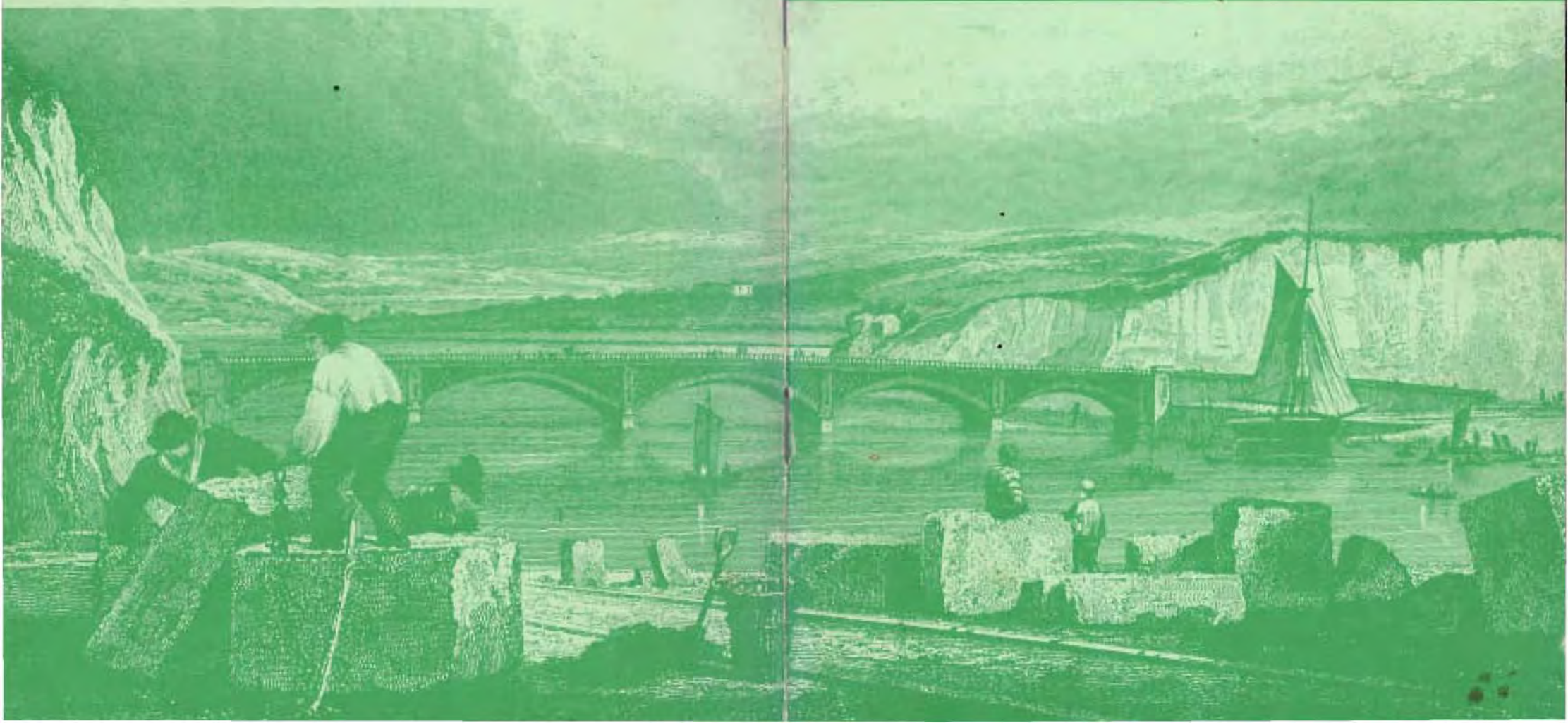


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The Devon Historian

April 1979

18



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RELIGIOUS WORSHIP IN DEVON IN 1851

Bruce Coleman

The 1851 Census of Religious Worship, the only survey of its kind, provides indispensable evidence for the historian of religious practice and denominational fortunes. The evidence is of two kinds: the MS returns (there are over 1,200 for Devon alone) in the Public Record Office, and the statistical summaries printed as a 'Blue Book' in 1853¹. The present author is undertaking a study of the MS returns for Devon, but for the moment this article considers the printed figures and what they show of the county's religious character in the mid-nineteenth century.

On the Census Sunday (30th March) returns of numbers attending all services — morning, afternoon and evening — were to be completed. The printed summaries show the total attendance of each time of day for each denomination in England and Wales, in eleven regions or 'divisions', in the registration counties, in 73 large towns and metropolitan boroughs and in every registration district. The table at the end of this article has, for convenience, grouped all the Methodist denominations together and all the Baptist denominations. Except for Roman Catholics, all the small denominations have been omitted. The figures shown are the index of attendance (IA), i.e. the total of attendances as a percentage of population, and the percentage share (PS), i.e. the total of attendances for that denomination or group of denominations as a percentage of attendances for all denominations. To understand the position of a denomination in a locality one has to consider both its IA and its PS. There are various methodological problems about these figures, but limitations of space preclude their consideration here, though it is worth mentioning that what are shown are **attendances**, not the numbers of people attending. Some people attended worship more than once that Sunday (perhaps in more than one denomination), and the IA of 96.9 for the Kingsbridge district, for example, does not mean that that percentage of the whole population worshipped.

I want to use the figures to answer four questions. First, how weak or strong was the Church of England in Devon? Second, what were the special or peculiar features, if any, of Devon's religious character in 1851? Third, how uniform was the picture across the whole of the county? Fourth, if uniformity was lacking, what was the significant internal regionalisation of the county?

Weak and strong are comparative terms. The figures for Devon, when compared with those for England and Wales and for the rest of the South West, show that the Church of England was strong in the county. The Anglican IA and PS were well above the national average, and Devon was well into the upper half of the ranking order of the registration counties in both respects. Even in the registration districts of North Devon, often depicted as a stronghold of Non-conformity, the Church's IA ran well above the national average, though in two of them its PS did drop below the average. Only in Plymouth, Devonport and the surrounding districts did the Church fare

1851 Census of Religious Worship: *printed figures (given as percentages)*

	Total	C. of E.		All Meths.		Independents		All Baptists		Roman Catholics	
		IA	PS	IA	PS	IA	PS	IA	PS	IA	PS
England & Wales (uncorrected)	58.1	27.6	47.4	14.9	25.7	6.6	11.4	5.1	8.7	2.0	3.5
England & Wales (corrected)	60.8	29.5	48.6	15.2	25.0	6.8	11.1	5.2	8.5	2.1	3.5
DEVON	70.5	40.1	56.9	13.2	18.7	7.6	10.8	5.3	7.5	0.3	0.5
Wiltshire	85.7	44.7	52.2	16.0	18.7	10.3	12.1	12.6	14.7	0.6	0.7
Somerset	70.3	43.2	61.5	12.5	17.8	6.8	9.7	5.3	7.5	0.6	0.9
Dorset	77.6	48.2	62.1	13.8	17.7	11.7	15.1	1.6	2.1	0.7	0.9
Cornwall	68.0	19.2	27.2	43.8	64.5	2.8	4.1	1.3	2.0	0.3	0.4
Exeter	84.5	54.7	64.7	10.0	11.8	3.6	4.3	7.0	8.3	0.8	0.9
Devonport	56.5	22.0	39.0	14.3	25.3	10.6	17.9	6.1	10.7	2.0	3.5
Plymouth	55.1	24.5	44.5	7.5	13.7	5.8	10.5	2.8	5.1	—	—*
DEVON less 3 towns	72.9	43.0	59.0	14.0	19.2	7.8	10.7	5.4	7.3	0.1	0.2
Registration Districts:											
Axminster	82.9	53.9	65.1	7.9	9.5	15.8	19.1	3.2	3.8	—	—
Honiton	76.8	50.4	65.6	8.2	10.7	13.7	17.8	3.6	4.7	—	—
St. Thomas	63.5	48.5	76.4	4.6	7.2	4.9	7.7	1.3	2.1	—	—
Exeter	84.5	54.7	64.7	10.0	11.8	3.6	4.3	7.0	8.3	0.8	0.9
Newton Abbot	75.9	45.5	60.0	10.0	13.2	9.6	12.7	6.7	8.9	0.7	1.0
Totnes	78.5	45.9	58.4	12.4	15.8	11.5	14.6	5.2	6.6	0.1	0.1
Kingsbridge	96.9	52.2	53.9	21.7	22.4	7.3	7.6	10.2	10.6	—	—
Plympton, St. Mary	50.1	32.2	64.4	12.4	24.9	2.5	4.9	1.2	2.4	—	—
Plymouth	55.1	24.5	44.5	7.5	13.7	5.8	10.5	2.8	5.1	—	—*
East Stonehouse	54.5	21.7	39.8	14.4	26.5	4.1	7.6	5.9	10.9	8.3	15.3
Stoke Damerel	57.2	22.1	38.7	14.2	24.9	9.5	16.7	6.1	10.7	—	—
Tavistock	60.1	26.2	43.6	24.7	41.2	4.6	7.6	2.7	4.5	—	—
Okehampton	59.4	35.5	59.7	13.4	22.5	5.2	8.7	3.9	6.6	—	—
Crediton	64.9	42.6	65.6	6.4	9.8	10.3	15.8	1.3	2.1	—	—
Tiverton	66.9	39.3	57.0	10.1	14.6	8.3	12.0	10.3	14.9	0.2	0.3
South Molton	88.1	60.0	68.1	16.5	18.7	6.6	7.5	2.6	3.0	—	—
Barnstaple	71.5	39.6	55.4	12.2	17.0	8.0	11.2	8.9	12.4	—	—
Torrington	75.1	37.0	49.2	22.6	30.1	5.5	7.3	9.6	12.8	—	—
Bideford	81.0	35.0	43.2	32.1	39.6	8.3	10.2	5.4	6.6	—	—
Holsworthy	76.0	32.1	42.2	42.1	55.4	—	—	1.8	2.3	—	—

* Plymouth: Isolated Congregations 12.9/23.4

notably worse than in England and Wales as a whole.

It is worth emphasising that religious practice in general ran at a high level in Devon — and indeed in the South West as a whole — and that in four of the five counties listed in the table Anglican attendances were well above the national figure. Only Cornwall, where Wesleyan Methodism had become something of a *volkskirche*, departed from this pattern. The explanation for the condition of the South West is not hard to find. In the century's first half the region had experienced low rates of population growth, little large-scale urbanisation, relatively little new industrialisation, and low levels of immigration and internal migration. Those developments that had weakened religious practice in general and the Church of England in particular in other parts of the country had affected the South West to a small degree.

The figures show that neither Old Dissent (i.e. the sects of 17th century origin) nor Methodism was particularly strong in Devon as a whole. If anything both fared rather worse than in the country as a whole, and Devon could not compare with Wiltshire as a stronghold of the Old Dissent nor with Cornwall as a missionary territory for Methodism. Non-conformity was no doubt increasing in Devon around 1851, as almost everywhere else, but it was certainly far from triumphant. Devon in fact approximated to the pattern prevailing along the whole of the southern coastline — namely majority Anglican practice² with Old Dissent and Methodism each taking around one fifth of attendances.

This suggests that there was little that was special or unique about Devon's pattern of religious practice, though (if the Census returns are to be credited) it was the only county without any Primitive Methodists and the county could claim a notable tradition of religious heterodoxy and creativity which was illustrated by the position of the Bible Christians in the North West (though in north-eastern Cornwall too) and of the Plymouth Brethren in Plymouth. (The latter's refusal to identify themselves as a denomination gave Plymouth the highest IA and PA in the country for 'Isolated Congregations'.)

But perhaps the most remarkable feature was the unevenness and diversity of the pattern of worship. As one of the largest and geographically most variegated of the counties, Devon displayed some notable contrasts. The Anglican IAs of the registration districts ranged from 21.7 to 60; the Anglican PSs from 38.7 to 76.4; the Methodist IAs from 4.6 to 42.1, and the Methodist PSs from 7.2 to 55.4. Even between those extremes there were great variations among both urban and rural districts. Weak Anglican performance was concentrated in the North and West. The districts where the Anglican IA fell below 40 or the Anglican PS fell below 50 were all, with the exception of Tiverton, on the Cornish border or on the northern coastline or in the western or north-western interior. Compensatory strength for the church lay in the East, South-East and far South of the county. Here there were five registrations districts with Anglican IAs over 50 and seven with Anglican PSs over 60. Only Tiverton was much of a problem, though admittedly Old Dissent was rather stronger on the eastern borders than elsewhere in the county and Wesleyan

Methodism had established itself in the Kingsbridge district alongside a high level of Anglican church-going.

The same contrasts are evident between the large towns of the county, though it is worth emphasising that even Plymouth and Devonport returned quite good figures for all worship and for Anglican worship compared with most towns of their size and growth-rate. Methodism was stronger there than in Devon as a whole, though in Plymouth itself the Brethren provided effective competition for Methodism. At the other end of the county was Exeter which as the county town, the Cathedral city, an agricultural market town, a centre of fashionable resort, and a city with a slower growth rate than Plymouth and Devonport, was notably Anglican. Indeed it returned the third highest total IA for all English large towns, the highest Anglican IA and the fourth highest Anglican PS. But both Plymouth and Devonport on the one hand and Exeter on the other showed considerable congruity with their respective parts of Devon.

County boundaries were not always of much significance for patterns of religious practice. All the border districts of Devon, both eastern and western, were pretty similar to the adjacent registration districts across the border — in East Cornwall, in West Dorset and in South-West Somerset. Devon was not self-contained. Tides of religious change had ebbed and flowed across its boundaries, so that East Cornwall and West Devon were more alike than West Devon and East Devon were. The same point could be made about the eastern corner of Devon and West Dorset. It is clear that the dividing line between major regions of religious practice cut across Devon.

There is obviously much more to the internal regionalisation of Devon's religious practice than I have sketched here. It was not simply a division into North and South, or East and West, or even into all four. There were probably some eight or nine definable sub-regions with district patterns of religious practice within the county, as the figures in the table suggest. Work on the MS returns of 1851 may well modify any conclusions based on the printed figures and will certainly permit a much more precise and detailed map of religious performance in the county to be drawn than at present. It may also show that some of the registration districts were themselves far from uniform and homogeneous in religious character. The problems are those of explanation as well as of delineation. What caused the regional and local variations? The answers suggested by work on other parts of England involve such factors as the nature of ecclesiastical provision (the size of parishes, the incidence of clerical non-residence), settlement patterns, occupational structure, patterns of land ownership and manorial control, and the nature of population growth and redistribution over the decades before 1851. The evidence is available for these factors to be quantified and related to patterns of religious worship in 1851, and further research is likely to shed much more light on the religious regionalisation of nineteenth-century Devon and on its sociology.

The conclusions of this preliminary survey can be stated briefly. Devon was on the whole a county of fairly strong and well-established Anglican

practice. Dissent taken as a whole was around its national average or rather weaker. There was little that was unique about Devon, and to understand the patterns of worship in Devon you have to look outside its borders. What makes the county particularly worthy of study is its high degree of internal diversity and variation. As a county of contrasts Devon is well suited to test some of the current hypotheses about local religious cultures in this period. The internal regionalisation of the county is especially interesting and needs much more study.

1. Parliamentary Papers, 1852-3, LXXXIX, Census, 1851: Religious Worship (England and Wales).
2. That is, an Anglican majority of the attendances each Sunday, which was not necessarily a majority of the whole population.

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THE FREEDOM OF HANGMAN HILL

Norah Gregory

A single document can sometimes bring to life times past, rolling back the centuries so that we stand with those who once lived where we now live and see events through their eyes. Such a document is the account of the inquiry held at Combe Martin on 7th October, 1531 and recorded by the Royal Commissioners who conducted the hearing!

The reason for holding this special inquiry unfolds as the old men are sworn in to recall the rights enjoyed by the village folk, the tenants of Combe Martin manor or the 'King's tenants', during the time of their remembrance. Since the days of the Martins the manor had reverted to the Crown on several occasions, at one time being given to Anne, Duchess of Exeter, sister of Edward IV, and later to Margaret, Countess of Richmond, mother of Henry VII. For a while the manor was retained by Henry VIII who kept part of it as a deer park, and it was the Keeper of this Park, John Hensley², who was first to give evidence.

Aged 80, he said he had lived at Berrynarbor for 44 years and had been Keeper of the Park of Combe Martin for 38 of them. He identified the piece of ground, the subject of the inquiry, as "the waste ground where the gallows stand in Combe Martin [which] has always been known as Hangman Hill". (Present day guide books say the name is a corrupt form of the old English 'An Maen' — Hill of Stone. Is it possible it could have a more sinister connotation going back to time immemorial?)

John Hensley continued that the King's tenants had always had the right of grazing their sheep and cattle on this waste ground. Hangman Hill and Little Hangman were part of the manor of Combe Martin which had belonged to King Henry VII and was now held by King Henry VIII. It had always been open and unfenced until recently when he heard Hangman Hill had been enclosed by Lawrence Prouz. Moreover, there was a right of way over Hangman Hill, for the King's tenants to go down to the sea shore. (Lawrence Prouz owned the freehold estate of West Challacombe which included the subsidiary farmsteads of East Challacombe and Middle Challacombe. He had inherited it from his Uncle, William Orchard, who himself had inherited the estate from his father, John Orchard. The West Challacombe property bordered Hangman Hill and Little Hangman and by this enclosure the estate would be considerably enlarged.)

John Vellacott, of Kentsbury, 83 years old, was the next to speak and said he could remember back sixty years when there was no ditch, hedge or gate separating the common lands of Girt Down and Hangman Hill. After the death of the Duke of Exeter (the last of the Holland family to hold the manor of Combe Martin), the Duchess of Exeter made John Orchard the Chief Steward of the Manor. (She had been granted all the lands held by her late husband.) Towards the end of his life, John Orchard ordered one of his servants, John Whitehear, to make a ditch and bank and set it with stakes between Hangman

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Hill and Girt Down. This upset the King's tenants whose grazing rights were now restricted and they made a complaint to the Manor Court. Since John Orchard was the Manor Steward and an important man (he was a Commissioner of the Peace) as well as having a lot of authority and living in the village, nothing came of the complaint. Realising they would get no justice in the Manor Court, the King's tenants went to Girt Down, pulled down the dividing hedge and drove their sheep and cattle on to Hangman Hill and used both the common lands as they had done before. Shortly after this John Orchard died and his son William made a new hedge to enclose Hangman Hill. Once more the tenants pulled it down and made a further complaint to the Manor Officers about the trouble they were having. William Orchard was called to the Court of Combe Martin to answer the charge of enclosing the King's waste ground without permission before the Steward and Master Morgan, the deputy Surveyor. He gave his word he would not attempt to enclose Hangman Hill again but would only use his grazing rights there the same as any other villager. John Vellacott said he had been in the Court that day and had heard him say it. After that the King's tenants had grazed their sheep on the commons without any further trouble until recently when Lawrence Prouz had separated Hangman Hill from Girt Down with a new hedge. John Vellacott added that as far back as he could remember Combe Martin people always used a path over Hangman Hill to go to the beach at Little Hangman with all kinds of carts to fetch sand, and he had never heard of anyone paying William Orchard or his father for the privilege.

Walter Dennett, aged 71, of West Down, confirmed that the waste ground to the west of Girt Down was called Hangman Hill and recalled that sixty years ago there had been no hedge, ditch or gate separating these two common lands. He knew where the present dividing hedge was. John Whitehear had told him he was the first person to make such an enclosure on the instructions of John Orchard, and how within a month the King's tenants had pulled it down. He added there had always been a lawful way across Hangman Hill but some inhabitants of Countisbury and other places had taken a path to Combe Martin which ran close to John Orchard's mansion and their dogs had killed some of his sheep. John Orchard had made them pay for the damage and made others who had used this path pay for trespassing, but this concerned his own estate and not Hangman Hill. Walter Dennett continued that about sixty years ago John Orchard had asked the Combe Martin folk to allow him to till part of Little Hangman (also common land) and they had given him permission to do so. John Tracey had come home from the meeting and told his wife and him, Walter Dennett, that he thought this would lead to trouble in time to come. He told him, Walter Dennett, to remember his words and if such trouble arose he should report him, John Tracey, as saying John Orchard was only allowed to till Little Hangman by permission of the King's tenants because he had promised to be a good friend to them in any issues which might arise.

Thomas Tracey of the parish of Berrynarbor, aged 75, stated that Little Hangman and Hangman Hill belonged to the King and that the tenants of the Manor of Combe Martin had always had the right to graze their sheep and

cattle there and on adjoining Girt Down. He too, recounted the attempts of John Orchard and William Orchard to enclose Hangman Hill.

Robert Cryte of Ilfracombe confirmed that the waste ground to the west of Girt Down was known, and always had been known, as Hangman Hill. He had seen books dating back to 1215 which listed coastal landmarks that were used by seafarers, and in them Hangman Hill was marked as such. Five more men from Ilfracombe and two from Northam agreed with Robert Cryte's statement.

John Harry of Berrynarbor, 56 years old, claimed he had known William Orchard who had lived at West Challacombe and he recalled that about thirty years previously William Orchard had put a fence to keep out the King's tenants from Hangman Hill and Little Hangman, but the tenants had pulled down the enclosure and continued to graze their sheep there. They had continued to use the path too, without hindrance, and he, John Harry, had never heard that the tenants or anyone else had paid for this right. The only people to be charged were foreigners from Kentisbury and other places who had an agreement with William Orchard for the use of a path across West Challacombe property, but this had nothing to do with the common land.

Sixty year old John Harry of Kentisbury repeated the story of William Orchard's attempt to enclose Hangman Hill and added that when the villagers complained, with their agreement and with the assent of William Orchard, the Steward, the Surveyor and other officers of the Manor, had directed that the common land should be kept open for the King's tenants and should not be taken for his own use by William Orchard or his heirs and there should be no charge for using the path across the common. William Orchard had given the payments he had already received to the Church, left the waste ground unfenced and life in the village had been peaceful until lately when William Orchard's heir, Lawrence Prouz, was trying to separate Hangman Hill from Girt Down and was charging men for the use of the path when they wished to fetch sand from the beach, and the King's tenants were again aroused by this new threat.

Five more men, all from Kentisbury, on oath stated that they agreed with everything John Harry had said.

Nicholas Whitefield, aged 45 of Ilfracombe, in his evidence, said his father Thomas Whitefield who had been employed by John Orchard had told him about the trouble between his master and the Combe Martin tenants, and he had said that he had always known that John Orchard had no right or title to the land in question.

Thomas Edmond of Northam, aged 50, said he remembered the King's tenants of Combe Martin always having the right to graze their sheep on Hangman Hill and Little Hangman as their rightful common. He also said that his father, Harry Edmond, had been a servant to William Orchard and his tenant at West Challacombe. About thirty years before, on William Orchard's instructions, he had encroached upon a piece of ground from the King's common at Combe Martin and put a fence round it, but the King's tenants had pulled down the fence and carried on grazing their sheep there. About forty

years before, William Orchard had put a hedge with a gate between Girt Down and Hangman Hill and the tenants had immediately pulled down the hedge and thrown the gate over the cliff.

Seventy-six year old Walter Ley was the first Combe Martin man to speak. He too recalled the attempts to enclose Hangman Hill made by John Orchard and William Orchard. He remembered about sixty-seven years before, he had gone with his father by way of the path across Hangman Hill to fetch sand from the beach and he had used the path for about twenty-five years without hindrance. Proving his point that Hangman Hill was not private but Manor property belonging to the King, Walter Ley added that the gallows that stood there had been made with timber taken from Widdecombe Wood, which was the King's wood, and the cost of erecting it had been borne by the King's tenants.

Four more Combe Martin men, Richard Hany (76), John Reynel (76), Richard (80) and John Lerwill (83) agreed with Walter Ley's statement and enlarged on it by saying when there was conflict between King Edward IV and Prince Edward, John Orchard sided with the King while the Duke of Exeter and all the tenants supported the Prince. (The Duke of Exeter who was then Lord of the Manor although married to the King's sister Anne, was a strong supporter of the opposing House of Lancaster.) The King retained his power and John Orchard, feeling secure, was bold enough to enclose a part of Little Hangman and till it until the tenants at the command of the Duke, pulled down the hedge and put their sheep to graze there once more.

The hearing concludes with David Skinner, John Peak the elder, John Barne, John Smith, a hooper, John Crascombe, John Hoole, William Blackmore, William Tucker, John Brantley, Nicholas Tenow, John Lovering, Thomas Barne, John Pole, John Bartlett and William Payne, all of Combe Martin, stating that as far back as they could remember, the present King, and his ancestors before him, and through them the Lords of the manor, had held the common lands of Little Hangman, Hangman Hill and Girt Down for the use of the King's tenants for the grazing of their sheep and cattle. They too, recalled John Orchard's attempt to take for his own use a part of the common and how the tenants had dealt with the situation, and how John Orchard's son William had appeared in the Court of Combe Martin charged with the same offence and had publicly admitted he was in the wrong and that the commons should be left open for all time. And they too, confirmed that the people of Combe Martin had a lawful right of way over Hangman Hill to go down to the sea.

And that is how it is today. The manuscript ends there and we can only conjecture the outcome of the hearing. During the intervening centuries the need for common grazing ground has disappeared. Animal husbandry has died and arable farming has increased. Almost certainly parts of the commons have been enclosed and made into fields, but there is a large area remaining and one can still walk from Girt Down across Hangman Hill and follow the path to the beach at Little Hangman, for which we should be grateful to those sturdy men

of old who refused to be intimidated by wealth and power and stood out for the rights which were theirs.

1. Public Record Office, E 315/117/67-80. Though now to be found among the records of the Court of Augmentations (founded 1536) these must be the returns to an inquiry instituted by the Courts of Chancery or Requests.
2. **Calendar of Patent Rolls 1485-94**, p.12.
3. **Ibid. 1476-85**, p. 558.
4. **Notes on Combe Martin** by K.M. Toms.

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BENJAMIN BOWRING, WATCHMAKER

Clive Ponsford

A multi-million pound international insurance, banking and trading group, C.T. Bowring & Co. Limited, of Tower Place, London, owes its origins to the enterprise of one man who at the close of 1815 sold up his Exeter watchmaker's business and took his family to Newfoundland. It is a remarkable story and has been the subject of two books, Arthur C. Wardle's *Benjamin Bowring and His Descendants*¹ and David Keir's *The Bowring Story*². These give the overall picture, but can be supplemented from purely local sources with information on the watchmaker's early career in Exeter.

Benjamin Bowring came from an Exeter Nonconformist family. He was born in 1778 and was only three years old when his father, Nathaniel, died. His mother was from Moretonhampstead, on the fringes of Dartmoor, and it was there that he spent many of his childhood days, being educated, so it is believed, at an academy attached to the Moretonhampstead Unitarian Chapel. He was then apprenticed as a clock and watchmaker with the elder John Tucker, whose shop was on the north side of Fore Street in the market town of Tiverton. After this he presumably gained experience as a journeyman, as was the custom.

In October 1803 at the age of 25 Benjamin Bowring announced in the Exeter newspapers that he had opened a shop as a watchmaker, silversmith, jeweller, and engraver at premises nearly opposite St. Martin's Lane in the High Street. The announcement appeared in the *Flying Post* of October 6, and on October 8, a Saturday, Bowring and Miss Charlotte Price, daughter of the Wiveliscombe watchmaker, Charles Price, were married at Wellington Parish Church in Somerset.

Bowring's shop was No. 225 High Street and it was part of a 17th century merchant's house, the facade of which is now incorporated into C. & A's Exeter store. In the *Flying Post* of 2 October 1806 he advertised for an apprentice and announced that he had moved premises to 199 High Street, four doors below the Guildhall. Henry Ellis, who was later to succeed him in the shop, relates that Bowring had "a tolerably good clock trade" and that he employed a clockmaker named Charles Cross who had served his apprenticeship with Price in Wiveliscombe. Bowring's clocks were of good quality, judging by a well-proportioned, mahogany longcase clock, with painted arched dial and moonwork, that is illustrated in Wardle's book. Another Bowring longcase was the subject of an enquiry to Exeter Museum, and a fine mahogany bracket clock by 'B. Bowring, Exeter' is also recorded.

Wardle relates that in 1811, leaving the Exeter shop in the care of Mrs. Bowring and his assistant, Bowring took passage to Newfoundland in order to establish a similar business there. According to hearsay, he was induced to try his fortune after conversation with a customer at his Exeter shop. The customer, then on a visit to England in connection with the sale of codfish, purchased several of Benjamin's clocks.

Bowring, by 1814, had established links in St. John's, Newfoundland, and in Exeter had built the business up to the position where he was able to advertise: "The Trade supplied with Clock-movements, Clock brass, Steel-work and Watch materials, of the best quality".

The story can now be continued by Henry Ellis³ who records that in the latter part of 1815 "an unexpected event occurred...it being no less than an offer to succeed to the business of another watchmaker and silversmith, Mr. Benjamin Bowring residing at No. 199 in the same street [High Street]. I had known Mr. B's family for many years; his mother lived on the Friar's Walk near my father's, and was an acquaintance of my mother's; and Mr. B. had served his apprenticeship at Tiverton, in the same house as myself, with my master's father. I had, however, very little knowledge of him personally, having left Exeter shortly after his commencement in business. On my return (ten years later) I began on my own account, which circumstance in itself was not likely to increase our acquaintance.

"Mr. B. was carrying on a very fair business at this time, supporting his wife and family in credit and respectability, but he fell anxious to enter into a more extensive line, and may perhaps have had some other reason not stated for wishing to quit Exeter: in fact he had made himself busy in party politics and religion; felt dissatisfied with the government of the country, and had a misunderstanding with the members of the congregation of dissenters to which he belonged, on the occasion of an organ being erected in George's Meeting House, to which he strongly objected. These things combined made him determined on seeking his fortune elsewhere and for the purpose he embarked for St. John's, Newfoundland."

"Mr. B. on leaving Exeter had not made known his intentions of settling abroad, but understanding that he was absent from home, I offered my assistance to Mrs. B. if I could be of any service to her in the business.... This offer it appears she considered kind, most other persons in the trade having exhibited a different feeling towards her. In the month of October 1815 Mrs. B. received a letter from her husband dated St. John's, in which he informed her that having found a good opening for business in that place he desired her to dispose of the concern at Exeter with as little delay as possible, and join him with the family. Thus situated Mrs. B. at once thought of me, and made a proposition offering me the business."

Ellis obtained the business on terms which he regarded as advantageous and goes on to relate that Mrs. Bowring "gave me to understand that no 'good will' would be expected, her principal object being to get the house with the fixtures taken off her hands at Christmas. She also said that in addition to the business there was the agency of the County Fire Office and Provident Life Office, which she had no doubt, on making proper application would be continued with Mr. Bowring's successor."

Bowring returned to England early in the Spring of 1816 in order to finish what matters he had left unsettled and take his wife and family to Newfoundland. The stock purchased by Ellis consisted principally of clocks.

clock-cases and dials, watch glasses and materials. The rest was sold off at "prime cost".

In Newfoundland he at first continued in the clock and watchmaking trade, but then branched out into the general shop trade and then into trade generally, supplying fishermen with goods and buying and exporting their produce. By 1823 he was the owner of a wharf and the schooner Charlotte. Readers wishing to follow the story further are recommended to read the two previously-mentioned biographies. Benjamin Bowring died in Liverpool on 1 June 1846, aged 68, having returned from St. John's in 1834.

1. Hodder and Stoughton, 1938.
2. Bodley Head, 1962.
3. Henry Ellis Memoirs. 8 ms. vols. in West Country Studies Library, Exeter.

The above account is taken from *Time in Exeter*, by C.N. Ponsford. Headwell Vale Books, 1978. £6.00.



*Shop at 199 High Street, Exeter
bought by Henry Ellis from Benjamin Bowring in 1815.*

THE LAW OF SETTLEMENT IN PRACTICE

R.R. Sellman

The famous Act of 1662¹ authorised the removal of an intruder to the parish where he has been last legally settled for at least 40 days, 'as, native, householder, sojourner, apprentice, or servant', within 40 days of arrival, unless he gave security that he would cause no expense to the parish to which he had come. Hence the Discharges which many parishes gave for parishioners anxious to move to 'better themselves' in their trade or craft, even before 1662. From the terms of this Act it is nowadays repeatedly stated in print that 40 days residence, or anyhow 40 days after giving written notice of arrival, conferred a Settlement; yet the careful study of a mass of Settlement Examinations from parishes within 10 miles or so of Exeter never reveals one claimed or admitted on this ground alone. Was 'written notice' in fact a non-starter, either because most incomers were unable to provide it or unwilling for fear of prompt expulsion? — at least before 1795, when removal was allowed only when someone became 'chargeable'.

Later 17th century Acts confirm that a Settlement could be acquired by apprenticeship, by (in the case of unmarried persons not under apprentice indenture) a completed year's contract of living-in service, by occupying property worth at least £10 p.a. for at least a year and the payment of parish rate thereon, or by holding a parish office for a year (if legally appointed to do so). Why, if simply living in the parish for 40 days gave a Settlement, should these much more positive qualifications (apart from apprenticeship) require a year?

Parish office does not in fact appear in the examinations as a ground for Settlement, for the obvious reason that those 'legally appointed' by the Vestry as Churchwardens, Overseers, Constables, or Waywardens were already occupiers of substantial properties and so already parishioners. Deputies were often installed by private arrangements, especially by gentry and by women occupiers; but it is unlikely that this would pass as 'legal appointment', and in any case they were nearly always settled parishioners who had already served the office on their own behalf. One attempt was made in 1796 to claim a Settlement in Kenton for a man who had earlier served three years there as Workhouse Governor, but counsel held that this was not a 'public office' because not recognised by law.

The much-quoted 40 days does indeed appear, but only in determining that a Settlement established by apprenticeship or by contract service was in that parish where the last 40 days were spent. Apprentice-masters often moved with their apprentices to another parish; and it was sometimes stipulated that the last 40 days of an apprenticeship elsewhere should be served in the parish of original Settlement. Indeed, until the anomaly was abolished by the New Poor Law of 1834, boys apprenticed to the merchant service might gain Settlements in parishes in whose waters their vessel had lain at anchor for more than 40 days. In 1833, for example, an East Budleigh boy apprenticed to a Topsham

shipmaster was held to have acquired a Settlement in Kenton (with which parish he had no connection whatever) because the vessel had lain in 'the Bight of Exmouth Harbour' for that length of time; and a Kenton boy, apprenticed to a Sunderland shipmaster trading to the Exe estuary, was held on the same basis to be 'naturalised' in Wapping because the ship had lain in the Pool of London for two months while being fitted for the 1807 expedition to Copenhagen.

A wife acquired the Settlement of her husband, a legitimate child that of its father, but a bastard (until 1834) one in its parish of birth. The New Poor Law gave future bastards the Settlement of their mother, and so obviated situations such as that in the Kenton papers for 1773, when an innocent bigamously-married woman was removed to Alphington but her small child, as a bastard, to the Bristol parish where he had been born. A more complex case, but with a happier outcome, was that of 1821 at Kenton of a 'common law' couple who had produced children in four widely separated localities, all therefore having different Settlements from each other and from their parents; but this was met not by breaking up the family but by the various Overseers each agreeing to contribute their share of cash. By this time, mercifully, a child could not be removed from its mother below the age of 5 without her consent.

In the Broadclyst papers a claim to Settlement by a year's living-in contract service was held by counsel to be invalidated by two nights absence from the master's house; and there are countless others in every collection studied where several years residence, including prolonged living-out service for weekly wages, was no bar to a Removal Order. Indeed, not until the Act of 1846² did a term of simple residence exempt from removal — 5 years, excluding any time in prison or lunatic asylum, in the Services or on relief — and still the original parish of Settlement had to pay.

The Law of Settlement applied only to England and Wales, and parishes near the sea were particularly likely to find incomers born in Scotland, Ireland, the Channel Islands, Newfoundland, or even further afield, who had no Settlement at all unless they had somehow acquired one after arrival. If they married local women, the wife retained her maiden Settlement; and the man, if becoming chargeable, could be removed to his place of birth³. But this would have been both costly and difficult, and in no case so far have I found it attempted. One example among many was that of Henry Rose, mariner, examined in 1817 in Chudleigh after he had married a local girl. He had been born in Boston, Mass., pressed into the British Navy at the age of 16 on arrival in a U.S. merchant ship, deserted in Plymouth 5½ years later, been imprisoned there for 9 months for his part in a theatre riot, escaped, been recaptured and given 2 more years in gaol, and then on discharge had volunteered for Lord Exmouth's expedition to Algiers — still with no Settlement, and with no offer from Chudleigh to escort him back to Boston at parish expense.

The 1834 Act abolished, for the future, Settlement by a year's contract service, by Parish Office, or by apprenticeship to a shipmaster or fisherman; and those who held a Settlement by occupation or possession of property were henceforth to lose it if they ceased to live within 10 miles. That of 1846 forbade

removal of a widow within one year of her husband's death, or of children from their mother and father (or step-parents) under the age of 16. But exemption from removal, under these and the five years residence clauses, still left liability for their support to the parish to which they would otherwise have been removed. Not till 1865 did individual parish responsibility (and effectively the Law of Settlement) finally end.

Settlement Examinations are, of course, a rich source for brief biographies of working-class individuals of the mid-18th to mid-19th centuries. They show inter alia the frequency and range of movement, the wages paid for different kinds of work, and the many vicissitudes of contemporary life. They are also, in connection with decisions as to Settlement and removal (which sometimes incorporate counsel's opinion and references to case-law) first-hand evidence on how the system in fact worked. Whatever may have been the intention of the 1662 legislators, it is abundantly clear that, at least in the last century and a half of the Settlement Laws from which most of the surviving evidence comes, mere residence of any length did not qualify. Nor did removal have to take place within 40 days of arrival, or even of examination: many incomers, especially those marrying locally, were examined simply as a precaution in case they later became chargeable. That so much evidence survives is in fact due to the need at the time to preserve it in case action should be required in the perhaps distant future.

Judicial decisions on a now long-dead issue are (unlike the Statutes) hard to trace, but it appears that a mass of case-law developed which might repay the researches of a historian with access to a legal-historical library. Some other historians would have done well to consult the readily available material in their local Record Office before repeating in print the quite misleading statement that '40 days residence gave a Settlement'.

1. 13/14 Car. ii, cap. 12. (the County Record Office has a complete run of Statutes for the period in question).
2. 9/10 Vict., cap. 66. (the term was reduced to 3 years shortly before the end of individual parish chargeability).
3. 59 Geo. III, cap. 66 (1810) for the first time allowed this without previous conviction as a 'vagabond', hitherto necessary.

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A COLLEGE HOSTEL BEFORE THE FIRST WORLD WAR*

B.W. Clapp

The modern University of Exeter has a large number of halls of residence that accommodate some two thousand students, two-fifths of the total number. The University, like its predecessor the University College of the South West, has always prided itself on its residential facilities. Indeed the tradition of providing hostel accommodation goes back almost to the beginnings of higher education in Exeter. It was in 1893 that the Exeter Technical and University Extension College came into existence. In 1901, when its official title was the Royal Albert Memorial College and its short title University College, Exeter, a new department was opened for the training of women as elementary-school teachers. Both the Board of Education and the college authorities were anxious to provide hostel accommodation, but it was Miss Jessie Montgomery, the moving spirit in the university movement in Exeter, who took the first steps. She formed a committee and purchased 'The Vineyard' in Castle Street (the property now known as Bradninch Hall), a large, early-nineteenth century residence set in pleasant grounds under the shadow of the castle. Miss Montgomery moved in with her own servants and acted as warden for the first six months. 'College Hostel' opened in 1902 and housed thirty students, who came from various parts of the country, with a large contingent from South Wales. In the following year Bradninch House, Bradninch Place, Gandy Street, was purchased to provide bedrooms for a further twenty students, who took their meals in College Hostel. The outpost in Bradninch Place survived for only a few years. Together with the other properties there it was demolished to make room for the new college building in Gandy Street, completed in 1911. The loss was made good by the erection of a modern wing in the grounds of College Hostel so that by 1912 the hostel could theoretically take 78 students, though there were only 63 in residence, and the college would have been reluctant to admit more than 70.

In 1906 the City Council bought the hostel from Miss Montgomery's committee and transferred it to full college control. The rules of the college required that women 'students in training' should live in the hostel unless their homes were in or near to Exeter. Consequently there were few places available for students other than the prospective teachers sponsored by the Board of Education.

Conditions were rather cramped; hence the reluctance to admit more than 70 students. The larger bedrooms were partitioned into cubicles by serge curtains.**Students had the use of a common room and study but, if the memory of one old student is to be trusted, there was not one comfortable chair in Castle Street. The hostel was warmed by solid fuel central heating. In the

* This account is based on records in the archives of the University of Exeter.

** In the 1920s slightly lower fees were charged for cubicles.

winter months a ton of anthracite (£1 6s. 8d. per ton in 1908) was consumed every week. The anthracite was still being purchased at the same price in 1912 and even in 1917 after three years of war and inflation it still cost only £2 per ton.

Tenders accepted by the college on behalf of the hostel throw an interesting light on the domestic economy of the time. Bread, butter, cheese, milk, sugar and bacon naturally figured in the purchases. So too did those institutional standbys - cocoa (Frys, 11½d. per lb.), rice (1¼d.), flaked tapioca (3d.), haricot beans (1¼d.), prunes (4d.), split peas, egg powder (6d.), and chicory. Meat cost 6½d. per lb., coffee 1s. and tea 1s. 2d. Jam was bought in 7 lb. tins (Veale's, at prices ranging from 1s. 4½d. to 2s. 6d.), sugar in the loaf (5s. per 28 lb.), picallili by the half gallon jar (1s. 5d.)†. The surviving records give no indication of relative quantities bought: perhaps the diet consisted largely of meat, best Canadian bacon, and ham garnished with picallili; perhaps rice or tapioca and prunes was served every day. It seems unlikely that the housekeeper could have afforded anything but plain fare. Women students in training received from the Board of Education a maintenance grant of £25 p.a. The hostel took the whole grant and charged a further £5, which the student or her parents had to find. £1 a week was the charge made to such other students as lived in the hostel, and this roughly represented the full cost of the service provided, including servants' wages and keep. Good digs could be had in Exeter before the first world war at from 14s. to 16s. per week: then as now the student found it more expensive to live in.

The cost of living was rising slowly in England in the years 1908-14, but this movement is scarcely traceable in the records of College Hostel. Some articles rose in price but as many were unchanged and a few actually got cheaper. When war broke out the upward movement of prices became more noticeable. By 1917 tea, coffee and sugar had doubled or trebled in price and the college was enquiring about the possibility of mixing 20 lb. of potato meal with every sack of flour. Fees and grants had by no means risen in proportion and it is likely that diet in the College Hostel was decidedly spartan in the later stages of the war.

In 1903 the training department of the University College began to admit men as well as women, but the college was not fully co-educational. "We have not found any practical inconvenience", wrote the Registrar, "arising by the joint instruction of men and women; careful rules are made which are loyally obeyed. Our number of students is so large that it is necessary in any case to divide each year into sets and the men naturally fall into a distinct set for most subjects". For teaching practice, the women were supervised by the mistress of education assisted by other women members of staff and the men by the professor of education and male members of staff. Hostel rules were equally circumspect. The doors closed at 7 p.m. and special permission was necessary if a student wished to stay out until 9 p.m. Lights went out at 9.45 p.m. College

Hostel was non-denominational but by no means indifferent to religion. There were daily religious exercises: in the morning, the reading of a psalm and three collects, prayers and grace; in the evening, hymns and three collects, prayers and grace. In the student magazines of the period some aspects of hostel life (such as the curfew) were subjected to mild banter. The solicitude of their elders may have prevented some indiscretions, but it did not and was not intended to keep young men and women in monastic seclusion. Nor had the full theory of the residential system been applied to students of the college in the years before 1914. It was after the war and especially under Principal John Murray (1926-51) that residence came to be seen as an essential part of higher education in Exeter. It is no accident that in 1924 College Hostel was renamed Bradninch Hall. A hostel was only a collective lodging, despite the strict curfew and considerable emphasis on religious observance. A hall of residence was, or was intended to be, a community of scholars and a civilising influence - a gracious setting in which to pursue learning and good manners.

NOTES ON NEW CONTRIBUTORS

Bruce Coleman is lecturer in history in the University of Exeter and edited **The idea of the city in 19th century Britain** (Routledge, 1973).

Norah Gregory became interested in Combe Martin's history while she was a schoolgirl and she now devotes much of her spare time to research into the village's past.

Clive Ponsford is a newspaper sub-editor and lives in Exeter. He collaborated with John Scott and William Authers on **Clocks and Clockmakers of Tiverton** and has just published **Time in Exeter** from which we print an extract.

Brian Clapp is senior lecturer in economic history in the University of Exeter and at present commissioned to write the official history of the University. He is joint editor of the series **Documents in English Economic History** (Bell, 1976-7).

Leslie Hutchings has been Vicar of Modbury with Brownston since 1967. He is retiring shortly and plans a detailed study of the Totnes-Kingsbridge road.

† These are all 1908 prices.

Leslie B. Hutchings

One way to study the question of road improvement is by means of the private acts which had to be passed by Parliament before any changes could be made. In 1823 two such bills were presented to Parliament. One was for 'erecting a bridge over the water of Lary' (4 Geo. IV c. x) and the other 'for more effectually making the road from Modbury to the bridge over the Lary' (4 Geo. IV c. cix). In 1824 another Act provided for three new roads: (i) from Kitley Hill to the Lary; (ii) from Addistone Hill to the Totnes Road at Ladydown; (iii) from Sequer's Bridge to Modbury Cross. Acts of 1825 and 1827 provided for the continuation of these roads through Modbury and Kingsbridge via Slapton Sands to Dartmouth. Another of 1836 improved the road from the River Erme via Modbury and Gara Bridge to Dartmouth. Yet another of 1833 was for making a turnpike road from Kingsbridge through Loddiswell to Ermington but this last was never carried out. In all the legislation of this time it is impossible to discover which were the operative Acts for each section of road as the deposited plans are in many cases missing.

We are on safer ground when we consult the surviving maps and when we look at the evidence of the roads themselves. There were two main periods of road improvement in Devon, the mid-eighteenth century, and the 1820s and 1830s. It is, of course, no coincidence that there are good maps dating from these two periods for it was the same spirit of enterprise and invention that produced both the maps and the roads. Benjamin Donn's great map of 1765 provides ample evidence for the earlier period and for the later we have the 1 inch Ordnance Survey map of 1809 in its various editions. Care is required in using the David & Charles reprint, which was made from an electrotype plate of 1882, as there is much inconsistency in the selection of matter added in the revisions. For example, the South Devon railway of 1848 is included but new roads which appear in the Modbury tithe map of 1841 are not.

Donn's map shows only two turnpike roads in the South Hams south of the line of the A38. One runs from Bittaford to Totnes, the other from Plympton via Brixton to Modbury, and thence via Brownson (sic) and Bickham Bridge to Totnes. Part of this is marked 'not yet turnpike'. There was no turnpike road to Kingsbridge or Dartmouth. Such roads as did exist, whether turnpike or not, followed different routes from those of today in many places. This can be seen most clearly on the A38 east of South Brent and west of Ivybridge, on the A379 between Sequer's Bridge over the Erme and Modbury and on the A385 in the 2½ miles immediately west of Totnes. No attempt seems to have been made in these early turnpike roads to establish better lines or to effect any major improvements. They were presumably a little better than they had been in 1698, when Celia Fiennes wrote of the road from Ashburton to Plymouth: 'The wayes now became so difficult that one could scarcely pass by each other, even the single horses, and so dirty in many places and just a track

for one horses feete, and the banks on either side so neer'. But by 1810 there had been so little improvement that the editors of a new edition of Risdon's **Chorographical description** wrote 'The roads of the county cannot now be commended... It is to be lamented that when improvement began, a better plan had not been adopted; that instead of ascending one steep hill to descend again, more level tracks had not been pursued, which in most cases are to be found?'.¹

Although the 1809 Ordnance Survey map shows more main roads than Donn, they are no more than improvements of existing roads. By then there were main roads from Modbury to Kingsbridge, from Modbury to Dartmouth and from Kingsbridge to Totnes (but via Moreleigh not Halwell). There was also a new link from Modbury going over Shilston Bridge to join the Bittaford-Totnes road. An interesting survival of this route is the name 'Totnes' on the signpost at Weeke Cross. But there were no main roads from Dartmouth to Kingsbridge, Kingsbridge to Salcombe or Plymouth to Brixton.

Lord Morley's bridge over the water of Lary was to change all this. In the complicated negotiations that preceded its building he had to deal with both sides of the river. The greater difficulties were naturally on the Plymouth side but it was equally necessary to ensure that there would be adequate roads on the east to serve the new bridge. At the same time the turnpike trustees were naturally anxious not to build roads leading only to a bridgeless waterway. Even after the main principle was agreed, there were still points of detail to be settled such as the position of the turnpike gates, particularly those near the bridge, the trustees wanting to catch as much traffic as possible by having a gate close to the bridge and Lord Morley fearing that the close proximity of such a gate would reduce the traffic using his bridge. However all difficulties were solved and the bridge was opened on 14th July, 1827.

From the bridge as far as Kitley Hill, between Brixton and Yealmpton, the turnpike road was almost entirely a new construction. In addition to the documentary evidence of maps and Acts of Parliament there are three pieces of evidence on the ground that indicate that its origin was connected with the coaching traffic of the early nineteenth century. The first is its route, which bypasses Plymstock; the second is the nature of its banks and hedges, where these have not been replaced by more recent house building and road widening; and the third is the existence of engineering works, particularly in the valley between Brixton and Yealmpton. Turnpike cottages and milestones would be further evidence but I am not aware of any in this section.

Banks and hedges tell their story, even without taking into account the number of species growing in them. The traditional Devon hedge is almost always indicative of an origin at the time of the Saxon settlement or the medieval expansion, or even earlier than either. Roads made or widened for the

1. Christopher Morris, ed. *The journeys of Celia Fiennes* (Cresset Press, 1947) p. 250.
2. Tristram Risdon. *The chorographical description or survey of Devon, printed from a genuine copy of the original manuscript with considerable additions* (London, 1811) p. iii.

coaching traffic of the early nineteenth century have either stone walls, low earth banks or ground-level hedges.

Between Brixton and Yealmpton the new road shows an interesting deviation from an older one. It now crosses the valley by an embankment a few hundred yards higher up than the old track. The reason for this may have been merely the need to reduce the steepness of the gradients but it is also possible that the Bastards, living at Kitley, wanted the new road farther away from their splendid new mansion, built at about this time. A similar re-routing took place in the neighbourhood of Flete, which lends support to the latter explanation.

East of Yealmpton there was little change from the old route until the top of Adstone or Addistone Hill. One small change can be traced just to the east of the River Yealm, where the old route can be seen on the other side of the field opposite Dunstone Cross Garage. Here there is a toll cottage and a stone structure like a sentry box on the north side of the road, intended to catch those who entered from the side roads. Adstone Hill is now marked by an AA box three-quarters of a mile from the Erme at Sequer's Bridge. From this point eastward the present road is an entirely new construction. The old road can be traced by those who are looking for it but it is neither marked on the maps of today nor is it obvious to the casual viewer. Looking east from the AA box across the fields there can sometimes be seen a strip of grassland between ploughed fields. This is never ploughed owing to the stony nature of the ground. If one follows this old road it can be seen as a dip in the next field and then as a distinct hollow in a small wood (OS ref SX 627518). East of the wood it is even more distinct in the next field as it curves round to the northward to the Flete estate drive and to the A379 at the Lodge. From there a line of tree stumps across the field marks the old road to Ermington.

The 1825 Act authorised the abandonment of this stretch and its replacement by the present Totnes road (B3210). It is worthy of note that the first intention was to make a road not to Modbury and Kingsbridge but to Totnes and so to provide an alternative coach route to London. In 1829 the 'Old Subscription' coach was advertised as doing the journey by this route in 26 hours. The coach proprietors using the Plympton route engaged a survey to measure the two roads and proved that theirs was in fact slightly shorter. This Totnes road is a good example of the sort of road that was constructed in the early nineteenth century for coach traffic: it has very easy gradients, it by-passes the villages of Ermington and Ugborough and it has no sharp bends.

Not long after, the road from the Erme to Modbury was almost entirely replaced. For a few years traffic to Modbury still had to turn south soon after crossing the river, cross the Sheepharn Brook at Goutford Bridge and climb the hill to the ridge road from Orchardton. But in 1836 an Act of Parliament authorised the building of a road across the Edmeston estate. This section clearly reveals its date of origin by its stone walls, the embankment by which it crosses the valley of the Sheepharn Brook and the cutting which eases the

severity of the gradient. Other improvements of this date concerned the stretch from 'the vicarage gate' to the top of Church Street, the widening of Barracks Road and Dark Lane. The vicarage was of course the old vicarage and its gate was not the present gate but one about three hundred yards further west which has now disappeared. The effect of these improvements was to provide an unimpeded road to Dartmouth, avoiding the descent into Modbury.

Other improvements were made to the Modbury-Dartmouth road: it was widened throughout its length and a new stretch was made to by-pass the little hamlet of Brownston. One of the Acts contained an alternative route more to the south, crossing the Avon at Topsham Bridge instead of Gara Bridge. Those who wish to make a direct comparison of the old and the new can see the difference most clearly by making a short tour and crossing the river by these two bridges.

East of Modbury the Kingsbridge Turnpike Trustees were active with their own schemes. These involved a drastic change in the town itself. In 1824 this letter was sent to all the principal landed proprietors:

It having been finally resolved by the intended trustees, that the roads both from Dartmouth, and Kingsbridge, to Plymouth, shall avoid the town of Modbury, unless the inhabitants of the latter place will contribute one moiety of the expence of purchasing their Shambles, Round-House, and Conduit, (which is estimated at £400) a subscription has been commenced for effecting so desirable an object.

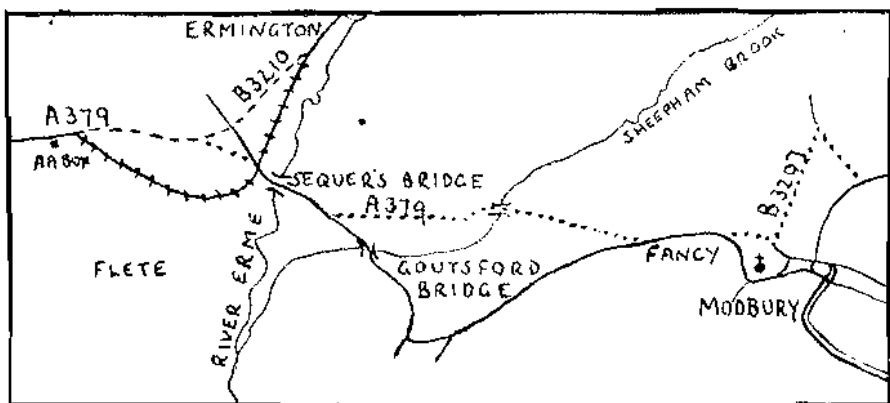
An Act of the following year provided for two possible routes, one through the town, the other by-passing it by a route almost the same as that proposed today for a Modbury by-pass. Modbury was not then a Conservation Area and the sad destruction was carried out under the powers of yet another Act two years later. The deposited plan in this case has survived and shows that the Shambles was at the bottom of Church Street and in the middle of it; it was a long, narrow building, with its long side along the street. The Round-House was described as being at the Market Cross. The Conduit was presumably that erected by Nicholas Trist in 1708, which still survives in the wall on the north side of Church Street. Church Street was widened and New Road was built to provide a more level way than the old road from Poundwell Street.

Outside the town a new road was made nearly as far as Aveton Gifford. This again is marked by its low hedges or walls and its engineering works. John Loudon McAdam was the engineer.

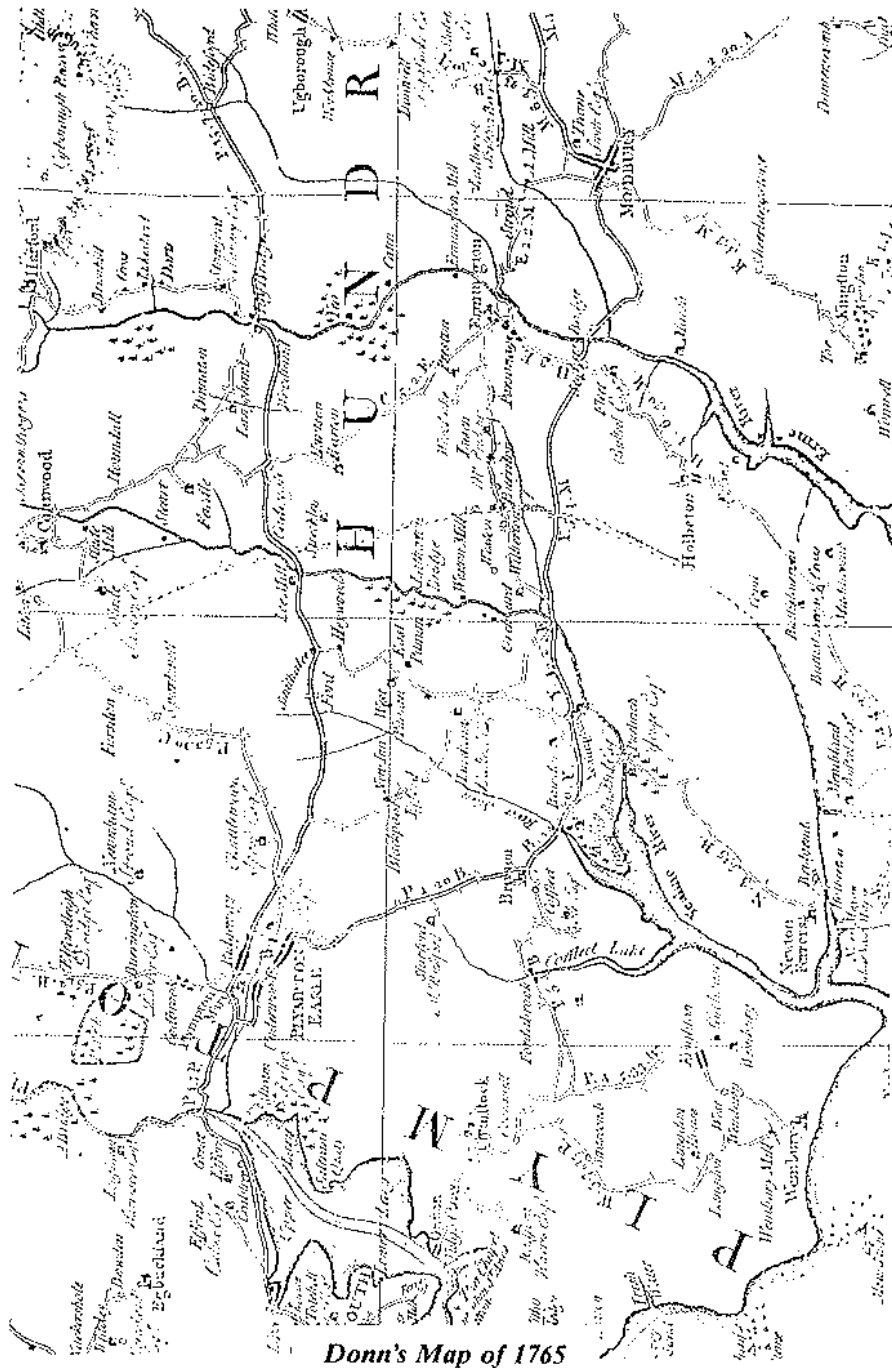
Further east the Kingsbridge-Dartmouth road was made, with its bridge over Bowcombe Creek and its long stretch by Slapton Ley. There was also the Kingsbridge-Totnes road through Halwell. These I have not studied in the same detail as those in my own parish and between Modbury and the 'bridge over the water of Lary'. To those living on or near them they could be a fascinating study based on Donn's map, the OS map of 1809 available in its original form in the Devon County Library and various Acts with their

deposited plans available in the County Record Office.

This study is limited in its scope. It suggests some interesting questions. For example it would be fascinating to discover the details of the various Turnpike Trusts, who the subscribers were and what return they expected to get for their investments; how much it cost to build a mile of road; what was the price of land, and so on. Another interesting question concerns the actual choice of route. I have suggested two places where the local landowners seem to have had the new road moved away from their houses. In another it went right across the estate and much nearer the house than the old one. Why the difference? Could it have been that in the one case the landowner was a wealthy shareholder, while in the other he was in financial difficulties and only too glad to improve his fortune by selling land? These and similar questions go much deeper than this preliminary survey.



- Pre-1824 roads still in use
- +++++ Pre-1824 roads abandoned
- - - - - New in 1824
- New in 1836 (or improved)
- ==== New in 1827



Donn's Map of 1765

SOUTH MOLTON AND DISTRICT ARCHIVE

William H. Pearce

At the end of its first year of existence, the South Molton and District Archive can look back to a period of substantial, if at present largely hidden progress. Apart from the efforts of one or two members who have been maintaining their own records in some isolation, there appears to have been no effort made since 1893 (when John Cock published his "Records of ye Antient Borough of South Molton in ye County of Devon") to record the history of this town, so we are tackling what is in effect virgin territory.

We are at present concentrating on the following fields of research (a) the recording on tape of the reminiscences of some of the older inhabitants of the town; (b) making a photographic record of past and present buildings; (c) a topological survey of the town by a study of old maps; and (d) the seeking out and cataloguing of such documents as now exist. These are widely scattered, some in the local library, some in the Museum, some in private hands, while the Churches and Schools have their own records. Additionally, the Devon Record Office has an enormous number of documents which will at some time need to be examined.

We hold periodic public shows at which we exhibit slides of South Molton, past and present, supported by photographs and maps. These have been well attended, and afford us a valuable means of publicity.

We work closely with the Library, the Museum and the South Molton Community College, whose help has been invaluable, particularly in the provision of facilities for meetings.

We shall be glad of the assistance of any readers of these notes, either by helping us in our work or by lending us any relevant documents, photographs, etc. which will be promptly returned, if required, after copying. All enquiries and offers of help to Mr. Pearce, "Havering", 3 Deans Park, South Molton, Devon, EX36 3DY.

Transport references in Thomas Moore's HISTORY OF DEVONSHIRE

A number of the early county histories (and the *Victoria History of the County of Devon*, vol. 1, 1906) are difficult to use because they were published either without indexes or with inadequate indexes. One of the contributions which members of the Standing Conference could make pro bono publico would be to make available for ultimate publication any partial indexes which they may have compiled. Could members (and any others who can help) kindly send any index material of this kind which they have to the Secretary? Here we reprint in revised form a list of the transport references to be found in Thomas Moore's *History of Devonshire* (1829-31) compiled by H. Compton from the *Journal of the Railway and Canal Historical Society*, XXXI (1976) 35. Moore's *Devonshire* was issued in two forms, quarto and octavo. In the quarto edition volume I has 400 pages and volume II 630 pages and an index of two pages. In the octavo edition volume I has 574 pages while volume II has 908 pages with index and imprint of four pages. As the history was issued in parts, with two engravings loose in each issue, it is unusual to find a copy with all the 94 engravings complete and in order of issue as listed by J.V. Somers Cocks in his *Devon Topographical Prints: 1660-1870* (Devon Library Services, 1977). The first volume of each edition was printed by Richard Taylor, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, London, the second by W.C. Featherstone, Exeter.

The list of transport references in the two editions is as follows :-

		Volume I		
		<i>quarto</i> (pages)	<i>octavo</i> (pages)	
Book 1,	chapter 3	40-4	56-64	The river navigations of the Exe, Teign, Dart, Erme, Plym, Tamar, Tavy, Torridge and Taw
Book 1,	chapter 3	45-52	64-74	The Exeter, Stover, Tamar Manure, Tavistock, Bude, Torrington, Grand Western and Crediton Canals
Book 1,	chapter 3	52	75-6	Plymouth and Dartmoor Railway; Hay Tor Railway
		Volume II		
Book 3,	chapter 2	223-5	318-22	Tavistock Canal
Book 4,	chapter 1	299	428	Stover Canal
Book 4,	chapter 1	340-1	488-9	Plymouth and Dartmoor Railway

Book 4,	chapter 2	372	534	Exeter Canal
Book 4,	chapter 2	374	536-7	Stover Canal
Book 4,	chapter 2	377	540	Tavistock Canal

As can be seen, this work contains a number of accounts of river and canal navigation in the county as well as passages on the Hay Tor and Plymouth and Dartmoor Railways.

W.E.M.

NOTICES OF BOOKS

KINGSTON CHURCH BELLS published by the Kingston History Society, 1978, 4 pp., illustration of the belfry and reduced facsimiles of the inscriptions on the bells. Obtainable from the Hon. Treasurer, Kingston Church Bells Fund, 1 Wheel Row, Kingston, Kingsbridge, Devon. 20p plus postage.

This history of the bells in Kingston Church is based on a report by the Rev. J.G.M. Scott, Vice-President of the Central Council of Bell Ringers, and on local material such as the Rural Dean's Visitation Book and Vestry Minutes. The bells are of particular interest because the medieval ring of four has been kept. The bells have not been rung for ten years because the timber frame is unsafe. The small village of Kingston is hoping to raise over £5,000 to rehang them, and the Kingston History Society has produced this booklet as a contribution towards the restoration fund.

H.M.P.

MEMOIRS OF FELIX W. GADE

Mr. F. W. Gade is still, happily, at the age of eighty-eight, living on Lundy where he first made his home in 1926. Agent to the owner of Lundy, Mr. M.C. Harman (and subsequently to Mr. A.P. Harman) for nearly half a century, he retired in 1971. A limited edition of his memoirs, **My Life on Lundy**, has been privately published this year at £12 (plus £1 postage). Enquiries to Mr. F.W. Gade, Lundy, EX34 8LA, via Ilfracombe, Devon.

DEVON TOPOGRAPHICAL PRINTS, 1660-1870 — A CATALOGUE AND GUIDE by J.V. Somers Cocks. Published by Devon Library Services, 1977. 324pp. £9.50. ISBN 0 8611401X.

It is only in recent years that topographical prints appear to have regained the popularity which they enjoyed during the heyday of their original production throughout the 19th century. Consequently, it is not only libraries, museums and other 'archives' which now seek to collect them but also private individuals. This is still possible because of the enormous numbers in which the prints were originally produced, whilst the wide range of their subject matter allows for there to be a subject to suit every taste. These two facets of the topographical print, whilst being a great advantage to the researcher and the collector, can be a great disadvantage to the potential cataloguer, due to the massive weight and range of material which has to be surveyed, compared and checked.

Mr. Somers Cocks has done an admirable job in undertaking such a survey of the topographical prints which relate to Devon and his book is likely to prove an invaluable reference work for anyone concerned with the social and economic history of the County and the geographic changes that have occurred within the last 200 years or so. Similarly, it is equally valuable to those interested mainly in the prints themselves and the artists, engravers and publishers who produced them. The author caters for both categories, not only in the way he has arranged the catalogue in an alphabetical 'subject' basis but by the amount of information he has included in each individual entry, the 'source' list and the introduction. I have only one personal minor criticism and that is that the book would have been even more useful to me had the various sources of individual prints been cited, at least insofar as our local public collections are concerned. However, one hopes that ancillary catalogues, published by those of us with such collections in our care, will, in due course, amend this omission. Meanwhile, one can only congratulate Mr. Somers Cocks on his heroic effort in undertaking such a catalogue and seeing it through to publication stage. One hopes that his admirable achievement will possibly inspire others to tackle the remaining Counties of Great Britain in due course.

Jane Baker

DARTMOOR MINES: THE MINES OF THE GRANITE MASS by Michael Atkinson, with Roger Burt and Peter Waite. Exeter Industrial Archaeology Group, Department of Economic History, University of Exeter. 56 pp. £1.00. ISBN 0 90623100 0.

For at least eight centuries Dartmoor has been the scene of mining activity, and from the superficial stream tin workings of early times, through opencast and shaft mining to the relatively recent micaceous haematite or "shiny ore" mines the last of which closed only ten years ago. Physical evidence of this long history of mining still abounds on the moorland landscape but is often difficult to link with documentary records. No comprehensive history of Dartmoor mining has yet been written and the task of obtaining information about the industry, particularly about specific sites is difficult and often unrewarding. The patchy nature of Dartmoor mineral deposits gave rise to many small and scattered ventures and even the sites of 18th and 19th century workings are by no means easy to locate and identify with certainty.

Dartmoor Mines, the eighth publication of the Exeter Industrial Archaeology Group, aims to provide background information and practical directions on finding 18th, 19th and 20th century sites at which evidence of mining can still be found. This attractively produced little book provides simple descriptions of the formation of the mineral deposits and of the techniques of Dartmoor mining, as well as a gazetteer of 38 mining sites on the granite mass. It presents a fascinating and well-illustrated picture of the more recent metal mining on the Moor, particularly of the micaceous haematite mines of south eastern Dartmoor which continued the tradition of mining almost up to the present day. Tin mining too, has become extinct on the Moor much more recently than many people would imagine. It is surprising to learn that 102 people were employed in 1870 at the Birch Tor and Vitifer mines opposite the Warren House Inn and 35 were employed in 1907, eight years before the mines' closure. A further 11 men were also working at this time in the neighbouring Golden Dagger mine and another 44 at Hexworthy.

Small maps based on the 6" Ordnance Survey accompany the descriptions of many of the sites. For copyright reasons these maps are based on the second edition published in the early years of this century, although there is no indication of this in the book. Useful for the information they contain, they could certainly mislead anyone regarding them as a picture of present day sites, for example Golden Dagger mine, shown as being on open moorland, is nowadays in a dense forestry plantation.

This book is definitely at its best on later and relatively better-known sites. Indeed there are a number of surprising omissions. There is no mention of the demolished engine house at Ringleshutes the remains of which are still clearly discernible, nor of North and South Brimpts sites which were worked as Devon Tin between 1850 and 1855, yet Peck Pits which appears to be an entirely alluvial working is included.

Part of the fascination of these Dartmoor mining sites is tracking them

down. Their remains are not always apparent to the casual eye, but when found and examined they provide much of interest to the industrial archaeologist, having usually escaped vandalism by later industrial activity. It is a pity therefore that the authors have made no attempt to provide a diagram of a typical Dartmoor Tin dressing plant to aid the reader's field interpretation.

It is part of the purpose of this book to argue that the mark made by miners in the last three centuries is as much part of our past as the pre-historic remains and should not be at greater risk than the medieval blowing house or prehistoric stone circles.

The book leaves a number of 19th century mining sites still available for personal discovery. It cannot be taken as comprehensive, but it is a useful introduction and should lead to a wider appreciation of the importance of Dartmoor's later mining remains.

Owen A. Baker

CONFERENCES

The Autumn Conference, attended by about fifty members, was held on 11th November, 1978 at the Castle Hill Hotel, Great Torrington. Mr. E.A. Holwill, former manager of the North Devon Clay Company, spoke on 'The North Devon Ball Clay Industry'. After lunch, Dr. Avril Henry, lecturer in English at the University of Exeter, gave an illustrated talk on 'Medieval Iconography in the West Country'.

The Spring Conference, with an attendance despite rain of over one hundred members and friends, was held in the Village Hall, Culmstock. The morning was devoted to a talk on the Culm Valley by Robin Stanes and guided visits to sites of interest including Hemyock Castle and Coldharbour Mill. After lunch, Robert Silvester, Field Officer for the Devon Committee for Rescue Archaeology, spoke about 'Recent Excavations in Devon'.

DOORWAY TO DEVON published by Devon County Council. 1977, 120 pp. £1.00.

As a librarian I am frequently asked to recommend a brief but comprehensive book which will serve as an introduction to the life and background of the county. There are, of course, many books about Devon, but most of them do not meet the enquirer's needs; usually they concentrate on one aspect of the subject to the exclusion of most others. To find a book which shows what a varied wealth of interest the county has to offer is extremely difficult.

It was with growing admiration, therefore, that I read "Doorway to Devon". Here was a book brief enough to tempt an impatient reader, cheap enough for easy purchase, well illustrated with clear photographs; which gave a reasonably thorough survey of the geography of the county and the life of its people.

A lucid explanation of Devon's physiography led naturally to a description of its industries past and present. Some pages on the national Parks were followed by an exposition of the history of the county from Saxon times to the end of the 18th century. A section on archaeological and artistic tradition showed how our multi-racial background had influenced the artistic development of the area. A description of Devon's greater buildings was balanced by some pages about the homes of the common folk. Finally, those repositories of the past, the museums, were described in some detail. Appendices, providing tabular synopses of the preceding sections, followed.

I shall have no hesitation in recommending "Doorway to Devon" to any reader whether he be a visitor anxious to gain a picture of the county as a whole, or a resident wishing to increase his local knowledge.

The seven contributors are to be congratulated.

Grace Griffiths

OLD TIVERTON AND MID-DEVON IN PHOTOGRAPHS selected by W.P. Authers and C.N. Ponsford. £1.45 (+ 30p postage) from booksellers or from W.P. Authers, Tiverton Museum.

This delightful collection will give much pleasure to many people. Most of the prints are from the beginning of this century, starting with an eye-catching front-cover showing an enormous boiler on its way from Tiverton station to Heathcoat's Factory and an end-cover picture of High Street, Crediton.

The comparative peace of this period is very evident throughout the book — a beautiful scene of horses ploughing at Chevithorne, Alderman Pinkstone, still remembered by many citizens, taken with his gorgeous 'Penny Farthing' bicycle, local village carriers at Cadbury and Witheridge and the grand horsebus outside the Palmerston Hotel, Tiverton (now sadly demolished).

There are several excellent pictures of the rural district: Bunnycross Forge at Morbath, Middles shop, Cullompton, Sampford Peverell Smithy and the bridge and forge at Newton St. Cyres. Railway enthusiasts will love the pictures of the old Exe Valley and Tiverton Junction and Hemyock Branch lines. Those who travelled daily on them for years will again feel sad that the 'Bumpers' are no longer operational.

The 'Fire at Heathcoat's' brings back memories of a night at the Tivoli Cinema and wondering why the programme had been stopped to ask all employees of the firm to report immediately to the main gate. I remember walking across Fore Street, trying to avoid the masses of pieces of burning net flying everywhere and the horror of seeing the blazing building from Exe Bridge.

What fun was to be had on Water-Bailing days and lucky were the few who managed a good walk without being ducked fully clothed in the water. Altogether an excellent selection. I thoroughly recommend the book and look forward with anticipation to Part 2.

Grace Leisser

CORRECTION

The Devon Cloth Industry in the Eighteenth Century, 1726-1770, edited by Stanley D. Chapman (reviewed in No. 17, pp. 28-29), is available to non-members from the Assistant Secretary, Devon and Cornwall Record Society, 7 The Close, Exeter, at £3.

THE FOLKLORE OF DEVON by Ralph Whitlock. Illustrations by Gay John Galsworthy, and map. B.T. Batsford. 214 pp. £3.95.

In reviewing a book on local folklore one is bound to ask first who is best qualified for the task? — one who has already written a most excellent book on his own area — or one who has worked for years in the place under discussion? Ideally such a book should somehow combine good writing, an objective viewpoint, and an intimate knowledge of the locality.

Mr. Whitlock is a countryman, well-known for his books and his broadcasts, and his book (in this series) on Wiltshire was outstandingly good, with a wealth of first-hand knowledge... but, alas, this does not help him when he is dealing with Devon. He writes delightfully and gives us much good material, but he cannot bring to it the feel of a native. No amount of library research can make up for this, and even at that level he is not at his best for he relies too heavily on secondary sources, themselves not invariably accurate. He has barely begun to tap the immense body of material to be found in the Folklore Reports of the Devonshire Association, nor does he even appear to have consulted those who could have corrected some of his inevitable slips, such as "Ring-in-the-Mere" (instead of Mire) in East Devon or "Daddy's Hole" at Torquay. Dean Combe (p.58) is nowhere near Mary Tavy, nor did Bishop Lacy have his residence at the pub which now bears his name. He speaks of the "severity" of Lydford Law, which kept its accused in gaol indefinitely or hanged them the morning before the trial. Surely "severe" is hardly the right adjective? He repeats the old chestnut about the bloody nature of the Holne ram-roasting; this was refuted immediately, but Gomme and others cited it and fact has never caught up with fiction, as so often happens. The legend of Brutus the Trojan receives scant coverage: a pity since it was once an accepted part of British history.

The Editor of the series (her name is misspelt on p.12) in her Foreword suggests that Devon's folklore derives from Celtic, Saxon and Danish origins: apart from two or three place-names it would be hard to find proof of any Danish influence. She devotes much space to the doings of the crazy demagogue Tom Courtenay who is barely a subject of interest to folklorists.

However it is only fair to say this is a most readable book, as one would expect from this author. The Motif Index is in small type so does not waste as much space as it so often does in the series. But Devon is a huge county, and its folklore is a vast subject; there has never been a comprehensive book on it, and it looks as though we still await it.

Theo Brown

MEDIEVAL WOODWORK IN EXETER CATHEDRAL by Marion Glasscoe and Michael Swanton. Dean & Chapter of Exeter Cathedral 1978, 35 pp. 60p. ISBN 0 9503320 1 1.

This booklet might better have been entitled "The Bishop's Throne and the Misericordes" as it is mainly a painstaking description of these two outstanding examples of medieval wood carvings in the Cathedral. Whether it is intended for the average untutored visitor or the more enlightened student of ecclesiastical art it will certainly draw attention to the uniqueness of the throne as the finest and earliest one in the country, if not in Europe, and of the misericordes as being the only complete set of 13th century date in any cathedral.

The lucid account of the complex structure of the throne in tiers emphasises its architectural relationship with the sedilia of the same period (1312-1316), only differing in the thrusting out of the ogees to form the so-called "nodding arches", which produce an undulating effect with elaborate carvings of foliage and minute sculptured heads of animals and men of a quality of craftsmanship exceptional in woodwork. The principal carvers were two local men, Robert of Galpton and Walter of Membury, supervised by Master Thomas de Winton (stalls at Winchester had been completed by 1300) who stayed four weeks choosing timber from the bishop's woods. The writers suggest that he was the designer, but one wonders if he was not more likely to be a man skilled in stonework perhaps Master William de Schoverville, cementarius, of Salisbury, who was paid the large sum of 20s. in 1310 to visit the new work, i.e. the completed presbytery and choir and advise on the fittings, since much medieval wood carving was carried out by master masons.

The survival of the misericordes intact is remarkable but possibly due to their concealed position when the seats are down. They can be dated c.1230-70 from the style of carving, the type of costume and from special figures like the elephant, probably copied from a contemporary drawing of the animal presented to King Henry III by the French King in 1255. They were moved from the Norman transepts to the newly-built choir in 1309 by Master John of Glastonbury when new stalls of the Decorated style were made for them. Escaping destruction during the Civil War fresh stalls were made for them after 1660 and again in 1870.

The authors have grouped the illustrations of the misericordes to demonstrate themes. This results in the seats as numbered not being consecutive, so making examination of the carvings a tedious job. Rather strangely they make no reference to other publications dealing with the subject of misericordes, or indeed of ecclesiastical carvings in general, which cannot have escaped their notice.

R. Fortescue-Foulkes

ASHBURTON: THE DARTMOOR TOWN by Francis Pilkington. 1978. 136 pp. ISBN 0 950630500. £1.50.

My own background as I read this book is that I was born at 16 North Street, in 1914 and it was my home until 1938. My Grandfather, William Henry Huddy, a grocer, moved to Ashburton and took over the premises from a Mrs. Jane Kingwell, shopkeeper, in March 1882, but they were rebuilt completely in the mid 1890s when he went to live in a private house, 77 East Street. My father was born in the old building in 1883 and on his marriage in 1909 went back to live over the grocer's shop in the new premises.

Over the years I have read C. Worthy's **Ashburton and its Neighbourhood**, 1875, W.S. Graf's **Ashburton Grammar School, 1314-1938** and various articles on different aspects of the town's history, in particular those which have appeared in the **Transactions** of the Devonshire Association. But one has always had to search for information in likely places. This is the first comprehensive history of Ashburton ever to be published and as such I feel it is to be commended very highly. The subject matter ranges from prehistoric times to the Local Government Reorganisation of 1974 with a look to the future in the very worthy suggestion that there might be the founding of a twentieth century Guild of St. Lawrence which would raise money for the restoration of the Chapel.

The book is attractively produced with specially drawn illustrations by Michael Huggins. The writer has recorded for each chapter the many works and articles which have been consulted: a useful bibliography, in miniature, for those who wish to read further. The book also has an adequate index.

In the event of a re-issue, I would mention a few points where amendments might be considered. On page 84 the author says of John Ireland: "The most endearing thread in his private life was his life-long friendship with William Gifford, **five years his junior**". But, as stated correctly in this chapter on "Honoured Citizens", William Gifford was born in 1756 whereas Ireland himself was not born until 1762. On page 51 it is stated: "We have evidence that the Baptist Chapel in Heavy Head Lane (now Woodland Road) was converted into a gymnasium (for the Elementary School), probably in 1912. W.S. Graf in his **Ashburton Grammar School** states, page 23, after speaking of the building of three classrooms in 1911: "In addition the old Baptist Chapel in Woodland Road was acquired and converted into a gymnasium and domestic science room a little later". Access to the two departments in the building has always been from the grounds of the Grammar School. On page 51 speaking of Roman Catholics in Ashburton it is stated: "A **barn** on the right-hand side going up Roborough Lane was used as a temporary chapel and in 1911 the Mass was restored." The location is correctly stated but the room used was the upstairs room of a cottage belonging to 79 East Street (then called "Orley House" but now the "Ashburton Hotel") which was owned by a Roman Catholic family. Next to this cottage was a similar cottage belonging to 77 East Street, the property of my grandfather. Both 77 and 79 East Street, in common with certain other houses on this side of the street have access to Roborough Lane at

the end of their gardens.

The reading of this history should give great pleasure to all who know the town and district. For Ashburton may it be true that its past is but a prologue to its future.

C. Huddy

SYLLOGE OF COINS OF THE BRITISH ISLES, Vol. 24, ANCIENT BRITISH, ANGLO-SAXON AND NORMAN COINS IN WEST COUNTRY MUSEUMS by A.J.H. Gunstone. O.U.P., for the British Academy, 1977. pp.xxxvi + 35 plates + indices. £10.50. ISBN 0 197259723.

The S.C.B.I., a series which began in 1968, seeks to illustrate and document as fully as possible early British coins in the major collections and some minor collections, both in Britain and abroad. Volumes are not totally consistent in the periods they cover, but this latest includes the three with which the Sylloge as a whole is most concerned.

Antony Gunstone, himself a West Country man, has put together an illustrated documentation of coins of the relevant periods in twenty-nine museums in the south-west of England, including four in Devon. It is to be regretted that, presumably due to the then disorganised state of the collection, a small group of coins in the museum of the Torquay Natural History Society has been overlooked. This consists of six Saxon stycas and a silver penny of Stephen (since described in **Trans. Torquay N.H.S.**, V.17, pt. 3, 1978, pp.10-11 and **Num. Circ.**, v.86, 1978, p.364). A further omission is the Exeter penny of Aethelred II, currently on display in the Cathedral Library, Exeter. The author is nonetheless to be congratulated upon the inclusion of over one thousand coins in what must have been much the most difficult of all the volumes so far produced because of the widespread distribution of material. In arrangement this volume is less tidy than most, as the author himself admits, because of the need to incorporate at the last minute the Pitt-Rivers coins acquired by Salisbury Museum.

Despite these minor limitations this work provides a most useful source of reference for what would otherwise be a largely inaccessible body of material.

N. Shiel

TITHES AND THE TITHE COMMUTATION ACT, 1836 by Eric J. Evans. Bedford Square Press. 1978. 40 pp. £1.50. ISBN 0 7199 0935 X.

This booklet is one of a series being produced by the Standing Conference for Local History about national statutes and the local community. Following the pattern of the series, it describes the system of tithe collection before 1836, considers the passage of that complex statute, the Act of 1836, and discusses the Act in practice, which resulted in tithes being converted into rent charge payments. Mr. Evans, who is the author of **The Contentious Tithe** (Routledge, 1976), argues that modern specialist agricultural studies play down the importance of the Act which, he suggests, settled a major irritant in rural society and enabled agricultural investment to be planned on a more rational basis. The pamphlet concludes with a discussion of the source material which resulted from the Act, which is now available for the local historian. And Mr. Evans illustrates the usefulness of this material — while drawing attention to its limitations — by reference to the Birmingham team who began their parish histories by compiling four separate maps from the tithe maps and awards: maps of landownership, of land occupation, of land utilisation (arable, meadow or pasture) and of field names. Local historians generally could well take notice of the statement by Mr. Skipp, the leader of the Birmingham group, that 'he would hesitate to tackle local research without the tithe award'.

DEVON'S TRADITIONAL BUILDINGS. Devon County Council, 1978. vi + 82 pp. £1.50. ISBN 0 86114 059 1.

To follow **Devon Town Trails**, **Devon Wetlands** and **Doorway to Devon**, this is the fourth publication in the County Council's series 'An Open Door to Devon'. The volume consists of a series of chapters by different hands with an introduction by Professor W.G. Hoskins. Charles Hulland contributes brief notes on building materials in Devon while Peter Child presents an excellent and well-illustrated survey of the ways in which farmhouses have changed over time. Kay Coutin, whose removal from the county is a loss to local history particularly in the South Hams, writes about farm buildings. She distinguishes between poundhouses which she says were simple rectangular houses where cider was made and roundhouses which contained horse engines. The latter, she seems to imply, had semi-circular ends yet the diagram she gives on p.24 of a typical Devon farm layout shows both buildings with an apsidal end. Many of Michael Laithwaite's examples of town houses built before 1700 unfortunately no longer exist but Jonathan Lomas is luckier with his town houses of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Roger Thorne describes the rise and fall of the chapel, of which there were about 1,000 in Devon. Belying the title of the volume, David Richardson provides a perceptive survey of modern buildings in the county which might have spurred Frank Booker to extend his coverage

of the buildings of industry to include chimneys, cooling towers and gasholders. A brief note by Ronald Wilson discusses some examples of decorated screens and murals in east Devon. The pamphlet is brought to a close by a survey by Peter Beacham of the problems of conserving the heritage of traditional buildings in Devon. The enterprise of the County Council in sponsoring this publication is welcome; if only it could have been presented more elegantly. The text is rather dense on the page with too long a line to be read with comfort, there is no list of illustrations, some of the illustrations themselves are unidentified and the bibliography is patchy with no sections for some chapters. Within a small compass this collection of essays provides at a reasonable price a fair if uneven survey of its subject.

THE REGENCY IN DEVON. Exeter Museum Publication No. 94, 1978, 46 pp. No price stated.

This pamphlet was produced to accompany the exhibition of the same name at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in the Autumn of 1978. Running to 46 pages altogether, its author says it 'is intended to provide a comprehensive picture of life in Devon over this period as illustrated by contemporary pictorial records and written accounts'. With brief sections on such subjects as the land, agriculture, canals, roads, mining and quarrying, fishing, shipbuilding, industry, commerce, towns, resorts, shops and traders, law and order, public health, religion, politics, amusements, and the wars, this pamphlet falls far short of its stated objectives. Some of the generalisations are of a daring if somewhat unhistorical audacity. The cover illustration, dated 1832, is rather unexpectedly of the first paddle steamer to go up the Exe whereas the title 'Regency in Devon' should refer to the period 1811-1820. Only 15 out of the total of 44 contemporary quotations and illustrations are in fact concerned with the Regency period. In layout, too, the pamphlet is somewhat unprofessional. While some of the illustrations are reasonably produced, others, and notably the reproductions of Cary's 1807 map of Devon, are extremely poorly printed. A pleasant amateur publication, readers will note its presumption. Future generations will regret that, however démodé the idea may be amongst young museum curators, this splendid exhibition which brought together material from private collections to join that of the Royal Albert Memorial Museum itself was not more suitably commemorated. An annotated list of the exhibits with some illustrations and an introduction justifying the choice of period would have been much more appropriate.

Walter Minchinton

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Standing Conference for Local History

Information for local historians:

1. Directory of national organisations. 1978. 40p
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ISBN 0 85989 094 9

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Paperback, A4, approximately 130 pages.

ISBN 0 85989 044 9

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