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# The Devon Historian

April 1987

# 34





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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 1 July 1987. Books for review should be sent to Mrs S. Stirling, c/o Devon & Exeter Institution, 7 The Close, Exeter.

## DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY CONFERENCES

One-day conferences will be held at South Brent on Saturday 14 March and at North Molton on Saturday 6 June (details later).

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Current and back issues of the *Devon Historian* (except for numbers 7, 11, 15, 16, 22 and 23) can be obtained, price £1.50 post free, from Mrs S. Stirling, Devon & Exeter Institution, 7 The Close, Exeter. Also available post free are *Devon Newspapers* (£1.00), *Index to Devon Historian* (for issues 1-15 50p and 16-30 £1), and *Devon Bibliography* (1980 50p, 1981 and 1982 60p each, 1983 and 1984 75p each).

The Vice-Chairman, Mr John Pike, 82 Hawkins Avenue, Chelston, Torquay, would be glad to acquire copies of the unobtainable numbers of the *Devon Historian* listed above.

#### ERRATUM

It is regretted that two names were misspelt in David J. Hawkings' paper 'Plymouth: histories and historians' which appeared in the October issue. 'Woolcombe' should read: Woolcombe, and 'Whitfield': Whitfeld.

## FRENCH PRISONERS-OF-WAR ON PAROLE IN DEVON 1750-1815

Crispin Gill

(Presidential address to the Devon History Society 11 October 1986)

In the incessant wars with France in the eighteenth century there were large numbers of prisoners-of-war in England. In 1811 for instance there were 48,000. Because of Plymouth's naval importance Devon always had a large number; Dartmoor Prison was specially built in 1809 to relieve pressure on Millbay Prison at Plymouth and in the hulks in the Hamoaze, but even with Dartmoor housing 6,280 in 1811 there were still 6,755 in Plymouth.

Officers and senior warrant officers were allowed their parole on condition that they would not try to escape, and were lodged outside the prisons, a facility extended also to the officers of merchantmen and privateers of over 80 tons. In Devon they were billeted at Tavistock, Torrington, Exeter, Crediton, Ashburton, Bideford and Okehampton, and after 1807 at Moretonhampstead. Officers who broke parole and escaped were required to be returned by their native countries if identified there.

On parole they were allowed abroad from their lodgings from 6am until 8pm in summer, 5pm in winter, when a curfew bell was sounded. They could go a mile from the extremities of the towns on any of the great turnpikes, but not into sideroads or across fields. At Whitchurch, a mile out of Tavistock, the Honour Oak still marks their limit in that direction. They were allowed to receive limited cash from their families, but letters home had to be approved in the different towns by the agents appointed, at first by the Commissioners of the Sick and Hurt Board, after 1796 by the Transport Board. Agents in early days were shopkeepers and men of similar standing; they were found open to bribes and in later years professional men and naval lieutenants 'of ten years and more good standing' were appointed. They were required to muster all prisoners twice a week but were more than just guardians, they were expected to be guides and philosophers as well. There was even a scale of punishment for townspeople who insulted prisoners.

A reward of ten shillings was paid for information on breaches of parole, which led to informers and much petty persecution. At Tavistock there was a complaint that some officers were breaking parole by going out at night in women's clothing. At Okehampton there were complaints that officers had moved milestones to their advantage, and at Ashburton prisoners moved one milestone bit by bit further from the town until they could get to a good stretch of fishing. Informers watched them, moved the stones back again, and then lodged their complaints.

These officers undoubtedly had a real impact on the social life of these small provincial towns: many of them after all were gentlemen of culture and refinement. They could add to their income by giving lessons to English families in dancing, drawing, fencing and singing. In Okehampton they made small articles such as cabinets, cribbage boards and models of churches. Lieutenant Gicquel des Touches, on parole at Tiverton after being captured at Trafalgar, described it as a pleasant little town, but monotonous. 'Some locals urged us to escape, and one pretty young miss wanted me to take her with me, and marry her on arrival on the continent'. He

was there for six years, before being exchanged. Some officers found their towns dull; the commonest request for transfer was to Bath for reasons of health, but in reality for the livelier social life there.

Many officers did marry local girls, and some stayed on after the peace. In Tavistock some made overtures to local girls who were strongly discouraged by the magistrates. Some girls were deceived into wedlock by officers who already had wives in France, who promptly forgot these English wives and children when they eventually were repatriated. They were always aware that such marriages were invalid in France, anyway. But in general the Frenchmen were gentlemen and well received. J.H. Amory wrote in *Devon Notes and Queries* that 'my uncle kept open house for them. The French were nice and gentlemanly, the Americans (in the War of 1812) rougher and broke things up a good deal'.

In two cases the French officers on parole founded Masonic lodges. At Tiverton the lodge, called 'Enfants de la Mer', was opened about 1810. It met in Frog Street (now Castle Street) and was only closed after two members escaped. The first and only Master was Alexander de la Motte, who became language master at Blundell's School. The Tyler of the lodge, an officer's servant called Riveron, remained after the peace and worked as a slipper maker. A lodge at Ashburton was called 'Des Amis Reunis'.

No town was allowed more than 400 prisoners. Tavistock had on average 150, and one group of officers there, ordered to transfer to another town, requested permission to stay because the agent had treated them so well. At Moreton altogether 379 officers were paroled, the greatest number in 1811 when the figure reached 250, but it was of course only a parole town from 1807 until 1815. Eight months after the first officers arrived there they celebrated Napoleon's birthday, 15 August, with great festivity 'but in such a manner as not to give offence to the inhabitants'. '19 August' (from Treleven's Diary), 'This night the French officers assembled at the Cross Tree with their band of music. They performed several airs with great taste and precision.' The cross tree, or its successor, is still a landmark in Moretonhampstead, on the Exeter road out of the Square.

Serious breaches of parole, such as trying to escape, were punished by the offenders being returned to prison. Financing the escapes was the main problem, but the rule about allowances from home was frequently broken and the limits passed, and forgery was commonplace in the prisons. (The Government of each country were responsible for the maintenance of their men in prison in other countries.) Escapes tended to go in cycles when events in the war made for optimism among the incarcerated men. There was one such wave in 1778-80 with 295 escapes, including 19 from Okehampton and 18 from Ashburton. The end of 1810 brought another, with 33 'running' from Moretonhampstead, including 8 naval captains, 8 commanders and 14 other naval officers, mostly running in groups of four to six.

Some Englishmen, notably smugglers, specialised in organising escapes, charging up to £100 for a group of four. Waddell, a notorious Dymchurch smuggler, went to Moreton in 1812 to arrange an escape but was betrayed to the agent and arrested. Another known man was James King 'who worked the western ports'. At Exeter summer Assize, 1812, Richard Tapper of Moretonhampstead and Thomas and William Vinnicombe of Cheriton Bishop were sent to transportation for life for aiding the attempted escape from Moretonhampstead of two merchant captains, a second captain of a privateer, and a midshipman. They received £25 down and

promises of £150. Tapper led them on horse to Topsham where the Vinnicombes were waiting with a large boat. Unfortunately for them it grounded on a bar at Exmouth and they were all captured. At the same Summer Assize Whithair of Tiverton was fined and imprisoned for cheating French prisoners at Okehampton by promising to organise their escape.

Two distinguished French generals were paroled in Devon. An article by J.G. McNeel, 'An American's Trip to Dartmoor' in *Devonian* Vol 1, August 1904, records 'on the road from Princetown to Ashburton the first object of interest is the cottage at Ockery Bridge. It was built for two French generals, Rochambeau and Boyer, who were prisoners here. It had two floors, with a thatched roof, and was the first house in England which had galleries around it. It was a rough copy of a Swiss chalet.'

Ockery is at the bottom of the hill out of Princetown, where the road swings right-handed across the Blackbrook. Crossing in 1914 described the house, but today only the foundations are visible. McNeel says that Rochambeau would parade in front of the house in full uniform and a great cocked hat when news came that Napoleon was about to invade England, 'warning the rustics of their fate'. Rochambeau served with the French Army in the War of the American Revolution, and it was his scullion, staying on in the States, whom Chateaubriand saw on his journey to Niagara in 1791, teaching the Iroquois to dance. He served in the early days of the French Revolution on the Belgian front but resigned, was in Philadelphia with Tallyrand in 1793, and back in command in Santo Domingo when forced to surrender to the British invasion of the island. Boyer was a mulatto who switched from the French army to join native resistance and became president of Haiti. Rochambeau with a black servant was on parole at Moreton until 1811.

The other great French general on parole in Devon was Cambronne, who commanded the Old Guard at Waterloo and was captured after being wounded. McNeel records of Ashburton: 'go down the High Street and observe that quaint house facing the Station Road: it was the home of Sergeant Eddy of the Ashburton Serge Backs, and here Marshal (sic) Cambronne was quartered when on parole'. McNeel lunched at the Golden Lion: 'if you like old relics ask Mrs Clymo (then the landlady) to show you Marshal Cambronne's picture, presented to her grandmother, Mrs Sergeant Eddy; for he was quartered at her house'. According to A.J. Rhodes, who wrote *Dartmoor Prison* in 1933, the portrait hung for long years in the Golden Lion, but had in his time disappeared without trace.

Maybe it will one day be found again. J.D. Prickman in the *Transactions of the Devonshire Association* for 1901 records one tombstone of a French prisoner-of-war on parole—in Okehampton churchyard, to Darmand Bernard, died 26 October 1815. Maybe it survives; maybe there are others in parole town churchyards. But strange, that this large number of men who played an important role in the small country towns of Devon less than two hundred years ago, should have left so little trace, though who knows how much French blood may run in families still living in the county.

#### SOURCES

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Torr, Cecil. *Small Talk at Wreyland*, third series (Cambridge UP 1923)  
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NOTE: Only local sources have been used for this paper. A great deal of information is available in the letter books and papers of the Sick and Hurt Commissioners, and the Transport Board, in the Public Record Office.

## THE NORTH DEVON ATHENAEUM

J.M. Rowe  
(Head Librarian)

The new Barnstaple Library building is due to open towards the end of 1987. The whole of the second floor will house a comprehensive Local Studies Centre, to be operated jointly by Devon Library Services, Devon Record Office and the North Devon Athenaeum. It will house an extensive collection of documents in the North Devon Area Record Office, the Athenaeum's large local studies collection of books, documents, newspapers, prints, drawings and photographs, and a comprehensive collection of books, maps etc. provided by Devon Library Services. The Henry Williamson Room will be well equipped for use by societies and school classes, while Reading and Search Rooms will provide spacious accommodation for anyone who wishes to read and study items from the collections. The Athenaeum's largest general collection of older books, and books less readily obtainable, will also be available for reference in the Reading Room.

During 1988 the Athenaeum building in Barnstaple Square will open as a new Museum of North Devon to be operated by North Devon District Council. It will house the Council's own collections, together with the museum collections of the Athenaeum. Other important collections are likely to be included. The Museum of North Devon will also include more specialised displays in St Anne's Chapel.

The whole project should provide greatly improved library and museum facilities for North Devon. It is, perhaps, a little unusual for the number of authorities, both public and private, who are co-operating with enthusiasm to bring it about.

## MASS WALKOUT BY DOCTORS

Marjorie F. Snetzler

MASS WALKOUT BY DOCTORS AT THE NORTH DEVON INFIRMARY—  
What circumstances could have brought about such an event which was publicised by a poster, printed in Barnstaple and published by the medical practitioners lately attendant to the North Devon Infirmary?

The North Devon Infirmary was built by voluntary subscription which followed a public meeting at the Guildhall, Barnstaple in March 1824, under the presidency of the first Earl Fortescue. At the first meeting £1,059 was raised and many annual subscriptions promised, and in 1825 a site was acquired at the corner of Barbican Lane to erect a twenty bed hospital, which duly opened to its first patients in August 1826.

All appears to have run smoothly for the first few years—a wing was added for 'offensive or infectious patients' in 1828 and normal changes in staff took place—until in 1832 after nearly twelve months of semi-public wrangling (much of it through the media of the *North Devon Journal*) the publication of a poster by the medical practitioners followed a public meeting at the Guildhall in December 1831.

The whole affair centred around one man, Simon Gage Britton, M.D., M.R.C.S., R.N. who came to live in Newport, North Devon in 1825.

Simon Gage Britton was born in Bristol on 5 November 1782, son of Simon Britton and Mary Gage. The family, long established at Bitton, Gloucestershire, moved into Bristol where Simon Britton senior was in trade as a draper.

When Simon junior was fourteen years old his father approached Mr Baynton, a surgeon of Bristol, to take his son as an apprentice surgeon, but Baynton's list was full and he persuaded Britton to apprentice his son to Dr Peell, M.D. (Edinburgh), a surgeon and anatomist and friend of Professor Coleman of the Veterinary College, Bristol. Britton continued under the direction of Peell for four years, attending courses on anatomy and physiology delivered by the well known surgeons Smith and Bowles, both of Bristol, and lectures by Dr Beddon of Clifton and the famous chemist Sir Humphrey Davy.

In 1800 Dr Peell was appointed Professor to the Royal Dublin Society and Britton removed to London to study human anatomy and surgery under Dr Abernethy in St Bartholomew's Hospital. He remained there until the outbreak of war in 1803, when, like many a young man, he resolved to enter the Navy.

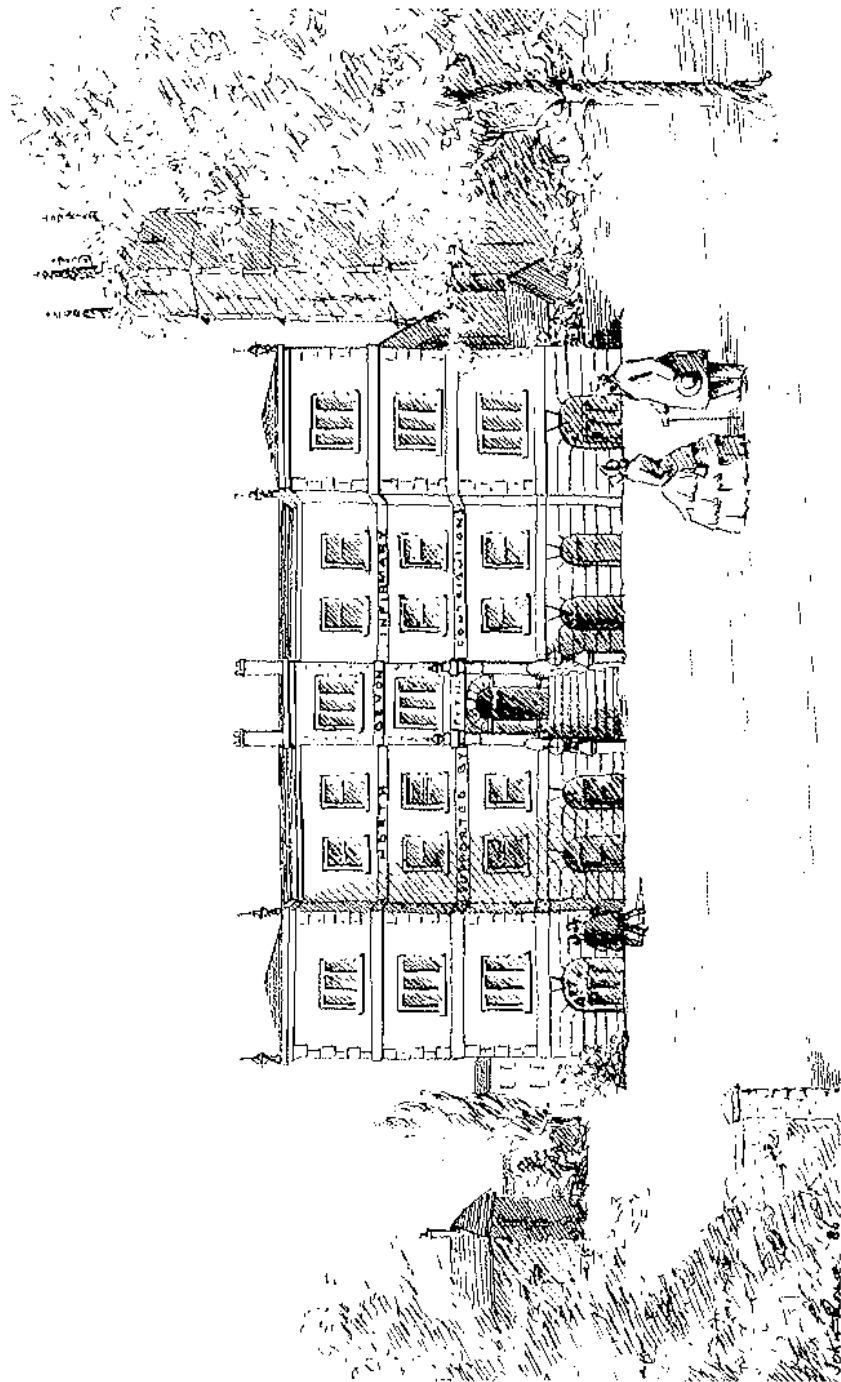
Britton presented himself at the College of Surgeons and, passing his examinations, qualified as first assistant surgeon (then called surgeon's mate) with a recommendation from the examiners to the Navy medical board.

His first appointment was on 18 October 1803, to his Majesty's schooner *Pickle* where, although he held the rank of assistant, he received the pay of a surgeon until 1804, when the *Pickle* was laid up as unseaworthy.

He returned to London and passed examinations as a surgeon and was appointed to the *Enchantress* on 28 December 1805.

Britton's most celebrated time was when he transferred to the *Victory*, during the Battle of Trafalgar, and along with Surgeon William Beatty and Captain Thomas Hardy was in attendance on Nelson, indeed he is said to be featured in the famous





picture by A.W. Devis of the death of Nelson. Beatty and Hardy were so impressed with his efforts at Trafalgar that, through their recommendation, he was promoted to surgeon on 7 March 1806, and joined the *Fly*, a sloop of war, where he remained for two years. He transferred to the frigate *Tartar* on 20 February 1808, until her loss on 23 October 1811 in the Gulf of Finland. During the following six months he was awarded the degree M.D. by St Andrew's University on testimonials signed by William Beatty, M.D. of *Victory* fame and Physician to the Channel Fleet, and George Magrath, M.D. from the Hospital for Prisoners of War, Plymouth.

Britton's next appointment was to the *Ardent* on 20 April 1812 where he remained until the ship was paid off on 5 August 1813. His last commission was aboard the *Magicienne*, a frigate, with the Hon. Captain Gordon, until the peace of April 1814 when she was paid off, and here his service with the Navy terminated.

Britton retired from the Navy on half pay, and before entering private practice he attended a refresher course at St Bartholomew's on dissection and medicine.

In 1816, on 7 March Britton married Jane Hopkins with the approval and approbation of her father the Reverend Thomas Hopkins, Rector of Donyat and Earnshill, Somerset. He was to spend nine years in Bristol as a general practitioner where he built up a respected practice, until his health was affected by overwork and he decided to move to Devon to recuperate.

He spent six years practising from his home in Newport and gaining a reputation, prior to 1831 and the subsequent events leading up to his appointment as physician at the North Devon Infirmary.

At the beginning of 1831 a special general meeting was held of the Charity at the Guildhall, to revise the rules and regulations of the Institution and provide for the election of an additional physician, along with a matron. It is interesting to read the *curriculum vitae* of the applicants to both posts, with references from suitably qualified people, published in the *North Devon Journal*, and although a matron was eventually chosen the medical men, while apparently qualified, were not appointed, in fact this state of indecision continued throughout the year. Both Richard Budd and Simon Britton offered their services through announcements in the *Journal*, although the latter seems to have done so as the result of a plea in the newspaper that his services would be welcomed.

Again the election of a physician was postponed and the post readvertised. Meanwhile in November, perhaps because it was evident by public opinion and the Subscribers supporting Earl Fortescue that events were reaching a climax, two staff resignations occurred, that of Mr James Copner, consulting surgeon, and Mr C.M. Cutcliffe, officiating surgeon. Later these two were to head and append their names to a public notice announcing with other doctors at the Infirmary that they were not prepared to practice alongside Dr S.G. Britton.

In December another meeting of benefactors and subscribers to the Infirmary was called to discuss the expediency of filling the vacancies caused by Copner's and Cutcliffe's resignations, in accordance with the constitution. At this time a public notice was published by various North Devon worthies including Fortescue, Poltimore, Chichester, Lewis W. Buck, solicitors of the town (Bencraft, J. Besley & Avery), regretting that Britton had not offered himself for the position—to which Britton replied 'I must accede to your wishes and offer myself, and pledge to serve the establishment to the best of my ability.'

The result of Britton's offer to take the post was concerted objections from the established medical gentlemen at the Infirmary.

Two public groups appeared in the controversy: those who supported Britton headed by Earl Fortescue, patron of the Infirmary, and Lord Ebrington, and the other group supporting the incumbent doctors headed by Sir Bouchier Palk Wrey.

At the time of Britton's offer to take up the position of physician in March 1831, the Infirmary doctors had presented a 'round robin' to the governing board refusing to practise along with Britton and threatening a mass walk out. The *Journal* carried a whole page report of most of the proceedings of a Special General Meeting at the Guildhall held on 29 December 1831. Mr Bencraft, a supporter of Britton regretted the 'contemplated action' of the Infirmary doctors, and stated that at no time did the doctors control the appointment of staff, that was the duty of the Governing Board, which they would carry out in accordance with the constitution. Dr Britton had challenged the doctors to prove him unworthy of the post, but had not had the courtesy of a reply; he had been referred to as 'a horse doctor from Bristol', by his enemies with financial gain by using a druggist to make up his prescriptions.

Britton then outlined his career to date, as previously mentioned, producing all the relative testimonials, which were found to be faultless, and Cotton, the druggist concerned, produced a sworn affidavit that no financial gain had been obtained by his making up the good doctor's prescriptions—in fact he (Cotton) would state that many of the poorer people in the town had cause to give thanks to Dr Britton for his assistance in time of need, in order that they could obtain treatment at lesser expense than before.

Lord Ebrington next rose to propose that Dr Britton be elected to the Infirmary, he being more than able to fit the vacancy as many patients from all classes were able to testify—in fact—with all due respects, and whilst all were grateful to the efforts of the medical practitioners, they were not in a position to dictate policy within the establishment.

Sir Bouchier Palk Wrey, whilst regretting the opposition and the spreading of scurrilous rumours about the doctor, proposed that another physician was not necessary, and in fact Britton's appointment would be disastrous to the Infirmary if he was opposed by the present medical team.

Mr Bencraft next spoke of the opposition to Dr Britton's appointment on the grounds of the Navy being an unsuitable school to qualify a man, but he wished to remind those present that Dr Britton had left the Navy in 1814 and had been in private practice for some seventeen years since, and as for there being no need to fill the vacancy, this was quite untrue as the rules of the Infirmary required them to do just that.

Peter Johnson Esquire, as a subscriber, submitted that the Board must not be dictated to, and far from Britton being unsuitable as suggested, his service in the Navy, vouchsafed by Hardy and Beatty, especially when dealing with casualties, made him eminently suitable for the type of practice in the neighbourhood—in fact he would go as far as to say if the doctors refused to co-operate he would recommend them to walk out.

Mr Winter then rose to assert that he and his colleagues disapproved of Dr Britton in every way and quoted an instance where he and Dr James Copner had attended a child and where Britton was called in as a second opinion, and of the refusal subsequently of Mrs Harvey, the parent of the child Frederick who had died, to pay

the bill. It is interesting to note that Mrs Harvey had been lodging in a house at Newport, (Mr W. Bryant) and, according to the landlord, it was not that she refused to pay the bill, but that she considered she had been overcharged. Mrs Harvey paid £5 which she considered ample, she also disputed within the fee the charge of 2/6d per visit whereas in London she had been wont to pay 1/-, plus a charge for bottles.

Mr Westbrook addressed the meeting, stating that Dr Morgan had hopes of returning to the Infirmary. The latter was one of the first doctors elected along with Bignell; possibly he was older or semi-retired, but he did not return to the hospital.

The Hon. George Fortescue had strong words to say on the behaviour and attitudes of the incumbent medical men and was adamant enough to state that if the medical team thought to override the governing body he would rather see the house rased to the ground—he had the support of Lord Ebrington who advocated the closing of the gates for the same reason.

The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the Noble Lord (Fortescue) and a vote in favour of Dr Britton's election, a majority of 10 votes.

This of course was not the end of the matter; on 12 January 1832 an announcement in the *Journal*, signed by a meeting of general practitioners, deplored the election of Britton and stated their withdrawal of support. Letters in the paper appeared weekly—accusations and derogatory statements all aimed at the character and abilities of Simon Britton, until he finally announced in a published letter his intention of allowing the law to intervene if the personal and verbal attacks on his integrity continued.

The sequel to the whole affair was that the resigning doctors, meeting at the Guildhall on 22 December 1831, commented on the Noble Earl's advice 'to go to our houses and to dissect, horses, dogs, cats, and other beasts in order that we might return and be able to compete with, and arrive at the same celebrity which Dr Britton has already attained.' Having failed to remove Britton from his position the doctors formed for themselves a North Devon Medical Association and at the meeting previously mentioned they announced that they would continue their services to an Institution to be known as 'The Barnstaple and North Devon Dispensary'. Supporting the new Dispensary was J.B. Bignell, M.D.; Charles Cutcliffe, consulting surgeon; Charles Henry Hiern, surgeon; Robert Harding, surgeon, and John Winter, surgeon, in fact all the doctors whose names appeared on the public notice.

Sir B.P. Wrey, their chairman, and previous supporter, proposed the dispensary should be especially for the poor who would not care to go to the hospital—a strange observation as many poor patients were already attending the surgery of Dr Britton.

One rather strange happening in February 1831 makes one wonder just why the 'good' doctors were so vociferous in their condemnation of Britton. The *Journal* carried a story on 17 February, macabre to say the least, of a patient named Bishop from Torrington dying and a funeral taking place at Barnstaple churchyard, and indeed the parish register of St Peter carries the entry: James Bishop, died North Devon Infirmary and buried February 1831. The widow received an anonymous letter that all was not as it seemed, and in fact the coffin so recently buried did not contain a body but was full of earth! Widow Bishop and the Overseer of Torrington travelled to Barnstaple and the coffin was disinterred to show in truth that this was so. The widow and her companion transferred to the Infirmary and after some delay

the body of her husband was produced, having been disembowelled and exhibiting signs of the commencement of dissection. The poor woman had the mangled remains placed in the coffin and carried them with her to Torrington—a case of being in two places at once, for his name also appears in the Torrington parish register as being buried on 11 February!

There was of course an enquiry, but the results were kept private. This strange affair was reported in February 1831 at a time when Britton was being attacked as an anatomist; one wonders how the doctors of the infirmary reconciled their own dubious behaviour, and one can assume the incident reported may not have been an isolated one.

All in all the behaviour demonstrated by the doctors was strange by any standard. Did they have something to hide from an experienced anatomist and surgeon? Were they jealous of his reputation? Were they opposed to him as freemasons? Did they regard him as an interloper of their own comfortable arrangements? I suppose we will never know the true reasons for the year long debacle, sufficient to say that Dr Britton and Dr Budd who became the two established surgeons at the infirmary practised there for 25 years and 36 years respectively, surely a vindication of their personal merits.

#### References:

North Devon Journal published in Barnstaple (1824 to date)

#### Biographical note

Marjorie Snetzler is a professional record searcher, a local historian, and librarian at the North Devon Athenaeum Local Studies Library.

## BILLIARDS

J.H. Porter

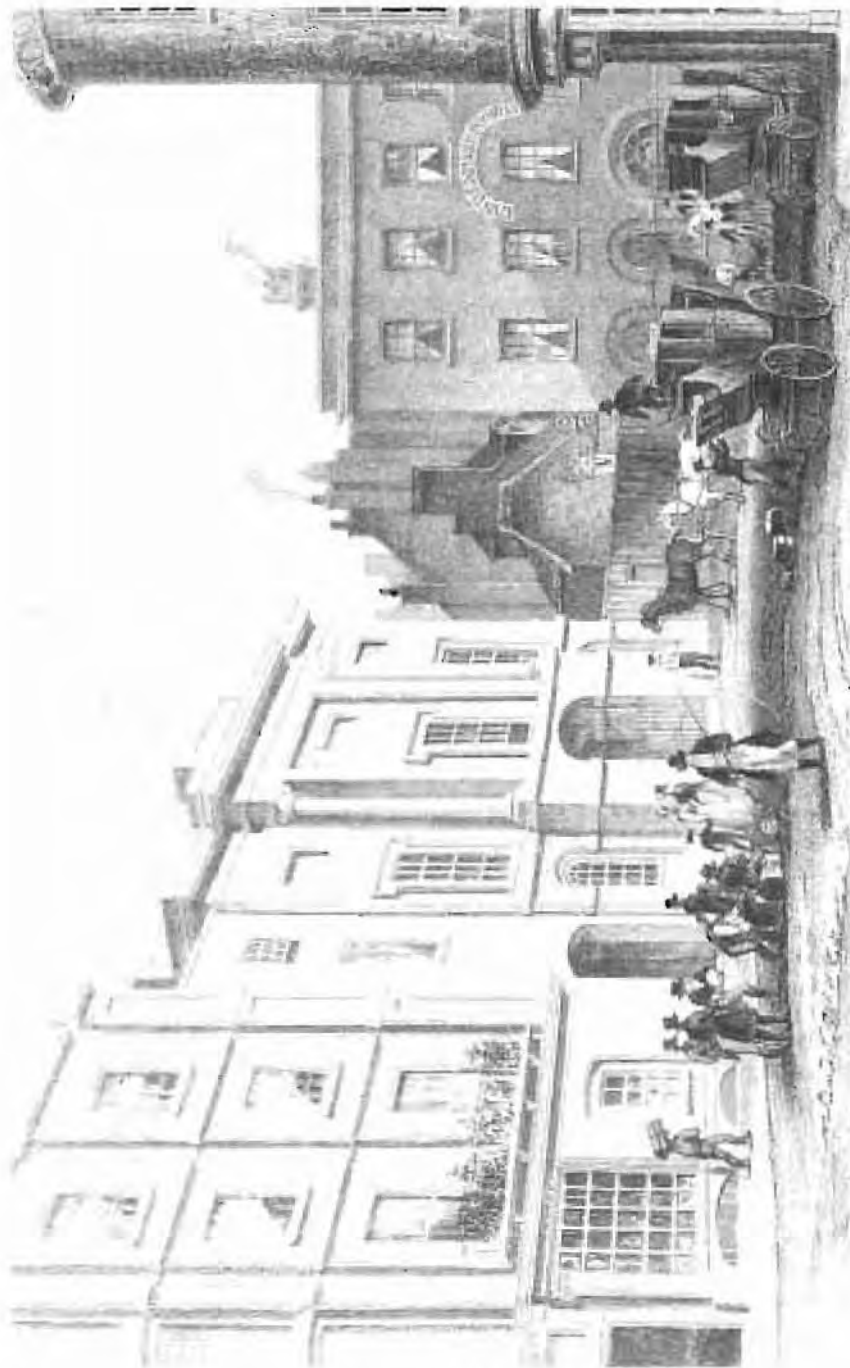
The first half of the nineteenth century saw major changes in the technology of the sport of billiards and in the recognition of a new, if as yet limited, breed of professional players. Joseph Strutt drew attention to the popularity of the game, while the 1815 edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* noted the traditional ambivalent attitude towards a game which attracted both rich and poor: 'it became a favourite diversion in many parts of England with persons of the first rank . . . (but) . . . it has been in a great measure prostituted by designing and vulgar people'.<sup>1</sup>

The attitude of Parliament and magistrates reflected that ambivalence, for there was a danger that the lower orders would be seduced from their proper employment. In 1744 the *Gentleman's Magazine* had recorded the prosecution in Dublin of the proprietors of fifteen billiard tables for keeping open after 9 o'clock at night and who 'knowingly suffer merchants, apprentices or clerks belonging to gentlemen of any business to play in their houses'. A general act for England was passed in 1757 to discourage 'gaming in public houses by journeymen, labourers, servants and apprentices' and specifically listed gaming at billiard tables with penalties of 40 shillings for each offence and up to £10 for subsequent offences. 'An Act to amend the Law Concerning Games and Wagers' of 1845 regulated the granting of billiard licences to inns and ale houses with stiff penalties of up to £10 a day or one month hard labour and these penalties were enhanced in 1872.<sup>2</sup>

The first person to be generally accepted as a professional player was Edwin Kentfield, who was known as Jonathan by his devotees. He kept billiard rooms in Brighton and reigned as champion from 1825-49 when he retired in favour of one John Roberts. Kentfield wrote his own treatise on the game in 1850 entitled *The Game of Billiards* but the first work of the century was E. White, *Practical Treatise on the Game of Billiards* of 1807 with a revised edition in 1818. There was one maker of billiard tables with a national reputation, the cabinet maker John Thurston who had founded a billiard equipment firm in 1799. Two major changes in the construction of tables were made possible by the changing technology of the industrial revolution. The first was the introduction of stone bedded tables made possible around 1830 by the development of machine tools which could produce a plane surface. Second, in 1835 Thurston introduced india-rubber cushions to replace the old stuffed cushions built up of layers of cloth and ten years later he secured the patent to apply the vulcanisation of rubber to the cushions. Thurston also translated Mingaud, *The Noble Art of Billiards* in 1830.<sup>3</sup>

One of the first stone bedded tables in England was to be introduced to Exeter at the Subscription Rooms in 1835 by Joseph Congdon. Joseph Congdon had arrived in Exeter in 1819 moving from the Commercial Hotel in Plymouth to take over the Hotel in Cathedral Yard. There he modernised the inn, built up its social functions of assemblies, assize balls and such like and extended its coaching connections.<sup>4</sup> By 1824 the respectability of the Hotel was such that Lady Palk was patroness of the winter assembly and on that high note Congdon decided to retire from business and the inn was put on the market for letting.<sup>5</sup> His retirement proved to be but a temporary break for three years later he was in charge of the Subscription Rooms in





Northernhay Place which became known by various variants of the title 'Congdon's Royal Subscription Rooms'. The Devon and Exeter Subscription Rooms' had been opened in 1820 for concerts, balls and public functions and Congdon took over their renovations and operation in 1827.<sup>6</sup> There assize balls, meetings of pressure groups of gentry interests and other public functions continued.<sup>7</sup>

It was in these rooms that Congdon brought in the newest of billiard tables to increase their attractions to gentlemen. As the *Exeter Flying Post* reported:

Royal Subscription Rooms—Mr Congdon, the Proprietor of these magnificent rooms is now engaged in fitting up a most splendid Billiard Table, the bed of which is composed, in a most tasteful manner, of stone. The plan is altogether novel, but where tried has been highly approved of: they are, however, rare, as there are but three similarly constructed Billiard Tables in the country, and this alone in the West of England.<sup>8</sup>

Whether this table was made by Thurston is unrecorded but Joseph Congdon was displaying a considerable entrepreneurial talent in bringing one of the products of the new technology to Exeter. It is not clear when he finally retired from the Subscription Rooms. He is still there in 1844 but by 1850 Miss Mary Congdon had taken over and Slater's Directory of 1852 names the proprietors as 'the Exors of Joseph Congdon'.<sup>9</sup>

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2. *Gentleman's Magazine*, 14, 1744, p.337; An Act for the Effectual Punishment of Persons etc, 30 Geo II c24 s14; 8 & 9 Vict. c109 1845 s11; The Licencing Act 35 & 36 Vict. c94 1872, s17.
3. Frederic Boase, *Modern English Biography*, vol 5, 1912; William Broadfoot, *Billiards*, 1896, pp.10-19; J.A. Cantrell, *James Nasmyth and the Bridgewater Foundry*, Manchester, 1984, pp.95-6.
4. *Exeter Flying Post (EFP)*, 5 August 1819, 24 Feb. 1820, 22 March 1821, 22 May 1821, 22 Jan., 4 Nov., 1824, 30 June 1824.
5. *EFP*, 6 April 1824.
6. *Pigot's Directory of Cornwall and Devon*, 1822-23; *A new guide to the City of Exeter, Exeter* 1824, p.88; *EFP*, 29 March, 1827.
7. *Western Luminary*, 6 July 1835, *Devonshire Chronicle*, 11 July, 1835, Robert Newton, *Victorian Exeter*, Leicester, 1968, pp.16, 75.
8. *EFP*, 16 July 1835, also *Western Luminary*, 13 July 1865.
9. *Pigot's Directory*, 1844, *White's Directory*, 1850, *Slater's*, 1852.

Illustration by courtesy of the Librarian of the Devon and Exeter Institution.

## THE ORIGIN OF THE FAMILY NAME OF WESTERN IN DEVON

W.G. Western

After spending a few years in researching the history of some of the Western family in Devon, the writer began to suspect that the origin of the name was not as quoted in the Dictionary of British Surnames, i.e. 'The man from the West'. Nor could it be assumed that the earliest appearance quoted there as being in the Danelaw Charters c1172-80 of 'Geoffrey le Westerne' indicated that he was the progenitor of the Devon Westerns. To carry the family pedigree of simple yeomen, artisans and peasants back so far would be most unusual. The true origin of the name could only be sought by searching down the avenues of genealogy and appropriate Subsidy Rolls.

Today, 'surname' means an inherited family name; originally it was simply an additional descriptive name. Even before Domesday Survey the Saxons had in some cases begun to use the second or 'bye-name' attached to their 'font name', but it was from the Norman noblemen that the custom of hereditary surnames began to spread, so that by the end of the 14th century practically all people were provided with them. These names were derived, in general, from either their father (Williamson), or their occupation (Fuller), or their land (Westlake) or their nationality (French).

When looking through the records of a family name, no undue surprise should be expected at the changes in spelling or phonetics which occur across the centuries. The modern form of many surnames is comparatively recent, but in earlier times the parish clerk or priest may have written it down as it sounded to his ears. When these names are recorded in rural eighteenth century Devon the changes in spelling that the thick throaty burr of a Devon accent would bring about must be borne in mind.

In the tracing of the genealogies of our Devon families in the Devon Parish Registers it will be found that the spelling WESTERN has become generally settled by the early nineteenth century (1820—Cullompton, 1819—Bondleigh) although it occurs as early as 1547 in Knowstone. The common variation between 1760 and 1820 was WESTRON or WESTREN. An example of this is of Henry Western, married at North Tawton in 1760, whose eldest sister was married at Bondleigh in 1765 as WESTREN, and who himself was referred to successively as WESTREN, had a grandchild christened using WESTREN as a second name, but was buried in 1802 as Henry WESTERN. A number of children baptised at Cullompton in the late eighteenth century as WESTRON were married there from 1815 onwards as WESTERN. To this day, one family in Penzance carries the name WESTREN.

Other variations occurring in the 17th century and 18th century were WESTERAN (Chulmleigh 1707), WESTEREN (Zeal Monachorum 1656), WESTERON (South Molton 1628 and other places), WESTRANE (Winkleigh 1662), WESTRENE (Cruwys Morchard 1613) and WISSTERNE (Sowton 1661). The spelling WESTHERNE occurs almost entirely in the Witheridge district from 1588 to 1637. But the main variant in the 17th century was WESTERNE. This form was the one largely in use in West Somerset in the Somerset Assessment Rolls of 1542, whereas in the Devon Muster Roll of 1569 the spelling was WESTHORNE or WESTORNE, with a WESTERNE and a WESTRON.

It is interesting to note that these WESTHORNES are all in North Devon—mostly billmen or harquebusiers, but one of significance is Richard of Okeford, an archer.

Going back a further 45 years, the Devon Subsidy Rolls of 1524-7 are the first taxation lists giving the names of Devon inhabitants since the Subsidy of 1332. This was to finance the war in France and was levied by Wolsey. Here, only the name WESTHORNE occurs with WESTRYN at Tiverton and at Brixham. The significant fact is that these Westhornes are in parishes not far from Knowstone and Oakford. In this area the transition of the name from WESTHORNE to WESTERNE can be traced.

In the Witheridge Parish Register from 1588 it takes the form of WESTHERNE until 1637, and at Oakford the spelling WESTHORN(E) persists until 1635 before changing.

Before 1600 the spread of the family name from this area of Devon, on the borders of Exmoor, was limited, being mainly to the south, with a small number of families registered in north-west Somerset. The names do not occur in Exeter until 1611. There is no occurrence of the name in Dorset, Wiltshire, or Cornwall.

The centering of the name around the Oakford and Knowstone district was significant, and in the *Place Names of Devon: Part II* by the English Place Name Society, under Oakford Parish there occurs: WESTERN is WASTHORNE. 1333 Subsidy Rolls. "Thorn bush in the mud" (O.E. Wase). There is marshy land here'. A local historian, E.W. Bentley in his *History of Oakford* writes that 'the Westerns had lived in Oakford in the very early times and presumably derived their name from the farm Western (earlier WASTHORNE)'. In the Devon Lay Subsidy of 1333—a tax levied mainly on crops and animals, 'Richard of Washthorne' had to pay the sizable sum of 12d. In 1349, one 'Henrico de Westhorne' was among the witnesses to a deed of Spurway, also in Oakford Parish. And in 1542 we have the previously mentioned RICHARD WESTHORNE, archer.

In 1681 Thomas Westerne and his wife Elizabeth mortgaged a messuage called Higher Westerne, Lower Westerne and Northmore for £600. It appears that the mortgage was never paid off. Elizabeth died that same year and Thomas with his children left Oakford not long afterwards. The rest of the history of the farm will be found outlined in Mr Bentley's book.

There is no genealogical proof that Henrico de Westhorne (1349) was a descendant of Richard of Washthorne (1332), or that Thomas Western (1681) was descended from them either. But the common occurrence of the names in the surrounding parishes by 1524 indicates that the name had been adopted as a family name for several generations. It would thus appear that certainly in the 14th century and probably as early as the 13th century the farmland WASTHORNE gave rise to the family name which became WESTERN.

The farm with the name WESTERN is still worked today. It is situated at SS882255, 3.5kms. NW of Oakford, just south of the A361 and opposite the old farm cottages (converted to a restaurant) called HIGHER WESTERN.

### Bibliography

1. *Oakford. A parish history*. E.W. Bentley 1982
2. *A Dictionary of British Surnames*. P.H. Reaney. Routledge and Keegan Paul.
3. *The Place Names of Devon Part II*. English Place Name Society C.D.P. 1932.
4. *The International Genealogical Register*.
5. *Middle English Surnames of Occupation*. G. Fransson.
6. Various Parish Registers. D.C.R.O.

## POPULAR IMPRESSIONS OF PLYMOUTH: PICTURE POSTCARDS AND THEIR MESSAGES, 1900 to 1930

David J. Hawkings

Picture postcards were first sanctioned by the Post Office in 1894, and following a decision in 1902 that one side could be used exclusively for pictorial matter, they enjoyed a particular vogue during the first three decades of the 20th century. The output from a large number of publishers was prolific, and provided an invaluable record of visual images of Plymouth as it was before the blitz and post war rebuilding.

Most of the national postcard publishers produced a wide selection of Plymouth subjects; the Appendix lists those represented in the author's collection and is not exhaustive. Of particular interest, Raphael Tuck and Sons produced several series featuring Plymouth scenes, including the 'View', 'Town & City', and 'Oilette—Plymouth series', the latter featuring colour reproductions of original paintings and a paragraph of descriptive text. For example, we learn from 'Plymouth—The Hoe and Pier' in Series III that the Promenade Pier was 'opened in 1884, is 480 feet long and has a fine pavilion, used for concerts in summer and a rink in winter'. Thus, postcards can provide useful information not recorded in the more formal histories of the city.

Picture postcards were also published locally, mostly by booksellers and stationers. But their output was small, less than 10% of the total issued<sup>1</sup> seeming to suggest that local publishers were none too interested in the postcard business. Amongst the firms which did participate were:

William Dawson & Sons Ltd., Plymouth.

Albert Pengelly, 106 Fore Street, Devonport.

W.G. Swiss & Sons, Marlborough Steet, Devonport.

T.F. Bullock, Stationer & Bookseller, 1 Millbay Road, Plymouth.

Prior, Printer, of Stoke Devonport.

Underhill (Plymouth) Ltd

I.H. Keys, Printer and Publisher of Whimble Street, produced a fascinating series of cards featuring scenes in Plymouth and Devonport, based on water colours or engravings of the late 18th or early 19th centuries.

Chapman & Sons of Dawlish, whose output of high quality black and white photographs of Dartmoor scenes was prolific. But they produced very few Plymouth cards. One, however, that of Douglass' Eddystone Lighthouse (No. 1113) is worthy of note; in Chapman's typically crisp archival style it shows the steam tug used to supply the lighthouse, and the two large fog warning bells mounted just below the lantern gallery. Here also, the picture postcard contributes to the historical record, for although the bells are an important feature, they are not referred to in published histories—including the authoritative work on the subject<sup>2</sup>—, neither do they appear in contemporary photographs, although just visible in a line engraving in R.N. Worth's *History of Plymouth* (1890).

But the unique value of picture postcards as historical documents lies in the fact that the messages they carry present the popular image of the city, as opposed to the received wisdom of the academic historian. These brief but often touching or







amusing observations provide a perspective of Plymouth from those whose impressions would not otherwise have been recorded.

However, to form a balanced view of Plymouth in the popular eye would require a far larger sample of cards than that to which the author has access. It is perhaps surprising how few senders of cards recorded their impressions of the town, usually restricting their remarks to domestic or romantic matters. Nevertheless, the examples quoted here give an indication of the type of material available and may point the way to a wider study based on larger samples, which probably exist in private collections. The subjects covered by correspondents may conveniently be grouped in the following general categories:

- 1) Meteorological observations
- 2) Comments on the town.
- 3) Travellers' tales—service and civilian.
- 4) Comments on specific events.

A few representative selections may be of interest.

- 1) 'Weather simply grand' August 1906.

'Weather looked to (sic) threatening . . . it has turned out lovely now' July 1908.

'Isn't the weather vile? I'm in a decent fix, for my luggage has not turned up yet'. August 1918.

- 2) 'This is the place you have heard so much about. Hope you will have the pleasure of visiting it soon'. 1907.

'The town looks alright . . . but all the places I have been to seem so far behind the times compared with London.' Circa 1910.

'Not a bit like Whitstable is it?' Circa 1915.

'What do you think of this place from photo? The reality is far better.' July 1906.

- 3) 'Am ashore tonight, Sunday, on my lonesome. I eagerly look forward to being with you again . . . I am going for a stroll on the Hoe'. Circa 1910.

(From HMS *Devonshire*) 'I am still at Plymouth harbour and doing well and expect to get home on Sunday fortnight'. March 1905.

'Had a fearful rough journey here.  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the people sick.' Circa 1905.

- 4) 'There was great excitement here last Saturday; two of the electric trams came, but they are not so big as the ones you have'. Circa 1905.

(note: this probably refers to trams of batch 31-36 delivered in 1905 to serve the new route to Peverell).

In conclusion, it may be said that the picture postcards despatched to addresses throughout the land by visitors to Plymouth contain in their messages a unique insight into popular impressions of the town during the first three decades of this century. The collections of postcards in private hands in the county must therefore represent one of the last sources of primary anecdotal material not to have been systematically exploited by historians. It is thus a fruitful field of research which, if properly used, could shed light on many of the obscurer corners of Plymouth history as well as offering us a glimpse into the hearts and minds of ordinary visitors to the Three Towns.

#### Notes

1. This figure is based on a small sample of about 150 cards in the author's collection.
2. F. Majdalany 'The Red Rocks of Eddystone' London 1959.

## National Publishers of Plymouth Postcards

B & D 'KROMO' Series—Picture Postcard Pioneers, London E.C.  
 C.P.C. London.  
 City Postcard Co. London.  
 The 'Dainty' Series (Hughes's Pens Series' on some cards).  
 Davidson Bros., London—'Marlborough' Series.  
 E.S., London.  
 Empire Series, London.  
 F. Frith & Co. Ltd., Reigate.  
 G.D. & D. Ltd.  
 G. & P. Ltd.—The Wellington Series.  
 'Hartmann' Trade Mark.  
 Heraldic Series—"Ja-Ja" Regd. Trade Mark.  
 J.W.S.  
 The 'Penn' Series.  
 Photochrom Co. Ltd., Royal Tunbridge Wells.  
 Pictorial Stationery Co. Ltd., "Autochrom" 'Peacock Brand' Trade Mark.  
 London.  
 Pincock Bros. Bristol.  
 The Rapid Photo Printing Co. Ltd., London E.C.  
 J.W. Ruddock, Lincoln. 'The Artist' Series.  
 E.A. Scherdtfeger & Co. London E.C. 'EAS' Trademark.  
 Sergeant Bros., West Drayton.  
 Shurey's Publications (Cards issued free with publishers novels).  
 Stewart & Woolf, London E.C.  
 Raphael Tuck & Sons—Various series.  
 J. Valentine.  
 W.B.P. ('Rotary Photo E.C.' on some cards).  
 Woolstone Bros. London E.C.1. The 'Milton' Series.  
 J. Welch & Sons, Photographic Publishers. Portsmouth.

## CHARLES II IN TWO PLACES AT ONCE

G.M. Chapman

The Axminster churchwardens' accounts for 1671 contain the following item:

To the ringers when his Majestie passed through the Towne the 24th of  
 July 10-0 (10 shillings)

Charles II's appearance in Axminster was unpremeditated. It resulted from a change in his plans forced upon him by the stormy weather that prevailed in late July 1671. He had been on a visit to the Channel fleet, commencing at Portsmouth and ending at Plymouth whence he intended to return to Portsmouth by sea. The return journey was hindered by adverse winds however and he was eventually unable to complete it. The details are given in a News Letter from Whitehall, dated 25 July, to Walter Tucker at Lyme<sup>1</sup>. 'His Majesty, on the 18th, went aboard again about nine, and sailed towards Portsmouth, but the wind being easterly and blowing hard, at about three on the 21st went into Dartmouth, where he went up the river and lay aboard that night, whence he sent an express to order his coaches from Portsmouth to Salisbury, intending to come directly to London by land.' The King had, in fact, got well beyond Dartmouth before being obliged to turn back and was off Lyme on 20 July. (See below).

The Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, for 1671, from which the above extract is taken, includes another item of interest, dated 23 July, at Dartmouth<sup>2</sup>. 'Post warrant from the Duke of Monmouth, requiring postmasters to furnish the bearer with six horses.' This suggests that the King had been provided with a coach for his journey to Salisbury, where his own coaches would be awaiting him, and required changes of horses to be ready for him on the way. It would also explain how the Axminster churchwardens had fore-knowledge of the King's approach, giving them time to summon the ringers to be at their posts, ready to celebrate his passage through the town. It is possible that Axminster was one of the places where fresh horses were to be ready for him. Its later importance as a staging post for coaches is well known<sup>3</sup>. There must have been a good deal of scurrying to and fro in the town and mounting excitement as the King's coach was sighted, rumbling down Gammons Hill in Kilmington, on the far side of the Axe valley. The entry also shows that the King's favourite son, the young Duke of Monmouth, was with him in Dartmouth and probably accompanied him on the return journey to London. If this was so, one wonders if the Duke recollected the occasion when he was in Axminster fourteen years later, achieving the only success in his ill-fated rebellion, the bloodless rout of the Somerset Militia.

Samuel Pepys had also been with the King on the voyage from Portsmouth to Plymouth but did not accompany him on the return journey. With Lord Brouncker and others he had left the royal party at Plymouth to set out on a tour of inspection of some of the royal forests that supplied oaks for the King's ships, starting with the Forest of Dean and going on to the forests of Whittlebury in Oxfordshire and Brackley in Northamptonshire<sup>4</sup>.

The account of the King's enforced change of plan and return to London by road from Dartmouth, as given in the State Papers, seems so convincing that it is puzzling to find that Charles Wanklyn, in *Lyme Regis. A Retrospect*<sup>5</sup>, gives a

different version of it, stating that he came ashore at Lyme and proceeded to London from there. He quotes from a letter written by Anthony Thorold, an official of the Lyme Corporation, responsible for making returns of ships arriving at or departing from the port. (This was the same man who, with a customs officer named Dassell, rode to London in June 1685 to give the first news of Monmouth's landing.) The letter by Thorold, quoted by Wanklyn, is printed in the State Papers<sup>6</sup>. Dated 22 July, at Lyme, it reads 'Thursday the 20th, the King with the fleet attending him from Plymouth sailed along this bay (some time near the shore) eastwards, but the wind being strong N.E. and E., could not get about Portland, but next morning tacked to the westward again. While he passed this place most of the inhabitants made to the shore to be spectators, when our great guns were fired from the shore and cliff, and Captain Alford, in a small bark, made out in hopes to get aboard, but the wind, veering E. and S.E. was disappointed.'

Gregory Alford, twice mayor of Lyme Regis, was noted for his fervent adulation of the Stuart monarchy and for his relentless persecution of the dissenters in the town. He had been in the Royalist army that besieged Lyme under Prince Maurice in 1644 during the Civil War, when he probably attained the rank of captain, the title by which he was generally known. One of the occasions on which he was mayor was in 1685, the year of Monmouth's rebellion. When Monmouth and his followers came ashore Alford rode out of the town in haste, 'well knowing that I should be first seized' as he wrote in a letter to James II, sent from Honiton, where he had sought safety<sup>7</sup>. He had good reason to think that the detestation in which he was held by the Protestants who were exultantly cheering Monmouth would almost certainly have resulted in summary retribution had he remained.

It will be noted that Thorold says nothing in his letter suggesting that the King came ashore, a matter he would surely have mentioned in his report to London. Wanklyn however, as noted above, states that he did so, adding that he left for London by the old Roman road up Charmouth Hill, 'while the guns of Lyme went off once more'. He gives as his authority the mayoral expenses for 1671, quoting an entry from them for 'A barrel of strong beer when Captain Alford went forth to meet the King'. In another of his books, *Lyme Leaflets*<sup>8</sup>, he expands his account of Charles II's unintentional visit to Lyme, again based on the mayoral expense vouchers, concluding by describing how the King was attended out of the town by an escort of local gentlemen, including a Courtenay, a Rolle and an Acland.

Despite the persuasive circumstantial evidence Wanklyn advances in support of his contention that Charles II landed at Lyme in the stormy weather of late July, 1671, his account of it lacks the support of any definite statement that he did so in the contemporary version of the King's voyage, given in the State papers. Sir Arthur Bryant, describing it in his account of Charles II's reign, does not say where the King came ashore but refers to his return to London, 'over the rough Devon roads'<sup>9</sup>. Wanklyn seems to have been unaware that Pulman includes the extract from the Axminster churchwardens' accounts in *The Book of the Axe*<sup>10</sup>. The statement that Charles landed at Dartmouth, given in the State Papers, coupled with the entry in the Axminster churchwardens' accounts, would seem conclusive. It would be interesting to know if the churchwardens' accounts of any other Devon town on the route between Dartmouth and Axminster contain a reference to the King's journey.

I am grateful to my brother Christopher, of Paragon Books, Ilminster, for the loan of the books by Roberts and Wanklyn and to George Tatham who obtained the references from the State Papers for me.

#### Notes

1. Calendar of State Papers Domestic, Charles II. 1671. 291, No.228. (Walter Tucker was a prominent Lyme merchant. Mayor in 1663 and 1674.)
2. Ibid. 291, No.225.
3. G.P.R. Pulman, *The Book of the Axe*. 1878. Facsimile reprints Bath, 1969. p.589.
4. Sir Arthur Bryant, *Samuel Pepys. The Years of Peril*. London. 1935.
5. Charles Wanklyn, *Lyme Regis. A Retrospect*. London 1922.
6. C.S.P.D. 291, No.222.
7. George Roberts, *The Life, Progresses and Rebellion of James, Duke of Monmouth*. London. 1844.
8. Charles Wanklyn, *Lyme Leaflets*. London 1944.
9. Sir Arthur Bryant, *King Charles the Second*. London. 1931. C.S.P.D. 299, No.54.
10. Pulman. As above. p.638.

## COMMON GROUND AND THE PARISH MAPS PROJECT— LOCAL HISTORY, CONSERVATION AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY

Tom Greeves

Common Ground is a small national charity established in 1983 with ambitious aims of changing people's attitudes to, and involvement in, conservation. It exists to promote recognition of the importance of ordinary and familiar features in the landscape, to encourage people to speak out about the things they value in their surroundings, and to stimulate the use of the arts in the widest sense as a means of helping people express their emotional feelings about the natural and human environment.

Local historians can be key figures in this process because of their access to such a wealth of varied information which could change people's perception of their locality. Common Ground's *Parish Maps Project* provides new opportunities for involvement in local conservation. The idea is that any group might create a 'map' of their parish on which are shown those features that people care about.

The map need not be conventional or sophisticated, but can be of any scale, orientation or medium—paint, ceramics, film and tapestry are just some of the ideas being worked on nationally. The map should reflect and celebrate the distinctive character of the parish—its raw materials, plants, animals and people.

Diligent search in local archives may well reveal unexpected information about men and women who once lived in, or were associated with a particular parish—perhaps writers, poets, artists or craftsmen who have contributed



something to the human character of the place. The fabric of the buildings of a parish—the stone, bricks or timber—will alert the historian to links between quarry, wood and house which others may have missed. Such information could be crucial in preventing tipping in a now-abandoned quarry, in re-introducing coppice management of a wood, or in conserving a particular structure.

Study of tithe and estate maps may well reveal the former existence of boundary trees or boundmarks along the parish boundary, and could lead to new plantings, perhaps by schoolchildren, or the cutting of a new boundstone by a local stonemason. By providing the parish council with a description of the bounds of your parish as recorded in some old document, you might fire them with enthusiasm to revive the custom of 'beating the bounds', and so lead to a greater sense of community pride in the parish territory as a whole. Similarly, you might draw attention to parish anniversaries and events worth celebrating.

In summary, there are numerous opportunities for local historians to surprise their fellow parishioners, whose primary concerns might lie more in farming or industry, in nature conservation or the arts, or in the everyday business of parish council work.

Public display of the finished map, and involvement of the parish council in its creation, should result in something that is not only attractive but also useful and informative. It will be a constant reminder to the parish that many unobtrusive and seemingly insignificant features that would not otherwise be noted in a conventional survey, nor be protected by national legislation, matter greatly to a wide cross-section of people, and should therefore be treated sensitively.

Common Ground has produced a leaflet about the Parish Maps Project which is available from Tom Greeves, Local Initiatives officer, Common Ground, 45 Shelton Street, London WC2H 9HJ. More detailed booklets on the Parish Boundary and Parish Maps will be available by March 1987. A Parish Maps Day is being organised by the Rural Community Council for Devon (contact Susanna Friel on Exeter 272535) and is to be held at Beaford on Saturday 28 March 1987. A major exhibition of nineteen Parish Maps by artists commissioned by Common Ground will be on show at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter, from mid-November to mid-December 1987. The Parish Maps Project is supported by The Carnegie UK Trust, The Countryside Commission, The World Wildlife Fund and The Vincent Wildlife Trust.

## DEVON BIRTH ANNIVERSARIES

SIR THOMAS DYKE ACLAND (1787-1871). Politician. Entered House of Commons in 1812 in Tory interest and served with short breaks until 1857. He supported Wellington over Catholic Emancipation. In the 1830 election, which is said to have cost him £80,000, some Whig support helped him to defeat Lord Ebrington but he lost his seat in the following year because of his opposition to the first Reform Bill. He got back into Parliament in 1837 as one of the North Devon members, retiring from politics in 1857 after the death of his wife, the daughter of the banker, Henry Hoare. Of strong moral principles he was looked on as the head of the 'religious party' in the House of Commons.

WILLIAM BROCKENDEN (1787-1854). Painter, author and inventor. Born in Totnes, the son of a poor but able clockmaker, he carried on his father's business for five years after his death when he was sent by wealthy patrons to study at the Royal Academy. He quickly became a successful painter of historical scenes, landscapes and portraits. A friend of Clarkson Stanfield and of Prout he illustrated with them and with others a number of books on Italy where he spent much time. He is said to have made 58 crossings of the Alps and became the English authority on that area. He turned from illustrating to writing travel books and then, from the 1840s, concentrated on his inventive work and in particular the development of the commercial uses of rubber which he pursued as a partner in the Manchester firm of Charles Mackintosh. A founder Council Member of the Royal Geographical Society he was esteemed as a kindly man and as a devoted son.

SIR WILLIAM FORTESCUE (1687-1749). Lawyer. Born at Buckland Filleigh, he only left his estates to study law in London in 1710 on the death of his wife. He became private secretary to Sir Robert Walpole in 1715, MP in 1727 and a Baron of the Exchequer in 1736. In 1741 he was made Master of the Rolls and a Privy Councillor. Through his friendship with Gay with whom he had been at Barnstaple Grammar School he met Pope whose legal and financial adviser he became. He is remembered more for his literary connections than for his legal achievements.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE BART (First Lord Iddesleigh). (1818-1887). Statesman. Educated Eton and Balliol, he was appointed private secretary to Gladstone in 1842 and joint secretary to the 1851 Exhibition. He was co-author with Booth and Trevelyan of a report on the Board of Trade and with the latter on the Civil Service which led to far reaching reforms. Keenly interested in social problems he established a reformatory school near the family seat at Upton Pyne. He entered Parliament in 1855 and in the Derby—Disraeli government of 1866-8 was successively President of the Board of Trade and Secretary of State for India. Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company for five years, he represented Britain in the 1871 boundary negotiations with the USA. In Disraeli's administration of 1874-80 he was Chancellor of the Exchequer and after 1876, when the Prime Minister went to the Lords, also Leader of the House. He is best remembered for his attempt to regularise redemption of the National Debt through the so-called New Sinking Fund. He led the Opposition during Gladstone's Ministry of 1880-1885. With the return to office of the Conservatives in the latter year he was created Earl of Iddesleigh. Appointed Foreign Secretary in 1887 he died suddenly that year. His contemporaries judged him to be that rarity, a 'pure minded politician'. A financier of the Gladstone school, his reputation was that of a cautious but fearless statesman.

*Adrian Reed*

RICHARD SAINTHILL (1787-1869), antiquarian, historian and numismatist, was born in Topsham on 28 January 1787 (and christened there on 17 May). He came from an old-established Devonshire family, but his father, after an eventful naval career, settled in Cork, where Sainthill spent most of his life. While there he encouraged a young artist, Daniel Maclise, later a renowned Royal Academician. He

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## REVIEWS

**Raleigh in Exeter 1985 Privateering and Colonisation in the reign of Elizabeth I.** Edited by Joyce Youings, University of Exeter 1985 x, 117pp (Exeter Studies in History No. 10) £3.95 (ISBN 0 85989 252 2).

This book comprises seven papers delivered at a conference at Exeter University in May 1985 'to mark the 400th anniversary of the first attempt to settle English people in North America.'

The first paper is the Harte Lecture 1985 by Professor Kenneth R. Andrews on 'Elizabethan Privateering' and it concentrates on 'the sordid reality' of privateering rather than the romantic image fostered, but not invented, by Charles Kingsley. Raleigh's role as an imperial pioneer is seen as questionable and from his own point of view seemed to take second place to plunder. Stimulating and informative this paper challenges our assumptions and charges us to resist nostalgia.

In her paper Professor Joyce Youings puts the question 'Did Raleigh's England need Colonies' and she notes the themes which linked overseas colonisation with contemporary English society and then considers them in the light of modern research. Most importantly for readers of *The Devon Historian*, Professor Youings illustrates the points she makes with many references to Devon which contrast with, or confirm, the national trends.

The paper by Mr Ian Friel (of the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich) is on 'The Three-Masted Ship and Atlantic Voyages'. The ocean-going ships and barks of the Roanoke voyages were generally of some 50-200 burden and most seem to have been three-masted. The three-masted ship was 'the right development at the right time' and was the result of the combination of the skeleton-built hull and the three masted square rig; cost advantage lay behind both developments.

Professor David Quinn in his paper on 'The Lost Colonists' describes the circumstances which led to a party of the second expedition of colonists waiting on Roanoke Island for the return of their Governor, John White, from England and the difficulties which finally delayed him until 1590, by which time the party had disappeared and become The Lost Colonists. If Professor Quinn's tentative reconstruction is valid the Lost Colonists survived for twenty years before being slaughtered and so acted as a link between the Roanoke colonies of 1585-87 and the settlement of a Colony at Virginia in 1607.

Dr H.G. Jones, Curator of the North Carolina Collection in the library of the University of North Carolina writes on 'The Americanisation of Raleigh' and sets out the extent to which Sir Walter's name graces the businesses, professions, housing complexes and organisations in the 'City of Raleigh' in North Carolina. The background is also given of the 'living history' programme which occurs at the reconstructed earthworks of Fort Raleigh, the base of the first colonists.

But what of the man himself? Dr Michael Stanford and the Rev. Maurice Turner focus their attention on 'The Raleighs, Father and Son'. Dr Stanford summarises the background and activities of Walter Raleigh senior, while Mr Turner asks of the son, 'Can the contradictions, vagaries and ambiguities of his character be seen as a coherent life in the context of the complexities of his time?'

The book concludes by returning to Raleigh's American colonial scheme as it affected John White, artist of the first Roanoke Colony 1585-6 and governor of the second Colony of 1587. Mr Paul Hulton, lately Deputy Keeper of the Department of Prints and Drawings at the British Museum writes on 'John White and his Drawings of Raleigh's Virginia'. John White failed to find the Lost Colonists but he had ultimate success in his drawings, the importance of which have only comparatively recently been realised for ethnography and natural history.

This book has authoritative statements on a wide range of inter-related matters which might otherwise be scattered in specialist journals.

*Marjorie E. Bird*

**A HISTORY OF DEVON** by Robin Stanes with drawings by Jim Stanes and Judy Stevens, Phillimore 1986. 128pp, 57 photographs, 10 maps and numerous drawings. ISBN 0 85033 528 0 £8.95 hardback.

A glance at the late Mr Geoffrey Paley's valuable annual compilation, *Devon Bibliography*, underlines the explosion in books and booklets on local history published in recent years. The majority of these have very specific topics—often a particular parish, town or area. Only a few have attempted to look at Devon or the South-West as a whole entity. An up-to-date account of the history of Devon is clearly due. W.G. Hoskins' *Devon*, now nearly 35 years old, still takes pride of place on any Devonian bookshelf, but where can we read of the advances of the generation of historians and other researchers who have been at work—often under inspiration from Professor Hoskins' lead—since the 1950s?

The indefinite article is carefully used in the title of Mr Stanes' new book. Although it gives coverage from earliest prehistoric times to the 20th century, it does not seek to be the definitive version. The book's seventeen chapters take up about 100 pages of text set out in a chronological framework. Some chapters tackle important themes such as the tin and cloth industries, the sea and farming. There is a good index, but only a 'select' bibliography. This diminishes the book's use for reference purposes, as does the lack of notes of references within the text. Thus the reader cannot easily pursue a subject of interest or resolve any points of doubt. *A History of Devon* has grown out of Mr Stanes' adult education classes, which have opened many new eyes to Devon's past. This book has a good extra-mural feel about it. It is written with enthusiasm and the clear and concise text draws the reader into the subject. Mr Stanes uses some effective examples to make his points. The looks of a Devon parish church before the Reformation are vividly put across and the use of Sir William Waller's letter to his old friend, now Civil War foe, Sir Ralph Hopton gives a fine introduction to the 'war without an enemy'.

Elsewhere contrasts with the modern world that we take too much for granted are tellingly made, and help to emphasise the all important difference in scale between past and present. Thus fleeces in Tavistock in 1400 weighed less than 2lb compared with a possible 20lb or more today. In 1874 18% of Devon was owner-occupied; today the figure stands at about 66%. And how should those charged with securing Ilfracombe's prosperity today view its 19th century policy of raising railway fares 'to deter working people who could afford a holiday'?

One of Professor Hoskins' most valuable messages is that the historian ignores the study of the landscape at his or her peril. Mr Stanes devotes a chapter to 'farms,

fields and villages' and, with his own farming background, obviously has a feeling for the land 'made by peasants'. He sets out the direction which recent landscape research is taking, but the number of provisional statements reminds us of how much further we still have to go to get firm answers in this field of research.

Some readers will be disappointed that the book does not get to grips with the evidence to be found in both urban and rural historic buildings. Charles Hulland's superb colour photograph of a medieval farmhouse near Witheridge cries out for a good discussion, but both text and bibliography fight shy of the great advances being made in the study of Devon's vernacular buildings.

A word more should be said about the illustrations. The book is well equipped with four splendid colour photographs and over 50 good black and white photos. However none of the photographs are referenced into the text and the captions could be more informative (eg Plate 45 is simply titled 'The Customs House, Exeter'). The inclusion of over 70 distinctive line drawings, usually within the wide margin, is an attractive idea, but again fuller captions and reference to the text would have served the reader better.

*A History of Devon* should achieve a wide readership and will serve as a departure point for the next generation of Devon historians. Mr Stanes points to what needs to be done, if only the study of history can survive strongly enough at school, university and adult education levels to produce people equipped to take up the challenge.

Simon Timms

Tin Mines and Miners of Dartmoor: A Photographic Record. Tom Greeves, Devon Books, 1986. 86pp ISBN 0 86114 766 7. £4.95.

There will be few readers of the *Devon Historian*, be they historians, archaeologists or casual walkers on Dartmoor, who will not be absorbed by Tom Greeves' original book. It results from many years' research by Dr Greeves (until recently, the Archaeologist for Dartmoor National Park) on a subject close to his heart. The book is built around a series of photographs of Dartmoor mining scenes from the late 19th century onwards, and these pictures greatly illuminate the now scant physical remains surviving from the last great wave of tin exploitation on the Moor—wheelpits, stamps, buddles etc are all clearly illustrated. For many readers it will however be the commentary that will be the most striking part: Dr Greeves' account is based on numerous conversations with those on the Moor to whom the figures in the photographs are still real people. Many of the miners in the book were closely related (family trees are given) and a single frame of a miner with a candle in his hat is expanded with the history of his cousins, his wife and his war service (all too often the last event in his life).

Not only will reading this book elucidate your Dartmoor walks, it will almost certainly expand the vocabulary of those not currently conversant with chimming kieves and skiddy bags. For those who may have trouble with a sentence such as 'When rotated, the trommel caused the turf and loose material to be beaten into a slurry . . . which was then fed directly to a round buddle' a glossary is helpfully provided. Many of the machines and tools of the modern Dartmoor miner are illustrated, and described by the men who used them.

The speed with which these mining remains have decayed and disappeared surprises one, as do the accounts of the phenomenally hard working life of the Dartmoor miner well into this century. It is fortunate that Dr Greeves' enthusiasm for the subject was kindled so early (the reports his first interviews in the book when still an undergraduate)—all too many of his informants are already dead, and his work here represents a unique and irreplaceable record of these highly individual people. This must act as a stimulus to all those contemplating 'oral history' projects—though he gives a cautionary tale on page *viii* of the pitfalls of such efforts! One may hope that he is considering further publications on this subject.

The book has been well produced by Devon Books, and at this price for a paperback containing 75 plates represents excellent value. It is however Dr Greeves' enthusiasm and affection for a subject—and subjects, who are warmly acknowledged throughout—that is perhaps this book's most striking quality: 'industrial archaeology' with real people.

F.M. Griffith

**The Monmouth Rising: Aspects of the 1685 Rebellion in the West Country.** Edited by Ivan Roots, Devon Books, 1986. 80pp. Softback ISBN 0 86114 779 0 £4.95.

As a postscript to the tercentenary of Monmouth's Rebellion this slim but informative volume has been produced containing two of the lectures given in Exeter in the summer of 1985 plus an additional chapter and four appendices. The whole has been carefully edited by Ivan Roots, who has also written a helpful introduction setting the West Country in the context of its earlier rebellions and the text is provided with a balanced mixture of contemporary illustrations and modern photographs.

The first chapter is concerned with 'The Political Context of Monmouth's Rebellion' and K.H.D. Haley, University of Sheffield, cites Trevelyan's view about the 1680s being 'The most decisive decade in our history' and incisively examines the evidence, adding his own important qualifications. It is perhaps unfortunate that Dr Peter Earle, London School of Economics, declined to offer his lecture on 'The Rebels of 1685' for inclusion—the more so since it was he who provided important evidence of the urban background of many of the rebels and his book is now out of print. However, the omission has been engagingly filled by W. MacDonald Wigfield's contribution on 'The Rebellious Army of James Scott, Late Duke of Monmouth'. He provides a brief account of the Rebellion and a masterful series of vignettes depicting the command structure, other personalities involved, and the judicial aftermath including the dramatic escape of the Pitman brothers from Barbados. The final chapter, contributed by Robin Clifton, University of Warwick, gives a lucid and thought-provoking account of 'Sedgemoor 1685: Lessons and Implications', striking a careful balance between the ones that affected national security and the more provincial ones that applied to the south west. The appendices contain a list of the Devon Rebels, details of the Exeter Plot, a chronology of events and a valuable bibliography.

This volume is a judicious blend of the latest scholarly thinking on 'this last purely English rebellion' placed within a national context and a practical resumé of the events and personalities as they affected the South West. Both strands reiterate



and demonstrate the symbiosis between politics and military history throughout the seventeenth century. Ivan Roots and Devon Books have done a considerable service in bringing these opinions to the attention of a wider public.

*George Tatham*

**Tall ships in Torbay. A brief maritime history** by John Pike, Bradford on Avon: Ex Libris, 1986.

John Pike's 'brief maritime history' of Torbay provides a narrative account of the various sea-related activities that the bay has witnessed over the centuries. Thus, the coverage is broad, ranging from the maritime trades of the bay such as fishing, ship-building and sea-faring, to the naval vessels that have periodically sheltered, foundered, paraded or pillaged in the bay, to the Royal visitors (William III, Napoleon, George V and others) who have entered Torbay for various purposes. Less savoury characters, such as the 'gentlemen' smugglers, the Paignton wreckers and the naval press-masters, find a place in this work alongside the more altruistic members of the maritime community—the coastguards, lifeboatmen and medical personnel—who have sought to assist mariners in distress.

Such a long and diverse list of characters reflects the historical significance that the sea has held for the inhabitants of the towns and coastal villages bordering the bay. In this respect, Mr Pike adopts a refreshing and interesting approach to local history, identifying a particular theme—man's relationship with the sea—and examining its relevance to Torbay over the ages. This approach, however, does pose certain problems. Attention needs to be paid to the scope and content of 'maritime history': the various aspects defined as constituting the maritime element of historical investigation need to be treated as evenly as feasible; moreover, a balanced treatment of the subject over time is required. In addressing these problems Mr Pike is only partially successful. Little attempt is made to define the subject area and, despite the coverage of many aspects associated with the maritime past, topics such as the development of the bay's role as a holiday resort—surely a sea-related activity of some importance over the last century—are neglected. Undue weight is given to Torbay's incidental role in political and military affairs, with the result that the inter-dependence of maritime activity with the local economy and society is not considered fully. Thus, the choice of 'three great events in Torbay's maritime history'—the arrival of the Armada ship *Nuestra Senora del Rosario*, the landing of William of Orange, and Napoleon's brief appearance in 1815—distorts the work towards the naval side, to the detriment of the socio-economic. Balance is also lacking in the coverage of maritime affairs over time; for instance, the 19th century is discussed in some depth while the present century is poorly represented, though maritime-related activity remains of significance in the form of tourism, pleasure sailing, and fishing. Nevertheless, Mr Pike offers us a highly readable and well illustrated volume of much interest to those concerned with local maritime history.

*David Starkey*

**A History of Kingsbridge and Salcombe** by Anne Born, Phillimore, 1986, 179pp. £9.95. **Kingsbridge Devon** by Anne Borne and Kathy Tanner, 1986, 24pp. £1.35.

*A History of Kingsbridge and Salcombe* draws not only on historical sources but on personal knowledge and research which brings life and warmth to the subject. It is more than an account of the two towns for it covers the history and development of the surrounding countryside and discusses the relationship of the towns to the land and to the sea. This southernmost peninsula of the South Hams is not so clearly defined as Purbeck but the Avon and Gara rivers and the Torr brook nearly surrounded it, making an 'island' which looks towards the Estuary. The latter divides the area in two with Salcombe looking seaward at the southern end and Kingsbridge, the centre for the farmland around, at the north.

The first chapters describe the geology and its effect on the landscape and the early history. Stone Age flints and Bronze Age pottery and metalwork show early settlement and documentation begins with two Saxon charters. One of 846 defines the area south of the holed 'Thurie stone' and the stream running east from it, following the present parish boundary between South Milton and South Huish, then north to beyond Kingsbridge, while the second outlines the area to the north of Kingsbridge and mentions the 'cinges bricge'. The later history is treated by subject with chapters on farming, fishing, quarrying, and shipbuilding as well as markets and fairs and communications by land and sea. The history of the church and non-conformism, Salcombe and the Civil War, education, piracy and smuggling are also discussed. The development of the ancient market town of Kingsbridge is contrasted with the mushroom growth of Salcombe. In the 'trewe platt' of 1586 the plan of Kingsbridge is already established though, with the removal of the 'Cheape house', the street has been narrowed by the addition of new facades to the gabled and tiled or, surely, thatched houses. Shipbuilding transformed Salcombe in the 19th century from a fishing village to a thriving industrial town. Fast sailing ships built for the fruit trade brought prosperity which is reflected in the villas built for their captains and later, when the trade had declined, for the visitors who discovered the beauties of the estuary and the mildness of the climate.

The villages are not discussed in detail but descriptions of some of the churches and houses illustrate the rural architecture.

*Kingsbridge Devon* is a model guide book, bringing to life the history of the town and relating it to the present. The text is brief and clear, there is a good map showing the town's amenities, and also notes on events and services. It is so good that it merits a more generous layout and better reproduction of some of the photographs.

*H M Petter*

This second annual volume published by the South West Maritime History Society contains, in addition to information useful to its members in their research work, a number of more general articles. Neil Casey and David Dunkerley examine why 'Trade Unions in Naval Dockyards in the Late Nineteenth Century' had so little impact, with no union activity before 1885 and even dockyard labourers not organised until 1909. Part of the explanation seems to have been that the Admiralty had already had a century and a half's experience in the handling of large industrial units before private employers had to face management problems on a similar scale. As a result, by the time they did, in the 1850s the Admiralty had already evolved a hierarchical system of employee/management relations, including procedures for ventilating grievances, that worked reasonably smoothly. They could offer the great inducements of promotion by qualification to the able man as well as 'establishment' with its benefits of security and a pension—advantages not available in contemporary industry. Trade fluctuations did not affect the dockyards nor did the workers in them feel drawn politically to Liberalism or to the labour movement. The Liberal economy axe fell heavily on Devonport in the 1870s and 1880s while socialism advocated disarmament. Naval expansion was the consequence of an active foreign policy, and that was generally Conservative. Against this background it is not surprising that the most popular collectivism in Devonport was membership of the Dockyard Volunteer Battalion!

In 'Baltic Trade with Devon 1784-95' Walter Minchinton and Ian Jarman draw on abstracts of the Registers of the Sound Tolls prepared by Odense University. These show that imports were almost entirely naval stores, mainly for Plymouth Dockyard, although some of them such as Swedish boards could be used for purposes other than shipbuilding. Three quarters of the imports went to Plymouth; the balance going to Exeter, Bideford, Dartmouth, Appledore and Seaton. Few of the ships engaged in the trade were Devon owned and the lack of local cargoes meant that 97% of vessels clearing Devon ports for the Baltic sailed in ballast. It seems clear that but for the needs of the naval dockyard the Baltic trade would have been negligible for, as the authors of the paper observe, Devon's maritime interests lay elsewhere.

The three great pioneers in naval medicine in the eighteenth century were Lind, Blane and Trotter. The latter may not have been the most original of the three but he was a practical and humane man who did much for the seamen in his care and for the improvement of the status of the medical branch afloat. He published his *Medicina Nautica* after his retirement in 1802 and John Pike examines in his 'Dr Trotter on the Health of the Fleet in 'Torbay' the passages in its bearing on the doctor's time in Devon. Howe appointed Trotter physician of the Channel Fleet in 1794 and 'Torbay was the Fleet's home anchorage. He worked well with Howe but was on less easy terms with his successor, St Vincent. At first he accompanied the ships blockading the French coast, sailing in his hospital ship which had the professionally challenging name of *Charon*. Later, after an injury he seems to have spent much of his time ashore where he concerned himself with ensuring supplies of anti-scorbutics and fresh foods to the ships. In winter, when the hospital ship was withdrawn, the sick were sent ashore to be taken in open carts to Dartmouth or sent

by sea to Haslar or Plymouth. A hospital was established at Paignton but this does not seem to have been much of an improvement. In 1801 he observes that conditions there merely added to the patients' afflictions. A strong proponent of vaccination he also insisted on a useful flow of statistical information from the surgeons under his command. It is a pity that he did not tell us anything of his life ashore in the Torbay villages of the 1790s.

The second part of the annual includes a report by John Stengelhofen on the outstations in the west of the National Maritime Museum and an account by Derek Shorrocks of the Maritime Archives at the Somerset Record Office. Book reviews and a bibliography complete the volume.

*Adrian Reed*

*Domesday Totnes* by Urban Earle, Totnes Community Archive, 1986 49pp. limp, price not stated. *The Domesday Survey of 1086 and the Country round Chulmleigh in North Devon* by R.C.M. Bass, Chulmleigh, 1986 45pp limp £1.00.

As well as a surge of Domesday publications at national level, 1986 has also stimulated a range of local Domesday studies, of which these are two Devon examples. They illustrate well both the attractions and the difficulties of presenting short pieces which will please a particular local audience, in this case presumably an essentially amateur one, while remaining reliable in all the treacherous areas of Domesday scholarship proper.

The Totnes volume bears evidence of much work, but the reader also has to work quite hard. It is not wholly clear who exactly will find this useful and readable. It is too technical for those wanting a brief and general statement, but insufficiently informed to rank with the specialist literature. Full credit must be given for emphasising how difficult it is to reconstruct settlement and population from Domesday information, but too much of the content follows well-worn paths, and the short bibliography contains the usual familiar items, the result of which is lengthy and not too exciting discussions of 'Domesday Geography'. Another is the imbalance of treatment in favour of economic matters, with relatively little on the people who imposed the Norman Conquest on Devon and created the landholding framework of Domesday. The author seems unaware that Judhael was a Breton, not a Norman, and there is no mention of the castle he built at Totnes. Although it was not actually mentioned in Domesday it was surely the most obvious physical result of the Conquest of South Devon. There is however a remark on the possible role of the hillfort at Loddiswell as a base of military activity. This comment (published by the reviewer and not acknowledged here) fails to make full use of the evidence by omitting to mention the Norman (or Breton) earthwork which was added to the existing site (probably Iron Age rather than Saxon). In the discussion of boroughs, distinction should have been made between the Saxon foundations, which included Totnes and Okehampton which was the first of the 'new towns'. The study covers twenty-odd parishes around Totnes, and while the author is aware that this is an artificial unit as far as medieval Devon is concerned, the point should have been made more strongly. A study of Judhael's estates, and those of its major tenants, would have had more cohesion historically if not geographically.

The Chulmleigh volume contrasts in a number of ways. Much of the Domesday information is given in tables, which while in themselves fairly indigestible do at

least allow the text to be lighter in approach. As a result the commentary is more readable and entertaining. It is easier to imagine this volume being read by a local audience, and although one could quibble with some of the points made (the translation of *balistarius* for example) the notes do contain much of interest. This author is also aware of the problems of Domesday interpretation in landscape and population matters. Even so, comparing the (approx.) 1086 population with that of 1981 is of limited value, since the major ups and downs which occurred between the two dates are not taken into account. The author has been wide ranging in his reading, and makes some good points in passing, for example on the possible context of the site at Stone Castle as a hunting lodge for the Courtenays' park.

*R. Higham*

**Chulmleigh: a short history and walk round guide** by Jack Mair and R.C.M. Bass, 1986. Available from Mr R.C.M. Bass, Glebe Cottage, Chulmleigh EX18 7BY. 161p. £1.25.

Chulmleigh has a population of only about 1,100 people today but has a Parish Council which is proud of its heritage. It has sponsored this modest but well-produced booklet on the village (though it has been called a town since Risdon's time) in Domesday year to combat the 'lie in (its) having no History'. The walk round guide outlines places of special interest; for example the parish church, dedicated to St Mary Magdalene, has an early 16th century screen and a tower, which according to the authors, is 'one of the finest in the County'. Chulmleigh is a Domesday manor but has obviously suffered much from depopulation in the past century, having had little to offer as an alternative to agriculture. There is a good bibliography given as footnotes which show the thoroughness of the research undertaken by Jack Mair and Richard Bass.

*John R. Pike*

**A field guide to the boundary markers on and around Dartmoor**, by Dave Brewer, Devon Books, 1986. 102pp. £3.95. ISBN 0 86114 786 3.

This is a considerably expanded and improved version of a booklet published by the author in 1985. A dozen or so different categories of boundary stones, spanning several centuries, to define such limits as those of parishes, warrens, and various industries, are dealt with in twelve chapters, plentifully illustrated by Peter Hones from Dave Brewer's own drawings and photographs. This is a fascinating guide for all who are intrigued or puzzled by strange marks encountered on the moor. **Dartmoor then and now**, by F.H. Starkey, published by the author, 1986. 83pp. £3.75. ISBN 0 9507240 4 1. In this, his fifth Dartmoor book, Harry Starkey brings into view signs of man's presence on the moor and in border villages from medieval to later times. A variety of subjects, unrelated save by their Dartmoor appertenance, are considered in sixteen chapters, with interesting facts related in the author's pleasant easy style. One is tempted throughout to read 'just one more chapter'—until all too soon the end is reached. Including 38 illustrations (mostly from the author's photographs) the book is one both for the newcomer to Dartmoor and those longer acquainted. **A gentleman's walking tour of Dartmoor 1864**, ed. Simon Butler, Devon Books, 1986. 58 pp. £2.95. ISBN 0 086114 783 9. This charming booklet reproduces an original diary (held in the West Country Studies Library) of an unnamed young man who recounts his four-day walk over Dartmoor with a companion. The energetic pair set off from South Brent station of the recently opened South Devon Railway, on which they had travelled from Exeter, and walked over the moor with overnight stops at Princetown, Lydford and Chagford before completing the circuit to Exeter. Illustrated with old drawings and photographs, the account provides a graphic and entertaining picture of the Dartmoor scene as it appeared to an observant walker over a century ago.

*Helen Harris*

**Devon's Industrial Past: a guide**, by Walter Minchinton. Dartington Centre for Education and Research. 1986. ISBN 0 905926 07 2. Price not given.

With a new title and an attractive new cover this guide offers a much revised and extended fourth edition of the *Industrial Archaeology of Devon* first produced in 1968. There are two extra sections, on agriculture (is this really industry?) and public utilities, and the text has been corrected and takes account of demolitions and new discoveries. The most striking improvement is the provision of fresh photographs throughout. If your earlier edition is dog-eared it is well worth replacing it.

*Cynthia Gaskell Brown*

Devon Books are published for Devon County Council, presumably to attract tourists, or to encourage residents to subsidise their own rates by reading about their home county. The publications vary widely in size and shape, including chunky paperbacks, glossy giftbooks, and 'posters' of old panoramic views. In the 'St Sidwell' slot, a better seller might have been a pretty edition of the plain text of Grandisson's 14th-century legend. Instead, we are offered a slim monograph. Of its 28 pages, three are blank, the centrefold is taken up by a rather empty map (which shows the cult's distribution all the more clearly by omitting the placenames) and there are eight black and white illustrations of medieval representations of the saint in stained glass, stone and one mural drawing.

The modern relief on the front wall of 'Tesco's provides the starting point for the text, which is a scarcely modified academic article complete with a 3½-page bibliography. This bibliography is surely fuller than would be required by the average shopper in Tesco's; at the same time it is inadequate for the serious enquirer. There is no mention of Susan Pearce's work on early Christianity, or her valuable suggestions about possible origins of the legend. There is no mention of any of the archaeological finds which have added to our understanding of the area. The key to interpreting the legend must surely lie in the local landscape.

Professor Swanton does explain at some length that the legend could well be a Christianised version of age-old harvest traditions such as still survive in rural areas. He could not find a photo of a girl being sacrificed in a fertility rite, but there is a full page photo of 'the last barley sheaf' being threatened by a solitary reaper in a north Devon field in 1980.

The saint's name is itself a complicated problem which is not dealt with satisfactorily. The semantic changes and soundshifts of Middle English are outlined on p10, but the opening pages have already given the misleading impression that the name Sidwell is documented in that form in 932 A.D., the 11th century and mid 14th century, whereas the true early form, the Latin *Sativola*, could be the very clue that is needed. Surely we should remember that the Romans cultivated fields here for 400 years. They buried their dead along the line of the street. The springs of water were already here, and being tapped, centuries before the severed head of any Anglo-Saxon maiden can have caused one to spurt out. Susan Pearce suggests that a Roman shrine among the cultivated fields may have become a focus for Christian worship. Can *Sancta Sativola* have begun, not as a personal name but as a place name—the sacred place among the cultivated fields? Swanton concludes that an individual has become a type. Surely the reverse is the case: an airy nothing has been given a local habitation and a name.

Hazel Harvey

**Kingston Defended** is the title of a well-researched leaflet written by Miss H.M. Petter and published in 1985 by Kingston (South Devon) History Society.

## THE DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY

Minutes of the 16th Annual General Meeting held at Exeter  
on Saturday 11th October 1986

In the Chair, the President, Crispin Gill, Esq., OBE

Apologies were received from Mrs Wilkinson and Messrs Bosanko and Madge.

1. The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting (printed in *The Devon Historian*, April 1986) were read. The date in section 9d was amended, to read '1985'. The minutes were then approved.

### Matters Arising

**Devon Historic Buildings Trust** It was reported that the completion of the Tavistock project would be marked by a ceremony on 15 October 1986.

**Oral History** The Council was criticised for failing to act.

**Seminar Room** The University Librarian is to be thanked for again allowing the Society the use of this for the AGM.

**Devon Bibliography and Union List** At this point the death of Mr Geoffrey Paley was reported, and tribute paid to his work for the Society. Members agreed that a letter of sympathy be sent to Mrs Paley, and an appreciation printed in the next issue of the bibliography. Professor Youings announced that the Devon and Exeter Institution would appreciate suggestions for its intended memorial to Mr Paley. Mr Maxted said that the 1984 bibliography had been circulated, and that he and Mrs Stirling would continue the work begun by Mr Paley on the next edition. With regard to the Union List, the problem of the 'Brockett gap' 1975-80 remained, but he hoped for a consolidated list in time.

**Centre for South Western Historical Studies** The Devon History Society is now an institutional member.

**Braunton Great Field** Professor Youings reported that a representative from English Heritage had attended a meeting with Mr M. Havinden and Mr S. Timms, and was now convinced of the importance of the field. The Society should continue to exert pressure when necessary.

2. **Acting Hon. Secretary's Report**

Mr J. Pike reported much correspondence, including letters from the USA and Europe. A supplementary membership list, including 45 new members since the last AGM had been circulated, but the full list was not yet ready. He appealed for changes of address to be sent to the Secretary.

3. **Hon. Treasurer's Report**

Mr D. Edmund had continued in office. He presented the income and expenditure account, and reported that subscriptions were still at the 1981 level. Although the cost of publishing *The Devon Historian* was rising, there



were over 400 members, and he expected the next balance to be about the same. He thanked Mrs Stirling and the Devon and Exeter Institution for facilities for dispatching and labelling. The accounts were adopted.

#### 4. Hon Editor's Report

Mrs H. Harris reported good working relationships and prompt service from the printers at Callington. She expressed gratitude to contributors, and said she would be happy to receive not only more articles, but also some shorter contributions. She thanked Mr Reed for his work on Devon anniversaries, and said she hoped to include articles on museums as a regular feature. Tribute was paid to Mrs Stirling's work as editor of reviews, and in the distribution of copies. The editor's report was adopted.

The President thanked all those who had presented reports for their work for the Society over the past year.

#### 5. Election of Officers and Council

**Chairman** Two nominations had been received:

Prof. W. Minchinton; proposed Mr Tatham, seconded Mrs Wilkinson

Prof. J. Youings; proposed Mr Bedward, seconded Mr Barrow

After a ballot, Professor Youings was declared elected. The President thanked the outgoing chairman for his work during his 16-year term of office.

**Other Officers** The following were re-elected:

Vice-Chairman, Mr J. Pike; Hon. Treasurer, Mr D. Edmund; Hon. Editor, Mrs H. Harris.

The Council's proposal to divide secretarial duties was adopted:

Membership—Mr J. Pike; Correspondence—Mrs S. Stirling; Minutes—Dr A. Grant.

**Council Members**

Professor I. Roots elected.

Dr A. Grant, who retired under the 3 year rule, re-elected.

**Any Other Business**

#### 6. Anniversaries 1588, 1688, to be marked by one day conferences in appropriate locations.

**Constitution** The Council's proposed revision was circulated. It was resolved that this be placed on the next AGM Agenda.

*Continued from page 27*

published several works; his best known being *Olla Podrida* (2 volumes, 1844 & 1853). The unusual title compares the variety of its contents with a Spanish mixed stew. In 1855 he commissioned a personal medallion celebrating Numismata, the goddess of numismatics, Measuring 58mm diameter and struck in bronze by L.C. Wyon, it features Sainthill's bust and three allegorical figures. He died in Cork on 13 November 1869, aged 83. Although he lived in Ireland for fifty years he always proudly described himself, in his writings and on his medallion, as 'of Topsham, Devonshire'.

*John Ryton*

## Exeter University Publications

### NEW AND FORTHCOMING BOOKS

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edited by Christopher Holdsworth (Exeter Studies in History No.14).

The documentary survivals from the Great Domesday survey in 1086 for south-western England are peculiarly interesting. The strongly west-country flavour to these essays is of considerable general as well as local interest. The book includes five essays by David Bates, Frank Barlow, William Ravenhill, Christopher Holdsworth, and Audrey Erskine and Robert Higham.

Paperback, 88 pages, £1.75 net

0 85989 238 7

Published October 1986

#### CORNISH MINES

edited by Roger Burt, Peter Waite and Raymond Burnley.

The eighth volume in a series of mineral statistics of the UK. It gives annual details of the production, ownership, management and employment in all the mines operating in Cornwall between the mid-nineteenth century and the First World war. A short introduction reviews the data and estimates the role of Cornwall within the British non-ferrous mining industry. Together with *Devon and Somerset Mines* (already published, £3.95), it completes the coverage of the south-west mining region.

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#### EVER WESTWARD THE LAND

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The story of Samuel James and his family, who left the Lizard area of Cornwall in the 1840s for North America. From Samuel's detailed diary and surviving family letters, A.C. Todd and David James (a direct descendant) have written the first complete account of the family's journey in covered wagons on the 'Oregon Trail'.

Hardback, 128 pages, illustrated, £7.95 net

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Published September 1986

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