

# DR. THOMAS BRUGES FLOWER

Natural history collection

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Thomas Flower was born in Wiltshire, but spent much of his life in Bristol and Bath. It is evident that even from a young age he had an interest in plants, contributing many records of a rare species for Charles Babington's *Flora Bathoniensis* in 1839. Charles Babington later became the Professor of botany at Cambridge University. Flower was also a member, and later a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, and for a brief period he practised as a surgeon.



As his herbarium shows, Thomas Flower studied plants all over Britain and travelled extensively. He also wrote lots of scientific papers on the flora of Swansea, Bristol, Reading and Kent. However, despite all this enthusiasm, Flower was frequently known by his colleagues as an eccentric. In truth, he rarely allowed anyone access to his private herbarium and often gave deliberately false field collection information to even his closest botanical friends. It is thought he did this to protect the rare species of Wiltshire.

## Help us find a picture

Unfortunately, Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery have never seen an image of Thomas Flower in their collections. It would be really exciting to find the face behind this beautiful collection of pressed plants. If you know of a picture of Thomas Flower please contact our Natural History department on 01752 304774.