

MFB
Millfield Bookcase
1663-1992

Administrative and biographical history

The Clarks family of Street became closely connected with Quaker families with origins in the Newcastle and Rochdale areas of the North of England as a result of the marriage of William Stephens Clark (1839-1925) to Helen Priestman Bright (1840-1927). Helen Priestman Bright Clark was the daughter of Elizabeth Priestman (d 1841) and the politician John Bright (1811-1889), who were closely linked to the Taylor, Bragg, Wilson, Wheeler, Tanner and McClaren families.

Also of note as campaigners for women's rights amongst HPBC's maternal relations are Priscilla Bright McLaren (1815-1906), Anna Maria Priestman (1828-1914) and Margaret Priestman (later Wheeler, later Tanner) (1817-1905), who all had a direct input into the raising of Helen from a young age. Helen's grandmother Rachel Priestman (1791-1854) was a Quaker minister. The direct connection with the Clarks family is represented within this particular collection in three of the children of William and Helen, namely Alice (1874-1934), businesswoman and campaigner for women's rights, Hilda (1881-1955), doctor and aid worker, and John Bright Clark (1867-1933), businessman.

The mansion house Millfield was built in c 1889 by William Stephens Clark as his family residence for his six children, superseding Greenbank House which was situated immediately adjacent to the C & J Clark shoe works situated in the centre of Street village (Greenbank was named after HPBC's childhood home in Rochdale and was her first married home from 1866). The house was sold by the family in 1935, following the death of Alice Clark in 1934, and is now the site of Millfield School.

Extent

21 boxes

Archival history

F Coole listed the items contained within the bookcase in 1977. About one half of the collection belonged to the heirs of Roger and Sarah Bancroft Clark. Of these, many of the earlier items on Quaker history formerly belonged to Benjamin Bower Le Tall (1858-1906) of Woodhouse, Sheffield, and of 20 Bootham, York, and were mainly collected during the 1880s. He was part of a well known South Yorkshire Quaker family and was son of a surgeon of the same name (d 1883). He was a master at Bootham School, York, and also at the Friends' School in Hobart, Tasmania. Of the other items belonging to Roger and Sarah Bancroft Clark, the remainder were books lent from Whitenights before the death of SBC. The other half of the collection belongs to C & J Clark and the heirs of JAC and others. The ownership of each item is marked accordingly in Coole's 1977 listing.

Description

This collection consists of nearly 300 books, serials, pamphlets and ephemera associated with Millfield and with the family of William Stephens and Helen Priestman Bright Clark and their children. The principal subject areas covered reflect the personal interests of the family, mainly covering biography and family history

(including John Bright); local history; Quakerism and religious texts. This collection was previously housed in the so-called 'Millfield Bookcase'.

Many books have no attributed author or date. Some items are of an ephemeral and archival nature, such as the 1930 bound typescript history of the Pease family of Bristol, the early 19th century *Avalonian Budget Box* and *Street Village Budget* and minute books for the Street and District Nursing Association, 1909-1953, the Street Child Welfare Association, 1908-1958, and the Somerset Moral Welfare Association, Street Branch, 1957-1975. Also included are the bound typescript diaries of John Bright, 1835-1887. Many of the older items have a provenance connection with other members of the Clark family and some more recent items are private family publications. There are very few duplicate copies or editions, and a number of items are known to be missing. The earliest item dates from 1663. A summary of the approx. 50 items predating 1850 items is given below:

- 1663, *Hubberthorn's writings*, Hubberthorn
- 1672, *The memorable works of Edward Burroughs*, Edward Burroughs
- 1675, *A collection of writings*, James Parnel
- 1675, *Works of William Smith*, William Smith
- 1676, *Testimony to Francis Howgil*, Anon
- 1679, *Testimony to Samuel Fisher*, Anon
- 1681, *Isaac Penington's works*, Isaac Penington
- 1689, *Dewsbery's testimony*, Dewsbery
- 1692, *Works of Robert Barclay*, Robert Barclay
- 1710, *Margaret Fox's works*, Margaret Fox
- 1722, *The history and antiquities of Glastonbury*, Anon
- 1733, *An abstract of the sufferings of the people called Quakers*, Anon
- 1736, *An apology*, Robert Barclay
- 1747, *Works of Thomas Story*, Thomas Story
- 1748, *A call in Christian love to all people*, Benjamin Holme
- 1751, *A collection of the works of Thomas Chalkley*, Thomas Chalkey
- 1760, *'Varieties': sundry pamphlets*, various authors
- 1760, *A collection of letters*, William Law
- 1764, *Translation of all the books of the Old and New Testaments*, Anthony Purver
- 1784, *A plain pathway opened to the simple-minded*, Stephen Crisp
- 1786, *Rise and progress of the people called Quakers*, William Penn
- 1787, *A collection of memorials*, various authors
- 1791, *The history of the town of Taunton*, Joshua Toulmin
- 1791, *The history of Somersetshire*, Rev John Collins
- 1792, *Life of Sarah Grubb and account of Ackworth School*, Anon
- 1795, *A catalogue of drugs, prepared and sold by William Gillett*, Yeovil
- 1799, *Waltham Abbey School*, Anon
- 1801, *Practical education*, Maria Edgworth and R.L.
- 1810, *A topographical and historical description of Somerset*, Rev J Nightingale
- 1811, *History of Friends*, William Sewell
- 1816, *Associate rhymes* [Avalonian Budget Box], Anon
- 1817, *Sturms reflections*, translated by Rev Dr Balfour
- 1819, *Areopagitica: a speech of the Parliament of England for the liberty of unlicensed printing*, John Milton
- 1822, *Somerset delineated*, C and J Greenwood

- 1825, *Select works*, William Penn
1825, *Memoirs of the life of John Roberts by his son*, Daniel Roberts
1825, *Observations of the dialects in the West of England, particularly Somersetshire*, James Jennings
1826, *An history of the Abbey of Glaston and of the town of Glastonbury*, Rev Richard Warner
1829, *Delineations of the N W Division of the County of Somerset*, John Rutter
1830, *Memoirs of George Whitehead*, George Whitehead
1831, *Budget: Street Village*, various authors [manuscript]
1832, *The Pitney pavement*, Sir Richard Colt Hoare
1834, *Memoirs of Ichthyosauri and plesiosauri*, Thomas Hawkins
1836, *The truth vindicated*, Joseph John Gurney
1836, *The history and antiquities of Somersetshire*, Rev W Phelps
1836, *Life of William Dewsbury*, Edward Smith
1839, *Journal of Thomas Shillitoe*, Thomas Shillitoe
1840, *Early days in the Society of Friends*, Mary Ann Kelty
1841, *Letters etc of early Friends*, John Barclay
1842, *Memoirs of Daniel Wheeler*, Daniel Wheeler
1843, *A visit to the Australian colonies*, James Backhouse
1844-1846, *Village Chronicle*, Anon [manuscript?]
1846-1847, *Life of William Allen*, Anon
'Undated but very old': *Topographical and statistical description of the County of Somerset*, George Alexander Cooke
Undated, Charles Dickens, *Nicholas Nickleby*

The collection also contains the following journal serials:

Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Proceedings, 1849-1976 [gaps]

Somerset Folk Series, 1921-1934

Clarks Courier, 1956-1979

Access conditions

Access to the collection is arranged via advance appointment only. Access to some collections may be restricted due to Data Protection or other restrictions. Please check with the Archivist.

Reproduction conditions

Usual Alfred Gillett Trust regulations apply. Permission from the Trust and/or owner of a collection is usually required before publication. Copying of some items may be possible on a case by case basis – please check with the Archivist.

Language

English, German

Finding aids

A typed list was originally compiled by F Cooley in 1977. This is now available on the Access database. The collection would benefit from more detailed bibliographical research and cataloguing, particularly the earlier, ephemeral and manuscript items.

Related units of description

An extensive collection of papers relating to Millfield is held by the Alfred Gillett Trust: please see MILL. Other collections relating to the Clark family of Street are also available. See also the print collection Whitenights Books (WNB).

Publication note

It is not known to what extent this collection has been used in published research.