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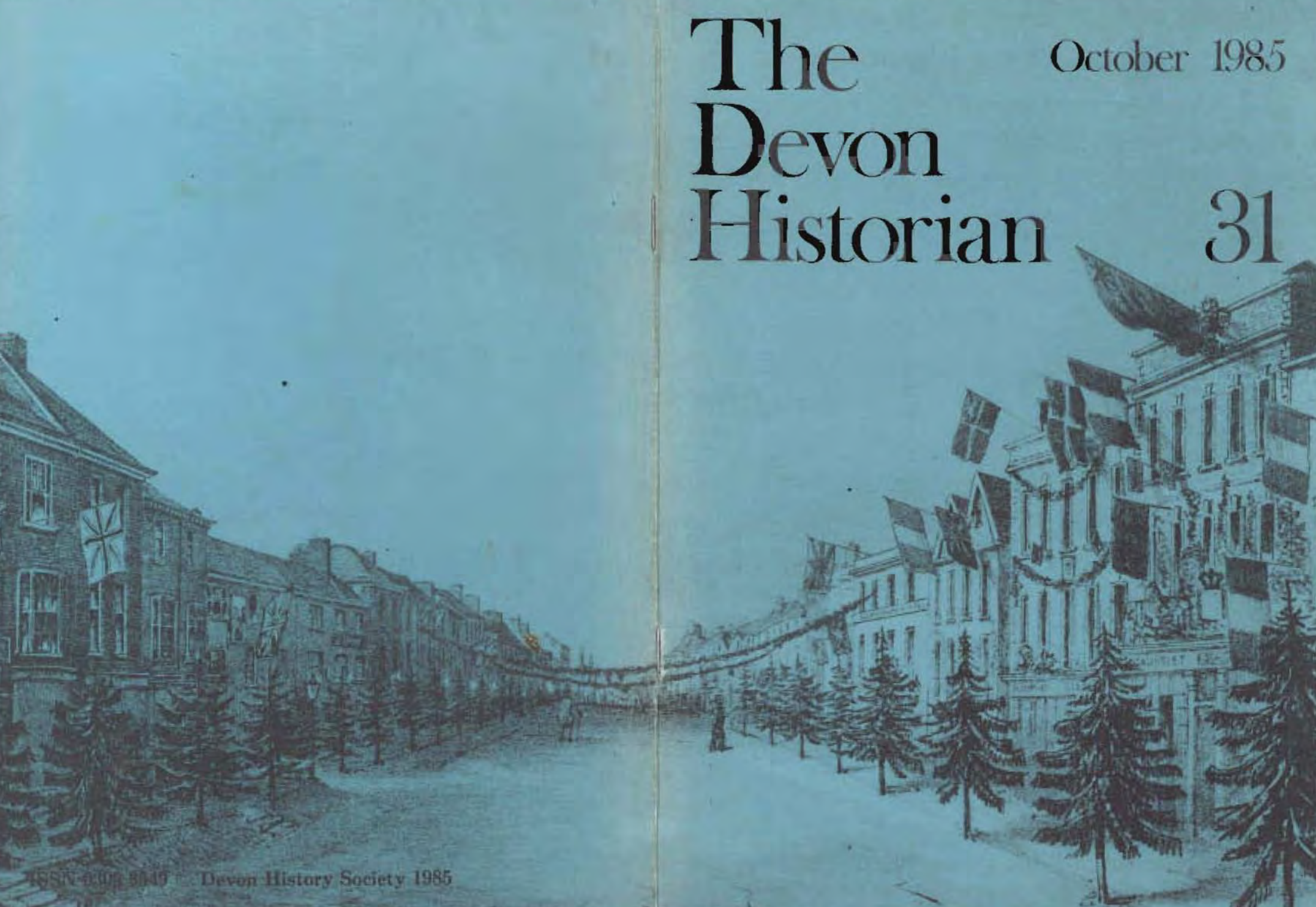

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THE DEVON HISTORIAN

Correspondence relating to the *Devon Historian* and contributions for publication should be sent to Mrs Helen Harris, Hon. Editor, The Devon Historian, Hirondelles, 22 Churchill Road, Whitchurch, Tavistock, PL19 9BU. The deadline for the next issue is 30 November 1985. Books for review should be sent to Mrs S. Stirling, c/o Devon & Exeter Institution, 7 The Close, Exeter.

DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY: AGM The AGM of the Society will take place in the Seminar Room of the New Library, University of Exeter, on 12 October 1985 from 10.30 am to 4.00 pm.

The print on the cover is *South West view of the town of Honiton, as decorated for the celebration of peace, May 29 1856.* Lithography after J.Martin. (Somers-Cocks no.1188.) Reproduced by kind permission of the Curator, Allhallows Museum, Honiton.

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EDITORIAL

Although it is not intended that an editorial should become a regular feature of this journal, I feel I cannot let this, the first issue for which I am responsible, enter circulation without a word of introduction. Sheila Stirling was most generous in her remarks about me in the April issue, and also in her help during the changeover, and I have very much appreciated kind messages received from members of the Society, from both near and distant parts of the country. I would like to thank them all.

Succeeding the two previous editors, who have so successfully brought the *Devon Historian* through the first fifteen years of its existence—Sheila Stirling and before her Robin Stanes—is a somewhat daunting undertaking. There is the anxiety of seeking to maintain the high standard so far achieved, and the occasional panic of wondering what one will do if not enough prospective articles of suitable content drop through the letterbox.

Obviously it is upon the contributors that the appeal or otherwise of a journal like this depends. Our membership of people who are interested in the history of Devon embraces a broad range of scholarship, from those of high academic attainment to others with specialised local interests and knowledge. One of the pleasing features of the *Devon Historian*, I have always felt over the years, has been the way in which this variation has generally been represented in the mix of article content. Certain editions inevitably reflect the diversity more than others.

I hope, therefore, that there will be no shortage of contributions coming in for consideration, and the better the spread in relation to all parts of this large county the better. Mostly we look for original work, whether as a result of research from documentary sources, or by way of local investigations with information gained possibly through site observations or verbal interviews. Articles on interesting and stimulating subjects that are presented clearly and concisely naturally stand the best chance of acceptance, and relevant black and white illustrations are welcome. So, please, let the written offerings continue to flow in, and thus help to ensure that the *Devon Historian* is both enjoyable and informative on as wide a coverage of historical interests as possible.

Helen Harris

DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

The following numbers of *The Devon Historian* can be obtained for £1.00 (plus postage) from Mrs S. Stirling, Devon & Exeter Institution, 7 The Close, Exeter: Nos. 1-6, 8-10, 12-14, 17-21, 24-26. Also available (all prices plus postage): *Devon Newspapers*, £1.00; *Index to Devon Historian* 1-15, 20p; *Devon Bibliography* 1980 (=*DH* No. 22), 50p; *Devon Bibliography* 1981, 60p.

The Hon. Secretary, Mr John Pike, 82 Hawkins Avenue, Chelston, Torquay, would be glad to acquire copies of *The Devon Historian* Nos. 7, 11, 15, 16, 23, which are now out of stock.

THE HONITON ELECTIONS OF 1806 AND THE GENESIS OF PARLIAMENTARY REFORM

John Sugden

The Honiton elections of June and October 1806 have been regarded as significant milestones in the movement for parliamentary reform in the early nineteenth century. It has been alleged that they played an important role in the radicalisation of two of the most prominent participants in the agitation which followed the Napoleonic wars: William Cobbett, the radical journalist whose *Political Register* became the mouthpiece of reform in 1816; and Thomas, Lord Cochrane, the naval commander who subsequently held a seat as Radical Member of Parliament for Westminster and later still acted a key part in the liberation of the South American states. The many biographers of both men have stressed the formative nature of their subjects' experiences at Honiton. 'The Honiton election', wrote a recent commentator, 'coming on top of Cobbett's other experiences, proved a turning point, possibly the most important turning point in his career.'[1] More important, the Honiton elections of 1806 mark the revival of the campaign for economical and parliamentary reform after one of its periodic lulls.

The outbreak of the French Revolution had stimulated reformers at home, and Tom Paine's *Rights of Man* (1792) placed the British movement upon an extreme footing by its attack upon the monarchy and the aristocracy and its advocacy of the sovereignty of the people and a redistribution of wealth. Radicalism spread to the artisan classes. The membership of the London Corresponding Society, which demanded universal manhood suffrage and annual parliaments, was open to any who paid a penny a week. But the excesses of the French revolutionaries, the loyalism which swept Britain after the outbreak of war with France in 1793, and the fears of the propertied classes soon stimulated reaction, and by 1800 the agitation had considerably abated, tempered by government repression.[2]

The movement flickered for a few years, but 1806 brought clear signs of revival. A minister, Lord Melville, was impeached for speculation in 1805 and broadcast the abuse of public money, while the enduring war and high taxes, and the apparent inability of the Foxite Whigs to reform government when they took office in 1806, contributed towards awakening feelings that a new initiative would be necessary if politics were to be purified. Simultaneously, the cancellation of Napoleon's plans to invade England and the battle of Trafalgar in 1805 enhanced Britain's sense of security and facilitated a more introspective mood. Sir Francis Burdett, a popular champion of economical and modest parliamentary reform, declared his independence of both Whigs and Tories and stood for Middlesex in the general election of November 1806. At the same time John Cartwright, a veteran reformer, contested Boston, and the radical tailor, James Paull, tried to carry Westminster: but all three were presaged by Cobbett and Cochrane at the June by-election at Honiton in Devonshire, perhaps the first election of the new century to be fought upon clear-cut Radical principles.

It was from Cobbett that Cochrane received his introduction to Radical thought. Compared with Paine and his disciples, the pugnacious journalist was strongly conservative, harking to a mythical past where inferiors were bound to their betters in an established social hierarchy whose keynote was paternalism. He was not interested in levelling, and upheld the monarchy and the supremacy of landed society. The system of government, embracing a balance of power between Crown

and people, was fundamentally good for Cobbett, but it had fallen under the control of a parliament of borough-mongers, in which those sufficiently wealthy to have stood apart from self-seeking had been supplanted by men of inferior birth. Such men were court sycophants, aspiring to wealth and power by office-holding, and retaining it through the employment of placemen, sinecures, pensions and bribes. Unchecked, they oppressed the people with heavy taxation, harsh game laws and infringements of public liberty. The national debt, to which their profligacy contributed, was enhanced by the activities of fundholders and stockjobbers who benefitted from the government loans required to finance the war and who agitated to prolong international conflict to their own advantage. The solution, Cobbett believed, lay in economical reform and a purification of electoral procedures. The application of principles of non-bribery at elections and the nomination of independent candidates able to withstand the allurements of office would establish in the Commons a body of uncorrupted members who would contest the venality of governments. This was the policy which took him to Honiton.[3]

Cochrane's interests were rather different. A distinguished post-captain, he was strongly critical of the injustices of the system of promotion in the Royal Navy, and since 1802 had been campaigning on behalf of deserving officers whose merits the Admiralty appeared to have overlooked. The conviction grew upon Cochrane that the Admiralty were using naval commissions to buy political support and denying advancement to able but uninfluential officers. A seat in parliament seemed to be one way in which a junior captain could find a forum for his views and strengthen his hand against the Admiralty. The immediate obstacle to such an ambition, the expense likely to accompany electioneering, was overcome in 1805 when Cochrane's cruises in command of the *Pallas* frigate netted him a fortune in prize money. A man 'pretty well flushed with Spanish money' would have little difficulty in finding some corrupt borough willing to send him to Westminster as its representative.[4]

The lace-making borough of Honiton was an ideal choice. It was a 'potwalloper' borough with a franchise which embraced all the town's few hundred householders, who possessed the right to return two Members of Parliament. For some time the borough's choices had reflected the influence of the Yonge family, but in the early nineteenth century Sir George Yonge's fortunes had diminished and the voters turned to others who would reward their support more liberally. Both Cobbett and Cochrane were impressed by the mercenary motives of the electors. 'You need not ask me, my Lord, who I votes for,' one told Cochrane. 'I always votes for Mister Most.'[5] Cobbett's description is more detailed:

> Now, as to the state of the borough, who shall describe it? Who shall describe the gulph wherein have been swallowed the fortunes of so many ancient and once respectable families? There is, the electors will tell you, no bribery. They take a certain sum of money each according to their consequence . . . 'but this,' say they, 'comes in the shape of a reward after the election, and, therefore the oath may be safely taken.' Considered as a question of morality, how contemptible this subterfuge is need hardly be noticed; but, to say the truth, they did not deceive themselves, and I must do them the justice to say, that they were not very anxious to deceive any body else. They tell you, flatly and plainly, that the money which they obtain for their votes, is absolutely necessary to enable them to live; that, without it, they could not pay their rents; and that, from election to election, the poor men run up scores at the shops, and are trusted by the shopkeepers, expressly upon the credit of the proceeds of the ensuing election; and that, thus, the whole of the inhabitants of the borough . . . are bound together in an indissoluble chain of venality . . .

> In quitting this scene, in looking back from one of the many hills that surrounded the fertile and beautiful valley in which Honiton lies, with its houses spreading down the side of an inferior eminence crowned by its ancient and venerable church; in surveying the fields, the crops, the cattle, all the blessings that nature could bestow . . . it was impossible to divest myself of a feeling of horror at reflecting upon the deeds which the then rising sun was about to witness . . .[6]

In 1806 one of Honiton's members, Richard Bateman Robson, who had been elected as recently as that April, earned something of a reputation attacking the abuse of public funds in the department for building barracks, and Cobbett had no quarrel with him.[7] His venom was reserved for the other member, Augustus Cavendish Bradshaw, who in May had accepted a rewarding government post as Teller of the Irish Exchequer, an office which Cobbett regarded as a worthless sinecure. Bradshaw's new position compelled him to seek re-election, and Cobbett determined to oppose him, issuing an address to the electors of Honiton on June 1. He reprobated the burdensome taxes which government grants, pensions and sinecures such as that secured by Bradshaw inflicted upon the public, and pledged the electorate that he himself would never accept a farthing from the Crown. Members of Parliament financed by the government were inevitably its servants, quite incapable of defending the liberties of the people against the natural tyrannies of governments. By remaining independent, Cobbett declared that he could 'watch over and defend the property, the liberties and the privileges of the people.' As for buying himself into Parliament, Cobbett announced that he had no intention of paying for votes and perpetuating 'this disgraceful, this unlawful, this profligate, this impious practice . . .'[8]

Cobbett left London on Friday June 6, ironically accompanied by his friend, Andrew Cochrane-Johnstone, Lord Cochrane's uncle, and reached Honiton the following day. Cochrane-Johnstone intended discussing some private business with his nephew, who had recently put into Plymouth with the *Pallas*, but that Saturday, said Cobbett,

> Mr Johnstone received a letter from Lord Cochrane informing him that his Lordship could not leave Plymouth just then. But on the Sunday, while we were at dinner, there came an express from Lord Cochrane, bearing a letter for me, informing me, that his Lordship, having read my address to the people of Honiton in the London newspapers, and having perceived that I had resolved to stand myself merely because I could find no other independent man to oppose Mr Bradshaw, he had determined to accept of my general invitation, and that he was actually on his way (dating his letter from Exeter) to put his purpose into execution. In an hour afterward, having stopped at Exeter to provide lawyers, &c. his Lordship arrived.[9]

Cochrane cut a dramatic figure, arriving with several supporters in two post chaises and four on the Sunday evening, and Cobbett deferred to a man whose social status made him a more likely contestant. The press simply commented that Cobbett declined to stand, 'finding his influence too weak.'[10] Eventually there were three candidates, Bradshaw, Cochrane, and one W. Courtenay, but only Bradshaw managed to 'canvas' the borough to meet the inhabitants and receive promises of support. The Rector even invited him to a dinner with some of the electors. Formal procedures commenced on the hot Monday of June 9, when the two principal contestants harangued the voters in an open meeting. Bradshaw alluded to the important post which he had accepted and assured the listeners that it would not affect his relationship to them. 'I shall always support every measure that I think conducive to the good of my country,' he insisted, 'and shall always oppose every

measure of a contrary description.' Cochrane, on his part, revealed how completely he had accepted Cobbett's principles:

> Gentlemen, the very short time that I have had, has completely prevented me from gratifying my wishes by a personal and respectful application to each individual elector; but, gentlemen, the very flattering reception I met with at my entrance into your respectable borough, and the numerous instances of public spirit which I have since witnessed in this favourite spot of the most favoured of countries, encourage me to hope that my cause is not so very desperate as the gentleman who has just spoken seems to consider it.
>
> Gentlemen, any little merit that I may have been so fortunate to acquire in the performance of my public duty, I shall certainly not put in competition with any merits, of any sort, of Mr Bradshaw. The greater part of my life has been spent in the toils of the sea; but, those toils have become pleasures when I reflected that they might tend to the security and the honour of this happy land, and to the preservation of those inestimable liberties, to exercise the most important of which, you, gentlemen, are this day assembled. To preserve these liberties unimpaired shall be the business and the pride of my life; and, gentlemen, as a pledge that I will make these efforts purely for the good of my country, I give you my word of honour, that I never will accept of any sinecure or pension, or any grant of the public money, and that I never will ask or receive any such for any person whatever, that may be in any way dependent upon me.'

To emphasize the purity of his platform, Cochrane reiterated his pledge just before the meeting closed:

> Gentlemen, I was brought here by no person; I was induced to do myself the honour of presenting myself to you by the public address of Mr Cobbett, which I read at Plymouth; and I have now only to add that if you do me the honour to elect me, I give you my word, that I never will (except in the way of my profession) receive a shilling of the public money, either for myself or anyone dependent upon me. My constant endeavour shall be to be useful to my country in general, and to this borough in particular: and I am, besides, extremely anxious to be able to point out some enormous abuses, which, from my own observation, I know to exist.

It is not difficult to deduce why Cochrane accepted Cobbett's simple radicalism. He intended to attack the administration over naval abuses, and Cobbett furnished him with an explanation of the iniquities of the promotion system at sea. The government failed to reward talent adequately because naval commissions, no less than pensions and sinecures, were the plums by which corrupt administrations purchased the support to sustain themselves. When Cochrane had finished his initial speech, Cobbett rose upon his behalf, and launched into an intemperate attack upon Bradshaw, denouncing him as a cynical, place-seeking liar. The last time Bradshaw had been returned for the borough he had paid six guineas a vote, but he had said that upon the present occasion he would offer no more than two guineas to the 'corrupt rascals' he expected to elect him. Bradshaw, said Cobbett, had no care for the interests of his constituents; his sole purpose in Parliament was to retain office. 'Unless those who are invested with the power of returning members to parliament, will determine to return such only as will make a declaration to forego all profit, either to themselves or their family, arising out of the public money, the House of Commons will never be such as to support the measures which are now absolutely necessary to the preservation of our liberties and our independence.' The speeches concluded. Cochrane demanded a poll, and efforts began to erect hustings for the following day.[11]

Cobbett did not linger at Honiton, but left for London on Wednesday, June 11,

while Cochrane daily appeared to determine the progress of the poll. It opened at ten on the Tuesday morning and closed for the first day at seven in the evening, after only thirty-six votes had been cast, twenty for Bradshaw and the balance for Cochrane. Voting was resumed at nine on the Wednesday morning, and within a few hours the two candidates had taken about an equal number of votes, but at the close of Friday's polling Bradshaw was again ahead, 100 to 79. After seven days of voting the poll closed on Tuesday, June 17, leaving Bradshaw the decisive victor: he had received 259 votes, Cochrane 129, and Courtenay 2.[12]

In London Cobbett fumed at the venality of the borough. 'The greater fault,' he claimed, 'is in those who expose the poor and miserable to the temptation of selling their votes.'[13] Cochrane, however, playing a generous loser and perhaps preparing for some future contest, treated the village to a dinner a few days after his defeat. 'Lord Cochrane gave an ox roasted whole to the populace,' reported the press, 'and great hilarity prevailed.'[14]

The by-election of June proved to be an expensive extravagance, since the parliamentary session was then almost at an end, and before the new session began a general election took place which threw both the Honiton seats open to another challenge. Only one connected account of the Honiton election of October has been given, that offered more than half a century later in Cochrane's autobiography, and it sustains the view that he was returned in the Radical interest after a contest. Unfortunately, the few contemporary records do not bear out Cochrane's narrative in either of these important particulars.

Cochrane arrived in Honiton on Saturday, October 18, in a carriage which also conveyed two naval lieutenants and a midshipman in uniform. Behind followed another carriage transporting the captain's boat's crew of the *Pallas*, fully rigged out, with the helmsman perched upon the box and the boatswain seated upon the roof and armed with a whistle to assist him in his act as cheer leader. Many of the electors turned out in the streets to applaud the return of the popular sailor. Within eight hours Cochrane had canvassed the town with 'extraordinary perseverence' and met the voters at their doors to secure pledges of support. So thoroughly was the business conducted that he was soon regarded as unbeatable.[15]

Election proceedings began on Friday, October 31. Robson was standing for Okehampton, and only two nominations were received for the places at Honiton, those of Cochrane and Bradshaw. Accordingly, both were declared elected without a contest.[16] 'You will be delighted to hear my dearest brother,' wrote Cochrane's cousin, 'that Lord Cochrane is returned member for Honiton . . . I had a . . . letter from Cochrane with an account of the uproar on his being elected—he said we would have been highly entertained had we seen the people conveying him all over the town in an arm chair on their shoulders with his long legs hanging over."[17]

What was the nature of Cochrane's canvass of Honiton? Had the captain reneged upon his newly-found principles and reverted to the traditionally corrupt practices of Honiton's electioneering by exchanging money for promises of support? The contemporary material suggests that he did, and that the Honiton election of November cannot be regarded as a Radical victory. However, the evidence is scant. Cochrane did not serve Honiton for long. In the Commons he voted only once as its representative before the collapse of the Ministry of All the Talents in March 1807, and in the ensuing general election he stood and was returned for Westminster.[18] During that campaign Cochrane reasserted the non-bribery principles which Cobbett had inculcated into him, but upon several occasions the sailor found his integrity challenged on the hustings by a detractor, James Gibbons. Gibbons

accused Cochrane of bribing the electors of Honiton: 'He wished him to answer upon what public principle or public ground it was that he first chose to come into Parliament, by increasing the wages of corruption among the voters of Honiton.'[19] To these allegations Cochrane refused an answer, even when the evasion was visibly irritating the electors of Westminster whose support he was soliciting. 'Mr Gibbons then came forward,' reported *The Times*, 'and fixed his eyes on Lord Cochrane (who immediately left the hustings). He said he perceived that the Noble Lord did not like his questions.'[20]

Ten years later, when Cochrane's standing as a Radical was assured, he was less reticent about the beginnings of his parliamentary career. Speaking in the Commons in support of reform in January 1817:

> He remembered very well the time he was first returned as a member to the House, which was for the borough of Honiton, and on which occasion the town bellman was sent through the town to order the voters to come to Mr Townshend's, the head man in that place, and a banker, to receive the sum of £10 10s. This was the truth . . . Though he was now conscious that he had done wrong, he assured the House that that was the very way by which he had been returned. If any member disputed it, he could only say he was willing to show the bills and vouchers which he had for the money . . . His motive, he was now fully convinced, was wrong, decidedly wrong, but as he came home pretty well flushed with Spanish money, he had found this borough open, and he had bargained for it; and he was sure he should have been returned had he been lord Camelford's black servant or his great dog.'[21]

A few months later, Cochrane complained that

> It was well-known that the great majority of the returns to that House were carried by money . . . He held in his hand accounts, containing charges against him which amounted to more than £5,700 for one of his elections.[22]

These remarks would seem to establish that Lord Cochrane did buy his way into Parliament in 1806, and that the Radical issues of the June by-election were not raised in the succeeding general election. Many years afterwards the old campaigner remembered the affair differently, and his account, although well-known, is worth quoting:

> Having had decisive proof as to the nature of Honiton politics, I made up my mind that the next time there was a vacancy in the borough, the seat should be mine without bribery. Accordingly, immediately after my defeat (in June), I sent the bellman round the town, having first primed him with an appropriate speech, intimating that 'all who had voted for me, might repair to my agent, J. Townsend, Esq., and receive ten pounds ten!'
>
> The novelty of a defeated candidate paying double the current price expended by the successful one—or, indeed, paying anything—made a great sensation. Even my agent assured me that he could have secured my return for less money, for that the popular voice being in my favour, a trifling judicial expenditure would have turned the scale.
>
> I told Mr Townsend that such payments would have been bribery, which would not accord with my character as a reformer of abuses—a declaration which seemed highly to amuse him. Notwithstanding the explanation that the ten guineas was paid as a reward for having withstood the influence of bribery, the impression produced on the electoral mind by such unlooked-for liberality, was simply this—that if I gave ten guineas for being beaten, my opponent had not paid half enough for being elected; a conclusion which, by a similar process of reasoning, was magnified into the conviction that each of his voters had been cheated out of five pounds ten.
>
> The result was what had been foreseen. My opponent, though successful, was

> regarded with anything but a favourable eye; I, though defeated, had suddenly become most popular . . .
>
> A general election being at hand, no time was lost in proceeding to Honiton, where considerable sensation was created by my entrance into the town in a vis-a-vis and six, followed by several carriages and four filled with officers and seamen of the *Pallas*, who volunteered to accompany me on the occasion.
>
> Our reception by the townspeople was enthusiastic, the more so, perhaps, from the general belief that my capture of the Spanish galleons . . . had endowed me with untold wealth . . .
>
> Aware of my previous objection to bribery, not a word was asked by my partisans, as to the price expected in exchange for their suffrages. It was enough that my former friends had received ten guineas each after my defeat, and it was judged best to leave the cost of success to my discretion.
>
> My return was triumphant, and this effected, it was then plainly asked, what ex post facto consideration was to be expected by those who had supported me in so delicate a manner.
>
> 'Not one farthing!' was the reply.
>
> 'But, my Lord, you gave ten guineas a head to the minority at the last election, and the majority have been calculating on something handsome on the present occasion.'
>
> 'No doubt. The former gift was for their disinterested conduct in not taking the bribe of five pounds from the agents of my opponent. For me now to pay them would be a violation of my own previously expressed principles.'
>
> Finding nothing could be got from me in the way of money payment for their support, it was put to my generosity whether I would not, at least, give my constituents a public supper.
>
> 'By *all* means,' was my reply, 'and it will give me great satisfaction to know that so rational a display of patriotism had superseded a system of bribery, which reflects even less credit on the donor than the recipients.'
>
> Alas! for the vanity of good intentions. The permission thus given was converted into a public treat; not only for my partisans, but for my opponents, their wives, children, and friends; in short, for the whole town! The result showed itself in a bill for some twelve hundred pounds! which I refused to pay, but was eventually compelled to liquidate . . .[23]

Some of the inaccuracies in this account are readily apparent. The public meal occurred after the first election, not the second. Cochrane's reminiscences assert that in June he rewarded his supporters with ten guineas each, and that his generosity made the electors drool over what he might provide if he was ever victorious. Probably the dinner did have that effect, and accounted for the enthusiastic welcome the sailor received in Honiton the following October. But these memoirs do not clear up the matter of the bribery. In them he insisted that the money was paid in June, to electors who had supported him against Bradshaw's allurements; in 1817 he had spoken of 'the time he was first *returned* as a member to the House,' and implied that he had bribed the electors in October. It would be difficult to be too hard on Cochrane even if he had been less than scrupulous. However laudable Cobbett's principles might have been, they were new to Cochrane, and probably incapable of supplying him with a parliamentary seat in a rotten system. If he was to further his ambition to expose naval abuses in the House, he may have believed, like many another politician, that he would have to dirty his hands to get there. Upon the evidence currently to hand, the question of the bribery—and consequently whether the Honiton election of October 1806 can be regarded as a Radical triumph—cannot be satisfactorily settled.

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18. *The Times,* May 13, 1807.
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23. Cochrane, *Autobiography,* I, 180-81, 202-04.

GYPSY POACHERS IN VICTORIAN DEVONSHIRE

J.H. Porter

As early as 1816 John Hoyland had sympathetically pointed to the winter poverty of the Northamptonshire gypsies whom as a class he considered to be 'the most neglected and destitute of all persons' and the association of their destitution with petty crime was later made less charitably by Richard Jefferies who wrote of 'their petty pilfering tricks'.[1] One way of alleviating necessity was to supplement the diet by poaching game. The subsequent conflict with authority and the game laws may be illustrated by cases appearing before the Devonshire petty sessions between 1862 and 1900.

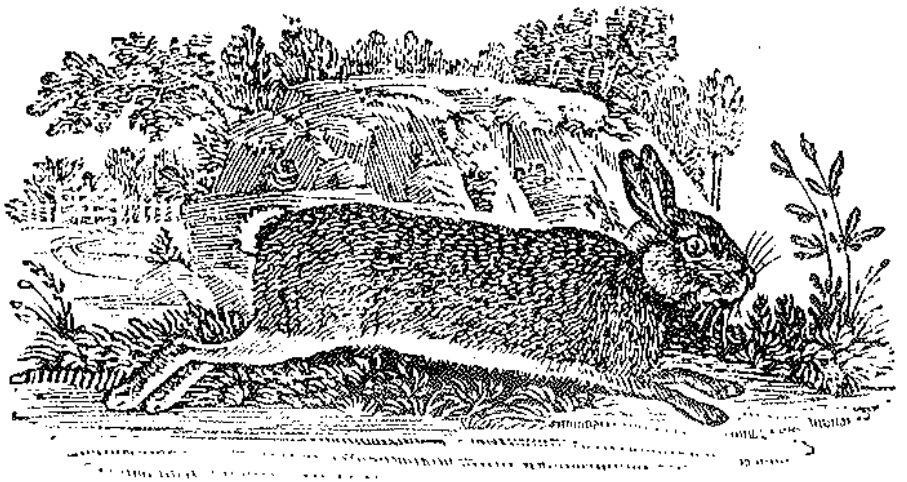
The cases used to illustrate this note are part of a wider study of poaching and social conflict in Devon which includes a survey of over 6,300 prosecutions in that period, of which only twenty-two are known to have involved men or boys described as gypsies in the press reports of the cases. The relative lack of prosecution of gypsies may be an indication of their actual success in preying upon the county's game without being detected. The general suspicion of the gypsy meant that some were brought before the petty sessions even if the evidence was insecure. Thus in 1870 Robert Small was accused by an assistant keeper of being in a field full of tame pheasants with a gun at Kingsteignton on Christmas eve. Small denied the charge claiming that he had no gun and was only taking a short cut and the Newton Abbot sessions were forced to dismiss the case through lack of evidence. Similarly James Hughes and Hugh Cooper were acquitted by the Axminster bench because of insufficient evidence.[2]

Just as some labourers' sons started young in trapping rabbit so too might gypsy boys, and as so few were caught they presumably developed an early proficiency. The ten year old Joseph Orchard, for example, appeared before the Ottery St Mary bench, which was chaired by W.R. Coleridge of Salston House, in 1886 charged with game trespass in November. In this instance, however, the case was dismissed because the summons had been sent to the wrong Joseph Orchard, nevertheless the boy's father had to pay 8s costs. Two other lads found on Sir John Heathcoat Amory's lands at Tiverton in February 1887 were less fortunate and James Birch and Henry Roberts were each fined £1 inclusive of costs by the Tiverton Borough Magistrate. Two years later Charles Manley, another young gypsy, was caught on the Rolle Trustees' land at East Budleigh and the Exmouth sessions took 1s and 11s costs from him. Also at East Budleigh on 30 December 1894 was discovered William James who took a rabbit from a wire, put it under his coat and ran off when seen. After a chase he threw away the rabbit but failed to escape and the same bench fined him 10s inclusive with the alternative of seven days imprisonment.[3]

The Rolle Trustees and Lady Rolle of Bicton House were especial prosecutors of all poachers on their lands and upon Woodbury Common in particular. In 1889 gypsies William James and John Dickinson were acquitted of game trespass at Bicton in October of that year but as a warning each was fined 10s and costs (or seven days) for ordinary trespass. In 1895 two gypsies escaped detection by running away but the four labourers who were with them and who were recognised by Rolle keepers were each fined 19s 4½d for taking rabbits on the Common in November and also in that month Jesse Cooper paid 15s and costs to the Woodbury bench for game trespass on Shortwood Common at East Budleigh.[4]

It was not only the Rolle Trustees who complained of gypsies. A Dawlish land-

owner secured the fining of George Smith of £1 in 1870 at the Teignmouth sessions. At Dartmouth Thomas Roberts senior was caught by a keeper while he was trying the hedges with two dogs on 28 November 1886, which date being a Sunday the offence was particularly deplored. The Dartmouth bench did not accept his denial of being there and fined him 40s and costs. After he had said he had no money to pay, a Dartmouth resident, a 'Mr Stancombe said he would be answerable for 30s if the defendant would let him have a horse he had in town. This was agreed to and the money was paid, the defendant having a sovereign with him.' Another Roberts, this time William, came before the same bench in December on a similar charge and in defence he claimed he was only looking for his brother's watch. He was fined £1 and 12s 7d costs which he paid. Earlier, at Totnes, when Richard Stanley had failed to appear after a game trespass at Dean Prior he was fined £2 and costs in May 1877.[5]



A Joseph Orchard, possibly the same one as had escaped because of the erroneous summons of 1886, in 1890 fell foul of the Ottery St Mary bench, chaired by Col Darnell, for trespassing after game at Sidbury where he admitted setting 23 wires. He paid 20s and costs. One of the principal landowners of Sidbury, Sir Charles Cave of Sidbury Manor, Sidmouth, complained in 1898 that he was 'fed up of the depredation of gipsies' and the four justices sitting at Ottery in December of that year must have agreed with him for they fined Fred Holland *alias* Stamp £1 which he paid rather than take the alternative of 14 days. Holland had denied being in a field with a rabbit and a snare but was disbelieved.[6] Several other gypsies were prosecuted in the eighteen-nineties. The Rev Robert Hole of North Tawton fined John Ball, who did not appear, £1 or 14 days for game trespass at Bondleigh in 1890; in September Sir John Shelley at Crediton fined John Tuckett, a 25 year old tinker, 10s and costs for game trespass with two shoemakers on lands of his fellow magistrate Sir Redvers Buller on a Sunday in July. Two county policemen, who in effect functioned as rate-financed game keepers, had caught them with a dog, a ferret, several nets and three rabbits. At Luppit in November 1894 a B. Orchard was found after game and charged 14s by the Honiton bench; that same year John Penfold had killed a rabbit in January and was fined 5s inclusive at Torrington, while in April 1895 James Birch was unsuccessfully prosecuted at Tiverton for

being in a hedge with a pistol near a cock pheasant. When the pistol was produced in court it was proved not to be charged. In September 1900 William Holland and Walter Winter for game trespass at Hockworthy were each fined 10s inclusive at Tiverton.[7]

This account does not preclude there being other gypsy poachers who were convicted as many of the press reports do not include the occupation or status of the defendant. There is the further problem that it is impossible to know the income of the defendants and so assess how heavily the costs imposed by the game laws bore down upon them. However, the weight of the fines and costs may be imputed. The weekly wage of a Devon agricultural labourer around this period was 10s-13s and so a £1 fine plus costs would be equivalent to at least two weeks' wages.

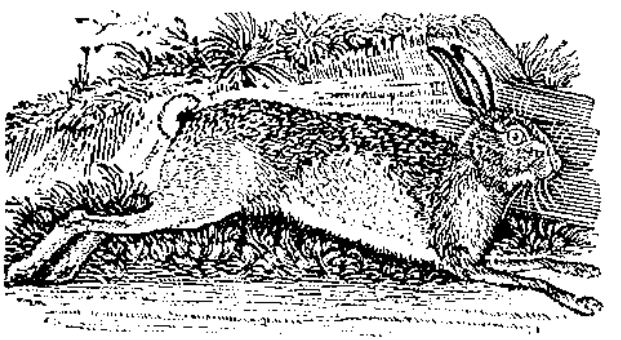
The relative anonymity of the gypsies to authority and their mobility must have made prosecution more difficult than in the case of the labourer. In particular none of these cases involves the offence of night poaching which, as in other rural counties, was common in Devon.[8] While that is a contrast, the gypsy poachers have a common factor with other Devon poachers of rabbit and hare; it was done most frequently in the winter months when their poverty was greatest and the animals at their best. In common too was the shared assumption that rabbits were not solely the perquisites of the propertied even if the law declared otherwise.

Notes

1. John Hoyland, *Survey of the customs, habits and present state of the gypsies*, York, 1816, pp 151-72, 256; Richard Jefferies, *Hodge and his Masters*, vol 2, 1966 edn, p 88. Judith Okely, 'Gypsies Travelling in Southern England', in *Gypsies, Tinkers and other Travellers*, ed Farnham Rehfisch, 1975, pp 55-83.
2. *Devon Weekly Times (DWT)*, 28 Jan 70; 28 Nov 78. All defendants named are described as gypsies in the reports of the court proceedings and all convictions are under the 1831 Game Act 1 & 2 William C32.
3. *DWT* 10 Dec 86, 11 Mar 87, 13 Dec 89, 11 Jan 95.
4. *DWT* 15 Nov 89, 1 Nov 95, 29 Nov 95.
5. *DWT* 29 July 70, 3 Dec 86, 10 Dec 86, 18 May 77.
6. *DWT* 7 Feb 90, 9 Dec 98.
7. *DWT* 7 Mar 90, 5 Sept 90, 4 Jan 95, 15 April 95, 28 Sept 1900.
8. J.H. Porter, 'Poaching and social conflict in late Victorian Devon' in *Rural Social Change and Conflicts since 1500*, ed Andrew Charlesworth, Hull, 1983, pp 96-107.

Acknowledgement

Both illustrations are by Thomas Bewick from engravings on wood.



WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Iris M. Woods

The third issue of the Devon Historian contained an article with the title and author as above. History repeating itself? Certainly not. The first article was concerned with common local names in an isolated parish during the late 16th to the early 18th century. Here we shall trace the occurrence of an unusual name in the same parish during the last years of the 19th and the opening of the 20th century.

The parish is Widecombe-in-the-Moor, one of the largest in Devon, covering almost 11,000 acres, with a population that reached almost 1,000 in 1851 but has declined to about 600 since. It is a farming community living in hill farms or very small hamlets. The parish church is at Widecombe, about 2½ miles from the Northern boundary of the parish, and the school is less than ¼ mile from the church. Until little more than a hundred years ago, people living in the southern part of the parish had to face a walk or ride of several miles to attend a church service, while the children had long daily walks to and from school in all kinds of weather. This appeared to be an unfair arrangement to a wealthy widow lady who did not live in the locality, but enjoyed frequent visits there. She decided to provide a school nearer the children's homes. She had a substantial school building and teacher's house erected on part of the area known as Leusdon Green. A few years later, in 1865, she added a church, and Widecombe parish was divided into two ecclesiastical parishes—though remaining one civil parish. The name of the benefactress was Mrs Charlotte Rosamond Larpent, and her action is commemorated in a cross standing outside the west end of Leusdon Church. I was anxious to find out something more about her, and began by asking those who might possibly have seen her in their childhood, but all I could discover was that she was wealthy, never lived in Leusdon for any length of time, and added to the school teacher's house to provide a place where she could stay. Parish Registers were unlikely to supply any further information. The Census Returns for 1871 produced:-

LEUSDON HOUSE	Charlotte Larpent, widow lady 77
	Jane H. Saxby, boarder, lady's companion 32
	Anne Mare, lodger, school mistress 23
	Louisa Mare, assistant mistress, 20

The rest of the household included a groom who was also the gardener, his wife who was the cook, and a house-parlourmaid. And there the trickle of facts dried up, so I turned to an entirely different subject which had long interested me—the building of 'Dartmoor Prison of War', and the history of its early years as a prison for French and American soldiers and sailors. Napoleon abdicated in 1814 and was banished to Elba whence he escaped in March 1815 and returned to France. From 1812 to 1814 America joined France against England. When peace was signed in 1814 the French prisoners returned home immediately and the Americans anticipated rapid repatriation, but their government was unable to supply the ships necessary to bring them home. Several hundred remained in Dartmoor and naturally became impatient of the restrictions imposed on them. On April 2nd 1815 they rioted and the guards fired on them—seven were killed or died shortly after, many were wounded. The prisoners retreated to their quarters, and the incident was given considerable publicity in the Press, especially in the States. The Foreign Secretary, Lord Castlereagh, ordered an immediate enquiry to be undertaken by a commission of two—one American, Charles King, and one Englishman, Francis Seymour

Larpent. The name leapt out at me! Could there be any connection with Charlotte Rosamond? The first and obvious thing to do was to consult the Dictionary of National Biography. This revealed that F.S. Larpent was a lawyer who had been deputy-judge-advocate-general with Wellington's forces in the Peninsula from 1812-1814. Another interesting fact was that in 1829 he had married as his second wife Charlotte Rosamond Arnold of Halstead Place, Kent.

To return to the commission of enquiry on the 'Dartmoor Massacre': the report by C. King and F.S. Larpent was in the hands of Castlereagh by April 26th. (It is worth noting this date: without any of the time-saving devices of today in transport or communication, these two men had visited the prison, questioned staff and prisoners and presented their report within 24 days of the riot.) Castlereagh extended the regrets of the Prince Regent to the American government, and offered compensation to the families of those who had been killed. When this news reached the States, editorials on the 'shocking massacre' ceased abruptly, while the administration declared itself satisfied that 'no malice had been involved'. (See 'Castlereagh and Adams' by Bradford Perkins.) Francis Seymour Larpent died in 1845, Charlotte outlived him by thirty-four years. So far, so good—Charlotte Rosamond's identity had been established, why her interest had been caught by the Leusdon area of Widecombe parish remained a mystery. In my innocence I had supposed that historical research ultimately yielded the answer to all questions, one had only to look in the right place. Fortunately an experienced historian was at hand to point out that more questions remain unanswered than one might expect. So, although I looked unsuccessfully for a link between Charlotte Rosamond Arnold of Kent and the Arnolds (or Arnells) of Uppacot and Sweaton near Leusdon, it might well have been nothing more than a pretty picture postcard that first attracted her attention to this part of Dartmoor.

However, this is not quite the end of the Larpent connection. In 1894 a new Local Government Act set up parish councils to replace the old vestry meetings. In the minutes of the first meeting, Dec 13th 1894, to elect councillors for the parish of Widecombe, the name occurs of Baron de Hochepied who owned Bag Park, or the South Devon Country Hotel as he called it. At about this time an adjoining property at Wooder was bought by the baron's sisters, the Misses de Hochepied Larpent. The relevant documents came to light among the papers of an Ashburton solicitor. When the baron went bankrupt in 1896, the six Misses Larpent who lived in Onslow Square, London, offered him the tenancy of Wooder where he lived till his death at the age of 42 in 1903. Once more the DNB supplied the necessary details. Francis Seymour was the elder son of John Larpent, a clerk in the Foreign Office, by his first wife. His second wife was connected with the de Hochepied family—the title of Baron was conferred by the Emperor Leopold on Daniel de Hochepied in 1699, and the two sons of John Larpent by his second wife John James and George Gerard. John James obtained a licence to bear the title in England in Sept. 1819, and succeeded to it in 1828.

Thus the name Larpent appears at both ends of Widecombe parish through the two half brothers, Francis Seymour and John James. It is an entertaining little jigsaw puzzle, even if some pieces are still missing.

FOUNDRIES IN NINETEENTH CENTURY TAVISTOCK

Helen Harris

Foundries were busy places in nineteenth century Tavistock, particularly so because of the numerous mines then active in the neighbourhood. The most important mine was Devon Great Consols, opened in 1844 on the Duke of Bedford's land in the Tamar Valley. In mid-century it accounted for the bulk of Devon's copper production which for a time supplied half the world's needs. Others included Devon Friendship mine at Mary Tavy and numerous smaller ones in the locality.

Tavistock had three main foundries. One was in the Parkwood area at the east (Okehampton road) end of the town, the scene of industry from the thirteenth century in the form of tanning, edge-tool and woollen mills. These were sited close to the leat known as the Mill-brook, cut in the twelfth century to carry water from the River Tavy to the town's corn mill. The foundry here, known as Tavistock Iron Works, was established in 1800. It was leased for some years by the Bedford Estate to Gill, Rundle and Bridgman (notable names in Tavistock's commercial life). Later it was in the hands of Nicholls, Mathews & Co who in 1878 were advertising as 'Engineers, brass and iron founders, boiler makers and smiths, makers of Cornish pumping, winding and stamping engines, steam capstans and crushers, water wheels, pump work, shovels, hammered iron, axle and shear moulds and forgings of every discription'. They also prepared machinery for foreign mines. Several original buildings remain on the site, which is now owned by Kaminskis, builders' merchants. A long building on the lower side, through which water from another cut from the Tavy passed, included the engine pattern-making shop. Other buildings, on the higher side, and the three waterwheels that powered them from the Mill-brook, no longer remain. Shovels, hooks and manhole covers were made latterly. From 1898 the premises were used for woolcombing, a surviving form of one of Tavistock's earlier industries which continued until 1965.

Close to the river on the opposite side of Parkwood Road, and across the Tavy adjacent to Mount Tavy (the Princetown) road, were other foundry premises, known as the Tavy Iron Works. A walking bridge connected the two areas. It was probably here that, as reported in the *Exeter Flying Post* of 4 April 1811, an iron boat capable of carrying 8 tons, to be launched on the Tavistock Canal, was built. Lessees here from the Bedford Estate during the latter part of the century were James and Henry Pearce. They were followed by Petherick and Stenner, 'Brass and Iron Founders, Agricultural Machinery Makers'. From 1905 until closure during the first world war the foundry was run by G.H.Budge & Son. Several of the buildings, serving other uses, still remain.

North of the town, in the Lakeside area east of Bannawell Street, was the third, the New or Bedford foundry. This was leased to Nicholls, Williams & Co, who specialised in smith work, 'castings of every description' and were much involved with mine engines. The surviving building is now part of a motor works.

Buildings were of local stone, and included fine arched windows. Scope undoubtedly exists for a deeper study of the foundries' history.

THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE HOLDSWORTH AND NEWMAN FAMILIES TO DARTMOUTH

Ray Freeman

It was inevitable in a port like Dartmouth, dependent on its merchants for its prosperity, that the wealthiest of them would gain political power. No other families however dominated the town so completely or for so long as the Holdsworths. Between 1715 and 1830 a Holdsworth was mayor for 47 years. If one includes the Newmans, Brookings and Hunts — all related by marriage, or business partners — the total is 76.

The art of controlling elections in the close corporation of Dartmouth had been perfected around 1700 by a group of unscrupulous magistrates, none of them Holdsworths. The mayor and twelve senior magistrates, or aldermen,—or a majority of them—chose the freemen, a group of about 40 from whom the twelve were themselves chosen.[1] They invariably chose their own sons, other relatives, or trusted supporters, all of them by the Corporation Act obliged to be members of the Church of England. In practise the mayor and aldermen chose the next mayor from among themselves, though this had to be approved by the whole body of freemen. They also chose the two M.P.'s. One of the 'perks' of freemen was to be exempt from paying petticustoms, or shipping dues on all cargoes passing through the port, which included Torbay and Salcombe as well as the Dart. The corporation was entitled to levy these through their lease of the Waterbaileywick of the Dart from the Duchy of Cornwall. The freemen thus gained an economic advantage over their rivals; they could also be sure that any paid town appointments went to their friends.

The second Arthur Holdsworth in Dartmouth (1668-1726) took over the system to keep for himself and five successors of the same name such power that they were nick-named 'King Arthur'. Holdsworth II's mother was Joan Newman, whose family were already prominent in the Newfoundland trade in the early 17th century.[2] They owned land in Newfoundland as well as vineyards on the Douro in Portugal, and prospered on the trading triangle by which salt was carried across the Atlantic, used to salt and dry cod from the Banks off Newfoundland, this being sold in the Mediterranean or Portugal to buy wine or fruit which was brought back to England. The Newmans later developed their own variety of wine—Port—which was matured by being carried in the holds of their ships to Newfoundland and back. It became popular especially after the Methuen Treaty of 1703 lowered duties on wine imported from Portugal, as compared with France, with whom England was at war. Over the 18th century the Newmans concentrated on their trading ventures, sons from each generation being sent out to gain experience in Portugal or Newfoundland. Several further marriages bound their interests to those of the Holdsworths, but they seemed content to leave the running of the borough to the latter.

Arthur Holdsworth II was a close friend of George Treby, M.P. for Dartmouth from 1722-1747, who gave him a beautiful silver punchbowl,[3] now in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, depicting 18th century gentlemen in tricorn hats walking along a quay. On the other side they are shown sitting at a table on which a punchbowl like this is prominent, under an inscription 'Prosperity to Hooks and Lines'.[4] It seems certain that it portrays the Mayor and Aldermen, with perhaps Treby, enjoying one

of their regular feasts in the Mayoralty House—now Battarbees hardware shop—where, under an elaborate plasterwork ceiling full of classical allusions, they consumed a rich diet of lobsters, mutton and cheese washed down by punch made from rum, lemons and sugar. In politics they supported the Whigs, and were prepared to accept outsiders nominated by them as M.P.s. In 1761 the fourth Arthur Holdsworth wrote to the Duke of Newcastle promising support for the two new candidates, Howe and Jeffreys nominated by him, assuring him that 'all my friends are unanimous in their behalf'.[5] The fifth Holdsworth was M.P. himself from 1780-87, as was the seventh, from 1802-20 and 1829-32.

The secret of the Holdsworth's success lay in the fact that his family were plentiful and reliable, in addition to being able. As well as the main line, there was a younger one descended from Robert Holdsworth of Modbury, also married to a Newman.[6] Between them, they never died out in the male line, though in the mid-18th century each Arthur Holdsworth had in turn only one son—dangerously few in those days. The younger line was useful in providing freemen, magistrates and mayors; and daughters of both were married to sons of business partners, creating a formidable old boy (and girl) network. At meetings of the corporation business could be constructed by as few as seven out of the twelve, and since most of them were relatives there was little argument.[7]

In addition to controlling the borough they also controlled the church, as the corporation had the advowson to the parish of Townstall and St Saviours, Dartmouth. Henry Holdsworth became vicar from 1808-1836. The family also controlled the advowsons of Stokenham, Brixham and Ashprington. To complete their power, from 1725 until 1861 an Arthur Holdsworth was Governor of Dartmouth Castle, which had to be kept fortified against the threat of French attack in the frequent wars.

Dartmouth Castle and harbour entrance in a print of 1734. Five Arthur Holdsworths were governors of the Castle between 1725 and 1861.

What was the business which made it worth while controlling the town during this time? It was still based on the Newfoundland trade, but with differences from the pattern of the previous century, when both the English government and the merchants opposed the settling of colonists there, preferring instead annual summer fishing fleets which returned home for the winter. However, despite laws forbidding ships to carry passengers who might become settlers, in fact the resident

population in Newfoundland grew, as did the rival French colony on the island, with active encouragement from France, reaching 2,611 in 1716 according to a Report on the State of the Fisheries in 1718.[8]

The master fishermen permanently living in Newfoundland were desperate for labour in the busy summer season, and both Holdsworths and Newmans had bases there. Every year their agents scoured the West Country villages and towns as far away as Poole in Dorset, recruiting boys and young men for Newfoundland. They were persuaded to sign on for two summers and a winter, or three summers and two winters, in exchange for a free passage, their keep while there, and at the end from £15 to £40 in back wages according to length of time, age and fitness when recruited.[9] Ships often carried two or three hundred such lads, known as 'green' men, and captains were warned not to call at any port after leaving in case they jumped ship — the term 'green' being probably all too true in both senses by then. Few of these lads came back, although free passage was offered: many married the daughters of their masters. Others went on to New England or elsewhere, rather than brave the return crossing. Many Devon mothers must have known when their sons left home that they would never see them again. Emigration probably explains why the total population of Dartmouth in the 1801 census was no greater than the estimates for 1674 based on the Hearth Tax returns.[10]

However, these settlers needed goods of all descriptions, and here was where another side of the Holdsworth/Newman organisation came in. By the early 18th century ships were leaving Dartmouth regularly filled with what they needed, and had clearly ordered. A typical entry in a Port Book of 1744, February, records the following cargo for Newfoundland:-

> Salt, mellasses, strong beer, nails, tin ware, Eng. sope, tallow candles, 50 sailors suits of clothes, 25 doz. shirts, 5 doz rugs, 10 tons cordage, buiscuit, pease, kersey, shagg, 640 ells English sail duck, twine, seynes, netts, lines, 1,000 pairs shoes.[11]

Other ships carried cheese, dried whiting, wrought iron, lime, tools of all sorts, scissors, knives, barrels of pork and casks of butter. Farmers, it seems, were exporting surplus food to America — a contrast with today. There were some re-exports, such as tobacco, and oranges, or spices, but the great majority of the goods were produced, if not in Dartmouth itself, then in the villages of the surrounding Devon countryside. There was a thriving cottage industry, for instance, in places such as Ipplepen and Broadhempston, in producing boots and shoes for Newfoundland, of which there is an oral tradition today. Devon cattle produced good hide for them, just as Devon sheep produced wool for all those sailors suits. Ironware, and all the sails, cordage lines and hooks were made in Dartmouth for the local shipbuilding industry, so to produce a surplus for export was easy. One must imagine the organisation needed to go round all the villages to place order for the goods, collect the finished articles, transport them by packhorse down the steep streets unfit for wheeled vehicles, to be laden into ships, to meet requests placed six months ago in St John's, Newfoundland. It can be seen that this must have given work to hundreds.

All this stimulated the need for ships, which were built locally along the banks of the Dart, in Dartmouth around Hardness shore and onto Coombe mud. Timber had to be imported from the Baltic by this time, and here too we find Holdsworth ships in the business. There was an enormous increase in shipping registered in Dartmouth in the 18th century, from a total of 825 tons in 1709 to 4,492 in 1770, by which time the port was second only to Exeter in Devon.[12] A large number of sub-

stantial houses were built by prosperous merchants in the town during this period.

Another source of wealth for the town, in which the Holdsworths and Newmans were much involved was privateering. This was the practice by all maritime nations in time of war of issuing Letters of Marque to armed merchantmen, giving them the right to attack enemy merchant ships. Usually several merchants combined to share the cost of fitting out such a ship, sharing the profits proportionately. The captain and crew had their share too, to encourage them to risk their lives in a very dangerous enterprise. In the war with France, 1739-1747, Holdsworths and Newmans had shares in fifteen such ships.[13] One, the *Dartmouth Galley* took six prizes in two years.[14] Another, the *Boscawen* of 260 tons, fought a battle with a much larger French privateer, *Les Deux Amis*, which was captured and brought in to Dartmouth as a prize. The Court of Admiralty was set up in the New Inn — now the Castle Hotel — and heard the French captain describe how the *Boscawen* had missed a much greater prize, since he had, just before being taken, put into Corunna and landed a cargo of 60,000 pieces of eight, as well as some tobacco and sugar.[15] Even so, his remaining cargo and ship were valued at £10,000. However, gains like this were likely to be offset by losses to enemy privateers.

Directly or indirectly, therefore, most people in Dartmouth were dependent on Holdsworth organisation and enterprise, so could they be considered public benefactors? To a certain extent, in that if they were prospering, then the port also was doing so. However, some people felt aggrieved, with reason. The nonconformists were excluded by law from becoming freemen, and felt bitter at paying shipping dues when their competitors were exempt from them. The same applied to any one who fell out with the Holdsworths. The most prominent of these was the Seale family, equally rich as the Holdsworths, living in the town at Mount Boone, and anxious to take part in the borough politics. When they were deliberately excluded a bitter feud ensued over three generations, the Seales coming to lead others tired of Holdsworth rule.

John Seale in 1775 began the building of Sandquay Docks,[16] in the teeth of Holdsworth opposition, which he was able to do on his own land. They were busy throughout the Napoleonic wars, turning out merchant ships and frigates for the navy, and ships continued to be built there until after the second world war, providing steady employment for the town.

However, the Napoleonic wars marked the end of the Newfoundland trade, and led to a great depression in the town. Americans and French could combine to attack English shipping at both ends of their journey and losses were heavy. Even after the war, other places such as Canada could supply some goods needed by Newfoundlanders, and Lancashire could export factory made goods through the port of Liverpool more cheaply than Devon could provide them. The Newmans had already transferred their main office to London, and only a younger line remained in Dartmouth. No Newman ships were built in Dartmouth in the 19th century until 1873, and many were built in Newfoundland. The family business became world-wide, and London based.[17]

The last of the Dartmouth Holdsworths, Arthur Howe, could easily too have left the town to its own devices, being a wealthy landowner. He was a Holdsworth on his mother's side too, and seems to have been doubly endowed with the family talents. He was a good amateur artist, and designed new Corporation seats for St Saviour's church. He was also scientific and an inventor. He bought Warfleet Mill, a grain mill, and converted it to making fine quality paper, designing a special roof which used the least possible timber, and it was driven by a water wheel which was the largest

Arthur Howe Holdsworth (1780-1861). Although forced off the town council after 1836, he held the title of Governor of Dartmouth Castle from 1807 until his death.

west of Bristol. He devised a way of using coloured rags, and extracting the colour from them to make them equal to the finest white rags in paper making. He also patented an improved rudder for ships, water-tight bulkheads, and a fireproof magazine.[18]

In Dartmouth, after 1815, he was responsible for an Improvement Act under which the old Mill Pool was filled in, forming good level land on which in 1828 a new market was completed—the money being lent by his mother. A new (Victoria) road alongside it provided the first carriage road out of the town's roads, part of a turnpike road to Kingsbridge. He had plans to widen all the town's roads, fill in the outer par' of the pool, and build a new Guildhall on the land created. However, all this was prevented by a renewal of the feud with the Seales.

John Henry Seale was winning considerable support in his campaign against Holdsworth control of what he aptly called 'Rottenborough'. His contribution to the town was his promotion of the building of the Floating Bridge, or Higher Ferry, which enabled carriages to cross the river for the first time, in 1831. In 1832, the long national campaign to reform Parliament came to fruition with the Reform Act, and with voting now given to the £10 householder Seale was triumphantly elected the one remaining M.P. for the town. In 1835 a Royal Commission report on the Corporation of Dartmouth made devastating comments on its graft, nepotism and incompetence.[19] In 1836 there was a clean sweep of the entire Holdsworth family both from the Council, as it was now called, and the church, as Robert resigned the living of Townstall.

Arthur Howe had his revenge by sueing the new Town Council for £1,240 owed to him on a bond given by the old corporation for legal expenses incurred in defending them against a 'quo warranto' suit in 1831 brought by their political opponents. Now, in 1836, these same people were the new Council, and found themselves liable to pay their enemy's legal costs. They refused; a long legal battle followed, which went to appeal, and they lost. They had to pay, including costs, nearly £7,000 to find which they had to mortgage much of their income.[20] Thus Holdsworth ensured that the new council never had the money to carry out the improvements the town so badly needed.

However, though this shows a petty side to his character, he was otherwise a man of vision. He strongly supported Dartmouth's claim to be a mail packet station, when an Admiralty commission investigated it in 1841, and a long letter on the subject is full of ideas for promoting the prosperity of the town. He urged the completion of the railway, and its use to promote tourism — then hardly existing because of lack of transport — as well as for sending Devon farm products to London. He saw the possibility of the port becoming one for the embarcation of passengers, and a coaling station for steamers — both of which happened after his death. He did tend to regard the town as his personal property, but because of that he wanted it to prosper. Certainly his successors over the next forty years in the town council did little to encourage optimism in the democratic process.

Notes on Sources

The major sources for this article are: Devon Record Office, Dartmouth Borough Archives, ref. DD 63,600-67,044, and Stuart Moore 2003-6; Public Record Office, Port Books, E190 976/9-1003/11; P.R.O. H.C.A. 32/105 and 32/118 re privateering; the Newman private family papers, including their History of Newman Hunt & Co. by Tom Newman.

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4. See *Country Life*, Oct. 31, 1947 p.875.
5. Namier & Brooke: *History of Parliament 1754-90.*
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8. Calendar of State Papers, America and W. Indies.
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10. Devon Hearth Tax, 1674, Ed. Stoate.
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15. P.R.O: H.C.A. 32/105/1.
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THE INIMITABLE GEORGE WIGHTWICK

Keith S. Perkins

When eminent Plymouth architect John Foulston reached that time in his life when he thought about handing over the reins of his business to a younger man, such a man presented himself in the shape of one George Wightwick, a young architect from London.

Wightwick (pronounced Whittick) was born on 26 August 1802, at Alyn Bank, near Mold in Flintshire. He was educated first at Wolverhampton Grammar School and then at Dr Lord's School, Tooting. In 1818, he was articled to Edward Lapidge but failed to secure admission to the Royal Academy Schools and in 1826 he obtained the position of secretary-companion to architect John Soane (later Sir John) where he remained—reluctantly it seems—for a period of several months.

At the age of 25, Wightwick embarked upon a seven month educational tour of Italy, but permanent employment 'eluded' him. In 1828, seeing no hope of establishing himself in London, he set off by road to Portsmouth for the purpose of travelling by sea to South Devon, which he did aboard the Plymouth paddle-steamer *Brunswick*. He had previously visited Devonshire in 1825 and 1826, and had cherished the wish that Plymouth would eventually become the place of his professional residence. He could already lay claim to other influences in Devonshire at that time, for at Yelverton lived his mother, now Mrs William Damant (Wightwick's father had tragically drowned in a Flintshire canal in 1811).

Wightwick eventually arrived at the mouth of the River Dart at Dartmouth, repenting that he had not preferred the tedium of the turnpike road. He recalls:

> . . . We 'lay to', as it is termed—that is, we stopped our paddles and performed a *pas seul* on the waves, in which a compound of starboard and larboard rolling and fore and aft pitching was practised to the utmost amount of allowable eccentricity. The steward told me to get ready. This was gratuitous. There was never a man more ready than I for the most submissive yielding to anything which the fates in their ingenuity might contrive as an imperative decree. But when he told me to get my luggage ready, he might as well have ordered me to ascend and hang my portmanteau on the mainmast . . .
>
> . . . The purse, which I drew with difficulty from its tenacious hold in my damp pocket—the pocket coming out with it—seemed to be made of seaweed; and the several required pieces of silver came from it like reluctant limpets. the boat was now alongside—meaning, that at one moment staving in its bows against the paddle-box, and the next bounding off out of reach; now up to the steamers gangway, and anon at the bottom of a wave, six or eight feet below it. In went my luggage, and away went luggage and boat, as if nothing else was expected. Again came the boat to the gangway. — . . . 'Now sir, jump in!' — I let myself drop. Down went the boat, and I after it, but before I reached the footplank, it was on the re-ascent to meet me, and in another second I was part of an hetero-geneous cargo of leather, carpet and still life, half suffocated by the woollen embrace of a boatman . . .

Finally landed upon the quay at Dartmouth, Wightwick found lodgings close by and immediately went to bed — 'But, oh! the bed was still the hated steamer! though more gentle in its game of "pitch and toss"!'

At the time of Wightwick's arrival in Dartmouth—1828—Devon civil engineer James Meadows Rendel and Plymouth architect John Foulston were surveying Greenway narrows, where they had projected the erection of a suspension bridge.[1] Thus it is conceivable that all three: Wightwick, Rendel and Foulston, would have become acquainted at that time. Later their lives were to become interwoven, both in friendship and in professional association, with John Foulston in due course offering Wightwick a partnership, and Rendel naming his third son, George Wightwick Rendel, after the boy's godfather[2] . . . In the meantime, however, Wightwick departed upon a tour through Devonshire.

Sometime before May 1829, he entered Plymouth for the first time and found lodgings in Tavistock Place. He soon made himself indispensible to Plymouth society and became 'the welcome guest at every country house party'. But perhaps one of the most intriguing social activities in Wightwick's somewhat eccentric life was his involvement—as a founder member—with the Brotherhood of 'Blue Friars',[3] — a select club whose members dined in monastic garb of blue and buff:

> . . . It was the fancy of these men to form themselves into a small and select literary and convivial club, holding periodical conclaves at the houses of each in succession, there to dine, to crack jokes, to read papers original or selected and to while away the hours in the feast of reason and the flow of sole . . .

To this social circle, Wightwick became *Brother Locke*, under which name he contributed many articles to Frazer's magazine, edited as *Blue Friars Pleasantries*.

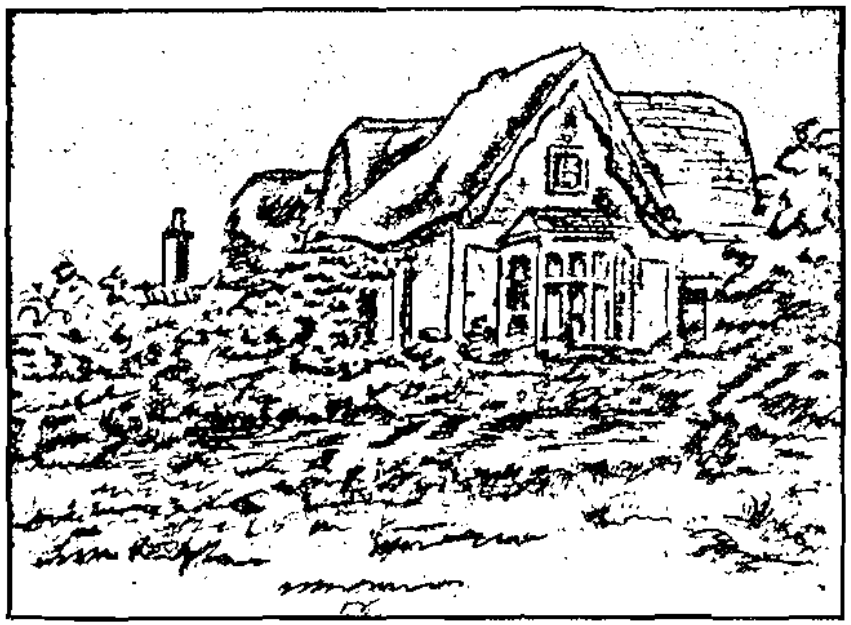
On 26 August 1829 (the 27th anniversary of his birthday), George married Caroline, his step-sister, daughter of William Damant, at Buckland Monochorum.[4] This was followed by an all too brief 'honey-week' in Exmouth and then a return to Plymouth and 'wonderfully small' lodgings in Union Street.

John Foulston,[5] who was then the leading architect in Plymouth and indeed in the south western part of England, had conceived a whole quarter of Plymouth long

before Wightwick's arrival. But by now he was fifty-seven years of age, and six months of partnership with George Wightwick ended when Foulston retired to what publicly was regarded as 'Foulston's Cottage', Wightwick wrote:

> . . . A former appellation had distinguished it as 'Athenian Cottage', though what connection there was between a kind of Tudor thatched domicile and anything ever seen in Athens it was for the fanciful owner to specify . . .

John Foulston died in 1842, but the Plymouth he had planned and built lasted 120-130 years until most of it (but not all) was destroyed in the second world war.



Wightwick had a great love for the theatre. He wrote plays and performed as an amateur, sometimes at Saltram House, the home of Lord Morley.

At Falmouth, in 1835, during the period when he was engaged upon designs and the construction of the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic, Wightwick had become a frequent visitor to Rosehill and probably Penjerrick, the homes of Quaker scientist Robert Were Fox, whose second daughter, Caroline, began in that year to keep the journal[6] for which she became celebrated. Caroline Fox's journal was published in 1882, eleven years after her death. In brief it was notable not so much for its considerable literary merits as for its association with distinguished persons, mostly men of science. Amongst them were: Davis Gilbert (formerly Giddy) scientist and President of the Royal Society, 1827-1830, during which time he judged the Clifton Bridge competition; Captain Fitzroy of H.M.S. Beagle and Darwin fame; Professor Wheatstone; Sir William Snow Harris (another of the original 'Blue Friars') also a scientist; and Sir Richard Owen (a friend of James Meadows Rendel)—to name but a few.

On 25 October 1839, Caroline entered in her journal:

> . . . G. Wightwick and others dined with us. He talked agreeably about capital punishment, greatly doubting it having any effect in preventing crime . . .

Throughout the 1830s, George had an extensive architectural practice in Devon and Cornwall.[7] He designed buildings in both Classical and Gothic styles but, unfortunately for him, his idea of church Gothic was more in sympathy with that of late Georgian architects, and he failed to change his outlook in the 1840s. His designs and ideas were castigated by the *Ecclesiologist* and he began to lose his church commissions.

In 1848 he became President of the Plymouth Atheneum where he frequently lectured, but soon the increasing competition posed by some of his former pupils added to his worries and although he was pleased by their success he was nevertheless personally overcome by a sense of failure. As if that were not enough, he began to realize that almost all of the audience at his lectures had come only to be entertained. In 1851, after seeing no prospect of recovering his former position, George gave up his practice in favour of his step-brother and partner, Walter Damant, and then retired.

Caroline Fox recorded the departure of the Wightwick's from Plymouth in her journal on the 27th June:

> . . . Saw George Wightwick who with wife and other furniture, is starting for Clifton to live. He showed us two portraits of himself: one by young Opie, so good that he says if he saw a fly on its nose he should certainly scratch his own; the other by Talfourd, catching a momentary passionate gleam of dramatic expression — a fine abstraction . . .

In 1859, George was awarded a Silver Medal by the Royal Institution of British Architects for an essay on the Architecture and Genius of Sir Christopher Wren (the man from whom he drew his inspiration). In 1867, he mourned the loss of his wife who had suffered a gradual paralysis and in January 1868, he was married again—this time to Isabella, eldest daughter of Samuel Jackson, a landscape painter of Clifton.

Then at Portishead on 9 July 1872, two months short of his 70th birthday, George Wightwick—Brother Locke—architect, writer, brilliant conversationalist, story teller, actor, entertainer, always theatrical and slightly larger than life--was no more.

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6. Memories of Old Friends—being extracts from The Journal of Caroline Fox of Penjerrick, Cornwall from 1835-1871. Edited by Horace N. Pym.
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Illustrations

1. George Wightwick — Devon Library Services
2. Foulstons 'Athenian Cottage' — Devon Library Services
3. Caroline Fox — Acknowledgement: Woodbrooke Extension Committee

ROADS IN SOUTH DEVON

Notes compiled by John R. Pike

There is no full history of road transport, for specific aspects *see below.*

1765	First reliable map of Devon (Scale 1" to 1ml.) by Benjamin Donn; modern reprint pub. by Exeter University, 1965.
1765	Keyberry Bridge Turnpike Trust formed (5 Geo. III c. 70) For history of the local turnpikes *see* Bibliogs. Torquay 1973 p38; Paignton 1974 p9; Brixham 1974 p11).
1809	First edition of the Ordnance Survey (rep. by David & Charles).
1821	Torquay and Dartmouth T.P.'s Trusts merged. Many new roads built see J.T. White's *Torquay* 1878 pp158-9; Kanefsky: *Devon tollhouses* 1976.
1831	Dartmouth Higher Ferry opened *see* Blewitt p149 and *Rendel's News* July/August 1981: Freeman: *Dartmouth* 1983.
1840	Torbay Road started: previous one partially destroyed 1824. From 1847 issues of the *Torquay Directory* contain reports of monthly Trust meetings and of news items. Some are indexed at Torquay Library.
1874	Toll system abandoned in Torbay. *Kelly's Directory of Devon 1875* has a "roads" section in its editorial section.
c1870-1900	Omnibus services operating *see* Bib. Guides Torquay p43; Paignton p12.
1899	Thomas Adams operating the LIFU steam bus in Paignton.
1903	First steam bus Chelston - Strand *see* Fisher Barham: *Torbay Transport* 1980.
1904	GWR motor buses running between Torquay and Paignton *see* Bib. Guide Torquay p44.
1907	Torquay Tramways start using the Dolter stud system. *see* Fisher Barham; Gentry, P.W. *Tramways of the West of England* Ellis, A.C. *Historical Survey* p433.
1911	Conversion to overhead wires and trams run through to Paignton. Total cost £60,000. *see* Bib. Guide Paignton p44.
1913	Grey Torpedo Cars formed and the start of the charabanc era *see* PSV Circle: *History of the Devon General.* This is a very detailed and technical account of many of the small South Devon bus companies as well.
1920	Prospectus for Grey Cars Ltd *see* Torquay Directory 23 June 1920 (an example of how advertisements can aid local historians).
1929	Route reorganisation in Paignton *see* Bib. Guide Paignton p14 and Anderson, R.C. *History of the Western National* 1979.
1934	Last trams ran in Torbay.

For the later history and the merging of companies and the rivalry between them *use* the Bib. Guides, Fisher Barham and the *History of the Devon General* (A new work on the history of local transport is being written by Mr L. Folkard).

The Chronological Record of events relating to Torquay and neighbourhood by R. Dymond and J.T. White is a useful record from early times to 1880. It should be remembered that it is selective and represents the

interests of its Victorian compilers, and the newspaper files should be consulted as well. An annual chronology of local events was published in the *Torquay Directory* at the end of each year until 1928. Some complete sets are in Torquay Library and Torquay Museum.

RAILWAYS IN SOUTH DEVON

Notes compiled by John R. Pike

There is an extensive bibliography. Note particularly:

MacDermot E.T. and Clinker C.R. *History of the GWR* v 2, 2nd ed. 1973.
Thomas, D. St J. *Regional hist. of railways: West Country* 5th ed. 1981.
Rolt, L.T.C. *Isambard Kingdon Brunel* 1957 (Penguin 1970).
Noble, C.B. *The Brunels: father and son* 1938.
Gregory, R.H. *The South Devon Railway* 1982.

Plans of projected railways were deposited with the Devon Quarter Sessions Court; they are listed in the Devon Record Office *Brief Guide* Part 1, 1969, p35. For Torbay material see the Bibliographical Guides for Torquay 1973, Paignton 1974, and Brixham 1974, and White and Dymond's *Chronological Record of Torquay & neighbourhood* 1880 pp 30-48.

Brief chronology

1832	2 proposals for railways from Newton to Torquay.
1836	Plans deposited for the London, Exeter & Falmouth Railway possibly the one surveyed by Brunel (Rolt p 213).
1843	Prospectus for the Plymouth, Devonport and Exeter Railway Co. Participating companies, GWR, Bristol & Exeter, Bristol & Gloucester. Name changed to:
1844 (Jul)	*South Devon Railway* Act received Royal Assent. I.K. Brunel chief engineer so a broad-gauge line.
1844 (Oct)	Survey of line from Newton to Torquay Harbour commenced.
1845	Dartmouth, Brixham, Torbay, Exeter and North Devon Junction Railway plans deposited. (A standard gauge line to link with another at Exeter).
1846 (May)	S.D. Railway opened to Teignmouth: to Newton Abbot in Dec.
1846 (Aug)	S.D.R. (Amendments & Branches) Act received Royal Assent (authorising a railway from Newton Abbot to 'a certain field in Tormohum').
1846 (Nov)	Plans being made for an extension into Torquay and to Brixham.
1848 (Dec)	Line to Torquay (at Torre Station) opened. First train hauled by *Taurus* (GWR 2-4-0).
1851 (Dec)	First recorded railway accident at Torquay (Lawes Bridge).
1852-53	Further proposals for extending line into Torquay.
1853	Doubling of line from Newton to Totnes commenced. Torquay branch used as far as Aller where a junction was created.
1853	Prospectus for the Dartmouth Railway Co. issued. (Plans deposited describe it as the Dartmouth, Torquay & South Devon Railway.)
1854	Torquay Railway Extension Bill submitted but later withdrawn.

1857	Dartmouth & Torbay Railway Act received Royal Assent.
1858 (Jan)	"First sod" cut at Torre.
1859	Line opened to Paignton. New 'Torquay Station' overlooking Tor Abbey Sands.
1859	Notice of the incorporation of a company to build a horse tramway from the Station to the Pier (at Vaughan Parade).
1860 (Aug)	Refreshment room opened at Torquay Station by Mr Cash of the Queens Hotel.
1861	Brixham Road (Churston Station) opened. Newton Station rebuilt.
1862	S.D.R. now responsible for operating line from Torquay to Churston. Paignton goods shed completed.
1862	*Flying Dutchman* express started (From 1864 it ran to and from Plymouth).
1864 (Aug)	Line opened to Kingswear (Hoodown).
1864	Torbay & Brixham Railway Act passed.
1864 (Oct)	Rail and river *Dart Trip* introduced.
1865	Coal siding and shipping place built at Kingswear.
1868	Torbay & Brixham Railway line opened for traffic.
1870 (May)	Accident at Kingswear.
1871	Debenture debt of the Dartmouth & Torbay passed to GWR.
1871	Large meeting at Torquay declared in favour of extending line to Torquay Harbour; a week later an equally large meeting declared against.
1874	Third line laid to Aller, and Torquay branch separate again.
1875 (Aug)	Runaway train at Torquay Station.
1876 (Feb)	Great Western Railway took over the lines in the South West, the Bristol & Exeter, South Devon and Cornwall Railways.
1877	Double lines extended to Torquay; new station, the present one built.
1878 (Sept)	Saxby's Patent Signals installed at Torquay Station.
1882	Petition 30ft long submitted to GWR re difficulties caused by broad-gauge.
1887	Footbridge erected at Torbay Road crossing, Paignton.
1889	Paignton joined outcry for gauge change.
1890	"Automatic" crossing gates installed in Torbay Road, Paignton; double swing-gates at Sands Road.
1891	Torquay brought within 5 hours running time from London.
1892 (May)	Gauge conversion between 21st and 22nd.
1897	Proposal for a Totnes, Paignton & Torbay Railway submitted. GWR opposed.
1903	Landslip at Hollacombe. Paignton improved, down platform widened and fitted up with waiting-room.
1906	Opening of line via Westbury reduced journey-time Paddington-Torquay to 3 hours 50 minutes.
1910	Double tracks laid from Torquay to Paignton. "Breakneck" tunnel (133 yards) opened out. Estimated cost £20,000.
1910	Second class abandoned.
1912	First entry in *Paignton Observer* of Preston Platform being in use.
1925	Proposed extension through the South Hams. Sir Felix Pole, GWR General Manager at Torquay.
1927 (Apr)	New Station at Newton Abbot opened.

1928 (Jul)	Goodrington Sands Halt opened.
1929	"Torquay Pullman" inaugurated (Ran 1929 Summer only).
1931	Goodrington Sands goods-yard in use. Main building on 152 concrete piles.
1938	(August Bank Holiday) 20,000 people arrived in Torquay. 50 additional excursions trains ran.
1939-45	The Railways at War; many RAF and other Service personnel carried.
1948 (Jan)	Private companies including the GWR became *British Railways*.
1956	New Goodrington Station and Tanners Road bridge to beach opened.
1963 (May)	Brixham branch closed.
1972	Dart Valley Railway Co. took over the section from Paignton to Kingswear.

Many contemporary accounts appear in local newspapers: consult

Torquay Directory from 1849 (Torquay LIbrary and Museum)
Torquay Times from 1865 (files incomplete) (Torquay Library)
Western Morning News from 1860 (also not complete) (Plymouth Library)
Paignton Observer from 1892 (Torquay Library)

A MOORLAND HEALER

The following anecdote, is given to us by the Reverend Canon E.F. Hall. Canon Hall, formerly Archdeacon of Totnes, now aged 97 lives in retirement at Leusdon, to which he first went as vicar in 1921.

Sixty years ago Granny Turner of Corndon Ford Farm, Poundsgate, had a great reputation for curing skin troubles and people came to her from all over the Moor. She had some knowledge of herbs, which she picked from the River Webburn, and made up her own ointment which she smoothed into the skin, wrapped up in a bandage and told the patient to come back in a month's time.

I tried to find out details. She said, 'You will need the milk of a red cow, the wool of a black sheep and a sprig of hawthorn', and added with a twinkle, 'but it does not matter about the hawthorn.'

I said, 'Yes, Granny, the milk to mix up the ointment and the wool for the bandage — and what then?' She replied, 'I strike them.' which puzzled me until I remembered the Bible story of Naaman the leper who thought the prophet could 'strike his hand' over his skin and he would be cured. Then I saw that 'strike' was the old English for 'stroke'. So Granny gently massaged in the ointment, 'striking' it in.

'And then, Granny', I said, 'What next?' She replied, 'I make the sign of the Cross and I say "In nummy dummy".' She had not any idea where the words came from, but I recognised them as 'In nomine Domini Patris . . .' and Latin had not been heard in a church service up here for over four hundred years! It had been handed down in the family, one of our oldest Moor familes.

Now her grandson, who runs the farm, has bought a television. I shall encourage him to listen to the Pope at Easter giving his blessing from St Peter's, Rome, and he will say, "The Pope got that from my granny.'

Reviews

Ottery St Mary by John Whitham. Phillimore, 124pp. £8.95.

Until Mr Whitham produced this book, there was no history of Ottery St Mary. There were books on the Coleridge family, and an account of the manor of Ottery in the late seventeenth century, and various articles on the church and the College, but the history of the town itself had not been examined.

This book is arranged chronologically, and deals fairly briefly with the history of the town up to the founding of the College in 1337 by Bishop Grandison. The history of the College and its dissolution is dealt with more fully, and there are then chapters on the Kings School, on Stuart and Georgian times in Ottery, and on Samuel Taylor Coleridge and his not very happy relationships with his family in Ottery. Finally there is a chapter on Victorian Ottery, and an account on the big houses, Cadhay, Knightsone, Thorne, Holcombe, and the Chanters House that lay within the very large parish.

Mr Whitham tells us about the fire of 1866, recently celebrated in a Community Play; about the founding of the Cottage Hospital in the late nineteenth century out of the munificence of Isabella Elliot; about the Ottery factory, now Otter Switchgear, built by Sir George Yonge of Escot, with its, perhaps unique, tumbling weir.

There are also some details of the Corn Riots of 1766 when food prices were very high, and of William Browne, the Poet, and Alexander Barclay, who was a monk at Ottery in the early fifteenth century and wrote "The Ship of Fools", though one would hardly agree with Mr Whitham that this was one of the "great books in the English language.".

The dramatic events at Ottery during the Civil War, in the autumn of 1645, are also recalled, though it is unlikely that it was the plague that killed off so many soldiers and townsfolk, since it is referred to as the "New disease".

Perhaps what is lacking in this work is a sense of continuity of the life of the people of Ottery over the centuries, the way they made a living, their wealth or poverty at different times, and their relationship with the monks of the College and with their successors. To compare Ottery, its size, wealth, and status with other towns, Honiton for instance, would be interesting. We would not know from the book that Ottery, unlike Honiton, and even Woodbury, was never a "Borough", though it had a fair and a market; nor that it preserved at least the rudiments of an open-field system at the end of the seventeenth century, and that its land tenures were varied and peculiar. Manorial documents for Ottery survive in some numbers, but they do not seem to have been much used. There are some printing errors: "Penrith", on p. 7 should be "Penwith", "Pitt" on p. 86 should be "Putt". It must also be said that there were never 400 'Minster' churches in Devon.

But these are mostly academic comments, and they should not deter anyone from reading what is a long needed, and good historical guide to Ottery St Mary.

Robin Stanes

Devon' Age of Elegance edited by Peter Hunt. Exeter, Devon Books. 160pp. £9.95 ISBN 0 86114 750 2

Devon historians must praise the initiative of the County Council in making some of the splendid collections in the County Archives and the West Country Studies Library available to a wider audience through the contents of this attractively produced volume. It is always a problem deciding at what level to pitch such a work and this is avowedly aimed at 'those with a general rather than a scholastic interest', though this (biased) scholastic reviewer feels that the editor has perhaps underestimated both the extent of scholarship the general reader will take and also the extent to which scholars can inform the general reader on such material. The theme of the volume is that Devon's 'architecture and the style of life reached a peak of elegance during the first fifty years of the nineteenth century', and it is substantiated by ninety-seven contemporary prints (the book's crowning glory) and by fragments from the social life of Mary Cornish at Plymouth and Lady Paterson at Exeter. There is however more difficulty than the editor would admit in fitting into this framework the main text used—selections from the journals of the Reverend John Swete on tours of Devon in the 1790s—for Swete set out to look for *picturesque* Devon and not for elegant Devon. Swete was following a contemporary vogue initiated by William Gilpin, whose picturesque tours of South Wales, the Lake District and the Highlands were published between 1782 and 1789. If his train of thought, and indeed, his very language are to be understood it might have been helpful to have reproduced some of Swete's 'amateurish watercolours' painted when he found the picturesque, and especially to have explained the word 'picturesque' itself, which occurs so often in Swete's journals. Gilpin defined it as 'that kind of beauty which would look well in a picture', and the type of picture he had in mind was that of the fashionable landscape paintings of Claude Lorraine, Gaspard Poussin and Salvatore Rosa which combined perspective with intricacy and variety—the latter two facets thought essential by Uvedale Price in his *Essay on the Picturesque* in 1794. Swete thus searched Devon with a very precise picture in mind, one focussed on a particular type of landscape which preferably included ruins (a major source of intricacy and variety). Landscape preoccupies Swete and his view of Devon's 'age of elegance' has to be gleaned from some delicious asides on the towns and houses he passed on his way, some of which indeed were very inelegant! Thorverton he thought 'a mean straggling town', Coombe Martin 'a long scattering dilapidated village', the Dunkeswell area so miserable that he 'got away from this region of want as fast as the hills and stoney roads would permit'. At times his memory fails him so that he transposes houses and names — near Bideford he comes to 'Cleveland owned by Mr Tapley' and on points like this the accompanying editorial might have been more helpful with correction or elucidation. The leaning of the commentary is rather to detail what has happened to places since Swete visited them and historians may well find this irritating. Once accepted on his own terms Swete has so many colourful *vignettes* of late eighteenth century Devon that one longs for more of the Reverend at the expense of information that Brixham now lands 47% of Devon's fishing catch, amounting to 8,800 tonnes in 1981 and employing 3-400 people. One final wish would be for a map or maps to chart the course of Swete's journeyings, but, such grumblings apart, there is something for everyone in this book and it savours the appetite for more.

Michael Duffy

The swift foot of time: an Australian in England 1938-45 by Nancy Phelan. Quartet Books, 1983. 232 pp. £9.95. ISBN 0 908128 21 5.

Nancy Phelan is an Australian who bought a one-way ticket to England by boat in 1938 for £40—how times have changed! Arriving in London, she got a job as a waitress for Quality Inns, then she became a demonstrator for Pears Soap in the Midlands, then she sold horoscopes for Madame Sybellina. In her lively account of her experiences, she tells us something about English life and customs forty or so years ago. All this is compellingly set down but the justification for reviewing this book in the *Devon Historian* is the second half of the book. An unexplained pregnancy leads to the birth of Vanessa in wartime Britain. As a woman with a baby, Nancy Phelan was evacuated to North Devon where she was billeted first in Churchill Farm and then at Arlington Rectory. Of her time there she provides a perceptive, revealing, and on occasion hilarious account. Life in Churchill was a real education. Nancy Phelan learned to light fires, skin rabbits, make bread and wash sheets in the open and life was spiced with gossip and with public occasions like weddings. There was a sturdy conservative radicalism about the villagers Mrs Phelan met and a strong suspicion of the outside world. News of the bombing of Plymouth evoked a feeling of sympathy for 'all they poor sharks burned in their beds'. Still, the local view was that it 'serves un right. 'Tes their own fault for living in they cities'. And then Nancy Phelan and Vanessa went to live at Arlington Rectory and life became much more comfortable, no water to carry, no sheets to wash, floors to scrub, windows to clean or wood to cut. And there are many stories: of villagers unrecognisable when they wore hats and had their teeth in for special occasions, of men in bowler hats refused information about their whereabouts because they might be German parachutists and so on. The last part of the book is dominated by Arlington Court. The locals scoff at the National Trust plaque in the church with reference to Miss Chichester's 'many acts of kindness'. 'Praaper old devil', 'miserable old toad' was the view of the residents on the estate as they remembered employees sacked without reason or evicted on the slightest pretext. But when Mrs Phelan went back in 1981 she found that times had changed. The National Trust had improved the cottages which are now used as holiday lets. The locals need housing but they cannot afford to pay the rents set by the Trust so they move away. It is sometimes said that a spectator sees more of the game than the players. This extremely readable book provides a lively and vivid picture of life in North Devon during the second world war. Such accounts make a real contribution to the historical record—and there should be more of them.

Walter Minchinton

Devon and Somerset Mines: metalliferous and associated minerals 1845-1913 compiled by Roger Burt, Peter Waite and Ray Burnley. University of Exeter, 1984. xxviii, 138 pp. £3.95. ISBN 0 85989 201 8

This is the sixth volume in a series of statistical volumes drawing on the published annual volumes of *The Mineral Statistics of the United Kingdom* from their beginning in the mid-nineteenth century until the eve of the first world war. The information is presented on a mine-by-mine basis with a minimum of editorial adjustment but with the locations altered where necessary to current usage. Ordnance

Survey grid references have been added. This volume provides a valuable record of production and employment at the individual mines together with some information about ownership and management which will make it a useful book to consult. But there are some quirks which no doubt will be blamed on the computer. Some Cornish mines appear in the Devon list and some Devon mines in the Somerset list with some mines from further afield. This means that while the entry numbers can be used as identification, they cannot be used for totals. Some of the grid references are missing and not all of them are accurate. The volume also falls short of the claim on the back cover that 'this (is) the most comprehensive field guide to the still substantial surface and underground remains of both counties' since it serves neither. There are no maps, apart from the map reference no information is given about the surface remains and nothing is said at all about what survives underground. Further, since the entries appear alphabetically under mines' names, it would have been useful to have had an index of places. But it is the introduction with its ten statistical tables which is most unhelpful. In no sense do Devon and Somerset form a regional economy and to total production for the two counties just makes the tables unuseful. It is to be hoped that, when this most useful volume is reprinted, the introduction and its tables will be revised.

Walter Minchinton

Eighteenth century Exeter by Robert Newton. University of Exeter, 1984. x, 192 pp. £7.95. ISBN 0 85989 255 7

Piecemeal in separate volumes, the history of Exeter since the mid-sixteenth century is being re-written. Wallace MacCaffrey described the growth of an English country town between 1540 and 1640 and, taking a more limited canvas, William Stephens provided a study of the industrial and commercial development of the city between 1625 and 1688. To follow his *Victorian Exeter* which covered not only the reign of Victoria from 1837 to 1901 but also the period to 1914, Robert Newton occupied his last years with research on the previous century or so. Published posthumously, this book is concerned with a rather longer period than the title suggests since it covers the years from 1688 to 1835 (did nothing happen in 1836?). The limits are determined by political events. This book begins with the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and ends with the aftermath of the Municipal Corporations Act of 1834. And, as the titles of some of the chapters indicate — 'The Chamber: "the most wise and gravest"', 'Party Politics 1688-1760' and 'The Chamber at Work' — the emphasis is on local politics, where Dr Newton felt happiest, though there is a chapter which deals with 'the spirit of improvement' which, he argues, began in 1769 with the erection of the hotel in the Close, which we now know as the Royal Clarence, and ended with the construction of the Higher Market in 1835. Engagingly written, there are many sentences which evoke vivid pictures of what life must have been like in Exeter at this time. But it is a book which looks back to previous fashions of historical writing, as Dr Newton argues, Exeter looked back to the halycon days of its early eighteenth century prosperity, and sometimes Dr Newton seems to be more annalist than historian. His book is based on a study of local records and newspapers but, apart from published calendars, does not use national archives. As the author quite properly affirms in his introduction, this pleasantly allusive volume is 'a portrait rather than an analysis'.

Walter Minchinton

The Last Popular Rebellion: The Western Rising of 1685 by Robin Clifton pp XI and 308. Maurice Temple Smith. 1984. £17.50.

The rebellion is, of course, Monmouth's, the tercentenary of which has been celebrated this summer with high jinks in Somerset, where decisive defeat was met at Sedgemoor, and, more modestly, by a series of lectures in Devon, less directly involved but contributing some hundreds to the Duke's army and a score of victims for James II's inexorable revenge. Dr Robin Clifton—one of Devon's commemorative lecturers—admits that 'the rebellion is one of the most over-written insurrections in English history'. He justifies his own study by stressing certain novelties of approach and emphasis, notably a more systematic investigation than ever before of the economic, social and religious qualities of the region. But the best justification for any book is the book itself. On this count *The Last Popular Rebellion* was well worth doing and has been well done.

Dr Clifton brings out many long-term significances of the rebellion. 'It signalled the appearance of the standing professional army in England.' James II put that in jeopardy when he set out to catholicise it, but under William III it would become permanent, welcome, almost to the propertied classes as a guarantee of order and in its officering a form of outdoor relief to their younger sons. Monmouth's considerable success in getting so many respectable craftsmen and farmers into arms for a politico-religious cause frightened the élite, because these rebels were not called out or coerced by their betters, but moved to action by their thoughtful perceptions of their own interests. Men of substance showed how swiftly they had learned a lesson when they insulated the Revolution of 1688-89 from the lower orders and made it Glorious in that as well as in its lack of bloodshed and its essentially conservative settlement.

Dr Clifton, who has written before on the potency of anti-popery throughout the seventeenth century, underlines how much support flowed to Monmouth because he appealed to both positive protestantism (chiefly nonconformist) and to 'no popery', at a time when religion, always a potential source of conflict, was likely to set a Catholic King against his subjects. For more conformable men, Monmouth's was, of course, the wrong rising—too soon and too radical—but within four years they had settled their problem to their own satisfaction, thus ensuring a firm protestant succession and throwing as a sop to dissenters a limited Toleration Act.

The chapter on 'the campaign' of retribution in the west is particularly judicious, humane without overheated polemics. It notes Jeffreys' odd restraint at Exeter Assizes immediately after the brutal exemplary punishments in Dorset. 26 rebels were presented. (Since there were at least 300 Devonians involved in the rising, the haul of the JPs and other local authorities suggests some lack of diligence on their part). Of the 26, three, who pleaded not guilty, were adjudged guilty, sentenced and executed more or less immediately. The rest, admitting guilt, were sentenced to death certainly, but implementation was left *sine die*. Explanation for this sudden change lies in the king's urge to make a profit and dispense patronage by selling rebels as indentured servants in the West Indies, and in Jeffreys' desire by obedience to secure the newly-vacant Lord Chancellorship. He got it, but shortly after his return to London, and clearly at royal orders which betoken some change of heart, warrants went out for further executions. In Devon ten more rebels were hanged, drawn and quartered. Bits of them were exhibited in towns and villages that had shown sympathy with Monmouth. Revulsion at this appalling gesture was, suggests Dr Clifton, 'the earliest of James II's disastrous series of miscalculations',

which brought him to deposition and exile.

The Last Popular Rebellion is by a mile the best survey so far of the rebellion and its context. It establishes vividly and yet with consummate scholarship the vital historical significance and qualities of what has sometimes been dismissed as 'a mere episode'. Robert Dunning's *The Monmouth Rebellion* (Wimborne: Dovecote Press Paperbacks 1984, 95 pp. £4.50) would not pretend to compete with it. But this 'guide to the rebellion and Bloody Assizes' is an intelligent and informed commemorative for 1985, attractively produced and for its price lavishly illustrated. The author knows the sources and secondary material for what, like Dr Clifton (whose book appeared too late for him to use), he sees as 'the last genuine radical rebellion in English history'. His book is a bargain by any standard and will be worth preserving long after the immediate occasion for its publication has passed by.

Ivan Roots

Chudleigh: a chronicle by Anthony Crockett. Devon Books, 1985. 128 pp. £6.95. ISBN 0 86114 757 X

Chambers' Dictionary defines an amateur as 'an enthusiast; one who cultivates a study or art for the love of it'. Anthony Crockett is an amateur historian in every sense; his research is thorough and his style of writing so entertaining that *A Chudleigh Chronicle*, as the title appears on the verso throughout, proved to be a book very difficult to put down. Starting as it were at the beginning, he covers five hundred years of the town's history using principally the records 'written' by the townspeople themselves, the parish registers, overseers of the poor account books and parish minutes among others. Together they cover an impressive length of time commencing in the fifteen-eighties.

There are so many interesting facts about the district in its pages that is impossible to do more than to select one or two at random. In 1601 Elizabeth Courtenay made her will and among her instructions was the bequest of 'my new dwelling house' or 'mansion house in and uppon the said farme or tenament called Ugbrooke' to her daughter Anne and at her death to her grandson Thomas Clifford. This was the start of the family's association with Ugbrooke which of course still continues. The Chudleigh briefs cover half a century from 1672 and show how much the inhabitants contributed to causes, some far away from the little town on the edge of Dartmoor; for example there was the 'amount of a Collection towards the Redemption of poor distressed Captives in Algiers'; nearer home was '20 shillings for sundry inhabitants of Topsham who suffered great losses by fire'. However one entry from the parish minutes and accounts, which is earlier, records: 'Collected in the Church of Chudleigh towards the building of the Church of St Paul in London the sume of four shillings threepens'. That was of course in 1666, the year of the Great Fire.

Each chapter has a bibliography; there is an excellent index which is not so often found these days; the illustrations are well-chosen and the standards of typography and production are exceptional. It is indeed a credit to Devon Books, the new imprint, which is offering opportunities to both past and present Devon writers.

A glance at Devon Record Office's *Parish Poor Law records in Devon* shows that the documents, similar to those of Chudleigh, of many towns and villages in the County have been deposited there; Anthony Crockett has pointed the way to others as to how they may be exploited. To many people in South Devon it was just the

town on the A38 where 'the traffic was bumper-to-bumper on Saturdays . . . Crossing the road was only for the young and active . . . noxious fumes hung permanently in the air' (page 13). Holiday traffic now speeds by on the other side of the hill, and the old market town can rebuild its community life in the new-found peace.

John R. Pike

Walkhampton: The Story of a Parish. Written and published by L. Govier in aid of the Church Restoration Fund, 1984. 48 pp. £2. Available from Miss M. Lillicrap, Brookside, Walkhampton (plus postage).

In this booklet Lionel Govier has presented the fruits of many years of meticulous research in a clear and comprehensive style. Described as a history of Walkhampton 'from Bronze Age to Present Day' the study covers the origin of the parish—with approximately two-thirds of it moorland, one of the largest in Devon—the two manors, medieval courts and industry, much information on the parish church and on more secular records, schools, Methodism, the police, and industrial and village developments of the past century.

The author, who for many years was headmaster of the village's Lady Modyford School (now the Primary School), explains in a foreword that the compilation was produced somewhat urgently in response to request in the face of the church's need for substantial restoration funds, and that his account has been partly adapted and summarised from his earlier writings for the village. As a result the reader does encounter some slight repetitions, but these are hardly noticeable and of no disadvantage if one is referring to just isolated sections of the well-headed text. Sadly, his remark of being urged to write the history 'before I was "gathered to my fathers" ' proved all too timely, for Lionel Govier died shortly after it appeared in print.

Three photographs, and two skilful drawings by Mr Govier himself are provided, also a map of the parish, which hardly reaches a standard that the text deserves. Obviously it suffers from size reduction to fit page size, and farm names are not easily read. But the valuable account is one that will make the reader want to visit or revisit Walkhampton and will be of speical interest to those with roots there or who live in or stay in the parish.

Helen Harris

Proceedings of The Plymouth Athenaeum Vol V (1978-82) 112 pages. (Price not given, but enquiries to W.E. Pope, Secretary to the Proceedings Committee, The Plymouth Athenaeum, Derry's Cross, Plymouth. PL1 2SW).

The varied range of talks and lectures detailed in the Athenaeum's proceedings makes one a trifle envious of those who live close enough to city life to be able to benefit, although, alas, there is a limit to the number of organisations to which one can reasonably belong. However, the volume does provide some compensation, for besides giving an account of each year's programme, thirteen of the lectures are given in text, for leisurely perusal and permanent record. Amongst them, accounts of various village histories are particularly interesting: of St Budeaux by E.R. Harris, Tamerton Foliot by P.S. Bebbington, Plymstock by Mrs E. Arnold, and Plympton St Maurice by Mrs . Mills.

Helen Harris

BOOKS RECEIVED

A Gazetteer of English Urban Fire Disasters 1500-1900. E.L. Jones, S. Porter and M. Turner. Historical Geography Research series No 13, August 1984. 68 pp. (Price not given). Details from Department of Geography, University of Lancaster, Bailrigg, Lancaster, LA1 4YR. ISBN 0 86094 165 5. ISSN 0143 683X.

Devon Record Office Report 1st April 1983 to 31st March 1984. Devon County Council. ISBN 0 86114 520 8.

NEW CONTRIBUTOR

Dr John Sugden is a graduate of Leeds, Lancaster and Sheffield Universities. Interested in aspects of both British and American history, he has contributed to journals in Britain and the United States and his first book, on Britain's relationships with the American Indians during the War of 1812, is to be published this autumn. He is currently acting Director of Studies at Hereward College, Coventry.

Previous contributor Mrs Ray Freeman has now retired from being Head of History at Torquay Girls' Grammar School. Her *Dartmouth—A New History of the Port and its People* was published in 1983 by Harbour Books. She is currently working on the history of local families.

NOTICES

Mr Steven Pugsley of Zeal, Hawkridge, Dulverton, Somerset, TA22 9QJ, one of our newer members who is engaged on a post-graduate course, would like to contact any members working on subjects related to his studies. He is making a detailed examination of Devon as a resort and retirement area and its development as such during the 19th and 20th centuries. He is looking at both the coastal towns and at the growth of middle-class housing in Exeter and Devonport, and the architectural renewal of country houses throughout the county. He is also interested in the architects and landscape gardeners who worked on these.

Mr I.E. Wakeling of the Old Rectory, Clayhidon, Cullompton, EX15 3TJ, is chairman of Clayhidon Local History Group. Also a member of the DHS, he says that the group already has a collection of photographs and transcripts of documents, but he would like to hear from any DHS member with further material of which the group may not be aware.

Mrs Janet Thorne, 15 Chesterfield Road, Laira, Plymouth (tel. Plymouth 27582) would like to know of the whereabouts of any secular sun-dials in Devon for a book she is preparing.

Dr C.K. Langley, 46 King's Road, Hitchin, Herts, SG5 1RD, would be grateful for any information on the Widgery family of watercolourists for a booklet he is to prepare.

Mr J.K. Walker, 82 Wainsford Road, Everton, Lymington, Hants, is anxious to locate extensive research work by Hugh R. Watkin, dating from around 1915, on a notable Devonian, Lord William Brewer, c.1150-1226, and would appreciate any assistance.