

South  
Devon  
Dec/89 Androok  
near Totnes  
South Devon  
24<sup>th</sup> - December 1889.

My dear Sir

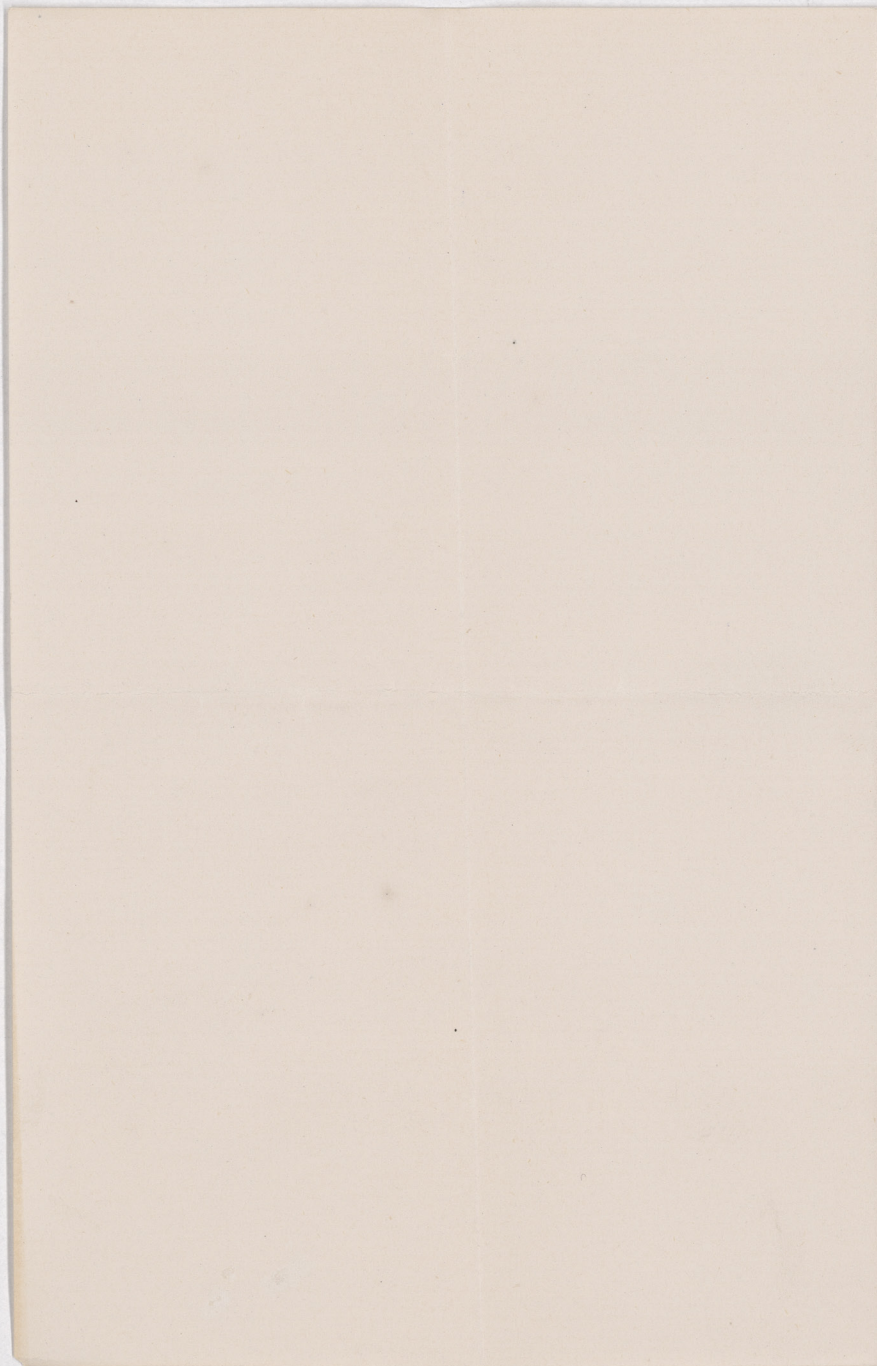
Your kind letter of the  
9<sup>th</sup> September afforded me very  
great pleasure, and I should  
have written to thank you for  
it long ere now had it not been  
that I wished to delay doing so  
until I could have a section  
made of the fossil of which I

sent you a drawing - It was only quite recently that my orders were complied with and the sections provided. As you concluded from your inspection of the drawing would be the case, the larger fossil proved to be of the same structure as the smaller fragments forwarded to you with my first letter. The polished sections exhibit the structure extremely well; and, as these have cut the cells in every variety of plane, when examined with a lens not only the hexagonal

arrangement, but also the transverse floors can be well seen.

A stronger power would, however, have to be used to enable the round pores in their sides to be made out. I asked the workman to try to make a section such as you might have placed under the microscope, but in this I am sorry to say he has not been successful. I have not succeeded in finding any more of the detached fossils, but I have discovered that a large "rough-coping" stone in a recently erected wall is of well-marked coralline structure,

like that of the specimens already found, but evidently in massive form as if it had been quarried from the remains of a regular coral reef. The stone in question was taken from an old wall which must have been constructed some 80 or 100 years ago, and was probably dug from one of two quarries in a neighbouring field. These quarries have been long disused, they are now earthed over, from parts of my game covers, and have trees in the resulting hollows which are some 40 years old. It would have been interesting to have been able to trace the old coral reef from which the piece came. I may perhaps yet stumble upon it in some other limestone quarry in the neighbourhood.



The other fossils appear to have been detached specimens which grew on or near the top of the limestone deposit, probably not long before the formation ceased to be covered by the ocean.

I cannot sufficiently thank you for the trouble you so kindly took in this matter. The information conveyed in your letter has made the fossil of much interest not only to myself but also to some of my friends and neighbours, who, like myself, although far from being

reports, take very great  
interest in all branches of  
Natural history -

With kind regards, and  
wishing you all the compli-  
ments of the season -

Truly yours -

— Alexander Smith

Sir William Dawson

