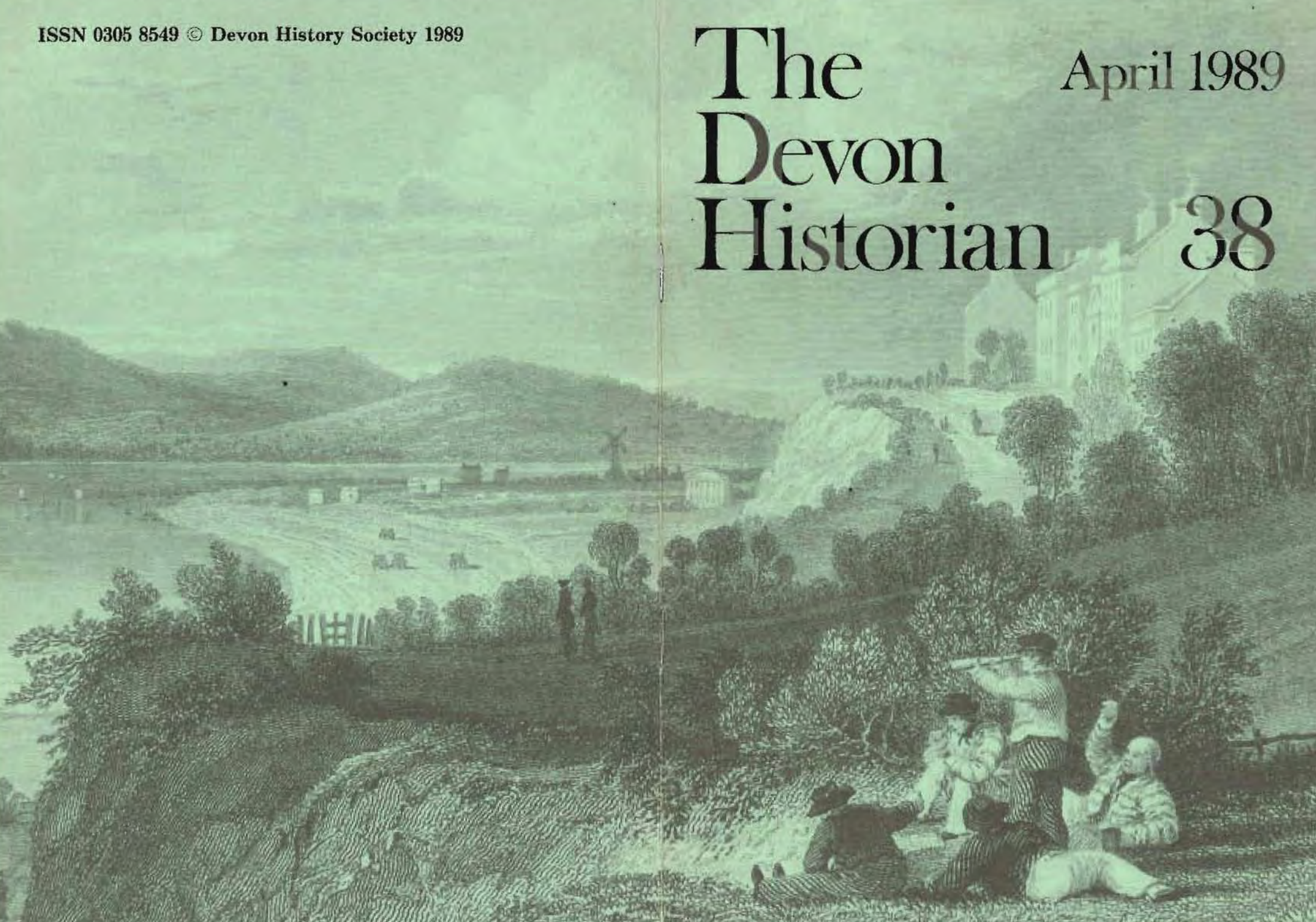


# The Devon Historian

April 1989

# 38



# DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY

## Past Presidents

Professor W.G. Hoskins (1969-72); Lady Aileen Fox (1973-4);  
Dr C.A. Raleigh Radford (1975-7); W. Best Harris (1978-80); Frank Booker (1981-2)  
Professor Joyce Youings (1983-6)

## OFFICERS

PRESIDENT	Crispin Gill
CHAIRMAN	Professor Joyce Youings
VICE-CHAIRMAN	John Pike
HON. SECRETARY	Mrs Sheila Stirling
HON. TREASURER	David Edmund
HON. EDITOR	Mrs Helen Harris
HON. PUBLICITY OFFICER	David Edmund
COUNCIL	Robert Bedward, Miss Joy Beer, John Bosanko, Dr Alison Grant, Ian Maxted, Adrian Reed, Professor Ivan Roots, Robin Stanes, Kenneth Stoneman, George Tatham, Mrs Freda Wilkinson.

## MEMBERSHIP

All correspondence relating to membership, personal local history interests and offers of work or assistance should be sent to the Vice Chairman, John Pike, 82 Hawkins Avenue, Chelston, Torquay TQ2 6ES.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

*The Devon Historian* is available free to all members of the Devon History Society. Membership subscriptions for the current year are as follows: Individual: £5.00; Family: £6.00; Libraries, Museums, Schools and Record Offices: £5.00; Institutions and Societies: £7.00. Please send subscriptions to the Hon. Treasurer, David Edmund, 5 Lark Close, Pennsylvania, Exeter EX4 4SL.

## 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 Churchhill Road, Whitchurch, Tavistock PL19 9BU. The deadline for the next issue is 1 July 1989. Books for review should be sent to Mrs S. Stirling, c/o Devon & Exeter Institution, 7 The Close, Exeter. EX1 1EZ.

## DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY CONFERENCES

The Spring Conference will be held at Exmouth on Saturday 18 March. The Summer Conference will be at Combe Martin (date to be arranged). Provisional date for Annual General Meeting: 14 October.

The print on the cover is *Exmouth from the Gun Cliff, Devonshire*. Steel engraving by J. Thomas after T. Allom, published Fisher, London, 1831. (Somers Cocks no.1065)

Notices .....	2
The pewterers of Devon	RONALD F. HOMER . . . . . 3
Honiton war work depot	H.J. YALLOP . . . . . 10
An unfortunate speculation: The Sidmouth and Cullompton Turnpike Trust	M.C. LOWE . . . . . 16
William Crossing and the Ivybridge connection	BRYAN NICHOLLS . . . . . 20
The collaborative activity of nineteenth century Barnstaple historians	NOEL BEER . . . . . 22
Topsham Museum	BARBARA ENTWISTLE . . . . . 25
The Horrabridge shoemakers	JOY BEER . . . . . 28
New contributors .....	28
Concerning postcard fairs . . . . .	DAVID EDMUND . . . . . 29
Devon centenaries compiled by Adrian Reed .....	30
Devon Record Office notice .....	31
The North Devon Record Office .....	31
The North Devon Athenaeum	ALISON GRANT . . . . . 31
North Devon Maritime Museum	ALISON GRANT . . . . . 32
Reviews:	
Devon roads, by Michael Hawkins (Walter Minchinton) .....	33
Devon's past: an aerial view, by Frances Griffith (Crispin Gill) .....	34
Spanish Armada prisoners, by Paula Martin (Adrian Reed) .....	35
Lisbon as a port town, etc., ed. Stephen Fisher (Adrian Reed) .....	36
Old Cullompton, part 2, by David Pugsley (David Edmund) .....	37
Teignmouth in old picture postcards, by Ann Pearson (David Edmund) .....	38
The North Devon Athenaeum 1888-1988 (Helen Harris) .....	38
Devon History Society, 18th AGM .....	39

## DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

Current and back issues of *The Devon Historian* (except for numbers 7, 11, 15, 16 and 23) can be obtained from Mrs. S. Stirling, Devon & Exeter Institution, 7 The Close, Exeter EX1 1EZ. (Number 22, which is available, was not a 'normal' issue, but was totally devoted to being our first Bibliography). Copies up to and including No 36 are priced at £1.50, post free, and from No 37 onwards £2.00. Also available post free are *Devon Newspapers* (£1.00), *Index to The 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 TQ2 6ES, would be glad to acquire copies of the unobtainable numbers of *The Devon Historian* listed above.

---

### NOTE FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Articles are welcomed by the Hon. Editor to be considered for publication in *The Devon Historian*. Generally the length should not exceed 3,000 words (plus notes and possible illustrations), although much shorter pieces of suitable substance may also be acceptable, as are items of information concerning museums, local societies and particular projects being undertaken.

To assist the work of the Editor and the printers please ensure that contributions are clearly typewritten, on one side of the paper only, with double spacing and adequate margins, and also, as far as possible, that the journal's style is followed on such matters as the restrained use of capital letters, initial single rather than double inverted commas, the writing of the date thus e.g.: 25 March 1989, etc.

## THE PEWTERERS OF DEVON

Ronald F. Homer

Pewter ecclesiastical plate dates from the end of the Anglo-Saxon period, and domestic utensils were being made from the metal by c.1300. In London the pewterers obtained official recognition through the grant of ordinances in 1348 and by that date pewterers were already established in a number of provincial towns and cities. The mines of Devon and Cornwall provided tin for the alloy and pewterers were working in the westcountry as early as 1327 when Richard peautrer is recorded in Lostwithiel.<sup>1</sup> In Devon, Thomas Pewterer is recorded in Barnstaple in 1343/4 and Richard peautrer in Exeter in 1370. For the next 400 years pewterware was to be found in the households of both rich and poor alike, until eventually it was displaced by tinsplate and cheap pottery.

In a survey of pewtering in the west midlands and Wales, valuable information was obtained from wills and inventories and from parish registers.<sup>2</sup> Douche in his survey of Cornish pewterers also relied heavily on these records.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately the war-time destruction of Devon wills, and the fact that Devon parish registers only rarely give occupations, means that the available sources of information for the county are less extensive than might be hoped for. Further, although there must have been local guilds which included pewterers among their members, none of their records appears to survive.

The situation is however saved to some extent by the London records of the Worshipful Company of Pewterers. The Company's charter of 1473/4 gave them a right to search country-wide for substandard wares, and this they exercised extensively from 1474 until the early 18th century, visiting pewterers' shops throughout much of England. Among the surviving records of country searches are those of Devon for 1636, 1637 and 1641, when the London searches visited Exeter, Plymouth, Totnes, Ashburton, Tavistock, Barnstaple and Honiton.<sup>4</sup> The London searches had also apparently visited Exeter as early as 1474. Among a list compiled then of 'bretheren that be of the country, sworn to the king and the craft' are the names of William Joyce and John Folete of Exeter, who, with some 30 other provincial pewterers had been cajoled or threatened into joining the Company following searches by the Company's wardens.<sup>5</sup>

Sixty years ago Cotterell recorded makers' marks of the 17th and 18th centuries which include the town names Exeter, Barnstaple, Totnes, Bideford, Ashburton and Crediton.<sup>6</sup> However the only town which has been studied in detail is Barnstaple, the subject of a paper by the late Stanley Thomas who lists 20 pewterers who worked there.<sup>7</sup> Extracts from the Barnstaple and Bideford Port Books between 1672 and 1740 quoted by Thomas show that considerable quantities of pewter were exported to Ireland and to the American colonies. As will be seen later at least two Devon pewterers emigrated to America where records show that they subsequently practised the craft in New England.

The names, dates and locations of 133 Devon pewterers are given in the Appendix to this paper and the available information, town by town, may be summarised as follows.

**Ashburton.** Pewtering was probably being practiced in Ashburton in the early 16th

century as a deed of 1521 refers to John Reede, 'late of Ashburton, pewterer'.<sup>8</sup> By the middle of the 17th century there were several craftsmen in the town and pewtering continued there well into the second half of the 18th century.

Members of the Dolbeare family were prominent throughout much of this period. Cotterell notes a John Dolbeare, pewterer, as mentioned in a lawsuit of 1631. Pewterware made in the mid 17th century for the Edgecumbe family bears the marks of Nicholas and Edmund Dolbeare, and this remained at Cotehele House until 1956 when much of the pewter there was dispersed by auction. Edmund emigrated to America in 1670, with his wife and two small sons, and appears aged 29 in the Boston records in 1671. By 1700 he is described as 'aged and poor' and he died sometime between 1705 and 1711. At least one son, Joseph, continued the trade of pewterer in Boston.<sup>9</sup> Later Dolbeares in Ashburton include John (dead in 1761) who was succeeded by Benjamin Parham, and another John, brazier, who died in 1794.<sup>10</sup>

The Pewterers' Company searches record John and William Bone (also Boune), Alexander Soper and Lawrence Langworth (*sic*), no doubt an ancestor of the Lawrence Langworthy who emigrated about 1730. This later Lawrence is recorded in Newport, Rhode Island in 1731, where he was married (for the second time) in 1734 and became a freeman in 1735. (He had become a freeman of Exeter in 1714). He died in Newport where his gravestone reads:

'In memory of Lawrence Langworthy of Ashburton in ye County of Devonshire. Died Oct. ye 19, 1739 in ye 47 year of his age. Also of Mary his wife, of Dartmoor in ye County of Devonshire died Jany ye 16, 1732-3 in ye 37 yr of her age.'<sup>11</sup>

Another 17th century pewtering family was that of Knowles. A Richard is mentioned in 1613, Thomas senior in 1631, and Thomas junior was apprenticed in Bristol in 1647.

**Barnstaple.** Stanley Thomas' study of the Barnstaple pewterers shows the importance of the craft in that town in the 17th and 18th centuries and the present investigation adds little. The Company's 1637 search (unknown to Thomas) adds the name of John Williams and that of 'Widdow Howard'; probably a mistake for 'Heywood' which would make her the widow of Robert Heywood noted by Thomas as buried in 1623. The search also includes John Har(r)is, Thomas' earliest date for whom is 1649.

**Bideford.** Cotterell notes two Bideford pewterers. One, known only by the initials 'IM' which appear with 'BITHEFORD' in his mark flourished c 1700. The second, A(nthony) Williams used as his mark the device of the town's seal (the ship and bridge) again with name 'BITHEFORD'. A deed at Exeter mentions him in 1746.<sup>12</sup>

**Crediton.** Cotterell records a Crediton pewterer of c.1720 known only by his mark, 'KERSLAKE CREDITON'.\* Later in the century the *Exeter Flying Post* reported the sale of the stock in trade of Thomas Levett of Crediton in 1772.<sup>13</sup> He was presumably the Thomas Levett, son of Samuel Levett, pewterer, who was made free of Exeter in September 1753.

**Exeter.** The published rolls of Exeter freemen yield 58 pewterers between 1370 and

1818.<sup>14</sup> To these may be added a further 17 whose names have been recovered from other sources.

The craft was established in the city in medieval times and the name Richard Peautrer (alias Richard Osberne) occurs between 1370 and 1389 in the rolls of freemen. He was a man of some prominence, being the city's receiver in 1398/9.<sup>15</sup> Other 14th century pewterers were John Kittow, who had been apprenticed to Richard, and William Chese, free in 1396. The fifteenth century provides seven pewterers, including John Folete and William Joyce mentioned in the Pewterers Company records. What appear to be their names appear in the rolls of freemen, as John Folyot (free 1459/60) and William Joce (free 1461), but they are not there described as pewterers.

The 16th century provides seven names including two not recorded as freemen: Gregorie Jane, who was a 'searcher' in 1562<sup>16</sup> and Benjamin Lynne whom Hooker records as occupying 'a tenement in the South gate street over against the Innehouse called the bore' in 1584/5<sup>17</sup>. It was in 1561 that the Company of Smiths and Cutlers was established in the city and by analogy with similar companies in other towns it almost certainly included the pewterers among its members. The reference to Gregorie Jane being a searcher 'appointed for the serche of the trew making of pewter vessel within the citie of Exon . . . accordinge to the statutes' implies a well organised and officially recognised craft at that time.

In the 17th century the popularity of pewter reached its peak and some 30 individuals practised the craft in Exeter between 1600 and 1700. Seventeen pewterers are recorded in the 18th century. Of these, Robert Dawe appears to have been of some standing, appearing in several deeds and purchasing the manor of Larkbeare in 1718.<sup>18</sup> The trade continued into the early 19th century and Exeter's last pewterer, Robert Gaul jnr. was in business until c.1850.<sup>19</sup>

Some families carried on a business for several generations. There were four generations of Kings, and three of Levett, Paul (Powle) and Skinner. Members of the Levett and Paul families are also found among the pewterers of Barnstaple.

Comparatively little Exeter pewter survives and the earlier makers' marks most frequently encountered are those of Humphrey Evans (free in 1710), Lawrence Langworthy (free in 1714) and Robert Dawe (free in 1681). Late 18th and early 19th century tavern pewter by John Ferris and by Robert Gaul is also to be found.

The Pewterers' Company searches of 1636-41 tell us a little about the wares then being made in the city. In the shop of Robert Paul (Pale, Pall) were found substandard stillheads, chamber pots, wine pots, beer mugs, beer bowls, porringers and spoons, 'all of which was defaced and broke and siezed'. The shops of Thomas Cole, William Gaylor, Robert Dase, and Abell King together yielded a similar selection of faulty goods supplemented by plates made by Abell King and 'limbecks' (alembics) made by both King and Cole. Wares made in other towns were also being sold in Exeter and the searches noted in 1641 that Thomas Cole had in stock porringers by Lawrence Langworthy of Ashburton, bowls and chamberpots by John Bone of Ashburton and porringers by John Harris of Barnstaple.

In 1636 the searchers reported 'Soo all the bad wares that was seized . . . was delivered unto Abell King (as scrap) and it was praised at vd/1b and it wayed 1cwt 3qrs 22lbs weight so was received for it the sum of four pounds twelve shillings and four pence'.

\* See Addendum

**Honiton.** The 1641 London searchers visited the shop of John Care in Honiton and substandard wares by John Bone of Ashburton and Robert Paul of Exeter were seized. In their 1689 search of Chard, wares made by another Honiton pewterer, Edward Sanders, were found in the shop of Robert Clothyer, a Chard pewterer.<sup>20</sup> A seller at least of pewter had a shop in Honiton in the latter part of the 18th century. The surviving order books of Ingram and Hunt, the large wholesale pewterers of Bewdley, note consignments to Benjamin Stocker of Honiton c.1770-90.<sup>21</sup>

**Plymouth.** The London searches include the names of three Plymouth pewterers; Thomas Sanderers in 1637, and John Hall and Thomas Nicholas in 1641. In deeds at Exeter are found the names of John Bennett in 1706 and Thomas Bound in 1708-31.<sup>22</sup> Two pewterers working in Plymouth Dock are recorded by Cotterell, Benjamin Parham (c.1725) and Robert Cumming. The latter died in 1787.<sup>23</sup> It will be recalled that Benjamin Parham later succeeded to the Dolbeare business in Ashburton. One may suspect that Plymouth had a considerable number of pewterers, even if only to supply the requirements for shipboard use, but extensive record searching would be needed to uncover them. At least seven factors in Plymouth Dock and six in Plymouth are to be found among Ingram and Hunt's customers in the period 1799 to 1807.<sup>24</sup>

**Tavistock.** The name of Pennington appears to have been associated with pewtering in Tavistock over a long period. In 1637, 156lbs of 'very bad' metal was seized from Thomas Pennington and in 1641 he forfeited substandard chamber pots, spoons and porringers. A later Pennington, John, is recorded by Cotterell between c.1680 and 1729 and pewter with his mark is known. Douche notes Christopher and Barnard Pennington as Bodmin pewterers in the late 17th century and a John Pennington in Truro in the mid 18th. John Abraham, pewterer of Tavistock, advertised in 1796 for a journeyman and he is also recorded in a deed of 1822.<sup>25</sup>

**Tiverton.** One Peter Sainthill, pewterer of Tiverton, died in 1697.<sup>26</sup> Sampson Hodge is recorded by Cotterell and was free of Exeter in 1706. Cotterell also records Thomas Hodge c.1720-50. Both used marks incorporating the town's name.

**Totnes.** Most likely there were pewterers in medieval Totnes for blacksmiths and goldsmiths were working there in the early 13th century and braziers (*brasyuter*, *brasuter*) are recorded in the later part of the 14th century.<sup>27</sup> However, not until 1509 is the name of one 15/16th century Totnes pewterer, Geoffrey Hawkwill, fortuitously preserved among those who were granted a general pardon by Henry VIII.<sup>28</sup> The 1637 search names two Totnes pewterers, Nicholas White and William Crockett. White was fined £1-16s for having 108lbs of bad metal and Crockett half-a-crown for '5 doz of very bad spoons'. Cotterell notes one later Totnes pewterer, W. Cockey (c.1750-90) who was perhaps related to the Plymouth brazier Samuel Cockey who is recorded in 1788.<sup>29</sup>

The information on which the above survey is based is in most cases fragmentary and only for Exeter has a coherent picture been reconstructed. Nevertheless, as elsewhere in England, most Devon market towns appear to have had resident pewterers throughout the period when pewter was in daily domestic use. Exeter was clearly the most important centre and is comparable with many other English cities.

Barnstaple follows second with Ashburton probably third. Perhaps, however, Plymouth, were it to be studied in detail, would displace one or both of these towns.

Pewterware made in many of these towns can be seen in the fine collection of Devon pewter formed by the late Stanley Thomas and bequeathed by him to the North Devon Athanaeum.

**Addendum.** It is now known that Cotterell's date for Kerslake of Crediton is in error. William Kerslake was free of Exeter as a tinman in 1792 and is recorded as a pewterer, brazier and tinplate worker in both Crediton and Exeter until 1824. See for example *Exeter Flying Post*, 4 January 1810 and *Exeter Pocket Journal*, 1816 and 1822.

## APPENDIX

### List of Devon Pewterers

**Note:** References to Cotterell (Cott.) are to Ref.6. Individuals found only in the Pewterers Company searches of 1637-41 are identified by 'Search' (Ref.4). Barnstaple pewterers are from Ref.7 except as noted. Exeter freedoms are from Ref.14.

#### Ashburton

John Bone (Search)  
William Bone (Search)  
Edmund Dolbeare, c.1660-70  
John Dolbeare, c.1631 (Cott.1407)  
John Dolbeare before 1761 (Cott.1408)  
John Dolbeare, died 1795.  
Nicholas Dolbeare, c.1650-70  
Richard Knowles, c.1613 (Cott.2787)  
Thomas Knowles, c.1631 (Cott. 2788)  
Thomas Knowles, after 1647  
(Cott.2789)  
Lawrence Langworthy, (Search)  
Lawrence Langworthy, 1714-30  
Benjamin Parham, after 1761 (Cott.  
3508)  
John Recde, before 1521  
Alexander Soper (Search)

#### Barnstaple

Joseph Coles, c.1679  
Thomas Copner, c.1792-1820  
George Goode, c.1650  
Gilbert Harris, 1560-99  
John Harris, c.1637-49  
William Harris, c.1605-25

Robert Heywood, c.1600-1623  
Widow Howard (= Heywood?) (Search)  
Samuel Levett, c.1720  
John Ley (= Lee?), c.1705-33  
Samuel Lee, c.1720  
Christopher Pawle, c.1765-86  
Thomas Pewterer, 1343  
Nicholas Shephard, c.1760-1806  
Arthur Slocumb, c.1630  
Marshall Swayne, c.1730-60  
Alexander Webber, c.1710-39  
Jeffrey Webber, 1630-77  
John Webber, c.1660-1700  
John Webber, c.1694-1735  
Richard Webber, c.1667-1708  
John Williams (Search)

#### Bideford

I.M., c.1700 (Cott.5784)  
Anthony Williams, c. 1736-46  
(Cott.5165)

#### Crediton

Kerslake, c.1720 (Cott.2725)  
Thomas Levett, c.1772

**Exeter**  
 William Angre, free 1396  
 John Band, free 1745  
 William Bennett, free 1661  
 George Bennison, free 1715  
 William Birchinshaw, free 1723  
 Edward Bryant, free 1701  
 William Chese, free 1396  
 Samuel Clarke, free 1722  
 James Cogan, free 1577  
 Thomas Cole, free 1621  
 Richard Cumming, free 1729  
 Edmund Dolbeare, free 1664  
 Robert Dase (Search)  
 Robert Dawe jnr, free 1681  
 Robert Dawe, free 1653  
 Humphrey Evans, free 1710  
 John Evans, c.1790 (Cott.1588a)  
 John Ferris, c.1803 (Cott.1659, 1659a)  
 John Folete (Folyot), free 1459/60 \*  
 (Search)  
 Robert Gaul snr.  
 Robert Gaul jnr.  
 William Gaylor, (Search)  
 John Harry, free 1450  
 Philip Hawkins, free 1701  
 Sampson Hodge, free 1706  
 Gregorie Jane c.1562  
 William Joyce (Jocel), free 1461  
 (Search)  
 Willial Jurden, free 1586  
 Abel Kinge, free 1632  
 Abel Kinge jnr., free 1658  
 James King, free 1681  
 Joseph King, free 1697  
 John Kittow, free 1389  
 William Lane, free 1707  
 Lawrence Langworthy, free 1714  
 Samuel Levett, free 1669  
 Samuel Levett, free 1708  
 Thomas Levett, free 1753  
 John Luer snr., free 1448  
 John Leur jnr., free 1448  
 Benjamin Lynne, c.1584/5  
 John Lynne, free 1586  
 Thomas Miller, free 1726  
 Edmund Mills, before 1789  
 (Cott.3228a)

Thomas Mills, free 1753  
 Gilbert Morrell, free 1705  
 George Major, free 1681  
 Gilbert Morrow, free 1675  
 Thomas Nosworthie, free 1673  
 Robert Paul, free 1632  
 Robert Pawle, free 1603/4  
 Thomas Pawle, dead by 1665  
 William Powle, died 1654  
 Digory Penwarden, free 1677  
 Richard Peutrer, free 1370  
 Edward Row, free 1695  
 Elizabeth Scott c.1793 (Cott.4147a)  
 Richard Shapley c.1803  
 John Smyth, free 1425  
 Robert Skinner, c.1689 (Cott.4310a)  
 Thomas Skynner, free 1635  
 Thomas Skynner snr. free 1664  
 Thomas Skynner jnr. free 1673  
 Thomas Skinner, free 1695  
 Richard Stephyns, free 1556  
 Edward Stevens, free 1716  
 John Stevens, free 1526/7  
 William Taylor, c.1803  
 Samuel Ticken, free 1710  
 John Toms, free 1669  
 John Turner, free 1727  
 Thomas Welsh, free 1695  
 Philip Wyatt free 1665

#### Honiton

John Care (Search)  
 Edward Sanders, c.1689  
 Benjamin Stocker, c.1770-90

#### Plymouth

John Bennett, c.1706  
 Thomas Bound, c.1708-31  
 Robert Cumming, dead by 1787  
 (Cott.1250a)  
 John Hall (Search)  
 Thomas Nicholas (Search)  
 Benjamin Parham, c.1725 (Cott.3507)  
 Thomas Sanderer (Search)

**Tavistock**  
 John Abraham, c.1796-1822  
 John Pennington, died 1729  
 (Cott.3607)  
 Thomas Pennington (Search)

**Tiverton**  
 Sampson Hodge, after 1706  
 (Cott.2356)

Thomas Hodge, c.1720-50 (Cott.2357)  
 Peter Sainthill, died 1697

#### Totnes

W. Cockey, c.1750-90 (Cott.1001)  
 William Crockett (Search)  
 Geoffrey Hawkwill, c.1509

#### References

- 1.H.L. Douche, *J. Royal Inst. Cornwall*, 6 (1969) 65-80
- 2.R.F. Homer and D.W. Hall, *Provincial Pewterers* (1986).
- 3.H.L. Douche, *loc. cit.*
- 4.Pewterers Company Search Books, ms.7105/1, Guildhall Library, London.
- 5.Pewterers Company Audit Book, ms.7086/1, Guildhall Library, London.
- 6.H.H. Cotterell, *Old Pewter its Makers and Marks* (1929 and reprints).
- 7.S.E. Thomas, 'The Barnstaple Pewterers', *Trans. Devonshire Assn.*, 103 (1971), 85-102
- 8.Devon R.O., Exeter, 48/14/98/1.
- 9.L.I. Laughlin, *Pewter in America*, Vol.1, 54-5 (Barre, Mass. 1969).
- 10.*Exeter Flying Post*, 27 Nov. 1794.
- 11.L.I. Laughlin, *loc. cit.*, Vol.1, 86-8
- 12.Devon R.O., Exeter, 276C/EF22.
- 13.*Exeter Flying Post*, 3 Apr. 1772.
- 14.M.M. Rowe and A.M. Jackson (eds.), *Exeter Freemen* (Devon and Cornwall Record Soc., 1973).
- 15.J.J. Alexander, 'Leading Civic Officials of Exeter', *Trans. Devonshire Assn.*, 70 (1938), 412.
- 16.W.T. Harte, 'Illustrations of Municipal History . . .', *Trans. Devonshire Assn.*, 44 (1912), 206-30.
- 17.John Hooker, *Description of the City of Exeter*, 686 (Devon and Cornwall Record Soc., 1979).
- 18.Devon R.O., Exeter, D1/5/86, DD1281, 57/13/6, DD3476, D1/5/26.
- 19.R.F. Homer, 'Robert Gaul I and II, Exeter's Last Pewterers', *Devon Historian*, 35 (Oct. 1987), 15-17.
- 20.Pewterers Company Search Books, ms.7105/2, Guildhall Library, London.
- 21.Hereford and Worcester R.O. (Worcester), 4600. 705:550, 559.
- 22.Devon Record Office, Exeter, 49/1/32/11 (John Bennett) and 49/1/32/15-16, 49/1/32/12/10/1-2, 49/1/32/12/17 (Thomas Bound).
- 23.*Exeter Flying Post*, 30 Aug. 1787.
- 24.Hereford and Worcester R.O. (Worcester), 4600. 705:550, 96 and 357.
- 25.*Exeter Flying Post*, 21 Jan. 1796; Devon R.O., Exeter, 2847D/7.
- 26.His will was proved in the PCC.
- 27.H.R. Watkin, *History of Totness Priory and the Medieval Town* (1914) Watkin mistakenly interprets 'brasyuter' as 'brewer'.
- 28.*Letters and Papers Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII*, Vol.1, No.438.
- 29.*Exeter Flying Post*, 15 Aug. 1799.

# HONITON WAR WORK DEPOT

H.J. Yallop

On the outbreak of war in 1914 various ladies of Honiton sought to help the war effort and an early venture was the formation of a V.A.D. hospital. This was situated in a building (now shops) on the south side of the High Street, opposite St Paul's church, and continued to provide nursing care for wounded soldiers throughout the war. An equally early venture was a shirt making scheme, of the type which inspired the popular song Sister Susie's sewing shirts for soldiers, but it lacked funds and organisation, and did not last long.

For some years Allhallows Museum, Honiton, has possessed a small table-cloth, 28 x 26 ins., embroidered with 101 signatures and the legend 'Honiton War Depot 1917', but details of the nature of this enterprise remained largely unknown until recently, when a communication from Major P.E. Stamp revealed that the co-founders were his grandmother and mother, and that his grandmother had included information about the Depot among personal family papers. Major Stamp has extracted the information<sup>1</sup> and this, together with reports in Pulman's Weekly News and the Deanery Magazine, has made it possible for the first time to give some account of this episode of Honiton's social history.

In June 1916 Mrs Rundle of Holyshute, wife of Mr Leslie Rundle who was a partner in the Honiton firm of solicitors Dunning, Rundle and Stamp, together with her daughter, Mrs W.A.E. Stamp, started the Honiton War Work Depot as a branch of the Central Depot organised by Queen Mary's Needlework Guild. The aim of the Depot was to supply hospitals with slippers, bandages, dressings and other medical necessities. Women from all walks of life from Honiton and the surrounding district attended for two days a week (Tuesday and Thursday), later for an afternoon as well (Monday), to work in the Depot which had the use of a flat over the old territorial Drill Hall (now the scout H.Q.) in Dowell Street. All the workers wore a simple uniform of a white head-dress, apron and sleeves, partly for hygienic reasons and also to avoid any suggestion of class distinction when they were at work together.

The Depot was entirely self-financing. Donations to start the venture came from a wide variety of persons, and furniture and equipment was given or lent by people of the town. Each worker contributed 6d. per week and periodical sales of work were held to raise further money.

The main articles made were slippers, capeline bandages, many-tailed bandages and sphagnum moss bags, the work being organised into sections with rooms specifically devoted to slippers, to bandages and to moss bags. Capeline bandages, used for the head, were made by sewing the free ends of two rolled bandages together and the resultant composite could then be used in the manner shown<sup>2</sup> in Figure 1. A many-tailed bandage was made from a series of short bandages laid parallel, each overlapping the preceding one by a third, and then joined by sewing another strip across the centres, as shown<sup>3</sup> in Figure 2. Such bandages were used in the manner shown<sup>4</sup> in Figure 3. Sphagnum moss, otherwise turf moss or bog moss, occurs in numerous varieties which are indigenous to Great Britain. When dried it will absorb up to 20 times its own weight of water and was, therefore, used as a basis for absorbant dressings and for other purposes, such as in cases of incontinence, where absorbancy was required.<sup>5</sup>

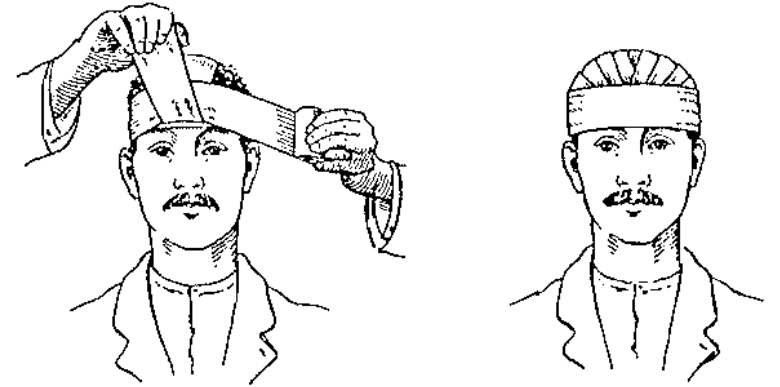


Figure 1. Capeline bandage.

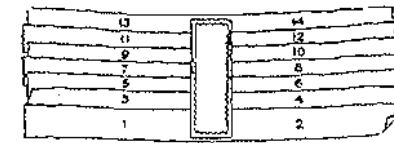


Figure 2. Many tailed bandage.

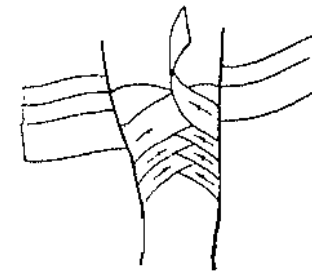


Figure 3. Application of many tailed bandage.

Other articles produced in smaller quantities were socks, comfort bags, stretcher pillows and life-saving waistcoats. The comfort bags may have been cap comforters, defined by Brophy and Partridge<sup>6</sup> as 'A sack, about 18 inches long, of khaki knitted wool and used for storing odds and ends and, off parade and in the line, in a rolled up form, as a cap for cold weather, patrols, fatigues and so on.' The author received a similar article as an official issue in the 1939-1945 war. The nature of the life-saving waistcoats has not been identified.

The moss was collected for the Depot by various people and the committee expressed its thanks<sup>7</sup> to a number of individuals as well as to groups, which included the Buckerell School children, the Boy Scouts, the children at Cotleigh Rectory, the pupils of the Misses Grimbley of Summerland School in New Street and the members of the Girls Friendly Society. The moss from the outlying districts was brought in by farmers when they attended market, and later an extra weekly supply was brought from Dartmoor. The moss was dried and then picked over to remove impurities. The best worker at this task was a blind woman, Emma Bishop, familiarly known as Blind Emma, who lived in a tiny house at the corner of Silver Street, now part of the adjoining shop. The cleaned moss was then filled into butter muslin bags. The bags were made by Mrs Sansom, the wife of a mason, who is recorded as refusing a deputy and insisting on doing the whole of the work herself. She also acted as caretaker of the flat.

A report on the first three months working<sup>8</sup> stated that the Depot had been open every Tuesday and Thursday with an average daily attendance of just over 60, though the demand for the products was such that more recruits were urgently needed. The output between 17 May and 10 August was stated to have been 132 pairs of slippers, 90 capelines, 470 many-tailed bandages and 1070 moss bags, together with a further 2000 moss bags made as a consequence of an emergency call from Exeter, making a total of 4762 articles.

A report on 16 January 1917<sup>9</sup> stated that the number of articles made to date had risen to 10981 and that the work produced was divided between the surgical branch of Queen Mary's Needlework Guild, Cavendish Square, London, and the Grouped Auxiliary Hospitals, Exeter, and the Exeter Linen League. There was also an appeal for those who could not come to work at the Depot to gather and send in sphagnum moss, '... of which the supply is always less than the demand.'

On 22 May 1917 it was reported<sup>10</sup> that average attendance had declined to '... about 50 workers a day.' This was confirmed by a further report in June<sup>7</sup> which added that the total number of articles made up to the end of February was 12342. The money receipts to the beginning of January were £146 16s 7d, of which the members themselves had contributed £66 17s 10d, a figure which must have been made up of some donations as well as the sixpenny weekly contributions. £76 13s 4d had been spent on materials and the difficulties of war-time inflation are reflected in the comment that 'Materials are, unfortunately, daily rising in price.'

Detailed accounts of the sale of work<sup>11,12</sup> on 5 July 1917 show that it was held at Holyshute in beautiful weather and that it raised £91 1s 0d with expenses of only 6s, met by a special donation. Apart from stalls there were other attractions which included a children's play 'Alice in Wonderland', games and competitions, a fish pond, a baby show and '... a most popular, though war-time, tea'. A further item, organised by Mrs J. Murch, is described as 'Autograph Table-cloth' and it may be assumed that this refers to the object in the museum collection. It is described as a



HONITON WAR WORK DEPOT, 1916.

Members of the Honiton War Work Depot 1916.



fancy tea cloth, on which were worked the signatures of the workers at the Depot. It was raffled and won by Mrs A. Stamp of Summerland. The account of the sale includes a long list of names which the secretary stated that she hoped was a complete one of the donors, lenders and helpers. Though many of these names are on the cloth there are others, thereby indicating support from people unconnected with the Depot.

The names on the cloth do not, save in a few instances, give any indication of marital status, but the names in the printed report do, as well as including sex. These show that of a total of 195 persons only 31 (=16%) were men, and, even though the event occurred on a Thursday afternoon when men would be prevented from attending by work, this may well reflect the absence of many of the men of Honiton on war service. A comparison of the names with those for Honiton in Kelly's Directory of Devonshire (1914) shows that, like the depot workers, the supporters came from all walks of life.

An appeal made in November<sup>13</sup> for gifts of materials for use in making slippers asked for pieces of serge, cretonne, tapestry, calico etc., a list which indicates that the workers were prepared to use more or less whatever was available.

At an annual public meeting held<sup>14</sup> on 17 January 1918 it was stated that the total receipts for the year had been £235 17s 2d and the expenses £201, of which £178 had gone to pay for materials. Numbers appear to have picked up, since the number of working members was reported to be about 63. The output for 1917 was 6350 surgical dressings, 923 pairs of slippers, 160 pairs of socks, 376 comfort bags, 130 stretcher pillows, 6 life saving waistcoats and 28395 sphagnum moss bags.

An even more successful sale was held<sup>15</sup> on 6 June 1918 on much the same lines as that of the previous year, though Mrs Murch organised a battalion of pennies instead of a table cloth. Once again a war-time tea was served, '... compliance with the requirements of rationing being strictly observed.' The total sum raised was £135 6s 3d. This event was followed<sup>16</sup> on 25 September by an inspection carried out by Miss Gibson CBE from the Cavendish Square headquarters. After watching the work Miss Gibson explained that she had not come so much to inspect the work, '... for its excellent standard was well-known in London', but to see the general administration, and congratulated all concerned on their excellent work. She described the national organisation as '... a white clad army stretching from Lands End to John o'Groats' and emphasised the importance of the work and the urgent need for their products in the 11000 hospitals they supplied. She expressed herself sorry to see some empty chairs and exhorted everyone to keep up their efforts. She appealed for an increase in anti-vermin garments and gave as a motto 'make what is needed and not what you would like to make'.

The Depot finally closed on 30 January 1919. The total attendances over the whole period were 11882, giving an average of 33 for a full day, and the overall production was 1734 slippers, 13203 bandages, comfort bags etc. and 85180 sphagnum moss bags, a grand total of 100476 articles. The initial donations amounted to £30, £669 16s 0½d was raised in various ways, whilst expenditure was £520 19s 0½d. The balance of £148 17s 0d was given to the King's Fund for Disabled Soldiers and Sailors.

It is apparent that this little known enterprise made a useful contribution to the war effort by supplying a significant amount of material required by those attempting to alleviate the sufferings of wounded servicemen. As an episode in

social history it can be seen as one which breached class barriers at a time when they were much stronger than they are now, and which showed that women from different social backgrounds could work together in mutual respect on terms of equality. It is sad to record that Mrs Rundle noted with regret that the spirit of co-operation between the social classes did not long survive the end of the war. Similar sentiments were to be heard after 1945 and the history of the 20th century suggests that national unity which transcends all barriers is only possible in the face of great national crises.

1. Facts quoted about the Depot are from Major Stamp's extracts from his grandmother's papers, unless otherwise specified.
2. Comrie J.D., Black's Medical Dictionary, 16th edition, 1941, p.101
3. Comrie J.D., Black's Medical Dictionary, 16th edition, 1941, p.104.
4. St John Ambulance Association, First aid to the injured, 1939, p.273.
5. Martindale W., The Extra Pharmacopoeia, 22nd edition, 1941, I p.564.
6. Brophy J. and Partridge E., The Long Trail, 1969, p.80.
7. The Deanery Magazine, June 1917, under Honiton.
8. The Deanery Magazine, September 1916, under Honiton.
9. Pulmans Weekly News, Dorset and Devon Edition, 16 January 1917 5C.
10. Pulmans Weekly News, Dorset and Devon Edition, 22 May 1917 6E.
11. The Deanery Magazine, September 1917, under Honiton.
12. Pulmans Weekly News, Dorset and Devon Edition, 10 July 1917 6B.
13. Pulmans Weekly News, Dorset and Devon Edition, 6 November 6C.
14. Pulmans Weekly News, Dorset and Devon Edition, 22 January 1918 6D.
15. Pulmans Weekly News, Dorset and Devon Edition, 11 June 1918 5D.
16. Pulmans Weekly News, Dorset and Devon Edition, 1 October 1918 5D.

The author's thanks are due to Mr Wallace Penwarden of Honiton, a retired pharmaceutical chemist, for locating the descriptions of the bandages and the details of the applications of sphagnum moss.

## AN UNFORTUNATE SPECULATION: THE SIDMOUTH AND CULLOMPTON TURNPIKE TRUST

M.C. Lowe

The Bristol and Exeter Railway reached Exeter in 1844, the first train arriving there on 1 May. Only two turnpike trusts were set up in Devon after that event, the Sidmouth and Cullompton in the same year and the Combe Martin and Ilfracombe as late as 1866.

The route of the Sidmouth and Cullompton Trust's road was, on the face of it, an unlikely one:

'from or from near the Town of *Sidmouth* in the County of *Devon* to a Four Cross Way at a House called the *Hare and Hounds* Inn, near to the Town of *Cullompton* in the said County, and also to or near to a Place called *Hele Mill* in the Parish of *Bradninch* in the said County, passing from, through, or into the several Parishes of *Sidmouth*, *Harpford*, *Ottery St. Mary*, *Tiverton*, *Clisthydon*, *Broadclist*, *Bradninch*, and *Cullompton*, in the said County.'

This is the route of the present B3176 (the Hare and Hounds later became the Merry Harriers). It is questionable whether the route ever received more than purely local traffic, except perhaps on the stretch from Sidmouth to Bowde.

From the start there was opposition to the setting up of the Trust. The petition for the Bill was presented to the House of Commons on 14 February 1844, and accepted by the Select Committee on 8 March. Over the next two months petitions and counter-petitions were laid before the House: one 'against certain parts' of the Bill by 'Trustees of *Lyme Regis* Turnpike-roads, the Creditors thereof, and other persons interested therein' (27 March); another against the Bill came on 22 April (and is again recorded on 30 April) from 'owners of land situate in the parish of *Harpford*'; and in favour of the Bill from 'Inhabitants of the town and parish of *Bradninch*' and 'Owners of land on or near the line of road intended to be made from *Sidmouth* to *Cullompton*' (29 April). By 13 May, however, the Committee reported that 'they had heard the Parties in support of Several of the said Petitions; and had examined the allegations of the Bill, and found the same to be true . . .' The Royal Assent followed on 4 July<sup>2</sup>. The trust survived until 1 November 1876, when it was abolished by the Turnpike Continuation Act of 1876 (39-40 Vict.c.39, Schedule 2, No.31).

The Act listed the names of 77 trustees, of whom 23 are recorded (together with four names not in the Act) as having taken the oath at the first meeting on 7 August 1844.<sup>3</sup> Francis George Coleridge was appointed Clerk to the Trustees and Henry Davy Treasurer. Deeds poll on the security of the tolls were to be issued for sums of £25 upwards at five per cent interest.

At the next meeting on 24 August, the Trustees ordered that 'measures be forthwith taken for making the road from Langford Green to the Hare & Hounds Inn near Cullompton—carried unanimously' (Clause XXIII of the Act required them to complete that section of the road before any tolls could be collected). Also tenders were to be obtained for making the sections from Sidmouth to the Lyme Regis Road, and from there to Ottery St. Mary. Various tenders were accepted at meetings in

September, and by 20 October the Trustees were able to resolve

'that the Surveyor be directed to proceed with the Work where the Contracts are entered into altho' the Landowners may refuse their Consent to the Land being entered on, the Surveyor taking care to do as little Damage as possible.'

Four months later, the minutes of 15 February 1845 record that Sidmouth Parish agreed to pay £150 'towards the widening of the Roads in that parish' on condition that, firstly, 'all the works and Improvements . . . be completed', secondly, 'that the parish be guaranteed by the Trustees that no Turnpike Gates be placed upon the Road nearer than the Turning into the Exeter and Lyme Road at Bowde', and thirdly, 'that no part of the money be paid until the whole has been performed'. This was accepted by the meeting.

On 7 April it was reported that the road from Langford Green to the Hare and Hounds was completed except for the repair of Langford Bridge. The next meeting on 19 April was told this part of the road was now fully completed, as was the stretch from the Exeter to Cullompton Turnpike to the railway station at Hele, which had been opened to the public on 22 February. A toll gate was to be erected 'at or near Bowde on the Side of the Lyme Regis Turnpike Road and its dependent Stop Gate on the Ottery Side thereof'. It was also resolved 'that Mr Livermore be directed to build a House and Toll Bar Bate according to Specification at a Sum not exceeding Fourteen Pounds and Ten Shillings and that Mr Norrington also prepare a Sentry Box and Toll Bar Gate at the same rate'.

The following month what was to become the permanent financial crisis arose. At a Debenture Holders' Meeting on 5 May the Clerk was ordered to apply to the Exchequer Loan Commissioners for £3000 (nothing more was heard of this). On 28 June a meeting of Trustees and holders of deeds poll was told £3500 more was needed to carry out the work on the road. It was decided interest on deeds poll was to be foregone and priority given 'to those who are willing to advance money to pay off the present liabilities and complete the Work through the Town of Ottery with its Branch to Tipton'. The Clerk was to raise a loan of £3500.

By 13 May 1846 'the Road from Bowde to Sidmouth was passable'. Various gates were set up in that year, though litigation (not for the last time) ensued in one case, for on 2 November the Clerk reported 'that an Indictment had been preferred . . . agt. John Roseworn Collector of the Tolls at Tiphill Gate for a Nuisance'. The Toll Collectors were, a minute of 28 February 1848 shows, paid at the princely rate of five shillings per week. Two more court cases against the trustees were heard in 1849; as reported in the *Exeter Flying Post* of 22 March, the brothers Drew in one case and a man called Mayne in the other case both successfully recovered sums for road construction from the Clerk to the Trust.

On 31 August 1850 it was decided to complete the road from Langford to Hele at a cost not exceeding £250 including the first two years' repair.

From this time onwards the minutes record little except poorly attended annual meetings of the Trustees (in 1855 three attended, in 1856 there were five, and in 1858 three again). Such activity as there was seems to have been occasioned by financial problems. On 6 April 1858 the Clerk wrote to Albert Gribble, Solicitor, Cullompton, about a claim by the Whiteheathfield Charity:

'I wish the Trust could pay this claim—but they cannot, indeed year by

year matters get worse and worse and with little prospect of improvem<sup>t</sup>.  
Again, on 21 March 1865, it was

'Resolved that the Clerk do write to the Clerk of the Cullompton Highway Board and call his attention to the state of so much of the road from Langford Court to Hele Station as is within the parish of Cullompton, about 1½ mile, and to inform the board that the funds of the Sidmouth & Cullompton Trust are not sufficient to maintain such road in repair and to ask if the Board will repair the road, without an application for a contribution order'.

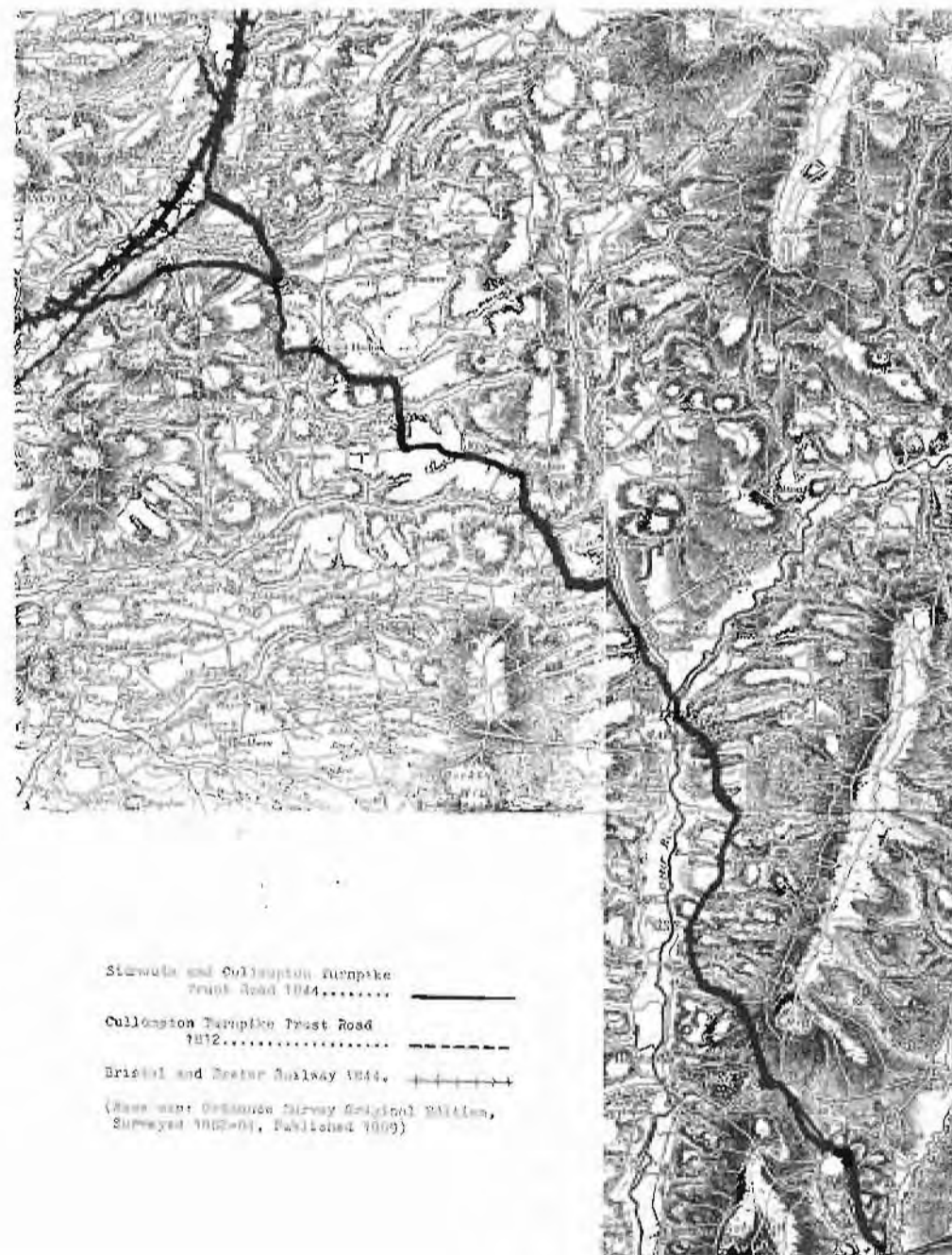
In the late 1860s and early 1870s business was almost entirely concerned with the letting of tolls, and most funds were being used at this stage to liquidate part of an amount due on a bond to the late Mrs Harriet Huyshe dated 12 December 1850. When the final account was made up at the termination of the Trust, £650 capital was still due to her and £5525 to the unfortunate holders of deeds poll, together with the staggering sum of £8363.18.0d. in unpaid interest. All this is not really surprising when it is realised that the total toll income for the whole existence of the Trust was only around £4000<sup>4</sup>.

A further court case, which resulted in the Trust being found guilty of trying to obtain toll illegally (the Act, which by Clause VII required the Trustees to make the road not less than twenty feet wide, not having been complied with), was the subject of a report 'from a Correspondent' in the *Exeter Flying Post* of 5 June 1861. His comments tell us much about the Trust and its unhappy history:

'On the formation of the Bristol and Exeter Railway a new road was made from Sidmouth to Hele, through Ottery St. Mary. This road proved to be an unfortunate speculation for the shareholders. All the money that the surveyor stated the entire road would cost was spent between Sidmouth and Ottery, and for want of means it was never completed according to the terms of the Act of Parliament. Notwithstanding this, toll-gates were erected, and amongst them one was fixed at Langford Heathfield. This has been a constant source of annoyance to the inhabitants of the district . . . The trustees must have been aware that they had no right to demand toll, for many persons passed who refused payment. Mr James Martin . . . commenced an action against the trustees for a nuisance in setting up the gate.'

#### Notes

- 1.7 & 8 Vict. c.xlix.
- 2.*Journals of the House of Commons*, Vol.99, 1844, pp.30, 97, 175, 223, 244, 247, 295, 466.
- 3.The minutes (and copies of letters sent by the Clerk) are recorded in Sidmouth & Cullompton Turnpike Minute Book 1844-77 (in the Devon Record Office, 337B/13/26 Vol.Turnpikes 1).
- 4.Figures are taken from the annual returns of income and expenditure printed in *British Parliamentary Papers*.



## WILLIAM CROSSING AND THE IVYBRIDGE CONNECTION

Bryan Nicholls

The works of poet, author, journalist and lyricist William Crossing are familiar to most lovers of Dartmoor. The 1965 reprint of his *Guide to Dartmoor*<sup>1</sup>, the definitive work for which he is chiefly remembered, contains, in the introduction by Brian Le Messurier, brief biographical details. Although the periods of his life when he was domiciled in Mary Tavy and South Brent are well documented in this and other works<sup>2,3,4</sup>, there is very little published about the brief spell when he lived in Ivybridge. Brian Le Messurier notes that Crossing and his wife, who was ailing, moved to Ivybridge shortly after his 70th birthday in 1917 to live with relatives. These and other facts were extracted from an unpublished manuscript by Hamlyn Parsons, the Christow schoolmaster, Dartmoor authority, and acquaintance of Crossing<sup>5,6</sup>. The manuscript also states that in 1872 Crossing had married Emma Witheridge, whose father was manager of the Ivybridge paper mills and that at the time of Crossing's later move here, his wife's sister resided in the town.

Kelly's Directories list a Richard Witheridge as living at No 2, Fore Street between 1873 and 1883 but his profession is described as either haberdasher or draper and grocer. For the years between 1889 and 1919 the business was in the hands of Miss Cordelia Witheridge; entries cease with the 1923 directory.

The 1871 Census<sup>7</sup> is the first to include details of the Witheridge family. Richard Witheridge, aged 50, is listed as living in Fore Steet (no house numbers are given) and carrying on the occupation of draper. With him were domiciled his wife, Jane, age 49, born in Ermington and their two unmarried daughters, Cordelia, aged 26, and Emma, 24, born in Tavistock and Plymouth respectively. The Crossing marriage certificate<sup>8</sup> confirms that this was the Emma he married. Dated 14 March 1872 it lists Emma's place of residence as Ivybridge and among the witnesses were her father Richard, draper, and sister Cordelia.

Thus we know that at the time of Crossing's move there resided an unmarried sister-in-law at No 2, Fore Street and it seems very likely in view of his wife's health that this is where the couple made their home. Throughout the period of their stay the Crossings' names continued to be listed in the Mary Tavy electoral roll<sup>9</sup>, suggesting that they regarded their stay in Ivybridge as only temporary. It seems likely that their date of departure was the 21 April 1921, for it was on this date that Emma was admitted into the Tavistock Institution. The admission certificate<sup>10</sup> lists here year of birth as 1847, and her creed as Church of England, both details confirming the information in the Census<sup>7</sup> and the marriage certificate<sup>8</sup>. Her death, on the 6 June 1921<sup>10</sup>, less than seven weeks after her admission raises the question, in view of her poor state of health, of why she was moved. Could it be that her condition had deteriorated so much that her sister was unable to carry on nursing her? There is no mention of Cordelia in the voters' list after Spring 1921 or in Kelly's Directory for 1923.

By recourse to a number of primary sources, it has been possible to shed some light on Crossing's stay in Ivybridge. We know with reasonable certainty the period and place of residence. What of his work? This we can only guess at; bibliographies<sup>11</sup> & <sup>12</sup> shows that his most prolific period was between 1888 and 1911 when some ten

books and numerous newspaper articles were published. We cannot say with any certainty what he was working on when living in Ivybridge. Later, in 1924, while he was away from his home, a cleaning lady burnt a mass of papers which had been damaged by mice. The notes were concerned with a history of Dartmoor he had been preparing over many years.

In 1925 the 4th edition of the *Guide* was published to be followed the following year by a slim volume of poems entitled '*Cranmere*'<sup>13</sup>; could Crossing have been working on these ventures during his stay in Ivybridge?

### References and Notes

1. The *Guide* first appeared in 1909. The second edition (1921) was reprinted by David and Charles (Newton Abbot) in 1965.
2. *Western Morning News*; 4 September, 1928. Crossing's obituary.
3. *Ivybridge and South Brent Gazette*: 18 January, 1980.
4. Crossing, William, *Amid Devon's Alps*. Simpkin, Marshall (London) and W H Luke (Plymouth) 1888; reprinted by David and Charles (Newton Abbot) in 1974.
5. Private Correspondence: 6 June 1976 from Brian Le Messurier.
6. Hamlyn Parsons Collection, Volume 5, Chapter 12, 'Dartmoor Authors' (1950). (West Country Studies Library, Exeter).
7. Census Return, 1871. Ermington Parish—Ivybridge Village, schedule No. 212.
8. Marriage Certificate No. 117, 14 March, 1872. St John's Church in the district of Ivybridge, in the county of Devon.
9. Register of Electors. Tavistock Parliamentary division of the County of Devon. Parish of Mary Tavy 1921 (Spring) and 1922 (Spring and Autumn).
10. The Register of Religious Creed, Tavistock Union, Tavistock Institution, April 1914-1932, p.32.
11. *The Dartmoor Bibliography (Non-Fiction)*, compiled by J V Somers Cocks.
12. William Crossing by T Cann Hughes *The Devonian Year Book* 1929, pp.69-71.
13. *Cranmere*, Crossing, William, Simpkin Marshall, Hamilton Kent & Co Ltd (London) and Charles Luke & Co Ltd (Plymouth) 1926.

## THE COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY OF NINETEENTH CENTURY BARNSTAPLE HISTORIANS

Noel Beer

J.R. Chanter's personal copy of his 1882 book on the Barnstaple parish church, *Memorials of the Church of St. Peter, Barnstaple*,<sup>1</sup> provides an interesting glimpse of the collaboration which existed amongst a group of North Devon historians in the late nineteenth century.

Chanter had collected a batch of papers relating to the *Memorials* and kept these inside the book's back cover—a sort of Memorials scrapbook. These papers include a number of reviews of the book taken from local newspapers, a print of the old grammar school which stands next to the church, and an 1804 copy of the church terrier which appears in the *Memorials*, (pp. 160-163).

More interestingly, the papers also include a dozen letters which relate to the book and which Chanter received before and after its publication. Amongst the latter are letters of congratulation, but some also comment on the historical detail of parts of the work, whilst some pre-publication correspondence offers advice and information. A selection of these letters provides a vignette of the collaborative activity of the small group of local historians which resulted in a major addition to the published history of the town of Barnstaple in the late nineteenth century.

Prior to this period, only Gribble's 1830 work<sup>2</sup> is of note in a scanty bibliography of a town with a long history. The 1880s and 1890s, however, saw a change in this, and, as Gardiner<sup>3</sup> says in his 1897 publication, 'Three names will always be associated with this work. They are those of the late Mr J.R. Chanter, Mr R.W. Cotton (a native of Barnstaple now residing near Newton Abbot), and Mr. Thomas Wainwright (for many years Headmaster of the Grammar School and now librarian of the North Devon Athenaeum). It was Mr Chanter who led the way'.

In the mid-1860s Chanter had produced two slim volumes, one of incidents in Barnstaple history<sup>4</sup>, and the other on the literary history of Barnstaple<sup>5</sup>, and in the 1860s and 1870s was a regular contributor of papers to the Devonshire Association. Then, in 1879, he joined with Wainwright in publishing a series of articles in the *North Devon Journal* and the *North Devon Herald*; these were entitled 'Barnstaple Records', and were the sifted and deciphered borough records which had been stored in the Guildhall. The articles were later published as the *Reprint of the Barnstaple Records*<sup>6</sup>.

A consequence of the publication of these articles, to quote Gardiner again, is that 'it led to the writing by Mr. R.W. Cotton of the most valuable, as well as the most ambitious, book relating to Barnstaple, which has been published since 1830. Mr Cotton's "Barnstaple during the great Civil War: 1642-1646"<sup>7</sup>. . . In his preface Mr Cotton expresses his indebtedness to the labours of Mr Chanter—the name of Mr Wainwright must have been omitted by inadvertence'.

An examination of the helpful correspondence received by Chanter in connection with the *Memorials* shows that Wainwright had been able to offer him an addition to the material he had gathered on masters and students at the grammar school next to the church, (pp. 107-109). Wainwright sent a short list of names of students who had matriculated at the school and had gone to Caius. He had obtained this

I have been making out the  
pedigree of the Barber's for  
a fellow--- of Caius who is  
writing an account of the  
distinguished men of that college  
I am certain for my trouble  
he has sent me a list of the  
students of Caius who matriculated  
from Barnstaple school this  
gives the names of three new  
masters Mr Wilson 1610  
Mr Sam Clarke 1646  
Mr Hughes 1667.  
(not there)

I am yours truly  
Thos Wainwright  
J. R. Chanter Esq

Photocopy of the last page of a letter from Wainwright, referred to in the article.

information from a fellow of Caius in return for a favour he had done for him. However, Chanter chose not to include these in the *Memorials*.

Cotton wrote to Chanter both before and after publication, which was in October. On 1 August he sent Chanter some new information about the Columbass family, who were buried in the Priory, (p. 148), with the expressed hope that Chanter would have time to include it in the *Memorials*. He wrote again on 15 October, thanking Chanter for an early copy of the book, congratulating him on its merit, playing down its errors, and announcing that he was sending a short review to the editor of the *North Devon Journal*, 'to be used if approved, or not, if the Editor has anything better in hand'. A review of two and a half columns appeared in the *Journal* of 19 October, its authorship not acknowledged, so perhaps this was Cotton's 'short' version.

The second Cotton letter makes reference to another Barnstaple historian of the time, Mr. W.P. Hiern, whose central interest was botany, and whose reputation in this subject is demonstrated in his Presidential Address to the Devonshire Association in 1917<sup>8</sup>; but he also had other, historical and literary interests and he was pursuing research in one of these areas in parallel with Cotton, who writes, 'If Mr. Hiern intends to publish what it appears he has been collecting simultaneously with myself I suppose I had better forego my own intentions. He is doubtless more competent and being connected with the Gay family perhaps has a better right to do it'. Cotton goes on to express his disappointment, but is also satisfied that Hiern should be left to publish on the unmentioned subject.

Chanter also received two letters from Z. Wade of High Street, Ilfracombe. These are undated, but from their contents they were sent after publication of the *Memorials*. This was Miss Z.E.A. Wade, author of *Pixy-led in North Devon*<sup>9</sup>, who wrote extensively to Chanter on the subject of the mural on the wall of the old church (p.27 of the *Memorials*). Later she was to expand on this in chapter II of her own work, in which she examines in detail the contents and origins of the St. Peter's mural. Not surprisingly, in turn Chanter's name appears in the list of names in the preface to Wade's book, in which she acknowledges that she is 'indebted to the authentic documents of all sorts and conditions of writers . . . '.

At no time has there been a prolific outpouring of books about Barnstaple, but this was a period of significant expansion in the town's published history. After the turn of the century the output declined and then became a trickle until the late 1970s, since when there has been a healthy resurgence in publications about the town.

#### References

1. CHANTER, J.R. *Memorials descriptive and historical of the church of St. Peter, Barnstaple, with its other ecclesiastical antiquities and an account of the conventual church of St. Mary Magdalene, recently discovered.* Henry A. Royster (Barnstaple). 1882.
2. GRIBBLE, J.B. *Memorials of Barnstaple.* (2 Vols.) Avery (Barnstaple). 1830.
3. GARDINER, W.F. *Barnstaple: 1837-1897.* Ralph Allan (Barnstaple). 1897.
4. CHANTER, J.R. *Sketches of some striking incidents in the history of Barnstaple.* Arnold (Barnstaple). 1865.
5. CHANTER, J.R. *Sketches of the literary history of Barnstaple.* Arnold (Barnstaple). 1866.
6. CHANTER, J.R. and WAINWRIGHT, T. *reprint of the Barnstaple Records.* (2 vols.) Barnes (Barnstaple). 1900.
7. COTTON, R.W. *Barnstaple and the Northern Part of Devonshire during the Great Civil War, 1642-1646.* Uwin Bro. (London). 1889.
8. HIERN, W.P. President's address to the Devonshire Association. In *Report and Transactions of the Devonshire Association.* (Barnstaple, July, 1917). W. Brendon (Plymouth). 1917.
9. WADE, Z.E.A. *Pixy-led in North Devon: old facts and new fancies.* Marshall Brothers (London). 1895.

## TOPSHAM MUSEUM

Barbara Entwistle

The founder of Topsham Museum was Miss Dorothy Holman, a great-granddaughter of John Holman (1800-1863), shipowner, shipbuilder and marine insurer in Topsham. Dorothy Holman came to live in Topsham in 1939, buying a house at No.25 The Strand, which had an old sail-loft attached to the rear of the premises, built in 1858 by an earlier relative, Thomas Holman, who was 'very particular about his sails'. Miss Holman used part of this loft to set up her museum in 1967, displaying objects passed down over the years from members of her family, many of whom had been involved in the wooden shipbuilding industry in nineteenth century Topsham.

Miss Holman died in 1983. Determined that her museum should continue, she bequeathed her whole property,—her house, sail-loft and two gardens, to Exeter City Council for museum purposes.

In a Memorandum of her wishes, Miss Holman stated.

My object in giving my house and furniture to the City and County of the City of Exeter is to provide a place where members of the public interested in the history of Topsham can see both a museum of the town's history and a typical Topsham merchant's house . . .

These two themes identified by Miss Holman,—the town's history and a Topsham



Topsham Museum, 25 The Strand.

merchant house,—have been taken up and developed by Topsham Museum Society, comprising volunteers who brought their skills and enthusiasm to the task of running the museum. The museum was registered as a charity. Support came from bodies such as the Area Museum Council for the South West, Topsham Market House Trust, the Topsham Town Fayre Committee, and from many local firms and individuals . . . Exeter City Council carried out extensive alterations to the property and redecorated the building throughout. In May, 1986, the museum was reopened to the public.

The museum building stands on a corner site where Lower Shapter Street joins the Strand. From its own riverside garden there is delightful view westwards across the valley of the River Exe to the Haldon Hills. Entrance to the museum is through a walled garden to the south of the building, with its cobbled yard and yew tree arches. The ground-floor entrance area holds attractive displays, carried out by a Community Programme team, of the flora and fauna of the Exe Valley. The estuary is world-famous for avocets and other birds which overwinter here.

Topsham's rich maritime history is featured in the old sail-loft. Topsham was a Roman settlement, and finds from excavations are on view from both pre-Roman and Roman sites. Displays show Topsham's history as a port from the time when



*'Hugh Fortescue' Barque, built Topsham in 1865 for the China trade. 505 tons. Painted in Yokohama on her maiden voyage. Traded worldwide. N.B. Holman house flag—red and white 'H' in red.*

the first stone quay was built in 1316, to the period of Topsham's greatest prosperity during the late 17th and early 18th centuries. A mural, painted by artist Harry Naven, shows a view of the estuary from Topsham Quay in the 1680s, with small merchant vessels,—pinks and fluits,—preparing to sail under convoy to Holland, then the principal market for Devonshire-made serge cloth.

The Parish Registers, as published by the Devon and Cornwall Record Society in 1938,—a source of much information to family historians,—record the burial in Topsham of a 'Dutch Soldyner' on 11th November and of Sir William Hambleton (Hamilton) on 8th December 1688, both from the army of William, Prince of Orange, which had just landed in Brixham . . . Guns and equipment were despatched to Exeter through Topsham, and these two soldiers were casualties of the expedition.

From Topsham's shipbuilding era (dominated by the Davy and Holman family tree) there are paintings and photographs of ships and their masters, ship models, shipwrights' tools and a rare collection of shipbuilders' half-block models of vessels built by John Holman & Sons.

The house itself is of interest to visitors, as one of the series of handsome houses built along the Stand in the period 1680-1720. Joseph Hodder, a shipmaster who traded to Holland, was very probably the person to build the house, in 1689. Some features remain of the 17th century building, such as the bolection moulded fireplace surround in the parlour. The pine panelling, window shutters, and stairway seem to have been added in 1739 when extensive refurbishment took place. Three rooms in the house are furnished to show the domestic life of a merchant family of the period 1680-1720. Most of the furniture is of the period, but much interesting work has been achieved by craftsmen, who for example, have embroidered a set of bedhangings for a four-poster bed, working in crewel wools on linen, after much study of other, authentic hangings. Topsham's trading links with Holland are illustrated by the inclusion of items of Delftware and paintings by Dutch artists.

The museum opens from February to November each year, on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday, from 2-5pm. Refreshments are available and there is a small museum shop.

## THE HORRABRIDGE SHOEMAKERS

Joy Beer

Horrabridge is perhaps a little unusual, and certainly fortunate, in having a fifth generation of a shoemakers family practising in the village.

Though the five generations lived and worked in Horrabridge, Horrabridge itself was until recently made up from four neighbouring parishes—Whitchurch, Sampford Spiney, Buckland Monachorum and Walkhampton, and the five generations seemed to have moved about just over three of those parish boundaries.

The Land Tax Assessments for Whitchurch revealed a Henry Gawman, Ivor Gawman's great great great grandfather as a miner, probably working the nearby copper mine Wheal Franco. However, his son William, the great great grandfather, born in 1788 was the first of the shoemakers, living then in Whitchurch. His son James, the great grandfather born in 1826 and the youngest of the family, was living in Sampford Spiney, and at 17 was already classed as a shoemaker. His son, the second James, is the present shoemaker's grandfather, and in the Parish Magazine dated 1922 his advertisement does not differ very much from that of his grandson at the present date.

Charles James, Ivor Gawman's father, moved to Plymouth shortly before the second world war, having repaired boots and shoes in Horrabridge for some years. Fortunately for the village and the area, Ivor Gawmen is carrying on the family tradition.

---

## NEW CONTRIBUTORS

Bryan Nicholls is a Chartered Chemical Engineer, he has an Open University degree in Humanities and has lived in Devon for 25 years. Among his historical interests are nineteenth century metalliferous mining, agriculture, industrial housing and landscape history.

Noel Beer is a native of Barnstaple, works in management development in south-east England and has a special interest in the literature of North Devon.

Barbara Entwistle is Chairman of Topsham Museum Society.

Joy Beer is a member of the Council of the Devon History Society. She is a member of local history societies and has been a leading member of the Devon Family History Society for several years.

## CONCERNING POSTCARD FAIRS . . .

David Edmund

Very soon after starting to build up a history of my recent home village of Silverton, I realised that it should be possible to make a collection of the relatively few postcards produced depicting that village. Little did I realise those ten or twelve years ago just how 'collectable' such items were to become! Now, some 28 cards later, thanks chiefly to several fascinating hours browsing through tidy racks at many postcard fairs, I am struck by a sobering thought. It is very rare to spot anyone at such events whom I recognise as also interested in local history.

Am I the odd one out in the melange of devotees seeking individual 'wants' to complete their sets of 'Oilettes' or battleships or North Tawton? Do I not recognise my fellow local historians? Or can it be that these treasure troves of social history are still waiting to be discovered?

If this last possibility is true in your case, may I recommend a visit to the next fair staged near you? Apart from some surprises at the cost of certain cards (which, as a bonus, may make you more appreciative of any cards you already hold) and some amused amazement at the intensesness of the collector fraternity, I believe that you will find yourself really enjoying a browse through cards of your particular interest—and maybe making some rewarding purchases as well.

All the major dealers are very organised in the arrangement of card headings, especially topographical, and usually display an impressive knowledge of locations in the British Isles. There is just one phrase to watch for: 'Cards in front of (or 'behind') the Marker' indicating which side of the heading card one should replace cards after examination. Otherwise forget about 'Undivided Backs' or LL's (but mind the stampede if one depicts Exeter's Arcade!) and good hunting—it IS a treasure trove, just allow yourself ample time to look.



## DEVON CENTENARIES

Compiled by Adrian Reed  
(Births)

JOSEPH CARTWRIGHT (1789-1829). Marine painter. Said to have been born in Dawlish. Employed as Paymaster General of the forces in Corfu where he produced his *Views in the Ionian Islands*. On return to England he specialized in marine subjects and, particularly, in naval engagements. Appointed Marine Painter to the Duke of Clarence in 1828.

(Deaths)

JAMES GANDY (1619-1689). Painter. Thought to have been born in Exeter. Said to have been a pupil of Van Dyck he was taken to Ireland in 1661 by the Duke of Ormond where he remained until his death, making copies of his master's works and portraits of the local notables. The father of the better known William Gandy who sometimes preferred a more illustrious if less legitimate paternity.

SAMUEL CARTER HALL (1801-1889). Publicist. Born in Topsham he became a House of Commons reporter and then the editor of various popular magazines including the *Amulet*, the *New Monthly Magazine* and the *Art Journal*. He wrote on many subjects, actively promoted the temperance movement and with his wife is credited with the production of between 300 and 400 books.

LORD BLACKFORD (1811-1889). Civil Servant. After Oxford and some time at the Bar he received a number of official appointments culminating in that of Permanent Under Secretary at the Colonial Office which he held until his retirement and ennoblement in 1871.

SAMUEL BEAL (1825-1889). Sinologist. Born in Devonport, son of a Wesleyan minister. Ordained in 1852 became a naval chaplain and was interpreter in the China war of 1857-60. His interest in the Chinese tongues was said to stem from his desire to explore the dark places of Chinese Buddhism. He held various naval chaplaincies at home and after 1877 was rector of three northern parishes. During this time he was appointed to the chair of Chinese studies at University College, London. He published a number of Chinese Buddhist texts, including a *Life*. His best work was said to have been done during his northern incumbency!

## DEVON RECORD OFFICE NEWSLETTER

During 1988 the Devon Record Office has commenced the production of a twice-yearly Newsletter, in May and November, to present news, views and information on the activities of the various branches of the DRO. It is edited by Mrs Margery Rowe, the County Archivist, who will welcome material from members of the public for future issues. Please send to Mrs Rowe at the Devon Record Office, Castle Street, Exeter. EX4 3PU.

## THE NORTH DEVON RECORD OFFICE

After many years of planning this new office (part of the Devon Record Office) was opened to the public on 11 April 1988. It is on the second floor of the new North Devon Library and Record Office in Tuly Street, Barnstaple. The core of the collections available in the new Record Office is some 1200 feet of records which were transferred from the Exeter Office during the week of 14-18 March. They include parish records of almost all the parishes in the Archdeaconry of Barnstaple, the records of North Devon and Torridge District Councils and their predecessor authorities, Methodist, business and family relating to North Devon.

Also available are the registers, tithe maps and apportionments of most Devon parishes on microfiche. It is likely that the office will be busy, so that it may be necessary to have an appointments system for the use of the film and fiche readers. It is open on Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 9.30a.m. to 5p.m., from 9.30a.m. to 4p.m. on Wednesday and Saturday and from 9.30a.m. to 7p.m. on Thursday. Documents required on a Saturday and between 12 noon and 2p.m. each day should be ordered in advance.

The North Devon Athenaeum has recently deposited its archives collections in the Record Office. These include Barnstaple Borough records from the thirteenth to nineteenth centuries, with borough charters from 1444; North Devon Friendly Institution records 1825-1966; North Devon Athenaeum meteorological reports and records 1858-1983 and the Barnstaple barrack-master's letter book 1784-1807. Barnstaple overseers' accounts 1724-1795 and churchwardens' accounts 1773-1812 have also been deposited by the Athenaeum, with two beautifully illuminated grants of arms to John Hawkins of Plymouth, 1565 and 1571.

Louise Rose, the archivist at Barnstaple, will be happy to receive deposits of records from North Devon institutions, families, businesses and societies.

## THE NORTH DEVON ATHENAEUM

Alison Grant

Readers of the *Devon Historian* familiar with Barnstaple will associate the North Devon Athenaeum with the attractive, red-brick Victorian house on the Square, provided by its founder, William Frederick Rock, in 1888. They may therefore be surprised to learn that the venerable institution has moved to one of the most up-to-

date buildings in town—the new North Devon Library and Record Office. The move was not made without much heart-searching and grave deliberation on the part of the Board, but after six months in the new building, it is clear that the decision was the right one, for all North Devon's local history resources and research facilities are now in the same place, to the great benefit of the public. All the reader or researcher has to do is walk or take the lift to the second floor, which now houses the North Devon Athenaeum, Devon County Library's Local Studies Centre, and the North Devon Record Office.

The North Devon Athenaeum, which was for many years the custodian of the Barnstaple Borough Records, has now handed this important and substantial collection to the new Record Office, together with some other documentary material. It retains its extensive collections of local history books, papers, photographs, maps, and miscellanea, as well as microfilm of the *North Devon Journal*, census returns, and other material. The Athenaeum's pictures and museum collections have been transferred to North Devon District Council for use in the Regional Museum of North Devon, which, happily, will be housed in the old building on the Square.

The North Devon Athenaeum is still an independent body, administered by the Rock Trust, in accordance with the wishes of its founder. It has its own office, and extensive storage and shelf-space in the new building, and employs its own staff. In practice the researcher has access to any of the resources on the second floor, and the Athenaeum's staff work harmoniously with the County's to provide the best possible service. The Board, believing that Mr Rock, a man in many ways in advance of his times, would have approved the move, has launched the Athenaeum into its second century in the confident expectation that it will continue to be an outstanding educational amenity for the people of Barnstaple and North Devon.

## NORTH DEVON MARITIME MUSEUM

Alison Grant

Odun House, Appledore, once the home of a wealthy nineteenth-century shipowner, has for the last twelve years housed a maritime museum run by North Devon Museum Trust. Torridge District council makes the premises available, and the Area Museum Council for the South West also provides some welcome support, but otherwise the museum is almost entirely self-financing. As there is no money to employ help, the museum is run, staffed, and maintained by local volunteers, which makes it a part of the Appledore community, and has turned out to be one of its strengths. In spite of its shoe-string budget, North Devon Maritime Museum has achieved considerable success, having been Highly Commended in the Museum of the Year competition in 1979, and honoured by a visit from H.R.H. the Prince of Wales in 1984.

Excellent models and photographs illustrate the museum's exhibitions, which all relate to North Devon, and include maritime history, shipbuilding, steam and motor vessels, amphibious trials during the Second World War, and much more. For 1989, to mark British Food and Farming Year, the Appledore kitchen exhibition, c 1900, has been completely restyled, and a new audio-visual presentation on fishing off the

north coast of Devon will be shown in the museum's interpretation centre across the road, adjacent to the free car park. Another new audio-visual programme on wreck and rescue will be available, and from June-September, North Devon Record Office's Appledore exhibition will be displayed in the centre. Behind the museum itself an imaginative garden project has been started, featuring a breeches buoy presented by the Coastguard Service, and other exhibits suitable for outdoor display.

The museum is open to visitors from Easter to the end of October, Mondays to Fridays 1100-1300 and 1400-1730, and Saturdays and Sundays 1400-1730. There are many facilities for schools and colleges, and parties of children or adults are welcome by appointment (phone Bideford 74852).

## REVIEWS

**Devon roads: An illustrated survey of the development and management of Devon's Highway Network** by Michael Hawkins. Devon Books, 1988. 240pp., £20. ISBN 0 86114 817 7.

This splendidly-illustrated volume forms part of the celebration of the centenary of Devon County Council. In coverage, it runs from prehistoric times to the present day, though more space is devoted to the past hundred years and indeed to the past forty years when the pace of change quickened markedly. The scope is considerable. With 8000 miles, Devon has a greater length of roads than any other English county. It also has 4000 bridges. This extremely wide ranging volume treats the subject extensively, not only analysing the development of the modern highway network, describing how it is managed and kept in good repair, but also dealing with peripheral aspects of the highway environment. Included are such topics as ancient trackways and green lanes, roadside stones and crosses—milestones, manorial stones, 'take off' stones, parole stones—milk churn stands, cattle creeps, conduits and fountains, stocks, limekilns, bus shelters, horse troughs, tollhouses, ventilating columns and much more. Illustrations enliven this account, in almost all cases indicating where the particular examples are to be found. But where is the roadside stone (p.218) which reads: 'At this spot H A W Aylesbury lost his life through a carriage accident 9 January 1905'? There is much to enjoy and to learn from the richness of this volume. Yet some reservations are appropriate. The story is told in a matter-of-fact way with plenty of detail from County Council Committee reports but, perhaps because it is an in-house production, discussion of alternatives is eschewed. The chapter on road builders has as sub-title 'designers and decision makers' but we learn nothing about the designers or what decisions had to be taken. The recent shift from public construction of roads to construction by private firms is noted succinctly—'many regretted', it is stated, 'the winding up of the Road Construction Units'—and no attempt is made to comment on the new system.

Throughout there are few judgements and some of these may be challenged. To my eyes, confirmed by the picture which is reproduced (p.82), the earliest surviving concrete bridge in the country over the Axe at Seaton is not 'the ugliest bridge in the West Country' and to speak of the 'elegance' of the viaduct across the Exe seems to me inappropriate; 'utilitarian' or 'workmanlike' would appear to be more

apt terms to apply. Nor does the Honiton by-pass seem to me to show a 'high standard of design and construction', the eastbound carriageway being of extremely poor design. And what is one to make of the conclusion to the chapter on bridges where it is stated that: 'Although the largest and most recent examples (of bridges), such as Torridge Bridge at Bideford, inspire wonder and admiration, the humble clapper bridge at Postbridge was just as important in its day' (p.100). Surely not. And while there is the obligatory nod at the contribution made by the political leaders, there is no indication, admirable people though they may be, of their contribution to the development of Devon roads. And in this largely bland account there is no room for controversy. The route of the M5 and its continuation, the improvement of the A38, the 'longest lane in England', is given an air of inevitability. Who would guess from this account too that the Okehampton by-pass gave rise to great debate? So there is no mention of the opposition of the National Trust or of Lady Sayer to these schemes. Further, what a pity the County Engineer and Planning Officer who is credited with the authorship of this volume, Michael Hawkins, did not use this opportunity to set out his credo, to explain the rationale of his policies and to indicate how he resolved the conflicting claims. For the serious reader it is disappointing that there is no list of illustrations, that the photographs are not dated and, for those who wish to follow up some of the subjects, there is no bibliography. This book provides a basic factual account of the development of roads in Devon, particularly during the past forty years. What we now need is an analysis in both technical and political terms of the issues and the alternatives involved.

*Walter Minchinton*

**Devon's Past: an aerial view.** Frances Griffith. Devon Books 1988. £9.95. ISBN 0 86114 833 9. 164pp. Illustrated 80 mono, 40 full colour photographs.

Miss Griffith's book is valuable for a number of reasons. It is an interesting collection of pictures of familiar places from unfamiliar angles, a demonstration of how aerial photography can find ancient features invisible from the ground, a visual explanation of sites often difficult to comprehend by the earthbound, and a tremendous help to mere historians struggling to keep up with the rapid development of knowledge of Devon's past being produced by recent archaeological work.

This tremendous change in our understanding of the past has come about for a number of reasons: the employment of local government of archaeological units, the need for rescue digs in the face of so many modern developments in road building and urban change, and particularly in lowland areas the new understanding produced by aerial photography itself.

For instance, the old idea that prehistoric man congregated on the barren uplands because he could not clear the forests which covered the lowlands is knocked on the head by the discoveries from the air of so many ancient sites in these lowlands. Where a ditch has been dug and later filled in, the richer subsoil will afford more moisture and stronger growing crops; the base of the wall thinly covered with soil will dry out and produce a weaker crop. So these cropmarks, seen from the air, have

given an entirely new conception of development in cultivated area, such as the henge between Bow and North Tawton of a type previously unsuspected west of Dorchester. Nor is it only cropmarks that help. Photographs when the sun is low, showing faint shadows, or when the ground is thinly covered by snow or flood waters, are also revealing.

The exploration of reeves on Dartmoor, much aided by air surveys, have produced new ideas about cultivation and occupation of Dartmoor. Roman roads and Roman forts have been found from the air, or made clearer, to give us a much sharper view of Roman activities so far west.

Even medieval towns and villages, photographed from the air are more clearly understood. A simply Saxon town like Lydford can be appreciated by a walk down the main street, but more complicated places like Barnstaple and Crediton become much more comprehensible when seen from the air.

The book in fact is wide-ranging in time, starting with almost geological pictures and ending with such recent developments as the Roadford reservoir excavations and the pedestrianisation of Plymouth. A contrasting pair of pictures of Plymouth's city centre, before the wartime bombing and after the reconstruction, are tremendously illuminating.

I regret that, in her fine picture of the Citadel upon Plymouth Hoe, Miss Griffith has not explained that the original plan was for a conventional five-pointed star later extended to embrace Drake's fort of seventy years earlier, which led to Samuel Pepys's lofty remark that 'De Gomme hath built mightily sillily'.

Many of the pictures Miss Griffiths has taken herself, and clearly she flies in a small aircraft at low altitude in all seasons of the year. It must be an exciting form of archaeology which not all of us would be brave enough to attempt. But it is certainly highly rewarding, and the county is the richer for her work.

*Crispin Gill*

**Spanish Armada Prisoners** by Paula Martin (Exeter Maritime Studies No.1) Exeter University Publications 1988 113pp. £8.25. ISBN 0 85989 305 7.

This book's central character is Don Pedro de Valdes, the commander of the Andalusian Squadron. His flagship, the *Nuestra Senora del Rosario*, was crippled in a collision on 31 July (NS) and the author concludes that Medina Sidonia made no serious effort to save her. Separated from the Armada in the night Valdes had no alternative the following morning to surrendering to Drake. He and his more ransomable officers spent several days in the *Revenge* and the author thinks it possible that during that time Drake got valuable information from him which may have had some influence on the course of the campaign. The ship herself was sent into Torbay and later to Dartmouth. A substantial part of her contents were, to use a verb from a later war, 'liberated', to the fury of the Council, by those afloat or ashore who managed to get near her.

The two Deputy Lieutenants for Devon, John Gilbert and George Cary, were at loggerheads and as they were responsible between them for the prisoners this did not help the unfortunates from the *Rosario* and those from the *San Pedro Mayor*, wrecked at the Hope, who later joined them. Stripped of most of their clothes, they

were lodged in barns and bridewells until the survivors were ransomed by Parma. There was a long argument about what food they might be allowed, where it should come from and at whose cost. It is surprising that any survived to reach Parma. At one point the Council decided to execute the prisoners and then changed its mind. Cary thought that a lot of trouble could have been avoided if they had been made 'water spaniels' as Chaucer's shipman would have done. The idea that prisoners of war were entitled to any consideration at all, unless of course they were well born, dates only from the last century. Valdes himself spent 5 comfortable if increasingly impatient years in the custody of Richard Drake at Esher until the terms of his release could be finally agreed.

This volume is the first in the new series of Maritime Studies published by the University which would seem designed for the academic rather than the general reader. Even so it does have rather a lot of notes and references in relation to its length: 334 of them taking up 17 pages against only 79 of text. Many, if not most, of the notes could with advantage have been included in the actual narrative.

Adrian Reed

**Lisbon as a Port Town, the British Seaman and other Maritime Themes.** Edited by Stephen Fisher (Exeter Maritime Studies No.2). Exeter University Publications 1988. 143pp. £4.50. ISBN 0 85989 313 8.

The paper of most interest to Devon Historians in this collection is that by J.L. Anderson 'Prince William's Descent Upon Devon, 1688: The Environmental Constraints'. It makes a useful companion to that read to the Society by Dr D. Davies at our 1988 meeting at Brixham. Given that William insisted on a large expeditionary force, including cavalry, to secure him from Monmouth's fate if local support failed and that he was anxious to avoid any fighting, least of all with the English fleet, the author argues the inevitability of a landing in the West Country. James was known to have been concentrating his land forces in East and South East England and his battle fleet at the mouth of the Thames. William could not go there without a fight and there were political objections to the less well defended NE Coast where harbours were scarce. A memorandum before sailing recommended Exmouth as the landfall with the transports discharging at Topsham. The English fleet could not follow them into shoal water and once ashore the cavalry and draught horses would have time to recover from the voyage, long before any of James' troops could reach them. In the event, the English had the wind against them, while the Dutch could in theory choose any point on the East and South coasts. Exmouth was discarded on the advice of the fleet's pilot and only some of the transports used Topsham. Looking at a series of prints of the expedition in the Town Hall in Brill I was interested to see one illustrating the landing at Exmouth!

Of the other papers Peter Hilditch's on 'The Decline of British Shipbuilding since the Second World War' cites the Appledore yard as one of the two most successful between the 60s and 70s. It concentrated on high technology shipping while the great yards, pushed into big groupings, fell over their own feet in their ineffective search for company policies. The remaining contributions: 'Lisbon as a Port;' 'Henry Mayhew and the British Seaman;' 'The Crews of eighteenth century whalers' and a

fascinating attempt to discover trends in seamen's wages by computer analysis are of more general interest.

Most of these papers were given at recent maritime history seminars at Dartington Hall. Earlier one appeared in the less glamorous, unillustrated 'Papers in Economic History'. Presumably future ones will also be published in this new series which one imagines is aimed at a wider readership than the old. If so there would seem advantage in the seminars dealing with specific themes so that the papers from each would provide useful sources on a given aspect of maritime history.

Adrian Reed

**Old Cullompton (part 2)** ed. David Pugsley. Cullompton Church Restoration Fund 1987. 40pp. illustrated—available from David Pugsley, Rockhaven, St. George's Well, Cullompton EX15 1AR.

There is an undeniable fascination in eavesdropping: television serials and the rummagings of our popular press offer ample proof of this. For the historian, however, there exists an especially exciting form of such social involvement when one is given the opportunity to wallow in a learned battle of words from the past. For this, the fifth modestly priced booklet edited by David Pugsley, the files of the *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, *Exeter Flying Post* and, especially, the *Western Times* have yielded a rich insight into a catalogue of Cullompton squabbles. With the Vicar, William Sykes, inevitably cast as the villain in tithe disputes and the people's churchwarden, Elias Baker, scarcely a disinterested party, the repartee is just waiting to be enjoyed.

An appendix listing the patron, vicars, curates and churchwardens over the period 1830-1861 plus four pages of background notes completes an informative yet always enjoyable restaging of some not atypical episodes in the life of a country town. Archdeacon Grantly would have felt quite at home! Once again, everyone interested in local history—and Cullompton's in particular—must be grateful that David Pugsley decided to make a major contribution to the Restoration Appeal Fund for his parish church by publishing a series of compilations from contemporary archives, several items of which would otherwise would have remained very inconvenient to locate.

Previous titles were *Our Vicars*, written by Lewis Upcott around the turn of the century, recounting tales of Cullompton's vicars within his memory; *The Town on the Culm* lists and considers the many variant spellings of this town; *Pages from the Past* and the first part of *Old Cullompton* provide further selections from the Parish Magazine, contemporary Churchwardens' accounts and various newspapers. For anyone interested in the social history of East Devon or small country towns in general, these convenient records offer material out of all proportion to their cost or shelf space.

David Edmund

**Teignmouth in old picture postcards** by Ann Pearson. European Library—Zaltbomme/Netherlands. £6.95 80pp. ISBN 90 288 3367 6/CIP.

The basic format of picture plus caption with little other text has provided a flurry of publications in recent years but no one is likely to challenge the activity of this Dutch publisher, already with over 3,000 titles throughout Europe to their credit and evidently intending many more: 'A book about virtually every town in the United Kingdom is to be published in this series.'

A further quote from the publisher's preamble defines the object of the series as setting 'out to show what a particular place looked like and what life was like in Victorian and Edwardian times'. Reasonably enough, it seems, Ann Pearson has not adhered too literally to the title of 'postcards' nor to an Edwardian cut-off point (indeed it is intriguing to note that the same preamble in two other volumes—*Torquay* and *Sidmouth*—helpfully explains 'Victorian and Edwardian' as 'which means between 1880 and 1930!').

By including a few snapshots or photographs of the non-published variety such as 'Two ladies enjoying a day trip to the town in 1930', much more of the publisher's brief 'what life was like' can be shown than is usually apparent from commercially produced postcards, excellent though these are in capturing 'what a particular place looked like'. By no means over-biased towards pictures associated with the sea, the 76 photographs are well selected to portray an impression of this town and have been reproduced to Zaltbommel's expected high standards. Continuing the usual A5 landscape presentation in coloured cloth boards, *Teignmouth* is a welcome ninth Devon title for the *En cartes postales anciennes* library.

David Edmund

**The North Devon Athenaeum 1888-1988** 22pp. text and illustrations. £1. Obtainable at the new North Devon Athenaeum in the N. Devon Library and Record Office Building, Barnstaple.

This well researched and attractive pamphlet has been produced to mark the centenary of the founding of the North Devon Athenaeum, in the year that also sees its move to new accommodation in a modern building. The booklet, commissioned and published by the board of the North Devon Athenaeum, has been written as a 'labour of love' by some of its members: James Morgan, Alison Grant, Lois Lamplugh and Peter Christie. Established through the generosity and concern of William Frederick Rock, a nineteenth century Barumite who realised the intellectual needs of Barnstaple's growing population, the Athenaeum has developed as a considerable resource of valuable documents, collections of books, papers and photographs. Sections of the booklet deal in an interesting way with the Barnstaple of W.F. Rock's day, various aspects of the Athenaeum's development, and Bruce William Oliver, whose bequest in 1976 ensured continuing financial security.

Helen Harris

## THE DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY

Minutes of the 18th Annual General Meeting held at Exeter  
on Saturday 29 October 1988

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

Apologies were received from Mr J Havill, Mr M Madge, Professor N. Orme, and Mrs J. Sedgwick.

### 1 Minutes

The minutes of the last Annual General Meeting (printed in *The Devon Historian*, April 1988) were read and approved.

Matters Arising—none.

### 2 Hon. Secretary's Report

Mrs S Stirling thanked Mr J Pike and Dr A Grant who had served as membership secretary and minutes secretary respectively, while she (Mrs Stirling) had dealt with the remaining business. She also thanked Mr D Edmund for his support and help. The year had been notable for a 'surfeit of anniversaries', so the Society had not held a summer meeting, but there had been a successful conference at Brixham in March. The Council, which had met three times, had been chiefly concerned with the membership list, the bibliography, and programmes for the Brixham Conference and the AGM. Mr R Stanes had rejoined the Council as a co-opted member. Mr J Pike reported that the new membership list, which is now ready, shows 430 individual members, and 39 corporate bodies and non-members who receive the *Devon Historian*. Copies are also circulated to the press and TV. Supplements and amendments to the list will be issued as necessary. The report was adopted.

### 3 Hon. Treasurer's Report

Mr Edmund presented the income and expenditure account, and pointed out that, as the balance was still healthy, there would be no need to raise subscriptions this year. To ensure prompt payment, he would still appreciate more standing orders. He thanked Mrs Stirling for continued help with the distribution of the *Devon Historian*; sales were increasing, but, so, unfortunately, was the cost of postage. Other expenses had been fairly light. He appealed for someone to act as honorary auditor, or to recommend someone who might be willing to serve. The accounts were adopted.

### 4 Hon Editor's Report

Mrs H Harris thanked contributors to the two issues of the *Devon Historian* published since the last AGM, and said a wide variety of subjects had been covered, featuring all parts of the county. There was still space available in the forthcoming

issue (Spring 1989), for which contributions should be submitted by 30 November. articles could be of any length up to 3000 words, but short pieces, even of 300 words, would also be very welcome. She hoped for a high standard of content, references as appropriate, and good presentation. She drew attention to her appeal on page 2 of the current issue regarding form and style.

The President thanked the officers for their reports and for running the Society well and efficiently over the past year.

#### 5 Devon Bibliography

1985 is ready, and 1986 and 87 are almost ready. It was suggested that these could probably be issued together, the Council to decide numbers and price. Gratitude was expressed to the compilers, particularly to Mr I Maxted.

#### 6 Election of Officers and Council

The elections produced no change of Officers or Council. Mr R Bedward, Miss J Beer, Mr D Edmund, and Dr A Grant stood down under the three-year rule. All were re-elected.

#### 7 Conference Programme 1989

*Exmouth*, provisional date 18 March. Mr Edmund to co-ordinate arrangements.

*Combe Martin*, date in June to be fixed. Mr Stanes to co-ordinate, with help from Dr Grant if required.

#### 8 Any Other Business

None.

---

## Exeter University Publications

### THE GREAT EAST WINDOW OF EXETER CATHEDRAL

#### A Glazing History by Chris Brooks and David Evans

The last significant account of the stained glass of Exeter Cathedral was published in the 1920s, since when the Cathedral glass has largely been ignored by scholars. Yet the Exeter glazing, and particularly the Great East Window, is of major importance. Moreover the remarkable survival of the Cathedral's written records presents a unique opportunity for relating a complex body of existing glass to detailed documentation. In this full-length and lavishly illustrated study, Chris Brooks and David Evans remedy Exeter's omission from contemporary scholarship. *The Great East Window of Exeter Cathedral* provides a complete account of primary documentation\* from the fourteenth century to the twentieth, and a definitive critical survey of interpretations of the glass from the mid-eighteenth century to the present.

The Approach adopted by Brooks and Evans integrates stylistic and iconographic analysis with documentary research and historiography to produce what they have called a glazing history. Unlike more orthodox accounts of medieval glass, this study places as much emphasis upon eighteenth—and nineteenth—century craftsmen and glass-painters as upon their medieval predecessors, and considers financing and craft organisation as integral to questions of style and aesthetics.

Both in its subject and method, *The Great East Window of Exeter Cathedral* is a major contribution to the scholarship of English stained glass.

Cloth bound, 242 x 178 mm., 208 pages, 44 colour and 56 black and white plates, 33 line illustrations, bibliography. February 1989. £50 net. Exeter University Publications, Reed Hall, Streatham Drive, Exeter EX4 4QR. (0392 263066).

---