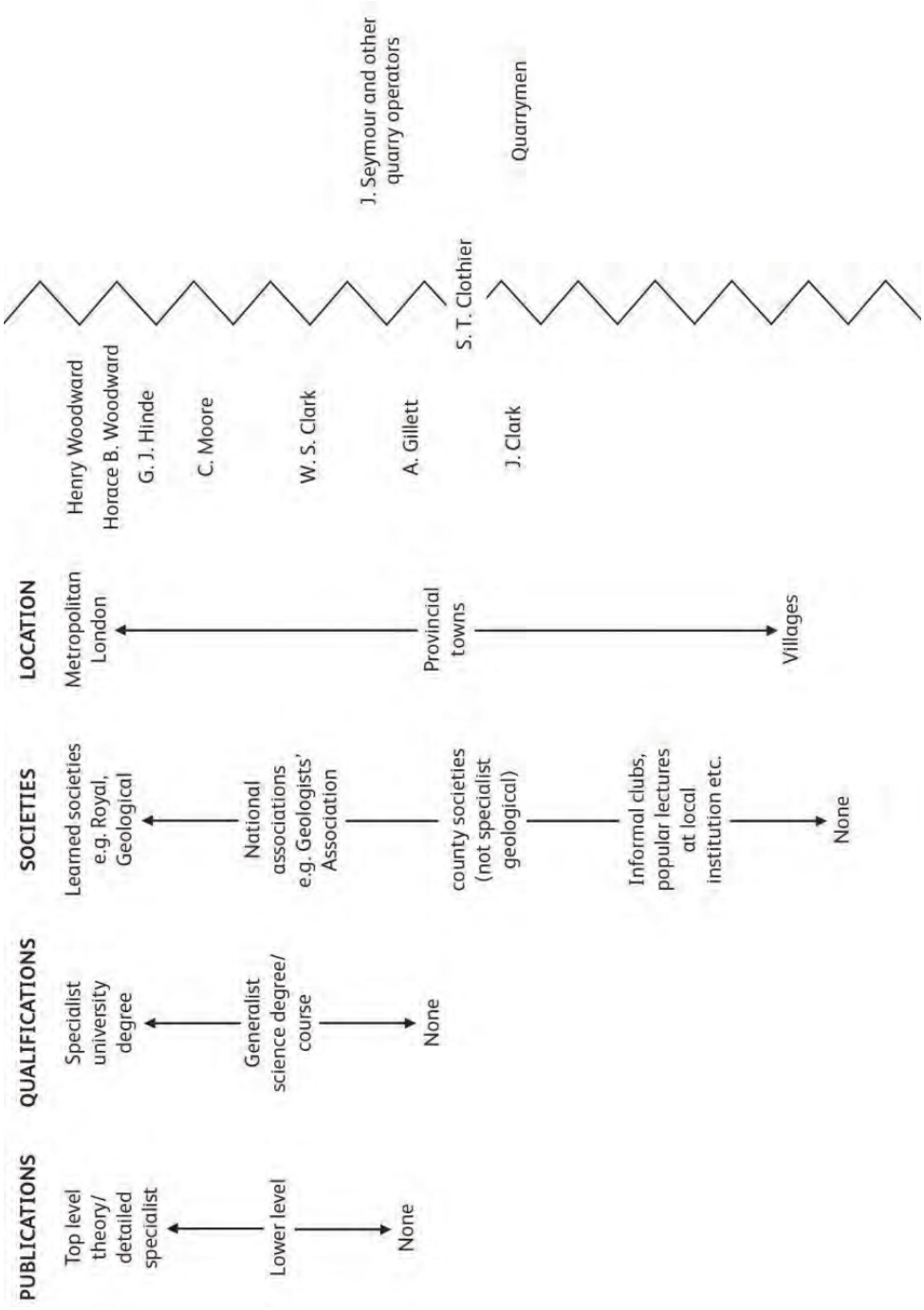


Fig. 14 Gillett's position in contemporary science: hierarchical model. See text for discussion.

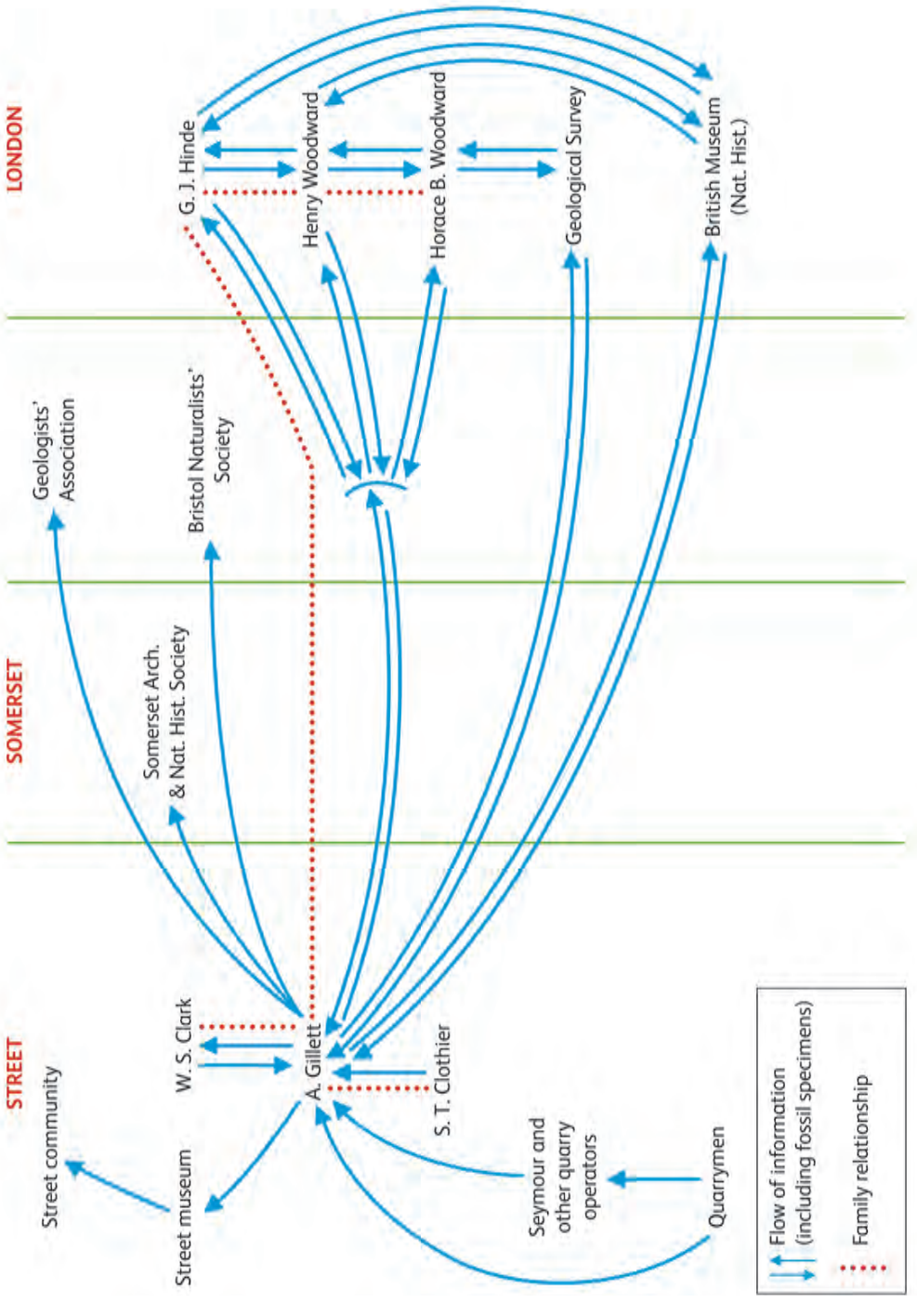


Fig. 15 Gillett's position in science: network model. See text for discussion.

would be fixed quite low down in any conventional view of the hierarchy of contemporary science such as that attempted here (Fig. 14). The factors used to decide rank in this diagram are not completely commensurable. Academic geological training is notably problematical as it was largely unavailable in the earlier 19th century. Moreover, such a schema cannot accommodate the 'practical men' with their craft skills and empirical knowledge. Because of the nature of this knowledge, and the social attitudes involved, their expertise is easily overlooked when focussing solely on formal geology.[102] They are therefore shown in a separate realm, the boundary represented by a zig-zag line, and S. T. Clothier left on the boundary pending clarification of his interests and knowledge. Yet the quarry operators and their workmen were plainly not ignorant. They had their own collective understanding exemplified by their naming of the individual beds and identification of the various best uses (for instance, for walling, paving, or roadstone). They could also spot fossil reptiles still buried in the stone, from the way in which the fine sedimentary layers draped over hidden bones.[103]

By contrast, Sandra Holton's recent work on the Quaker women of Street has emphasised the notion of informal networks of kinship and friendship.[104] We find this location- and network-based approach fruitful when thinking about Gillett and his geological activities (Fig. 15). Unlike the conventional hierarchical structure, it easily incorporates his relationships with men at the core of formal British science, and their reciprocal regard for him. We treat information as naturally flowing both ways; Gillett learnt what his visitors thought of Street geology and fossils, in their specialist ways, just as they learnt from him. One must not claim too much. Gillett was never a formal geologist, even as an amateur. He was also active at a time when ichthyosaurs were no longer cutting-edge science. Yet in a sense he was central to Street geology. One can well imagine that even Survey geologists such as Horace Woodward benefited from his local knowledge and his contacts, for all that they had legal rights of access as State employees. This perception is strengthened when fossils are included in that 'information'. We can then allow for gifts from, for instance, Hinde to complement Gillett's collection for the new museum.[105] This model can also incorporate Gillett's philanthropy when his collection was embodied in this public museum at the intellectual centre of his home village. However, this approach also raises the interesting question of how far the gender differences run within the surviving record. Quaker families often set importance on keeping family archives, hence the success of Sandra Holton's research using the extensive letter collections at AGT. These letter collections were often created by the women of the family, who were apt to be the principal letter-writers. It was, in any case, an important female function to keep the wider kinship connected through their letter-writing. The Quaker men seem to have been too busy earning, or simply less inclined to write letters, which implies less trace of their activities, domestic or otherwise, in family letter collections. It may well be that their scientific activities also fell through the gap between business and home lives, which might explain why they do not seem to be well documented. Much the same could be true of the women, if one broadens 'business' to include the public realm as a whole (such as Society of Friends matters, campaigning and charities). Hence the importance of such overt indicators as society memberships, and the bias implicit in female exclusion from those societies.

A related question is the significance of parents and relatives in supporting and inspiring an interest in science generally, and geology in particular. The noted surgeon Joseph Lister (1827-1912) was the son of an Essex Quaker wine merchant and noted microscopist who encouraged his children in natural history, so that Lister developed an interest in anatomy and thence surgery.[106]

Alfred Gillett has been a worthwhile subject. If never as eccentric as his uncle John Clark, he has proved happier company, for us as much as his contemporaries, than the thoroughly unpleasant Thomas Hawkins. He was (we infer) a competent businessman whose Yeovil partnership evolved, in other hands, into Westland Aircraft and then Westland Helicopters, of great importance to the local economy if in a mainly military trade which, as a Friend, he would likely deplore. As a local geologist, Gillett played a role in the scientific investigation of Street's geology and fossils in the last third of the 19th century. One can well imagine that any visiting geologist was quietly welcomed and fed apples and advice. Gillett was seemingly the main local fossil collector after 1875 or so (though he apparently began much earlier). Perhaps most importantly, his gift to the Street community established that collection's future within Street itself. All this reflects his nature as a member of the Somerset Quaker community, while our investigation has also thrown an unexpected further light on his fellow Friends of all levels of scientific interest and attainment. We hope that this study demonstrates and exemplifies the value, breadth and depth of the research collections held by the Alfred Gillett Trust, and that it helps to inform and assist the Trust's future work on researching and interpreting the history of Street, as well as inspiring new directions of scholarship.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AGT Alfred Gillett Trust, The Grange, Farm Road, Street, Somerset BA16 0BQ, https://alfredgilletttrust.org/.

LRSF Library of the Religious Society of Friends in Britain, Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ.

ODNB *Oxford dictionary of national biography*, https://www.oxforddnb.com/ [accessed: December 2020].

SANHS Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, later Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society.

REFERENCES

[1] H. B. Woodward, *Memoirs of the Geological Survey of the United Kingdom. The Jurassic rocks of Britain. Volume III. The Lias of England and Wales (Yorkshire excepted)* (London: HMSO, 1893), 79-81.

[2] M. McGarvie, *The Book of Street* (Buckingham: C. & J. Clark, 1987), 128, 137.

[3] W. D. Conybeare, 'Additional notices on the fossil genera *Ichthyosaurus* and *Plesiosaurus*', *Trans. Geol. Soc. London*, 2nd Series, 1 (1822), 103-23; J. Bowen, *A brief memoir of the life and character of William Baker [...]* (Taunton: Frederick May, 1854); H. S. Torrens, 'Colonel Birch (c. 1768-1829)', *The Geol. Curator* 2 (1980), 561-2; S. R. Howe, T. Sharpe and H. S. Torrens, *Ichthyosaurs: a history of fossil 'sea-dragons'* (Cardiff: National Museum of Wales, 1981); M. A. Taylor, 'Before the dinosaur: the historical significance of the fossil marine reptiles', in J. M. Callaway and E. L. Nicholls (eds), *Ancient marine reptiles* (San Diego: Academic Press, 1997), xix-xlvi; M. Evans, 'The roles played by museums, collections and collectors in the early history of reptile palaeontology', in R. T. J. Moody, E. Buffetaut, D. Naish and D. M. Martill (eds), *Dinosaurs and other extinct saurians: a historical perspective* (London: Geological Society Special Publication 343, 2010), 5-29.

[4] Genealogical information is taken from company and family histories referenced in note 6 (below); summary lists of fonds at AGT (https://alfredgilletttrust.org/); Digest registers of births, marriages and burials, including Bristol & Somerset Quarterly Meeting, LRSF, kindly provided by Tabitha Driver pers. comm., 2004; standard databases (www.ancestry.co.uk, www.familysearch.org and Probate Registry, London, searched at various times up to 3 May 2021); and J. J. Green, *Quaker records: being an index to 'The Annual Monitor', 1813-92 [...]* (London: Hick, 1894). Ordnance Survey mapping: www.digimap.edina.ac.uk and www.nls.uk/maps [accessed: May 2021]. Names for fossil genera and species are unmodernised. 'Somerset' is the pre-1974 county.

[5] Alfred Gillett's one known full obituary said that he 'came of a very old Somerset family, his progenitors formerly residing near Chard': Anon, 'Death of Mr A. Gillett', *Central Somerset Gazette* (30 January 1904), 5. Other sources: LRSF; AGT WN 121/08; entry for John Gillett, E. H. Milligan, *Biographical dictionary of British Quakers in commerce and industry* (York: Sessions Book Trust, 2007). John Gillett's parents were Sarah Dawe of Glastonbury and Joseph Gillett (1754-1824) of Somerton, son of John Gillett (c. 1723-72) of Somerton or Long Sutton and Ann Smith of Crewkerne. Martha Isaac was born at Sturminster Newton in Dorset, child of William Isaac (b. 1747) (formerly of Sandford Orcas) and Elizabeth Clark of Greinton (b. 1753). Martha Clothier Gillett's parents were the Yeovil druggist William Gillett (1755-1843) and Martha Clothier (1780-1857): S. C. Morland, 'Mid-Somerset Friends in the 18th century: a study in the administration of discipline', *J. Friends' Hist. Soc.* 52 (1971), 249-76, 268-9.

[6] This paper draws on these company and family histories: Anon, *1825-1925: One hundred years' history of shoes and sheep-skin rugs at Street, Somerset* (Street: Pelican Press, 1925); [L. H. Barber], *Clarks of Street 1825-1950* (Street: Clarks Ltd, 1950); P. Lovell, *Quaker inheritance 1871-1961* (London: Bannisdale Press, 1970); R. Clark, *Somerset anthology: twenty-four pieces* (York: William Sessions Ltd., 1975); M. McGarvie, *Bowlingreen Mill: a centenary history* (Street: Avalon Leatherboard Company, 1979); G. B. Sutton, *A history of shoe making in Street, Somerset: C. & J. Clark 1833-1903* (York: Sessions Book Trust, 1979); Anon, *The descendants of Joseph and Fanny Clark* (Street: C. & J. Clark, Street Shoe Museum, 1981); M. Haynes,

'Clark, William Stephens (1839-1925)' *ODNB* (2007) doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/46819; M. Palmer, *Clarks: made to last* (London: Profile Books, 2013).

[7] T. A. B. Corley, *Quaker enterprise in biscuits: Huntley and Palmers of Reading 1822-1972* (London: Hutchinson, 1972), xiv-xv, 24-31, 41. Also, Alfred Gillett's brother William (b. 1825) married Maria Whiting (1828-58), granddaughter of the biscuit business's founder Joseph Huntley (1775-1849) and his wife Mary Willis (1773-1821). Alfred is not known to have been related, during his lifetime, to the Quaker banking Gilletts of Oxfordshire and Warwickshire and (eventually) Barclays Bank: A. M. Taylor, *Gilletts: bankers at Banbury and Oxford* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964).

[8] As well as references in notes 5 and 6, the remainder of this section draws on A. Raistrick, *Quakers in science and industry* (York: Sessions Book Trust, 1950 (reprinted 1993)); E. A. Isichei, *Victorian Quakers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970); S. S. Holton, *Quaker women. Personal life, memory and radicalism in the lives of women Friends, 1780-1930* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007).

[9] Holton, *op. cit.* note 8, 151.

[10] Holton, *op. cit.* note 8; D. M. Fahey, 'Impey, Catherine (1847-1923)', *ODNB* (2004) doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/39157; S. S. Holton, 'Clark, Alice (1874-1934)', *ODNB* (2004) doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/38517; S. S. Holton, 'Kinship and friendship: Quaker women's networks and the women's movement', *Women's Hist. Rev.* 14 (2005), 365-84; C. Bressey, 'Victorian "Anti-racism" and feminism in Britain', *Women: a cultural review* 21 (2010), 279-91; M. Taylor, 'Bright, John (1811-1889)', *ODNB* (2013), doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/3421; S. S. Holton, 'Clark, Hilda (1881-1955)', *ODNB* (2016) doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/38518.

[11] Morland, *op. cit.* note 5, 252.

[12] Gillett did not attend the Quaker boarding schools at Ackworth in Yorkshire (Celia Wolfe pers. comm. 2015), Bootham in York (Jenny Orwin pers. comm. 2015) or Sidcot in Somerset (Christine Gladwin pers. comm. 2015), and is not on any index of Quaker schools at LRSF (Tabitha Driver pers. comm. 2004).

[13] Anon, *op. cit.* note 5. William Palmer III and his five brothers were farmers or graziers. At least two, Walter (1793-1868) and Robert (1796-1874), were at Long Sutton about the right time: Anon, *Register of persons entitled to vote in the election of [...] knights of the shire [...]* (Somerset 1832; SANHS Library); Corley, *op. cit.* note 7, 24, 26.

[14] Also, Stephens's mother Amy Metford (1773-1847) was a sister of Mary Metford (1766-1837), wife of Thomas Clark sen. (1759-1850). Anon, 'Josiah Hannam [...]', *Dorset County Chronicle* (7 January 1841), 1; 'Death of Mr Hannam', *Western Gazette* (27 November 1874), 8. It is not known if Gillett had served a formal apprenticeship as ironmonger, or where he worked before 1841, perhaps under Hannam, or their Bridgwater relative Joseph Thompson (1778-1855): [Barber], *op. cit.* note 6, 177; Clark, *op. cit.* note 6, 3, 100, 106 and family tree; Sutton, *op. cit.* note 6, 107 and family tree.

[15] Bills of sale and other items: Bob Osborn's website http://www.yeovilhistory.info/hannam.htm [accessed: April 2021]. Anon, 'Housebreaking', *Western Flying Post* (10 December 1842), 4.

[16] Anon, 'Hannam and Gillett [...]' and 'General furnishing ironmongery [...]', *Western Gazette* (4 August 1865), 4; '[...] Josiah Hannam and Alfred Gillett [...]', *London Gazette* (17 August 1866), 4606; D. N. James, *Westland aircraft since 1915* (London: Putnam, 1991), 1.

[17] Anon, 'To be disposed of, an old established business [...]', *Sherborne Mercury* (4 April 1831), 1.

[18] Today 55 Overleigh. Only two rooms remained of the older house, at least in 1926: Clark, *op. cit.* note 6, 43. Overleigh (also Higher Leigh) was one of the Leigh hamlets on the northward dip slope of the Lias, absorbed by Street's southward expansion. Depending on context, 'Overleigh' could denote the vicinity; Overleigh House; Overleigh Farm (now Whitenights); and the modern street name for the public road encircling Overleigh House.

[19] It is not clear whether Gillett wanted to sell Overleigh House, or validate the price paid to his father's estate. Anon, 'Street, Somerset. A most desirable freehold residence [...]', *Bath Chronicle* (13 August 1868), 4 (quoted); 'Overleigh House [...]', *Western Gazette and Flying Post* (28 August 1868), 5, and (revised) (4 September), 5; 'Street, Somerset', *Western Gazette and Flying Post* (9 October 1868), 4; 'To be sold, or let [...] at Overleigh [...]', *Western Gazette and Flying Post* (12 February 1869), 4. Land in 1840s: 1841-43 tithe map and listing, copy in AGT.

[20] Gillett, 'after a year or so of travel, settled at Overleigh House on his mother's death': Clark, *op. cit.* note 6, 43. The October 1868 and February 1869 advertisements, however, directed inquirers to him at Yeovil.

[21] Census data and will.

[22] In 1873 (as 'Gillet') he owned 11 acres and one perch at Street, presumably the house and gardens and the nine acres: *England and Wales (exclusive of the Metropolis). Return of owners of land, 1873* (London: HMSO, 1875), volume 2, 35. The 1881 census has Gillett farming nine acres (presumably not house and gardens). Cattle: sale after his death, Anon, 'Overleigh House, Street, Somerset', *Central Somerset Gazette* (20 February 1904), 1.

[23] AGT LHB box 31. John Aubrey Clark (1826-90), known as Aubrey, was Cyrus Clark's eldest son.

[24] AGT LHB box 31, entry dated 23 August 1920.

[25] G. J. Hinde, 'On beds of sponge-remains in the Lower and Upper Greensand of the south of England', *Philosophical Trans. Royal Soc. London* 176 (1885), 403-53, 420-1.

[26] Anon, *op. cit.* note 5; Clark, *op. cit.* note 6, 43: 'enjoy[ing] the pursuits of gardening and geology until the end of his long life'.

[27] H. H. Winwood and H. B. Woodward, 'Excursion to the Mendip Hills. August 4th to 9th, 1890', *Proc. Geol. Assoc.* 11 (1891), clxxi-ccxvi, ccv.

[28] Anon, 'Geologists abroad', *Wells J.* (14 August 1890), 5.

[29] Lovell, *op. cit.* note 6, 115.

[30] Quoted from death certificate, which contains the deletion reproduced here; LRSF; Anon, *op. cit.* note 5.

[31] Anon, *op. cit.* note 5; 'In memory of Alfred Gillett [...]', *Geol. Mag.* 5th series, 1 (1904), 96.

[32] Will of 3 November 1903, probate granted at Taunton, 9 March 1904.

[33] Isichei, *op. cit.* note 8, 184-5.

[34] Anon, 'Bowring and Hawkins', *Central Somerset Gazette* (13 February 1904), 1; 'Overleigh House, Street, Somerset', *Central Somerset Gazette* (27 February 1904), 1; 'We hear that Overleigh House [...]', *Central Somerset Gazette* (21 May 1904), 8; R. Clark Ms. 'Of scents – or the sense of smell', in the society's Ms. proceedings, Village Album, volume 86 for 1937-9, AGT GB2075 (quoted); Clark, *op. cit.* note 6, xix, 43, 79-83; Lovell, *op. cit.* note 6, 274; C. Berry, *VA Village Album Collection 1857-1998*, fonds guide, 2014, AGT. 'Heaving': settling unevenly. Lias slabs laid on earth make cold flooring, tending to condense moisture from the air.

[35] Anon, 'Opening of the Geological Museum at Street. Dr. Woodward on the study of geology', *Central Somerset Gazette* (30 April 1887), 5.

[36] T. Wright, 'On the zone of *Avicula contorta*, and the Lower Lias of the south of England', *Quarterly J. Geol. Soc. London* 16 (1860), 374-411, 391.

[37] Bowen, *op. cit.* note 3, esp. 56; Clark, *op. cit.* note 6, 43, 96-102, 106, 111-5 and family tree; D. W. Blandford, 'The Eureka', *Classical J.* 60 (1965), 247-51; C. Berry, *LVM Latin Verse Machine c 1830-c 1845*, AGT fonds description, version of 2014. See also note 14. The Machine is now held by AGT. The ichthyosaur is possibly the specimen previously deposited (that is, loaned) by John Clark in the Bristol Institution from 1829 to 1832: notes by Roger Clark, Geology Section, City of Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, Geology File CLA.8, referring to DB. Deposit 11 (5 February 1829) and DB. 1605.

[38] Anon, 'Local Museum', *SANH* 11:1 (1863), 29-30, 29. Without other evidence that William collected fossils, it remains possible that the specimens were lent to him by Alfred, or belonged to some other Gillett altogether.

[39] 'The Museum', *SANH* [4] (1854), 7-14, 11. Alfred certainly had a collection of shells in later years: Anon, *op. cit.* note 35.

[40] Anon, 'Second Day. Excursion', *SANH* 9 (1860), 20-32.

[41] R. Lydekker, 'Note on a nearly perfect skeleton of *Ichthyosaurus tenuirostris* from the Lower Lias of Street, Somerset', *Geol. Mag.* 3rd series, 8 (1891), 289-90, 289.

[42] Winwood and Woodward, *op. cit.* note 27, ccv (not to be taken literally: simply that the work was spread over a year).

[43] Lydekker, *op. cit.* note 41.

[44] The museum was closed and dispersed in 1948, and the local fossils are now held by AGT. Anon, *op. cit.* note 35; 'Street Museum: temporary storage and closure', *Museums J.* 48 (1948), 39; Taylor and Berry in prep.

[45] Winwood and Woodward, *op. cit.* note 27, ccv, quoted below. Perhaps fieldwork for the Survey memoir by H. B. Woodward, *Geology of east Somerset and the Bristol coal-fields [...]* (London: HMSO, 1876).

[46] H. B. Woodward, 'A ramble across the Mendip Hills', *Geol. Mag.* 11th series, 1 (1874), 481-92, 487. 'Dolberry' is presumably Dolebury Warren.

[47] H. B. Woodward, 'Notes on the geology of Brent Knoll, in Somersetshire', *Proc. Bath Nat. Hist. Antiquarian Field Club* 6 (1886), 125-30.

[48] Woodward, *op. cit.* note 1, 81, 84. The British Geological Survey, Keyworth, holds 13 Jurassic fossils from Shepton Mallet acquired from 'A. Gillet', presumably our subject (Paul Shepherd pers. comm. 2015).

[49] Hinde: [W. Whitaker], '[obituary, George Jennings Hinde]', *Quarterly J. Geol. Soc. London* 75, 1918, lvii-lix; H. Woodward, 'Obituary, George Jennings Hinde [...]', *Geol. Mag.* 6th series, 5, 1918, 233-40; S. L. Long, P. D. Taylor, S. Baker and J. Cooper, 'Some early collectors and collections of fossil sponges represented in The Natural History Museum, London', *The Geol. Curator* **7**, 2003, 353-62; S. J. Knell, *The great fossil enigma: the search for the conodont animal* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013). Hinde's father Ephraim (c. 1804-82) had a brother Francis Hinde (c. 1812-97) who was married to Sophia Eliza Page (1814-94), sister of Martin Fountain Page (1811-82), Ellen Woodward's father: Lauren Turner pers. comm. 2021. Meeting with Edith Clark: Holton, *op. cit.* note 8, 154. Henry Woodward: Anon, 1904, *op. cit.* note 31 (quoted); [A. Smith Woodward], 'Henry Woodward - 1832-1921', *Proc. Royal Soc. London* B 98 (1921), xxiii-xxv. Martin Woodward: AGT WHT19/36 in WN93/2 (quoted); [B. B. Woodward], 'Martin Fountain Woodward [...]', *Proc Malacol. Soc. London* 5 (1902), 1-7.

[50] Anon, 'Street', *Central Somerset Gazette* (12 January 1878), 5, and (19 January), 5; H. G. Seeley, 'Report on the mode of reproduction of certain species of *Ichthyosaurus* [...]', *Annual Rep. Brit. Assoc. Advancement of Sci.* 1880, 68-76; Anon, '[Annual Meeting at Glastonbury]', *SANH* 26:1 (1881), 1-92, 78-9.

[51] Anon, 'Bristol Naturalists' Society', *Bristol Mercury* (31 August 1886), 3.

[52] Winwood and Woodward, *op. cit.* note 27, cciv-ccv.

[53] Anon, *op. cit.* note 28.

[54] T. Hawkins, *Memoirs on ichthyosauri and plesiosauri, extinct monsters of the ancient earth* (London: Relfe and Fletcher, 1834).

[55] Winwood and Woodward, *op. cit.* note 27, ccv-ccvi. The site's location is uncertain as there were several related Seymours in the quarrying trade: Clive Hooper pers. comm. 2010, and directories.

[56] Winwood and Woodward, *op. cit.* note 27, ccvii.

[57] 'Anticlinal': Ramues Gallois pers. comm. 2021. Anon, *op. cit.* note 28, names the site 'Percy's Quarry', presumably one of two quarries operated by different Purseys near the present-day Brooks Road/Stonehill junction: Clive Hooper

pers. comm. 2010.

[58] *Kelly's Local Directory* for 1889 and 1897; C. Berry, *CLO Clothier Papers 1561-1984*, fonds guide, AGT, October 2014. 1881 and 1891 censuses have Clothier living with his father the tanner John Columbus Clothier (1821-95) at Leigh Holt, the house which John built in 1871 a little south of Overleigh House.

[59] Anon, *op. cit.* note 31.

[60] Membership list, *SANH* 47; membership records, Geological Society of London, Wendy Cawthorne pers. comm. 2004.

[61] Woodward, *op. cit.* note 1, 81.

[62] Lydekker, *op. cit.* note 41, 289.

[63] Examples of specimens sold ready to display: Anon, 'Fossil found in Somersetshire', *Taunton Courier and Western Advertiser* (27 August 1856), 11; T. Mellard Reade, 'The Lower Lias of Street, Somerset', *Proc. Liverpool Geol. Soc.* 3 (1878), 97-99. We are grateful to Hugh Torrens for raising the question of the ichthyosaur industry, and Clive Hooper for discussing quarry ownership and development: pers. comm. 2010.

[64] M. A. Taylor, 'Hawkins, Thomas (1810-1889)', *ODNB* (2004), doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/12682.

[65] C. J. T. Copp, M. A. Taylor and J. C. Thackray, 'Charles Moore (1814-1881), Somerset geologist', *SANH* 140 (2000), 1-36; M. Williams, 'Of canals and quarries: the Bath geologists', in P. Wallis (ed.), *Innovation and discovery: Bath and the rise of science* (Bath: Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution & William Herschel Society, 2008), 42-54. C. J. Duffin, 'Charles Moore and Late Triassic vertebrates: history and reassessment', *The Geol. Curator* 11 (2019), 143-60. Some of Moore's geological collection is in SANHS's collections. He was also on the British Association ichthyosaur committee with Boyd Dawkins: see note 50.

[66] Ms. Catalogue of the J. Chaning Pearce Collection of British fossils 1847 […], Acc. No. 3324, Geology Section, City of Bristol Museum and Art Gallery; Howe *et al.*, *op. cit.* note 3, 26-7.

[67] M. A. Taylor, 'The Reverend David Williams F.G.S. (1792-1850) of Bleadon, and his collection of ichthyosaurs and a plesiosaur from the Lower Lias of Somerset', *The Geol. Curator* 10 (2016), 263-7; M. A. Taylor and M. Evans, 'A plesiosaur from the Lower Lias of Watchet, Somerset, in the collection of the Reverend David Williams F. G. S. (1792-1850), and its casts', *The Geol. Curator* 10, (2016), 269-72.

[68] Anon, 'William Ayshford Sanford, F. G. S., F. Z. S.', *SANH* 48:2 (1903), 122-5. He collected mainly Ice Age fossils from Somerset bone caves, but also fossil reptiles such as the Rhaetian (latest Triassic) dinosaurs from Wedmore, some at least of which came to SANHS: W. A. Sanford, 'On bones of an animal resembling the Megalosaur, found in the Rhaetic formation at Wedmore', *SANH* 40:2 (1894), 227-35; P. M. Galton, 'Saurischian dinosaurs from the Upper Triassic of England: *Camelotia* (Prosauropoda, Melanorosauridae) and *Avalonianus* (Theropoda, ?Carnosauria)', *Palaeontographica* A250 (1998), 155-72. The '*Plesiosaurus*, from the lias at Street' displayed at SANHS's 1872 Annual Meeting was perhaps that donated to SANHS around 1874: Anon, 'The Museum', *SANH* 18:1 (1874), 70-2, 72; 'Report of the Council', *SANH* 19:1 (1875), 2-51, 4.

[69] Green, *op. cit.* note 4; J. Ennis, J. H. B. Bland, and J. F. Knight, *A memoir of Thomas Bellerby Wilson [...]* (Philadelphia: The Entomological Society, 1865), 28-9; M. A. Taylor and R. D. Clark, 'Ichthyosaurs from the Lower Lias (Lower Jurassic) of Banwell, Somerset', *Geoscience in South-West England* 14 (2016), 59-67.

[70] Anon, 'Ashcott, near Glastonbury, Somerset', *Bath Chronicle* (3 September 1868), 4; M. A. Taylor, 'Joseph Clark III's reminiscences about the Somerset fossil reptile collector Thomas Hawkins (1810-1889) [...]', *SANH* 146 (2003), 1-10. Hawkins gave 1868 as the terminal date for his last known collection from Somerset and Dorset: Catalogue of Mr Hawkins' Collection of Fossil Saurian Remains from the Somersetshire quarries [...] from 1858 to 1868 [...], manuscript in Geological Collections, Oxford University Museum of Natural History.

[71] Moore's fieldwork was restricted after 1872, but that did not preclude buying ichthyosaurs. Photographic evidence shows that he acquired many of his wall-mounted ichthyosaurs by 1874 at the latest, but nothing can be said either way about others in the collection today: Copp *et al.*, *op. cit.* note 65; Williams, *op. cit.* note 65; Taylor and Evans, *op. cit.* note 67; Judy Massare pers. comm. 2020.

[72] Mellard Reade's ichthyosaur of about 1878 went to Liverpool Museum: *op. cit.* note 63.

[73] This section draws from the references in note 8.

[74] George: unpublished Dictionary of Quaker Biography, LRSF; Clark, *op. cit.* note 6, 86 ('a very evangelical preaching member of the Gillett family'); Anon, 'The late Mr George Gillett', *Wiltshire and Gloucestershire Standard* (4 May 1908), 4; 'George Gillett [...]' *Annual Monitor* (1909), 29-31.

[75] Anon, *op. cit.* note 5. *Annual Monitor* (1905), 54, only mentions Gillett in the summary listing of the year's deceased, and *The Friend* has no obituary.

[76] Anon, *op. cit.* note 5.

[77] Anon, 'Mr William Gillett's Assignment', *Sherborne Mercury* (24 September 1861), 4; Anon, '[Francis Gillett]', *London Gazette* (22 February 1867), 993.

[78] Holton, *op. cit.* note 8, 22-4, 37, 42-3.

[79] Copp *et al*., *op. cit.* note 65.

[80] As well as the histories cited in note 8, this section, on attitudes to science, draws from P. Wood, 'Introduction: stepping out of Merton's shadow', in P. Wood (ed.), *Science and dissent in England, 1688-1945* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 1-18; G. Cantor, 'Real disabilities? Quaker schools as "nurseries" of science', in Wood, *op. cit.*, 147-65; H. Gay, '"If gold ruste what shall iren do?": Silvanus Phillips Thompson, Quakerism and science', in Wood, *op. cit.*, 215-37; G. Cantor, *Quakers, Jews and science. Religious responses to*

modernity and the sciences in Britain, 1650-1900 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[81] H. Miller, *The Old Red Sandstone* (Edinburgh: John Johnstone, 1841).

[82] Copp *et al.*, *op. cit.* note 65; H. S. Torrens and M. A. Taylor, 'Further information on the life of Charles Moore (1815-1881), Somerset geologist', *SANH* 147 (2004), 181-2; D. Rabson, *From Somerset to the Pyrenees in the steps of William Arthur Jones, geologist and antiquary* (Taunton: SANHS, 2015); M. A. Taylor and L. I. Anderson, 'Additional information on Charles W. Peach (1800-1886)', *The Geol. Curator* 10 (2015), 159-80.

[83] Unpublished Dictionary of Quaker Biography entry for George Gillett, LRSF (quoted); [Barber], *op. cit.* note 6, 38; Palmer, *op. cit.* note 6, 40-41; Anon 1909, *op. cit.* note 74; Anon, 'Langport Floral and Horticultural Society', *Sherborne Mercury* (6 September 1859), 5; 'Passing of William S. Clark [...]', *Central Somerset Gazette* (27 November 1925), 6; 'Mr Joseph Clark passes, another loss to Street', *Central Somerset Gazette* (23 November 1928), 5; [R. G. S. Hudson], 'In Memoriam James Edmund Clark 1850-1944', *Proc. Yorkshire Geol. Soc.* 25 (1945), 331; G. C. Ainsworth (J. Webster and D. Moore, eds), *Brief biographies of British mycologists* (Stourbridge: British Mycological Society, 1996), 41; R. Desmond, *Dictionary of British and Irish botanists and horticulturalists including plant collectors, flower painters and garden designers* (revised edn, London: Taylor and Francis, 1994), 149. J. Edmund at York: Bob Hale, Yorkshire Philosophical Society, pers. comm. 2014. William sent 'Meteorological reports' to him there: Lovell, *op. cit.* note 6, 22. No doubt other society memberships existed. Joseph Clark III was, for instance, a Fellow of the Royal Microscopical Society: 'American freshwater sponges', *Hardwicke's Science-Gossip* 293 (May 1889), 119-20.

[84] Cantor 2005, *op. cit.* note 80; H. S. Torrens, 'Dissenting science: the Quakers among the Founding Fathers', in C. L. E. Lewis and S. J. Knell (eds.), *The making of the Geological Society of London* (London: Geological Society Special Publication 317, 2009), 129-44. Examples of geological Quakers: J. A. Cooper, 'The life and work of George Bax Holmes (1803-1887) of Horsham, Sussex: a Quaker vertebrate fossil collector', *Archives Nat. Hist.* 19 (1992), 379-400, and *Horsham's dinosaur hunter: George Bax Holmes (1803-1887)* (Horsham: Friends of Horsham Museum, 2008); M. J. Bishop, 'Pengelly, William (1812-1894)', *ODNB* (2004) doi-org/10.1093/ref:odnb/21838; H. S. Torrens, 'Another Quaker "Lunatick": the Worcester origins of Jonathan Stokes, junior (1754-1831), physician, botanist, geologist and youngest member of the Lunar Society (from 1783)', *J. Friends' Hist. Soc.* 61 (2009), 196-219.

[85] Anon 1881, *op. cit.* note 50 (quoted); 'Somersetshire Archaeological Society', *Central Somerset Gazette* (28 August 1880), 4.

[86] Anon, 'Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society', *Sherborne Mercury* (6 September 1859), 2; 'Second Day. Excursion', *SANH* 9 (1860), 20-32, 21 (quoted).

[87] R. Atthill, *The Somerset and Dorset Railway* (London: Pan Books, 1970), 112.

[88] Hinde's wife and their children were Friends, but it is unclear whether he himself was a member or attender (someone who came to Meeting without being a formal member): LRSF records, and unpublished Dictionary of Quaker Biography entry, Tabitha Driver pers. comm. 2004.

[89] *Nat. Hist. J.* 1:1, 1877, iv; University of London, *The historical record (1836-1912)* [...] (London: 1912) 201, 503; E. B. Collinson, *Bootham School Register* (York: Old York Scholars Association, 1935), 100-1; Anon, 'James Edmund Clark', *The Friend* (1944), 861-2, and 'Obituaries', *Annual Rep. Yorkshire Philosophical Soc.* (1945), 8-9; [R. G. S. Hudson], *op. cit.* note 83; Cantor 2005, *op. cit.* note 80, esp. 51-9, 270, 284-8. Some of Clark's scientific publications: 'Glacial sections at York, and their relation to later deposits', *Proc. Yorkshire Geol. Soc.* 7 (1881), 421-39; 'Phenological observations on early flowering and winter temperatures', *Nature* 25 (1882), 552-4; 'The heatwave of July 13th 1808', *Meteorological Mag.* (August 1936), 64-5; 'The history of British phenology', *Quarterly J. Royal Meteorological Soc.* 1936, 19-23. Clark also wrote on scientific and other matters in *The Friend* and *Friends Quarterly Examiner*: Tabitha Driver, LRSF, pers. comm. 2004.

[90] Morland: McGarvie, *op. cit.* note 6, 21; T. G. Chambers, *Register of the Associates and old students of the Royal College of Chemistry, the Royal College of Mines and the Royal College of Science [...]* (London: Hazell, 1896), 118, 203, as 'Moreland'; Anon, 'John Morland, born 1837; entered into rest July 31, 1934', and 'Our own grand old man', *Central Somerset Gazette* (10 August 1934), 6. Esther Clark: Holton, *op. cit.* note 8, 191-2. William Stephens Clark: Palmer, *op. cit.* note 6, 46; Holton, *op. cit.* note 8, 150; W. S. Clark, 'Description of a self-acting washing bottle', *Quarterly J. Chemical Soc. of London* 9 (1857), 200-1; Anon, 'The Street waterworks. Opening ceremony [...]', *Central Somerset Gazette* (25 June 1904), 5; W. W. Webb and R. Hankins, 'Thomson, Robert Dundas (1810-1864)', *ODNB* (2004) doi-org/10.1093/ref:odnb/27322. Roger Clark: Lovell, *op. cit.* note 6, 43-68. Morland formally graduated, but Roger and presumably William Clark did not. We have not established whether William attended the Royal School of Mines, perhaps only briefly.

[91] Holton, *op. cit.* note 8; 2016, *op. cit.* note 10.

[92] Woodward, *op. cit.* note 49, 235; Cantor 2005, *op. cit.* note 80, esp. 18, 90-1, 128-9; C. V. Burek, 'Margaret Chorley Crosfield, FGS: the very first female Fellow of the Geological Society', in C. V. Burek and B. Higgs (eds), *Celebrating 100 years of female Fellowship of the Geological Society: discovering forgotten histories* (London: Geological Society Special Publication 506, 2021), 33-53; M. Kölbl-Ebert, 'Ladies with hammers – exploring a social paradox in early

nineteenth-century Britain', in Burek and Higgs, *op. cit.*, 55-62, 60.

[93] On women and 19th-century geology in general: Kölbl-Ebert, *op. cit.* note 92; M. A. Taylor and S. Levitt, 'Mary Anning (1799-1847) and the photograph The Geologists ascribed to William Henry Fox Talbot (1800-1877)', *Geoscience in South-West England* 13 (2015), 419-27; C. V. Burek and B. Higgs (eds), *The role of women in the history of geology* (London: Geological Society Special Publication 281, 2007), and *op. cit.* note 92.

[94] H.F. Glen and G. Germishuizen, *Botanical exploration of southern Africa: an illustrated history of early botanical literature on the Cape Flora, biographical accounts of the leading plant collectors and their activities in southern Africa […]*, 2nd edn (Pretoria: *Strelitzia* 26, 2010); International Plant Name Index https://www.ipni.org/?q=author%20std%3AGillett [accessed: January 2021].

[95] G. Dawson and B. Lightman (eds), *Victorian scientific naturalism. Community, identity, continuity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014).

[96] F. H. Wood, *Somerset memories and traditions* (London: Robert Scott, 1924), 86. Hickley is not named but his identity is clear from internal evidence (he married Wood's sister) and the timing of the Wood family's residence in The Grange, now home of AGT, c. 1852-78. He was sufficiently serious an amateur to observe solar flares: 'A fine prominence', *The Observatory* 3 (1880), 541-2. He appears occasionally as a local botanical observer, e.g. Anon, 'Botany', *Victoria County History of Somerset*, volume 1, 41-69. Joseph Clark III and J. Edmund Clark did make astronomical observations on, at least, the aurora borealis: P. Fuller, 'The life and times of John Rand Capron (1829-1888)', *The Antiq. Astronomer* 8 (2014), 21-45. But they are too young to be Wood's Quaker. However, Wood next wrote 'We went to tea once to see his fine collection of engravings, black and coloured' – which must refer to the Quaker. Moreover, a room in Overleigh House was 'hung round with the curious colour prints that now adorn the staircase walls at Netherleigh': Clark MS, *op. cit.* note 34. The Quaker may possibly be John Gillett, rather than his son Alfred Gillett, who had no known interest in astronomy.

[97] M. Kölbl-Ebert, 'Mary Buckland (née Morland) 1797-1857', *Earth Sciences Hist.* 16 (1997), 33-38; R. Stott, *Theatres of glass: the woman who brought the sea to the city* (London: Short Books, 2003). The 1841 census and newspaper searches show that the Thynnes were at least occasionally in residence at Walton in the 1830s and early 1840s.

[98] Local elites: Wood, *op. cit.* note 80. Clark: Anon, 'Mr Bright at Street', *Wells J.* (15 October 1885), 5. As well as specimens, and a small trust in 1900 to support the museum and related activities, Gillett gave his time in setting out the displays: Anon [Annual Meeting], *SANH* 48:1 (1903), 1-61, 61; Taylor and Berry in prep.; copy of trust deed, AGT BC45/23. The present Alfred Gillett Trust dates from 2002: C. Berry and T. E. Crumplin, 'Pastures new: unlocking the heritage collections at the Alfred Gillett Trust', *Business Archives: Sources and Hist.* 105 (2012), 18-34.

[99] Quotation: Anon, *op. cit.* note 5.

[100] H. S. Torrens, 'Mary Anning (1799-1847) of Lyme; "the greatest fossilist the world ever knew"', *Brit. J. Hist. of Sci.* 28 (1995), 257-84.

[101] H. S. Torrens, 'Notes on "The Amateur" in the development of British geology', *Proc. Geol. Assoc.* 117 (2006), 1-8.

[102] Torrens, *op. cit.* note 101; *The practice of British geology, 1750-1850* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002).

[103] Woodward, *op. cit.* note 1; Anon, 'A fine fossil', *Western Gazette* (6 June 1879), 7.

[104] Holton, *op. cit.* note 8.

[105] Anon, *op. cit.* notes 35, 44; Taylor and Berry in prep.

[106] L. Fitzharris, *The butchering art: Joseph Lister's quest to transform the grisly world of Victorian medicine* (London: Allen Lane, 2017).