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April 1980

# The Devon Historian 20



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## THE STANDING CONFERENCE FOR DEVON HISTORY: THE FIRST TEN YEARS

Robin Stanes

The Standing Conference for Devon History arose from a need to serve the interests of local historians in Devon. There has always been great interest in local history in Devon as the columns of the **Transactions of the Devonshire Association** and the **Devon and Cornwall Notes and Queries** indicate. There was, however, no one body whose purpose was to unite local historians from all over the county, such as existed in many other counties. Partly because of its size, Devon had a number of local History Societies, but no occasion or opportunity for them to meet together. The Parochial History Section of the Devonshire Association functioned to some extent as a County Local History Society, but it met on Mondays in Exeter in the afternoon and clearly could not cope with the interests of the many local historians who had jobs or could not travel to Exeter. The Standing Conference for Local History, our parent body, felt that there was room for a new, rather more all-embracing organisation. The Devonshire Association and the Extra-Mural Department of the University were approached, but neither wished to make any moves towards setting up such a body. In December 1969 a meeting was held at County Hall, called together by the Community Council for Devon, itself allied, through the National Council of Social Service, to the Standing Conference for Local History. About sixty people attended that meeting from all over the County. The main speaker was Kenneth Hudson. At that meeting it was agreed that a working party should decide on the form, function and title of the new organisation. This met under the Chairmanship of Professor Joyce Youings. The working party reported back to another meeting held at the University in May 1970 and there it was agreed that the present organisation should come, formally, into existence.

That is how this organisation began. Various things were agreed early on as to what the SCDH should do. It was agreed that there should be regular meetings in different parts of the county and that there should be an AGM in Exeter. We have met — for purposes of record and in no particular order — at the following places: Plymouth, Tavistock, Modbury, Kingsbridge, Totnes, Newton Abbot, Torquay, Ashburton, Honiton, Culmstock, Tiverton, Crediton, South Molton, Ilfracombe, Barnstaple, Bideford, Holsworthy, Okehampton and Torrington. The County has been fairly well covered. It does not look as if it will be necessary to repeat a location for some time yet. These local meetings have generally been well attended. Few occasions have seen fewer than 50 people, and some have had as many as 120. This, despite a February/March date for the spring meeting. The meetings always attract a number of local people interested in the history of their town or village and, as well, regularly and sometimes from a long distance away, people from all over the County. Quite a number never miss a meeting. It seems that the interests of local historians are well served in this respect. The pattern of

meetings is that the morning is normally devoted to a talk and visits about the locality and the afternoon to a talk by a visiting speaker on a more general topic. It is worth noting that quite a number of farmers attend our meetings.

The SCDH is governed by a Council with a Chairman and Officers. Our Chairman for the whole period of the ten years has been Professor W.E. Minchinton. It is, to a great extent, due to his energy and enthusiasm that the SCDH has functioned so well. It is largely through his doing, for instance, that we have been addressed by so many distinguished historians. It would be invidious to name names, except that we have listened with interest to the three successive Professors of Local History at the University of Leicester, W.G. Hoskins, M.P.R. Finberg and A.L. Everett. The Council meets, generally in some haste, after the conferences and the actual organisation of the meetings is mostly left to local people, who fill this role admirably. Without them life would be much more difficult.

We have had two Secretaries, Roger Sellman and John Pike, both of them busy men who managed to fit this quite arduous job in with everything else they do. We have, likewise, had two Treasurers, Lyndon Taverner and John Roberts. The latter seldom fails to attend a meeting, though he has to travel from Leicester to do so. The **Devon Historian** has been edited by the writer and by Sheila Stirling. The University of Exeter has given us considerable support. Professor Joyce Youings chaired the working party that brought this organisation into existence and was then our Vice Chairman for a number of years. A number of lecturers at the University have written for the **Devon Historian** or have spoken to our conferences.

We have had three Presidents, all Devonians. Professor W.G. Hoskins, the 'doyen' of local historians in this country was our first. C.A. Raleigh Radford, the distinguished archaeologist our second, and Bill Best Harris, known to many in Devon and in Plymouth in particular, our third.

Our membership stands at 352. Not as many as we would like but a workable number. There are in addition 46 institutional members and the **Devon Historian** is sent overseas to members in the United States (including New York Public Library), Australia (including the National Library, Canberra), New Zealand and Newfoundland.

This is the 20th number of the **Devon Historian**. A recent survey of County Local History magazines by the Editor of the **Local Historian** included the **Devon Historian** amongst the best of them. The Editorial in No. 16 stated the opinions of the writer when he ceased to be Editor, as to how well the magazine was fulfilling its original function. Despite the rather hand-to-mouth nature of contributions, which probably still persists, there seems to be room for it and the **Devon and Cornwall Notes and Queries** and the **Transactions of the Devonshire Association**. It is bought by a number of learned institutions and the County Library Services buy 65 copies.

The Standing Conference has certainly drawn local historians in the County together and provided them with a forum and a means of publication. The **Devon Historian** keeps its readers in touch with what is going on in local

history in the County and elsewhere. It is less clear that the tasks set by Professor Hoskins and our Chairman in No. 1 of the *Devon Historian* have gone ahead quite as enthusiastically as they might. The County biography has not got off the ground nor has the survey of Devon surnames. There is, however, a good index to Devon newspapers and the listing of watermills and tombstones has gone ahead with considerable success. Milestones have been well surveyed by Mr. Masson Phillips and the County Council Surveyors Department, but there is no Directory of Devon Directories and no attempt has been made to list family portraits. Other tasks, such as the questionnaire sent out by N.W. Alcock on vernacular houses, did not meet with much response. There is still a lot of work to be done by readers of this journal if they are so minded. Nevertheless, in this writer's view, this has been a successful ten years and inflation and similar ills do not seem to have dimmed the enthusiasm of local historians, perhaps the reverse. May the next 10 years be equally good.

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### CORRESPONDENCE

Mrs. W.M. Molland, formerly Librarian, St. Luke's College, of 4 Greenhill Cottages, Bridford, nr. Exeter, writes to ask if readers can let her know other examples in Devon churches of the stuffed owl in Doddiscombsleigh Church on top of the belfry screen, 'presumably intended to keep bats from the belfry'.

## CHARLES BRADLAUGH AND THE EXETER ROUGHS

Jeffrey Porter

When Charles Bradlaugh visited Exeter in October 1880 all the precedents pointed to a fine display of public feeling. Bradlaugh, well known as an atheist, republican and neo-Malthusian was at the start of his long battle to sit in the Commons as Liberal M.P. for Northampton, having been elected in 1880 after twelve years of campaigning. The battle was to take six years and four elections.

Charles Bradlaugh wished to affirm rather than swear the oath of allegiance, to the great outrage of a portion of the Tory opposition. However, it seems likely that initially Sir Stafford Northcote, then Leader of the Tories in the Commons, had no strong feelings on the question of affirmation. On May 3rd, 1880, he noted in his diary, "Took the seat. Question as to Bradlaugh's right to make an affirmation instead of an oath to be referred to a committee. It seems strange to request an oath from a Christian, and to dispense with it from an atheist. Would it not be better to do away with the member's oath altogether, and make the affirmation general?"

Such a relaxed approach infuriated those Tories who wished to use the question to make party capital against Gladstone and the Liberals. On the Tory side Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, Sir Hardinge Giffard and Charles Newdigate Newdigate characterised the affirmation as "a declaration of war against Christianity" and Lord Randolph Churchill was in 1883 to describe atheists as "for the most part they were the residuum, the rabble, the scum of the population". All this placed Gladstone in a dilemma. He wrote to the Speaker on May 24th, 1880, "I had no idea before the discussion on Friday to what extent there would be a disposition in the House to make capital out of Bradlaugh's loathsome and revolting opinions by a deviation from judicial impartiality."

The principal study of Bradlaugh's fight to sit in the Commons is by Walter L. Arnstein and it is his judgement that "Bradlaugh became not only the most notorious Member of Parliament in the spring of 1880 but also the major topic of conversation — in the streets and in the homes, in private clubs and in public houses [...] The more the matter was discussed the greater was the protest. The case broke upon a reading public already accustomed to the threat of unbelief. [...] For most people atheism connoted not mere unbelief but immorality as well".

Charles Bradlaugh had already experienced opposition in Devon two decades previously. In December 1860 he had planned to give a week of lectures in Plymouth. Just as he was about to start one of these lectures in Devonport Park the superintendent of police announced that the Town Council had instructed him to prevent the park, a place of recreation, being used as a centre for propaganda. Despite the fact that Bradlaugh pointed out that the park was used by advocates of temperance the police were insistent and so on that occasion Bradlaugh, always careful to respect the legal forms, withdrew.

In March 1861 he returned to Devonport with plans for a two week campaign. The Plymouth and Devonport Secular Society had for the first day hired a private field next to Devonport Park but the police arrived right at the beginning of his lecture. He was ordered to stop by Superintendent Edwards. Bradlaugh refused on the grounds that he was the lawful tenant of the field. As he began to speak: "Friends, I am about to address you on the Bible..." six policemen fell upon him, one half choking him. At the police station he was charged with inciting a breach of the peace and refused bail. Next morning he was charged with assault upon Edwards. There was so much excitement and so many wanting to attend the hearing that the case was transferred to the large hall at the Guildhall. Many local Nonconformists came forward to give evidence in Bradlaugh's favour, including the Rev. W. Sharman, a Unitarian. In consequence the case was dismissed.

Bradlaugh was to lecture again, this time on Sunday, and on that occasion on setting out for Devonport Park he was accompanied by a considerable crowd, and followed by a large police contingent, representatives of the Watch Committee and the YMCA. The mayor was reported as ready to read the Riot Act and troops held in reserve nearby. However, all were outmanoeuvred by Bradlaugh and his supporters. When he reached Devonport Park Lodge he turned down to Stonehouse Creek, and was rowed out to a large boat moored a few feet from the shore — outside the jurisdiction of the Devonport police. However, an act of God shortened the lecture, the rain poured down.

Later Superintendent Edwards was sued by Bradlaugh for assault and wrongful imprisonment and the case came before the Devon Assize at Exeter. Bradlaugh won his case but his religious beliefs were so unpopular that he was only awarded one farthing damages and was refused costs<sup>1</sup>.

Since his earlier appearance in Devon Bradlaugh had done still more to upset the susceptibilities of the orthodox Conservative. In 1877 he, in company with Mrs. Annie Besant, was placed on trial for publishing a forty year old birth control pamphlet, **The Fruits of Philosophy** by Charles Knowlton which was described in the charge as "a certain indecent, lewd, filthy, bawdy, and obscene book". Neither Bradlaugh nor Mrs. Besant regarded Knowlton's book as the best of its kind but both regarded the dissemination of birth control literature as a question of free speech. The trial gave future opponents of Bradlaugh opportunity for scurrility; and Mrs. Besant lost the custody of her daughter<sup>2</sup>.

Before their trial Knowlton's indifferent pamphlet had sold about a hundred copies a year; afterwards some 130,000 were sold.

Opinion in Devon was likely to be equally hostile to the public discussion of family limitation, or neo-Malthusianism as it was discreetly called by its adherents. In July 1868 Lord Amberley had joined Charles Bradlaugh and Charles Drysdale in a meeting on 'Over population and public health' and in consequence was much attacked by the medical press as an "ambitious lordling" who supported "nastiness". In August of that year he was accepted as Liberal candidate for South Devon in opposition to two Conservatives. His association with Bradlaugh and Drysdale was a gift to his Tory opponents.

The **Exeter and Plymouth Gazette** accused him of supporting "unnatural crimes" and the Tories said he advocated infanticide. Amberley lost the election<sup>4</sup>.

Bradlaugh thrived on controversy but he preferred reason to unthinking abuse and frequently tired of the latter. Sir Stafford Northcote noted in his diary on July 28th, 1880, "On going down to the House today, I received a letter from Bradlaugh, complaining of the scurrilous language used about him at several contested elections. [...] I must say I think he has grounds for his complaint."

This was the range of hostile opinion facing Charles Bradlaugh in 1880. He did, however, have his supporters; his fellow secularists and those Liberals who, while they might dislike his theological opinions, passionately believed in the right of free speech and the right of the electorate to decide who should represent them — the very issues which had been personified in John Wilkes and his fight to represent the electors of Middlesex. Early in 1880 there had been formed the Exeter Working Men's Radical Association as part of the Liberal endeavour to mobilise working class support. That organisation, at a meeting held in Rex's Temperance Hotel, had heard speeches from three of its prominent members, A. Stradling, a keen temperance worker, E.C. Perry and J. Sandford in favour of the introduction of an Affirmation Bill and resolved in its favour<sup>5</sup>. Subsequently the Association invited Bradlaugh to visit Exeter. He agreed to lecture on the Land Laws on October 20th, 1880.

Being well aware of the customary violence of the Tory crowd in Exeter the officers of the Radical Association were uneasy about their ability to control the event. As the unsympathetic **Trewman's Exeter Flying Post** reported<sup>6</sup>, "The greatest possible publicity was given to the engagement but the notice met with so unfavourable a reception that the committee, fearing a disturbance, made application to the authorities to maintain order." Stradling, Perry and W. Venton went to see the Chief Constable, Captain Bent, to seek his aid. He referred them to the mayor as chief magistrate. Mr. Ellis was, however, out of town and so the deputy mayor, H.D. Thomas, dealt with the matter. The three Radical Association representatives advised him of their fears and left with the understanding that they might rely upon the assistance of the police if the need arose.

However, the deputy mayor subsequently addressed the following letter to Charles Bradlaugh who was staying at the Queens Hotel having arrived from Redruth early in the afternoon.

"20 October 1880

Sir, An information has been sworn before me today by three men, namely, A. Stradling, W. Venton, and E.C. Perry, describing themselves as the chairman and members of the committee appointed to arrange for Mr. Bradlaugh's lecture tonight, that they are apprehensive of a serious disturbance at the said meeting, and requesting the aid of the police. This is a very serious matter, and throws an immense responsibility upon the persons engaged in organising or taking part in such a meeting, and under these circumstances I feel it my duty as

representing for the time the chief magistrate of this city, to request and I do hereby request you to desist from holding or taking part in such a proposed meeting. And I beg that you will take notice that if, noting such sworn information and my request to you thereupon made, you persist in holding such a meeting, the responsibility for all consequence must rest upon you, and you will distinctly be held liable for the results of any such apprehended disturbance.

H.D. Thomas, J.P., Deputy Mayor.”

The letter was addressed to 'C. Bradlaugh' without the designation M.P. and delivered to him at 7 o'clock in the evening as he was preparing to attend the meeting. Bradlaugh was deeply offended; not by the decision of the deputy mayor, but, to their surprise, at the action of the organising committee. By messenger he replied, "Sir, I am in receipt of your letter, the contents of which much surprise me, as the information and request for police have been sworn and made entirely without my knowledge. I have never yet on any occasion applied for police aid during my life, and am much disgusted that any should have done so for the meeting to be addressed by me. I am so ashamed of the conduct of Messrs. Stradling, Venton and E.C. Perry that I shall most certainly not take part in the meeting."

In vain did the committee try and change his mind, he told Stradling that at 16 stones' weight he needed no police protection, that Stradling was "his greatest enemy" and that he would never visit Exeter again. The **Western Times** believed that he was far too hard on the committee, they had experience of previous disturbances and in any case they paid the police rate and had a right to protection. The unfortunate Stradling was left with the unenviable task of going to the Victoria Hall to explain the position. At the meeting were "a number of well known roughs at the lower end of the hall". As the **Western Times** explained, "When Mr. Bradlaugh's intended visit was announced Rowdyism declared that he should not have a meeting. It was known to be organising its forces. It had provided a number of white 'slops' or canvas blouses for its men at the last contest, with 'Mills and Northcote' painted on them. These slops were washed for Wednesday's work, but the inscription was not quite obliterated on all of them"; and "More than one of the roughs in the hall and among the crowd in the street wore the white slops which still bore upon them the blue-lettered words 'Mills and Northcote'."

Stradling told the audience that whilst he had no sympathy with Bradlaugh's theological views he had wanted to hear him on an important social question. However, that was not to be and ticket holders would get their money back. (Although it seems probable that many tickets had been forged.) Not all the audience agreed with Bradlaugh's decision not to speak. The Rev. T.H. Eastlake said that he had travelled from Moretonhampstead and that he and others around him were willing to act as special constables if Bradlaugh would speak. Mr. J. Wilson declared that the citizens had a right to demand the services of the police, that "It was 'a Tory job' from beginning to end". This statement was met by much cheering.

The meeting broke up in disorder. A noisy and tumultuous crowd gathered outside the Queens Hotel from 8-10 p.m. waiting for Charles Bradlaugh to leave for St. David's station. "On leaving the hotel to catch the up mail Mr. Bradlaugh made his way with some difficulty through crowds of cheering admirers and hooting opponents as far as the Museum, where he jumped into a cab that was waiting with his luggage. The movement was not executed without some exercise of force, and the cabman had to whip his horse to get clear of the mob which pressed closely around the vehicle and showed some inclination to upset it." So reported the **Flying Post** which continued, "At the station Mr. Bradlaugh was sped on his way with the parting cheers of a small knot of admirers who had assembled on the platform." In contrast the **Western Times** said that at St. David's "a large number of people were in attendance, and the train moved off amid the cheers of his admirers and the groans of his opponents."

It had indeed been a notable occasion and the **Western Times** could not fail to draw attention to the failure of the City authorities to provide protection to a speaker who wished to lecture on the 'Land Laws', a topic which while controversial was neither treasonable nor seditious. Further, Bradlaugh was always careful to distinguish clearly his secularism from general questions of Liberal policy and would not have breached the distinction in his lecture. The Liberal newspaper was prompted to review the whole question of free speech and law and order in Exeter in a forthright leader:

"The visit of Mr. Bradlaugh, M.P. has given us another proof of the character of our Junta Government. When any question is brought before the City which happens to be unpleasant to the ruling authorities it seems to be an understanding that the City is given up to mob rule, and Authority is to shirk its duty by throwing on the Party who comes to present new ideas the responsibility of disturbing the tender lambs of Toryism who want no change and will stand no nonsense. The meeting of the excellent people who want to liberate other people's religion, as they have liberated their own, from State patronage and control was broken up by what we may call the swell mob of young Exeter — the sons and artiled pupils of professional gentlemen and the rising hopes of many a Tory circle taking a lead in that row and doing the work of breaking up that meeting unchecked by the police. When Bishop Temple, taking Sir Wilfrid Lawson with him to the Victoria Hall, wanted to tell the working people that abstinence from alcoholic drinks was excellent practice for health and economy, his lordship's meeting was broken up with a tremendous row, [...] Exeter rowdyism having pelted them with bags of flour, [...] none of the leaders were brought to book for this sacriligious outrage on the person of the Lord's Anointed." Liberals could complain that "Mr. Deputy says, in effect, that Exeter is a City in which Authority will not sanction freedom of speech on such a subject as the Land Laws of England."

An issue later the **Western Times** continued its attack, "The police arrangements of the City have, under Tory Rule, assumed something of an autocratic guidance and are devoted to the interests of those superior people who call themselves the Greater Conservative Party. [...] The Deputy Mayor

[...] did last week lay down the doctrine that the Magistracy of Exeter choose when the police is to be used [...] for the maintenance of public order, and they choose when the police is to be withheld to scare timid people from proceeding to expound principles which are displeasing to the parties holding supreme power in Exeter."<sup>8</sup>

After his visit to Exeter Bradlaugh's fight to enter the Commons continued to worry prominent Devonians. Later that year Sir Stafford Northcote complained to the annual meeting of the Exeter Auxiliaries of the SPG and SPCK, "We cannot but feel we have to contend against [...] the spirit of infidelity and against the spirit of Rationalism, which are largely growing."<sup>9</sup> In 1882 Sir Thomas Dyke Acland complained to Gladstone that the Bradlaugh issue was being used effectively against his son in East Cornwall and although he held the seat it was by a reduced percentage of the vote. When Rome entered the issue, in the shape of Cardinal Manning, Sir Massey Lopes welcomed the attack upon the atheists.<sup>10</sup>

#### Notes

1. Walter L. Arnstein, *The Bradlaugh case*, Oxford, 1965.  
Andrew Lange, *Life, letters and diaries of Sir Stafford Northcote first Earl of Iddesteigh*, Edinburgh, 1891.
2. David Tribe, *President Charles Bradlaugh MP*, London, 1971.
3. J.A. and O. Banks, *Feminism and family planning in Victorian England*, Liverpool, 1965.
4. J.A. Banks, *Prosperity and parenthood*, London, 1954.
5. *Devon Weekly Times*, 2 July 1880.
6. *Trewmans Weekly Flying Post*, 27 October 1880 and *Western Times*, 22 October 1880.
7. *Western Times*, 22 October 1880. For the activities of the Exeter rowdies on the previous occasions see Robert Newton, *Victorian Exeter*, Leicester, 1968.
8. *Western Times*, 26 October 1880.
9. *Western Times*, 3 November 1880.
10. *Champion of Liberty, Charles Bradlaugh*, London, 1933.

#### EPIDEMICS IN DEVON

Dr. Neville Oswald writes to point out that the epidemic which affected Bideford and Devon in 1643 was undoubtedly typhus and not plague as suggested in Greg Finch's article in *Devon Historian*, 19. (See Dr. Oswald's article in *T.D.A.*, v. 109, 1977). He also comments that the 'cholera' mentioned by Professor Pounds in his article on John Huxham (*Devon Historian*, 10) should not be confused with the Asiatic cholera of the nineteenth century. The severe epidemic in Plymouth in 1740 was in fact of typhus and initiated the most devastating outbreak of the disease ever to have struck Britain.

#### FIRE DISASTERS: THE SPECIAL CASE OF EAST DEVON

E.L. Jones

"It is a very singular circumstance, and worth remarking, that this [destruction by fire] has been the fate of more towns in the west, than any other part of the kingdom."

Richard Polwhele

The questions that arise from Polwhele's assertion are: was he right? if so, why were towns in the West Country particularly vulnerable to fires? and what impact did this have on the region? Taking Devon as the West Country for Polwhele's purposes, since he was writing about it and presumably had it most in mind — we come to a full stop before we have started. It is obvious that we cannot begin to answer the first question, whether or not fires were more numerous in Devon towns than elsewhere, without knowing how many fires occurred both here and elsewhere. There is a message here for the local historian which is so often unheeded that we ought to consider it before getting down to business: local historians are able to double the utility of their work for others and perhaps double the interest for themselves if only they will set their investigations in context. This means reading up-to-the-minute research on national history, or at any rate other people's local studies, in parallel with the more immediately exciting business of looking at local documents and doing fieldwork around home. The alternative is simply not being able to attempt some questions at all, for one may do the most detailed local studies and build up, say, the most comprehensive index of settlement fires in Devon — someone should — and still have no way of telling whether they were more numerous, or more severe, or declined over time at the same rate as elsewhere. Explicit comparison is a vital tool.

There is, as it happens, no national compendium of settlement fires with which to compare findings for Devon. My studies of fires in the four Wessex counties of Berkshire, Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire between 1650-1850 (Jones 1968), and of 'last major fires' in English market towns (Jones & Falkus 1979) do however offer some backcloth against which to view the list of fires that may be compiled from histories of Devon. It is (fortunately) beside the point that a Devon list derived from a few secondary sources is almost certain to be incomplete, since while the other studies were fairly thorough, the very first inspection of the evidence for Devon shows fires there to have been at least as numerous, causing heavier losses, and continuing later than in other counties. This is especially so for a group of half-a-dozen towns within ten or twelve miles of Exeter as the crow flies. At this point, Polwhele seems fully justified in his observation; ironically however Devon seems to stand out most from central southern England and probably elsewhere for its major fires in the nineteenth century, and Polwhele, writing between 1793-1806, cannot have known about them. There was apparently an underlying liability to fire that had not been cured and which is of some interest, quite apart from the significance of so

# WOFVLL NEWES,

*From the West-parts of England,*

## Being the lamentable Burning of the Towne of TEUERTON, IN DEUONSHIRE,

**Vpon the fift of August last, 1612,**

*Whereunto is annexed, the former burning of the aforesaid Towne,  
the third of Aprill, 1598.*



**L o n d o n :**

Printed by T. S. for Thomas Pauier, 1612.

Title-page of tract reproduced in Harding's *History of Tiverton* vol. 2 (1847).

many late and damaging disasters for the architecture, urban landscape and economic health of the county.

For the moment it is worth trying to assess the extent of Devon's individuality by comparing it with neighbouring Somerset (Table 1). The long tail of nineteenth century fires is at once apparent, and since Somerset followed the approximate pattern of the four Wessex counties the notion of a special

**Table 1**

Major settlement fires compared in Somerset and Devon, 1570-1900

DATE	SOMERSET	DEVON
1577	Chard	
1598		Tiverton
1604		Ottery St. Mary
1612		Tiverton
1623	Yeovil	
1625		Tiverton
1640	Yeovil	
1647	Bruton	
1658	Glastonbury	
1661	Ilminster	Tiverton
1672		Honiton
1676		Tiverton
1682		Cullompton
1698	Minehead	
1707	Wincanton	
1731	Wellington	Tiverton
1743		Crediton
1747	Wincanton	Tiverton
1754		Honiton
1765		Honiton
1766		Crediton
1767		Ottery St. Mary
1769		Crediton
1772		Crediton
1791	Minehead	
1792	Preston	
1798		Cullompton
1811	Merriott	
1815	Minehead	
1816		Moretonhampstead
1839		Cullompton
1845		Moretonhampstead
1866		Ottery St. Mary
1870		Broadclyst
1892		Moretonhampstead
1896		Ilfracombe

SOURCES: Britton and Brayley n.d.; Heath n.d.; Hoskins 1972 edition; Little 1953; Longhurst 1978; Polwhele 1977 edition; Willis Watson 1925; and individual village and town histories for both counties.



incidence of fire in Devon is reinforced. This may be refined by comparing Devon with the average for the four Wessex counties plus Somerset, remembering that the comparison is biased against the hypothesis that Devon was the fire county *par excellence* by the much greater thoroughness of the count for the other five counties, where many more village fires (destroying at least ten houses each) have been discovered from parish histories. If we set the average number of fires in the other counties each half century at one and work out the respective ratios of fires in Devon, we find the results set out in Table 2. Devon has a lower incidence of fire from 1650-1749, draws slightly ahead (or to put it another way, fails to share in the general reduction of fire damage) in the second half of the eighteenth century, and greatly and increasingly eclipses the average of the other counties during the nineteenth century. Devon does not seem to have experienced whatever improvements were responsible for the decrease of the scourge of fire elsewhere. We may conclude this short resume of the special problem of fire in Devon by drawing attention to the scale of the disasters we need to try to explain, as evidenced in the list of important losses given as Table 3.

**Table 2**

Ratio of settlement fires in Devon to the average of those in five other southern counties, 1650-1900, by half centuries.

PERIOD	FIVE COUNTIES	DEVON
1650-1699	1	0.4
1700-1749	1	0.4
1750-1799	1	1.1
1800-1849	1	3.0
1850-1899	1	16.0

SOURCES: As for table 1, plus Jones (1968).

**Table 3**

Some indicative losses by fire in Devon, 1570-1900

DATE	PLACE	LOSSES
1598	Tiverton	400 + houses, several chapels, 33 lives; value £150,000.
1612	Tiverton	600 houses; value £200,000.
1731	Tiverton	298 houses, other buildings; value £60,000.
1743	Crediton	460 + houses; value £40,000.
1765	Honiton	115 houses.
1766	Crediton	60 houses.
1816	Moretonhampstead	13 houses.
1839	Cullompton	264 houses.
1845	Moretonhampstead	50 houses.
1870	Broadclyst	62 houses.
1892	Moretonhampstead	17 houses.

SOURCES: As for table 1.

Why was fire such a problem in Devon? The county is scarcely the driest in England (windy days in dry summers constituted a flash point), nor is it especially urbanised, so that the incidence is not just a function of more towns than elsewhere potentially able to catch fire. There is no reason to think that before the eighteenth century it was more characterised than other counties by roof thatch, that Achilles' heel as regards fire. Later, however, it may possibly have retained an exceptional cover of urban thatch. If we approach the issue from the tail end, so to speak, and consider the lateness of major fires, it seems likely that Devon had to some extent fallen behind in the urban improvement detectable from the late seventeenth century elsewhere in England. This process included paving, lighting and widening streets and undertaking a range of other tasks likely to benefit the trade and amenities of market towns. The provision of piped water was one feature. Drake's Leet to supply Plymouth was a remarkable improvement of an urban water supply, but it was exceptionally early and may not have been copied in the East Devon towns.

Most important of all in reducing the incidence of fire was rebuilding in brick and tile, in the boxy 'Georgian' styles imitated nation-wide from pattern books reflecting the requirements of the London Building Acts of 1707 and 1709 — Acts for the better prevention of fire. There were for example no wooden exterior overhangs on such houses. Clearly houses of this new type were built in Devon, sometimes actually in the wake of fires, like those put in a 'handsome manner' after the 1769 fire at Crediton. But a few stretches of central streets capable of catching Sir Nikolaus Pevsner's eye, though they could act as firebreaks by virtue of their non-flammable materials (as at Dorchester), may have been insufficient. The manual engines of the day were too small to halt a good blaze (cf. Polwhele 1977 on the Crediton fire of 1743, p.328n.). Only non-flammable building materials, especially tile roofs, really brought the fire incidence down.

Some building in these fashionable materials and styles was opportunistic development in the aftermath of major fires. Much was simply 'prosperity' rebuilding; market towns in southern England were doing more trade, without growing much, in the eighteenth century and sharing out bigger profits which tended to go quickly into housing improvement, always an early desiderata of relatively poor societies becoming richer. But even towns rebuilt in the Georgian manner without the opportunity allowed by a big blaze may, on inspection, reveal that they were partly recreated during the late eighteenth century by gradual replacements of single houses from time to time burned down. At Bridport, Dorset, the Rev. Basil Short has shown me on the ground and in the rate books evidence of particular houses put up at known dates after fires, though the town never had a great conflagration.

In East Devon, where late fires concentrated, it is possible that the opportunities of repeated destructions (after his list for Tiverton, Polwhele (1977: p.328n.) wrote "&c. &c. &c.") could not be taken. The common run of worker housing was rushed up again, huddled and still thatched. The streets were seldom widened: the widest part of West Street, Crediton, where three

people were trapped and burnt to death in 1743 was only nineteen yards across. It was usual in the eighteenth century to pass local Acts of Parliament after major fires, legislating for tile roofs and other precautions such as the removal of dangerous trades using naked flames, and the stacks of hay and grain, from the main streets. This was done after the 1731 fire at Tiverton (Britton & Brayley n.d. p.284). But that was already Tiverton's third really massive disaster; it did not wholly solve the problem (perhaps enforcement was lax); and comparable Acts are not mentioned elsewhere in Devon.

The clothing towns of East Devon were not prospering in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Their textile industries might continue as long as the manufacturers could cover their variable costs and make some profit, but this does not guarantee that enough profit was made to cover fresh investment in, for example, adequate workers' housing. The long decline of Devon textiles represented an impoverishment that did not allow for the urban rebuilding and improvement which elsewhere was cutting the incidence and scale of fire. Hence Polwhele (1977 p.328) could write, "for fires, Crediton and Tiverton have a 'painful pre-eminence' over all the towns of the west". West Devon may or may not have shared fully in the eighteenth century prosperity of lowland England, but it escaped a high fire incidence because of stone building and slate roofs, enabling William Marshall to note in 1796 that the houses of all classes there were for that reason rather better than in England generally (Hoskins 1959 p.117).

As to the impact and significance of the fires, in one respect they compounded the problem. Some rebuilding funds came from charitable 'Briefs' (licences to collect alms), some, and increasingly, from private insurance, but some would have had to be borrowed and paid back with interest. Capital diverted to replace buildings destroyed *en masse*, household goods, and stocks of materials, could not be used to invest in industry or commerce. Where fires were so burdensome and industry so beset by outside competition, the economic impact was as or more serious than anywhere. Within Devon the clothing trade was said to have been spread by the dispersal on the magistrates' orders of many hundreds of workers to other towns after the 1612 fire at Tiverton, which, cutting into the recovery after the 1598 fire, destroyed the town's prosperity and its hopes. Cullompton was a gainer at that time (Little 1953 p.131; Polwhele 1977 p.284). The net effects cannot have been beneficial, for loss is loss.

The architectural consequences are clearer. Tiverton is said to boast only a single pre-eighteenth century house because of its fire record. Replacements after the 1731 fire may be seen in Fore Street and Phoenix Lane (Little 1953 p.125). Cullompton, according to Professor Hoskins, is "an undistinguished nineteenth century town, the product of frequent fires and rebuildings," and Honiton is much the same, while at Bovey Tracey, "the usual series of fires, so common in the cob-and-thatch country, has destroyed the old buildings, though away from the main street are one or two buildings in the vernacular style" (1972: pp.343, 380, 412). This latter remark points to a pattern

observable elsewhere in southern England, with the oldest surviving buildings peripheral to an eighteenth or nineteenth century core, fires of the past having so often levelled the town centres. We should see these patterns clearly in the towns of East Devon, which may indeed have been the part of provincial England worst afflicted by fire disasters.

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## THE CONSERVATION OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT: LEGISLATION AND GRANT PROCEDURE

Simon Timms

### 1. Introduction

The aim of these notes is to provide an informal guide to legislation and grant procedures for the conservation of the historic environment in Devon. For more detailed information the reader is referred to the following publications:-

<b>Annual Survey of Urban Conservation</b>	published by the Devon County Planning Department, 1979. Price £1.50.
<b>Historic Buildings and Conservation Areas — Policy and Procedure</b>	Department of the Environment Circular No. 23/77. Obtainable through H.M.S.O. bookshops. Price 75p.

It will be seen that grant aid is offered in a variety of ways and that three principal sources are involved — the Department of the Environment, Devon County Council (including the Dartmoor National Park Authority), and the District Councils. In the first instance, grant enquiries should always be made to the district council planning departments (addresses and telephone numbers listed on page 22).

### 2. Listed Buildings

*What are they?*

Lists of buildings of special architectural or historic interest are compiled by the Secretary of State (Department of the Environment) on the advice of the Historic Buildings Council. More than 10,000 buildings in Devon are listed at the present time, and there are many other buildings worthy of 'listing' as historic buildings but at present not included in the statutory lists. This is because many of the lists, particularly for the former Rural Districts, are out-of-date and in need of revision. Consequently, the fact that an historic building is not included on a statutory list does not necessarily mean that it is lacking in special interest. The current position is recognised by the local authorities which can consider grants for unlisted historic buildings.

At present the principles of selection are to list all buildings, which survive in anything like their original condition and were built before 1700, most buildings of 1700-1840 and some buildings of particular interest dating to the period 1840-1914. Listed buildings are graded according to quality. The vast majority are 'Grade II' (although some on the outdated lists are still shown as being 'Grade III'), whilst the small number of really outstanding properties are 'Grade II\*' or exceptionally

'Grade I', Lists may be inspected in planning departments and in some libraries.

*What effect does 'Listing' have?*

Anyone proposing to carry out alterations, development or demolition work which could affect the character of a listed building is required to obtain **listed building consent** or planning permission. This requirement covers not only external changes (e.g. window alterations or the replacement of a thatched or natural slate roof) but also internal alterations to the historic fabric (such as the removal of a staircase, fireplaces or other fittings such as panelling or decorated ceilings). In addition, approval is required for changes in the garden or grounds ("the curtilage") of a listed property (e.g. a new garage or the demolition of a boundary wall).

Proposals affecting listed buildings are determined by the local planning authority. Where demolition is involved or when an application has been submitted by a local authority in its own district, the application is notified to the Secretary of State for a final decision. The local planning authority must advertise applications and take into account any representations received.

Where there is a threat to the character of an historic building which is not listed but appears to be of the appropriate quality, the local planning authority may serve a **Building Preservation Notice**. This gives the property immediate protection as if it were a listed building and lasts for six months within which period the Secretary of State may indicate whether it is to be added to the statutory list.

*What Grant Aid is available?*

The Local Authorities (Historic Buildings) Act of 1962 enables local authorities to make grants or loans for the preservation of historic buildings. Details of the policy and funding are the responsibility of each authority with the result that there is some variation between different councils.

At present, The County Council gives priority to 'Town Schemes' (see below) and to historic buildings within the Dartmoor National Park. The District Councils all make funds available for the repair of historic buildings but the amount of grant varies (usually within the range of ten to twenty per cent of the total costs). It should be noted that grants are offered for repairs to the structure of the historic fabric only and not for maintenance work. Historic buildings may also, of course, be eligible for 'improvement grants' in the normal way.

The Department of the Environment (Historic Buildings Council) is also empowered to make grants for the repair of historic buildings, but in practice only exceptional properties can be considered by the Historic Buildings Council unless they are located in an 'Outstanding Conservation Area' or are included in a 'Town Scheme' (see below).

### 3. Conservation Areas

The Town and Country Planning Act of 1971 requires local planning authorities to designate "areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance". These Conservation Areas normally include all or part of the historic cores of towns and villages which contain groups of historic buildings, an intact historic street pattern, village greens or other such features. By the end of 1978, 175 Conservation Areas have been designated in Devon and revisions and additions are under consideration by the District Councils which are responsible for designation in consultation with the County Council

#### *What effect does a Conservation Area have?*

The designation of a Conservation Area draws attention to the special qualities of a particular village or town and allows for greater care to be exercised over the design of development, advertisements and other changes which might affect its overall character. In particular, *listed building consent* is required for the proposed demolition of any structure (whether listed or not) which is located within a Conservation Area and is more than 115 cubic metres in size. These applications are determined by the local planning authority or by the Secretary of State in the case of a proposal submitted by the local authority.

Proposals likely to affect the character of a Conservation Area are publicised locally and any representations are taken into consideration. The designation of a Conservation Area also controls the lopping or felling of trees, for which prior notification must be given to the local planning authority.

#### *What grant aid is available?*

The local authorities usually take into account the contribution of an historic building to a Conservation Area when considering applications for historic building repair grants (see above). In addition, the Town and Country Planning Act of 1971 requires a local authority to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas. To this end the County Council and the District Councils carry out enhancement schemes at focal points in Conservation Areas.

The County Council has also published a number of Conservation Studies and recent reports have covered the Conservation Areas at Tavistock, Sidmouth, Colyton, Winkleigh, Thorverton and South Molton.

### 4. Outstanding Conservation Areas and Town Schemes

#### *What are they?*

Under the Town and Country Planning (Amendment) Act of 1972 the Secretary of State may on the advice of the Historic Buildings Council

accept a Conservation Area as being 'Outstanding' for the purposes of making special grants. 20 Outstanding Conservation Areas have been identified to date in Devon and in seven of these a 'Town Scheme' making provision for the comprehensive repair of selected historic buildings is in operation. Town Schemes are jointly funded by the Department of the Environment, the County Council and the District Council concerned in Ashburton, Tavistock, Bideford, South Molton, Exeter, Sidmouth and Totnes, and in each case a special leaflet explaining the scheme in detail is available free of charge from the local planning department. Special provision has also been made for historic buildings in St. Peter's Street, Tiverton.

#### *What Grant Aid is available?*

In 1978 the contributing authorities allocated a total of £46,000 towards the Town Schemes in Devon. Grant offers of up to 50 per cent of the cost of eligible repairs are available with the applicant making up the balance.

In Outstanding Conservation Areas where Town Schemes are not in operation the Historic Buildings Council is able to consider making grants towards the repair of individual historic buildings.

### 5. Historic Churches In Use

The Historic Buildings Council is able to consider applications for grant aid towards the structural repair of historic churches which are still in use. In these cases applications should be made direct to the Historic Buildings Council.

### 6. Scheduled Ancient Monuments

#### *What are they?*

Over 900 sites, areas and structures of archaeological significance ranging from earliest prehistoric times through to nineteenth century industrial remains have been scheduled in Devon under the Ancient Monuments Acts. 'Scheduling' which is the responsibility of the Department of the Environment recognises that it is in the national interest that a particular feature be preserved for 'scheduling' and there are in addition a large number of archaeological features of local and county significance. In a few cases a standing structure such as a bridge or the ruins of a castle may be both a scheduled ancient monument and a listed building.

#### *What effect does 'Scheduling' have?*

As the law stands at present, three months advance notice of any works which might affect an ancient monument must be given to the Department of the Environment. However new legislation, The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 is due to come into force in the summer of 1980. Under this new act *scheduled monument consent* (broadly similar to listed building consent) will be needed before any such

works can be carried out. The new act also prohibits the use of metal detectors on ancient monuments and in other areas of archaeological importance.

*What Grant Aid is available?*

The new act enables the Department of the Environment and the local authorities to enter into agreements with landowners regarding the preservation, maintenance, and management of ancient monuments. Such agreements may include the making of grants of other financial provision. Further information is available from the County Planning Department.

### ADDRESSES

#### Department of the Environment and County Council

Historic Building Council, Department of the Environment, 25 Savile Row, London. W1X 2BT.

Dartmoor National Park Department, "Parke", Haytor Road, Bovey Tracey, Devon. TQ13 95Q. Tel: Bovey Tracey 832093.

County Planning Department, Devon County Council, County Hall, Exeter. EX2 4QH. Tel: Exeter 77977 Ext: 2261.

Exmoor National Park Dept., Exmoor House, Dulverton, Somerset. TA22 9HL. Tel: Dulverton 23665.

#### District Councils

Planning Department, Exeter City Council, Civic Centre, Exeter. EX1 1NN. Tel: Exeter 77888.

Planning Department, Torridge District Council, 20 Allhalland Street, Bideford. EX39 2JB. Tel: Bideford 6711.

Planning Department, Teignbridge District Council, 32 Courtenay Street, Newton Abbot. TQ12 2QR. Tel: Newton Abbot 66951.

Planning Department, South Hams District Council, Council Offices, 61 Fore Street, Totnes. TQ9 5QJ. Tel: Totnes 864499.

Planning Department, East Devon District Council, Council Offices, "Knowle", Sidmouth. EX10 8HL. Tel: Sidmouth 6661.

Planning Department, Plymouth City Council, Civic Centre, Plymouth. PL1 2EW. Tel: Plymouth 68000.

Planning Department, Mid Devon District Council, Ailsa House, Tidcombe Lane, Tiverton. EX16 6PG.

Planning Department, Torbay Borough Council, Tor Hill House, Castle Circus, Torquay. TQ2 5QL. Tel: Torquay 26244.

Planning Department, West Devon District Council, Oaklands Drive, Okehampton, EX20 1LH. Tel: Okehampton 2901.

Planning Department, North Devon District Council, Civic Centre, P.O. Box 21, Barnstaple. EX31 1EA. Tel: Barnstaple 72511.

### DEVON COUNTY SITES AND MONUMENTS REGISTER

The Sites and Monuments Register which was set up in 1975 under the auspices of Devon Committee for Rescue Archaeology and which has up to now been housed at Rougemont House Museum, Exeter, has been transferred to Devon County Council. It is now kept in the Planning Department at County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter, where it is available for public consultation by prior appointment. The officer in charge is Frances Griffith, Tel. Exeter 77977 Ext. 2266.

The Sites and Monuments Register is a still expanding index to Devon's past. It consists of map coverage of the County and a series of record sheets giving details and references for the sites shown on the maps. A computer retrieval programme is being developed in conjunction with the University of Exeter and new material is still being actively accessioned to the Register. Any information on results of fieldwork or documentary work would be welcomed by the staff of the Register, as would any offers of help with the large task of abstracting material on the County from national academic periodicals. Please contact them direct for any further information about the Register.

F.M. Griffith.



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## RAWRIDGE MILL, EAST DEVON

R.E. Wilson and John Marr

Domesday Book records that the Canons of St. Mary of Rouen held a Manor called Rouridge which Olvieva held in the time of Edward the Confessor and which William the Conqueror confirmed to them. In the 13th century it was conveyed by the Dean and Chapter to Sir Nicholas Cheyney and, after belonging to other families, it was purchased in the 18th century by Dr. Addington, father of the first Lord Sidmouth, along with the adjacent Manor of Upottery. This Manor is also recorded in Domesday Book and it then had a mill valued at 20 pence. However, the only Mill that has been traced was a Tucking Mill suggesting the possibility that Rawridge ground corn for both Manors, which are now in Upottery Parish. No documentary evidence has been found earlier than the Land Tax Assessments. These show the Mill to have been taxed at £1 17s. 5d. from 1780 to 1832. Occupiers' names in 1787 and 1794 were Joshua Lightfoot and Thomas Dares. From 1796 to 1850 the Millers were Benjamin, or Nicholas or John Hore.

From the middle of the last century Herman Bromfield and his nephew Jonas worked the Mill (the latter for 51 years), a bakery and farm up to 1939. The latter had assistance from his nephew, Henry Bromfield, to whom the business was offered by the owner, Lord Sidmouth, Lord of the Manor. Being a Millwright of repute he knew about milling but did not wish to be a baker as well; so Harold Hall was installed as tenant until he purchased the freehold on the break-up of Lord Sidmouth's estate in 1955 and he continued to work the Mill till about 1960. The wheel was broken up to sell as scrap and the buyer took a load to Honiton "to have it weighed" and was not seen again.

Within the Mill building the machinery is mainly intact and it is of conventional design but has a number of unusual features. The overshot wheel was 11 ft. in diameter by 5 ft. wide (3.35 m by 1.52 m) with about forty buckets, all iron. This replaced an earlier wheel and was installed by Fords of Wellington. At the same time the pentrough and other woodwork outside the building were put in by Lord Sidmouth's men who also fitted a new brass bearing. The axle passing through the wall to the pit wheel is of iron, 7 ins. in diameter (178 mm). Iron wheels and gearing were cast by Fords, probably replacing wood. There was a miscalculation when the pit wheel (*e*) was made. Owing to the lowness of the ceiling on the ground floor, although it could be fitted on the axle, there was insufficient room on the main shaft (*d*) for the wallower (*c*) and spur wheel (*b*) to be fixed with a more usual distance between them. Consequently the spur wheel was suspended (*a*), rather than supported from below, making it possible for the wallower to be supported close below it, and thus for its cogs to mesh with those of the pit wheel. Only one of the two original stone-buts (*f*) remains in position supported by its bridge-tree through which it is raised or lowered by a screwing device.

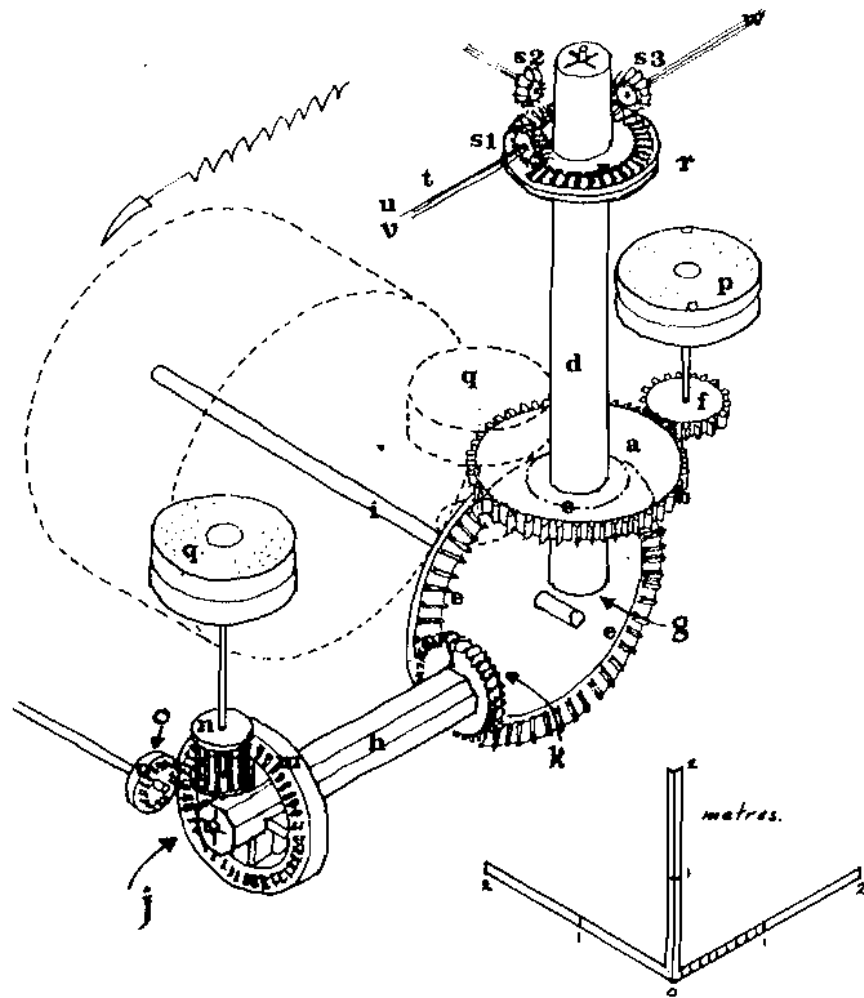
The round wooden main shaft is 18 ins. in diameter (457 mm), pivoted on an Armfield arch (*g*). When its brass bearing was worn out H. Bromfield

replaced it with a piece of box wood the pivot being on the grain end. It was still there when milling ceased after twenty years of use. The pit wheel is in halves bolted together, diameter 8 ft. 4 ins. (2.54 m), eight iron spokes, 128 cogs 6½ ins. (165 mm) long and dovetailed. All iron wallower 30 ins. diameter (762 mm), 37 cogs; spur wheel, two sections of iron 5 ft. (1.52 m) diameter about 50 cogs of wood dovetailed. Stone nut, 20 ins. (508 mm) diameter, 24 cogs 5 ins. (127 mm) long, all iron, conical seating known as "Chimley". All wooden cogs of applewood.

A second and horizontal octagonal wooden shaft (*h*), level with the wheel axle (*i*), has a fixed bearing at its outer (*j*) and a sliding bearing at its inner (*k*) end. Opposite to the rim of the pit wheel is a cast iron mitre wheel or second wallower (*l*). This can be engaged with or disengaged from the pit wheel by a crowbar. Near the outer end about 6 ft. (1.83 m) from the wallower is a contrate or spur wheel (*m*) made of 6 ins. wide wood 55 ins. in diameter (152 mm and 1.397 m). It is in four sections with four spokes mortised into the shaft and held together by iron bands. Forty wood cogs are fixed into slots in the wheel and fastened with iron nails. The cogs engage with a lantern pinion (*n*) which drove a third runner stone. It could be put out of gear by knocking out the wedges and removing three of its twelve rungs. Also driven from this spur wheel was a 2 ins. (51 mm) square shaft, belts from which would have operated a cider mill on the ground floor of an adjoining shed and a thrashing machine on the floor above. The forty cogs of the spur wheel engaged with sixteen projecting 2 ins. (51 mm) from a 14 ins. diameter (356 mm) wooden drum (*o*) into which the shaft was fixed. The cider mill was supplied by Walter Mickleburgh, Honiton, engineer and millwright.

On the stone floor were the three pairs of stones, one of French Burrs (*p*) for flour and the other of Derbyshire Peak (*q*). The wheel was not required to drive more than one pair at a time, but it was convenient to have two pairs for grist so that if one were out of action for stone dressing or breakdown the other could immediately take its place. The French Burrs were obtained from Huxham & Brown of Exeter.

There is a crown wheel (*r*) 44 ins. in diameter (1.12 m) of wood with 30 wooden cogs. It turned three layshafts by means of iron bevel pinions (*s*) at West, North and East. Those to the West and East are of iron 14 ins. diameter (356 mm) with 15 cogs and that to the North 12 ins. diameter (305 mm) with 19 cogs of wood. Pulleys on the West shaft (*u* and *v*) drove the sackhoist (*t*), a bucket conveyor and worm gearing. The East shaft (*w*) drove, at various times, a corn cracker, a 100 volt D.C. generator on the same floor. From a pulley on this same shaft, belting passed through a gap in the wall and across the wheel yard to the first floor of another building where Henry Bromfield had his workshop. There it turned another shaft from which a lathe was operated. The North shaft also crossed the yard to provide the drive for a saw bench. On the ground floor there was a butter factory with three milk separators driven from above. At times of water shortage, or when the wheel was standing, a traction engine was brought into use. This engine generally made two journeys a day to fetch grain from Honiton Station, a distance of ten miles (16 km), there and back.



**RAWRIDGE MILL**

Before electricity was generated on the stone floor it was produced by means of a small overshot water-wheel placed near the main wheel. Made of iron with wood spokes and buckets, it was 6 ft. in diameter by 2 ft. wide (1.83 m by 610 mm), constructed by Henry Bromfield. Pulleys were fixed on an extended axle and belting, passing into the building referred to above, and powered a dynamo generating 100 volts D.C. This provided light in the Mill house and buildings, but was superseded by the more powerful unit positioned on the stone floor. When a public supply reached Rawridge, Bromfield transferred this plant to his own dwelling where it is still in use. This wheel also powered his lathe in the same building giving him control which was lacking as when the main wheel was standing he had no power for the machines in his workshop.

After grinding, the meal or flour was led by wood chutes to large troughs on the mill floor. From there it was lifted to the bin floor by the bucket elevator. Thence it was fed by chutes to a horizontal worm gear from which delivery was made in succession to six sacks suspended below it; any meal for which there was not room fell on to the floor. The worm gear was attached to the ceiling of the mill floor.

This Mill, in a number of aspects, illustrates the skill and adaptability of those who have maintained and run it. It is the author's good fortune to have had the help and advice of Mr. Harold Hall, the past Miller and of Mr. Henry Broomfield, Millwright and Miller, now in his middle eighties, who knew every aspect of the installation from an earlier time and who personally contributed to its efficiency and interest. He is the last of a family engaged in milling for several generations. His grandfather had five sons, Thomas, Henry, Herman, William and John, all of whom, except Herman, were in demand as Millwrights. They would tour the South West servicing mills and sometimes would be away from home for six months at a time.

**NOTE:** The survey detailed above was undertaken in 1971 and does not necessarily describe the present state of the Mill.

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## SOME GUIDE LINES FOR RECORDING VERNACULAR HOUSES

Charles Hulland

These notes are intended to provide a pattern of procedure in order to identify and record succinctly the structural facts of a house even if the recorder is not aware of the full significance of what is seen. Sketch and/or photograph any specially interesting features.

**SUGGESTED ORDER OF RECORDING.** (A good, stout covered notebook is desirable).

1. **NAME.** of settlement. Parish; Map References; name of occupier.
2. **SITE.** Isolated; hamlet; village. Level site/ on slope. Rock/soil type. Site of spring/well.
3. **MATERIALS.** Cob; stone (ashlar or rubble — random or coursed); Brick rare in Devon before 18thC. and mostly post 1850 in rural areas. Thatch; slate; tiles etc.
4. **PLAN. (FIG. 1A)**
  - (a) walk around outside noting general lay-out, chimney stack positions, roof levels, any blocked door lintels, bread oven or stair bulge; any original window frames.
  - (b) draw outline plan showing basic room lay-out. 15th/16thC. and most 17thC. Devon houses are basically one-room deep, though a Wing and/ or an Outshot (lean-to) may have been added. "Standard" Devon late medieval plan — sometimes two but usually three laterally laid out rooms (Hall/ Inner Room and Lower Room plus a Cross Passage). Later houses (18thC. + ) two rooms deep (Double Pile). Oldest surviving rural cottages originally probably one up, one down.  
Do measured (metric) plan if really interesting house. Indicate North.
5. **FEATURES.** Record as they occur room by room.  
*Ground Floor.* Porch/ Entry/ Cross Passage (or variant), Hall/ Inner Room/ Lower Room. Any wings or outshots?  
*First Floor.* Chamber to chamber room access? Lobby at stair landing? Passage? Any sign here of roof trusses — note prior to roof examination.

- Doors/Frames.** Lintels/jambs/mitres/ mouldings/ chamfers/ stops. Any panelled doors? (FIG. 4).
- Windows.** Original frames uncommon. Likely earliest — mullioned frame (King Mullion?) with ovolo moulding — 17thC. (FIG.4).
- Screens.** Stud and panel screens generally 16thC. Usually one between Hall and Cross Passage; may be others e.g. between Hall and Inner Room.
- Ceilings.** Joists exposed? Variations in size, pattern; any odd unexplained joist section (perhaps early ladder access?). Paneled ceiling? Any plaster decoration (mostly late 16th/early 17thC.). **Beams** Oak or elm? Axial or transverse; mouldings; chamfers; stops. (FIG. 5).
- Floors.** Ask re any known earlier limeash/cobbled/flagged floors. Early Chamber floor boards can be unusually wide.
- Fireplaces/ Stacks**  
Position of stacks important.  
(a) Central (axial). If so does it back onto Cross Passage?  
(b) Lateral stack off S. Wall — 16th/17thC.  
(c) N. Wall stack — tends to be 17thC.  
(d) Gable end stacks — 17th to 19thC.  
(e) unusually a corner-of-room F/P with stack set at 45° to house line — probably 18thC.
- Bread Oven? Curing Chamber? Cream Oven?**  
All 17thC. onwards.
- Stairs.** Look especially for  
(a) early ladder well access (joist evidence)  
(b) closed-off early staircase.  
Some stair positions:-  
(a) alongside stack in Hall/ Passage wall  
(b) in front or off back wall in turret bulge  
(c) in rear portion of Cross Passage.  
Type of steps — stone or wood capped.  
Stair turret light and door/frame detail.
6. **ROOF.** Look for surviving medieval timbers even under 20thC. re-roofing. Note number of trusses and carpentry technique in detail.  
(a) FIG. 1B. Hipped. Half-hipped. Gable End.  
(b) **Type of structure**
  1. **True Cruck.** (FIG. 1B 4-7). *Full/ Base/ Upper/ Short Legged.* Mostly 15th/16thC.



2. **Jointed Cruck.** (FIG. 1B 8-10). Elbow carpentry variations. Mostly from 15thC. to mid 17thC.
  3. **"A" Framed.** (FIG. 3 E/F).
    - (a) Collar to truss — curved end halvings. 17thC. in N. Devon; earlier in S. Devon.
    - (b) straight end collars lapped to truss. 18thC+.
  4. **Plank Ridge.** (FIG. 3 G/H). Revival of "King Post"/Scissor bracing struts. Machine sawn a la pattern book. 19thC. particularly in farm buildings. N.B. Be alert for anything especially interesting e.g. notched halvings (FIG. 2A) in a medieval house — occur later in farm buildings.
- (c) **Apex Type.** (FIG. 2). Based on "A Catalogue of Cruck Buildings". Alcock).  
In Devon probably one of these four:-
1. **Type "H".** Ridge piece set square. Generally early 15thC.
  2. **Type "E".** Ridge piece on edge. "Standard" Devon later 15thC. +.
  3. **Threaded Ridge.** Basically pre 1500 in N. Devon; can be later in S.
  4. **Saddle Ridge.** 15thC. probably.
- If any other type seen do detailed sketch, always showing pegging.
- (d) **Trusses**
1. **Open.** i.e. with no partition.
  2. **Closed.** Originally open(?) but now with possibly 16th/17thC. wattle and daub partition.
- (e) **Purlins.** (FIG. A-D). How fixed to trusses.
1. **Threaded.**
  2. **Trenched.**
  3. **Lapped.**
  4. **Clasped.** A Midlands technique, so rare in Devon.
- (f) **Collars.** (FIG. 2; FIG. 3 E/F 3). Cranked, curved or straight? How fixed to truss — morticed and tenoned; halved or lapped. Look for empty mortices indicating collar removal.

- (g) **Wind Braces.** (FIG. 2G). Large square cut timbers or delicate and chamfered? Look for peg holes in purlins — clues to removed wind braces.
- (h) **Arch-Bracing.** (FIG. 2 B, C and H). Usually single arch-bracing to truss elbow; double if continued down wall-post. Is bracing chamfered or moulded?
- (i) **Wall Posts/Templates.** (FIG. 1 Nos. 4/5). Any exposed in walls?
- (j) **Soot/Smoke Blackening.** If originally a medieval Open Hall house, roof timbers especially over Hall, will be blackened. Is blackening confined to one section of roof (over Hall?) or over whole roof. Look for roof partitions black on one side only. Any sign of a **Smoke Louvre?** — rare in Devon.
- (k) **Thatch.** Check in roof space for any original bottom layer (probably rye) either in situ or in remnants. Evidence of a "wattle hurdle" thatching base? Probably pre 1450.

## 7. DATING AND DEVELOPMENT.

- Not a recommended exercise for the beginner — full of pitfalls even for the experienced field-worker. A few basic points are:-
- (a) Try to identify the original house plan (see Para. 4B). If a medieval Open Hall house, then stacks and stairs are later inserts.
  - (b) Did the house have a true Cross Passage (common) or a Lobby Entry (probably post 1600 and much less common)? N.B. Inserted staircase or stack can turn a Cross Passage into a Lobby Entry.
  - (c) Any projecting **Wings** added? Usually 17thC. +. c1600 traditional plan began to break up e.g. Outshots (17thC. onwards); "Double Pile" houses usually 18thC. +. First floor Landing Lobby with each bedroom door off lobby — typically 17thC. Compare with more usual original chamber thro' chamber access now probably obviated by thin-partition wall to chambers.
  - (d) Many Devon houses have "staged" ceilings i.e. one or two sections of the house may have been

chambered in 16thC. but the Hall remained open to roof into 17thC. Often involved an **Internal Jetty** for which clues may be

- (i) Hall ceiling at different level than that over Inner Room and/or Cross Passage.
  - (ii) Short joists in Jetty section may be independent of later and higher Hall ceiling joists; they sometimes have corbelled ends.
- (c) A date on a Porch, beam or panelling is usually of restricted significance.

## 8. FARM BUILDINGS.

In field of Conservation farm buildings are even more at risk than farm houses.

- (a) **Type** — Open or Closed complex?
- (b) Occupier often has an aerial photograph — may show an earlier farm lane, changed lay-out and even early small-field hedges.
- (c) Check any interesting unit especially if of cob. Occasionally carries evidence of an early roof structure, including jointed crucks; early door or window frames and sometimes re-used house beams.
- (d) Associated features e.g. cobbled courtyard; Beeholes; Ash House (1650+); Pound House (18thC.+); Round House (19thC.); round pillars in stone in shippens (18thC.+). These are fast disappearing.

## 9. DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE.

A very important supplementary subject but outside the scope of these notes.

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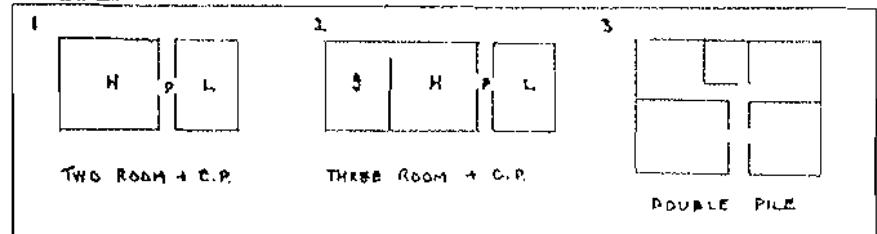
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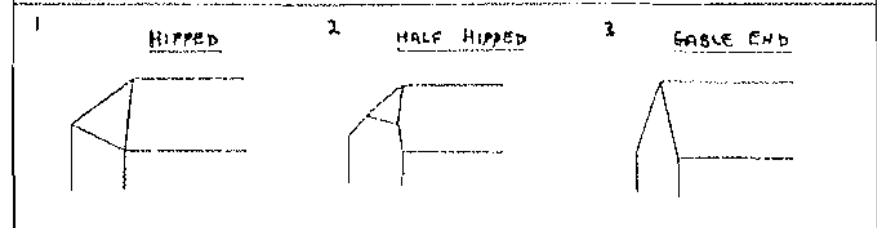
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FIG 1

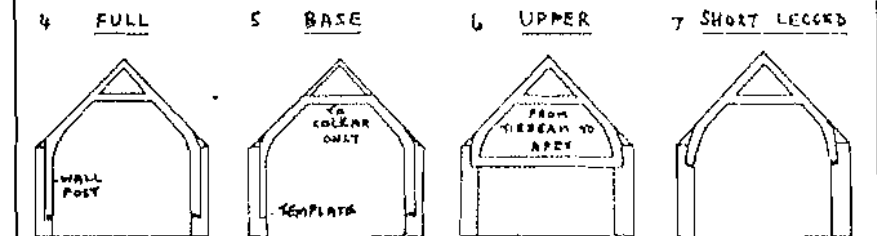
### A. PLANS



### B. ROOFS



### TRUE CRUCKS



### JOINTED CRUCKS

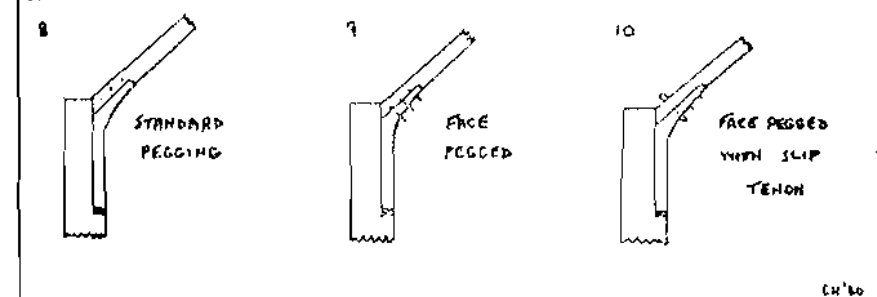


FIG. 2. CRUCK APEXES (DEVON).

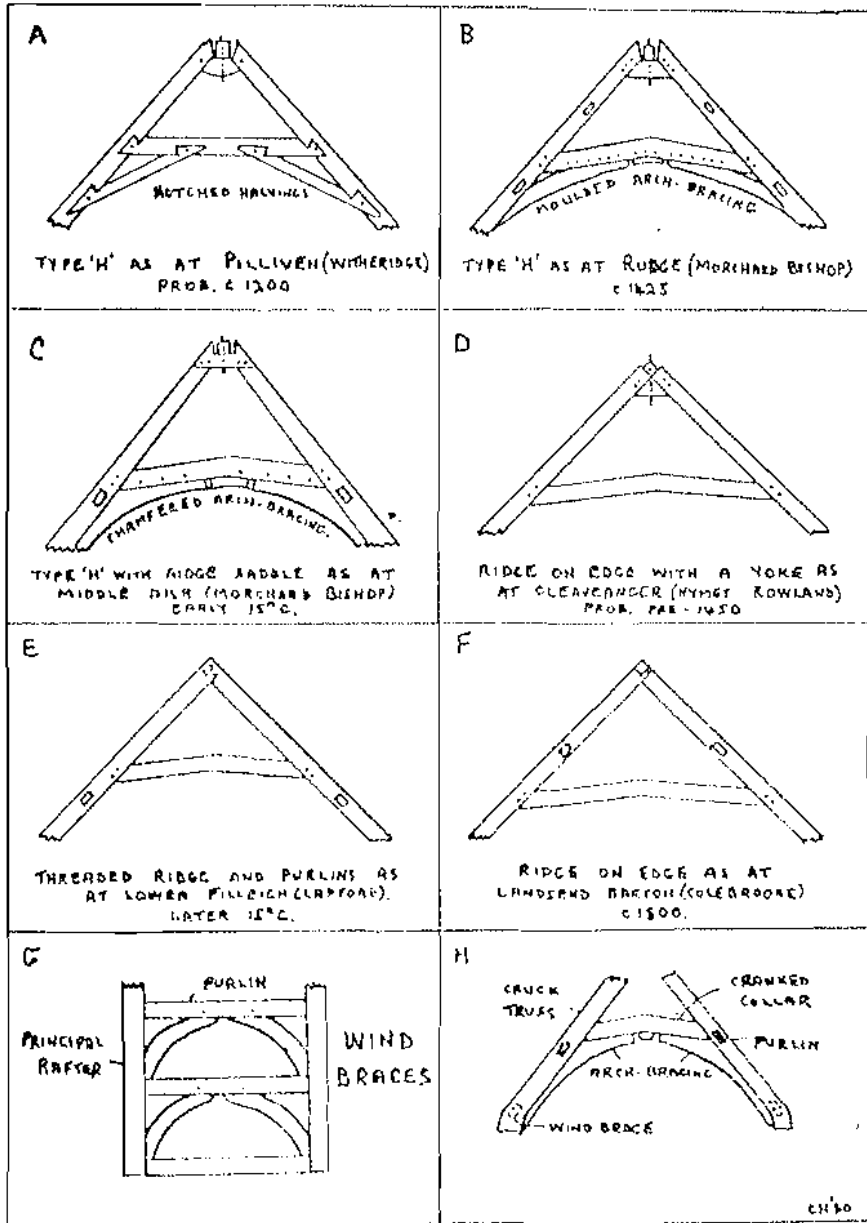


FIG. 3.

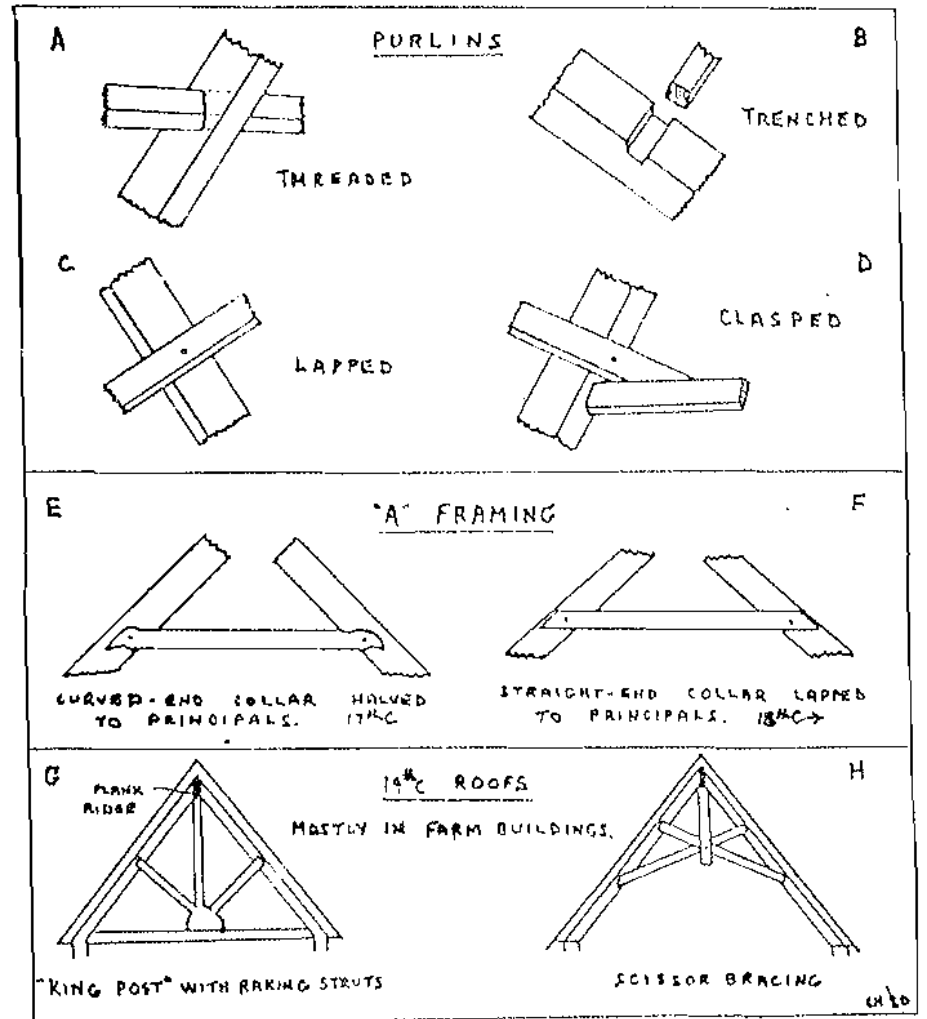


FIG 4. SOME DOOR FRAMES.

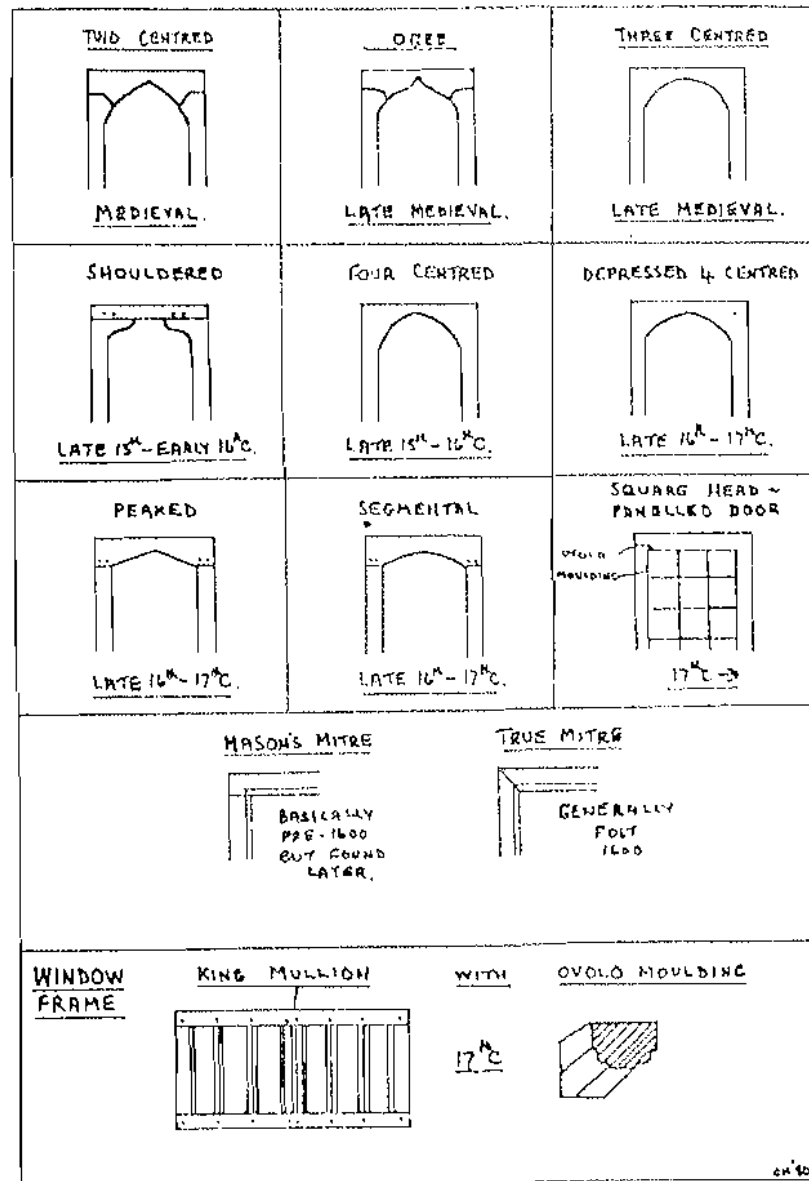
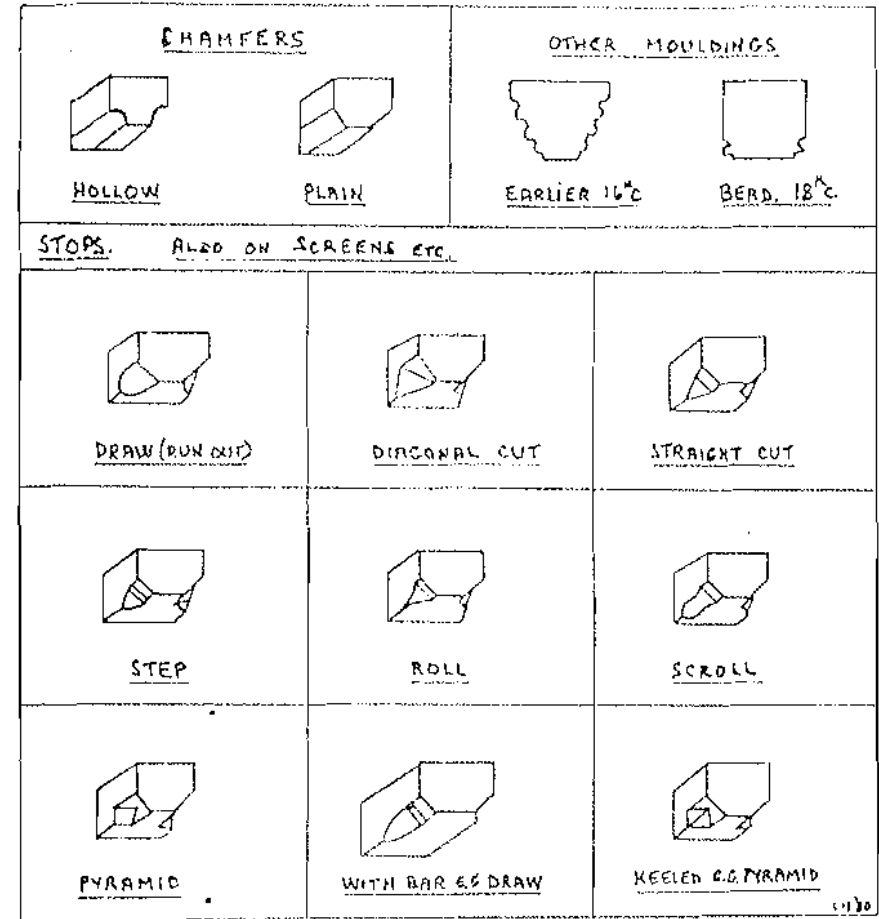


FIG 5. BEAMS.



SOME TENTATIVE GUIDANCE ON DATING OF STOPS.

1. DRAW STOPS IN GENERAL USE.
2. DIAGONAL CUT STOPS 15th — MID 16thC. MOSTLY ON SCREENS.
3. STRAIGHT CUT STOPS PROBABLY 16thC.
4. STEP STOPS BROADLY 16thC. BUT CAN BE LATER.
5. SCROLL STOPS 17thC. RATHER THAN 16thC.
6. PYRAMID STOPS MID 16thC. +
7. STOPS WITH BARS OR KEELING TEND TO BE 17thC.

## NOTES ON NEW CONTRIBUTORS

Simon Timms is Devon County Archaeologist, based at County Hall, Exeter. He spoke at our Torrington meeting in 1978 on the problems of preserving historic monuments in Devon.

Professor Eric Jones, from La Trobe University, Australia, has just spent a year as Visiting Professor in the Department of Economic History, University of Exeter.

Charles Hulland of Bampton is a retired headmaster. For many years a part-time lecturer for University of Exeter Extra Mural Department, he is Chairman of the N. Devon Branch of the Devon. Assoc. A member of the Vernacular Architecture Group, he has a special interest in Devon farmhouses.

## CONFERENCES

Meetings at Holsworthy last November and at Modbury this February were well attended, enjoyable and informative, thanks in each case to the enthusiasm and hospitality of the resident local history society. Professor Jones' paper on 'Fires and the local community', given at Holsworthy, is reproduced in this issue.

Future conferences will be held at Chumleigh (Autumn 1980) and Lydford (Spring 1981).

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LIBRARIES AND COLLECTIONS PURCHASED

**PLYMOUTH, A NEW HISTORY: 1603 TO THE PRESENT DAY.** Crispin Gill. David and Charles. 1979, 239 pp. £7.50. ISBN 0 7153 7617 9.

In 1966 the first volume of **Plymouth, a new history** was published at a price of 42s, with the subtitle of **Ice age to the Elizabethans**, the product of seven years of research when the author was assistant editor of the **Western Morning News**; now, thirteen years later, the second volume, written in the offices of **The Countryman** in Burford, has appeared with the tamer and potentially misleading subtitle of **1603 to the present day** and one page less than its predecessor for a more crowded period but a meaner format and an enhanced price. Such are our unregenerate days. By and large Mr. Gill provides a chronological treatment of his subject — the Puritan town, civil war, restoration and so on to war and peace 1914-39 and destruction and reconstruction 1939-79. Subsections of chapters discuss politics, trade, industry, religion, transport, social life etc. With his interest in the sea, those sections which deal with the Admiralty, with seaborne commerce, with the development of the harbour facilities and with the liner trade are the strongest and most compelling. He has a direct no-nonsense approach to his subject: none of that philosophising over a farm gate which is the mark of his alter ego. In plain style with no frills, almost breathless we are on to the next fact. Information there is in abundance, though the avoidance of tables makes it difficult to piece together matters which require statistical illumination, such as the growth of population or the trade of the port. What is present to a lesser extent is explanation — why did Plymouth have 'one of the highest mortality rates in the country' (p.143) between 1815 and 1914?; why was Plymouth's unemployment between 1929 and 1938 'higher than the national figure' (p.185)? And some aspects of Plymouth's history get left out. Just one example must suffice. The strike at Fine Tubes between 1970 and 1973, three years to the day, a long-running event which perhaps casts light on other aspects of industrial relations in Plymouth, does not get a mention. And in some ways this is an insider's books. Sometimes the text, sometimes the captions, sometimes the index are insufficiently informative — the professional football club, for example, which outsiders know as Plymouth Argyle is indexed under Argyle F.C. When he began his task, Mr. Gill noted that the wartime bombing obliterated the old pattern of the streets of Plymouth which told the history of the town so this history had to be written in his generation, the last to grow up in the old city and to remember clearly its shape. And at the end of the second volume Mr. Gill acknowledges the transitory and partial nature of an historian's work but is to be commended for bringing his twenty-year sentence to a successful conclusion. Urban history is now a flourishing branch of historical study in Britain and future researchers will no doubt ask different questions, explore other aspects and search for fuller explanations of the pattern of Plymouth's past. In the meantime, in this two-volume set, which is well-illustrated with a wide range of pictures and maps and rounded off with a useful bibliography, we have an outline account — though it deserves a better index — of the history of Plymouth within a manageable compass.

Walter Minchinton

**GUIDE TO THE PARISH AND NON-PAROCHIAL REGISTERS OF DEVON & CORNWALL 1538-1837.** Compiled with an Introduction by Hugh Peskett, 1979, and published by the Devon & Cornwall Record Society. Price £5.00 from the Assistant Secretary, D.C.R.S., 7 The Close, Exeter.

The expertise of the local historian and of the genealogist is not only a question of "know how" but of "know where". Every historian, professional or amateur, frequently finds himself confronting the problem of where to search for certain records — the Public Record Office, the House of Lords' Library, the Bodleian Library? Where?

For the genealogist, at least, Hugh Peskett's latest volume meets a long felt want, especially with regard to the whereabouts of non-parochial records.

But this volume is not a mere list of facts, the whereabouts of registers. The seventy page introduction is a scholarly work in its own right and makes compulsive reading. Mr. Peskett tells us, quite correctly, (pp. xxi and xxv), that in 1642/43 the episcopacy was abolished and the return of Bishop's Transcripts ceased for twenty years. Yet, strangely enough, at Salisbury there are BT's for the whole of the Commonwealth period for the Parish of Broadchalk. Perhaps the Vicar hadn't heard of Oliver Cromwell! One wonders who received these documents at Salisbury and preserved them. How many more may yet come to light?

To strike a more melancholy note p. xxii informs us that a register at Colan, Cornwall, microfilmed in 1959 cannot now be found. The missing register of Bridgerule (p. xxiii) must have been in existence at the end of the last century as Vivian quotes from it in his *Visitations of Devon*, 1895, (e.g. pp. 408 and 465.) This reviewer visited Chawleigh, Devon, in 1977 and made extracts from a register covering the eighteenth century. This, alas, is now missing. And so the dismal story goes on. Many of these missing registers are possibly still lying forgotten and unrecognised in cupboards in remote farmhouses where a Churchwarden great grandfather took them home and never took them back. Perhaps Mr. Gordon Honeycombe could be prevailed upon to make a TV appeal on this subject!

How long Mr. Peskett's volume will remain up to date is anybody's guess. One hopes there will be additions but one fears there may be subtractions!

A sneak thief has already removed from the Devon & Cornwall Record Society's shelves the copies of the registers of Plympton St. Mary, Launceis, Week St. Mary, Monkokehampston and Whitstone. If, by any chance, he reads this, I hope his conscience will prick him into getting these volumes back on the shelves where they belong.

To conclude, whatever tricks time may play, Mr. Peskett's book will remain a most valuable book of reference for many years to come.

J.W. Bastin

**TOPSHAM AND THE EXE ESTUARY.** Compiled by Clive N. Ponsford. Published in association with the Topsham Museum by Headwell Vale Books, 20 Devonshire Place, Exeter. Copies available from Topsham Museum, Topsham shops, Exeter Maritime Museum, local booksellers or post-free from the publishers. Price £1.95.

The sub-title of this booklet is "An Album of Sailing Ship Days" and the main theme is the river front at Topsham in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries when many fine vessels were launched. The southern end of the Strand was the 'traditional' building place but by the time of the Napoleonic Wars Robert Davy had a shipyard near Countess Wear bridge and he later developed the Higher yard at Passage in Topsham. In addition to ships for the R.N. and East Indiamen in 1813 he built H.M. Terror which was lost in the expedition to search for the N.W. Passage under Sir John Franklin. In the mid-nineteenth century John Holman took over the Higher and Lower yards where he and his family continued building until the increase in size of ships, now iron built, called for a deep-water estuary, and better equipped yards. Their marine insurance business moved to London but many of their interests remained in Topsham and it is to them and particularly Miss Dorothy Holman who still lives on the Strand that so many of the interesting photographs are due.

To frame the scene for the illustrations Mr. Ponsford uses the description of Topsham in 1754 from Brice's Gazetteer followed by contemporary newspaper accounts of launchings from local yards and social events. Perhaps the most charming of these is the report of a Fete Marine at Starcross in 1775 which apparently lasted from 8 a.m. until 3 o'clock the next morning.

Further photographs of other parts of the estuary, of Topsham streets and events early in this century and an interesting account of the Greenland Fishery about which little has been written conclude this interesting and well-produced book.

I. Coombes

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Publication received:

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE PLYMOUTH ATHENAEUM**, vol. 4, 1973-1979.  
Contains paper by J. Barber on current research into early Plymouth.

**CAPTAIN — GENERAL AND REBEL CHIEF. THE LIFE OF JAMES, DUKE OF MONMOUTH** by J.N.P. Watson. Allen and Unwin. xix and 311 pp. Illustrated. £9.95. ISBN 0 04 920058 5.

The chief episode in the short life of James, Duke of Monmouth (1649-1685) was the rising in the West, which culminated in Sedgemoor, the Bloody Assizes and his own execution. But there was more to him than the sad failure of a would-be King. 'The first part of his life was all sunshine' wrote a contemporary and this appealing new biography brings out very well his early adventures, achievements and potentialities, especially in the field. That Monmouth was brave, experienced and 'beloved of the common people' was a fact that his uncle, James, Duke of York, had to recognise long before he himself became James II. Charles II, though determined not to assert his son's legitimacy, was very affectionate and not averse from time to time to playing him off against his stiff brother, until Monmouth made the mistake of getting, involved, more perhaps than he ever contemplated, in the Whiggish machinations that produced the Exclusion crisis of 1680-1. Even that he survived and after a condign spell in the wilderness would most likely have been eased back into the Court had Charles not died in 1685. The Duke of York's accession after all vicissitudes blasted Monmouth's hopes enough to set off the enterprise which after the landing at Lyme Regis led on to such a spectacular, hopeful but and ultimately bloody — according to Judge Jeffreys not half bloody enough for James II — part of the history of the south-west. Mr. J.N.P. Watson — a military historian with many years of practical soldiering — recounts Monmouth's career with loving skill. The rebellion itself is made an exciting story, though we are offered little political and social analysis. (Peter Earle's *Monmouth's Rebels* apparently appeared too late to be used.) Even so, well produced, documented and illustrated, *Captain-General and Rebel Chief* is an attractive addition to the growing shelf of books devoted to Evelyn's 'quondam duke, darling of his father and the ladies', 'young Jemmy', 'the People's darling' who, alas, brought disaster to a good many of them, too.

Ivan Roots

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**PLYMOUTH EXCAVATIONS: CASTLE STREET: THE POTTERY;** ed. C. Gaskell Brown. Plymouth Museum Archaeological Series, No. 1., 1979. £3.00. ISBN 0904788024.

Since excavations were begun at Castle Street, Plymouth, in 1959, archaeologists have recovered one of the largest and most interesting collections of post-medieval artefacts from any British site. The present volume publishes the pottery, which makes up the bulk of the collection. It is principally a corpus of the various classes of ceramics in use at Plymouth, with descriptions and very fine drawings of the various types. The publication reflects the major developments made by archaeologists during the last generation in providing more accurate evidence of the attribution and dating of the wares present; this work has been of particular importance in the study of the more utilitarian types of pottery in which art historians took little interest. It will prove of most immediate use to archaeologists interested in post-medieval ceramics, as it provides the most comprehensive and authoritative publication of the wares imported into Britain, and the largest corpus of the pottery of South-West England currently available.

The volume does however, have much wider interest. The ceramics strongly underline Plymouth's cosmopolitan character; in this collection about 15% of sherds are foreign imports, most of them datable to the late 16th and 17th centuries. The most exotic finds are Ming porcelain, Persian earthenware and Martabani stoneware of Far Eastern origin, but, equally remarkable, there is an impressive number of Spanish, Portuguese and Italian tin-glazed dishes (over 1000 vessels) and plain earthenwares. These seem to be more common at Plymouth than at any other English port, and emphasise Plymouth's Mediterranean links. The Castle Street collection has a good scatter of French and Low Countries earthenwares, but surprisingly little of the Rhenish stonewares which are such common imports all over Britain.

However, a few difficulties attach to this work. It is the product of several authors; this is sometimes very apparent in the text. The imports are described and drawn in considerably more detail than the local wares, which are sometimes given rather sparse treatment. More serious, the authors differ in their dating of the finds. They are all unstratified and so dated by analogy with pottery from dated contexts. The imports are attributed to the period c. 1550-1650 whilst the local wares are dated 15th century or later and the South Somerset and North Devon wares are believed to date after c. 1650. It is unlikely that the imports and local wares are not contemporary, and the dating suggested will require revision in the light of new finds. Recent excavations in Bristol and Exeter show that many wares hitherto regarded as starting c. 1650 were really in production at an earlier period. Important dating evidence regarding the local micaceous wares is now available from elsewhere in Plymouth; this suggests the Castle Street wares are likely to belong to the 16th and 17th centuries. On the other hand, some classes of imports like the olive jars, North Dutch slipwares are known from late 17th century contexts, and may belong to that period.

The volume presents an interesting, and in some respects rather surprising, picture of the pattern of ceramic use in Plymouth. The value of the publications is very considerably increased by the provision of statistical tables showing the proportions of the wares represented in the collection. With similar work now in progress in many English ports, it should become possible during the next few years to compare the pattern of ceramic consumption in Plymouth with that in other ports.

J.P. Allan, Exeter Archaeological Field Unit.

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**STANDING CONFERENCE FOR LOCAL HISTORY**

At a special meeting in September 1979 the Blake Committee reported on their recently published Review of Local History. The full text of the Blake Report is available at £1.75 post free from S.C.L.H., 26 Bedford Square, W.C.1. The report is in three main sections: education and training; access to study materials; organisation and structure. A potted version appears in *The Local Historian*, vol. 13, no. 8, and a critical assessment in vol. 14, no. 1. One immediate problem is to find a national body to co-ordinate and promote local history studies now that the National Council of Social Service can no longer finance or staff the Standing Conference for Local History.

At the AGM following the special meeting, Professor W.E. Minchinton was elected to the Executive Committee of the Standing Conference.

The Editor of the *Devon Historian* would welcome comments on the Blake Report in relation to local history studies in Devon.

**EXETER UNIVERSITY PUBLICATIONS**

**Forthcoming — Summer 1980**

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