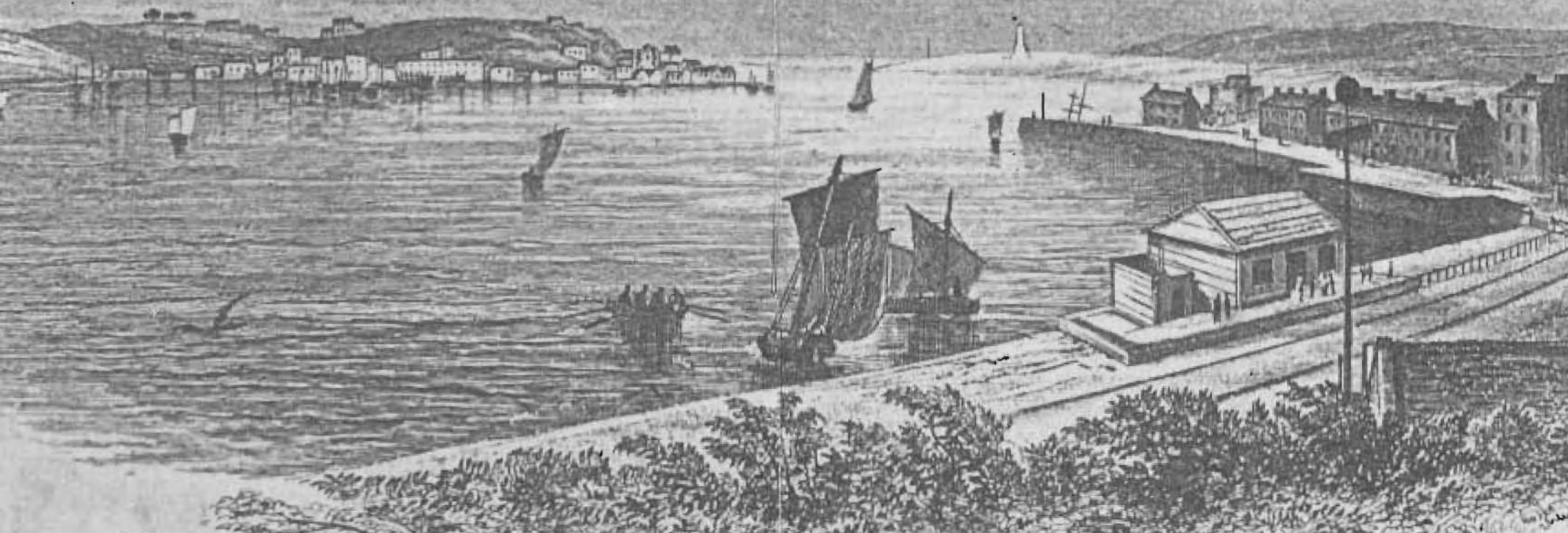


# The Devon Historian

April 1993

46



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## SUBSCRIPTIONS

*The Devon Historian* is available free to all members of the Devon History Society. Membership subscriptions run annually from 1 May to 30 April and 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 1993. 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.

## DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY CONFERENCES

These will be at Instow on 13 March, and Dunkeswell on 19 June.

The print on the cover is *Appledore and Instow*, steel engraving after G. Townsend, published (1856) in *Views of Devonshire*, Exeter, H. Besley, 1848-1871. (Somers Cocks no. 1357)

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## 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 £2.50. Also available post free are *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 2,000 - 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.: 1 July 1993, etc.

## F.W.L. STOCKDALE - BEGETTER OF THE STOCKDALE COLLECTION

Ian Stoyte

(This article complements Ian Stoyte's 'An overlooked description of Crediton', published in *The Devon Historian* 45, October 1992)

The publication of Samuel Rowe's description of Crediton in 1841 seems to call for some account of the man who caused it to be written. Who actually was F.W.L. Stockdale, the begetter of the Stockdale Collection? Even if he had not completed the gazetteer of Devon, had he completed anything else?

With the help of Mrs Sheila Stirling, the Librarian of the Devon and Exeter Institution, the information readily available was gathered together. The writer's full name was Frederick Wilton Litchfield Stockdale. His notes had been presented to the Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society in 1858 by his son, F.C. Stockdale. Questions were posed about him as far back as 1904 when Dr Brushfield<sup>1</sup> asked what had become of a future *Historical and Topographical Description of the County of Devon*, advertised on 1842 on a broadside, or broadsheet together with the names of some 700 subscribers, by 'F.W.L. Stockdale, Esq., (late Assistant Military Secretary to the Honourable East India Company), author of *Excursions through Cornwall, Antiquities of Kent*, etc, etc.' This had produced only a brief reply that it had never been published and that the notes had been donated to the Diocesan Architectural Society. And that seemed to be all that had been set down in print about him.

However, the Institution yielded further evidence. The letters in the Collection<sup>2</sup> had been written between 1840 and 1842, and had been addressed to Stockdale at Manor Place, Walworth, London, which fitted with his choice of a London bookseller, Smith, Elder, & Co, to receive further subscriptions. Wonderful to relate, Mrs Stirling was able to produce one of the very broadsides that Brushfield had enquired about, which carried both a description of the projected work (p. 4) and the list of the subscribers. As punctuated, a reference on it to 'one hundred engravings, from original drawings', did not, strictly speaking, say that Stockdale himself was the artist, but Brushfield had wrongly transcribed it to give it that sense. This now caused him to be sought in a fresh place, the Institution's reference works of artists, local and national, and the search was successful. Somers Cocks<sup>3</sup> listed some prints of Devon by F.W.L. Stockdale, presumably the son. Fisher's *Dictionary of Watercolour Painters*<sup>4</sup> contained a short entry:

Frederick Wilton Litchfield Stockdale (fl. 1808-48); assistant to military secretary East India Company; an antiquarian; probably lived in Kent; landscape and buildings. (V&A).

The brevity of the entry confirmed how little was known about him. His occupation could have been derived from the broadside, while the Kent connection was most probably a guess based on his apparently having written a book about the Antiquities of that county. That some of his work was at the Victoria and Albert Museum twenty years ago was fresh information. One wonders on what grounds 1808 and 1848 were chosen as limits for the time in which he was 'flourishing'. If accurate, they suggested he was born about 1780 and placed his death between 1848 and 1858.

Finally the Devon and Exeter Institution provided proof that his works were not all







F.W.L. Stockdale. Engraved by T. Woolnott from a drawing by Wageman.

Stockdale's entry in reference books could now be lengthened:

Frederick Wilton Litchfield Stockdale (1786-1842+), son of Robert and Caroline (Napier) Stockdale, of Westminster; married Harriet (perhaps Harriet Budd, in 1806, in London); antiquarian; author of *Antiquities of Kent* and *Excursions in the County of Cornwall* (1824); gathered notes and subscribers for an unpublished *Historical and Topographical Description of the County of Devon* for some 20 years; artist, of landscapes and buildings; illustrated his own works; examples of his drawings at the Victoria and Albert Museum; one child baptised in Cornwall in 1821 and two in London in 1824, and perhaps more elsewhere; Assistant Military Secretary to the East India Company until illness caused resignation pre-1824; portrait drawn by Wageman and engraved by Woolnott.

His social status is not entirely clear. His correspondents wrote to him as to a fellow gentleman; he styled himself "Esquire",<sup>12</sup> he can hardly have kept himself and his family for years on the proceeds of the books on Kent and Cornwall; and yet his tone is that of the professional writer, anxious to sell and a touch obsequious, rather than that of a man of independent means or outlook.

Perhaps this additional information about Stockdale will lead to examination of the registers in which some of the events above were recorded, which in turn could reveal more about him and his background. Maybe there are more clues in the *Antiquities of Kent*. Perhaps a family historian already has him firmly attached to a Stockdale family tree. Maybe a reader in London will check the 1841 census of Walworth for details of his household. Certainly it should be possible to establish the date and place of his death from the archives at St Catherine's House. But why he laboured so long at the gazetteer of Devon and sounded so close to publishing it, yet left nothing resembling a finished text, may remain a mystery. In the Collection is a printed circular to subscribers, dated November 1842 but with the year on this copy altered by hand to 1843. In it the author, still intent on drumming up trade, announced that 'the work is now in a great state of forwardness', even though 'his endeavours have been much impeded, owing to the most unforeseen circumstances, especially a long and dangerous illness'. But the manuscript draft of over eight hundred pages which he left, altered and re-altered to a state of painful incoherence, shows how very far it was from completion.

#### Notes

- 1 Brushfield, T.N., 'Unpublished History of Devonshire', *Devon Notes and Queries*, III, p.23, (1905)
- 2 It was R. Burnet Morris, principal compiler of the Devonshire Association's formidable slip-index, who decreed that 'Collection' was the most apt word to describe Stockdale's mixture of manuscript and printed papers.
- 3 Somers Cocks, J.V., *Devon Topographical Prints, 1660-1870 - A Catalogue and Guide*, Devon Library Services (1977)
- 4 Fisher, S.W., *Dictionary of Watercolour Painters, 1750-1900*, Foulsham (1972)
- 5 Stockdale, F.W.L., *Excursions in the County of Cornwall*, London (1824)
- 6 O'Byrne, W.R., *A Naval Biographical Dictionary*, London (1861)
- 7 The *International Genealogical Index*, compiled in America by the Church of the Latter Day Saints, is a collection of many thousands of microfiche containing, for England, by separate counties, the baptisms and marriages recorded in all church

registers that happen to have been transcribed but not in those that have never been transcribed. In consequence its coverage is uneven. Entries are telescoped as well, so that the occupations of bridegrooms or fathers, for example, are not included. It is nevertheless an invaluable tool for genealogists.

- 8 The London references are all to London Fiche C0368, *I.G.I.*
- 9 *Dictionary of National Biography*, LIV (1898)
- 10 Cornwall Fiche A0186, *I.G.I.* The manuscript transcript from which this entry was taken is in the Library of the Devon and Cornwall Record Society. 'Ureton' was found to be simply a misreading by an American Mormon of a less than copperplate 'Wilton' in the English transcriber's hand. Stockdale's abode at Lanivet was stated to be 'St. Bennett's'. He provides an illustration of 'St. Bennet's Priory' at Lanivet in the *Excursions*, and describes it as a family residence developed from the remains of an ancient monastery and maintaining its Gothic style.
- 11 Surrey Fiche D0295, *I.G.I.*
- 12 In the transcript of the Lanivet baptismal register Stockdale's rank or occupation was entered as 'gentleman'.

## NEW CONTRIBUTORS

Winifred O. Greenaway, who has contributed to leading national magazines, is currently writing the history of the Kennaway family of Escot.

C.A. Lewis's Doctoral thesis was entitled: 'The education of the adult in Plymouth 1908-1941'. His final appointment was Deputy Director of the Department of Adult and Continuing Education at Exeter University.

## THE KENNAWAYS OF ESCOT

Winifred O. Greenaway

Sir John Kennaway, first baronet, of Hyderabad, returned through ill-health from India in 1794 and within a few months bought Escot and its 4,000 acres from Sir John Yonge, MP for Honiton. The house, 1½ miles from Ottery St Mary, had been built for his grandfather in about 1680, to the design of Robert Hooke.<sup>1</sup>

Twenty-one years had passed since fourteen-year old John and his brother Richard, a year older, had sailed to India on the advice of their father, an Exeter woollen merchant.<sup>2</sup> They survived a shipwreck off the mouths of the Ganges and went on to make successful careers. John, in the military service of the East India Company, became ADC to the Marquess Cornwallis, who appointed him Resident to the court of the Nizam of Hyderabad. There he led the long negotiations which culminated in a diplomatic victory over Tipu Sultan, 'Tiger of Mysore'.<sup>3</sup> For these services, Cornwallis, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief, recommended a baronetcy, which was granted in 1791. He also gave Kennaway the larger-than-life portrait of himself by A.W. Devis, which is still in the library at Escot.

Richard made a considerable fortune in the civil service, becoming Second Member of the Board of Trade in Bengal. He returned to England two years after John and lived at Escot until his death in 1833. He never married, and the account books show it was he who paid most of the bills for the estate.

Sir John began improvements to his new house at once, employing James Wyatt II for the interior, and John Veitch (who had been brought from Scotland by Sir Thomas Dyke Acland to lay out the gardens at Killerton) to prepare 'A Plan of Roads at Escot'. In 1797 he married Charlotte, daughter of James Amyatt, former nabob and MP for Southampton, whose father was a surgeon in Totnes. Before they had completed their family of seven sons and five daughters Escot was destroyed by a fire in 1808. Although plans were made soon after to rebuild on the same site, this was not done until nearly thirty years later. The brothers, suffering latterly from blindness, both died in contented old age before the building was finished. Meanwhile, the family spent time at Fairmile, on the estate, and at Fort House in Sidmouth. A recent plaque on the building, now known as Church House, records the connection.

An impression of the estate at this period can be gained from *Pendennis* by Thackeray, who spent school holidays at Larkbeare, rented by his mother and stepfather from Sir John. Repairs to the farms were carried out as needed,<sup>4</sup> improvements continued, and the gardens began to assume their present layout. There is evidence<sup>5</sup> that Capability Brown influenced the design of the parkland, much of which survives until now.

The second baronet succeeded in 1836 and seems to have carried out his father's plans. The chief difference between the old and new building was the raising of the house above the ground by means of a terrace to the south and west of it, and the shifting of the entrance from south to east. The architect chosen was this Kennaway's contemporary, Henry Roberts,<sup>6</sup> who shared his deep religious convictions. This may have influenced the decision by Sir John (the name, John, was given to all the eldest sons) to build the church of St Philip and St James. Beautifully sited at the southern edge of the park, and one of the best of its time in Devon, its memorials give a biography of the

family. Unique in its originality is the window to his only daughter, Emily Charlotte, with Devon and estate flowers and her musical instruments telling a poignant chapter of family history. The church cost £2,000, and Escot became a separate parish in 1844.

The stables, almost as costly, were completed at this time and a new carriage 'yellow, picked out black and well-varnished, the crest on each side panel' was ordered from Hayman of Exeter. Sir John, educated at Winchester and Trinity College, Cambridge, married Frances, daughter of Thomas Kingscote, of Kingscote Park, Gloucestershire. Judging from diaries of their children, they lived not only a happy country life but one devoted to active and serious public service. Sheriff of Devon in 1866, the second baronet did a great deal for the Church Missionary Society, the Pastoral Aid Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society (his father had founded the Honiton branch) and for many other philanthropic movements and local charities. He also inherited a great enthusiasm for the 3rd Volunteer Battalion of the Devonshire Regiment.

These interests were passed on to his son who succeeded in 1873. After Harrow and a first class in law and modern history at Balliol College, Oxford, he was called to the Bar. A measure of his compassionate nature may be gauged by a journey he made to the southern United States, six months after the end of the Civil War. The *Nashville Courant* reported his arrival 'on a visit of amusement and general information'. He toured the battlefields and visited General Fisk to find out the progress being made in freeing the slaves.<sup>7</sup> He married Frances Arbuthnot after his return and just before election as MP for East Devon, which he represented from 1870-85. From then until 1910 he represented the Honiton division and was Father of the House for the last two years. Justice of the Peace and Deputy Lieutenant for Devon, he was made a Privy Councillor in 1897 and CB in 1902.

The estate flourished, famed for its splendid fernery, stocked by Sir William Cave.<sup>8</sup> Its flower gardens made a 'fairy-like foreground to the prettiest of perspectives'.<sup>9</sup> An item from the garden account book of 1874 indicates the scale of tree-planting - 3,500 trees at an extra payment to the men of 18 shillings per 1,000.

In 1906, 1,600 friends and constituents contributed towards a portrait of Sir John as a gift to his wife. By William Oules, it shows him, seated, in riding clothes, riding crop in his right hand by the end of his flowing beard. Family lore has it that this was the inspiration for Lear's limerick 'There was an old man with a beard', one of the less usual tributes to one who always gave of his best.

After war service in India, Mesopotamia and in Naval Intelligence, the fourth Sir John succeeded in 1919. Following Harrow and Balliol, he had travelled to the Far East before being called to the bar. He returned to the newly-opened Trans-Siberian Railway, bringing the rare azaleas and rhododendrons to add to the family collection and still to be seen in 'The Wilderness'.

The new baronet set about replanting the trees felled for use in the war, mechanising the estate while at the same time fulfilling the now traditional public duties of JP, Deputy Lieutenant, Honorary Colonel of the 8th Battalion the Devonshire Regiment, Member of the House of Laity and many others. During the 1939-45 war Escot housed evacuees and was a home for forty bombed-out children cared for by the Waifs and Strays' Society. Sir John married, in 1931, Mary Felicity Ponsonby, daughter of the Revd. Chancellor Stewart G. Ponsonby. As a thirteen-year old she had spent a holiday at Escot in 1910, keeping a diary:

'We went to stay at Sir John Kennaway's beautiful house, which is surrounded by a large park. In this park are some beautiful beech trees planted in circles and differ-

ent shaped groups...the Horse Shoe Clump was planted about 200 years ago by Mr. Lock (sic) who knew exactly the right distance apart to plant them, so they have grown straight and tall.'<sup>10</sup>

Their grandson looks after them now as the estate emerges from severe post-war difficulties and the burden of death duties. He founded the prosperous Escot Aquaculture, which finances the restoration of the estate. The Yeovil-Exeter railway in 1860 changed the estate's boundaries a little, the war cut it down to the parkland. The public can now enjoy the walk past the wild boar to The Wilderness, see the otters and the Pet Centre and the restored Victorian Rose Garden.

The family crest is surmounted by an eagle with open wings, in its beak a small shield with a 'naturally coloured sun'. The motto is *Ascendam, I shall arise*.

## Notes

1. R.Hooke, 1635-1703; chemist; physicist; architect; City Surveyor after the Great Fire; inventor of the microscope, quadrant and marine barometer.
2. William Kennaway was son of Robert who came from Fife in Scotland, becoming a weaver. The family moved to Exeter in 1713. William was elected a Freeman of the City and of the Tuckers' Company in 1715. (Youngs, *Tuckers' Hall, Exeter* 1968).
3. The Indian Office Records Library holds the 586 folios of these in Kennaway's writing. The private letters reveal the views on Clive etc of a highly intelligent, compassionate public servant.
4. Lazenby, Ian: 18th century soldier and 19th century gentleman, a biography of Sir John Kennaway. (Dissertation presented for BA, Exeter University 1984).
5. Kennaway Papers, Escot.
6. Roberts, 1803-76, pupil of Fowler, worked with Sir Robert Smirke, pioneer of working-class housing.
7. His book *On Sherman's Track* is a well observed account of this. The Devon Record Office holds his photographic record of the same journey.
8. Sir William Cave, politician, honorary member of the Zoological Society and anti-slavery campaigner.
9. Kennaway Papers, newspaper clipping 14 September 1877.
10. John Locke, 1632-1704, English philosopher, friend of Sir Walter Yonge.

# THURLESTONE PARISH COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT OF A PARISH COUNCIL IN RURAL DEVON OVER A HUNDRED YEARS

Neville C. Oswald

The Thurlestone Parish Council was formed in 1894, following the passage of the Local Government Act of that year. Thus it became part of the new structure of district and parish councils which supplemented the county councils that had been established six years before. It undertook various civil affairs that had previously been administered by the parish church council. Minute books of its meetings back to 1894 have survived and form the basis of this article, together with information obtained from many parishioners who have served on the council or known the district for most of their lives. From these various sources, a fairly accurate assessment may be made of the ways in which the council has attempted to understand and apply the necessarily tedious democratic process and record its triumphs and disappointments.

During the past century, Thurlestone has undergone considerable changes in housing, communications, social services and standards of living; the population, which stood at about 350 in the 1890s, has almost trebled. Yet half a dozen family-owned farms still occupy most of the three square miles that comprise the parish, which includes the hamlets of Buckland and Bantham.

## The early years

With four of the original seven members of the council also being elected to the new parish church council, the two having a common chairman, the prospects for a harmonious coexistence appeared good. Certainly, there seems to have been none of the disarray seen in many parts of the country as landowners and the clergy objected to intrusions on their authority,<sup>1</sup> but there were differences over the disposal of records and documents held by the church. The Vestry Book, with minutes of meetings back to 1827, was claimed by both; it contained details of, for example, housing, roads, rates, water and sewerage, all of which were to pass to the new council, leaving the church with the village school, church house and various charities. Eventually, the Devon County Council (DCC) was called upon to adjudicate and ruled that the book should be kept by the parish council in the iron chest it had bought for purpose.

Minutes of the first meetings, held irregularly every month or two, record little more than the election of officers; overseers were appointed to assist in the fixing of rates which were levied and collected by the rating authority, the Kingsbridge Rural District Council (KRDC). The only item of substance arose in 1895 when the council had before it thirteen applications for allotments, each asking for about half an acre. Mr. Jenkins, a landowner, was asked whether he had any suitable land available; he offered a seven acre site at an annual rent of two pounds an acre. Later in the year, the clerk to the council wrote to him stating that he had been unable to raise a quorum at the last three council meetings and apologised for the delay. Mr. Jenkins replied that he had led the field to another applicant and that he had no other land available.

By the year 1900, the council had settled into a routine. Meetings were held quarterly at 7.30 p.m. in the winters and 8.30 in the summers, which can hardly have suited

members of the farming community, few of whom, after an early start and a long day in the fields, would be inclined to trudge a mile or more along primitive country lanes. Indeed, meetings rarely attracted as many as half a dozen and those who did attend were the same councillors who were ordinarily reappointed year after year.

## From 1900 to 1974

*Highways and byways* By far the most important subject to claim the attention of the council from its inception until the 1970s was the maintenance of highways and byways. Usually, half the minutes of quarterly meetings were devoted to them, sometimes more. Some four or five new items were often on the agenda, each one ordinarily taking several meetings to resolve by the time the appropriate authorities, including the divisional surveyor, had been consulted. The biggest problem lay with keeping the roads open to Kingsbridge, the nearest town and some four miles distant. In the summer they were overgrown with hedges and in the winter billy stretches were so slippery that loaded carts had difficulty in negotiating them. This meant frequent requests to the KRDC which referred items involving highways to the DCC for action and contested with Thurlestone financial responsibility for maintaining byroads and cart tracks.

When in 1948 the coastal highway around the Links Hotel showed signs of subsidence, the main route to the adjoining parish of South Milton was closed to traffic. The council immediately started a long battle for its restoration but, lacking the authority to take effective action, it achieved little. Eventually in 1974 the road collapsed and the DCC built a fine new road inland of the hotel. A quite different situation arose over public footpaths, which were the subject of endless controversy. The council tried to ensure that they were properly maintained by their owners who, of course, were well known to them. Yet its position was anomalous in that it had the power but not the duty to repair them and therefore could not be made liable for their condition if they fell into disrepair. In the 1930s, for example, Mr. Cole flatly refused to remove a tree that was blocking a path on his property. Mr. Tribe resented having to cut back each year shrubs that were blocking a path. A herd of cattle repeatedly dislodged up to 150 feet of stepping stones on a particularly muddy stretch of pathway between Thurlestone and Bantham. The threat of an appeal to the quarter sessions was usually enough to resolve such problems.

These controversies may seem now to have been trivial but at least they had the virtue that their ordering was within the competence of the freely elected council at a time when it was struggling for recognition.

*Water* From its inception the council was faced with difficulties in the distribution of water. A hand pump and a well in the village street at Thurlestone supplied nearby households; elsewhere there were a dozen pumps in use, most of which may still be identified. Buckland, with its houses scattered along the sides of a valley was poorly served. The council tried to persuade the KRDC to accept the principle that it should recover the cost of purchasing, laying and maintaining the supply to any part of the parish by charging a rate to those who benefitted. Having failed, it recommended that the work be done and paid for by a special rate contributed by the whole parish. Meanwhile, in the 1920s, the privately owned Evans Estates controlled most of the water supply and agreed with the council to charge property owners a fixed percentage of their rateable value. This scheme continued until the 1960s when, mainly through the instigation of the chairman of the council, water from Dartmoor by way of the Avon



dam was connected to the parish by a six inch pipe.

*Sewerage* With earth closets and cesspits the ordinary means of disposal of sewage in the early years, the council employed a sewage disposal wagon which visited the village irregularly and, in the view of the council, charged excessive rates. Following an outbreak of diphtheria in 1922, the sanitary inspector recommended improvement of the primitive sewer leading to the sea, half a mile distant, and drainage of the offensive stagnant pool at the bottom of the village street in Thurlestone. With the approval of the Ministry of Health and the KRDC, a new sea outflow was built in 1932, but it was never satisfactory; having been designed for a population of 225, it was quite inadequate when summer visitors swelled the population to a thousand.

*Housing* The council was in almost continuous negotiation with the DCC over the provision of council houses. It had the responsibility for seeking suitable land and advising on water supply and sewerage; as new houses became available, it prepared lists of applicants and selected suitable tenants. Yet it received the biggest rebuff to its authority in 1965 when it was asked to review plans drawn up by the DCC for 104 detached private houses with garages on the Mead, adjacent to the village of Thurlestone. The council called a special meeting and organised a referendum of the whole parish, each showing a great majority against the plans, but to no avail. Building proceeded, the council concluding with regret that it could offer no effective opposition.

*Public services* From the beginning the postal and telegraph services attracted much attention. The installation of sub-post offices, for which the council offered to pay part of the cost, and the regular delivery of mail were essential for the day-to-day business of the community. As early as 1898 a telegraph service was requested and was duly installed with rather primitive apparatus and connected to a few houses. By the 1920s public opinion favoured call boxes of which three were installed.

The police have consistently had good relations with the people of Thurlestone, where there has been little crime over the years. Offers of street lighting have been repeatedly refused, so that the rural nature of the place may be preserved. Similarly, the provision of a car park and yellow lines on the roads have not been recommended.

The provision of fire services came under review in 1937, following a serious fire in a private house. The Chief Fire Officer from Exeter found insufficient power for a hose in the existing hydrants but did not recommend the purchase of expensive equipment which usually fell into neglect and decay after the early enthusiasm had passed off. It was agreed that for the time being emphasis should be placed on trying to extinguish fires in their early stages, pending the arrival of the fire services.

\* \* \* \* \*

Despite these diverse responsibilities, the council at first lacked the means of obtaining an informed opinion other than through official channels. The difficulty was not overcome until 1947 when the National Association of Parish Councils was formed which gave it more say in local affairs and greatly assisted the Maud Commission of 1969 in emphasising the importance of parish councils in the oversight of anything that affected the well-being of their parishes.<sup>2</sup>

#### **1974 and after**

As long ago as the 1940s, the three tiers of local government proved to be cumber-

some and inefficient. In the following years the county and district councils increased in size and importance whilst the parish councils were virtually ignored. The process continued until the Local Government Act of 1972 which drastically reduced the number of local authorities and created new district councils. It also withdrew personal health services, water and sewerage from local government and reduced local influence on planning and housing.<sup>3</sup>

For the councillors of Thurlestone, the new act meant the loss of the rural district council at Kingsbridge whose members were well known to them and of whom two were their own representatives. Instead, the South Hams District Council (SHDC) opened at Totnes, some 17 miles distant, in 1974 with one councillor representing Thurlestone and two neighbouring parishes. The SHDC was soon carried along by its own momentum with the proliferation of committees and a degree of complexity that was far beyond the previous experience of the councillors at Thurlestone. In a sense, a new form of communication had come about. Whereas previously the council communicated with whoever it wished, whether it be the chief constable in Exeter or a minister in London, it now found itself confronted by a formidable array of professional officials and elected members at Totnes.

The effect of the SHDC in the annual general meetings was dramatic. Attendance rose from half a dozen to 50 or 60; representatives from the DCC, the SHDC, the police and others regularly attended and made statements. Mr. Simon Day, County Councillor, repeatedly urged free communication between these various bodies. Indeed, a fair measure of goodwill was established, but the council was still smarting over the housing estate on the Mead and was further incensed by the building of more blocks of flats on Merchant's Field, adjoining the village of Thurlestone. Coincidentally, the sewage system was becoming increasingly inadequate, with sewers blowing their covers in stormy weather. The council aggressively pressed for improvements but was informed by South-West Water (SWW), in 1986, that they would be very costly and that Thurlestone's priority rating was low. Soon, the Nature Conservancy Council and the National Rivers Authority were involved in consultation. The council erected notices on the beach warning bathers of pollution, which was greater than on any other beach in the South Hams. The SWW, bearing in mind the council's comments, installed a splendid system in 1992 with a large holding tank and a conduit and a reconstructed treatment plant at South Milton.

#### **A retrospect**

Throughout the existence of the council, elected members have almost always been drawn from men who have spent the greater part or the whole of their lives in the district. In such a small community, their selection was bound to be a personal matter. Indeed, they were called upon to give a personal service by keeping a watch on all aspects of parochial life and being available to receive suggestions and give advice. They were aware of the extent and distribution of local resources, from which they earned their living, and recognised the importance of maintaining a ready access to Kingsbridge and an efficient postal and telegraph service. These features still obtain.

Divested of some of their former responsibilities by the Act of 1972, the purpose of rural parish councils may be questioned. First and most important is their function in safeguarding local democracy, something which was ingrained in the British character for generations by parish church councils and latterly has been preserved by parish councils. For the people of Thurlestone, the difference between having their own coun-

cillors to consult rather than nebulous figures in Kingsbridge and now in Totnes, has been the difference between their being able to air their views and having to accept edicts from afar. Indeed, local opinions are still important, whether upon local initiatives or upon initiatives that have originated elsewhere. The council is able to seek parochial opinions with ease, in a way that county and district councils might hesitate to do, especially when there is a political aspect.

Councillors at Thurlestone have always given much time and thought to their duties. They may have been inclined to regard innovations with suspicion, preferring to retain the *status quo* which they understand, yet they have been essential to the orderly administration of the parish.

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3. Drake, R., and Walker, R. 1977. *Local Government and the Public*. London. p.7.

## THE UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH - DEJA VU?

C.A. Lewis

Now that the University of Plymouth has been established, it is perhaps worth reflecting that something similar nearly happened over half a century ago. The first public airing of the matter was by A.W. Clayden, the Principal of the Royal Albert Memorial College in Exeter. He was also President of the Devonshire Association and chose this subject for his presidential address to the association in 1915.<sup>1</sup> He suggested an arrangement on the lines of the University of Wales which was a federation of several colleges. In the South West he saw Exeter and Plymouth as two constituent colleges, with the Camborne School of Mines making a third; other institutions such as the recently established Seale Hayne Agricultural College and the teacher training elements of Exeter and the two diocesan teacher training colleges of St Luke's and Truro, while not yet capable of College status would add breadth to the federation as a whole.

Such an arrangement would deal with the fundamental problem that each institution could offer only a small range of subjects though these could be considered complementary: Exeter was inclined to the arts while Plymouth's Technical Schools were obviously science orientated. The specialisations of the others - mining, agriculture and education - would not clash with this pattern. The federation could be expected to attract financial support both local and national but it was clear that national support would not materialise without evidence of substantial local support.

A Committee for the Furtherance of Higher Education in the South West was established in 1917<sup>2</sup> under the chairmanship of Sir Henry Lopes (later Lord Roborough), Chairman of Devon County Council, and containing representatives of the colleges, the local authorities and such of the good and great in academic fields as could be found. Although some financial support was achieved mainly from Devon and Exeter the committee ran quickly into a rather different obstacle: the opposition - if not hostility - to their ideas by the board, and particularly the Minister of Education.<sup>3</sup> Federation was not a favoured word in Whitehall even then!

Undaunted, the campaign, particularly to widen local support, continued. Although the federal idea seemed attractive, in the difficult financial climate of the immediate post war years, each institution was obviously concerned to ensure its own funding; in short the bird in the hand had clear attractions over its more distant rival. Nevertheless Plymouth did contribute to the idea because it believed that the establishment of a local degree-giving institution would help stimulate its own scheme to develop the technical schools into an engineering college.

But matters were not standing still at Exeter. A means of ending the geographical strait jacket of the sole site at Gandy Street had been found. The Streatham estate on the north-western outskirts of the city had been offered for sale in 1919. After several ineffective attempts to secure the site for the college, a former Mayor of Exeter, W.H. Reed offered in 1921 to buy it for the college if university status was achieved.<sup>4</sup> A further move, the suggestion that the aspiring university should be guided by an established university - in this case Oxford - found favour with the minister. These two factors plus the improved local funding position, since Cornwall had now joined Devon, Exeter and Plymouth, seemed to tip the scale. After a further inspection of Exeter the minister agreed in 1922 to recognise the University College of the South West though

its students would still take University of London degrees.<sup>5</sup>

This naturally caused Plymouth to enquire where it now stood in these arrangements and in 1924 a special joint committee reported that the following elements were planned for Plymouth:<sup>6</sup> a Faculty of Engineering (covering all branches including aeronautical and naval architecture); a Department of Economics and Commerce; and a Department of Law. The existing school of Pharmacy at Exeter was to be moved to Plymouth and sections of main departments at Exeter were to be established at Plymouth in Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Modern Languages, History and Geography. Integration was to be such that students might attend a first year in Plymouth and complete their degree in arts subjects in Exeter, or vice versa in science and engineering subjects. Plymouth had been mentioned as a natural location for a School of Medicine in a report of 1919,<sup>7</sup> though there was no reference to this possibility now. This sounded very encouraging but in reality was astonishingly ambitious. At Plymouth only the technical schools engaged in anything like higher education and the city was producing no more than fifteen students per year taking degree courses.<sup>8</sup> The frailty of this base was underlined when later that year the University Grants Committee stated that it was not prepared to fund the Plymouth section of the University College unless there was evidence of a minimum volume of work of university standard.<sup>9</sup>

Exeter was perfectly prepared to help improve this situation. Development of the technical schools was to be managed by a branch committee consisting of equal representation from Plymouth's higher education sub-committee and Exeter University College Council. More directly a somewhat bizarre arrangement provided for the Principal of Exeter (H. Hetherington) to supervise the work of the schools despite the existence of a principal in Plymouth, and for Plymouth to pay a proportion of his salary for this work in addition to the grant it was already making to Exeter.<sup>10</sup> The School of Pharmacy was duly transferred to Plymouth and in the following year the Department of Economics and Commerce was established.<sup>11</sup> Initially the Departmental Head, J. Sykes, had travelled from Exeter but when Astor Hall of Residence was opened in 1929 (by George Bernard Shaw), he became its first Warden. Manor Lodge, as Astor Hall was originally called, had been purchased with a £10,000 grant by Lord Astor specifically for the purpose of providing such a residence.<sup>12</sup> This was particularly generous since only six years before Lord Astor had created a scholarship fund yielding £200 annually.<sup>13</sup>

This was probably the high water mark of the endeavour in Plymouth, though the tide ebbed only gradually. Although the supervision of the technical schools was continued by Hetherington's successor, H.H. Moberley, for the bare two years of his appointment, his successor in 1926, John Murray, handed it on to his deputy<sup>14</sup> and eight years later the arrangement ended. In the same year, 1934, Sykes ceased to be Warden of Astor Hall and returned to Exeter, though he continued some teaching in Plymouth. In 1936 Plymouth noted with satisfaction the recognition of the Technical College by the University of London for the teaching of B.Sc.(Engineering)<sup>15</sup> and two years later in October marked the state of its relationship with the University College of the South West by passing a resolution that Plymouth Education Authority assume full responsibility for the organisation and control of all technical education provided by the City.<sup>16</sup> In the following month the University College and Higher Technology Branch Committee, consisting of representatives of the City Council and the University College and which had overseen relations between Plymouth and the University

College, ceased to exist. Co-operation between Plymouth and Exeter on the original lines was clearly at an end and though Plymouth representatives continued to be appointed to the University College's Court of Governors and Council this was little more than a token. Both went their separate ways: Exeter to develop the Streatham estate on which the University would eventually be based and Plymouth to develop its Technical College. Cynically it could be said that Exeter saw the opportunity of 'going it alone' and took it, but it is also possible to argue that at that time it was premature for Plymouth to attempt more than the gradual consolidation of the Technical College; also that at a time when higher education institutions were expected to cater primarily for local needs, demand in Plymouth would not have supported more than this.

It is unlikely that Clayden's address in 1915 was intended to be prophetic but although the pack has been shuffled rather differently, his blue-print has been fulfilled to a surprising degree, except that Plymouth and Exeter do not have constituent colleges but full universities. To them have been attracted the smaller institutions: Seale-Hayne and (two newcomers) Roile and Exeter College of Art to Plymouth, while Exeter has absorbed St Luke's, the Camborne School of Mines and most recently formed an affiliation with the College of St. Mark and St. John. Both have post graduate medical schools. Clayden had envisaged a third college (? read University now) in Cornwall but the present division would seem to have ruled that out; though possibly not for ever.

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2. *The University College at Exeter*, Sir Hector Hetherington, p.2
3. *The University of Exeter*. B.W.Clapp p50.
4. Hetherington op.cit. p16.
5. *Ibid*, P 14-15.
6. Plymouth Higher Education Sub Committee (PHESC) Minute 12 (1924)
7. Plymouth City Council (PCC) Minute 2122 (1919)
8. PHESC Minute 29 (1921)
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10. *Ibid* minute 20 (1924)
11. PCC Minute 1744(1925)=Pharmacy; 2655(1926)=Economics & Commerce.
12. *Ibid*. Minute 1299=Establishment; 1670=Sykes; 4065=GBS. All 1929.
13. PHESC Minute 7 (1922)
14. PCC Minute 1671 (1929)
15. *Ibid* Minute 2128 (1936)
16. *Ibid* Minute 4717 (1938)

## THE CARTE-DE VISITE PHENOMENON IN EXETER

C.G. Scott

During the 1860s a French photographic novelty known as the 'carte-de-visite' became an international craze.<sup>1</sup> At the height of the fad in England it was thought three to four hundred million cartes were being sold each year. The carte was a card of visiting-card size (2½ by 4 inches) on which was stuck a slightly smaller photograph (2¼ by 3¼ inches). Special photographic equipment enabled multiple identical exposures to be taken on one photographic plate, so allowing the small photographs to be printed out in multiples. The photographs on the carte-de-visite could be portraits of oneself, family and friends, or notables including royalty. Eventually the photographs could be of virtually anything, such as the famous or infamous, landscapes and town scenes, houses, or even curiosities. Cartes were easy to carry, and to send in the post, or to collect in specially made albums. Queen Victoria was an avid collector of cartes, and it is thought that the carte's popularity in England was boosted when J.E. Mayall<sup>2</sup> published his 'Royal Album' in August 1860 containing 14 carte portraits of the royal family.

Towards the end of October 1860 the carte format had reached Exeter in the form of 'photographic visiting cards', as advertised by Mr E. Steele Charlton of the Photographic Institution in Queen Street.<sup>3</sup> Charlton's business was the former London Photographic Institution of Messrs. Alder & Co., opposite the City Prison. Messrs. Alder & Co. had advertised that from 1 May 1860 the business would be under the sole management of Mr E. Steele Charlton who hoped for a 'continuance of the patronage bestowed upon the establishment during the past 5 years. Tinted portraits on glass in neat frame of best quality – one shilling.<sup>4</sup> That advertisement noted that Charlton had been connected with the wholesale trade of London and Paris for upwards of seven years and was prepared to supply amateurs with apparatus at 'lowest London prices'. Interestingly, Charlton would also advertise 'views of Hotels and trade establishments for mounting on advertising cards at a price per 100'.<sup>5</sup> The format of such cards is unclear but could have been based on stereographic slide photographs, for Charlton was taking stereoscopic portraits for 3s. 6d. in September 1860.<sup>6</sup>

Charlton's management of his 'Photographic Institution' coincided with the site being required for the arrival of Exeter's second railway which terminated at Queen Street, so the business removed to the opposite side of Queen Street, 'next door but one to the dispensary'.<sup>7</sup> (The dispensary can still be seen at the junction of Queen Street and Northernhay Street, and although a studio appears to have been upstairs – 'next door but one' – it seems unconnected.<sup>8</sup> Charlton's was probably at the front of today's Rougemont Hotel, i.e. 'next door but one' moving away from the city centre.)

By late October 1860 the carte-de-visite was in Exeter, and Charlton's business was using them under the caption: 'photographic visiting cards'. The price was 16s. per dozen, or 4 guineas per 100.<sup>9</sup> That price may have been a mistake, for Charlton put up the price a fortnight later to a guinea per dozen while retaining his price of 4 guineas per 100 – maintaining the link between his advertising cards and the new 'visiting cards'.<sup>10</sup> Charlton carried over from Messrs. Alder & Co. the use of the 'patent photogen' which allowed portraits to be taken up to 9pm during winter, with a pyrotechnic light.<sup>11</sup> In early December, a competitor, Owen Angel, was advertising the carte as his 'new style of visiting cards a la Francaise' at 21s. the first dozen, 12s the second



Fig. 1 Reverse: Henry Brice, 241, High Street, Exeter.



Fig 2. Reverse: Arthur Dawe, Artist, Queen St., Exeter



Fig. 3 Reverse: (handwritten) Nevet Photo 2 Bedford Lane Exeter.



dozen.<sup>12</sup> Earlier, Angel has advertised in May<sup>13</sup> that he had visited the Metropolis and had 'engaged artists and operators of first class talent and ability. Glass portraits as usual from 6d. to 30s.' at 5 High Street. By 1861 photography in Exeter seemed to be expanding. The term: 'carte-de-visite' was used by early January when Augustus De Niceville and Charles Hart combined to open a photographic studio at 2 Upper Southernhay<sup>14</sup>. De Niceville had 'just returned from visiting the First Establishments in Italy, France, and London', while Hart, an artist, had been a photographer at 30 Magdalen Street<sup>15</sup> around 1857. De Niceville could be engaged to take 'views' of 'country seats' in 'any part of England', and may have been Exeter's first proper photographic printer, for he would print the negatives of professionals and amateurs at his residence, 4 Jeffery's Row, St Sidwell's. The partnership may have been brief, for De Niceville seems to have taken over the former studio of Charles Hawkins & Co. at 262 High Street<sup>16</sup> around 1862.

By March 1861 Owen Angel was also using the term 'cartes de visite' and was taking them at 5 High Street while he was selling 'albums' for photographs alongside his usual 'scrapbooks'.<sup>17</sup> The specially designed albums for photographs consolidated the position of the carte as the industry norm for the studio photographer. The carte was a backbone around which all other photographic services could be grouped or added, and it gave an extra aura of 'professionalism' in an industry of low entry costs. Above all, it established paper photography over other competing processes and brought it from the scrapbook into that semi-heirloom: the family album. What had started as a novelty had organised an industry, and gave the Victorian family a repository for an extended visual genealogy, at the least, a consciousness of kin. Albums for cartes were sold throughout Exeter during 1861. Charlton<sup>18</sup> was selling albums from 18 pence each, and stockists such as Grant Bros., Clifford's, and Wheaton's advertised during December in the run-up to Christmas.<sup>19</sup> Wheaton's, of 185 Fore Street, sold albums with gilt clasps to hold 16 portraits for 3s. 6d., and a larger album bound in real morocco with gilt clasps to hold 36 portraits for 9s., sent free by post.<sup>20</sup> By 1862 Owen Angel<sup>21</sup> was advertising albums by De la Rue, Geck, and other eminent makers from 1s to 5 guineas, and by 1863 would send 'original cartes of any of the Royal family free by post of 18 stamps'.<sup>22</sup>

Portraits of the Royal family were on sale in Exeter from at least June 1861. The lithographer William Spreat of 229 High Street, a publisher of stereographs, was selling 'card portraits of notable people by Mayall and others including the whole of the Royal Family'. Spreat was also selling photographs and stereographs of the Cathedral, Exeter, North and South Devon and Cornwall, and transparencies of Niagara Switzerland, and Java, also photographic albums.<sup>23</sup> Spreat would lend stereographs for evening parties.<sup>24</sup>

Prices for carte portraits soon altered. By November 1861 Charlton's cartes were down to ten for 10 shillings. i.e., 12 shillings per dozen compared to his original guinea per dozen a year earlier.<sup>25</sup> No doubt competition was a factor. John Fey's Photographic Rooms<sup>26</sup> was selling cartes and 'life size portraits' at 249 High Street, and other photographers have been noted, such as G.E. Shooter of Sidwell Street.<sup>27</sup> By December 1861 J.F. Long was at 45 High Street taking carte portraits and selling apparatus and chemicals to amateurs and the trade.<sup>28</sup> Of interest is Henry Brice, portrait painter and photographic colourist 'from Mr Owen Angel's' who opened his own studio by May 1861 at 4 Queen Street, 'adjoining the Railway Parcel Office', and with cartes at 12s per dozen.<sup>29</sup> By May 1863 Henry Brice's address was numbered as 27 Queen Street, and

*Examples of early Cartes-de-visite, by de Niceville, Fey and Angel*



*A. de Niceville*



*Fey*



*Angel*



*Angel*

his cartes were down to 10s. 6d per dozen.<sup>30</sup>

Variations on the carte format were introduced. In 1863 Charlton<sup>31</sup> was selling his 'medallion' portraits at 5s. per dozen, while Owen Angel<sup>32</sup> advertised his new 'medallion' or 'Gem' portraits at a guinea per 100. By 1864 Angel<sup>33</sup> was taking 'postage stamp' portraits which could be used as 'visiting cards, book labels etc.' In 1865 Brice<sup>34</sup> gave his prices as: 'Diamond Cameo Cartes 15s. doz. Medallion ditto in 4 positions 7/6 doz. Ordinary Cartes 10/6 per doz. Vignetted ditto 12s. doz.'

It is thought that the demand for carte portraits was decreasing by 1867 and a substitute was needed.<sup>35</sup> It came in the form of the 'Cabinet' card, a large card (6½ by 4¼ inches) on which was stuck a slightly smaller photograph (5½ by 4 inches). The large size of the cabinet photograph gave better detail, but it did not mean the end of the carte, and albums were made to hold both types of photographs together. The carte complimented the cabinet. By August 1866 Owen Angel could advertise:

'Cabinet Photographs. Mr Owen Angel has much pleasure in calling attention to the above new style in photography. The Queen and other members of the Royal Family having given sittings in London have pronounced this the most elegant of all the recent introductions. Specimens on view.'<sup>36</sup>

By 1870 Henry Brice at 241 High Street (opposite the Half Moon Hotel) was taking cabinets at 17s per dozen, and cartes at 9s. per dozen.<sup>37</sup> He removed to 3 Lower Summerlands<sup>38</sup> by 1873, and Mr Williams<sup>39</sup> ('successor to Mr A. De Niceville') could be found at 241 High Street from March 1878 selling studio carte portraits from 6s. 6d. It is unclear what format was used for photographing the prisoners at Exeter Prison or if a local photographer had been engaged. (An advertisement in the *Exeter Flying Post* 13 January 1864 authorised by the Visiting Justices of the Devon County Prison requested photographers to submit tenders for the taking of photographs of prisoners.) The abstract of the accounts for the county of Devon were published in the *Exeter Flying Post* each January,<sup>40</sup> and show, for example, that £51 16s. was spent on photographing prisoners in 1872.

Looking towards Plymouth we can find for this large city the price lists of the photographer H. Yeo of 169 Union Street. His advertisement<sup>41</sup> of 1893 shows that he charged 10s. 6d. for a dozen cabinets, with 'no extra charge for children'. Cabinets with proofs sent to select from, were 15s. per dozen; carte-de-visite portraits with proofs to select from were 5s. per dozen. Cabinets as 'Parisian Enamels' (highly finished) were 22s. 6d. per dozen, cartes 12s. 6d. per dozen. As a permanent 'Platinotype', the cabinet portraits cost 25s. 6d. per dozen, while the newer 'Panels' cost 80 shillings. Yeo's list show the carte-de-visite and cabinet portrait photograph carrying over into the 1890s. (The coming of Kodak's box, and folding, roll-film cameras gave the public easier access to photography, but brought a proliferation of film and print sizes.) In Exeter we can expect the carte and cabinet portrait to follow similar lines of continuance as Yeo's in Plymouth.

The carte-de-visite had exerted an influence on photography structurally and aesthetically, and had survived for over thirty years, or longer. It is a remarkable piece of social history, for it reflects, for example, society's conformity, or emulation, or income, complimenting innumerable lines of enquiry that may concern the local historian. The *Carte de Visite* is still widely available to collectors at modest prices, giving young people a hobby that may have value as an introduction to history.

\* \* \* \* \*



Fig. 4. H.R.H. the Princess Alice, by Mayall. Signed in the negative 'Noyall fecit, April 1st 1862'.



Fig. 5 Advertisement *Tiverton Times* 2 Jan 1866 p1b: 'LORD PALMERSTON. His last photograph, taken from life by John Cann, with his Autograph, written expressly for it, at the last General Election, for 13 STAMPS'.

Thanks are due to Mr Ian Maxted and staff at the Westcountry Studies Library, Exeter, for permission to reproduce material from the library's newspapers.

#### Notes and References

1. Information in this paragraph derived from: Helmut Gernsheim, *The Rise of Photography 1850-1880*. Thames and Hudson (London) 1988, pp 189-203 passim.
2. Mayall passed himself off as an American called Highschool from Philadelphia. With Claudet he exhibited at Falmouth's Polytechnic in 1847: 'To Professor Highschool, of Philadelphia, the Society was indebted for several splendid Daguerreotypes of Figures and of the Falls of Niagara. And to Mr. Claudet, for specimens of his very beautiful Tinted Portraits' (*15 Report of the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society*, Falmouth 1847 p.xii).
3. *Exeter Flying Post*. 24 October 1860 p4c.
4. *Exeter Flying Post*. 25 April 1860 p4c; 23 April 1857 p4e.
5. *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*. 8 September 1860 p4c.
6. *Ibid*.
7. See *Exeter Flying Post*. 13 June 1860 p8c.

8. Today an amusement arcade but upstairs has a partial glass roof and windows inset in the ceiling -- a studio of some kind? The artist W. Widgery was advertising in 1869 'opposite the Museum' a free exhibition at his 'studio' (*Exeter Flying Post*, 18 August 1869 p4c). Perhaps Henry Brice or Arthur Dawe were at some time using it as a studio. It awaits further investigation.
9. *Exeter Flying Post*, 24 October 1860 p1c.
10. *Exeter Flying Post*, 7 November 1860 p4b
11. *Exeter Flying Post*, 18 January 1860 p4d; 2 January 1861 p4e.
12. *Exeter Flying Post*, 5 December 1860 p8b.
13. *Exeter Flying Post*, 30 May 1860 p4c. Angel had been 'Photographers to the Exeter School of Art and to the Devon and Cornwall Photographic Society' in 1855 as the West of England Photographic Institution (*EFP* 19 April 1855 p4f). He took Talbotypes, and sold secondhand apparatus, having moved from 92 Fore Street to open at 5 High Street by early June 1855 (*EFP* 7 June 1855 p4f.) See *The Devon Historian* 43, October 1991, p19, footnote 1
14. *Exeter Flying Post*, 16 January 1861 p4c.
15. *Billing's Directory of Devon* 1857 pp52, 77.
16. *Exeter Flying Post*, 29 January 1862 p4b; 5 September 1860 p4d.
17. *Exeter Flying Post*, 20 March 1861 p8c.
18. *Exeter Flying Post*, 9 October 1861 p4d.
19. e.g. *Exeter Flying Post*, 11 & 25 December 1861.
20. *Exeter Flying Post*, 11 December 1861 p8c-d.
21. *Exeter Flying Post*, 3 December 1862 p4e.
22. *Exeter Flying Post*, 10 June 1863 p4e.
23. *Exeter Flying Post*, 26 June 1861 p4d.
24. *Exeter Flying Post*, 4 December 1861.
25. *Devon Weekly Times*, 15 November 1861.
26. *Devon Weekly Times*, 11 October 1861. Fey died 11 Feb. 1877 aged 53 (*EFP* 14 Feb. 1877).
27. See *Exeter Flying Post*, 19 June 1861 p8d. Also, *Trewman's Pocket Journal of Exeter* 1860 p249, 1861 p250, for address at 103 Sidwell Street.
28. *Devon Weekly Times*, 20 December 1861.
29. *Exeter Flying Post*, 7 May p4d & 11 June p4f 1862.
30. *Exeter Flying Post*, 27 May 1863 p4e.
31. *Exeter Flying Post*, 5 August 1863 p4d.
32. *Exeter Flying Post*, 9 September 1863 p4e.
33. *Exeter Flying Post*, 20 April 1864 p4e.
34. *Exeter Flying Post*, 22 March 1865 p4b.
35. On this decrease, and cabinet cards, see Helmut Gernsheim, *op. cit.*, p202.
36. *Exeter Flying Post*, 1 August 1866 p4d.
37. *Moriss's Directory for Devonshire 1870*, Advertisement section p266.
38. *Exeter Flying Post*, 20 August 1873 p4e.
39. *Exeter Flying Post*, 27 February 1878 p5c. The Westcountry Studies Library's *EFP* newspaper file (Exeter) shows him in partnership with W.S. Sugden as 'Williams & Sugden', in 1877 at 88 Queen Street (*EFP* 11 April 1877 p4f). He separated from Sugden, who remained at 88 Queen Street and had financial problems by late 1878 (*EFP* 20 November 1878 p5b) Williams opened his studio 18 March (*EFP* 13 March 1878).
40. *Exeter Flying Post* each January: 1873 £58 18s.0d.; 1874 £57 15s. 0d.; 1875 £47 7s. 0d.; 1876 £46 17s. 0d.; 1877 £45 4s. 0d.; 1878 £34 0s.0d.; 1879 £1 19s. 6d.
41. *Doidge's Western Counties Illustrated Annual*, Plymouth 1893 pp29-31.

(Readers are advised their opinions expressed by reviewers are their own, and not necessarily those of the Editor or of the Devon History Society as a whole).

**Medieval Art and Architecture at Exeter Cathedral.** Ed. Francis Kelly The British Archaeological Association 1991. 229pp, 40 plates Hardback £41.50 ISBN 901286 27 3. Paperback £31.50 ISBN 901286 26 5

This volume is the eleventh in the British Archaeological Association series of medieval art and architecture conference transactions, each based upon a different locality or building, usually a cathedral. It follows upon the 1985 conference at Exeter when the papers which comprise it were presented.

As might be expected in this context, the essays relate more to the history of the structure of the cathedral than to its use. Audrey Erskine summarises the cathedral records as they relate to this aspect. John Allan has two contributions: the first on the building stones of the cathedral, the second, with Stuart Blylock as co-author on the structural history of the west front (this includes a reproduction of the Exeter Archaeological Field Unit's magnificent measured drawing of the front with its sculpture) and these essays will not need commending to those who have been privileged to hear his tour de force on-site lecture on this subject. This essay is complemented by two others on the West Front; the first on its polychromy by Eddie Sinclair and the second its iconography by Avril Henry. The former helps to bridge the credibility gap in conceiving cathedrals like Exeter as a blaze of colour externally; the latter analyses in depth the significance of the figures. Virginia Jansen studies the opposite end of the cathedral in an important contribution on the design and building sequence on the eastern area between 1270 and 1310 in which she analyses its development in detail; in her words 'a jigsaw puzzle on a monumental scale'. Her conclusion points to three masters' hands in the design, with influences from both the Court and from the north-east and Cistercian architecture.

A detailed analysis of the role of Thomas of Witney, the architect of the nave and fittings of the 14th century cathedral, is contributed by Richard K. Morris, basing his arguments primarily on a study of the mouldings and tracery of this period in the cathedral. The decorated tracery of the retrochoir, presbytery and Lady Chapel is examined by Georgina Russell and the perpendicular East Window is analysed by her to demonstrate its original decorated form. Her stylistic argument is supported by John Allan from an archaeological stance in a supplementary note.

Philip McAker deduces the reason for the construction of St. Edmund's Chapel off the north nave aisle. He dates it firmly to the 14th century and postulates its original use for a consistory court. Another puzzle is examined by Bridget Cherry in studying the remarkable similarity between the flying angels on the 14th century Stapledon tomb and those on the tombs of Bishop Bronescombe and Stallord of the 1440s as well as that of John Holand, Duke of Exeter, formerly in the hospital of St. Katherine by the Tower in London.

The early 14th century architectural furnishings of the choir are the subject of

Veronica Sekules' essay. The lost high altar reredos is discussed, along with the celebrated bishop's throne of 1316/17, and the screen between the choir and the nave which now lacks its medieval sculptures. Charles Tracy firmly dates the misericords as no later than 1244 on grounds of patronage, relating them stylistically to Wells. A smaller 'fitting' is the ring of Bishop Grandisson which is described in detail by John Cherry.

The Romanesque origins of the cathedral are exhaustively considered by Malcolm Thurlby who postulates a reconstruction of the 12th century building of which the twin towers are now the principal survivors. He comments upon the sources of its design and the influence it had on local ecclesiastical architecture. The lost charnel chapel which stood by the north-west corner of the cathedral is the subject of Nicholas Orme's contribution while John Thurmer describes early views of the cathedral's interior which show features now lost, such as the background of the medieval reredos which survived until Scott's 19th century replacement, and the 17th century box pews in the nave. Anna Hulbert reports on the polychrome decoration of the roof bosses, relating it to the documentary records; the purchase of material to colour the bosses acts as a cross-reference for their dating, as expensive colours were only employed once the bosses were in place. She defines three groups of colouring styles in the first quarter of the 14th century, as well as discussing materials and iconography. A further fully detailed account of the techniques and pigments of this decoration is in course of preparation by her.

Such a very brief summary of these essays does no justice to their enormously high academic quality and to the vast amount of material and information contained in them. The contributors are all foremost in their fields and every word is measured. Many of the essays need considerable concentration to be absorbed since the information is so compressed and some determination is required in their perusal. The volume is extremely well illustrated with plans, drawings and photographs (some in colour) and contains a comprehensive bibliography on the cathedral which itself is a major contribution. It has been immaculately produced under the editorship of Francis Kelly. Given these high standards and the relatively limited market for such a specialised production, the price is perhaps not unreasonable. It has been kept down by extensive subsidy from several bodies including Devon County and Exeter City Councils.

This is not a beginner's work for the study of Exeter Cathedral. Rather it should follow in sequence from Bridget Cherry's 1989 revised version of Pevsner's *Buildings of England* volume on Devon, where the cathedral and its fittings are brilliantly analysed in a single 22 page contribution, after which should come the volume produced by the Dean and Chapter in 1991: *Exeter Cathedral - a Celebration*. The latter, like the BAA volume, consists of a series of essays and four (out of its 26) contributors appear in both volumes. The information in it is more accessible and systematic perhaps than in the BAA volume but this is because the two are produced with different objectives, with the former trying to approach a less specialised audience. If the student of the cathedral can absorb all three works, he will not be left with many unanswered questions.

*Peter Child.*

**Torquay - The Place and the People**, by John Pike, Torquay Centenary Committee, 1992. 180pp. £16 ISBN 0 95 19930 0 3

This 'Centenary History', in a limited edition of 2000 copies, could well have been titled 'Everything you have ever wanted to know about Torquay'. It is quite remarkable assemblage of events portraying the life and life style of this famous resort following the granting of its Charter of Incorporation in September 1892. Which is not to suggest that this is some prosaic compilation or mere source book. Instead, John Pike has skilfully woven his unrivalled array of facts into a most readable account where celebrities - Ernest Brown, Agatha Christie, Mike Sangster, Oliver Heaviside, Wally Hammond, Sir Henry Wood, Eden Phillpotts - rub shoulders with the town's 'B & B Bazaar', its trams, fires and air raids, education, sports, leisure, and much more, giving a comprehensive mirroring of sometimes national, frequently local (and often personal) events over those 100 years.

It is only by John Pike's meticulous noting and recording of quite transient snippets of information that we can now know how, 'when the crew of the German navy training vessel 'Schlesian' played Torquay United in a benefit match in 1937, the whole team gave the Nazi salute during the playing of the British National Anthem' or that when work commenced in 1924 on a new automatic telephone exchange, it was reported that 'the nearest other exchanges are at Southampton to the East, Newport (Mon.) to the North and somewhere in Canada or America to the West!'

Around a hundred photographic illustrations, many from the turn of the century and previously unpublished, are well reproduced and appropriately enhance the text whilst a chronology of major events 1892-1992 provides a useful resume before the index of 400 or so entries from Abbey Park to Yorkshire Society via GATT and the Filles de la Croix.

John Pike's experience, research and contacts as former chief librarian of Torbay, coupled with an avid enthusiasm for data storage by computer, have enabled the publication by the Centenary Committee (and, pleasantly, printed by the Devonshire Press at Torquay itself) of a volume, crammed full of facts yet essentially readable and one which is very unlikely to be surpassed.

*David Edmund*

**Harvest Failure in Cornwall and Devon. The Book of Orders and the Corn Surveys of 1623 and 1630-1.** Sources of Cornish History, Vol. 1, ed. Todd Gray Institute of Cornish Studies, 1992. ii + 117pp. Paperback £9. ISBN 0 903686 65 1

Despite its title this is not a book about famine and misery but rather reveals in fascinating detail how the paternalistic Stuart state set out to combat bad harvests (with a fair amount of success) by searching out supplies of grain stored in farmers' barns and granaries and ensuring that it was offered for sale in the local markets, as well as regulating grain imports and exports and discouraging brewing. In his articles in the *Agricultural History Review* (Vol. 12, 1964 and Vol. 16, 1968) on 'Harvest Fluctuations and English Economic History, 1480-1759' W.G. Hoskins charts the course of English harvests by the use of wheat prices, contrasting yearly prices with a 31 year moving average. The harvest of 1622 was badly affected by the weather. The national average



price of a bushel of wheat rose to 46 shillings against the 35 shillings of the 31 year average – a rise of 26.1 per cent, but the harvest of 1630 was much worse. The national average wheat price rose to 54 shillings a bushel, 47.6 per cent higher than the 31 year average, and was specially bad in the west. This had the potential for serious problems.

In his substantial introduction to this meticulously edited book, Todd Gray shows how the government reacted and sets their actions in the context of the regional economy. Harvest failures were no new event and the government had well established procedures for dealing with them which were set out in Books of Orders. These had been issued at different dates in the sixteenth century and were periodically up-dated. In 1622 the government re-printed the 1608 edition, which is re-produced by Gray. The Privy Council wrote to the sheriffs of Devon and Cornwall instructing them to summon the local Justices of the Peace. They met in small groups to examine the parishes in their hundreds, or groups of hundreds. They had to tell the Privy Council how much grain was still in store and how many acres had been planted. They also had to regulate the markets, control the prices, prevent profiteering, see that the poor were supplied with grain 'by our persuasion somewhat under the price of the market' as happened at Crediton in February 1623, and suppress unnecessary alehouses. All the surviving Justices' reports for Devon and Cornwall are reproduced here for 1622-3 and 1630-1, and provide a most valuable source, not only for local history, but for national as well, since the reports are rare for much of England. Gray also relates the agricultural economy to the rapidly growing fisheries both in local waters and to the Newfoundland banks, showing how the fishing boats competed for supplies of grain, but also provided a substantial supply of fish to supplement peoples' diets when corn was in short supply.

The Devon and Cornwall reports are particularly interesting because, in addition to the general comments, in two cases the sheriffs returned to the Privy Council the detailed house to house surveys which the JPs had carried out. These were for the hundreds of Coleridge and Stanborough in South Devon for 1622 and for the hundred of Pydar in north central Cornwall in 1630. The most substantial farmers in each village were visited and the amounts of corn in each farm, and for each parish, were carefully noted. So also were the number of people in their households. These averaged 9 or 10, but in some cases were much larger. Mr. Champenowne at Dartington Hall in 1623 had 40 people in his household, and perhaps not surprisingly had 'no corn to spare'. Of the 17 households listed in St. Merryn parish, just west of Padstow in 1630, 8 had 10 or more persons residing with them, ranging from Henry Michell's 30 to Richard Vivian's 10. Between them the 17 farmers possessed 746 bushels of wheat and 1,491 bushels of barley, but no oats, in contrast to Lanivet parish in the hilly, inland country southwest of Bodmin, where the fourteen listed farmers had 473 bushels of wheat, 256 bushels of barley but 680 bushels of oats.

It is not possible in a short review to do justice to the wealth of information about southwestern farming in this book, but over 700 farmers are named, and local historians will find the book invaluable as well as fascinating. There are five good maps locating the hundreds and parishes and a useful index of personal names. The editor and the Institute of Cornish Studies are to be congratulated on this excellent book which is intended to be the first in a series of sources for Cornish history.

*Michael Havinden*

**The Industrial Archaeology of Dartmoor** by Helen Harris. Peninsula Press. Fourth Edition. 1992. 240 pp Hardback £14.95. ISBN 1 872640 21 4

1993 has been designated 'Industrial Heritage Year' by the English Tourist Board! Doubtless this summer we will be encouraged to spend money at the surprisingly large number of visitor attractions that portray a sometimes all too romanticised picture of old England at work. But IHY also gives us the spur to spend time reaching beyond the heritage-packaged product and developing a serious understanding of our real industrial history. There are a few better places to do this than Dartmoor, and for Dartmoor in all its facets there is no finer guide than this very welcome new edition of Helen Harris's classic book.

Readers of *The Devon Historian* need no reminding that they ignore at their peril the rich seams of evidence that lie buried in our industrial landscapes. Nor any longer can we avoid breaching the obsolete boundaries that have too long kept apart history and archaeology to the detriment of both. Over the past thirty years rich new veins of industrial archaeology have been opened up through the splendid efforts of individual researchers and local groups. And for many readers, their first introduction to industrial archaeology will have come through the numerous books on the subject published by David and Charles from their fittingly located base at Newton Abbot railway station.

Helen Harris's Dartmoor volume, which first appeared in 1968, had its origins here as did Frank Booker's companion study of the Tamar Valley. Now, twenty-five years on, we have a fresh edition of *The Industrial Archaeology of Dartmoor* 'revised and updated for the 1990s' and attractively published by Peninsula Press. Owners of the first edition will be relieved to find that the original format, which led the book to be such a friend on the bookshelf and guide in the field, is still intact. The book is divided into two main parts – a discussion of the bewildering range of industries that have come and gone on Dartmoor, followed by a gazetteer of the main features of interest. One of the book's great strengths is the scope of its coverage. It is not just about mines and leats. Its pages move easily on to candle and glass factories, and an iceworks, on which the author has done detailed research. Even agriculture is treated as part of the industrial story – it is hard to resist exploring references to the pioneering study of reaves to relive one of the great discoveries made on Dartmoor this century. (p. 145)

What is new about the 1992 edition is that the text has been revised in key areas to take account of recent research. A valuable updated bibliography is also included and the opportunity has been taken to add additional illustrations to the text. Thus anyone who is doubtful about recognising a potato cave when they see one, now has a photograph to go by, and a fine view of tinworkings at Brisworthy Burrows (which have a documented date of 1168) takes its rightful place as a frontispiece.

This new edition records more than changes due to recent research. Its pages also document the toll that time and development have taken on the industrial remains of Dartmoor over the last quarter century. The early photograph of the woollen mills in the heart of Buckfastleigh is now a poignant memorial following the demolition of so much of the complex in 1976. And those who seek to find the mill that made the crimson cloth for the uniforms of the Nizam of Hyderabad's bodyguard (Cleave Mill at Sticklepath) will discover that since 1968 'the main mill building has been demolished and the site redeveloped'.

Faced with losses such as this, readers may well begin to wonder how much more

will have gone before the Tourist Board next sees fit to launch an Industrial Heritage Year. The difficulties English Heritage seem to have in giving statutory protection to industrial sites and landscapes can only increase people's concern. (It was less than ten years ago that a government Inspector of Ancient Monuments felt able to inform a public inquiry that a magnificent and highly visible tinworking complex on Dartmoor could not be protected as it was not 'a work of man').

Fortunately, other authorities are taking a more positive approach. The Dartmoor National Park Authority, who have supported this new edition, are committed to conserving industrial sites, and the National Trust has recently repaired the Wheal Betsy engine house which features on the front cover.

But the key to ensuring that Dartmoor's industrial past has a future lies mainly in public opinion, just as further research into the history of that past must rely largely on the efforts of individuals and local groups. Helen Harris's book (with its easy flowing style that stems from the author's good fortune to have been born on the fringes of the moor as well as from her experience in serious journalism) has been responsible for doing much to stimulate awareness in both areas over the past twenty-five years. We have long looked back to 1968 and seen what a pioneering publication *Industrial Archaeology of Dartmoor* was. This welcome new edition will ensure that the next generation of readers can be equally inspired.

*Simon Timms*

**The Saxon Foundation of Totnes**, by Don Stansbury, Totnes Museum Society, 70 Fore Street, Totnes, 1992, 63pp., £2.50.

Any attempt to explain the origins of an historic town such as Totnes deserves a warm welcome. This modest volume is no exception and is notable for the clarity of the language with which the unfamiliar material is explained, although the 'royal' status of the burgh is perhaps over stressed! The narrative is largely free of the technical terms used by the more conventional medievalists, but those which are necessary are clearly defined. The text is strongly supported by good clear diagrammatic maps, although the views and coins have not reproduced as well as they might have done.

The argument regarding the dating of the foundation of Saxon Totnes, between 902 and 909, and tending toward a later date, is persuasive and draws on the work of recognised scholars. The whole booklet has been carefully researched, and the principal sources available to the historian of early Totnes are used in context, and enhanced by pertinent comments. The account of the Brutus story might be regarded as an indulgence in a publication with this title, but it is undoubtedly part of the early heritage of the town. The central section is much concerned with the wider Wessex scene, but comes back to the immediate locality with an eminently reasonable discussion of the alternative sites for the Halwell of the 'Burghal Hidage'. The concluding sections regarding the lay-out and position of the Saxon burgh is highly relevant, as it is the Totnes we all know to-day.

The purist might query one or two minor points, but the whole is eminently readable and Don Stansbury and the Totnes Museum Society have done us all a service in producing this useful and interesting booklet.

*John Bosanko*

**Tavistock's Yesterdays, Episodes from her history, 8**, by G. Woodcock, 1992. Published by the author: 87pp. Numerous illustrations. £3.95.

One of the benefits of acquiring a copy of Gerry Woodcock's latest annual publication is that – for this reviewer at least – a number of carefully snipped-out articles from issues of the previous year's *Tavistock Times-Gazette* can be discarded. But the advantage is greater, for here, in most convenient and attractive style, such articles which the author has previously contributed to the newspaper are reproduced, usually in expanded form, together with further chapters concerning Tavistock's history. The 1992 edition includes such subjects as: the Dissolution of the Abbey, Goosie Fair, Tavistock and the Civil War, and a lengthy and gripping account of events surrounding a tragic murder at Peter Tavy a century ago. There is also study of nineteenth century town developments under the patronage of the Bedfords, culminating in the 'sale of the century' and the disposal of most of that estate's Tavistock property in 1911.

This series of books is popular, a useful and entertaining source of facts about Tavistock. Perhaps in his modesty, Mr Woodcock does not recognise the potential interest of his researches to other historians and particularly those of the future, many of whom would doubtless be even more grateful if he were to include notes on his sources of reference.

*Helen Harris*

**Reactions in Devon to Invasions** Three Studies, by Ross Whitehead, Carl Brazier and Jane Witcher A-Level Personal Studies Series: 2 Published by the Devonshire Association 1992. £2.95.

This attractive booklet makes available to every one interested in Devon history three studies produced by students at South Devon College for their A-level exam. The topics, Romans, Normans and World War 2 refugees, cover the widest possible timespan. The editor must have scratched his head for a title to provide some excuse for printing them together.

The studies are published not simply as examples of what can be achieved by students at this level. They make a real contribution to scholarship. Ross Whitehead, who went on to gain a first-class degree in archaeology in Reading, wrote a mature and intelligent survey of the relatively minor influence of the Roman invasion on Devon, but the novelty and interest of his contribution comes from his analysis of Roman coins found by metal-detectors in marshes by the River Teign. The overall distribution of finds of Roman coins in Devon shows early activity west of Exeter, but no later coins to match those found in East Devon. The second study, by Carl Brazier, written with the breathless enthusiasm of a young animal let into a fresh field, makes interesting new use of the mass of statistics in the Domesday survey. He analyses the differences recorded in rent-levels, number of slaves and types of animals on church land as opposed to royal land, and puts forward convincing explanations. Jane Witcher found that little had been written about evacuees in Devon. She assembled anecdotal evidence to fill out the official framework, covering the experiences of host-families, teachers and the evacuees themselves.

The work contains several errors of spelling or proof-reading scattered through the text, e.g. 'Nanstallion' for Nanstallon.

*Hazel M. Harvey.*

## OTHER PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

**Plymouth Historians**, by Crispin Gill. Old Plymouth Society Publications no. 1, 1992. 19pp. Illustrated pamphlet with brief accounts of R.N. Worth, L. Jewitt, H. Whitfield, C.W. Braeken, R.A.J. Walling, C. Gill. Free to members of Old Plymouth Society, annual subscription £5. Hon. Sec. N.J. Casley, Carcaslys, 94 Glendower Road, Peverell, Plymouth PL3 4LD.

**Robinson's Directory of Paignton**, 'including gentry, clergy and other inhabitants, schools, churches and chapels, post-office regulations, lodgings'. Printed in Paignton in 1851, this 1992 issue has been edited and published by John Pentney. The earliest directory known to Paignton, this 24-page limited edition, which includes a small plan of Paignton in 1863, is obtainable locally, price £1.50.

## NOTICES

### SEMINAR ON 15TH CENTURY DARTMOOR

As the first stage of preparation for the 500th Anniversary of the Great Court of Devon Tinnars held at Crockerator on 11 September 1494, a day seminar is to be held at the Two Bridges Hotel on Saturday 17 April 1993.

The anniversary events are being planned jointly by the Dartmoor Tinworking Research Group and Theatre of the Heart, an environmental performance group.

The purpose of the seminar is to stimulate ideas, research and responses. The day will consist of presentations about aspects of 15th century Dartmoor society and culture, plus the setting out of preliminary ideas for the anniversary programme (which will extend over six months and be based on the towns of Chagford, Ashburton, Plympton and Tavistock). The day will include a walk to Crockerator itself.

Speakers will include Tom Greeves on the tinnars, James Crowden on farming, and others on sacred and secular music of the late 15th century. Morna Watson will talk about Theatre of the Heart and Desmond Truscott will lead a workshop.

The cost of the day will be £15.00 per head. This will include coffee, lunch and tea.

If you are interested in attending, please send an s.a.c. to Tom Greeves, 17 Godstone Road, St. Margarets, Twickenham TW1 1JY who will send you a detailed booking form.

## CONSERVATION OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Further to his article in *The Devon Historian*, 44 (April 1992), Simon Timms is leading an Exeter University evening class this spring on the topic of 'Conserving Our Past: Why do we bother?' The course of six lectures and two field trips will examine the conservation of historic buildings, town centres, archaeological sites and landscapes, and also historic parks. It should be of interest to anyone wishing to study the issues underlying the Devon heritage.

The course, which is based at the Queen's Building, Exeter University, starts at 7.15pm on Tuesday 27 April. No prior booking is required, just turn up (or phone Exeter 411902 for details).

## APOLOGY

Keith S. Perkins expresses his regrets for an inadvertent transposition of caption material with an illustration used with his article: 'Opening-up south Devon - the Hopkins connection' published in *The Devon Historian* 45. It refers to the elevation printed on page 14, in which the track of the Plymouth & Dartmoor Railway does not, in fact, appear.

## NEWS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES

**Brixham Museum** The Devon History Society visited Brixham at the time of the Tercentenary Celebrations of the landing of William of Orange and were able to see the Museum at first hand. It was a well-attended meeting but there have been changes made since and this is an 'update' as well as a restatement of Brixham Museum and History Society's ongoing activities.

Members saw the National Coastguard Museum (although the 'National' has been dropped) but now a modest annual grant is received to help with its maintenance. One of the displays seen there is already consigned to history. For well over a century coastguards hauled their breeches buoy rescue gear over rough ground to cliffs and headlands in the foulest weather to launch their rockets towards vessels in distress on the rocks below. Brixham is now one of the few places where relics of this operation remain. In February 1988 Paul Channon, the Secretary of State for Transport announced that the breeches-buoy was to be withdrawn from service and seafarers would in future have to rely on helicopters and lifeboats for rescue. The breeches-buoy had been used only twice in five years to save life although they had been deployed to casualties about 50 times. During the previous two years lifeboats had been launched 5,047 times and helicopters on 1,554 sorties. In addition the rockets were reaching the end of their lives; 200 miles of cordage needed maintaining and keeping crews trained was considered prohibitive! There was another modern hazard: liquid gas tankers would not welcome a rocket fired at them, the Manby Mortar and Boxer Rocket have gone for ever.

It may be recalled that, at the time of the visit, there was a Fisheries Exhibition (set up by the National Maritime Museum) still open down by the quayside. This was closed down some time ago and a private venture 'The Perils of the Deep' took its place. Before this happened material relevant to Brixham and its fishing fleet was passed to the Museum and is displayed in the Maritime Gallery. This is a major development (since 1988), purpose-built behind the original building. Opened by Antony Steen MP in April 1990, it is the society's most ambitious project ever and was achieved only with financial assistance from the Borough Council. Its main purpose is to show the history of Brixham's most important industry, fishing. This is done by displays of 'the tools of the trade', among many other exhibits. However, the outstanding exhibits are the scale models of trawlers, made by amateurs with loving hands which knew and were able to reproduce accurately in miniature, every spar, rope and sail on board.

The ground floor displays include, as members may recall, 'rooms' with contents taken from local homes. The 'residents' are garbed in original clothes of the time. Although storage facilities are limited, the society has been able to acquire a small collection of historic garments. Earlier this year it was possible to hold 'an evening of nostalgia' when volunteer mannequins, including quite young ones, modelled some of the night and day wear.

The Museum was granted provisional registration with the Museums and Galleries Commission early in 1991. A marathon task of recording (in triplicate) the thousands of items in the Society's possession has been going on since then. These include the many fragments (for example, parts of clay pipes and pottery) brought down from Berry Head after 'digs' there - particularly from the sites of the Napoleonic War forts. Registration is considered 'provisional' in such museums as Brixham where there are no professional curators employed. Members will be interested in the recent appoint-

ment of Dr Michael Rhodes, formerly of the London Museum, as Curatorial Adviser to the Borough of Torbay (this has been partly funded by Devon County Council and the Area Museums Council for an initial period). One of his duties is to give curatorial advice and assistance to Brixham Museum.

Recent changes in the Museum have released the top floor for library and other purposes. Books and a file of local newspapers are available to members but earlier this summer it was decided, reluctantly, that charges (£1.00 per hour) would have to be made for assistance given to non-members - new members are, of course, always welcome. Recent behind-the-scenes tasks undertaken have involved the preparation of worksheets, linked to the Museum's displays, for top juniors/lower secondary schoolchildren. Dr. Michael White, who was a voluntary helper in the 'Chained Library' at Hereford Cathedral before moving to Brixham, has completed his computer-catalogue of the Society's fine collection of photographs. He is now looking for a new task. The late Arthur Ellis's manuscript *History of Brixham* came back to Torbay some years ago. This comprehensive work (some 200,000 words long) was only in preliminary draft. It has been edited (and subsequently retyped) mostly through the efforts of one member, Mr Derek Wilson, working on it over a three period. It has just been made available to members in Brixham: copies are, however, being deposited at the Westcountry Studies Library in Exeter and at Torquay Museum.

Early in World War 2 ships of the Belgian fishing fleet sailed into Brixham to escape the Germans who had just invaded their country. They brought families and possessions with them, settling down to a new life in the town for the 'duration'. Some left after the War but some stayed. In September 1991 a Belgian television crew visited Brixham to record the story of the families who had arrived 50 years earlier. A copy of the finished production on video is one of the society's more recent acquisitions.

Current concerns are: increased insurance (following the MMI collapse); fitting security alarms, and the need for a lift for the elderly and disabled - but, within the limited boundaries of the property, improvements continue to be made. The building was once the town's police station - and the cells remain. Gradually these are being altered for additional displays. The society exists on a limited budget, partly in grant form from the Local Authority. However at the present time there is no intention of using this as a 'lock-up' to hold either a councillor or official to ransom until further funds are forthcoming - or is there!

*John Pike*

**Dartmouth Historical Research Group.** In Autumn 1991 some members of the Dartmouth Museum Society decided to form a group whose object was to encourage research into the history of Dartmouth and the surrounding villages, and to publish the results in a series of small booklets. It was also felt that many articles were already printed in various specialist magazines, including *The Devon Historian*, which were not easily available to local people who were not members of the society concerned. It was therefore desirable to reprint them and keep them as part of an ongoing collection in the Museum.

The group of ten people has met several times and has now produced the first three booklets, available for sale at £1 from Dartmouth Museum, the Harbour Bookshop, the Newcomen Engine Society, and some other outlets. One specially written was *The History of Dartmouth Hospital*, by Dr. W.G. Keane - a retired local G.P. Another was *The Holdsworth and Newman Families in Dartmouth*, by Ray Freeman. This was orig-



inally published by the Devon History Society whose permission to reproduce it is acknowledged. The third was *The Newcomen Family Residences in Dartmouth*, by Ivor Smart, an account of the various houses lived in by the family of the inventor Thomas Newcomen in the 17th century, and incidentally recreating much of the geography of the town from the Borough collection of leases. Originally published in the Newcomen Society journal, it is reprinted with acknowledgement.

We have half a dozen more booklets lined up for printing during the coming autumn and winter. Generally our methods are to produce them by desk-top publishing methods, and to work with a shoe-string budget which enables us to print only small quantities if demand is not expected to be high. We hope to gain wider support by arranging talks for general members of the Museum Society, and that this will in turn encourage more active workers to join us.

*Ray Freeman*

**The Paignton Preservation and Local History Society** was founded three years ago and has a membership of some 90 members. Among the numerous projects it has undertaken are an appeal towards the restoration of a 1908 scraffiti mosaic and the successful preservation of Primley Meadow, the last green space left in Paignton, on which the owners had planned a housing development. Chairman Mrs Peggy Parnell would welcome contacts from any prospective members or any information about the Belfield family and the origins of their residence at Primley Hill. Mrs. Parnell lives at 21 Fenwill Way (tel. Paignton 558065).

**Princetown and District History Club**, 'the only history club on Dartmoor' maintains its lively and friendly monthly activities, with 70-80 members aged 6-83. Subscription is £1 a year, non-members 50p. The 1992 programme includes: 6 April 'Old dame schools of Dartmoor' (Mary Stanbrook, Princetown Primary School 7.30 p.m.); 1 June Postbridge history walk with Rob Steemson (meet Postbridge car park 7 p.m.), and 7 September 'old Princetown' (Dave German, Primary School 7.30). Further details from chairman David German, South Hessary House, Princetown PL20 6SL, tel. 082289 424).

**Crediton Area History and Museum Society.** Events up to June include: 5 April, Arthur King-Robinson on 'Newcombes' (at Trevella, off Western Road); 10 May visit to Okehampton Castle (bluebell time), meet at castle at 3 p.m. 14 June visit to Fursdon House (followed by cream tea), meet at Fursdon 3 p.m. For further information ring Crediton 772270 or 772645.

**Old Plymouth Society.** The address of the Hon. Sec. N.J. Casely, is now: Carcastlys, 94 Glendower Road, Feverell, Plymouth PL3 4LD.

To all local societies: You are invited to send in items of news relating to activities, special interests, subjects of research, local museums or artefacts etc. for publication in *The Devon Historian*. The Editor will be delighted to receive them.

## Minutes of the 23rd Annual General Meeting held at Streatham Court, University of Exeter on Saturday 31 October 1992

In the Chair: the President, Professor Ivan Roots  
Present: c. 47 members of the society.

1. **Apologies:** Prof. N. Orme, Mr. R. Broad.

2. **Minutes**

The minutes of the last Annual General Meeting (printed in *The Devon Historian*, April 1992) were read and approved.

3. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

4. **Hon. Secretaries' Reports.**

Mrs. S. Stirling reported that the society is now registered as a charity under its revised title. Letters sent to MPs expressing opposition to the possible fragmentation of archives should local government be reorganised had met with favourable replies.

The restoration of Paterson's Cross at Ottery St Mary was being carried out.

The chairman, Prof. J. Youings, will represent the society at the forthcoming public enquiry concerning Braunton Great Field.

A register of historic landscapes is to be kept at County Hall, and a photographic competition had been suggested.

Mrs. Stirling thanked her fellow secretaries and Mr. D. Edmund for their help, and Mr. C. Tatham, and Mrs. H. Harris, for organising the day conferences at Membury and Tavistock respectively.

Mr. J. Pike, membership secretary, reported that a separate list of corporate members was available. An updated membership list would be sent out during the next twelve months. The president thanked all the secretaries for their work during the year.

5. **Hon. Treasurer's Report**

Mr. D. Edmund reported that the society had 408 individual and family members, and 51 corporate members. The financial situation was stable, and there was no

need at present to increase subscriptions. In reply to a question Mr. Edmund said that the circulation of leaflets with the journal did not necessarily mean that the society endorsed the 'products', but added that only leaflets considered acceptable to members were accepted. Mr. Edmund explained that a contribution had been made to the forthcoming publication of *Tudor and Stuart Devon*, a volume of essays written for the society's chairman, Prof. J. Youings. The president thanked the treasurer for his capable work.

#### 6. Hon. Editor's Report

Mrs. H. Harris thanked those who had contributed articles and reviews and other material, and Mrs. Stirling and Mr. Edmund for their work in dispatching the 500-plus copies twice yearly. The printers, Penwell Ltd. had provided a meticulous and efficient service. She hoped future issues might include more papers on periods before the nineteenth century (though not wishing to discourage articles from this later period), and perhaps more referring to the north of the county. The editor thanked the senders of news of local societies and hoped for more, and she reminded potential contributors of the advisory note on 'house style' on page 2 of *The Devon Historian*. The president thanked the editor for the work she had put into producing two more excellent issues of the society's journal.

#### 7. Elections

All officers being willing to stand again, they were re-elected *en bloc*. Mrs. F. Wilkinson, who was retiring from council, was thanked for her past work. Mr. S. Timms, previously a co-opted member, was elected to fill the vacant place, and Messrs. Bosanko, Maxted, Reed and Stoneman, retiring under the 3-year rule, were re-elected. The president thanked all officers and council members.

#### 8. Programme

It was announced that day conferences would be held at Instow on 13 March 1993, and at Dunkeswell later in the year.

#### 9. Any other business

Professor Youings proposed a vote of thanks to the president for chairing the proceedings.



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