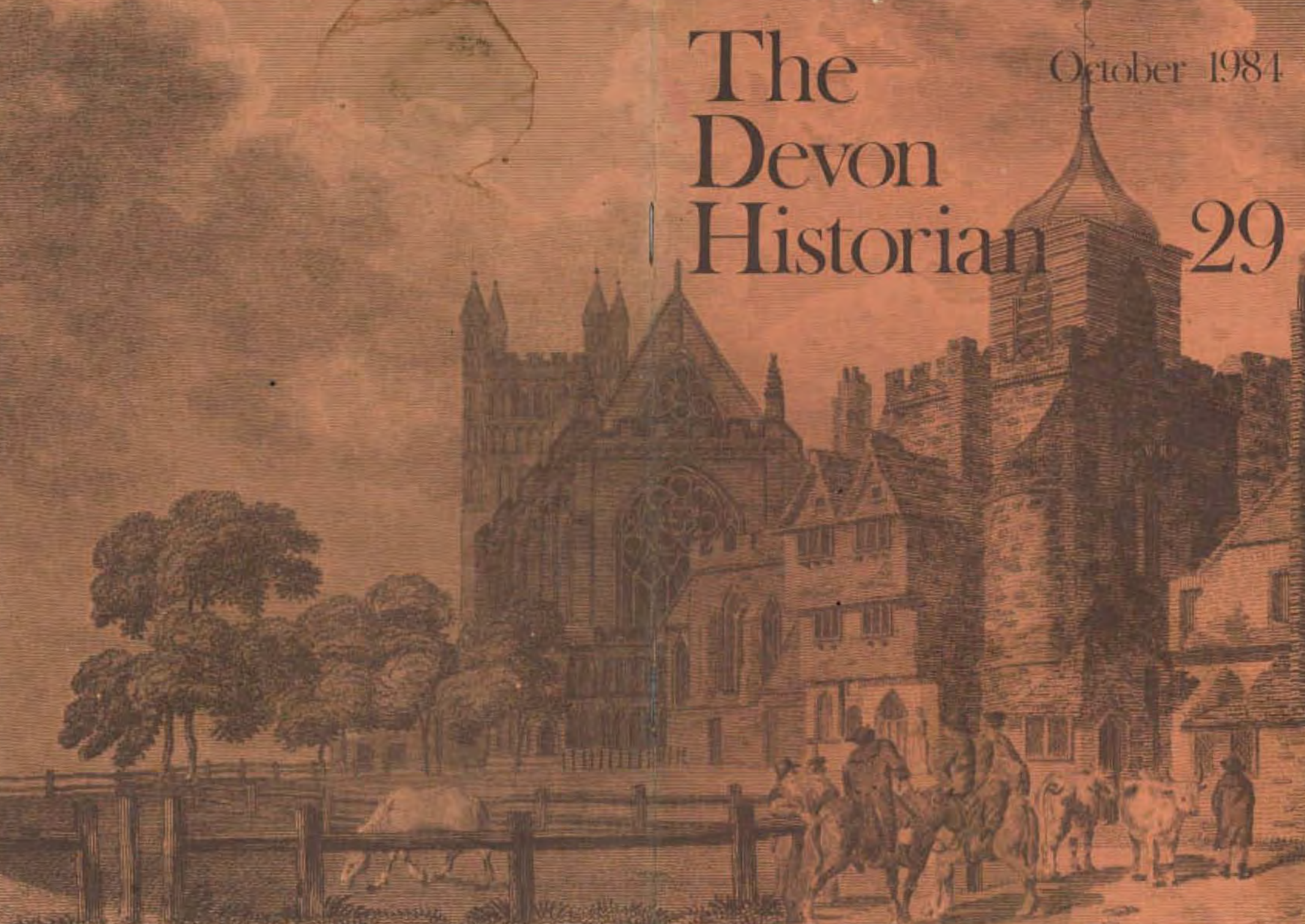


# The Devon Historian

October 1984

29



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### THE DEVON HISTORIAN

Correspondence relating to the *Devon Historian* and contributions for publication should be sent to the Editor, The Devon Historian, c/o Devon and Exeter Institution, 7 The Close, Exeter. The deadline for the next issue is 31 November 1984.

### DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY: AGM

The AGM of the Society will take place in Streatam Court, University of Exeter, on 13 October, 1984, from 10.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.

The print on the cover is *Exeter*, copper engraving by J. Walker after J. Moore, published London, 1797. Shows St Mary Major Church. (Somers-Cocks, No. 882).

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THE SOCIETY FOR THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF ARTS, MANUFACTURES  
AND COMMERCE: SOME EIGHTEENTH CENTURY DEVONIAN & CORNISH  
ASSOCIATIONS

David Allan

The Society of Arts was founded in 1754 by the Northamptonshire drawing master, William Shipley, whose success in local schemes for the public good had encouraged him to try his hand at a project aimed to benefit the whole country. By the end of the century the Society was recognised as a leading national institution comparable in standing with the older Royal Society and the younger Royal Academy of Arts. It had helped to create a climate of opinion favourable to the industrial growth and artistic achievement which was such a striking feature of British life at the time. Its early history and rich collection of archives have received the attention of several economic, social, literary and art historians and these have made valuable contributions to our understanding of the significance of various categories of the Society's awards and of the historical personalities associated in its membership.<sup>1</sup> The present survey will attempt for the first time an entirely regional approach, and may, perhaps, encourage local historians to undertake more detailed research.

**Membership**

In the year following the first meeting of the Society there was an urgent need to increase the size of the membership beyond the 17 persons who had subscribed during that period and, in particular, to make sure that those who had promised to join, did, in fact pay their subscription. Thus we find that the first of the West Country members, Mr. Henry Tolcher, who was on the 'Original List' of 1754 was said to be about to return to Plymouth on 11th June without having paid his subscription. William Shipley, now acting as Secretary, was asked to wait on him before his departure and the Society's Minute Book shows that on 6 August 1755 he paid the necessary two guineas. By this date a second member with a West Country address had been enrolled and this was done with the formality of an established Society, e.g. Proposal by an existing Member or Members at one meeting and the election by a majority of those present at a subsequent meeting. In fact Francis Beauchamp of Pengreep near Truro had told the Society that he would like to join and Henry Baker, co-founder of the Society with William Shipley, had thereupon taken upon himself to act as the proposer.<sup>2</sup>

The carpet manufacturers, Thomas Whitty of Axminster and Claude Passavant of Exeter were both, like Beauchamp, Premium Winners. They were elected on the same day 13 April 1757, with Shipley and Sir George Yonge as their respective proposers. Shipley was, like Baker, probably acting on behalf of the Society and Yonge, as M.P. for Honiton, was no doubt glad to help a Devonian. In 1760 two more Devonians were elected: John Baring, the banker, and his associate William Pittfield. Pittfield's proposer was not well known but Baring's was none other than Israel Wilkes, brother of the notorious politician, and an active member and Committee Chairman of the Society.

The next year (1761) saw three Devonian recruits, one of whom also had a celebrity as his proposer. This was John Lewis of Stonehouse near Plymouth who was proposed by Jonas Hanway, the well known philanthropist and chairman of the Society's Committee of Manufactures. The others were William Hawkes of Luppitt

and John Duntze of Exeter. Both called 'Esquires' in the Society's Subscription Book.

Duntze was a wealthy clothing merchant as well as a landowner who served as M.P. for Tiverton until his death in 1795, and was created a Baronet in 1774. Hawkes seems to have been a friend or associate of Duntze's since they had the same proposer: a Mr. Joseph Paice of Queen St. In 1762 Francis Baring, John's famous younger brother joined the Society as did a certain John Quicke of Newton. Quicke had the distinction of being proposed by the celebrated Dr. Battie, the expert on madness. Though long since settled near London, Battie was a native Devonian and this may explain his friendship with Quicke.

Quicke did not keep up his subscription to the Society and this unfortunate practice was also followed by Robert Barber of Grover who was elected in 1766. Six years later William Faren Holt of Barnstaple also joined and then failed to maintain payments. Christopher Guillet of Tavistock who was elected in March 1772 avoided payment, rather in the manner of Boswell, we may imagine, until May 1778, when the Collector extracted one year's payment from him. James Tompler of Stover Lodge, Devon, also paid only once, though without delay, following his election in 1791 and J. Champernoun of Totnes did the same thing.

With so much of the activities of the Society centred on London it was easy for the provincial membership to feel out of touch. Only very occasionally was a reminder sent out regarding subscriptions in arrears. One such elicited a most loyal response from Thomas Whitty, who wrote to the Society from Axminster in 1778:

'I now with pleasure send you the above remittance and shall esteem it an Honour to be continued a member of that worthy Society to which I am under very great obligations'<sup>3</sup>

These 'obligations' were the 'premiums' which he had received from the Society in the 1750s. We will now turn from the membership which supplied the society's means to the premiums which were its method of work.

#### Premiums: Classification

In August 1754 the Cornish clergyman and naturalist William Borlase received from his London friend Henry Baker the first premium list of the Society which, said Baker, 'speaks its own meaning'.<sup>4</sup> It was a single broadsheet listing only four offers of awards. The Society's second list (1755) offered twelve awards, the third (1756) twenty-one and the fourth (1757) sixty-five. In 1758 more than one hundred awards were offered and from 1761 onwards the Society used six broad categories for its premiums: 'Agriculture', 'Chemistry', 'Polite Arts', 'Manufactures', 'Mechanics' and 'Colonies and Trade'. In considering the Society's Devonian and Cornish awards we shall begin with the 'Polite Arts' followed by 'Chemistry' since the earliest awards were made for drawing and mining cobalt.

#### Polite Arts

The earliest premium offered in this category was 'for the best drawing by Boys and Girls under the age of 14 years, and Proof of their Abilities, in or before the 15th Day of January 1755, £15' and it was a young Devonian, Richard Cosway, who won the first prize. Cosway's father was the Master of Blundell's School, his uncle Mayor of Tiverton and his Godfather a wealthy local trader. When the members of the new Society saw specimens of the twelve years old Richard's work

on 27 November 1754 'it was thought proper' as the Minutes put it, [that] 'his Parents be writ to to know what will be the expence of his coming to Town'. At the next meeting William Shipley reported 'that he had wrote about the boy, and he is coming up to Town'. With financial help from his relations and the prizes he won from the Society Richard embarked on his outstandingly successful career.<sup>5</sup>

Apart from various categories of drawing, painting, sculpture and engraving the Society included amongst its 'Polite Arts' premiums in 1759 and for some years afterwards the offer of an award for an 'Accurate, Actual Survey of any County'. The first suggestion that the Society should extend its work in this direction was made by Borlase in one of the letters he wrote from Cornwall to Henry Baker and the first successful candidate was Benjamin Donn, the mathematical teacher of Bideford whose map of Devon won the prize of £100 in 1765. The story of Donn's achievement has been told by J. B. Harley and W. L. D. Ravenhill and need not be repeated here.<sup>6</sup>

#### Chemistry

The earliest award made in this category was adjudged to Francis Beauchamp of Truro. The £30 paid to him for mining Cobalt represents the first attempt by the Society to harness chemical knowledge to the national advantage. When Henry Baker wrote to William Borlase enclosing the Society's first Premium List he mentioned the new organisation's intention 'to encourage Industry, by giving Rewards for the Discovery of useful things, and for the Improvement of Arts and Manufactures. And as *Cobalt* may probably be found in your Country, you'll be so good to put the Papers in such Hands as you think most likely to seek after it.' Evidently Borlase put the List into the hands of Beauchamp who sent up satisfactory specimens from his mine near Truro. A year later Baker told Borlase that Beauchamp 'has sent up a larger quantity of Ore for the Use of the Society, into which he has at his Desire been elected a Member: and he has very Genteely offered the Society to have Shares or be concerned as they shall please in the Manufacture or Purchase of the Ore. But as the Society has no lucrative Views... He has... been thanked for his kind and civil offer, and informed that the Society as a Body can do Nothing further in this Affair, but if any Members in their Private Capacity shall chose to engage in it they will write to him themselves'. Beauchamp, it seems, was too optimistic 'The Truth is that the first Specimens Mr. Beauchamp sent were good Cobalt, and produced a tolerable good blue glass, but what he sent afterwards was good for Nothing, being either vast Stones containing nothing valuable, and having no resemblance to Cobalt, or else something of the same Sort pounded, or as it was called prepared, which on trial would give no blue colour. This indeed hurt the Credit of the Mine and staggered some Gentlemen, who before seemed inclinable to have purchased Shares.'<sup>7</sup>

The failure to produce cobalt suitable for the industrial uses required – its silicates, zaffre and smalt, imparted a beautiful blue to glass, and were also used to make 'powder blue' for washing linen, did not bring to an end the Society's interest in the mineral resources of the West Country. In 1763 Samuel More, a chairman of the Chemistry Committee undertook a journey to Cornwall during the course of which he visited several mines including those of Mr. Rosewarne 'a celebrated smelter of Tin' a quarter of mile outside Truro. Rosewarne gave More samples of crystals called 'Cornish Diamonds' and showed him where gold was sometimes found. Later in the same decade Nicholas Crisp, a founding member of the Society

attempted to establish a porcelain manufacture at Bovey Tracey. Finally towards the end of the century the Society made an award relating to the Cornish tin trade in the category of 'Colonies and Trade'<sup>8</sup>

#### Manufactures

From 1756 to 1758 the Society offered premiums for the manufacture of carpets and, as the Bicentenary History puts it 'Few of the industrial offers of the Society ever met with so quick and satisfactory a response, for all six of the prizes offered during the period of the competition were awarded.' One of the prizes went to Claude Passavant of Exeter and three to Thomas Whitty of Axminster. It was Whitty who established the original Axminster carpet manufacture which was subsequently transferred to Wilton and still survives merged in the Wilton Royal Carpet Manufactory. The contemporary publications of the Society claimed that 'that the Society... may be justly deemed to have contributed, in a very great degree, to the introduction of those extensive and valuable manufactures of carpets established in various parts of Great Britain' and... that 'by the Society's awards the manufacture of carpets is now established in different parts of the kingdom and brought to a degree of elegance and beauty which the Turkey carpets never attained.'<sup>9</sup>

The next West Country prize winners in this category were George Walker of Barnstaple, Robert Williams of Falmouth, John Pyke of Exeter and James Maynard of Honiton who carried off the majority of the premiums offered between 1759 and 1760 for producing druggat 'fit for the Lisbon market' and Thomas Perren, Master of the Plymouth Workhouse who won premiums for spinning in 1761 and 1762.<sup>10</sup>

The 1770s saw the efforts of John Pepperel to produce hats made of chips from his own willows at Totnes in order to reduce national dependence on the Italian straw variety; Pepperel received 30 guineas in 1774 and 10 in 1776.<sup>11</sup>

Lastly there was the award of 50 guineas made to J. W. Boswell of Barnstaple in 1796 for weaving fishing nets. The Society's efforts in this connection were more fruitful outside the country than inside, since it was this premium offer which was said to have inspired Jacquard.<sup>12</sup>

#### Mechanics

Two of the four awards known to have been given in this category to persons from this area were as might be expected associated with the extractive industries. In 1775 John Hulman of Redruth received a bounty of 5 guineas for his machine for raising ore and in 1793 Robert Fulton of Torbay (not the American inventor) the Silver Medal for his marble and stone sawing mill. It was a general characteristic of the awards made within this category that they were for relatively cheap but useful devices, which the inventors felt were not worthwhile patenting. This was the case in regard to the Cornish resident, James Efford's improved gauging rod which won a bounty of 17 guineas in 1759, and Joseph Kneebone's Drag for a two wheeled cart which won its inventor 20 guineas in 1795.<sup>13</sup> The circumstances of Kneebone's case were vividly set out in the letter written to the Society by his patron Mr. Richard Moyle, a gentleman of Marazion.

Moyle described how:

'This simple and useful contrivance, called here a Dog, or Wheel-drag was invented by Joseph Kneebone a poor cordwainer, of this place who being obliged for some time to undertake the business of carter was frequently distressed in descending steep hills; and after a variety of contrivances, he



*Carpet made by Claude Passavant at Exeter, 1757 (Victoria & Albert Museum)*

was at last so fortunate as to complete the machine here described which on every occasion has never failed to answer the desired purpose. I have seen it tried, in a variety of instances; and within these six months its use

has become general, particularly among farmers, where nothing but real and striking advantages can induce them to change of custom . . .'<sup>14</sup>

We can well imagine how this 'simple invention' benefitted the users of steep Cornish roads.

#### Agriculture

'A continual supply of useful timber is absolutely necessary, as well as for the Ornament and Convenience as for the Security of these kingdoms', ran the preamble to the Society's 1758 Premiums List and from then until the 1820s a succession of awards was made, leading it has been estimated to the planting of more than 15 million oaks and at least 20 million firs and larches. It is well known that the first of these awards was a Gold Medal given to the young Duke of Beaufort for sowing 23 acres with acorns at Hawksbury in Gloucestershire in 1758. The second Gold Medal went to a Devonian, who planted acorns on more than 25 acres at Hudscot, near South Molton in 1759. This was Denys Rolle, Landowner and Member of Parliament for Barnstaple (1761-4). Rolle won another Gold Medal from the Society in 1761 for planting 10,394 Scotch firs.<sup>15</sup>

The premiums offered in the class of agriculture also reflected the Society's interest in a wide variety of farming improvements. In 1768 William White of Isle, nr. Exeter won £10 for planting Madder on 2 acres and in the following year £10 with a Gold Medal went to Robert Barber of Gover (also nr. Exeter) for sowing the grass called Burnet on ten acres. In 1778 William Hbert of Bowringsleigh received the Gold Medal for planting Scotch Cabbage on 11 acres. In 1782 Richard Winsor of Totnes won the Silver Medal for his method of preventing rust in wheat.<sup>16</sup>

In the 1790s there were awards made for growing potatoes for cattle fodder and cultivating turnips. The winners of these awards were either tenant farmers or landowners. Humbler folk found it possible to compete for the Society's premium for Bee keeping or improvements in agricultural machinery.<sup>17</sup>

Only one Cornish award was made in this category (an understandable contrast between the two counties). It was to Richard Moyle of Marazion, Kneebone's patron, who received a Gold Medal in 1796 for reclaiming 36 acres from the sea. His communication to the Society is revealing:

'The novelty of my draining scheme, with its attendant difficulties, joined to the great dislike, which most farmers in the West of England have to the improvements of Low Lands drew on me the censure of the public, who treated the scheme chimerical, and impossible to be effected.'<sup>18</sup>

#### Conclusion

The distribution of the Society's membership and of its award winners during the eighteenth century reflected changes in the national balance of the economy. London and the South East accounted for more than 75% of the members' addresses throughout the period, but the proportions living in the other regions altered after 1774: a classic year in British economic and social history. At that time there were eleven members giving Devonshire addresses which was the highest county total outside London and the South East. By 1800 the Devonshire total had shrunk to 2 whereas Yorkshire had 16 instead of 8 and Lancashire 14 instead of 7. In the same way the county's decline from her initially important position in manufactures was reflected in the numbers of awards given to Devonshire candidates by the

Society in that class: 15 such awards were made between 1757 and 1800 of which 12 were made before 1764 and only 1 after 1776.

Cornwall as we should expect did not produce large numbers of either members of the Society or candidates for rewards, though it was, as we have seen, a centre for fruitful consultations by the founding fathers. In 1764 2 members of the Society gave Cornish addresses and in 1774 only 1, a figure which was repeated in 1800. No awards were made in Cornwall in the class of manufactures, but there were three made in Mechanics, in contrast to the solitary Devonian in this class. The following lists of award winners and members will, it is hoped, yield further information regarding this remarkable collection of 'ingenious' men. Correspondence is invited.

#### APPENDIX I:

##### MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY OF ARTS 1755-1800 HAVING DEVONIAN OR CORNISH ADDRESSES

- TOLCHER, Mr. Henry, Plymouth, Devon (Original member: no proposer named in subscription book)
- BEAUCHAMP, Francis, Esq., Pengreep, near Truro, Cornwall (Elected July 16 1755, declined 1773. Proposed by Henry Baker)
- PASSAVANT, Mr. Claude, Exeter, Devon (Elected April 13 1757, last entry 1763. Proposed by Sir George Yonge)
- WHITTY, Mr. Thomas, Axminster, Devon (Elected April 13 1757, last entry 1779. Proposed by William Shipley)
- BARING, John, Esq., Exeter, Devon (Elected Jan. 16 1760. Proposed by Israel Wilkes)
- PITTFIELD, Mr. Wm., near Exeter, Devon (Elected July 2 1760, declined 1763. Proposed by S. Sparrow)
- LEWIS, Mr. John, Stonehouse, near Plymouth (Elected May 13 1761, last entry 1763. Proposed by Mr. Jonas Hanway)
- HAWKES, William, Esq., Luppitt, Devonshire (Elected July 22 1761, declined 1765. Proposed by Mr. Paice)
- DUNTZE, John, Esq., Exeter (Elected July 27 1761, last entry 1767. Proposed by Mr. Paice)
- QUICKE, John, Esq., Newton, Devon (Elected April 5 1762, no further entry. Proposed by Dr. Battie)
- BARING, Sir Francis, *Bart.* Exeter, Devon (Elected June 9 1762. Proposed by Mr. Wheeler)
- BARBER, Robert, Esq., Gover, nr. Exeter, Devon (Elected Oct. 22 1766, no further entry. Proposed by Alexander Small)

GULLET, Chris, Esq., Tavistock, Devonshire. (Elected March 11 1772, last entry 1778. Proposed by Thomas Yeoman)

HOLT, Wm. Faren, Esq., Barnstaple, Devon (Elected Oct. 21 1772, no further entry. Proposed by Mr. Maunsell)

TEMPLER, James, Esq., Stover Lodge, Devon (Elected Mar. 2 1791. Proposed by James Davison)

CHAMPERNOUN, J., Esq., Totnes, Devon (Elected May 2 1798, last entry 1799. Proposed by The Hon. R. Clifford)

## APPENDIX II

### DEVONIAN AND CORNISH PRIZE-WINNERS 1755-1800

#### Agriculture

1759 Denis Rolle (Hudscot): sowing Acorns

1761 Denis Rolle (Hudscot): planting Scotch firs

1766 Peter Daley (Woodbury): Bees

1768 Peter Daley (Woodbury): Bees  
Wm. White (Isle): planting Madder  
Robert Barnes (Gover): sowing Burnet

1778 Wm. Ilbert (Bowringsleigh): planting Scotch Cabbage  
Richard Winson (Totnes): preventing rust in wheat

1786 James Pyke (Newton Abbot): inventing a Chaff cutter

1789 John Lane (Farrington, Devon): Bees  
Simon Manley (Topsham): Bees

1790 Jas. Bucknell (Knowstone, nr. Tiverton): Potatoes

1793 Wm. Barbor (Fremington): Potatoes  
Jas. Bucknell, as 1790

1796 Richard Moyle (Marazion): Gaining land from the sea

1798 John Exter (Pilton): Turnips

#### Chemistry

1755 Francis Beauchamp (Truro): Cobalt

#### Polite Arts

1755 Richard Cosway (Tiverton): Drawing

1757 Richard Cosway : Ornamental design

1758 Richard Cosway : Drawing

1759 Richard Cosway : Drawing

1760 Richard Cosway : Drawing

1765 Benjamin Donn (Bideford): County map

#### Manufactures

1757 Thomas Whitty (Axminster): Carpets

1758 Thomas Whitty (Axminster): Carpets  
Claude Passavant (Exeter): Carpets

1759 George Walker (Barnstaple): Drugget  
Robert Williams (Falmouth): Cat gut and drugget  
Thos. Whitty (Axminster): Carpets

1760 John Pyke (Exeter): Drugget

1761 Jas. Maynard (Honiton): Drugget  
Thos. Perren (Plymouth): Spinning

1762 Jas. Maynard (Honiton): Drugget

1763 Thos. Perren: An improved spinning wheel

1774 John Pepperell (Totnes): Chip hats

1776 John Pepperell (Totnes): Chip hats

1796 J. W. Boswell (Barnstaple): Weaving fishing nets

#### Mechanics

1769 Jas. Efford (Westminster and Cornwall): an improved Gauging Rod

1775 John Hulman (Redruth): Machine for raising ore

1793 Robt. Fulton (Torbay): Stone sawing mill

1795 Joseph Kneebone (Marazion): Drag for a two-wheeled cart

#### Colonies and Trade

1792 George Unwin: reviving the Cornish Tin Trade to India and China

#### References

1. See the contributions to the 'Studies in the Society's History and Archives' in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* (hereafter cited as *Jnl.R.S.A.*) 1958- (still in progress). For the foundation see the writer's *William Shipley: Founder of the Royal Society of Arts* (London, 1968, 1979)
2. Information regarding early members can be found in the Society's Ms. Minutes (hereafter cited as R.S.A. Ms., Soc. Min.) and in its Ms. Subscription Books (hereafter cited as R.S.A. Ms., Sub. Bks). I have used the standard sources for my additional biographical comments, e.g. *The Dictionary of National Biography*, *The History of Parliament*, and A. Valentine, *The British Establishment 1760-1784: an eighteenth century biographical dictionary* (Norman, 1970)
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4. H. Baker to W. Borlase, 6 Aug. 1754 (Morrab Library, Penzance, Borlase Papers, Incoming Letter Book IV, 168), Society of Arts, annual printed lists of premiums offered, 1754-
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6. W. Borlase to H. Baker [1757] (Borlase Papers, Outgoing Letter Book XIV, 159); J.B. Harley, 'The Society of Arts and the Survey of English Counties', *Jnl.R.S.A.* CXII (1964), pp.43, 269, 538; W.L.D. Ravenhill, 'Benjamin Donn, 1729-98: Map maker and master of mechanics' *Trans. Devon. Assoc. for the advancement of science, literature and art* XCVII (1965), p.179; P.A.S. Pool, 'William Borlase, the scholar and the man,' *Jnl. R. Inst. Cornwall* (1966), pp. 140-141.
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## RELATIVE URBAN WEALTH IN 1524/5

R. R. Seilman

9. D. Hudson & K. W. Luckhurst, *The Royal Society of Arts, 1754-1954* (London, 1954), p.127; R. Dossie, *Memoirs of Agriculture and other oeconomical arts I* (1768) p.91; Society of Arts, *Register of premiums and bounties given by the Society...* (London, 1778), p.4.
10. R. Dossie, *op.cit.*, I, pp.14-15.
11. *Ibid.*, III (1782), pp.357-65.
12. *Trans. S. of A.* XIV (1796), pp.273-6. The offer for weaving fishing nets is said to have inspired Jacquard. (D. Hudson & K. W. Luckhurst, *op.cit.* pp.131-2).
13. R. Dossie, *op.cit.* III, pp.454, 456, *Trans. S. of A.* XII (1794), p.329, XIII (1795), p.254.
14. R. Moyle to the Society of Arts, 26 Dec. 1794, (*Trans. S. of A.* XIII (1795), p.255.)
15. H. Le Rougetel, 'Encouragement given by the Society of Arts to tree planters: John Buxton's work at Shadwell, Norfolk' *Jnl.R.S.A.* CXXIX (1981), pp.678-681; D. Hudson & K. W. Luckhurst *op.cit.*, pp.86-9; R. Dossie, *op.cit.* I, pp.3-4.
16. R. Dossie, *op.cit.* III, pp.447-8; *Trans. S. of A.* I (1783), p.275; II (1784), p.72.
17. See below Appendix II and *Trans. S. of A.* IX (1791), p.45, XI (1793), p.88; XVI (1797), p.82.
18. R. Moyle to the Society of Arts, Oct. 1795 (*Trans. S. of A.* XIV (1796), p.152).

### Acknowledgements

I am indebted to Mr. J. V. G. Mallet for drawing my attention to the Borlase Papers in the Morrab Library and to Mr. P. A. S. Pool for assisting me in my use of the papers. Miss Ann Turner, owner of the Samuel More Journals kindly supplied me with extracts relating to his 1763 visit to the West Country. The late Mr. Rowland Offer, Honorary Secretary of the Society's South Western Regional Centre, 1969-1980 gave me great encouragement to pursue this investigation.

### HUGUENOT HERITAGE 1985:

a note from Mrs Jean Tsushima

1985 commemorates the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV, an act which brought so many Huguenots to this country. An exhibition at the Museum of London in 1985 will demonstrate the impact Huguenots made on English society and will also have on display an unparalleled collection of work by Huguenot artists and craftsmen.

It is known that Huguenots, particularly those from west France, landed and settled in Devon, near Plymouth and Barnstaple, and in Exeter, though few records of Huguenot churches in Devon have survived. However, many legends of Huguenot ancestors and origin have been handed down and 1985 seems a good opportunity to collect all such instances of Huguenot origins and to sift the true from the fanciful so that a coherent record of Huguenot settlement in Devon can be written.

With this in mind an appeal is made to readers to get in touch with me if they have any genuine examples of Huguenot descent. If they have any genuine articles of Huguenot workmanship or other items of Huguenot provenance, such as letters, Bibles, prints, acts of Naturalization, etc. which they would be prepared to lend should an exhibition of such items be possible in Devon, would they please contact Mr. Ian Maxted c/o The Westcountry Library, Castle Street, Exeter. *Please do not send him any article of any kind but only information about it.*

The record of assessments for the 1524/5 Subsidy,<sup>1</sup> though occasionally incomplete and probably varying in the values arrived at by local assessors, may give a reasonable basis for judging the relative prosperity of Devon towns at the time. By any criterion, Exeter was far ahead: taking an arbitrary £10+ level to exclude the labouring poor, it shows a total value greater than that of all its five largest competitors – Totnes, Plymouth, Ottery St Mary, Cullompton, and Crediton – together, and twice as many really prosperous tax-payers rated at £100 and above. Totnes, perhaps surprisingly, comes a clear second with some three-tenths of Exeter's £10+ value and the same average as the City (£43), and over a quarter of that at £100+; Plymouth is far behind Totnes, and shows only marginally more £10+ total than Ottery. Crediton, Cullompton, and Colyton follow closely – Cullompton being some 40% ahead of Tiverton, and Colyton no less than seven times as prosperous as Axminster. Honiton accounts for only two-fifths of the £10+ assessments, and a quarter of the total, of Ottery; while North Molton shows fewer assessments but virtually the same total as South Molton.

The other end of the scale gives some at first sight surprising discrepancies: Bideford had not yet begun to flourish, and (excluding a land assessment of £60 which can hardly have been in the town) mustered only 5 £10+ assessments totalling £76 – respectively a seventh and little more than a tenth of Barnstaple's. Okehampton shows only half the £10+ assessments, and two-fifths of the total, of Hatherleigh; and Teignmouth was at the time as undeveloped as Bideford, with about two-fifths the showing of Dawlish.

Of the 28 payers rated at £100+ in Exeter City, 18 were in the three parishes of St Petrock, St Mary Arches, and St Olave, clustered round the centre. Of the remaining 14, 6 (St Paul, St John, St Pancras, St Mary Major, St Mary Steps, and Allhallows on the Walls) show none at all, the last two being particularly poverty-stricken with respectively 1 and no £10+ assessments. The last had a total tax bill of £1 and average per payer of 1s, as compared with £81 (average 29s 6d) for St Petrock.

The assessors did not always distinguish between town and parish, and in some cases the latter may inflate the true urban total; but, for what they are worth, the respective figures for £10+ assessments are:

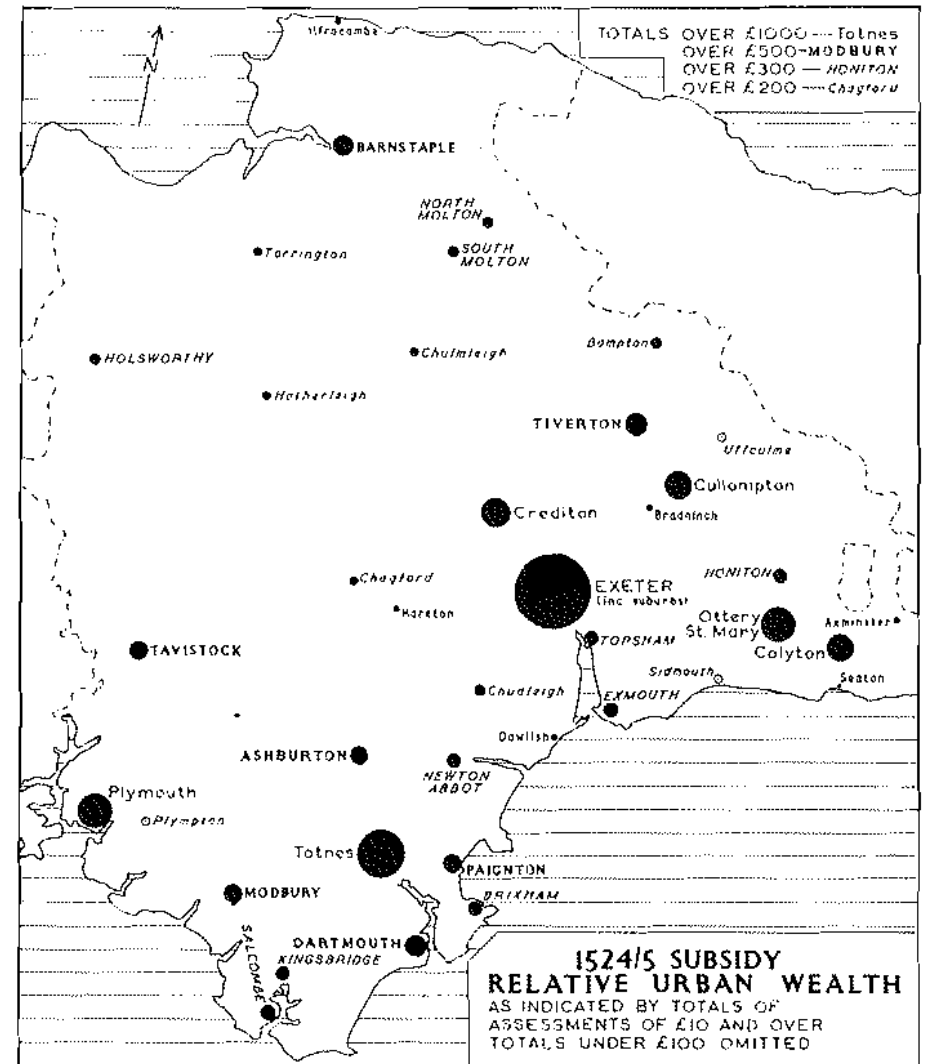
	number	total in £	average in £
Exeter City	156	6720	43
Suburbs	51	1208	24
Exeter total:	207	7928	38
Totnes	58	2518	43
Plymouth	38	1514	40
Ottery St Mary	51	1446	28
Crediton	62	1219	20
Cullompton	46	1138	25



£10+ assessments – contd

	number	total in £	average in £
Colyton	40	1116	28
Tiverton	30	772	26
Dartmouth	26	727	28
Barnstaple	35	718	21
Tavistock	27	667	25
Paignton	29	575	20
Ashburton	20	560	28
Modbury	32	552	17
Salcombe	20	489	24
Exmouth	19	443	23
Kingsbridge	18	395	22
Topsham	23	387	17
Honiton	20	375	19
Brixham	17	361	21
Newton Abbot	17	350	21
South Molton	14	322	23
North Molton	6	318	53
Holsworthy	13	314	24
Bampton	17	295	17
Chudleigh	17	293	17
Torrington	18	275	15
Chulmleigh	10	272	27
Hatherleigh	19	266	14
Chagford	15	252	17
Plympton	11	238	22
Uffculme	10	220	22
Sidmouth	13	214	17
Dawlish	13	192	15
Moretonhampstead	12	186	15
Bradninch	15	185	12
Axminster	10	155	15
Ifracombe	10	136	14
Seaton	6	113	19
Okehampton	9	98	11
Bideford	5	76	15
Teignmouth	4	73	18

On major rural estates the list is less helpful, since it dates shortly before the secularisation of monastic holdings and those of the Church compulsorily alienated under Edward VI, and does not include the property of landowners domiciled outside the County – such as the far-flung possessions of the Marchioness of Dorset.<sup>2</sup> Some old Devon families nevertheless stand out: John Coplestone (£666.2/3rd) based on Colebrooke and Thomas (£100) at Ermington; Fortescues at Filleigh (£200), Brixton (£160) and Woodleigh (£100); two Sir William Courtenays



at Powderham (£266.2/3rd) and Malborough (£366.2/3rd); Robert Cary at Cockington (£200); John Chichester at Shirwell (£200); Edward Baupfield at Poltimore (£120); Sir Lewis Pollard at Bishopsnynton (£333.1/3rd); Hugh Pruste of Hartland (£200); and Philip Champernoun at Modbury (£100). Some at least of these were shortly to extend their estates with former monastic lands. Other major

landowners were Lady Ann Saintleger (Monkleigh, £312) and the widow Joan Cotterell (Ashprington, £360).

Apart from wage-earners (here ignored), tax-payers were assessed on either goods or lands, whichever gave the higher figure; and it must be assumed that those assessed heavily on lands also had considerable and untaxed movable possessions. This however hardly affects figures for towns, where nearly all assessments were for goods and any considerable land assessment was likely to apply to property elsewhere.

#### References

1. For Exeter City see *Tudor Exeter*, M. M. Rowe, D & C Record Society, 1977; and for Exeter suburbs and the rest of the County, *Devon Subsidy Rolls 1524-7*, T. L. Stoate, Bristol, 1979.
2. *Survey of West Country Manors, 1525*, T. L. Stoate, 1979.

#### NEW CONTRIBUTORS

Keith Perkins is a retired electrical engineer. He is a Plymothian now living in Coventry and is researching the life of Devon civil engineer James Meadows Rendel (1799-1856).

Dr. D. G. C. Allan has been Curator-Librarian and Historian to the Royal Society of Arts since 1955.

#### Information, please

Ms Janet Thompson of the Department of History, University of Cincinnati, Ohio has recently joined the Society. Her main interests are witchcraft and the position of women in late seventeenth century Devon but she has also made a special study of female ale-house keepers of the same period and of defamation cases in the Diocese of Exeter. Any contributions from members should be addressed to her at the University.

#### AZARIAH PINNEY – YEOMAN, OF AXMINSTER

W. MacDonald Wigfield

Azariah was born in 1661, youngest son of the Revd John Pinney who, ordained by the First Classical Presbytery in London and appointed Vicar of Broadwindsor, Dorset, had been so well-liked that in 1660 his parishioners had appealed for him to stay: a request to which the rightful vicar, Thomas Fuller (author of *Worthies of England*) agreed. Nevertheless John Pinney could not fully subscribe to the 1662 Prayer Book and, after various periods of Nonconformist preaching (combined with farming his inherited Manor of Bettiscombe in Dorset and trading in lace) he became Minister of Dublin's Cooke Street Presbyterian Chapel. Here he heard of Monmouth's landing at Lyme and of his son's support for the rebels.

Azariah was by now married to Mary, an impecunious Scots servant girl who became a great trial to the family being referred to variously as Mistress Mary, Mrs. Azy, 'the Scot' or 'the broken Jade'. Like his father, he had an interest in the Dublin lace trade but as Monmouth reached Axminster, Azariah enlisted and marched with him to Sedgemoor. Although we know nothing else of his army service, from surviving family letters we have a fascinating and unique record of the alternating fears and hopes of a rebel's family.<sup>1</sup>

Monmouth landed at Lyme on June 11th. On the 14th John Pinney wrote to his third daughter, Sarah (then 35), "I see nothing but trouble and misery coming on these kingdoms. Wee have Rumors from the North [of Argyle's rebellion] every other day, and some from y<sup>e</sup> West". Sedgemoor Battle was fought on July 6th but John Pinney did not hear from his daughters for a fortnight nor know whether his son was alive or dead. Rachel (the fourth daughter) had written on July 11th, but the letter did not reach her father till the 22nd. Four days later he wrote to Rachel "This letter... hath life and death in it to me. For this fortnight I have languished with sorrow, weakness, grieffe, feare, that my knees shake, my eyes faile, my sleep gon... For poor Az. my eyes have not bin void of teares night and day these fortnight for him... I trembled to receive this last letter and open it. But blessed be God for some mercy in it. Oh that that poor soule were with me here. I am afraid your sistere will come into trouble about him, and... that I shall never see him more. I cannot study for disquietment of heart".

The next day he received a letter from Hester, his youngest and favourite daughter, evidently telling him that Azariah was alive and had reached London. We do not know how he got there but a later letter, referring to one from Azariah, suggests that "someone befriended him". John at once despatched Azariah's young wife "to see him ere he dye" which suggests that Azariah had been severely wounded. John wrote "If Nathaniel (his elder son) come to London, I shall be glad to see him here and A. also if possible and prudent" which seems to imply that Azariah had not by then been arrested.

The day after he received Hester's letter, John wrote "Your sorrowful letter came to me this Munday July y<sup>e</sup> 27th. It was no less then I Expected and my very soule is troubled in me, neither can I tell what to doe. I am so feeble and broken in Spirit. I would not omit any cost or care for Az. to preserve him. His Wife will Goe hence in the first ship that goeth for England... Helpe her to goe to him to

see him er he dye . . . My troubles are above my strength . . . It addeth to my misery that I dare not speake of it here to any, nor to goe home to be an helpe to them . . . Supply [her] with what money she shall need and you shall have a bill from me presently to repay it."

With the letter to Hester, John sent one to Sarah in which he quoted Job: "Shall we receive good at the hand of God and not Evil? . . . I shall never see that poor soule more in this World. He hath bin a child of sorrow to me, and with sorrow shall I goe to the grave . . . I have seen a letter from Nath. who hopes to gett cleare; and have sent Az. wife to see how it is, though I despaire that he shall live, till she come." As this was written in July, the fear for Azariah's life does suggest wounds, rather than fear of execution so soon, to what extent Nathaniel was involved, we do not know.

In the second week in August John wrote to Rachel "I ame comforted in the preserv[ation] and recovery of life. For I sayd I shall goe downe to the grave with sorrow; but God hath heard my prayer, and I hope I shall yet see the salvation of God. If Nath. come to London, I shall be glad to see him here, and A. also if possible and prudent. His last letter was life to me from the dead". With this letter John enclosed a letter to Azariah. "Son, If God shall redeem thy life from destruct[ion], he will redeem my eyes from teares . . . but it is some repaire that God hath heard prayer. Wednesday and fryday we kept a fast, Aug. 5th and 7th, and your letter came to me in the end of the fast, fryday last, which was some answer of prayer to me . . . I ame willing to spare no cost, that may serve you; and would have you to comfort your poor sisters in the Country, who are so Concerned. Every post I Expected to heare of death and trembled to open this letter. I hope your Mary came safe to London, who went hence sorrowfully but willingly . . . God open a way for you and restore you to life and liberty, that you may come hither againe, whiles I ame living . . . None knoweth your case here, neither doe I. But blessed be God that it is not worse . . . Since the writing of this I received yours dated August the 4th, which was a comfort to me on many accounts . . . Write . . . not anything plainly of yourselfe, but in some 3rd person. God preserve and direct you, to whom I comit you".

The mention of liberty, not yet restored, implies that Azariah had been arrested. With a number of others he was sent from London to Dorchester for the Assize there, which opened on September 5th. At that Assize both Azariah and one Robert Pinney were condemned to be hanged. Robert Pinney – of whom we know nothing except that he pleaded Not Guilty<sup>2</sup> – was found Guilty and hanged at Dorchester on September 7th whilst Azariah<sup>3</sup> was listed to be hanged at Bridport. Muddiman's Newsletter duly reported the hanging of Robert and a dozen others: John Pinney, reading this and knowing nothing of any Robert Pinney, presumed that it was Azariah who had been hanged, and that the report had given the wrong Christian name.

Then on September 26th John heard that Azariah was still alive, writing to Hester "It was a seasonable letter to me which came 26 of this moneth [gap] one from Az. from Dorchester, which I little Expected, Concluding [he had] bin Dead by the public papers (in which he is misnamed). But [God hath] spared him . . . I thank you (to whom he is so much obliged for his life) for your care, love and paines. For the cost it shall becomine to repay you. I have here £100 by me which shall bee returned to you speedily (if a pardon can be gott for him). I hope he may yet live to be a comfort to us all." In fact, Hester had already acted, using her

savings, £65, as a bribe to George Penne, one of the chief agents for arranging the transportation of the rebels.

Liaison between the counties hardly existed, and as Azariah normally lived in Axminster, he was presented at the Exeter Assize as "Azar Pinney of Axminster, yeoman, Supposed to bee in the Rebellion". Not being present, his name was included in the list "of the severall persons who are indicted for high Treason and are at large".

The Lord Chief Justice was not averse from transporting Azariah instead of hanging him, and allotted him to the batch 'given' to Sir Jerome Nepho and handed over to George Penne for transportation. Penne's report<sup>4</sup> on "Mr. Nepho's Account of Prisoners" mentions 65 from Dorchester, one wounded man in Exeter gaol, and 33 from Ilchester, "besides Azarias Pinney who was sent in custody to Bristol to be transported, who, it will be made appeare upon the Return of my Express sent for that purpose, hath been shipd for some one of his Majestes Plantations". The report is dated 21st October, 1685 with, for some unknown reason, Nevis selected as the young man's destination. Early in December Hester added a note to her father's letter to Sarah "since he (Azariah) went he as had a fever and shipwrack", commenting – for the benefit of Sarah who was proposing to marry without their father's permission – "See what disabedions doe".

John Pinney was vastly relieved at the alteration of Azariah's sentence. To Jane, his eldest daughter, he wrote "The last letter from A. dated at Dorchester gave me much quietness in that I saw the sense he had of Gods hand against him" and to Hester: "I ame concerned from my very soule for Az. and could chearfully have gon with him . . . But had I known of his Exile I should have Advised about the place, and took care to have furnished him to have lived as a factor till he come to us or we had gon to him . . . Since this was writ, I received your letter, by which I see more of Gods answering prayer in delivering A. as I see more of trouble on my family than I knew of. A. owes his life to you, my dear daughter, who have bin as tender as a mother to him, and don more for him than his mother could have don.<sup>5</sup> The charges I will reimburse to you, and bless God that raised you up for him, prospered you in saving him".

Hester was evidently upset that her bribe had not secured a free pardon for her brother. Her father's letter continues "My dear daughter, murmur not at God's dispensation; bless God, he is saved from being a reproach to the family, who should have bin visited with his death". One of the most rapacious of the pardon-mongers, Andrew Loder of Dorchester,<sup>6</sup> had proved singularly unhelpful, and "would have hastened his death . . . Had he (Azariah) bin reprived to have got a Pardon, I believe it would not have bin graunted him if known to have bin a Minister's Son. I hope to see him again with Comfort, whose life hath bin so oft here and in England saved by wonderfull providence . . . For Az. wife; if she will come here, I will keep her. If you can despose of her better, I am content . . . How I wish I knew in what Condition A. went and to what place. I thought his wife had bin well content to have his life spared". And after subscribing the letter "Your loving and thankful father", he added a postscript. "Read this to A. wife. Mrs. Mary, be not offended at this admirable providence of God. Bless God as I doe it is no worse. My son's life is preserved beyond my expectation . . . He may be a Joseph: sent away, not as a slave but as a purveyor, to prepare a place for us all. God will goe with him. If you please to come hither, you shall be Welcome".

A letter to Sarah, written on November 30th, mentions "I have a bill from your

Brother of £115 Expenses, not that I think that is all". The largest item on the bill was the repayment to Hester of her £65. Azariah's equipping cost over £30:

6 gallons sack for his voyage	£1-16-0
2 cheeses	6-0
3 pair thread hose	7-6
4 pair worsted	14-0
2 pair shoes	8-0
a hat	8-6
shifts and handkerchiefs etc.	14-0
tobacco and pipes	9-6
the mate and bosun for their kindness	7-6
bed, bolster and rug	2- 9-6
2 trunks	10-0
a Bible and other books	6-6
sugar, spice etc.	4-6
money given him	15- 0-0
his passage to Nevis (in the <i>Rose Pink</i> , Capt. Wogan)	5- 0-0
sword-belt, razor, shoes, buttons etc.	3- 4-0
	<hr/>
	<u>£32- 5-6</u>

Azariah had been granted "a pardon of his life and a grant of his goods and chattels from King James" on condition that he went to the Caribbean and did not return within ten years.<sup>7</sup> No one seemed interested in making Azariah an indentured servant, so he set up as a Factor, selling the lace and other goods his brother Nathaniel sent out to him, returning Nathaniel's costs in sugar. As his trade and his income increased, Azariah became a merchant as well as a factor, using this description on legal documents. Having shown himself a shrewd and reliable businessman, he was employed by neighbours as an attorney, a guardian of orphans and a tax-assessor, in time becoming a planter and a landed proprietor. His short service in Monmouth's Army was turned to good effect when he was commissioned Lieutenant in the Defence Force of Nevis. In 1696 he was elected to the House of Assembly, and a year or two later elected Treasurer of the island: holding that post for ten years — and is said to have been one of the few Treasurers of the island in the 18th century who were never accused of waste or dishonesty. He became a Member of the Council of Nevis and the new Governor, General Christopher Codrington, described Azariah as one of the "two best men of the island, without exception".

In England in May 1686 Azariah's young wife bore him a son, John, who must have been conceived during their brief reunion in the August after Sedgemoor. Mary Pinney brought the boy out to Nevis but found the climate intolerable, returning to England where part of John's boyhood was spent in Lyme Regis. In 1706 he entered Pembroke College, Oxford and later the Middle Temple where he acquired enough legal knowledge to function as Chief Justice of Nevis, living there from 1715 until his early death in 1720.

Azariah visited England in 1706 and 1719, and died in London a few months before his son's death. His grandson, John Frederick Pinney, was M.P. for Bridport

from 1747 to 1761. There are memorial tablets to him and many of Azariah's collateral descendants in Wayford Church near the border between Somerset and Dorset, not far from Crewkerne.

#### Notes:

- (1) *The Letters of John Pinney, 1679-1699* were published by Oxford University Press in 1939, edited by Geoffrey Nuttall. The story of Azariah's success is told in Professor Richard Pares' book, *A West India Fortune*, Longmans, 1950. Most of the Pinney Papers and Ledgers are now in the Library of Bristol University, one of Nathaniel's ledgers contains the Ransom Account. There is a summary of John Pinney's career in A. G. Matthews' *Calamy Revised*, Oxford, 1934.
- (2) The Gaol Book and Jeffreys' Account of the Proceedings tell us almost all we know of Robert Pinney.
- (3) J. G. Muddiman's edition of *The Bloody Assizes*, 1929, gives information from a previous Muddiman's Newsletters. Jeffreys' Account lists Azariah among those to be transported; that he was previously listed to be hanged at Bridport is shown on a Broadsheet containing "A List of the Names of the Rebels That were executed . . . (etc.) . . . Gathered out of several Papers formerly printed". The paragraph is headed "Order'd to be Executed at Bridport". The List was licensed for printing on April 1st, 1686, and "Printed by E. Millet, next Door to Mr. Shipton's Coffee-House near Fleet-Bridge, 1686". It is far from complete and of uncertain accuracy.
- (4) The note by Penne about Azariah's going to Bristol is printed in Hotten's *Original Lists of emigrants*, (p.320).
- (5) The Pinney letters occasionally show anxiety for the safety of one or other of the daughters. This would be lest they should be arrested for sheltering a fugitive rebel, for which several men and two women were executed.
- (6) Andrew Loder, who is misspelt Lodes in the Rev. John's letter of October 29th to Hester, was employed to sell the houses or farms confiscated from condemned rebels, and obtained some pardons at extortionate prices.
- (7) On May 31, 1687, at Windsor a Warrant was ordered to the Justices of Assize and Gaol Delivery for the Western Circuit, and all others whom it may concern, reciting that the King had extended his grace and mercy to 33 who were engaged in the late rebellion; the Warrant "for causing the said persons to be inserted in the next General Pardon, without any condition of transportation". Azariah's name is sixth on the list in para. 1833 in S.P.D. James II, Vol.2.

## A SAXON EARLY-WARNING SYSTEM

Anthony Collings

Documentary sources dating from the Saxon period are no less scarce for Devon than for other counties, and even when they do exist are often open to variant interpretation. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the choice facing the historian is one between starting at 1066 or turning to less familiar sources of evidence -- to that provided by archaeology, the landscape, place-names, and, as a last resort, folklore.

Even then certainty can rarely be attained, and the difficulties to be overcome before such certainty can be achieved are well illustrated by the example of the earliest written reference to Devonshire (as distinct from mere Devon), to be found in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle entry for 851 -- "In this year caldorman Ceorl with the men of Devonshire fought against the heathen at *Wicgeanbeorg*, and there made great slaughter and won the victory."

The problem here concerns the location of *Wicgeanbeorg*. The Ordnance Survey, on their map of Dark Age Britain, identify it with Wembury, although as long ago as 1925 J. J. Alexander wrote of the identity as being "phonologically quite impossible". (1) He had previously favoured Wigborough as the site, (2) although it is ten miles into Somerset, but later came to favour the hamlet of Weekaborough, on the border of Berry Pomeroy and Ipplepen parishes.

This last-named seems the obvious choice as it is on the border of the New Red Sandstone, which gives rise to the fertile 'red lands', able to provide the surplus that would have attracted the original Saxon settlers (3) and subsequent Danish raiders. A piece of folklore has survived to the effect that so much blood was spilt during the devastation of the Danes as to cause the cliffs to take on their blood-red colour, which, if nothing else, does lend support to the general location. More particular support comes from the Tithe Apportionment, which reveals three fields in the hamlet to have the name "Battlebury", yet the identification of *Wicgeanbeorg* with Weekaborough remains "not formally accepted" by the authors of *The Place-Names of Devon*.

Later that century, the continuing presence of a Danish army in England led King Alfred to initiate a network of fortresses, or *burhs*, throughout southern England. To quote Sir Frank Stenton, "By the early part of the tenth century no village in Sussex, Surrey, and Wessex east of the Tamar was distant more than twenty miles from a fortress which formed a unit in a planned scheme of national defence." (4) The picture for Devon accords very well with this, with *burhs* initially at Exeter, Pilton, Lydford and Halwell, which meant that only a small area south of Hartland was excluded, although easternmost Devon came within the ambit of the Somerset *burh* of Lyng, and the Dorset *burh* of Bredy.

The necessity of covering the maximum area of land meant that the *burhs* had to be sited away from the coast, in the case of Devon at distances varying from 5 to 20 miles, but very little seems to have been written about the problem of communicating the warning of impending attack. The late Percy Russell, in a paper on fire beacons in Devon, (5) drew attention to the place-name 'Warborough', derived from the Old English '*ward-beorg*', the watch hill, but the few instances he quoted were treated as isolated examples.

A more detailed search through the parish Tithe Apportionments for examples of the occurrence of Warborough as a field name has led to the conclusion that there

existed a comprehensive system of inter-visible watch-hills connecting the coast with the *burh* of Halwell, and later Totnes, and that there was possibly a connecting link to Exeter.

The most dramatic site is above a 400 feet high cliff two miles to the south of Brixham, which provides on a clear day a view over perhaps a thousand square miles of the English Channel. The Tithe Survey reveals two fields called Warborough, separated by an intriguingly zigzag hedgeline and reached by a Warbro Lane. Both the hedge and the lane have since been ploughed out.

The view inland is limited by higher hills, and on one a mile to the north occur three fields called Warborough or Warbers, adjacent to a Beacon Close. The latter presumably dates from several hundred years later when the threat of invasion was provided by the French.

The best known site is Galmpton Warborough, the only one to be shown on the current 1:50,000 map. As it is the lowest site, with a view only of Torbay, it seems the least necessary. The north of the bay was guarded by Warberry Hill, now covered with the pines and villas of Torquay, which makes it difficult today to assess its potential as a watch hill.

The focal point of the system, and visible from all except the first-mentioned site, is Beacon Hill, on the boundary of Marldon and the old Paignton parish, and now crowned by four telecommunications aeriels. Interestingly, a field on the Marldon side, Totness Down, preserves the alternative Saxon form for a watch hill, derived from '*Tot*' meaning a look-out and '*nals*' meaning a headland.

It is not at present known which of the two Iron Age forts in Halwell parish was chosen as the *burh*. Halwell camp is on a slight southerly slope, and Beacon Hill is not visible, although it can be seen from the sole survivor of a group of four Bronze Age barrows 300 yards to the north. Stanborough camp would seem much the more likely prospect. It has a very much more substantial bank and ditch, and Beacon Hill is clearly visible, even from the ditch. In addition, it gave its name to the adjacent hundred, indicating some form of activity here in late Saxon times.

Nor is it known when the *burh* was transferred from the windswept downs to the south of Totnes to the more sheltered location at the head of the tidal River Dart. While it is difficult to mentally reconstruct the appearance of pre-Norman Totnes, it is my belief that Beacon Hill would have been just visible from the top of what is now the High Street.

Any extension\*of the system to Exeter remains highly conjectural. The key site has to be a hill on the edge of Coffinswell parish where seven fields are called 'Fire Berry'. It is necessary to make the assumption of contemporaneity with the Warboroughs, an assumption that is next to impossible to prove, particularly in a county where the word 'bury' remained in vernacular use for an earthwork almost up to the present day. Nevertheless, it is my belief that by the later Middle Ages, when inland parishes were required to maintain a fire-beacon, early forms of the word, such as 'Fyrbykene' were in use.

However, it has to be said that many authorities consider that in Saxon times warning of danger was conveyed by messenger and not by fire. Sir Frank Stenton has indicated that there is no tradition of beacons, (6) although it has been pointed out by H. T. White that "the absence of actual record does not show that warning beacons were not used." (7) Yet a contemporary writer, Michael Wood, specifically suggests mustering by beacons in the build-up to the Battle of Hastings. (8)

Even if the contemporaneity of the 'Fire Berry' with the Warboroughs is

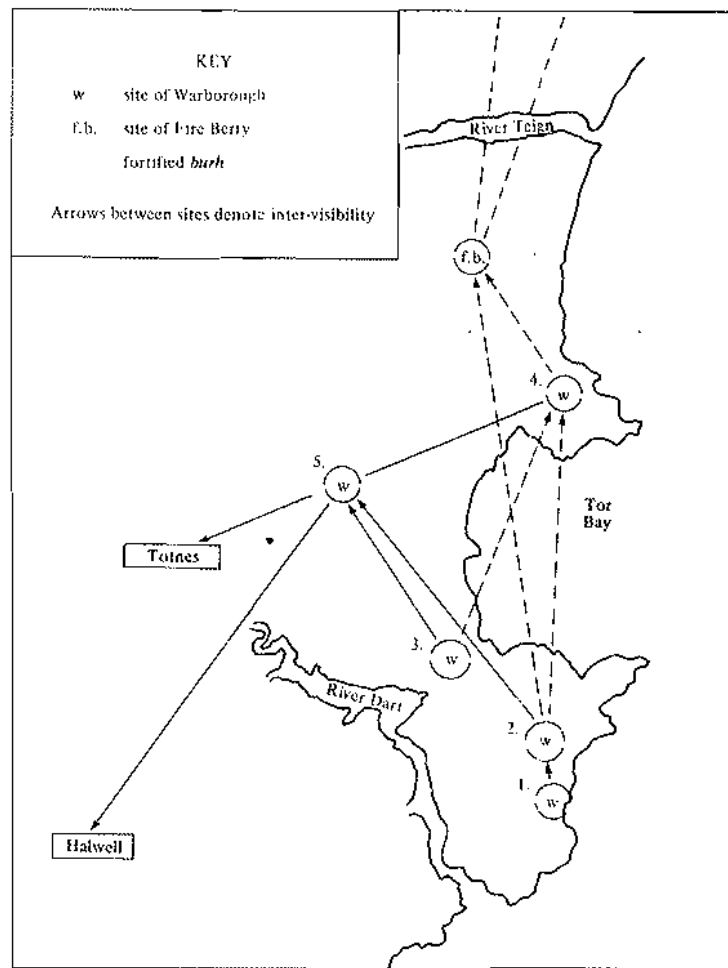


Fig 1. Locations of the field name 'Warborough'

accepted, another difficulty presents itself – the absence of another site visible to the north. But as the higher ground north of the River Teign is composed of Upper Greensand, which gives rise to very infertile soils, it is hardly reasonable to expect a Saxon name to have been preserved by continuous cultivation over 900 years. Therefore it seems not wildly fanciful to infer the existence of now lost sites at either Little Haldon or Holcombe Down in order to maintain a complete system.

Once the latter site is accepted, the way is clear to Exeter via the Warboro

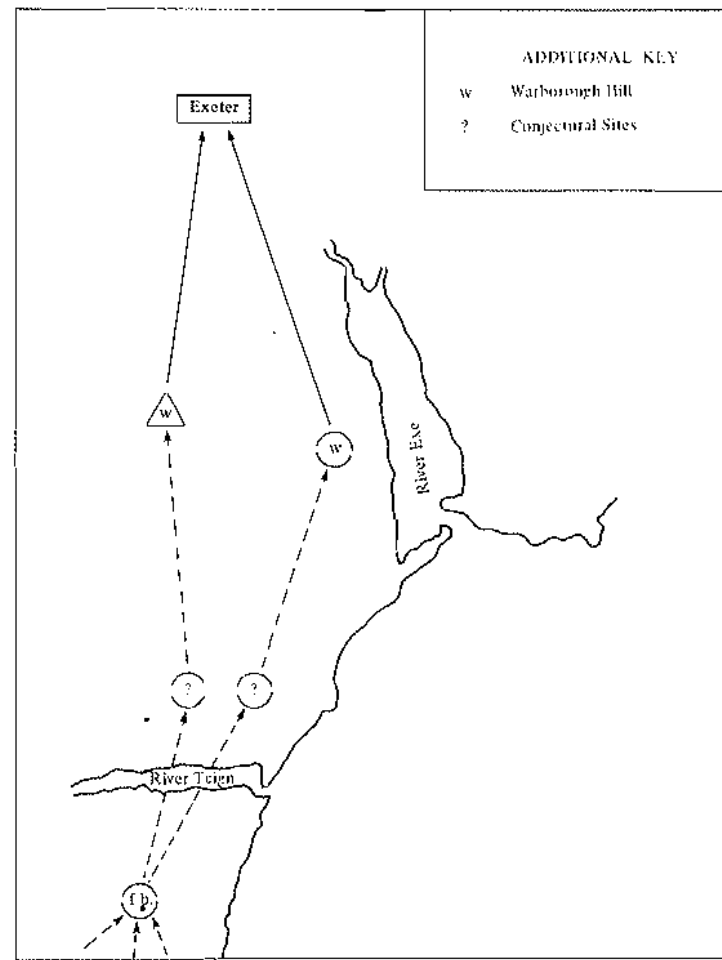


Fig 2. Conjectural Link to Exeter

plantation, shown on the 1:25,000 map in the parish of Kenton and where the Tithe Map reveals six fields called Warborough scattered over its southern slopes. The area is now given over to the rearing of game birds, with consequent exclusion of the casual pedestrian, but I believe that the highest part of Saxon Exeter, around what was to become Rougemont Castle, would be just visible through the gap in the intervening hills at Powderham Arch.

Another site, Warborough Hill, may not be immediately identifiable to the

present generation of Exonians, but it would have been to their forefathers. In 1806 it became part of another system of inter-visible watch hills when the Admiralty telegraph was installed on it, and has been known as Telegraph Hill ever since.

I know of only one example of the field name Warborough in North Devon – not, as might be expected, on one of the prominent hills to the south of the Taw estuary, but just west of Lee, near Ifracombe (SS476466). It seems a puzzling site, being dominated by higher cliffs on both sides, and with only a minimal view to the west. As it was in the Domesday manor of Warcombe, the first element in the name of which is suggested as being derived from a river-name, it must be possible that the Warborough has the same origin.

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- (6) F. M. Stenton, *op. cit.* p.592n.
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- (8) Michael Wood, *In Search of the Dark Ages*, 1981, pp.216, 217.

#### LIST OF WARBOROUGH SITES

Site Numbers	Grid Reference	Height (in feet)	Parish (at time of Tithe Survey)	Field Numbers on Tithe Map
1	SX 918256	400+	Brixham	451,458
2	SX 915543	483	Brixham	665/6,703
3	SX 889569	220	Churston Ferrers	136,139 439,448/9
4	SX 926644	448	Tormohun/ St. Marychurch	336/7 1497,1538,1541
5	SX 858620	643	Paignton	648/5
6	SX 960823	300	Kenton	671,675/6/7/8,684

#### SITE OF FIRE BERRY

SX 902690	585	Coffinswell	251,253/4/5/6/7/8
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## AN EXAMPLE OF 17th CENTURY HONITON LACE?

H. J. Yallop

A problem encountered in connection with investigating the history of the Honiton lace industry is the lack of any piece of 17th century lace which can unequivocally be shown to have been made in the Devon lace making area.<sup>1</sup> It is not credible to suppose that no such pieces have survived since plenty of lace from this time is to be found in museums, private collections, dealer's stocks and salerooms. It seems certain that examples from the considerable output of the area<sup>2</sup> do survive, but are not recognised for what they are and, hence, bear wrong attributions. It would, therefore, be most helpful if even one piece could be identified, either with certainty or beyond reasonable doubt, as being an example of 17th century Honiton lace. In this paper it is argued that such a piece does exist.

The piece in question was presented by The Antiquarian Society of the Art Institute of Chicago to the Institute in whose collection it now is.<sup>3</sup> It is shown in Figures 1 and 2. It is designated as a linen bobbin lace collar, probably West England, Devonshire, Dorset, 1661, with dimensions 28¾ x 5¼ in. (73.4 x 13.4 cm). An analysis of the design features provides a number of clues as to its possible origin.

The overall design consists of a pattern repeated three times, with part of a fourth. Each repeat contains two crowns, two Tudor roses and the three feather



Figure 1 – Piece of lace, Art Institute of Chicago 1937.452. – courtesy of the Art Institute of Chicago.



Figure 2 – Details from Figure 1. – courtesy of the Art Institute of Chicago.

emblem used by the Prince of Wales. There is, therefore, a clear connection with British royalty. The royal personage concerned is equally clearly indicated by the words CAROLUS REX (King Charles), which occur twice in the whole piece, and the date 1661, which is the year following the restoration of the monarchy in the person of Charles II. This identification is further confirmed by the fact that the whole design is united with sprays of oak involving both leaves and acorns. The oak has traditionally been associated with Charles II in memory of his escape by hiding in an oak tree after the battle of Worcester, and to this day sprays of oak are worn on Founder's Day by the pensioners of Chelsea Hospital in his memory.

The piece also contains the words VIVE LE ROY (Long live the king!), repeated twice. This is a sentiment used by loyal subjects and it seems improbable in the extreme that any king, however egotistical, which Charles was not, would use the expression. It may be concluded, therefore, that this piece of lace was commissioned by a loyal subject of Charles II, rather than by the king himself.

Further examination shows that the letters C and B are placed to each side of the date. It has been suggested<sup>4</sup> that these letters may stand for Catherine of Braganza whose marriage to Charles was arranged in 1661. This suggestion, however, leaves unsolved the problem of the significance of the final incorporated wording, namely CB BARONET. This cannot refer either to the king or to Catherine. An obvious explanation is that the lace was commissioned by a baronet whose initials were CB, who was an ardent royalist and who had special reason for marking the year 1661.

A study of the baronetage shows that there were two baronets with the initials CB in 1661.<sup>5</sup> One of these was Sir Cecil Bishopp of Parham, Sussex. He was born in 1635, succeeded to the title in 1652 and died in 1703. He married Sarah Bury of Culham, Oxfordshire, in 1666 and was Member of Parliament for Bramber, Sussex, from 1662 to 1679. Whilst there is no evidence to show that Sir Cecil did not commission this piece of lace, there is nothing known about his life to suggest that he was at all likely to have done so.

The other baronet was Sir Copleston Bampfield (or Bampfylde) of Poltimore, Devon. Sir Copleston was born in 1638, succeeded to the title in 1650 and died in 1692. He was Member of Parliament for Tiverton, Devon, 1659 and subsequently as a county member 1671-79 and 1685-87. He married Margaret Bulkeley of

Burgate, Hampshire and subsequently Jane Pole of Shute, Devon, who survived him. John Prince (1643-1723), who was a near contemporary of Sir Copleston, included an account of his life in his book *The Worthies of Devon*<sup>6</sup> and this contains some material highly relevant to this inquiry. It appears that Sir Copleston was very active in public affairs during the period from the death of Cromwell in 1658 and the restoration of the monarchy in 1660. Furthermore, after the Restoration he raised a troop of gentlemen who rode about the county where they "... brought all the disaffected in those parts into due subjection to the government in a little time." After that:—

When these dangers now were happily over, and the nation once more settled upon its antient bottom, this honourable person had the whole posse comitatus of Devon put into his hands by King Charles the Second; he being the first high-sheriff of this county, which he made after his return to the throne, and this was in the year of our Lord 1661. Which office, Sir Copleston executed with splendour, in an extraordinary number of liveries, and attendants. as gave occasion to the stinting sheriffs for the future, not to exceed forty upon their own account.

It is evident from Prince's account that Sir Copleston was an active royalist who received a special mark of favour from the king in 1661. It is also apparent that he was a man with a taste for dress and so what more likely than that he would celebrate this royal favour by the commissioning some special article of dress to be worn with one of his liveries.

One further aspect of Sir Copleston's life at this time is relevant. He was among the Devonshire gentlemen who were chosen by the king for the proposed new order of chivalry, the Knights of the Royal Oak,<sup>7</sup> though he was never invested since the project was abandoned as likely "... to keep awake animosities which it was part of wisdom to lull to sleep."<sup>8</sup>

It will be seen, therefore, that Sir Copleston Bampfield fulfills with great accuracy the specification suggested for the person who commissioned this piece of lace. He was a baronet with the initials CB, he was a royalist who had a special reason for marking a royal favour in 1661 and he was an enthusiast for dress.

The next point which must be considered is whether Sir Copleston would have been likely to have commissioned this piece from the Honiton lace industry. A number of observations suggest that he would.

Poltimore is situated about 4 miles (6.5 km) to the north east of Exeter and so is close to the lace making district. Honiton is about 11 miles (17.5 km) distant so Sir Copleston could have visited a lace manufacturer in Honiton and have returned home in the course of a few hours. A lace manufacturer could have visited him likewise. With a lace industry so conveniently at hand it would seem extremely unlikely that he would have even considered going further afield. One would also expect the gentry of an area to support local industry and there is evidence of this in connection with Honiton lace at a later date. Thus at a Drawing Room held by Queen Victoria in 1848 a description of the dresses shows that only three involved Honiton lace.<sup>9</sup> These were worn by the Dowager Lady Clinton, Lady Yarde Buller and Miss Yarde Buller, the only three ladies present to come from the East Devon area.

In 1661 several laws<sup>10</sup> were in force which banned the importation of a variety of manufactured goods and these were interpreted to include lace. It is



apparent that these laws were evaded and that lace was brought into the country illegally, for the king issued a Proclamation on 20 November 1661 to draw attention to them.<sup>11</sup> The following year a new act was passed<sup>12</sup> specifically prohibiting the importation of foreign lace and several related commodities. It is apparent, therefore, that at the time the piece of lace under consideration was made the importation of foreign lace was well-known to be illegal and so, in theory, it ought not to have been commissioned abroad. However, it is clear that in practice the laws were flouted. It must be remembered, though, that the penalties for being caught were not only a fine but also the confiscation of the lace. A lace dealer, motivated by hope of commercial gain, might consider this an acceptable risk but surely such considerations would not apply to a piece specially commissioned, especially when the commissioner was a man of established position and proven loyalty to the crown.

Finally it must be borne in mind that, unlike some royalists, Sir Copleston had not shared the king's exile. He would not, therefore, have had personal experience of the continental lace industry. It seems most unlikely that he would have gone to the trouble of trying to place an order in a foreign country with manufacturers he did not know rather than with his own countrymen who operated a notable industry close by.

A further point merits consideration. The piece of lace is at present designated as being a collar. This identification seems to be questionable. The object is a strange shape for a collar and could not be worn round the neck without a degree of puckering, which seems inconsistent with a piece which incorporates wording. A graver objection is that if so worn the design, in particular the wording, would be upside down. Examination of the corner shows that the piece was originally a single strip which was later severed and reassembled in its present form, using a different reseam along the join. A scissors and paste operation on a photograph shows that the piece can be reassembled into a single strip with the design carried through the new join.

If, as is apparent, the piece was originally a single strip it would have been 5¼in. (13.4cm) wide and about 53½in. (136cm) long. It seems likely, however, that it was originally somewhat longer. As reassembled the piece has three design repeats and part of a fourth. If the original extended to four complete repeats then the total length would have been about 63in. (160cm) long. This idea appears the more likely in that the missing piece could have been regarded as complete in itself, with a symmetrical design incorporating a crown and two roses. Its dimensions would have been 5¼in. (13.4cm) by 9in. (23cm). It could have been cut off to give to someone, or for separate use, or even as a collector's sample! The remaining length would then have been cut through at the appropriate point (29in. (74cm) from the end) for assembly into a right angled piece with equal arms.

The design of the whole suggests that it was intended to be worn flat and the only way which this could apparently be done on female dress of the period would be as a bertha. However it would have been too long for this purpose and, in any case, the whole concept suggests that it was for male wear. Sir Copleston Bampffield was over 6ft. (183cm) in height<sup>13</sup> and experiment with a replica shows that the dimensions would be eminently suitable for a sash, probably mounted on coloured silk or other rich cloth. In this form the wording and design would be the right way up, as would befit an article having the dignity of royal connotations.

The facts that Sir Copleston Bampffield so exactly fulfills the characteristics of

the person who commissioned this piece of lace as indicated by the design features, and that it is exceedingly unlikely that he would have commissioned it from anywhere other than his local source, show beyond reasonable doubt that this is an example of 17th century Honiton lace. It is difficult to see how any other identification could be sustained.

Given this strong probability that this piece is a product of the Honiton lace industry in 1661 it will be possible to use it as a basis for attempts to identify further examples. An obvious area for comparison is with the 17th century so-called Dutch lace and also with that classified as Antwerp.<sup>14</sup> There is certainly a superficial resemblance and this is in keeping with Celia Fiennes' observation of a resemblance between Honiton and Antwerp laces in the century.<sup>15</sup> Whether the lace now classified as Dutch and Antwerp should be renamed, in whole or in part, time alone will tell, following detailed studies of technique and structure as well as physical and, possibly, chemical investigation of the fibres used. Another possible connection to be considered is with the Crown Lace referred to in the Great Wardrobe Accounts.

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8. *Country Life*, 25.5.1951.
9. *Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 20 May 1848, p.6.
10. 1 Richard III c12, 3 Edward IV c4, 19 Henry VII c21, 5 Elizabeth I c7.
11. Preamble to 13 Charles II c13.
12. 13 Charles II c13.
13. Prince, Op. cit. p39. Prince had met Sir Copleston and gives a description of his appearance.
14. Pat Earnshaw, Op. cit. p74.
15. H. J. Yallop, Op. cit. p201.

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The existence of the *Burnet-Morris Index* and the *Treeman's Flying Post Index* in the West Country Studies Library, Exeter and the card index at Torquay Library should be noted also.

Select chronology

- 1317 Torre Abbey granted rights to draw nets at Cockington.
- 1338 Black Prince granted Water of Dartmouth including Torbay, later became the property of the Duchy of Cornwall.
- 1376 First reference to trawling. Brixham's involvement is much later

- 1456 *see* Russell, P. 'Some historical notes on the Brixham fisheries', in *Trans. Devon. Assoc.*, v83, 1951.
- 1495 John Marshall of Brixham granted a licence to carry pilgrims to the Tomb of St James of Compostella.
- 1512 Wreck in Torbay; cargo of wine passed to monks of Torre Abbey who did not pay for it. *see Torq. Dir.* 14 Aug 1912.
- 1512 Ships pressed for Navy service at Brixham, Torquay, Paignton, etc. (Impressment of ships and men *see* Oppenheim, p21)
- c1540 Dartmouth Customs House records list Torquay vessels and cargoes. *see Torq. Dir.* 20 March 1918.
- c1560 Bulwarks proposed at Berry Head, Beacon Hill and elsewhere. Dunkirkers (Privateers) in Torbay.
- 1573-78 Pirates in Torbay *see Acts of the Privy Council* for details.
- 1588, Jul Spanish Armada in Channel. *Nuestra Senora del Rosario* captured. Start of Newfoundland fisheries; by 1620s some 300 vessels were involved annually.
- Later 16th cent.
- 1623 John Nutt the pirate in Torbay; taken by Sir John Eliot. *see Forster, J. Life of Sir John Eliot and Camden Misc.* v17.
- 1626 King's fleet "lies in Torbay much in need of cordage and sails".
- 1629 Pirates still in Torbay including Downe. *See* Brixey, p60.
- 1637 Dunkirk men-of-war landed prisoners-of-war who were said to be a charge on the inhabitants.
- c1650 Press Gang were hard at work in Devon *see* Oppenheim, pp68-9.
- 1664-67 Naval engagements against the French & Dutch; de Ruyter in Torbay.
- 1688, Nov. William, Prince of Orange landed at Brixham.
- 1690 French fleet under Adm. Tourville in Torbay & bombarded Teignmouth.
- 1699 Plan for a harbour or mould across the entrance to Torquay proposed by Mr Robinson *see* Dymond & White, p11. (The idea was revived in the 1860s when a breakwater from Berry Head to Hope's Nose was proposed.)
- 1700-1800 British fleets in Torbay *see* Dymond & White, pp11-18.
- 1727 Smuggling vessel brought into Torquay with arrack and tea.
- 1740 Peter White "flogged through the fleet"; 100 lashes for desertion.
- 1771 Brig *St Peter* wrecked at Torre Abbey; local wreckers apprehended.
- 1778 Press Gang still at work. Midshipman Phillips killed a Torquay fisherman. *see* Dymond & White, p14.
- 1783 Privateer *Snapdragon* of Dartmouth captured the Dutch ship *Liefde*.
- 1784 Convict ship in Torbay; 116 prisoners escaped and swam to Paignton.
- 1787 Guernsey smuggling lugger lost in Torbay; crew of 5 died.
- 1793-1815 British fleets in Torbay frequently during Napoleonic War *see* Dymond & White, pp17-20.
- 1803 New pier at Torquay commenced; masons protected against Press Gang. Foundation stone of Brixham new pier laid; completed 1804.

- 1804 Wreck of the *Venerable*, see Larn. p102.  
 1811 Sailing match for open boats at Torquay; later became the Regatta.  
 1815, Jul. Napoleon aboard *Bellerophon* in Torbay. Presents of fruit sent from the gardens at Torre Abbey by Mr Cary.  
 1822 Coastguard Service founded; station at Babbacombe by 1825. Steam vessels first plied between-Portsmouth and Plymouth.  
 Before 1830 Steamship *Brunswick* bringing visitors to Torquay by sea.  
 1838 Paignton Harbour Act passed; first ships docked in 1839.  
 1841 George Gilley rescued the crew of a schooner wrecked under Waldon Hill "in a basket". (Breeches buoy not invented until 1855.)  
 1842 120 barrels of smuggled spirits found off Babbacombe.  
 1843 Foundation stone of Brixham breakwater laid; not completed until 1916.  
 c1845-60 Emigration from Torquay in Wm Crossman's vessels, mainly to Quebec see Fisher, H.E.S., ed., *Ports & shipping in the SW* p131.  
 1849, Mar. Emigrant ship *Isabella* sailed from Torquay for Galveston with 145 on board.  
 1849, Apr. Schooner launched at Shaw's Shipyard.  
 1850 Brixham said to have the largest fishery in England; 270 vessels, 1600 seamen in the port.  
 1850, Feb. Large cargo (90 tubs) of smuggled spirits taken at Babbacombe.  
 1855 *Charlotte*, the last vessel launched from Shaw's Shipyard.  
 1864 Schooner *Isabella* launched from W. A. Gibbs shipyard at Galmp-ton see Greenhill, B., *Merchant schooners*, v2, p171.  
 1866, Jan. Great hurricane, over 40 ships wrecked and 100 lives lost.  
 1866, Nov. First Brixham lifeboat *City of Exeter* arrived.  
 1868-69 Case concerning Duchy of Cornwall dues heard; useful information on cargoes and importers. Toll of 6d per ton in lieu agreed 1870.  
 1870 Haldon Pier completed.  
 1871 *Madcap* a large schooner was launched from Uphams' yard at Brixham.  
 1873 *Wallace* on fire; burnt out and sank see Larn, pp113-4.  
 1876 Torquay lifeboat arrived; station closed in 1923.  
 1883 Ship with 30 emigrants left Torquay for Australia.  
 1890 Foundation stone of Princess Pier & Gardens laid (Outer harbour).  
 1902 Letters "BM" introduced for Brixham fishing vessels.  
 1910, Jul. Fleet Review by King George V; Grahame White flew over ships see *Torq. Dir.* 10 Aug 1910.  
 1912 Large fleet in Torbay; visited by Winston Churchill see *Torq. Dir.* 31 Jul 1912.  
 1920 Ex-German warships aground at Paignton.  
 1936 Last visit of great "J" class yachts see Russell, p198.  
 1944, May United States Forces left Torbay (and elsewhere) for Normandy beaches.  
 1971 New fish market and jetty opened at Brixham.

## REVIEWS

**Barnstaple: Town on the Taw**, by Lois Lamplugh. Chichester, Phillimore, 1983. 224pp. £9.95. ISBN 085033 488 8.

At a time when the historic core of the ancient town of Barnstaple, including its Castle Mound, faces greater threats at the hands of developers than were ever posed by armies, a new and readable history of the town is most opportune. For a book which traces the town's history from Anglo-Saxon times almost to the present day there is a great deal of detailed information, but inevitably what we have is more of a chronicle than an investigation and no comparisons are made, even with neighbouring towns. But, while making no claim to originality, the author, an experienced writer, has made good use of nearly, but not quite, all available printed sources, both primary and secondary. For modern times she has also used local newspapers. There are obvious gaps, for example very little about the religious history of a town whose parish church was almost the corporation's private chapel, and there is nothing about the dissolution of the Magdalen priory and its consequences. There is more about government than about the town's economy and the author was unfortunate in that Dr Alison Grant's masterly study of the local pottery industry appeared too late for her to make use of it. Nor, apparently, did she keep in touch with the archaeologists who, during the last decade, have begun to uncover so much of Barnstaple's past. There are some delightful drawings by Jonathan Lomas, a very interesting collection of early prints and some good maps, though it should have been made clear that the drawing of sixteenth-century Barnstaple was a purely imaginative reconstruction by Bruce W. Oliver. The author pokes gentle fun at the promoters of the Millenary celebrations of 1930, but at least one of the children in Barnstaple at that time first had her historical interest aroused by all the pageantry and, genuine or not, Athelstan's charter provided her and her friends with a splendid swimming pool.

Joyce Youngs

**Planning in action: vision and realities in a country town**, by Anne Glyn-Jones. Devon County Council and the University of Exeter, 1983. 115pp. £3.50. ISBN 0 85989 169 0.

This book tells the story of the impact of planning on the town of Honiton from 1964 to 1980, with occasional glances outside the period. During that time the councillors who had to make decisions had to cope with 16 publications incorporating over 1700 pages of information, nearly 600 statistical tables, 136 graphs and diagrams and over 100 maps. A substantial part of the book is devoted to providing a summary of this mass of papers. Future historians will, of course, go to the original documents to study the aspects of interest to them, but they will certainly find Anne Glyn-Jones' masterly review an invaluable guide. Having read what she has written I was forcibly reminded of C. E. M. Joad's observation that the student of philosophy "... will be asked to take part not in a steady and ordered advance from speculation to knowledge but in a series of marches and counter-marches, in the course of which he will traverse and retrace the same territory in the company

of travellers whose concern seems less to arrive at a goal than to obliterate the footsteps of their predecessors."

In the second part of the book the author has some most perceptive observations on the planning process. Planning depends on the ability to forecast the future, a process which, like all extrapolation, is fraught with difficulty. The result can only be as good as the assumptions fed in and will often give an entirely spurious air of reliability. Readers of this book may be tempted to wonder whether any valid model can be constructed which will incorporate all the relevant parameters required to provide a decision datum on which peoples' lives and well-being are dependent.

The book is full of "quotable quotes", too many to incorporate in a short review. I will content myself with one in the hope that it will send readers to the book for more: "The prospects of manipulating tomorrow's world are of intrinsic interest to some casts of mind, but the point at which most people's interest engages is at a far more parochial level: where will the double yellow lines go? Which trees are going to come down? Is there going to be a youth club? If I start a business in my garage, shall I be told to stop? Are they going to build on the allotments? If the resolution of such issues seems to fall rather far short of the Utopian hopes that fire the imagination of the young enthusiast for planning, it may nevertheless be the level at which more can be achieved towards the construction of New Jerusalem than by all the participatory exercises in county, region or nationwide futurology which have so preoccupied politicians, planners and people over the last 20 years."

A final point for Devon historians -- Fig. 5 shows very clearly the structure of the medieval new town.

John Yallop

**Rebellion and Riot: Popular Disorder in England during the Reign of Edward VI**, by Barrett L. Beer. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1982. x, 269pp. £19.00. ISBN: 0-87338-269-2.

Down here in Devon 'Tudor rebellion' means the Prayer Book Rising of 1549 which brought armed Cornishmen over the Tamar, fierce fighting at Sampford Courtenay and Clyst St Mary, arson at Crediton and a culmination in the rebels' siege of Exeter, a failure followed by the usual grim retribution of a frightened establishment recovering its nerve. Controversy among historians has concentrated on the motivation. Was there a mono-cause? Were the priorities religious rather than social or economic? Was it an expression of national or of merely local grievances? Answers to such questions are likely to be suggested by extending the scope of enquiry to the whole country and to the entire Tudor century. It is clear at once that disorder was endemic. Englishmen (sometimes women) were regarded by foreign observers, such as Venetian ambassadors, as 'an ungovernable people' liable to speak and act 'in contempt of all authority'. (Risings were, in fact, common across Europe throughout the sixteenth century).

Professor Barrett Beer is chiefly concerned to survey such things during the difficult reign of Edward VI and particularly the rule of the regent, Somerset. He takes in beside the major Western Rebellion and Kett's in Norfolk, a range of minor incidents in the Midlands, Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Middlesex, Kent, Hants, Yorkshire and Lancashire, and in London itself. The capital faced not merely the external

threat of marching rebels (who saw it as the hub that turned the common wheel) but also an intestine one from an overcrowded population whose restlessness was always capable of alarming the ruling oligarchy. What emerges is the diversity of motivations, between risings but also within them. The label slapped on a 'bread riot' may conceal unexpected complexities. Each participant, eager or reluctant, would have his own list and orders of priorities, always subject to change with events. One man's triviality might be another's most vital issue, made so by 'an imperfect understanding of the past and a limited comprehension of the present' -- and, one might add, hazy expectations. Professor Beer, sees 'the world of Devon and Cornwall' -- I would say 'two worlds' -- as 'small, inward-looking and parochial', 'shielded by geography from innovation and change', with Exeter as 'the last bastion of civilisation before the rugged Celtic society of Cornwall', a proud land where the Cornish language was still spoken. For its denizens the English of the Prayer Book may in fact have been no more incomprehensible than the Latin of the old service, but its sounds and the ritual that went with them were unfamiliar, indeed, 'foreign'. But if religion was the first and for many the main thing contested for, there was more to it than that. The harshness of landlords, existing and rumoured fiscal oppression -- it was alleged that 'geese and pigs were soon to be taxed' -- dearth, all provided the 'emotionally charged atmosphere' requisite for revolt.

Professor Beer offers an efficient narrative, striving perhaps more readily than most historians hitherto to glimpse something of the way the rebels -- many of whom had 'but the interest of breathing' -- saw their situation rather than accepting the viewpoint of the winners -- the government and the regional ruling élite. No doubt his analysis of neither the rising in the West nor Kett's rebellion is conclusive. The debate will continue. All the while it does, the past, our past, happily, will be alive and kicking.

Ivan Roots

**Back along the lines -- North Devon's railways** by Victor Thompson. Bideford: Badger Books, 1983. 60pp. £1.95. ISBN 0 946290 03 2

**The Teign Valley Line** by L. W. Pomroy. Poole: Oxford Publishing Co. 1984. 36pp. £5.95. ISBN 0 86093 194 3

One of the most active branches of local history is that concerned with railways. There seems to be a limitless market for such books which come in all shapes, sizes and prices. The first of the books noticed here forms part of the publisher's 'Devon heritage' series. Using Barnstaple as his hub, the author describes the history of the lines which run to Exeter, to Ilfracombe, to Taunton, to Halwill Junction and to Lynton and adds to these lines sections on the Lynton Cliff Railway and the line from Bideford to Appledore.

Victor Thompson writes pleasantly and has drawn on the more serious works which he lists in his bibliography for the outline histories of these lines and provided information about access where appropriate, seemingly based on personal experience. The flavour of the book can be judged by the first paragraph of the section on the Lynton Cliff Railway, where the author writes: 'Devon's heart-stopping railway drops from Lynton to Lynmouth with an atmosphere inside the coach of do-or-die. Close your eyes, your mind and pray'.

To this the latest of the Oxford Publishing Company's volumes on railways

provides a complete contrast. A history for the devotee, it contains a detailed account of a branch line seventeen miles long which originally ran from Heathfield to Ashton. Opened in 1882, it was extended to Exeter and became a through line in 1904. Passenger traffic ceased in 1958 and the line was finally closed in 1967. This line was mainly designed to serve the quarries in the Teign valley at Christow, Bridford, Trusham and elsewhere and it was never a very active passenger line. For much of its period of operation it had no more than six passenger trains a day and reached a dizzy peak of activity in the mid-1930s of nine daily passenger services. On occasion it also provided a steep and winding alternative route from Exeter to Newton Abbot when the main line along the coast from Dawlish to Teignmouth was breached by storm. Lavishly illustrated, this book contains a detailed account of the route, together with information about the locomotives and rolling stock employed and the methods of signalling and train working, as well as of the goods traffic carried by the line, milk, coal, timber, oil and cattle in addition to stone. There are maps of the line, photographs and plans of the stations, measured drawings of the locomotives and rolling stock employed and sample pages from the timetables. As is characteristic of this series, the author is less interested in the men who owned and operated the line. There is a foreword by the late Bishop Westall of Crediton, well-known as a railway enthusiast, who recalls that on one occasion when he travelled on the line, 'we ran short of steam on the climb to what we used to call the Haldon Hump, and stopped short of the tunnel: I was allowed to get out of the carriage and pick bluebells, until the shrill whistle called to me'. A pleasant memory of a line which has disappeared from what British Rail choose to call 'the age of the train'.

Walter Minchinton

**Methodism in Devon: a handlist of chapels and their records;** a list with introduction by Roger F. S. Thorne. Devon Record Office Handlist no. 2, 1983. Available from the County Archivist, Devon Record Office, Castle Street, Exeter, EX4 3PU. £1.00 (£1.20 incl. post.)

With the publication of this finding list, Roger Thorne completes a duo with his historical bibliography *Methodism in the South West*, published by the author and briefly noticed in *D.H.* 28.

It would be an impertinence for this reviewer to contemplate assessing the accuracy and completeness of these compilations by the Honorary Archivist of the Plymouth and Exeter District of the Methodist church. But, equally, it would not be proper to allow them to remain unheralded in the pages of the *Devon Historian*. Indeed it must be a fundamental duty – albeit a very pleasant one – for the Society's Journal to encourage and laud publications of their nature and to advertise their availability.

As the Devon County Archivist, Mrs Margery Rowe, says in her foreword, the listings in this booklet will be of great use to searchers and staff alike in the County Record Office searchrooms. Equally, I am sure, those readers who but rarely visit a Record Office will welcome the addition of these two modestly priced publications to their bookshelves as essential sources for a significant aspect of Devon history.

An interesting reflection is that anyone referring to Roger Thorne's two

booklets side by side could hardly fail to notice the sharply contrasting standards in production. The Record Office handlist neat and precise (as one would expect) whilst the introduction to the Bibliography admits it to being a "homely production" with "no prospect of a more competent production being published".

Well, it *has* been published and all credit to Roger Thorne for his painstaking typing and for eventually finding printing facilities. Just occasionally there are entries which are a little 'thin' to read, but they scarcely detract. Maybe this indicates a moral or two. First that in the wider interests of local history studies, collected data like this should be published – even if the standards of publication are not as one would desire. Secondly, and more contentious, should not – could not – assistance with enhancing publication standards be available somewhere? Perchance via this very Society . . .

David Edmund

**Banks and Banknotes of Exeter 1769-1906,** by John Ryton. The Author, c/o National Westminster Bank, Exeter University Branch, Stocker Road, Exeter, 1983. 119pp. £4.95. ISBN 0 9508666 0 1.

The 'Mastermind' style of title for this book promises a specialised approach to a clearly defined subject and the reader will not be disappointed in what is patently the result of significant original research.

In detailing some thirty-seven Exeter banks (of which almost half issued their own banknotes) John Ryton constantly highlights the personalities involved and the development of local banking families, reflecting the then powerful commercial life of the City.

The book is basically in two parts with, first, the history and story of the Exeter banks: their formation, mergers and occasional collapse presented in a very readable manner with illustrations inserted appropriately throughout the text and considerable use of contemporary reports and references.

Then follows a tabulated 'standard list of banks, banknotes and partnerships' providing a ready access for specific information from this fascinating mirror of a provincial city's trade and commerce – even not forgetting the hoax (or intentionally misleading?) 'skit' notes.

An informative insight into nineteenth century banking with no small measure of relevant social history, combining a valuable reference data section with a disarming descriptive approach to what might seem a rather daunting subject.

David Edmund

**The Finch Foundry Trust and Sticklepath Museum of Rural Industry,** by R. A. Barron. Sticklepath: Finch Foundry Trust, 1983. 48pp + family tree. £1.00.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries there were a number of agricultural engineering works in Devon serving the farming community. Now only two edge tool works survive, at Dunsford, where commercial production continues (though there is also a small collection of by-gones), and at Sticklepath, where the works has become a museum of rural industry. Wrongly described as a foundry, the Sticklepath works made a variety of farm implements, of edge tools, including bill

hooks, mattocks, pick axes and shovels (illustrated by a plate in this volume) from 1814, when it took over a water-power site which had formerly had other purposes, until 1960. The works was then abandoned for six years during which it became dilapidated before it was rescued by Dick Barron who founded the Finch Foundry Trust to restore it. Replacing an earlier pamphlet by J. K. Major, this publication contains an explanation of how the various sections of the forge operate, together with an account of the people who ran it. Well-illustrated, it provides a pleasant account of a plant which once made a useful contribution to Devon's agricultural economy and now enjoys a second existence as one of Devon's tourist attractions.

Walter Minchinton

**Books received:**

**Change & continuity: an Exeter Centenary 1884-1984;** by R. A. B. Leaper with Laurence McWilliam. Exeter, Sacred Heart Church, 1984. 31pp. £1.00. Centenary history of Sacred Heart Church in aid of roof renewal.

**John Greenway, 1460-1529, merchant of Tiverton and London: a Devon worthy;** by A. E. Welsford. The Author, 1984. 20pp., illus. Available from Miss A. E. Welsford, 14 Twyford Place, Tiverton EX16 6AP. Price £1.00 + 16p post.

**A Limekiln miscellany: the South-West and South Wales;** compiled by Walter Minchinton. Exeter IA Group, 1984. 28pp., illus. 75p.

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