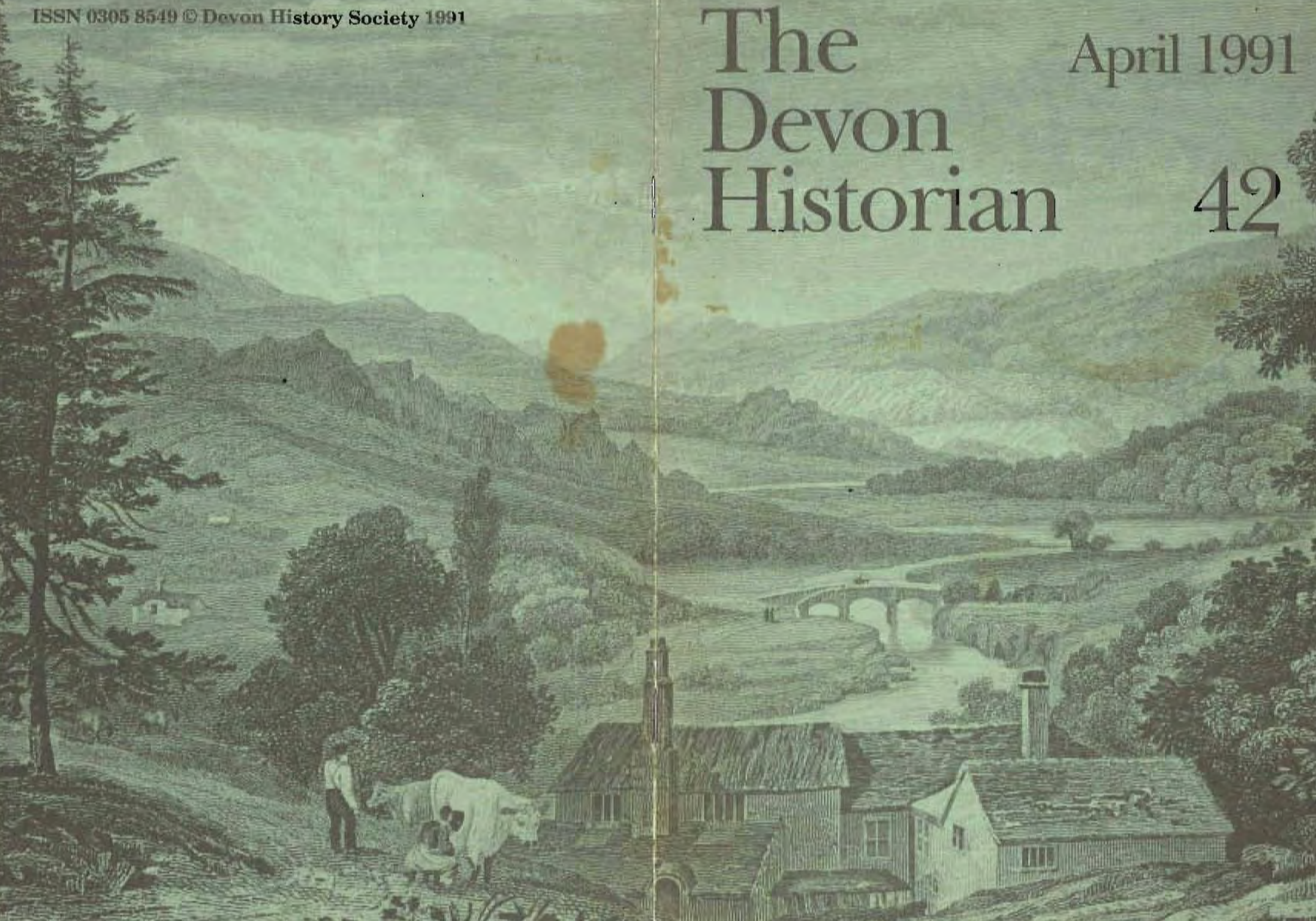


The Devon Historian

April 1991

42



Past Presidents

Professor W.G. Hoskins (1969-73); Lady Aileen Fox (1973-5);
 Dr C.A. Raleigh Radford (1975-7); W. Best Harris (1977-81); Frank Booker (1981-2)
 Professor Joyce Youings (1982-6); Crispin Gill (1986-9)

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT	Professor Ivan Roots
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	Miss Joy Beer, John Bosanko, Dr Alison Grant, Ian Maxted, Adrian Reed, 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 Churchill Road, Whitchurch, Tavistock PL19 9BU. The deadline for the next issue is 1 July 1990. Books for review should be sent to Mrs S. Stirling, c/o Devon & Exeter Institution, 7 The Close, Exeter: EX1 1EZ, who will invite the services of a reviewer. It is not the policy of the Society to receive unsolicited reviews.

The print on the cover is *New Bridge near Holne on the Dart*, steel engraving by A. McClatchie after T.M. Baynes, published by Jennings & Chaplin, 1830. (Somers Cocks no.1171)

The Devon Historian is typeset and printed by Penwell Ltd, Parkwood, Callington, Cornwall.

Notices	2
Two French generals at the Ockery, Princetown	ELISABETH STANBROOK...3
Devon bridge names	D.L.B. THOMAS.....9
Iron men of Shropshire come to Laira	KEITH S. PERKINS.....15
Devon death centenaries, compiled by Adrian Reed19
Ernie Bevin in Devon	ROBIN STANES.....20
Euphemistic language in 19th century Exeter	C.G. SCOTT.....24
The diary of a Victorian lady	ANNE BORN.....26
The Caunters of Ponsworthy	FREDA WILKINSON.....28
Reviews:	
Plymouth defences, by F.W. Woodward (Mark Brayshay).....	30
Dartmouth and its-neighbours, by Ray Freeman (Adrian Reed).....	31
Life of Sir John Dodderidge, by Chantal Stebbings (Joyce Youings).....	32
Stoking up the past, by A. Bird and H. Nabb, and	
In the cause of liberty, by Andrew Kirkby (J.H. Porter).....	32
The Edworthy scandals, by R.C.M. Bass (David Pugsley).....	33
Bond and Pearce, by David Pugsley (Crispin Gill).....	34
Tiverton and the Exe valley, by Mary de la Mahotiere (David Edmund)	34
Mr Wolston's little line, by John Dilley (David Edmund)	35
Horrabridge as it was, by John Rowe (Helen Harris)	36
Clearbrook in those days, by Lilian Lethbridge (Helen Harris).....	36
New contributors.....	37
Notices	37
Devon History Society, 20th AGM	38
Devon birth centenary, compiled by Adrian Reed	40

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 £1.70, post free, and from No 37 onwards £2.25. Also available post free are *Devon Newspapers* (£1.00), *Index to The Devon Historian* (for issues 1-15 70p and 16-30 £1.20), and *Devon Bibliography* (1980 70p, 1981 and 1982 80p each, 1983 and 1984 95p each). Bibliographies for more recent years are available from Devon Library Services.

The Vice-Chairman, Mr John Pike, 82 Hawkins Avenue, Chelston, Torquay TQ2 6ES, would be glad to acquire copies of the out-of-stock 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.: 13 October 1990, etc.

A DARTMOOR LEGEND: TWO FRENCH GENERALS AT THE OCKERY, PRINCETOWN

Elisabeth Stanbrook

The Ockery, near Princetown (also spelt Okery or Oakery in various publications), now reduced to mere foundations, was once a pretty thatched cottage built in the style of a Swiss chalet. It was situated on the northern outskirts of Princetown by the Ockery clapper bridge which carries the old Moretonhampstead to Plymouth packhorse track over the Blackbrook. It is just a few yards downstream from the comparatively modern Trena Bridge.

This cottage is the location of a mystery that has remained unsolved for nearly a century. Legend records that in 1809, during the Napoleonic Wars, the cottage was built for two French Generals, Rochambeau and Boyer, in order that they might be confined here during their parole in England. No doubt handed down through the generations, the legend was put into print during the turn of the century by writers such as William Crossing and J.G. McNeel, and one time Governor of Dartmoor Prison, Vernon Harris. But, writing in 1905, J. Brooking Rowe claimed 'The commandant legend in connection with Okery Cottage must be given up. It is not likely that a special house would have been erected by the British Government for prisoners, however high their rank might have been'.¹ This was supported by Basil Thomson who, writing two years later, blamed the origination of the legend on the escape of Louis François Vantulle in 1812, who in his opinion 'created sufficient stir in Devonshire to become the basis of a myth that a French General was confined in the cottage at Okery Bridge'.²

Since Brooking Rowe's and Thomson's claims to the contrary, the truth behind this legend has been the subject of much debate and it is now generally felt that if Rochambeau and Boyé (Boyé is the correct spelling) did live at the Ockery, it was prior to 1809 as Rochambeau was confined at Moretonhampstead from 1807 to 1811³ when he was exchanged and repatriated to France. But again, no evidence has been forthcoming to support this idea. Much of what has been written to date has relied upon locally available secondary sources. But it is the primary sources that give a fuller account of Rochambeau's and Boyé's stay in England, and shed light upon this age old debate. The fact that they frequently warranted special mention in the records indicates their importance, to the point of being given their own separate living quarters. It also becomes apparent that their behaviour was far from that associated with high-ranking Generals and was the cause of considerable concern to the Transport Board under whose responsibility they came.

So what is their story and their connection with Devon, and, most important of all, with the Ockery?

The French Army, which had been engaged in battle in Santa Domingo, was compelled to surrender to the British invaders on 3 August 1803.⁴ Amongst the French prisoners taken were the two French Generals, Donatien Rochambeau and Jacques Boyé. According to the 'General Entry Book of French Prisoners of War on Parole' for Portsmouth and Ashbourne, Rochambeau was 'General in Chief of the Army of Santa Domingo' whilst Boyé was 'General of Brigade and Chief of the Staff of the Army Santa Domingo'. Records show that the French captives set sail from Jamaica on 1 December

1803, in a Man of War ship, arriving at Portsmouth on 3 February 1804.⁵ When parole papers for Rochambeau and Boyé were finalised three days later, they travelled north to Ashbourne in Derbyshire, arriving there on 11 February.⁶

The General Entry Book for Ashbourne is interesting because it records details of the Generals' servants. These include Pierre Courpon who is listed as 'Servant to Gen. Rochambeau' while Albert Viollet is listed as 'Servant to Gen. Boyé'. Later records reveal that this man had an alias, 'Biolotti', under which he later married an English girl.

It is from their arrival in Ashbourne that the Transport Board soon realised the two Generals were going to make their presence felt. Within days, Rochambeau was caught attempting to smuggle a letter to France by devious means (records do not elaborate), which contained 'expressions which appear to the Board to be of an extraordinary Nature'.⁷ Next came a violation of their parole conditions, and the Transport Board, on receiving the report of the incident from the Deputy Clerk of the Peace for the West Riding of Yorkshire, decided to remove the two Generals from Ashbourne to Montgomery in Powys. However, true to form, Rochambeau and Boyé refused to cooperate and sign the necessary parole agreement, and, claiming they had insufficient funds for the journey, asked for travelling expenses. The Transport Board, not too pleased at this, informed them that if they failed to sign the papers, a special constable was to confine them in their lodgings until a military guard could be provided to escort them to Norman Cross in Huntingdonshire, where they would be imprisoned.

But Rochambeau and Boyé remained adamant in their refusal to sign and so, on 9 October, amidst threatening language from Rochambeau, they were indeed taken to Norman Cross where, on their arrival two days later⁸, they were imprisoned in the military hospital whilst more permanent plans were made for their confinement. One of the hospital wards was to be put aside for their use, and the rooms prepared at a cost of £20.15s.6d.⁹ Their servants were permitted to remain with them.

In April 1805, Rochambeau requested to be released from Norman Cross and allowed to reside at Odiham in Hampshire. This request was turned down on the grounds that he had refused to sign the parole papers and was therefore in prison by his own deliberate choice. It was not until March 1806 that the two Generals deigned to sign the papers, and the Transport Board then gave instructions for their removal to Wincanton in Somerset.¹⁰

Here, after 16 months on parole, history repeated itself with the two Generals violating the parole conditions, as they had at Ashbourne, but this time it was of a far more serious nature. In July 1807, Rochambeau and Boyé, together with other French officers and a few dogs, embarked on a four or five mile walk. Entering some farmland, they encountered the farmer who recognised them as French prisoners of war. There was an exchange of words which irritated Rochambeau, and he, together with the other officers, became extremely violent towards the farmer, who was beaten up. Tired of this sport, they returned to Wincanton, their mood still ugly, and set upon the local townsfolk causing riots and threatening to burn down the town. With some difficulty these French officers were rounded up and separated from the townspeople and put under lock and key.

Reports submitted to the Transport Board recommended that all the French prisoners of war should be removed from Wincanton and that Rochambeau and Boyé be separated 'and sent to some place near where a Military Guard was stationed'.¹¹ Any further disturbances from them would result in prison. Both Boyé and especially

Rochambeau had been 'exceedingly violent from the time of their arrival in this country'.¹² So it was decided that, accompanied by their servants, Rochambeau would go to Moretonhampstead and Boyé to Crediton, both leaving for their respective parole towns on 17 July 1807. Hence their residence in the county of Devon.

Rochambeau arrived at Moretonhampstead with his servant, Pierre Courpon (who is reputed to have been a black man¹³), on 18 July,¹⁴ while Boyé arrived at Crediton with his servant Albert Viollet on the same date.¹⁵ Having been separated, their behaviour seems to have improved somewhat, despite the occasional breach of parole regulations. A letter from Rochambeau was found on another French prisoner confined at Plymouth for breaking his parole, and was viewed as 'another manifestation of the Conduct and Principles of that Officer'.¹⁶ Two letters that survive, written in Rochambeau's own hand,¹⁷ indicate that he continued to assert himself whilst staying within the boundaries of permissible behaviour. They were, of course, written in French but a rough translation gives a general impression of Rochambeau's 'grievances'. One, dated 18 May 1809, indicates that he had been suspected of being in possession of plans he had supposedly stolen from Moretonhampstead and the other places he had been held. An enquiry ordered by Moretonhampstead Agent, Mr Ponsford, had revealed nothing, causing Rochambeau to retort that perhaps the Transport Office would 'equip themselves in future with more precise information if they wished to mitigate the poor opinion which he has long held of them'. The following day he wrote a lengthy letter accusing the Transport Board of, amongst other things, inaccurate statements regarding an incident off the French coast with a war vessel, and also that the British had attacked Spain and Denmark without any declaration of war. He hoped his letter would ensure that the Transport Office would conduct 'greater veracity in future should it wish to communicate with French prisoners of war or when it orders further searches under armed guard of our lodgings'. We can be in no doubt whatsoever of the opinion held by Rochambeau towards the Transport Board.

Cecil Torr, in his *Small Talk at Wreyland*, mentions French prisoners of war at Moretonhampstead, including Rochambeau who 'was the best known of them – he came out in full uniform on hearing of any French successes'.

Whilst at Moretonhampstead, Rochambeau's servant, Pierre Courpon (and presumably the Peter in Treleaven's Diary), married a local girl, Susannah Parker on 7 October 1808.¹⁸ If he was a black man, as Treleaven claims, this mixed marriage would have been a very unusual occurrence in a small Devon town. I could find no evidence of children from this marriage in the parish registers.

In Crediton, Boyé seems to have been fairly quiet with only the one breach of parole in January 1811. This misdemeanor did not please the Transport Board who said 'if he should be so again found out of his lodgings after the usual Hour, the usual Reward must be paid by him'.¹⁹ The 'Reward' was that given to English informers who told on those breaking their parole. I believe Boyé's servant, Albert Viollet, and his wife, may have married before his arrival at Crediton as I could find no record of their marriage in the parish registers. But it transpires that they did have children. In February 1811, when it became apparent that Boyé and Viollet might soon be released, the Transport Board wrote to Boyé informing him that no permission was needed for Viollet's wife and children to leave the country and travel back to France with him.²⁰

On 19 February 1811, an Order was made to discharge the prisoners of war 'who were included in the capitulation of General Rochambeau at Cape François'.²¹ Among others, two were to be released from Moretonhampstead (Rochambeau and Courpon)

and two from Crediton (Boyé and Viollet). A 'Conductor' was to travel to Tiverton to receive into his care fifteen prisoners. A military guard would then arrive and they would proceed to Crediton and Moretonhampstead to collect the Generals and their servants. Sums of money were to be given to the Conductor 'to enable you to pay the Expenses of the Prisoners delivered to you at Crediton and Moretonhampstead'.²²

From these two towns, the military guard was to escort the prisoners to Plymouth via Dartmoor Prison where 102 other prisoners were to be collected on the way.²³ From Plymouth they would embark for Morlaix in France.

Rochambeau and Boyé were released from their parole towns on 2 March 1811 and they arrived in Plymouth the next day. On 4 March they set sail from Plymouth to Morlaix, and a report in the *Exeter Flying Post* reads:

'This morning, the French General Rochambeau and General Boyer (sic), with several French officers from Martinique and St. Domingo, embarked on board two carrels, for Morlaix, being sent on the articles agreed on at the capitulation of these places'.²⁴

Having accounted for Rochambeau's and Boyé's movements during their enforced stay in England, it would seem fairly safe to assume that at no time whatsoever could they have stayed at the Ockery, thus supporting the claims of Brooking Rowe and Thomson. However, there is one area that is open to question. Sailing from Plymouth and accompanied by a military guard who were to collect more French prisoners of war held at Dartmoor Prison en route, Rochambeau and Boyé would have journeyed down the Moretonhampstead-Plymouth road that went past the Ockery. At some stage they had an overnight stop, so it is conceivable that the Generals and their servants were confined here on the night of the 2-3 March whilst arrangements for the receipt of 102 prisoners from Dartmoor Prison were finalised. The prison is also roughly halfway between Moretonhampstead and Plymouth. Such eminent men were the two Generals that a stay here would not have passed unnoticed by the local inhabitants, and it is certainly the case that no other house between Moretonhampstead and Plymouth is linked with their names. This journey to Plymouth is also the only time the Generals were together in Devon which could also explain why both names are associated with the cottage.

It is possible therefore that an overnight stay formed the basis of the legend that they were paroled here. Reports by Vernon Harris and J.G. McNeel that one or both Generals appeared in the grounds of the Ockery on hearing rumours of a French invasion or such, as Rochambeau did at Moretonhampstead, may have had an element of truth. Assuming that they did stay at the Ockery, Rochambeau and Boyé probably did appear in the Ockery grounds in full uniform on 2 and 3 March 1811. Indeed, Harris quotes a Transport Board Commissioner who reported that Rochambeau 'appeared two days in his grounds in full dress with boots and spurs'²⁵ on hearing good news of France. Surviving records do not, of course, confirm this. But they do confirm that the Ockery was never built in 1809 for Generals Rochambeau and Boyé, and that neither General lived here whilst on parole in England.

Tables showing places and dates of confinement in England of Generals Rochambeau and Boyé during the Napoleonic Wars. Taken from details included in the General Entry Books of French Prisoners of War on Parole.

DONATIEN ROCHAMBEAU General in Chief of the Army of St Domingo			
Place of Confinement	Date of Arrival	Date of Departure	Destination
Portsmouth	3rd Feb. 1804	6th Feb. 1804	Ashbourn
Ashbourn	11th Feb. 1804	11th Oct. 1804	Norman Cross
Norman Cross	13th Oct. 1804	18th Mar. 1806	Wincanton
Wincanton	21st Mar. 1806	17th July 1807	Moretonhampstead
Moretonhampstead	18th July 1807	2nd Mar. 1811	Plymouth
Plymouth	3rd Mar. 1811	4th Mar. 1811	Morlaix, France

JACQUES BOYE General of Brigade & Chief of the Staff of the Army of St Domingo			
Place of Confinement	Date of Arrival	Date of Departure	Destination
Portsmouth	3rd Feb. 1804	6th Feb. 1804	Ashbourn
Ashbourn	11th Feb. 1804	11th Oct. 1804	Norman Cross
Norman Cross	13th Oct. 1804	18th Mar. 1806	Wincanton
Wincanton	21st Mar. 1806	17th July 1807	Crediton
Crediton	18th July 1807	2nd Mar. 1811	Plymouth
Plymouth	3rd Mar. 1811	4th Mar. 1811	Morlaix, France

BIBLIOGRAPHY, REFERENCES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Bibliography

- Brewer, D. 'Napoleonic Prisoners of War: The Ockery' in *Dartmoor Magazine* No. 14. Quay Publications (Brixham) 1989.
 Brooking Rowe, J. 'Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt and Princetown' in *Translations of the Devonshire Association* 1905.
 Crossing, W. *Amid Devon's Alps* David & Charles 1974 Edn.

Gill, C. 'French Prisoners of War on Parole in Devon 1750-1815' in *The Devon Historian* April 1987.

Harris, V. *Dartmoor Prison, Past and Present* Brendon & Son, Plymouth c1880.

Thomson, B. *The Story of Dartmoor Prison* William Heineman 1907.

Torr, C. *Small Talk at Weyland* Oxford University Press 1979 Edn.

Treleaven, S. 'A Moretonhampstead Diary' in *Devon & Cornwall Notes & Queries* Vol.XXIV Pt.2, April 1950.

Treleaven, S. 'A Moretonhampstead Diary' in *TDA* No.86 1954.

Treuman's Exeter Flying Post 7 March 1811.

References

1. Brooking Rowe, J. 'Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt and Princetown' in *TDA* 1905 p.473.
2. Thomson, B. *The Story of Dartmoor Prison* William Heineman 1907 p.36.
3. Treleaven, S. *A Moretonhampstead Diary* in *TDA* 1954.
4. *General Entry Book of French Prisoners of War at Portsmouth* PRO ADM103/346.
5. *General Entry Book of French Prisoners of War at Moretonhampstead* PRO ADM109/591.
General Entry Book of French Prisoners of War at Crediton PRO ADM103/568.
6. *General Entry Book of French Prisoners of War at Ashbourne* PRO ADM103/554.
7. Transport Board Minutes Book PRO ADM99/153 13 Feb. 1804.
8. *General Entry Book of French Prisoners of War at Norman Cross* PRO ADM103/258.
9. Transport Board Minutes Book PRO ADM99/158 17 Sept. 1804.
10. *ibid* PRO ADM99/165 13 March 1806.
11. *ibid* PRO ADM99/179 11 July 1807.
12. *ibid* PRO ADM99/179 10 July 1807.
13. Treleaven, S. *op. cit.*
14. *General Entry Book for Moretonhampstead* *op.cit.*
15. *General Entry Book for Crediton* *op.cit.*
16. Transport Board Minutes Book PRO ADM99/181 22 Oct. 1807.
17. Transport Board In-Letters PRO ADM97/126.
18. Moretonhampstead Parish Registers.
19. Transport Board Out-Letters PRO ADM98/202 28 Jan. 1811.
20. *ibid* PRO ADM98/308 5 Feb. 1811.
21. *ibid* PRO ADM98/320 19 Feb. 1811.
22. *ibid* PRO ADM98/320 22 Feb. 1811.
23. *ibid* PRO ADM98/226 19 Feb. 1811.
24. *Treuman's Exeter Flying Post* 7 March 1811.
25. Harris, V. *Dartmoor Prison, Past and Present* Brendon & Son, Plymouth c1880 p.31.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Melanie Freeman and Thierry Blondel for their gallant attempts to translate General Rochambeau's letters which, owing to their illegibility and 'original' punctuation, proved extremely difficult. My thanks also go to the French Embassy in London and the Conservateur en Chef, Ministère de la Défense, in France, who gave their kind assistance including a search of French records.

DEVON BRIDGE NAMES

D L B Thomas

Bridge names can be divided into two main categories, depending on their source. There are those that have come into use because of the bridges' connection with something else, a town or a village or a physical feature. Thus, for example, the original bridge over the Dart in Totnes is Totnes Bridge and that over the Taw in Sticklepath is Sticklepath Bridge. The bridge near the confluence of the East and West Dart is called Dartmeet Bridge and most rivers, such as the Exe, the Yeo, the Taw, the Torridge and others, are crossed by at least one bridge that has taken the river's name. This category of source could be called secondary and the names, in their original context, are well examined in such works as *The Place Names of Devon*.

The names of other bridges are unconnected with features associated with those bridges. They stand on their own and the source might be termed primary. Some primary sources of bridge names are found in the material from which the bridge is, or was, built. The superstructure and columns of Iron Bridge in Exeter are of cast iron and Red Brick Bridge, built by LSWR in 1879 and demolished by Devon County in 1971, was a masonry arch bridge built of red engineering brick. The deck of Chain Bridge, a suspension bridge over the Exe to the south west of Bampton, is suspended from chains. The stone used for the impressive Greyston Bridge over the Tamar is a grey granite quarried nearby. There are eight bridges called 'Stone', 'Stoney' or 'Stony' in Devon and they would have been so named probably because of their location in an area where, at that time, timber was used more often for bridge building than stone. A predecessor of Woodbridge, over the Coly to the east of Farway, must have been made of wood although the present bridge is built of stone. Great Wooden Bridge, over Gissage Lake near Zeal Monachorum, is, disappointingly, an insignificant masonry arch bridge. It may once have been of wood but it is unlikely ever to have qualified as 'great' so that the source is probably secondary.

The names of many bridges derive from the type of structure. 'Bow', and there are nine so named in Devon, denotes an arch bridge. All Devon 'Bow' bridges are on ancient sites and use of the name suggests that arch bridges, at that time, were unusual. The customary form of construction prior to, say, the twelfth century was timber or stone beams on timber or stone piers and the stone arch was introduced as a more permanent form on crossings of some importance. Bow Bridge, over the Harbourne in Ashprington, was referred to in 1315 as '*Stenebogh*', or the stone arch. The downstream part of this bridge was added in the early part of the last century but the upstream part could date from the fourteenth century. Both the Swing Bridge at Pottington, now nearly demolished, and the Swing Bridge in Devonport Dockyard, now immovable, are correctly named as they could swing horizontally to allow waterbourne traffic to pass beneath them. Trews Weir Bridge in Exeter, a suspension bridge, is sometimes locally referred to as 'the Swing Bridge'. This is an example of incorrect naming as the bridge is a fixed structure.

Crossing, in 1909, defined a clapper bridge as one 'composed of immense slabs of unwrought granite upon buttresses and piers of the same' and a clam bridge as a 'wooden footbridge seldom seen on Dartmoor'. These definitions have been used by other local writers and seem generally to be accepted in Devon and Cornwall. For

example, Clam Bridge over the Bovey to the east of Manaton, is a footbridge of two independent spans each with a deck of tree trunks. Teign-e-ver Clapper is a stone slab bridge of one span while Huntingdon Clapper is of similar construction but with two spans. But the terms 'clapper' and 'clam' have different meanings elsewhere in Britain. Both de Marc and Casson define a clam bridge as a stone slab bridge of a single span and a clapper bridge as a stone slab bridge of more than one span. For example, Wycoller Clam in Lancashire, unfortunately destroyed by flood in May 1989, consisted of a single massive block of stone across the beck while Wycoller Clapper, a short distance downstream, has three spans. Derivation of the terms is obscure, although various theories have been put forward. Henderson suggested that 'clam' is an Anglo Saxon word for twig or stick which, if correct, gives credence to the use of the term in Devon and Cornwall. Hoker, writing about 1600, stated that, prior to the building of Gervase's masonry arch bridge in the twelfth century, the Exe at Exeter was crossed by 'Clappers of Tymbre which s'ved for men to passe over on foote'. In Berkshire and in Surrey, the term clapper seems to be applied, in certain instances, to the shallow parts of the Thames. There are four bridges in Devon named 'Clapper Bridge'. None of these is now a clapper bridge although at one time all must have been. The largest and most impressive of Devon's clapper bridges is the one over the East Dart at Postbridge. But was it this medieval clapper or the turnpike road bridge that gave its name to the hamlet? It has been suggested that the word 'post' refers to the stone piers of the clapper bridge and, elsewhere, that the word is connected with the fact that the turnpike bridge was on an early post route from Plymouth. In support of the latter, there does not appear to be any use of the name before the end of the eighteenth century when the road bridge was built.

Many bridges take their names from the fords that preceded them. Langaford, Langford and Longford indicate a long crossing through the rivers while Bradford, Bradford and Broadaford mean that the fords must have been wide rather than long. Beaford on the Torridge may derive from the fact that the ford was set in woodland or perhaps it was 'Beauford' as is sometimes seen in seventeenth century records. Then the name would, in old French, suggest a beautiful ford, as indeed the setting continues to be. 'River' in Riverford seems superfluous: there could not be a ford without a river! Stoneford probably had a pebbly or stony bottom while at Sandford the way would be across fine gravel.

As with Pont Newydd in Wales, there are far more bridges called New Bridge in England, Scotland and Ireland than anything else. Twenty-six bridges in Devon are called 'New' with 'Mill' coming a poor second with ten. Fairly obviously, the name indicates the newer of two river crossings close to one another. For example, an early road from Ashburton to Tavistock crossed the Dart at Holne Bridge and probably continued on the southern side of the river to Merrivale. At some time before the seventeenth century, a bridge was built upstream of Holne Bridge and the road followed the northern side of the river to Dartmeet. This bridge was probably referred to as 'the new bridge' to distinguish it from Holne and eventually became known as New Bridge. Teign Bridge was a Roman river crossing and it remained the only southern bridge until the eighteenth century when Thomas Southcott of Bovey built a bridge just over a mile upstream, partly out of money left over from the repair of Teign Bridge and 'the rest out of his owne purse'. This became known as New Bridge to avoid confusion with the ancient Teign Bridge.

Bridges are sometimes named after people associated with them in some way. In

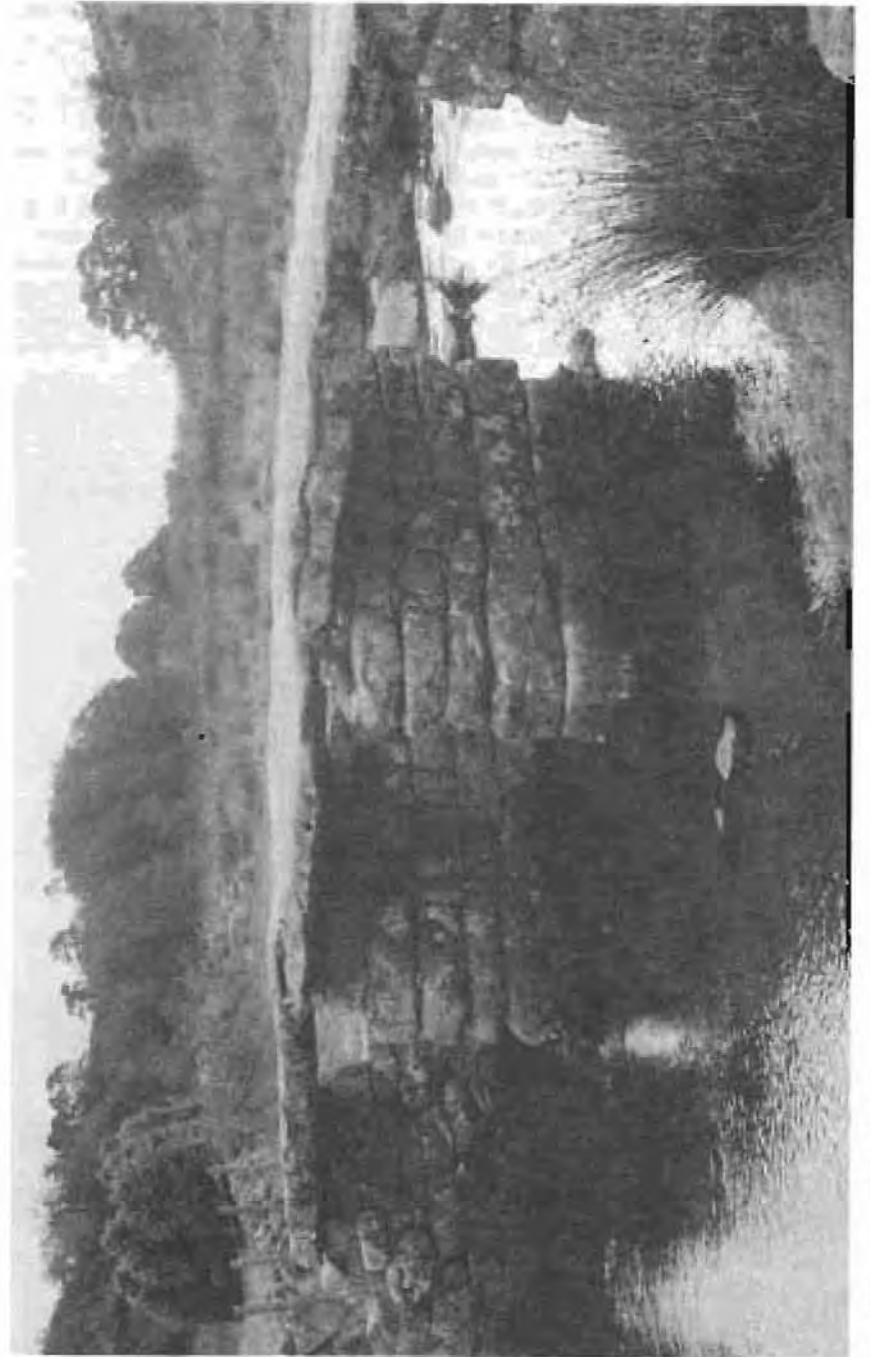
1624 the magistrates found that John Beare and John Toutte were responsible for the maintenance of Sheepwash Bridge in Bishops Nympton. John Beare has been long forgotten but Sheepwash Bridge is now called Tout's Bridge. Legend plays its part in the naming of bridges, too. The elegant bridge over the Dart in Totnes, built in 1982, was named 'Brutus Bridge' by the people of Totnes after Brutus the Trojan who, legend has it, gave the town its name. There are many bridges throughout Europe called 'Devil's' and, considering his apparent interest in Dartmoor, one might expect to find at least one Devil's Bridge in the County. There is indeed a bridge with such a name over the infant Meavy near Princetown but no spine chilling tale attaches to its building. Crossing states that it was built by a man named 'Devil' but the probable truth is more prosaic. Early in the century the alignment of the road near the bridge was even more tortuous than it is today. It was dubbed 'Devil's Elbow' and it was convenient to refer to the bridge by a similar name. Another name for Old Bridge over the Avon in Avonwick, a high arched structure, is the very appropriate Devil's Backbone Bridge. As a rule, designers or builders of bridges have not given their names to their handiwork. An exception is E Sandeman, then Borough Engineer of Torquay, after whom Sandeman Bridge, built as part of Fernworthy Reservoir in 1942, was named. There are three bridges named 'Palmer's' near Cullompton and two named 'Dymond's' near Exeter. Who were Palmer and Dymond? Builders, perhaps. Royalty is commemorated in the names of three Devon bridges. The Prince Consort formally opened Brunel's railway bridge over the Tamar on 2 May 1859 and the bridge is called Royal Albert Bridge in his honour. Queen Victoria gave her name to a much more modest structure, rebuilt in 1982, in Okehampton and Prince Edward Bridge at Two Bridges is named after the then Prince of Wales. Vigo Bridge in Tavistock is, one imagines, a reminder that Drake sacked Vigo in Spain in 1585. Drum Bridges, near Bovey Tracey, got its name from the 'drums', or headquarters, of the Royalist forces in the Civil War.

The bridge that gave Kingsbridge its name has long disappeared but there are 'King's' bridges extant at Ashburton, Chittlehamholt and Moretonhampstead. The name indicates that the bridges were on the King's, rather than the common, highway. East Bridge in Tavistock no longer exists but it was also called Great Bridge, a name it seems to have merited. Great Bridge in Ashburton is, however, quite a small structure. Why was Jews Bridge near Chudleigh Knighton so called? Was it built by a Jew? It was referred to in 1406 as *ponti Iudeorum* but in the eighteenth century the words 'Dieux' and 'Deux' were used to identify the bridge. The bridges at Barnstaple and Bideford are rightly called The Long Bridge but this name no longer describes the bridges at Cullompton, Membury, Newton Saint Cyres and Plympton. At one time they must have been long. There are ten 'Mill' bridges in Devon and many more with the word 'mill' in the name. Many of these were built by the mill owners and maintained by them.

To a stranger, as he passes over one bridge and notices another a short distance downstream, the hamlet of Two Bridges is aptly named. However, the name is not derived from the presence of these two structures, one of which is called Two Bridges and the other, built in 1931, Prince Edward Bridge. *The Place Names of Devon* suggests that the name derives from *to* or *at* and means simply 'at the bridge'. Donn, on his Map of 1765, shows a crossing of the West Dart apparently a short distance upstream of the confluence of this river with the Cowsic and a crossing of the Cowsic, which still exists, to the north west. It was probably these two bridges that gave the hamlet and, later, the eighteenth century bridge the name.



*Teign e ver clapper over North Teign River.
Clam bridge over River Bovey.*



Postbridge over East Dart River.

Horse Bridge over the Tamar might be thought to be a bridge for use by horse traffic as opposed to one exclusively for pedestrians. However, in the fifteenth century, all bridges were suitable for pedestrians and horsemen and a few wide enough for carriages. That apart, William of Worcester (1478) referred to the bridge as 'Hawtysbrygge' and 'Hautesbrygge' while Leland (1543) termed it 'Hawtesbridg'. Possibly 'haut' or 'hawt' was meant to signify 'high' for Horse Bridge is indeed a high bridge by mediaeval standards.

Some Devon bridges have alternative names. Dogmarsh Bridge, over the Teign downstream of Chagford, is also called Sandy Park or Dockerman's Bridge. Emmett's Bridge, over the Dart, is also called Riverford or Hood Bridge. Kenton Bridge, not a particularly large bridge, has three other names: Upper Stoney, Kenwith and John Tolls. Who was John Tolls, one wonders? Many more had names that are no longer used. Fenny Bridges, over the Otter near Honiton, was once called Saint Anne's or Chapel Bridge, and Cadhay Bridge, a little way downstream, was called New Bridge.

In Mediaeval times there were chapels associated with the Long Bridges at Barnstaple and Bideford, Clyst Saint Mary Bridge, Chantry Bridge, Exe Bridge, Saint Saviour's Bridge, Plym Bridge, Taddiport Bridge and Totnes Bridge. One might expect the chapel to have given its name to the bridge but this seems to have happened only to Saint Saviour's in Ottery Saint Mary.

References

- J E B Gover, A Mawer and F M Stenton *The Place Names of Devon*
William Crossing *Guide to Dartmoor*
Eric de Mare *The Bridges of Britain*
Sir Hugh Casson *Bridges*
Charles Henderson & Henry Coates *Old Cornish Bridges and Streams*
Lance Tregoning *Bovey Tracey An Ancient Town*
Benjamin Donn *A Map of the County of Devon, 1765*

Various documents at the Devon Record Office

IRON MEN OF SHROPSHIRE COME TO LAIRA

Keith S. Perkins

'The construction of bridges of large dimensions has, in every civilized age and country, been considered an object of general interest. Nor is this to be wondered at, when we regard their utility, or the difficulties to be encountered in their erection' (J.M. Rendel civil engineer – Plymouth, Jan 1829)¹

Britain's best known industrial monument is the Coalbrookdale Iron Bridge in Shropshire, the first structure of its kind in the world. Believed to have been substantially designed by the Shrewsbury architect Thomas Farnolls Pritchard² – the man



WILLIAM HAZLEDINE – Ironfounder of Shrewsbury, in his Mayoral robes. This is the man Thomas Telford called 'Arch Conjuror Merlin Hazledine'. He came to Plymouth in March 1825 to make the final arrangement before casting iron for the Laira Bridge, opened 1827.

whose idea it was – and built by Abraham Darby III,³ it spans the Severn Gorge amidst the beauty and tranquillity of the Shropshire countryside, steeped in the history of the industrial revolution.

Almost certainly, Plymouth civil engineer James Meadows Rendel at sometime stood at the apex of this extraordinary monument⁴ and gazed to the north-west along visible stretches of the River Severn, and just a half-mile to the south-east towards The Calcotts Ironworks, where tall brick chimneys belched all-blackening smoke and fire at Jackfield. About 1817, The Calcotts came into the hands of William Hazledine⁵, iron-founder of Shrewsbury, the man who produced the ironwork (at his chief foundry at Plas Kynaston) for the Menai Suspension Bridge⁶. Thomas Telford referred to him, affectionately, as the 'Arch Conjuror Merlin Hazledine'.⁷

During the evening of 6 January 1825, Rendel, who in June 1824 was ordered to design a cast-iron bridge⁸ to cross the Plym estuary at Laira by the 1st Earl of Morley, was summoned to Saltram House in South Devon by his patron to discuss a contract for ironwork, an earlier scheme to erect a suspension bridge having been shelved on technical grounds.⁹

On Sunday 9 January, Rendel travelled north by stagecoach to Birmingham where he met with William Hazledine. Both men proceeded to Shrewsbury where the contract for iron superstructure – destined for the Laira Bridge – was examined in detail. Fourteen days later, Rendel returned to Plymouth but not before he had communicated Hazledine's tender for the contract to Lord Morley who was then in residence at Kent House, his London home in Knightsbridge. In the event, Morley accepted Hazledine's tender and on the 9 March Rendel – together with Hazledine and Thomas Telford – again attended Morley when the contract was formally signed. On this occasion Morley charged Telford with the responsibility of sorting out any problem which might arise,



THE CALCUTTS IRONWORKS – at the riverside hamlet of Jackfield near Iron Bridge in Shropshire, was demolished in 1836. Ironwork for the Plymouth Iron Bridge at Laira was cast here in 1825/26. It was transported by narrow-boat to Stourport, by broad water barge to Bristol and by sea-going vessel to Plymouth.

his (Telford's) decision being binding on all parties.¹⁰

At Plymouth in the meantime, other works – the foundations and the masonry of the bridge, being executed under contract by Messrs John Johnson of the Plymouth Granite Works – progressed throughout the remainder of 1825 and well into 1826; but in that year Hazledine suffered serious injury whilst travelling in his gig on the Wyle Cop near his home in Shrewsbury. He collided with the Union stagecoach and shattered an arm in several places. He was taken to his home 'in such agony' that his wife suffered a condition of shock so severe that, tragically, its effect was eventually to deprive her of her own life.¹¹

It was not until five weeks later that Morley became aware of Hazledine's condition, but by then – to the astonishment of the many who knew and admired him – he was at work again. By 18 October 1826, Hazledine was able to advise Morley, that: '... Ironwork for the bridge, shipped from my works, now delivered in Bristol. Other parts are now taking down and loading at The Calcotts which will be regularly forwarded, and I hope the whole bridge will be delivered in Plymouth about New Years Day. There is now very little more to cast and only the fitting up of two arches to complete. We are not likely again to have a scarcity of water in the Severn, and every exertion is used to finish and send the whole away. I have a man at Stourport transshipping the iron as it is received there to Bristol, and another in Bristol to see that it is properly stowed in the sea (going) vessels . . .'¹²

William Stuttle was Hazledine's principle manager, and it was perhaps because of Hazledine's great respect for him that Stuttle's name appeared alongside that of his own on Telford's Waterloo Bridge at Bettws-y-Coed in North Wales. But with Morley now pressing for the completion of his bridge, it was as much as the incapacitated Hazledine could do to retain Stuttle with him in Shropshire:

'I feel much anxiety as to sending Mr Stuttle, my principle manager, to Plymouth just at this time, being very short days and the depth of winter fast approaching. Will your Lordship please to write me whether it will not meet your approbation for me to go on delivering the whole as soon as I can and afterwards to send all the force I have to erect it as soon as the days are pushing out again; this will not delay the completion any longer and will enable me to keep my people together to send off the whole by the time I have named . . .'¹³

But Hazledine's hopes soon faded with Morley's reply, anxiously urging him to have the Plymouth Bridge erected as soon as possible. Thus, with some misgivings and apprehension, Hazledine promised to send Richard Dee, one of his foremen, to Plymouth within a few days: '... and shall remain at Plymouth until all is complete'. He goes on to say: 'I have (also) arranged with Mr Stuttle, to leave here about this day fortnight and everything in my power shall be done to meet your Lordships wishes . . .'¹⁴

Rendel, who was well aware of Hazledine's plight, diplomatically requested Morley to avoid imposing penalties for late delivery; then on 20 November, Stuttle – together with a number of workmen – left Shrewsbury by the Bristol coach expecting to reach Plymouth by the following Wednesday.¹⁵ Richard Dee, having gone on ahead of Stuttle by a few weeks, was erecting the tons of ironwork which had already been delivered in Plymouth by the ship *Agramonia*. But for the second time, tragedy struck when Stuttle – soon after completion of the first arch – caught a severe cold. He refused to let work continue. By 14 February 1827, he was seriously ill.

Soon, Rendel was having to advise Morley: '... that there is but little hope for poor

Mr Stuttle. The medical gentlemen are of the opinion that he is completely worn out and that the event will be fatal . . . It will be an irreplaceable loss for Mr Hazledine'.

Hazledine, who had been notified of the situation, quickly wrote to pacify both Lord Morley and Rendel – who, although greatly sympathetic 'in this unpleasant case' were nevertheless anxious: 'as to the proper measures for providing against delay in the work'. He informed them that 'William Stuttle junior' would leave Shrewsbury for Plymouth on the following day,¹⁶ This he did, but without knowing that his father had died during the evening of 23 February.

William Stuttle, the son, completed the second arch of the bridge by 14 March and two more arches by the 26 May. On this day, the fifth and remaining arch was commenced. On 14 July 1827, Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Clarence (later Queen Adelaide) opened the bridge by being driven over it.¹⁷

Rendel, with a youthful exuberance – engendered by the completion of such a prestigious work – praised the young Stuttle (his contemporary), for having proved an energetic and competent manager. This 'Shropshire Lad' from Broseley eventually became an ironfounder in his own right, and one who it is believed, returned to The Calcotts to 'fetch' a young wife to Plymouth, rather than be parted from her!¹⁸

Although The Calcotts Ironworks was one of the most celebrated in Great Britain at the end of the 18th century, it was discarded by William Hazledine about 1828 as being unprofitable. It was demolished in 1836.¹⁹

At 1.30p.m. on the afternoon of Sunday 26 October 1840, at the age of 77, William Hazledine – ironfounder of Shrewsbury – passed away peacefully in his sleep. He was buried in the family vault at St Chads cemetery, Shrewsbury.²⁰ Plymouth Iron Bridge at Laira, opened in 1827, was replaced in 1962.

Notes, Sources and Acknowledgements

1. J.M. Rendel, 'The Ironbridge at Plymouth', *Trans. Plym. Athen I* (1830).
2. Barry Trinder, *The Making of the Industrial Landscape* (1982) p.87.
3. *ibid* p.88.
4. J.M. Rendel, *op.cit* p.102/103.
5. Barry Trinder, *The Industrial Revolution of Shropshire* (1973) p.63, 143.
6. H.J. Hopkins, *A Span of Bridges* (1970) p.187.
7. *ibid* p.82.
8. Act 5 Geo. IV c.cxiii.
9. Act 4 Geo. IV c.ix.
10. Morley Papers Acc 69 – D.R.O. (West). Rendel/Morley Accounts. 1823/28.
11. William Hazledine obituary – *Shrewsbury Chronicle* 30 October 1840, Shrewsbury Local Studies Library.
12. Morley Papers Acc 69 – D.R.O. (West). Letter: Hazledine to Morley, 18/10/1826.
13. *ibid*.
14. *ibid*. Letter: Hazledine to Morley 23 October 1826.
15. *ibid*. Letter: Hazledine to Morley 20 November 1826.
16. *ibid*. Letter: Hazledine to Morley 24 February 1827.
17. C.E. Welch, 'The Ironbridge at Plymouth', *Trans Dev Assoc.* Vol 98/1966.
18. Morley Papers Acc 69 – D.R.O. (West). Letter: Hazledine to Morley, 3 March 1827.
19. Barry Trinder, *The Industrial Revolution of Shropshire*, p.243.
20. William Hazledine obituary, *op.cit*.

Acknowledgements

J.R. Elliott, Area Librarian and Staff – Plymouth Local History. Lib.
Archivist Devon Record Office West.
Archivist Shropshire Record Office, Shrewsbury.
Librarian, Shrewsbury Local Studies Library.
C.E. Welch *op.cit* (believed to be resident in Canada).

DEVON DEATH CENTENARIES

Sir COPLESTON BAMPFIELD (1636 - 1691) Landowner and politician. Born at Poltimore. Served as Member for Tiverton in 1659 and for Devon in 1671 - 79 and 1685 - 87. Active in promoting Restoration and rewarded with shrievalty. Fell out of favour with James II but objected to new taxes imposed by William III's government and had his goods distrained to pay them. Said to have been generous and affable: died of gout.

Sir JOHN BERRY (1635 - 1691) Sailor. Son of Vicar of Molland ejected under the Commonwealth. In 1652 apprenticed as merchant seaman but taken by Spaniards. Appointed bosun in warship *Swallow* in 1663 and distinguished himself in action with pirates. Thereafter commissioned, commanding various men-of-war. At Sole Bay in 1672 came to rescue of Duke of York and was knighted. In 1682 saved Duke's life when the *Gloucester* was wrecked. Second in command of squadron sent to evacuate Tangier in 1683. Commissioner of Navy and second in command of fleet in 1688. Continued as Commissioner after the Revolution and is said to have upset the less industrious by his insistence on routine. Died suddenly but suggestion that he was poisoned never confirmed.

Sir GUY DE BRIAN (1307 - 1391) Soldier and administrator. Believed born at Tor-Bryan. Served in household of Edward III as itinerant commissioner, administrator and soldier. In 1349 King's standard bearer at Calais and fought in many campaigns. Admiral of Western Fleet from 1358 to 1374. Command at sea in several battles including defeat of the Flemings in 1371. Employed as ambassador on a number of missions and represented king's interests to Parliament. Knight of the Garter. After Edward's death appears more as elder statesman helping to mediate between king and parliament. Achieved great wealth in money and lands and was generous benefactor of the Church.

Adrian Reed

ERNIE BEVIN IN DEVON 1887-1894

Robin Stanes

Just over a century ago Ernie Bevin came to live with his sister and her family in Devon. They and he lived briefly at Morchard Bishop and then went to Coplestone to live at a house then called Tiddly Winks, but now known as Lee Mount. This stands almost exactly opposite Blandford and Webb's Coplestone Mill on the road from Coplestone to Morchard Road and Barnstaple. It will be seen that this is an old cob cottage, somewhat improved, built probably as a husbandman's house originally, but, by Ernie Bevin's day, a labourer's cottage. It backs closely on to the railway and may possibly have been railway property once, since Ernie's brother-in-law, George Pope, was a railwayman. This was Ernie's home until he left Devon for good six years later, although at times he 'lived in' on the farms where he worked, Beers and Chaffcombe, both within easy walking distance of Tiddly Winks.

Ernie (as he always liked to be called) had been born at Winsford in Somerset some 30 miles away in 1881. His mother was Diana Mercy Bevin (nee Tudball) and her husband was William Bevin. The Bevin family had been settled as labourers and farm-workers at Winsford for some generations. The name may be Welsh in origin, there has always been a good deal of migration of working people between north Devon and north Somerset and south Wales. Ernie's father William Bevin worked initially on the Acland estate near Winsford: later he went to Wales with his family but did not return to Winsford with them. Alan Bullock in his *Life and Times of Ernest Bevin* suggests that there is in fact some uncertainty about Ernie's paternity, that for some years before 1881 Diana Bevin had described herself as a widow and when she registered Ernie's birth she left the name of the father blank, as was done also in the parish register. Another account however says that his father died four months before Ernie was born. He was thus brought up entirely by his mother. She was the local midwife, she helped at the local pub and in some of the farmhouses. One contemporary of Ernie's at Winsford said of this period in his life that 'there was no-one ever poorer than he and his mother'. Diana Bevin had one great enthusiasm, she was a Methodist, a pillar of Winsford Methodist Chapel, at a time when Methodism still embodied a form of social protest against the Establishment in both Church and State. When she died in 1887, when Ernie was six years old, the Vicar was reluctant to bury her in the village churchyard because of her Methodism and only relented when most of the village turned up behind the coffin. Ernie kept a photograph of his mother on his desk at Transport and General Workers Union headquarters at Transport House.

Ernie had been to the Methodist Sunday school in Winsford and on arrival in Coplestone he was enrolled at Colebrooke school, a couple of miles walk down the lanes from Coplestone. He stayed there only a year, leaving in August 1890 as the log book reveals, and from there he went to the Hayward school in Crediton, by 1887 a state school but originally a charity school. It is not clear why he left Colebrooke, but the inspector's verdict on the school at that date is interesting. He remarked on the 'lack of cheerfulness' amongst the boys. Mr Sharland was headmaster and had the reputation of being a fierce disciplinarian. Perhaps the Hayward school was thought by the Popes to be a better and happier school, though the inspectors reported it as overcrowded. Crediton was however five miles away and it was probably only the fact that



The house near Coplestone where Ernie Bevin lived as a child. Formerly called Tiddly Winks, it is now known as Lee Mount.

George Pope, his brother-in-law, got him a rail pass for the journey to and from school that enabled Ernie to change schools. He stayed at the Hayward school until March 1892, when he was just eleven. He could have left the previous July when he reached Standard 4 and obtained his labour certificate, but he stayed on at school when most country boys sought the earliest opportunity to leave. Perhaps this too was the Pope family's idea. Apart from the extra six months at school he left without any claims to distinction at all. Later it was to be clear that he was a man of great ability, understanding and knowledge, with drive and force of character, but it would seem that his schooling was unimportant in the development of these characteristics. He did of course learn to read with some facility and that was soon to be important. Much later in life he was asked by King George VI to explain his vast knowledge and understanding of the world in which he lived. His reply, that 'it was gained in the hedgerows of experience' perhaps suggests that he too felt that school had done little for him . . . Once famous, he was remembered at the school. In the pages of the record books of the Hayward school, at the appropriate page, are tucked in obituaries of that school's most famous pupil.

Life at Tiddly Winks appears to have been fairly good, and he seems to have got on well with his brother-in-law and sister and their family. George Pope was a railwayman at a time when working on the railways was thought of as a secure and rather well paid job, certainly better than ordinary labouring work on the farm. For Ernie there were pleasures in country life available to all, not probably enjoyed by town children, and a village is, and was, necessarily something of a social mix. There are tales of playing 'bucking bronco' with a donkey that the Rector's sons owned or borrowed, and

of swimming naked in a railway reservoir and being chased out of this across the fields with his clothes under his arm. Later in life he remembered with pleasure following the hounds on foot, and like most countrymen saw little wrong in hunting. One villager remembered him at this stage of his life standing beside the road opposite Tiddly Winks washing potatoes in a stream (no longer there) that broke out of the hedge, his hands raw with chilblains. He also cleaned the family's shoes and he continued to clean his own shoes apparently right throughout his life. He once said to the Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov that he had got an idea while polishing his shoes. Molotov expressed surprise that the British Foreign Minister should have to polish his own shoes, and Ernie replied that there was nothing like polishing shoes for objective thinking, and recommended it to Molotov and to all who went to conferences. All the family at Tiddly Winks went to the Methodist chapel in Coplestone on Sundays, and he was sent to Sunday School as well, and this association with Chapel lasted well into his middle years. Clearly the Popes looked after his welfare as best they could, and he maintained close ties with them over the years, after he had left Devon. He was to say later that whenever he came back to these parts 'it gave him a deep sense of contentment'.

On leaving school he had to find work; he had no obvious qualifications to do anything but be some sort of labourer. It is odd that he never sought or acquired a 'skill' through apprenticeship, which was the way up for many poor boys. This was to be of some significance later, as the Union that he helped to create, the Transport & General Workers' Union, which became the basis of his political power was largely for the so called 'unskilled', the general labourers. So he was found work on two farms, first at Chaffcombe just off the Barnstaple road north of Coplestone at sixpence a week, and later at Beers, on the road to Bow and Okehampton, at 1s a week and his keep. He did doubtless what all farm boys did, mucked out shippens and pig houses, spread the dung in the fields, worked with horses rolling and harrowing – though probably not ploughing which was skilled work – chopped up roots, helped with the hedging, dug potatoes and so on. His wages were paid quarterly, 6 shillings and 6 pence a quarter initially, when a labourer's wages, living out, were 9 to 10 shillings a week. Working with horses gave him useful experience, as one of his best jobs in Bristol after leaving Devon was as a horse van driver. He never lost his interest in horses, begun presumably at Chaffcombe.

Part of the time he lived in as a farm servant. At Beers he slept in an outhouse up an outside staircase, reached from the yard, a room later used for storage. But he would have eaten with the family probably and therefore eaten fairly well, and he would have been able to listen to conversation which would, almost certainly, have turned to politics, and of course in the Westcountry to Liberal politics. One account of his life at this time says that the Mays who lived at Beers – and indeed still live there – entertained their neighbours a lot and that Ernie held the horses for these visitors and perhaps got a tip, and was perhaps also able to listen to what they had to say, when tea was over, or read the paper. All accounts seem to agree that Ernie used his ability to read to good account, his schooling had at least given him that facility. He read aloud to his employer at Chaffcombe, probably John Morris, from the Bristol Mercury and perhaps to the Mays at Beers as well, largely because old Mr May had failing sight, not because he could not read himself. Oil lamps or candles were the only source of light in a farmhouse a hundred years ago and to read a newspaper in a farm kitchen probably required young eyes. All the accounts suggest that Ernie picked up a lot of politics from

these readings, and it is of interest that it was a Bristol paper from which he read, since it was to Bristol that he was soon to go.

Ernie never really took to farm work, so all the accounts say. Although on the smallish Devon farms there is plenty of variety in the work done, much more than in a factory, boys' work was the least interesting. When Ernie became Foreign Secretary in 1945 there was much interest in his past at Coplestone, and a story emerged, which he later denied, that he had had a great row with William May at Beers. He had been set to cut up roots for the cattle, a boring job indeed, and William found him with all too little done and took a stick to him. Ernie was not having this and picked up a billhook to defend himself and threatened William with it. That was, so it seems, the end of his job and within a few days he was off to Bristol to begin the next stage of his career as kitchen boy, van driver and eventually Union organiser. He was by now thirteen. From then on he lived in cities, Bristol and London, but he was a countryman by upbringing. Alan Bullock wrote that 'he retained throughout his life many of a countryman's characteristics'.

He is still remembered in Coplestone, though it is nearly a hundred years since he left. The owners of Chaffcombe and Beers are still aware that a boy who later played a significant part in world affairs worked on their farms, though the former is by no means convinced that he was a 'great man'. One early inquirer into his life in Coplestone found that local folk dismissed him as a 'red', one of the principal, but in fact somewhat reluctant, organisers of the General Strike; but this was perhaps before he had demonstrated his relentless opposition to Stalinism through NATO and Marshall Aid, both of which he helped significantly to create and foster. In 1946 *Picture Post* did a feature on his early life and one of his biographers, Trevor Evans, clearly talked to Coplestone people. Only one old man, John Perkins, who had worked with him and heard him talk about what he had read in the paper, had predicted a great future for him in politics. It was the 'way the boy talked' that impressed him. Another opinion was that it wasn't really fitting for people of Ernie's background to occupy one of the high offices of state, but that he had at least put Coplestone on the map. Ernie would have disagreed with and resented this last view of his career. He saw nothing incongruous at all in someone of his background and class becoming first Minister of Labour and National Service, when he 'mobilised the nation for war', and later Foreign Secretary. As to his fitness to head a great department of state, Sir John Colville wrote in his published diaries, 'Indeed it may be doubted if there was ever a more loved and respected Foreign Secretary'. All memories of him agree on his eventual massive self confidence. This must be the result in his case, of having risen from the lowest rung in society to near the very top – even playing a memorable part in world affairs – entirely by his own efforts, without the benefit of birth or wealth or education. He may not be unique in the history of this country, but few farm boys have found, as he did, a final resting place in Westminster Abbey. Winston Churchill said of him, 'He was a rock, absolutely faithful, a great and true friend and comrade'. Perhaps his brief stay in Coplestone and in Devon should be visibly commemorated in some way.

Works consulted

- Alan Bullock, *The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin*.
Trevor Evans, *Bevin*, 1946.
Francis Williams, *Ernest Bevin*, 1952.

Mark Stephens. *Ernest Bevin*. 1981.
Roderick Barclay. *Ernest Bevin at the Foreign Office*. 1975.
John Colville. *The Fringes of Power. Downing Street Diaries*. 1985.
Picture Post. 30 November 1946.

EUPHEMISTIC LANGUAGE IN NINETEENTH CENTURY EXETER

C.G. Scott

Some of the language used in nineteenth-century newspapers and directories can be puzzling to the beginner in local history. What on earth was a 'Berlin Warehouse', or a 'Repository', or an 'Institution'? Besley's *Devonshire Chronicle and Exeter News*, in an article published in 1841 poked fun at what it deemed the 'paraphrasing' of the 'language of ordinary life' and the inflation of the ordinary by the use of flowery description. Although the article 'High-flown Phraseology' is anonymous – it is probably a true enough reflection of the changes taking place in nineteenth century society. Despite the lack of any explanation as to why language was being used in a particular way or its significance, the article is worth reading and has been reproduced below:

"High-flown Phraseology"

Amongst all the improvements of the age, none perhaps are more striking than those which have recently been made, and indeed are at present making, in the language of ordinary life. Who, in these days, ever reads of boarding-schools? Nobody. They are transformed into academies for boys, and seminaries for girls; The higher classes are "Establishments." A coachmaker's shop is a "Repository for Carriages;" a milliner's shop a "Depot;" a threadseller's an "Emporium." One buys druggs (sic) at a "Medical Hall;" wines, of a "Company;" and shoes at a "Mart." Blacking is dispensed from an "Institution;" and meat from a "Purveyor." One would imagine that the word "*shop*" had become not only contemptible, but had been discovered not to belong to the English language. Now a days, all the shops are "warehouses," or "places of business," and you would hardly find a tradesman having the honest hardihood to call himself a shopkeeper. There is now also no such world as that of "*tailor*," that it is to say, among ears polite, "clothier" has been discovered to be more elegant, although for our part the term tailor is every bit as respectable. This new mode of paraphrasing the language of ordinary life, however ridiculous it may in

some instances be, is not half so absurd as the newspaper fashion of using high-flown terms in speaking of very commonplace occurrence. For instance, instead of reading that after a ball the company did not go away till daylight, we are told that the joyous group continued tripping on the light fantastic toe until Sol gave them warning to depart. If one of the company happened on his way to tumble into a ditch, we should be informed that "his foot slipped, and he was immersed in the liquid element." A good supper is described as making "the tables groan with every delicacy of the season." A crowd of briefless lawyers, unbeneficed clergymen, and half-pay officers, are enumerated as a "host of fashion" at a watering place, where we are also informed that ladies, instead of taking a dip before breakfast, "plunge themselves fearlessly into the bosom of Neptune." A sheep killed by lightning is a thing unheard of: the animal may be destroyed by the "electric fluid;" but, even then, we should not be told it was dead; we should be informed that "the vital spark had fled for ever." If the carcase was picked up by a carpenter or shoemaker, we never should hear that a journeyman tradesman had found it; we should be told that its remains had been discovered by an "operative artizan." All little girls, be their faces ever so plain, pitted or pitiable, if they appear at a public office to complain of robbery or ill-treatment, are invariably "intelligent and interesting." If they have proceeded very far in crime, they are called "unfortunate females." Child-murder is elegantly termed "infanticide;" and when it is punished capitally, we hear, not that the unnatural mother was hanged, but that the "unfortunate culprit underwent the last sentence of the law, and was launched into eternity." No person reads in the newspapers that a house had been burned down – he perhaps will find "that a house fell sacrifice to the flames." In an account of a launch, we learn, not that the ship went off the slip without any accident, but that "she glided securely and majestically into her native element;" the said native element being one in which the said ship was never before. To send for a surgeon if one's leg be broke, is out of the question; a man indeed "may be dispatched for medical aid." There are now no public singers at tavern dinners; they are "the professional gentlemen;" and actors are all "professors of the histrionic art." Widows are scarce; they are all "interesting relicts;" and as for nursery-maids, they are now a days universally transformed into "young persons who superintend the junior branches of the family." – Anonymous.

(*Devonshire Chronicle and Exeter News*, 30 November 1841, p.8e. By permission of the Westcountry Studies Library, Exeter.)

THE DIARY OF A VICTORIAN LADY

Anne Born

A leather covered notebook came to light recently through a house sale. It is the journal of a young Plymouth woman for 1890 and 1891, and it tells the story of a Victorian love affair. Not explicitly, of course. Occasional endearments are in a private shorthand, and only once or twice does the writer allow herself a 'my Bob'.

The young lady was Florence Greet, born in 1867, who lived with her family at 4 Laira Street, Embankment Road, Plymouth. Her beloved was to become one of Plymouth's most eminent literary figures and editor of *The Western Morning News*. Robert Alfred John Walling (1869-1949) was 'the acknowledged prince of Devon and Cornish journalism'. Born in Exeter, he is remembered as a Plymothian; his father was editor of the Plymouth-based *Western Daily Mercury*. Robert first worked for the paper's West Cornwall office, but in 1891 he was appointed editor of *Bicycling News* in Coventry. He was soon recalled to Plymouth to launch the *Western Evening Herald*, which was a great success. In 1904 he became editor of the *Mercury*, and some time later, after a spell in London, editor of the *Western Morning News*. He wrote guide books and a fine history of Plymouth, *The Story of Plymouth*, published posthumously; and was an authority on George Borrow. He was also a prolific crime writer, although his thrillers were better known in America than England.

Florence and Bob's engagement was a long one, or seems so to us in 1991, for it lasted for five years. Those were the days when a young man could not marry until his future was assured. But soon after Bob became an editor they set up home, in 1892. Despite Florence's reticence enough can be drawn from her journal to show us the vast differences in lifestyle that have come about in the space of a century.

Florence married when she was 25, and we can be pretty sure she had not had a sweetheart before Bob came along. She led a quiet family life. Her diary entries are quite brief, detail what she did every day and note the weather. She dressmakes for herself and her sisters; does the washing – whether the family wash or her own is not clear. She reads quite widely, Dickens and Carlyle, joins in social life and helps entertain. Her parents are not mentioned. She enjoys walking and excursions.

But her thoughts and her whole life centre on Bob. These are the days of letter writing. They put us to shame. Bob was in Cornwall working for the *Mercury*, and only came home to Plymouth at weekends, sometimes not then. He and Florence write to each other every day, sometimes twice a day, and if she occasionally fails to get a letter she is plunged in gloom. But if Bob hasn't time to write one day he sends two letters the next! The Royal Mail really did see that letters got through at speed then, except during the Great Blizzard in March 1891 when there was no post for about 24 hours, something unprecedented.

Florence was subject to frequent colds, headaches and fatigue, obviously not helped by the strain of the long engagement and frequent partings. Bob often had to send a telegram saying he could not get home, and every time Florence is dreadfully disappointed. Sometimes she writes a cross or vexed letter back! Presents of flowers or gloves do not compensate for his absence. When he does come her joy filters through the laconic entries, they 'have fun' and she stays late at his home before he walks her back to hers. They get about a lot, by sea to Torquay, or to Penzance when they have

missed the train, which happens frequently, up on the Moor for picnics, by coach to Modbury, by train to Exeter. Or they walk, to Plymbridge, to Saltram, on the Hoe, to Millbrook, all over Plymouth. In the journal are numerous little pressed flowers and a few poems by Bob. He was a good prose writer but not the greatest of poets:

Oh my sweet, my darling Flower,
I think about you every hour,
For you are all to me –

are lines from an unfinished poem on a scrap of paper. The correspondence between the two must have been lively and enriching since it was such an important part of their courtship. Florence's fine dark eyes sparkle each time the postman calls; and after she has read Bob's latest letter, if she is not interrupted, she replies and takes the letter to the postbox herself. Then goes home to 'fuss about' – a frequent entry – read, sew and retire early, looking forward to Bob's return the next weekend.

In 1890 Florence finds her dairies for 1888 and 1889. She decides to copy the entries for each day into the diary for 1890, so that she can compare what happened. Fortunately for her writing hand the entries are short, but make an unusual record, without, it must be said, much variety in her occupations. But clearly each meeting with Bob was vitally important to her.

On New Year's Eve 1890 Florence writes: 'Didn't get up early, read Bob's story, did some sewing, heard from Bob, wrote to him, wrote up this diary, shall stay up to watch this year out, and hope the next, 1891, will be brighter and happier for us all.'

1891 did seem to be a reasonably good year, although the ambitious Bob was striving to advance in his work and away a lot. A keen sportsman himself, he attended football matches to report on them. 'Horrid football,' Florence grumbles to her diary. On Sunday 19th August it was dull and showery. Bob went to Laira Street and they stayed in all day, 'very happy'. After he had gone back to Cornwall, late, 'by the mail' train, Florence 'hardly knew what to do'.

Florence and Bob had to wait two more years before they married. Almost all their married life was spent in Plymouth except for a short spell in London. Florence died 18 months before her husband, and they were both 80 when they died. The obituary for Robert in the *Western Independent*, which he edited, in September 1949, makes no mention of Florence except to note her death and say, strangely formally, 'It would be an intrusion to write of the domestic happiness of his life'.

It would be good to know that Florence kept up her journal and was not swamped by domestic duties. She must have had many social obligations for she and Bob numbered among their circle Lord and Lady Astor, Eden Phillpotts and Isaac Foot.

THE CAUNTERS OF PONSWORTHY

Freda Wilkinson

Mary Ann Caunter, who was born in 1813 and married at nineteen or twenty, managed Ponsworthy Farm, in the hamlet of Ponsworthy, near Widecombe-in-the-Moor, for her invalid husband. She would never allow a pair of wheels on the place, I was told many years ago by Miss Thirza Mann, her great grand-daughter. 'These new-fangled carts cut up the turf, get stugged in the groot ground, and they're forever knocking down the gate-posts,' she said. Only the traditional Dartmoor sledges and pack-horses were used on Ponsworthy Farm then. Miss Mann, who spent all her life on the same Ponsworthy Farm, could just remember her great-grandmother. Miss Mann's niece (Mary Ann's great-great-granddaughter) and her husband and family still live and farm at Ponsworthy Farm.

In 1862 Mary Ann Caunter's son – Albert Henry Arthur Wakeham Douglas Caunter – married Thirza, only child of their neighbour at Sweaton Farm; a quarter of a mile along the road. Thirza's father was more progressive, he is said to have had the first market cart in the manor. On his first trip with it to Ashburton, the nearest town, he stopped at Paneras Hamlyn's black-smith shop in Poundsgate, only a mile and a half from home, leading his horse, as bewildered and dishevelled as its master. 'Paukus' he said, 'I've turned this damned thing over three times between Sweaton and here, will you lend us your boy to go down Ashburton with me? 'Tis a trade to be learned, you, a trade to be learned!'

These remembered folk, and many more of their kin, were celebrated by their descendants at the village hall near Ponsworthy in August 1990.

Many old family photographs, collected by the late Hermon French (local historian and a connection by marriage to the Caunter family), had been given to Colin and Margaret Westwood of the Dartington Rural Archive, who live in Ponsworthy, by Hermon's widow. They showed them to neighbours who recognised many of their own ancestors and they produced further photographs, documents and family memorabilia. Dartington Rural Archive decided to put on an exhibition about the Caunter family. The Westwoods researched the records for months and finally produced a family tree which I drew up for the Archive. Albert H.A.W.D. Caunter and his wife Thirza had fifteen children and several of them had long families. By the sixth generation (today's children) the family tree – or its twigs – stretched for thirty feet.

Albert and Thirza were tenants of Sweaton and of nearby Higher Uppacott Farm, but between them, by inheritance and later acquisition they also owned land at Hexworthy (some of the rare acres of freehold land in the Forest of Dartmoor); Ollsbrim and West Shallaford farms in Widecombe parish; and fields in Ashburton and Broadhempston. They were able to leave land to all their surviving sons and £100 to each daughter. Several of the daughters married farming neighbours – of the Mann, French, Irish, Nosworthy and Smerdon families, to produce dynasties of their own which still survive in the parish.

The name Caunter, however, does not. 500 years after a William Countour witnessed a charter of feoffment in Lowertown, near Ponsworthy, the last Caunter was born at Sweaton Farm and he left there as a young man nearly fifty years ago. His elder sister, another Thirza, who owned Sweaton, left after her husband – with whom she farmed it

– died in the 1960s. Many of the family took farms 'in-country', on the kinder lands where they had been accustomed to take their ewes for wintering (hence the fields at Ashburton and Broadhempston), in a way similar to that of Scottish farmers who, in the times of agricultural depression of the 1870s and 1930s, took pig farms in England and prospered where the softer-living lowlanders had gone to the wall. It was said 'If you could farm on Dartmoor you could farm anywhere'.

One such in-country family of Caunters still own the land at Hexworthy left by their great-great-great-grandfather, to his daughter Thirza Caunter the first, though they live on their main farm near Ipplepen.

Well over a hundred Caunter descendants came from as far as Bridgwater and Launceston to see the exhibition. It was a festive and happy occasion, cream teas provided (in aid of church funds) by the ladies of the village, half of whom had Caunter connections themselves. Long lost cousins, babes in arms and great-grand-parents gathered to examine the family Bible, with the birthdates of each of the fifteen of Albert and Thirza's children; the family photographs and the pictures and maps of their ancestral farms; the wills and deeds and leases of lands, and above all to work out the intricacies of their relationships.

Some appeared twice in the family tree, cousins having married cousins of the same descent, and many times two siblings of one family had married siblings of another. A very closely interwoven community it was in these parts a century ago, a community largely responsible for clothing, if not creating, the Dartmoor landscape we enjoy today. Their influence still prevails. Some of the best of the stone-faced hedges and dry-stone walls re-made today by the Dartmoor National Park's Upland Management team are the work of two Ponsworthy-bred great-great-grandsons of Albert and Thirza. Neat farms in the parish still delight the eye under the traditional management of other great and great-great-grandchildren.

But they do move with the times too. One great-great-granddaughter of these farmers to whom the wheel was a novelty still lives in Ponsworthy but spends her working life driving coach-loads of tourists all over Europe.

Note: Copies of the Caunter family tree (reduced in size!) may be obtained from The Dartington Rural Archive, Dartington Hall, Totnes, Devon, for £5 plus postage.

REVIEWS

Plymouth's Defences: A Short History, by F.W. Woodward. 1990. £4.95. ISBN: 0 9516393 0 7. 57pp, 11 maps, 38 illustrations. Published privately by the author.

The inextricable link between Plymouth's history and the wider evolution of defence technology during the past five centuries has inevitably bequeathed a remarkable legacy of important military structures in the city. Indeed, in terms of their scale and diversity, the remains of fortifications in Plymouth and its environs are amongst the most important to be found anywhere in Great Britain. And yet, as Major Woodward's admirable new survey of Plymouth's defences points out, there has so far been no coherent city council policy devoted to their conservation, still less to their interpretation and sympathetic usage. As a consequence, there have been instances where the treatment of important sites has been little short of scandalous. Moreover, apart from the acquisition of Crownhill Fort by the Landmark Trust and its opening to the public, there is at present little sign that any new enlightenment is about to dispel the benighted corporate attitude that has prevailed to date. But historians as well as planners must share the blame for neglecting this key aspect of Plymouth's heritage. After all, until now, there has been no serious work devoted specifically to the description and explanation of local fortifications, and this omission has undoubtedly contributed to an appalling disregard of their worth. Woodward should therefore be congratulated warmly for seeking not only to chart the evolution of Plymouth's defences, but also to record the structures which survive in the present-day landscape.

His stated intention to follow-up this first book with two more which will offer further details (about the physical remains on the one hand, and developments over the past one hundred years on the other) must also be applauded and encouraged. Studies of this kind do after all hold out a glimmer of hope that legacies of the city's past might at last be properly appreciated and cherished for the future.

Although relatively modest in length, Woodward's book manages to chart a clear descriptive pathway through the complex historical development of Plymouth's fortifications. The work comprises three sections. First, the 'story of Plymouth's defences' is recounted from the time of the earliest installations until the official abandonment of the idea of coastal defences in Britain in 1956. Second, a series of nine plans reveal the changing nature of defences between the mid-fourteenth century and the 1940s. A tenth draws together all this information by showing the location of seventy important installations in and around the city. Thirdly, the book includes a brief section listing sites recommended for visits. It is hoped that the potential to expand on the latter theme will be realised in Woodward's next volume.

Throughout the book the author (who has previously produced an important study of Plymouth's Royal Citadel) displays his expert knowledge of coastal artillery as well as his command of the historical events which shaped local developments. The result is a lucid, readable and well-illustrated text. Cartography by Sally Alexander is crisp and effective, though none of her maps includes a scale bar. (Indeed one of the only illustrations which shows scale is a reproduction of the 1643 'siege' map. Yet of all the many historical maps of Plymouth this is one of the least satisfactory in terms of planimetric accuracy). But such criticisms do not detract significantly from the positive qualities of the book. It represents not only a welcome work of reference, but also a handbook for

the enthusiast interested in finding the impressive remnants of Plymouth's fortifications in today's landscape.

Mark Brayshaw

Dartmouth and its Neighbours by Ray Freeman. Phillimore, Chichester 1990. 212 pp. Hardback. Illustrated. ISBN 0 85033 697 X. £13.95.

In 1983 the author published her *Dartmouth. A New History of the Port and its People* which was reviewed in *Devon Historian* No. 39. This latest work follows the same comprehensive pattern but, as its title suggests, includes the histories of the neighbouring parishes of Stoke Fleming, Ashprington, Cornworthy, Stoke Gabriel, Dittisham and Kingswear. Material from the earlier book is retained and, generally, expanded. There are additional chapters which take the history of the Dart Valley down to the Conquest and give a fuller account of overseas activities in Tudor times, notably those of the Gilberts and John Davies. There is more about the Newfoundland trade, so important in the 17th and 18th centuries, and a useful section on privateering during the French wars which was on the whole a profitable undertaking for the town. Greater space has allowed fuller treatment of the Dartmouth dynasties from the still necessarily shadowy Hawleys to the Holdsworths and their rivals the Seales who, with their friends, dominated the local scene for the best part of two centuries. They were a splendidly contentious lot and their lawsuits make fascinating reading. With these continuous power struggles it is not surprising that electoral corruption was the rule even after the 1832 Reform Act which cost the Borough one of its two seats, the other going in 1868. Ready cash was available to voters and threats and promises were openly used – a heavy subscription to the desired railway if one candidate were elected, a promise to 'black' the port by an influential shipowner if his man did not get in.

The social history of the Borough is covered as thoroughly as its political, economic and physical growth, the latter in great part the chronicle of river land reclamation. As elsewhere the poor in Dartmouth suffered, particularly in the last century. The narrowness of the site compressed a growing population into old and insanitary tenements by the river and it was not until between the wars that the problem began to be tackled. In the country conditions seem to have been slightly better. There, as in the town itself, power lay in a small number of hands. In Dittisham in the last century the vector, as lord of the manor, owned every house in the village.

Part of the charm of this book lies in the diversity of these Dart-side characters and there are a great many of them: preachers like Flavel practising their calling in disguise, inventors like Newcomen of Bidder, landowners, seamen, shipbuilders, the long procession of merchants, the goodwomen who kept the pesthouses in the plague and survived, and the less meritorious Roger the Miller who burnt down his house with his wife and children inside. The illustrations are excellent and to the original maps others have been added to illustrate medieval lordships and landholdings, ocean voyages and some of the eighteenth century lawsuits that decided the future shape of the town. It will be many years before this volume is replaced as the standard history of Dartmouth and around.

Adrian Reed

A Man of Great Learning: The Life of Sir John Dodderidge, 1555-1628, by Chantal Stebbings. Faculty of Law, Exeter University, 1989, 27pp, £2. ISBN 0 9514988 2 7

One of the most fruitful developments of recent years has been the interest of historians of the professions in the family background and career patterns of their practitioners. This booklet is also a good example of an author's specialist knowledge enabling her to pursue the career of one of the greatest of Devon-born lawyers with more authority than would have been possible for a layman. Born in South Molton (but not, surely, on the manor of Brennidge which he only acquired by purchase in about 1620) John Dodderidge was educated in Barnstaple, where his father traded, at Oxford, and at the Middle Temple. With considerable experience as a practising lawyer he rose to be Solicitor-General and ultimately one of the Judges of King's Bench. His closeness to the Stuart Court involved him in political issues, but not to his discredit, possibly because he had had opportunities to observe the political scene as a member of Elizabeth's parliaments. In telling her story Dr Stebbings has drawn upon a very wide range of sources, both printed and manuscript and her footnote references are a model of what these should be. She packs a great deal into this short pamphlet, including references to Dodderidge's main published works, both professional and antiquarian. The Judge's learning was indeed remarkable. And only in a few items of family history does the author fall short. The *Prudence*, John's father's ship, picked up her great prize in 1580 not off the coast of Guernsey but off that of Guinea in West Africa. There are also a few loose ends. Was a 24-year old law student really Mayor of Barnstaple in 1579? To accept this means relying on J.B. Gribble. The office was no sinecure and in fact Richard, John's father, is named as one of the town's Aldermen in 1583 which suggests that he had already been Mayor. The author includes some good stories to enliven the gatherings of the Law Faculty's Dodderidge Club, for whom this biography was written, but members should be warned that the story of the sober Judge and the fictional Huntingdon jurors is probably itself apocryphal. May one suggest a field-trip to view the Dodderidge Parlour in the Guildhall in Barnstaple?

Joyce Youngs

Stoking up the Past, a Sketchbook History of Gas Industry and the Growth of the Gas Worker Union in Plymouth by A. Bird and H. Nabb. British Gas plc South Western and GMB Southern Region. 1987. 64pp, £3. ISBN 090 3545 41 1.

In the Cause of Liberty, Exeter Trades Council 1890-1990 by Andrew Kirkby. Exeter Sparkler Books, 1990, pp81, £3.95. ISBN 0 9515561 0X.

As in other parts of the country the years 1889-90 were critical times for trade unionists and this is reflected in these two studies, the first being the centenary of the formation of the union in 1889 and the latter of the trades council the following year. Both histories have been hampered by the difficulties of finding primary institutional records because of wartime bombing. In the case of Bird and Nabb they have broad-

ened their work to a history of the Plymouth gas industry and the strength of the booklet is more on that side because of access to the national trade press of the gas industry. Andrew Kirkby has used the local newspapers and made good use of the secondary literature, as his bibliography shows. Both histories show how dramatically membership of local organisations can be affected by movements in the trade cycle and by technical change – in the case of the gasworkers in recent decades liquified petroleum gas and natural gas, and for the Exeter trades council the demise of traditional skilled engineering. In 1979 75 per cent of the latter's affiliated membership was in the public sector. What is encouraging about both these booklets is their indication that there is an active interest in working class history in the two cities. What we do not have anywhere is the sort of study of interest networks amongst the working class as we have for the middle and upper classes. For example Henry Loram, the veteran chairman of Exeter Co-operative Society, turns up in Andrew Kirkby's work as the first president of the trades council. Others may have been active in both and in the Liberal Radical Association which aimed to catch the working men for the Liberals. It may be impossible but if researchers kept their eyes open for working men of the same name in different organisations it would be some achievement to trace the links.

J.H. Porter

The Edworthy Scandals: A Story of Excommunication and Brawling in the Vestry in Chulmleigh in the early 19th century, by R.C.M. Bass. 30pp. Available from Gilsons, Newsagents, Fore Street, Chulmleigh: £1.50 + 30p p + p.

Chulmleigh in the 1810s: when there were signs of the gathering gloom in English farming; the great slump that was to force thousands of farmers off their farms (Hoskins); when many of the little Freeholds in this neighbourhood being mortgaged for nearly as much as they are worth, their Title deeds are in other hands than those of the owners' (Lyson); a time for quarrels and litigation. The story has two starting points: Susanna Edworthy ought to have paid 2/- a week under her husband's will to Agnes Hosegood and suffered excommunication and imprisonment rather than do so; and her son George Hosegood Edworthy 'did quarrel, chide and brawl' with the Curate, and was banned from entering the church for ten days. Richard Bass expands the story in all sorts of directions with the help of detailed research and a lively imagination. It is great fun to read, and instructive too. The author has now published a series of items on Chulmleigh's history. Let us hope he will now do for Chulmleigh as a representative Devon village what Rowland Parker did in *The Common Stream* for Foxton as a representative Cambridge village.

David Pugsley

Bond and Pearce, by David Pugsley. Law Faculty, University of Exeter. 36pp. £2. Obtainable from the offices in Plymouth and Exeter of Bond Pearce.

These two men J.T. Bond and Percy Pearce were linked not only by their partnership in the solicitors' business they founded (now one of the largest in the West of England) but in their political activity on Plymouth Town Council at the turn of the century.

Mr Pugsley opens with four sections on national politics, local politics, local newspapers and local government. Then he launches into his two biographies, liberally interspersed with facsimiles of articles and cartoons from the Plymouth papers, the *Morning News*, the *Mercury*, the *Western Figaro* and the *Comet*. J.T. Bond was a leader of the Liberal Party, three times Mayor, and the man responsible for modernising the administration of the Corporation, for starting the slum clearance drive, for the borough extensions which took in Laira and Compton, and for Burrator Reservoir.

Percy Pearce supported him on the Council, but his reputation was based on his ability in the Law Courts; indeed he was scornfully nick-named 'Percy the Pleader' by the powerful leader of the Conservatives on the council, John Pethick.

No one can walk about the streets of Plymouth without being aware of these names, but like so many notables of a generation or two ago, they are only names. Mr Pugsley has done a splendid job in reviving their memory, and in making them real through the lively contemporary reports of their activities. Would that we had such reporting today! One hopes that he will give us more such information and amusement on yesterday's Plymouth.

Crispin Gill

Tiverton and the Exe Valley, by Mary de la Mahotiere. Chichester, Phillimore, 1990. c120pp. £9.95. ISBN 0 85039 738 0

On expectation, Tiverton and the Exe Valley appears set to follow the style of Phillimore's volumes on, for example, Chagford, Barnstaple, Ottery St Mary, Ilfracombe, Bideford, Kingsbridge & Salcombe and the Torbay towns. Not, however, that this format has been without its limitations: this reviewer has commented before (*DH* 32) on the then lack of cohesion between illustrations and text. Happily that is a thing of the past and, specifically, Anne Born's 1989 *The Torbay Towns* was produced on paper consistent throughout the book so enabling a full integration of word and picture.

But what has happened now? From the former hapless sixteen page illustration 'insert' we now find just fourteen pages of text as an extended foreword to over a hundred pages of captioned illustrations. This brief history is undoubtedly most readable and informative but I cannot believe that Mary de la Mahotiere has expended all that she could have said in those few pages. For although the subsequent photographs, engravings, advertisement illustrations, etc, with their descriptive captions are most interesting, I submit that this type of presentation is already in plentiful supply and that we should be able to anticipate a predominance of reading matter in such a volume from this publisher. And why is it not paginated? The text, at least, should surely

be capable of easy reference. It is just too tantalising. This reader was left looking for more – despite the title, there is only a brief excursion away from Tiverton up or down the valley proper. Nevertheless this book provides a rewarding insight into, especially, the social history: there cannot be many towns able to provide photographs of six toll-houses nor one with its own police force, totalling around a mere dozen complete with Chief Constable, and not becoming part of Devon Constabulary until 1943.

One final comment on the layout. The right hand front end-paper carried a c1790 map of Tiverton which is coupled with a concise description on the facing inside cover. Ingeniously (and novelly to the reviewer) the text has been set to half width so that it is not obstructed by the dust jacket fold-over. A tiny aspect of the book, of course, but a particularly helpful one.

David Edmund

Mr Wolston's Little Line – The story of the Torbay and Brixham Railway by John Dilley. Published by the author at 84 Barton Avenue, Paignton; 1990, 48pp. £

I am sure that fellow Devon History Society member John Dilley will not mind my calling this little book unpretentious, its whole essence surely being to enable a wider audience to share the author's enjoyment in researching this Devon branch line and the involvement in its earlier days of local solicitor (and Portuguese Vice-Consul!) Richard Walter Wolston. Resulting, as the author notes, from an initial two-page exercise for an Open University Course, its many readers will be pleased that there is one instance of the efforts in researching a worthy project which has not been doomed to remain secreted – and thereby large wasted – between its thesis covers.

I feel a little unhappy at the subtitle *The Story of the Torbay & Brixham Railway* because 'The' always seems to imply a definitive history whilst, as John Dilley takes care to acknowledge, one other specific account has been published. But laying that thought aside, here is a very readable running commentary on the struggles over 95 years of a country branch line to survive, whether in getting its rightful dues for Brixham-originated goods traffic when continuing on the 'big brother' main line, or seeing a vast increase in passenger numbers which the branch managed to service during road transport problems disappear just as soon as those problems were resolved: 'Our clients left us as though we had the plague'.

One point in the book's production which I must praise – and which other publishers could emulate – is the use of the centre pages to print the main illustrative map: a two page spread without the annoying centre gap (or overlap) which so often occurs. This is an interesting account which holds the attention of the reader and has enough original material to warrant its place on the bookshelf of local historian or railway 'buff' alike.

David Edmund

Horrabridge as it was by John Rowe. Yelverton and District Local History Society. Reprint 1990. 26pp, including 6 photos. £1.50 each from local shops. ISBN 0 9515198 0 8.

This is a personal reminiscence of the west Devon parish of Horrabridge and its immediately neighbouring area near the River Walkham, as remembered by John Rowe, whose childhood was spent in the village in the years between the two world wars. In the booklet Mr Rowe recalls with clarity his impressions of features of the countryside – many of them still remaining although some now disappeared – and, vividly, many of the personalities of the people he knew, of the houses they lived in and the work they did. The result is a very readable portrayal of the life of a particular parish in the early part of the twentieth century. Surely there must be many other villages with histories still untold which could benefit from such well-written treatment.

Helen Harris

Clearbrook in those days by Lilian Lethbridge. Yelverton and District Local History Society. 1990. 56pp, including map and 5 photos. £3.00 from local shops. ISBN 0 9515198 1 6.

For the many people who may have pondered on how, when, and why the small somewhat suburban-style settlement of Clearbrook came into being, here is the explanation. Mrs Lethbridge tells us that the hamlet, which lies on the eastern slopes of Roborough Down, north of Plymouth, close to the River Meavy, owes its origins to an isolated farmhouse existing here in 1789 and to the development of nearby Yeoland mine in the nineteenth century. She traces the growth of the habitations and from a clear memory describes with first-hand affection the rural economy of her family and the others who lived in that close-bound community. From her account the hard work – often for little enough reward – and the general goodwill of that time come clearly into focus. An error that must be noted is the date of the Devonport feat (evidently in confusion with Drake's feat given as 1590, but actually dating from powers obtained in 1793). But this does not detract from the main value of the work, which lies in the uniqueness of the author's interesting and very personal account.

Helen Harris

NEW CONTRIBUTORS

Elisabeth Stanbrook is the Editor of *Dartmoor Magazine*. She is also a part-time postgraduate student at the College of St Mark and St John in Plymouth where she is studying for a M.Phil. research degree, and is applying for a transfer to a Ph.D.

D.L.B. Thomas, a Chartered Civil Engineer, practises as a consulting engineer and lives in Exeter.

Anne Born, historian, poet and translator, is the author of various books on Devon and local history.

THE COLYTON LOCAL HISTORY CENTRE

(a service-point for the Devon Record Office, administered by
THE COLYTON PARISH HISTORY SOCIETY)

The above-named is situated in The Board Room, above the Town Hall in Colyton, and is open on most Mondays between 2 and 5pm (Bank Holidays excepted).

We have copies of the Parish Registers for Colyton and 30 surrounding parishes, together with tithe maps and tithe apportionments and some Independent Registers, also a copy of the IGI for the County of Devon – all on microfiche.

Also available are microfilm copies of the records of the Feoffees of Colyton, and a small selection of reference books. An archivist from the Devon Record Office visits monthly, and will answer queries as well as bring any other Devon material which is available on fiche or film.

Enquiries and appointments – please phone COLYTON 53245.

THE DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY

Minutes of the 21st Annual General Meeting held at Exeter
on Saturday 13 October 1990.

In the Chair, the President, Professor Ivan Roots.

Apologies were received from Professor W. Manchinton, Messrs. D. Puglsey and A. Reed, and Mr. and Mrs. Sedgewick.

1. Minutes

The minutes of the last Annual General Meeting (printed in *The Devon Historian*, April 1990) were read and approved.

Matters Arising – none.

2. Hon. Secretary's Report

Mrs S. Stirling reported on the 20th anniversary of the Society, which had been marked by special articles in *DH* 40, and an anniversary lunch at Buckland Abbey in May, attended by 60 members. Thanks were due to Professor J. Youings for organising that event, Dr A. Grant for organising the summer conference at Hartland, and Mr M. Nix for serving as speaker and guide there. Council had met in September 1989 and January 1990. Mrs Stirling said she appreciated the details of meetings sent to her by secretaries of local societies for the information of DHS members. She warmly thanked Mr D. Edmund for his willing help in very many ways over the year. The members present then showed their appreciation of Mr Edmund's work for the Society.

The President congratulated Mrs Stirling on her report and her work, and also thanked the membership secretary, Mr J. Pike, and the minutes secretary, Dr. Grant.

3. Hon Treasurer's Report

Mr Edmund presented the income and expenditure account, and pointed out that, as the balance was much the same as last year's, there would again be no need to raise subscriptions this year. This might, however, become necessary in future, as postage had increased, and the latest estimate for *DH* was up by 14 per cent. Other estimates would be sought. Mr Edmund praised the production as well as the contents of *DH*, and was against reducing its size, especially as

advertisers' 'mailshots' were now covering costs of distribution. The number printed was 450, which included 'spares' as well as copies for 323 individual and 46 corporate members. Mr Edmund thanked the Devon and Exeter Institution for the use of their office address and other facilities, and proposed that the Institution should be made an honorary corporate member of DHS. This was seconded by Mr Pike, and carried unanimously.

The accounts were accepted by the meeting and the President warmly thanked Mr Edmund.

4. Hon. Editor's Report

Mrs. H. Harris thanked contributors to issues 40 and 41 of the *Devon Historian*, and praised the high standard not only of the papers received, but also their presentation, which had made her work easier. A wide variety of subjects had been covered, but with the emphasis on south rather than north Devon. She hoped this balance would be redressed in future issues. There had also been a good mix of styles, from lighter weight pieces to the products of deep research, with a pleasant element of humour here and there. Mrs. Harris added that she welcomed information from local history societies, and any 'updating' from previous articles. She hoped articles of a wide range of subjects, styles, and lengths would continue to flow in.

The President thanked Mrs. Harris, and praised the publication. He also mentioned the attractive cover-prints selected by Mrs. Stirling. Professor Youings congratulated Mrs. Harris on the photographs now being included.

5. Election of Officers and Council

Mr J. Bosanko proposed all officers be re-elected *en bloc*. This was seconded, and carried unanimously.

There were three vacancies on the Council. Mr. Tatham and Mrs. Wilkinson, who had stood down in accordance with the three-year rule, were re-elected. One place was left vacant, to be filled by co-option if necessary before the next AGM.

6. Conference Programme 1991

Cullompton, Sat. 18 May 1991. Mr. D. Pugsley to co-ordinate. Suggestions for the second meeting included Buckfast Abbey. Other ideas could be put to members of the council.

7. **Any Other Business**

Mr. Pike would appreciate members' post codes for the mailing list.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked officers, council and all present, and closed the meeting at 2.35 p.m.

DEVON BIRTH CENTENARY

ROBERT HERRICK (1591 - 1674) Priest and poet. Born London, educated Westminster School, St John's College, Cambridge and Trinity Hall. Vicar of Dean Prior 1629, ejected 1647, reinstated 1662 and remained there until his death. Said to have objected to some of his neighbours and to have found country life, at least at first, uncongenial. Later, seems to have enjoyed it and to have been popular with the local gentry. Substantial amount of his verse written while in Devonshire. Considered a fine lyricist who has been described as the most frankly pagan of English poets.

Adrian Reed

**UNIVERSITY OF EXETER
PRESS**

A History of the Church in Devon and Cornwall

Unity and variety
edited by Nicholas Orme

This is the first general history of the Church in the South West since 1922, the first to include the non-Anglican churches, and the first to cover the twentieth century. In seven chapters, six expert historians follow the story of religion from the fifth century to the present day, including the Celtic and Saxon periods, medieval monasteries and parish churches, the Reformation, the rise of Dissent and Nonconformity, the Victorian reforms and modern developments. There are numerous maps, illustrations, references and suggestions for further reading. This will be a standard reference work for local historians, members of Churches and general readers for a long time to come.

Exeter Studies in History
May 1991 200pps approx. illus.
0 85989 355 3 PB Price £6.95

SPECIAL PRE-PUBLICATION OFFER FOR MEMBERS OF THE DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY OF £5.95

The Jews of South-West England

Bernard Susser

This book is the definitive study of the Jews and Jewish communities (in Exeter, Falmouth, Penzance and Plymouth) of Devon and Cornwall. It records traces of Jewish contacts in Biblical and Roman times; the well-documented medieval Jewry of Exeter; traces of Jews in the post-expulsion period with their mining interests; and an in-depth study of the demography, economic activity as well as the cultural, religious and social life of south-west Jewry, 1730-1990.

The book chronicles the rise and decline of these once important communities and the part played by Jews in local and national government. It is essential reading for those interested in Anglo-Jewry, the countries and Jewish communities influenced by the emigration of south-west Jewry (USA, Australia, Canada, South Africa), and the acculturation and assimilation of a major British ethnic minority.

Spring 1991 288pps approx. illus.
0 85989 366 9 HB Provisional Price £25.00

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER PRESS
Reed Hall, Streatham Drive, Exeter EX4 4QR
