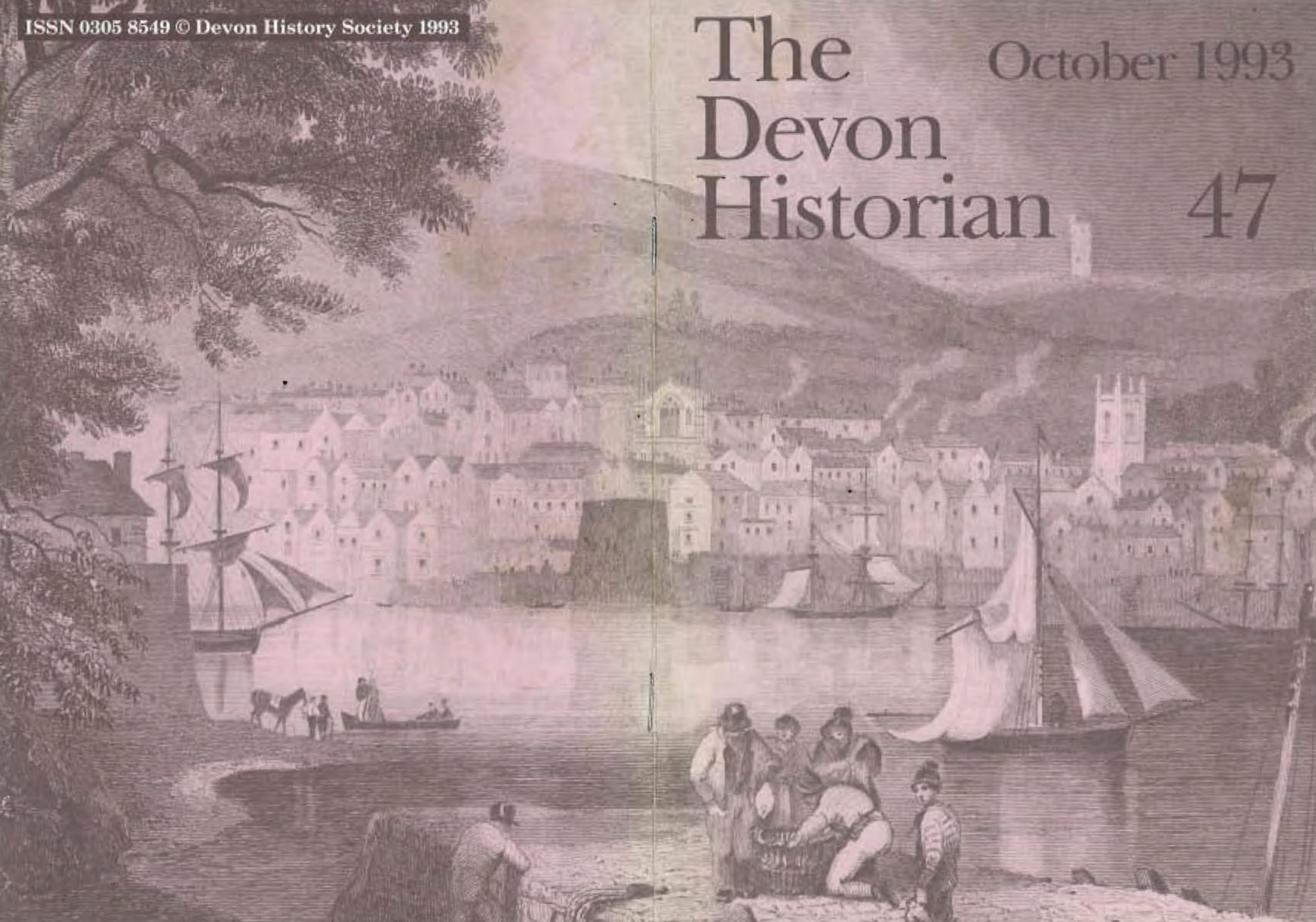


The Devon Historian

October 1993

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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 Acting Hon. Treasurer, Mrs Sheila Stirling (see address below).

THE DEVON HISTORIAN

Correspondence relating to *The Devon Historian* and contributions for publication should be sent to Mrs Helen Harris, Hon. Editor, *The Devon Historian*, Hirondelles, 22 Churchill Road, Whitchurch, Tavistock PL19 9BU. The deadline for the next issue is 30 November 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 AGM

The AGM of the Society will take place at St Luke's College, Exeter, on Saturday 16 October 1993 from 10.30 am to 4.30 pm. Maritime history will be the theme.

The print on the cover is *Dartmouth, Devon*, steel engraving by J. Bingley, after G.B. Campion, published by Jennings & Chaplin, 1831. (Somers Cocks no.468)

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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.: 30 November 1993, etc.

David Edmund 1929-1993



David Edmund's untimely death in May of this year robbed the Devon History Society at once of Treasurer, Publicity Officer, Schools Liaison Officer and Knight Errant to be called on in any crisis. (We remember how David, not for the first time standing in for a guest-speaker at a couple of hours notice, delivered a characteristically relaxed, witty and illuminating talk on 'Don't believe all you see', illustrated from his collection of local postcards.) He was always ready to help and his seemingly inexhaustible resourcefulness in solving problems may have been developed during his years as Stage Manager of Exeter's Theatre Royal in its hey-day or in his subsequent career as electronics lecturer at Exeter College.

Born in Leicester, but a Devonian from the age of six, David attended Hele's School, where like another former pupil, W.G. Hoskins, he may have first acquired a taste for the history of his county. Indeed, David had a passion for local history. He collected omnivorously, books, pamphlets, postcards, ephemera. He was an expert on a variety of subjects: railways, trams, papermills, Exeter theatres, the Exeter blitz. His great gift was to encourage others to share his enthusiasms: The Silvertown Local History Society and the History Section of the Devonshire Association (both groups made him their Chairman), the Devon & Exeter Institution Library Committee, Exeter City Guides, all benefited from his willingness to get involved, his knowledge and his energy.

A long-time member of the Devon History Society and Treasurer since 1981, David over the years turned a near financial disaster into a going concern. Early this year, in order to save the Society from paying punitive bank charges, although gravely ill he undertook the exhausting procedure of getting all standing orders amended. His dedication was no less in many other official and unglamorous chores, from laying-out programmes on his word-processor to stuffing envelopes with *The Devon Historian*. His latest initiative, looking to the future, was to recruit schools as members of the Society. This was a natural priority for David, since Jane, his wife, is headmistress of an Exeter School. Always a popular speaker on the local history circuit, he was as much at home talking to a class of ten-year-olds as to adult groups. His slide-presentations were always faultless, perhaps a result of his theatrical training, and the same careful preparation and professionalism showed in his easy delivery and skill in communicating.

However great his contribution as an Officer to the success of the Devon History Society, it is David himself we miss. Modest, humorous, fairminded and kind, he could always be relied on for wise comment and sound practical advice. He faced a long and often extremely painful illness with inspiring courage and cheerfulness. It was a privilege to know him and we have truly lost a friend.

Sheila Stirling

SOME FUTURES FOR OUR LOCAL PASTS

(Resume of a lecture given to the 22nd Annual General Meeting of the Devon History Society)

Charles Phythian-Adams

All local historians have to start from the premise that it is more appropriate for us to think not of one imagined *national* society in this country, or even simply of one 'English' society, but a multitude of regional or local societies all operating in their own idiosyncratic ways within an overall framework of nationally-shared social conventions, economic structures, legislative imperatives and so on.¹ Even today, English society is not wholly homogenized – or not quite! All English regions, and the West Country more than most, still retain something of their distinctive local identities.

That said, it is also true that most of us working on local subjects tend to characterize such identities by evoking them for periods other than our own. The 100-year rule regarding access to past censuses in particular has too frequently encouraged local investigators to cut their stories short at any point from 1891 backwards – and therefore at a stage before all of us were even born.² The result? We have come to regard the 'past' as something 'lost' rather than as something constantly 'replaced' and hence uninterruptedly connected to *us*? This has arisen what might be called a tacit local historical fallacy: that the present exists in its own vacuum.

Of course no one has deliberately intended this to happen, yet simply to think about it is to see immediately how irrational is such an attitude and how subversive of the idea (so important to the younger generation) that a knowledge of the past is only relevant if it tells us something about ourselves *now*. We then must guard against the assumption that, within only a few years of its completion, the last century of the second millennium after Christ still contains no matters of significance to local historians and, worse, that the analysis of it which has yet to be unfolded will merely be to do with the sorry degeneration of regional identity. For, on the contrary, in many respects the twentieth century may be regarded as an immensely exciting object of study not only because of the speed of change within it, but also because it seems to represent the fulfilment of one of those widely-spaced, climactic stages of human history when societies are fundamentally re-arranged in residential terms. The sequence includes such steps as the emergence of settled agriculture as a product of the so-called 'Neolithic revolution'; the evolution of nucleated forms of residence in village and town, the beginnings of which we are now associating with the end of the Dark Ages; and, of course, the more recent acceleration towards a fully urbanised society over the last 170 years or so, down to the present when the countryside itself is increasingly 'sub-urbanized' even at considerable distance from the nearest city. The opportunities for studying this latter transition in so rural a county as Devon surely pose tremendous possibilities.

What then are some of the problems that might usefully be confronted? Three preliminary themes immediately suggest themselves though there are many others, let me then simply outline some points that relate first, to the decline of the old order; second, to the implication of the new; and, third, to what this might mean to the student of people in a local society.

The decline of the old order may be studied, of course, not only through documents (including parish magazines) but also through oral history and old photographs

(including picture post cards). Here the points of focus will surely be the decline not only of traditional farming but also, eventually, of farming altogether; not just then the survival of the farm-house, for example, but even the survival of the farm itself. In Leicestershire, some villages no longer even contain working farms. Then there are all those crucial aspects of rural community: the village shop (and its disappearance); the village schools; the pubs; the local bobby; let alone the shrinkage of organized religion as that is expressed in amalgamated parishes and discontinued churches and chapels. Which was the last local workhouse to close? What was the timing of such changes in different districts? Were there countervailing factors like the democratisation of cricket, the spread of village halls, and the influence of the Mothers' Union?

A second theme comprises the onset of modernisation, much of it distinctly for the good. One thinks firstly of housing need, the provision of rural council housing and other new residential developments (that all need local mapping). And here the linking up of remote parts to modern services is so important: water, sewerage, gas, electricity: at what dates did these, and other benefits (like cottage hospitals), arrive? Probably surprisingly late. Above all, however, there is the impact of new modes of transport: from the coming of the bicycle, via the spread of rural bus-services (at the expense of the carriers) to the revolutionary expansion of private car-ownership (a development that can also be studied through tracing the visual history of the domestic garage). How rapidly did physical horizons expand?

Finally, we come to people. In this case, the new position of women must be regarded as fundamental not only because of birth control methods (when *did* these reach remoter Devon?) and ever-widening opportunities for paid employment (especially during the wars), but also because of the new availability of domestic labour-saving devices from water-taps and cookers to refrigerators and vacuum cleaners. For both women and men, however, ease of transport has increasingly separated residence from place of work, while long-distance mobility everywhere has led to the addition to local societies of new blood from outside, with all that both these factors may have meant for the displacement of the traditional localized influence of the older, native core families and their kinship networks. Are, however, such networks conceivably still in existence (albeit enlarged by in-comer connections) but now effectively invisible because, thanks to ease of transport and the telephone, they are more broadly spread-eagled over the wider region? This could be a key to the survival of local identity itself.

I believe that attention to such matters as these is a matter of urgency. In particular, the recorded evidence eventually available for future exploitation by historians concerned with the later twentieth century is itself increasingly scarce or transitory. If only to assist our successors, then, we local historians of today will have to act soon.

Notes

1. C.V. Phythian-Adams (ed.), *Societies, Cultures and Kinship 1580-1850: Cultural Provinces and English Local History*, Leicester, 1993.
2. A notable exception is Neville C. Oswald, "A View of Local History in Devon", *The Devon Historian*, 43, 1991; "Life in Thurleston in the Past 100 Years", *The Devonshire Association ... Report and Transactions*, 119, 1987.

ST SAVIOUR'S BRIDGE IN OTTERY ST MARY

D.L.B. Thomas

The first reference to this bridge appears to be in Bishop Grandisson's Register under the date 1 June 1355¹ as Ottery Bridge on which the Bishop had recently built the Chapel of Saint Saviour. On 16 May 1426², Bishop Lacy granted an indulgence for the repair of the south part of the chapel of St Saviour, which had been inundated by flood water, and, on 8 September 1438³, he granted an indulgence for the repair, alterations and strengthening of the bridge of Ottery and the chapel of St Saviour. On 6 November 1450⁴, Lacy granted forty days indulgence to contributors to the construction, repair, alteration and preservation of '*pontis sancti Salvatoris iuxta Otery situate*', which seems to be the first time the bridge was referred to by its present name.

Under the Statute of Bridge 1531⁵, responsibility for the upkeep of bridges passed from landowners, such as the Church, to the magistrates in quarter sessions. St Saviour's Bridge was reported to the justices as being in need of repair in January 1654⁶, July 1655⁷, Epiphany 1660⁸, Baptist 1674⁹, Michaelmas 1674¹⁰, Easter 1676¹¹, Baptist 1676¹², Michaelmas 1676¹³, Easter 1684¹⁴, Easter 1691¹⁵ and Michaelmas 1725¹⁶. At Easter Sessions 1726¹⁷, it was reported that the bridge was 'in much decay and the side walls fallen down and that the sd bridge by means of the narrowness thereof is dangerous to Travellers travelling with Coaches and Waggons'.

The Court ordered that the bridge should be inspected, an estimate of the cost of repair prepared and the required amount of money raised on the East Grand Division of the County. The money was then to be paid over to John Sesse, the Treasurer for this division, who would get the repairs put in hand. Later in the year¹⁸, it was reported that £100 was to be raised for 'enlarging St Avoir's bridge' and repairs to other bridges. There is no express record in the Order Book that this work was put in hand but a print¹⁹, probably late eighteenth century, shows St Saviour's Bridge as a four span masonry arch structure with sufficient width between parapets for carts and carriages. The bridge seems to have been reasonably well built because there were no repair orders until 1742. After that date until the end of the century there were eighteen such orders, an indication, perhaps that the structure was gradually deteriorating under the onslaught of the River Otter.

In 1799, the 73 year old bridge succumbed and was swept away. The magistrates were told the news at the Michaelmas Sessions 1799²⁰ and made an order that a temporary bridge should be erected under the supervision of Lord Rolle, Sir John Kennaway and a Mr Marker. Probably at that Sessions justices asked for an explanation of why the bridge had been washed away and William White, the local Surveyor of Bridges, would have been asked to carry out an investigation. The cause of the failure of the bridge becomes clear six months later²¹ when a presentment was made against Richard Brimicombe, a local landowner, for 'not repairing the Wearing or Bank of a Field above & on the west side of Ottery Bridge by which the water overflowd & wash'd away the Foundation of sd Bridge'.

At Midsummer Sessions 1800²², it was reported that Brimicombe had died and the proceedings were dropped. At the same Sessions, the Clerk of the Peace was required to advertise for tenders for rebuilding the bridge. Three months later²³, it was ordered that three magistrates should enter a contract with John Ferriman, a mason from Silvertown, to rebuild the bridge for £1,130 plus £180 for paved dished inverts under the

arches. The bridge was built under the direction of William White, the Surveyor of County Bridges in the East Grand Division, and was a two span masonry arch bridge, each span being 27 feet (8.23m), with a width between parapets of 10 feet (3.05m).

In 1807²⁴, Fenny Bridges, built only a short while before by Ferriman under White's direction, was washed away in a flood. The committee appointed to look into the reasons for the premature failure of Fenny bridge and the poor state of repair of St Saviour's Bridge, sought the advice of James Green, a civil engineer later to become Surveyor of Bridges for the County. Green reached the conclusion that the reason was the same in each case, that is, inferior quality mortar in the masonry. A further defect of St Saviour's Bridge was that the abutments were in danger of being scoured, or undercut, by the river and Green recommended that a weir be built on the downstream side of the structure so as to raise the level of the bed of the river under the bridge.²⁵ The weir was built and protected the bridge until 7 December 1849²⁶ when, during a severe storm, the Otter contemptuously swept them both away.

The Bridge Committee was quick to act. It instructed Thomas Whitaker, who had succeeded James Green as County Surveyor nine years before, to erect a temporary footbridge immediately at a cost of £13 and to advertise for tenders for a temporary carriage bridge. By the time the justices sat in quarter sessions at Epiphany 1850²⁷ tenders for the carriage bridge had been received and they ordered that the lowest, that of Charles Tuckett at £108.13s.0d (£108.65), should be accepted. They also asked the Bridge Committee to advertise for tenders for a permanent bridge: 'a Bridge of Iron or of any other construction'. The Bridge Committee reported back at the Easter Sessions 1850²⁸ that three different schemes had been considered, namely:

- one produced by a Capt. Moorsom²⁹ incorporating a wood and iron lattice beam;
- one produced by Messrs Knight and Canning incorporating an iron Warren³⁰ truss beam;
- a cast iron arch bridge designed by the County Surveyor.

The Committee instructed the Surveyor to inspect some of Capt. Moorsom's bridges – possibly on the Birmingham and Gloucester Railway – and one built by Knight & Canning on the North Kent Railway in Southwark. In its report to the Easter Sessions 1850³¹, the Committee stated that it had received from Whitaker 'an able and intelligent report in reference to them.' The report continued:

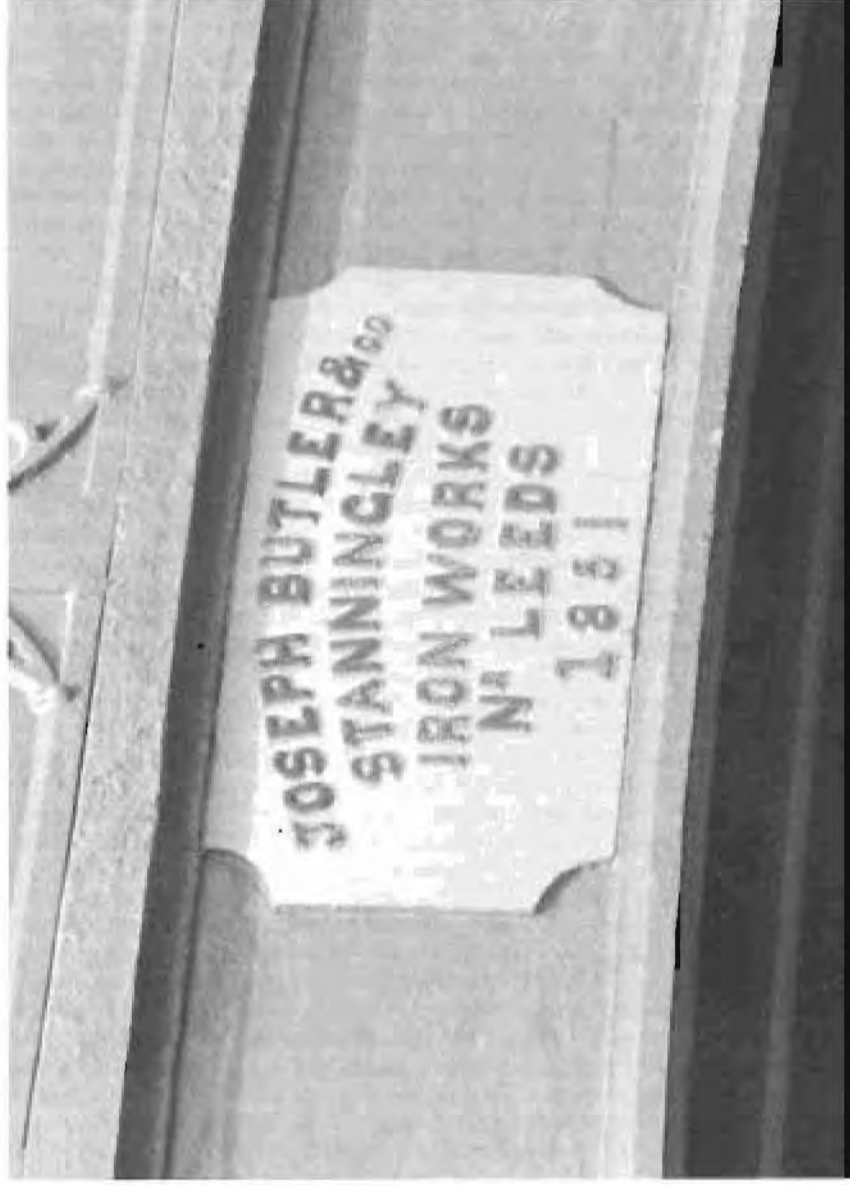
'Although these Bridges exhibit considerable skill and ingenuity of construction it is the opinion of your Committee that their durability & strength has not yet been sufficiently testified to justify them in recommending them to the adoption of this County. They are also of the opinion that no ultimate benefit would arise to the County from the adoption of Wood as the material for the Bridge. They consider that the single Cast Iron arch affords the best form and material for a permanent Bridge in the locality where Stone is of very difficult access.'

A number of tenders for Whitaker's cast iron arch design had been received and the Committee recommended that the Court accept one from Messrs Butler & Co of Stanningly³² which would make the total estimated cost of the bridge £1,800. It also recommended that Whitaker should be paid his expenses of £15.4s.6d (£15.22) for travelling to inspect the bridges.

Most civil engineers will agree that, while some projects go smoothly from start to finish, others, for no particular reason, attract all sorts of problems. Whitaker's St Saviour's Bridge Contract was one of the latter. At the Midsummer sessions 1850³³, Sir John Kennaway, Chairman of the Bridge Committee, told the justices that one of the



St Saviour's Bridge in Ottery St Mary. Downstream view.



St Saviour's Bridge in Ottery St Mary. Manufacturer's Plate.

committee members had noticed that the new temporary carriage bridge was not built in accordance with the Contract despite the fact that the County Surveyor had certified the work as having been properly completed. Sir John continued that the committee had asked Mr Donaldson, clerk of works at the Prisons, to inspect the bridge and to let them have a report. Donaldson's report was pretty damning. The work has been executed in 'a very insecure slovenly and unworkmanlike manner', he reported. Piles had not been driven to the correct depth, there were insufficient struts supporting the roadway, the decking was the wrong size, rails were not morticed and so on. The length of timber required by the contract was 1112 feet 1 inch (338.96m) and the amount used was 940 feet 7 inches (286.69m), leaving a shortfall of 171 feet 6 inches (52.27m). In his defence Whitaker had pointed out that, as this was a temporary bridge, he had not paid as much attention to it as he would have to a permanent structure and, on his behalf, 'one of the most intelligent Witnesses' had stated that the bridge 'would endure for a twelvemonth'. The Surveyor asked if he could have time to prepare his side of the matter and the Court ordered that the Committee should investigate the matter fully and report back to the next sessions. The Court agreed and, at the following Sessions²¹, the committee reported that it had interviewed Whitaker, Donaldson and two architects who spoke on behalf of the Surveyor. Whitaker, it reported, had been 'guilty of culpable laxity' but that 'there was no evidence before them of any improper motive for such irregularities'.

In retrospect, it is difficult not to feel sympathy for Whitaker. Certainly, by allowing a contractor to be paid for slipshod work, he had failed in one of his primary functions. But he was a very busy man and, to use a term coined much more recently, professionally isolated. On his own, he had to inspect over 300 bridges scattered throughout a large county twice a year which meant travelling on horseback about 6,000 miles and staying away from home for about 30 days. He had to produce drawings and documents and superintend bridge reconstruction projects, report to and attend monthly and quarterly meetings of the justices, inspect and report on certain turnpike and railway works, prepare and present accounts and numerous other duties. The humiliation of a public rebuke must have served no useful purpose.

At the Easter Sessions 1851²², the Bridge Committee reported that it had accepted the offer of Butler & Co of Stanningly for the ironwork in the sum of £1,200. It had received two tenders for the abutment and approaches work, namely, one of £1,150 and the other £1,000. The lower tender was from none other than John Perriman, who had built the bridge recently swept away by the Otter. He was now getting on in years and not enjoying the best of health. The Committee were firmly of the view, strengthened by a letter from Captain Moorsom, that the cost of the bridge should be £2,000. This prompted it to put the squeeze on Perriman who was persuaded to reduce his price by £70. The total contract price was still more than the approved figure of £1,800 and the Court gave approval for the additional £330.

Perriman started work on 24 May 1851 and soon realised that his price was too low. He started cutting corners and the Surveyor, probably still smarting under his rebuke over the temporary bridge, refused to accept any work not strictly in accordance with the contract. Perriman complained to the Committee that Whitaker was being unreasonably strict. However, the Committee supported Whitaker, much to his relief one imagines, and Perriman, by now a sick man, abandoned the contract.²³

The Committee was now in a bit of a pickle. It was 21 June; only 16 per cent of the abutment work had been done and the ironwork was due in July. According to the

Committee report, Whitaker said that he could complete the work for the 'amount in the hands of the Committee'. Later, Whitaker was to dispute that he said this but he was instructed to go ahead with the work and by 22 July everything was ready for the ironwork. Work on manufacture of the cast iron arch ribs and other members was proceeding at the Stanningly works at a fairly leisurely pace. Whitaker travelled up to Yorkshire on 2 July to inspect the moulds and collected expenses of £10. The various components were to be shipped from the Humber probably to Plymouth and hence by road to Ottery. At the end of July nothing had arrived although a part consignment had set off and was lying in the Margate road. Full delivery did not take place until 6 November 1851, nearly four months late. A flurry of activity followed and by 15 December the bridge was painted and ready for opening 'to the public use'.²⁴ But Whitaker was not yet off the hook. The Bridge Committee reported to the bench at Epiphany 1852²⁵, that the cost of building the abutments and approaches was now £449.7s.4d (£449.36) more than it would have been if Perriman had completed the work. The Surveyor had said that he could complete the work for Perriman's figure, the Committee reported, and it was evident from this overspend that 'he has either kept back the truth or which is more probable has in this instance manifested an incapacity to make an accurate estimate of works neither extensive nor complicated'. Whitaker's protest that he had not said that he would complete the works for Perriman's figure was of no avail and the Committee reported that it 'no longer had any confidence in him'.

The total cost of the bridge, including abutments, approaches, land, river works, temporary bridges, legal and valuation fees was £3511.7s.9d (£3511.39). Despite its apparent misgivings about Whitaker's competence, the Committee recommended to the magistrates that he should be granted £60 in addition to his annual salary for completing Perriman's work, which, it said, was 'not within the range of duties which under his appointment the Surveyor can be required to perform'. Perhaps the Committee realised that the finished product was a well designed and well built structure.

One more brush with authority is recorded against Whitaker. The Bridge Committee reported at Midsummer 1856²⁶ certain irregularities in Whitaker's financial reporting. He had been spending the saving on one bridge repair on another without formal authority. For example, he had saved £5.15s.6d (£5.77) on the repair of Exe Bridge, Morebath and £1 on the repair of Dart Bridge, Bampton Bridge, on the other hand, cost £17 17s.5d (£17.87) against an approved figure of £14 and Whitaker used part of the £5.77 saving to offset the additional expenditure. This was very much a technical offence and Whitaker had, in fact, spent £2.18s.1d (£2.91) less than authorised on the three bridges. Nevertheless, the Committee reported to Sessions that 'it is the opinion of the majority of the Committee unadvisable for the County to place their confidence in him as a County Officer.' The rather pretentious committee report is quite out of proportion to the trivial nature of Whitaker's offence and this and his previous troubles may point to a conflict of personality between himself and the committee chairman, Sir John Kennaway.

Whitaker stayed with the County for a further nine years after which he retired through ill health, the committee reporting rather mysteriously that his illness had arisen 'under very painful circumstances to which they need not further allude'.²⁷ His son Charles, a civil engineer engaged on London's main drainage took over for a short while until the magistrates could make a permanent arrangement.

Notes and References

1. Randolph. F.C. Hingeston- (ed). 1894-99, *The Register of John de Grandisson, Bishop of Exeter, Vol I*, pp 1188-90.
2. Dunstan, G.R. (ed). 1963. *The Register of Edmund Lacy, Bishop of Exeter, Vol I*, p 166.
3. Dunstan G.R. (ed). 1966, *op cit, Vol II*, p 110.
4. Dunstan G.R. (ed). 1968, *op cit, Vol III*, p 90.
5. 22 Henry VIII, cap 5
6. to 8. Devon Record Office (hereinafter DRO) reference 1/9
9. to 13. DRO 1/11
14. DRO 1/12.
15. DRO 1/13.
16. DRO 1/16.
17. & 18. DRO 1/17.
19. Whitham, John A. *Ottery St Mary A Devonshire Town*, Phillimore, Chichester, 1984, pl 17.
20. to 23. DRO 1/22.
24. & 25. DRO 1/23.
26. to 28. DRO 1/30.
29. William Scarth Moorsom, 1804 to 1863, was educated at Sandhurst and commissioned in the Royal Engineers. He left the army with the rank of captain and subsequently worked on the laying out of a number of railways in Britain and Ireland. He specialised in lattice beam bridges, that is, 1 section beams where the web, or vertical part, is made up of narrow plates set to form a trellis pattern. Moorsom's proposals for St Saviour's were described as being of wood and iron and probably incorporated timber vertical lattices and wrought iron top and bottom flanges. Moorsom later abandoned the use of timber and, during the year when he submitted his proposals to the Devon magistrates, won a competition prize for his design for two 600 feet (182.88m) wrought iron lattice spans over the Rhine at Cologne.
30. A Warren truss, or 'Kennard & Warren patent girder' as it was sometimes called, consists of parallel horizontal members connected by inclined members forming equilateral triangles. James Warren, who patented the system with Willoughby Theobald Monzani on 15 August 1848, appears to have developed his truss from a similar system patented by William Nash on 21 February 1839. The most impressive use of Warren girder construction was the Crumlin Viaduct on the Taff Vale extension of the Newport, Abergavenny & Hereford Railway built between 1853 and 1857, closed to traffic in 1964 and demolished in 1965-66. Initially Warren girders were a combination of cast iron and wrought iron and probably Knight and Canning's proposals for St Saviour's would have been of these materials. Later in the 1850s these girders were manufactured wholly from wrought iron and were exported in large quantities to India and elsewhere.
31. 33- 38. DRO 1/30.
32. Butler & Co later became Butler & Pitts and manufactured, among other things, the fixed spans of Goole Swing Bridge, opened in 1869, over the River Ouse near Doncaster.
39. DRO 1/31.
40. DRO 1/32.

FROM A NOTE ON A FLYLEAF

Pat Salter

On the flyleaf of one of the Kentisbeare parish registers was the following note '24 March 1788 William and Peter Salter his son were both hanged for murder'. This bold statement started my search through contemporary records to try and find more information to flesh out the meagre sentence.

The first clue came from the *Exeter Flying Post* and in the paper dated 8 November 1787:

'Friday last a terrible affray happened between Honiton and Axminster with three Officers of Excise and a party of smugglers. Two of the former were killed on the spot, the other escaped. It is also said that some of the smugglers were much hurt'.

Smuggling was rife in England during the eighteenth century as more and more imports had duties levied on them, not just the well known brandy, wines and silks but also tea and even salt. The south-west of England became one of the main areas for trying to evade these duties and the reasons are not difficult to understand:- there was a long coastline with many sheltered harbours and a reservoir of skilled seamen; the countryfolk were poor and the activities of the smugglers meant a little more money and a few luxuries. There was a general feeling that the taxes were unfair and there are plenty of stories of the involvement of every strata of society.

The passage in the paper indicates that the contraband was probably brought ashore in east Devon between Salcombe Regis and Beer and was being conveyed inland by pack men and their horses towards Kentisbeare. The smugglers were well organised and places en route where they could expect help were marked with secret signs. A bottle end was often set in the wall under the eaves of the welcoming cottages. There is still one to be seen on a house in the village of Offwell between Axminster and Honiton.¹

Looking through the parish registers of Kentisbeare I found that the marriage of an excise officer was recorded and the village was given as his place of residence. The local historian the Rev. E.S. Chalk wrote that there was a resident officer and that he made a map of the area in 1761 - no doubt of great use to his successors when faced with the network of deeply shadowed hollow lanes. Another interesting fact that came to light was that earlier this century excavations carried out in the village of Kentisbeare, within a furlong of the old vicarage, uncovered a smugglers' pit.² Further information was forthcoming in the *Exeter Flying Post* on 27 November 1787.

WHITEHALL, Nov. 16th, 1787.

WHEREAS it has been humbly represented to the King, that on Friday Evening, the 2nd Day of November Instant, a most inhuman Murder was committed on the bodies of William Jenkins and William Scott, late Officers in His Majesties Excise, by a gang of Smugglers, when the said Officers were in the Execution of their Duty, in attempting to seize some Run Goods, at a Place called Roncombe's Girt, on the Road between Honiton and Beer, in the County of Devon. His Majesty, for the better apprehending and bringing to Justice the Persons concerned in the said inhuman Murder, is hereby pleased to promise his most gracious Pardon to any one of them (except William Voisey, and any other who may be apprehended prior to the date of this Advertisement who shall discover his Accomplices therein, for that they may be apprehended and convicted thereof.

And, as a farther Encouragement: the Comissioners of Excise do hereby promise a

reward of TWO HUNDRED POUNDS to any Person or Persons making such Discovery, (except as before excepted) to be paid by their Secretary on conviction of any one or more of the Offenders.

William Jackson, pro sec^r

This document gave the precise place where the affray occurred and it was easy to find on the 1:25,000 map of Honiton and Cullompton (169945)² where it is named as Roncombe's Gate. The present B3174 road runs on a narrow ridge between the headwaters of two streams on the boundary between the parishes of Farway and Sidbury – an ideal spot. The amount of money offered as a reward was enormous for the time when a farm labourer might be expected to earn between 10-12 shillings a week and must have been a great temptation to the people of the area.³ It says much for the loyalty of the ordinary folk that such a large bribe had to be offered. The fact that the officers involved were excise officers is not surprising as the Customs and Excise did not amalgamate until 1906. Although much of their work overlapped, basically the customs officers were concerned with goods coming into the country – the excise officers on the other hand were concerned with exacting duty from goods manufactured or sold within the country, in particular the drinks sold in public houses.⁵

The hunt for the smugglers continued to no avail so the following notice was posted in the *Exeter Flying Post* on 27 December of the same year:-

WUTTEHALL

The following is a description of some persons who stand with the said Murder
William Salter – aged about 55 Years, remarkably black Beard, with some grey Hairs in it: black bushy Hair, a strong made boney Man, about five Feet eight Inches high.

Peter Salter – aged about 30 years, brown strait Hair, freckled in the Face, a thin boney Man, about five Feet eight Inches high, wounded much about the Head and Face and a wound in his left Arm by which he has lost great Part of the use of it.

William Voisey – aged about 35 years, fresh Complexion, broad faced, a well set Man, black bushy Hair about five feet six Inches high.

Thomas Godard – aged about 30 Years, brown strait Hair, a full faced and strong made Man, walks a little forward, has a down look with him, about five Feet eight Inches high.

Daniel Gosling – aged about 30 Years, brown Hair, fresh faced, short necked, broad Teeth before, carries his Head a little forward, further round shouldered about five Feet four Inches high.

The descriptions are clear and it is possible to imagine the men. No doubt the information would have been read out in many public houses in the area for the benefit of the bulk of the population who were unable to read. But the men were not caught until the spring of 1788, and were not brought to trial until March. There is a local tradition in Kentisbeare mentioned by the Rev. Chalk in his book that at least one man was hidden in the roof of the Priest's House for nine weeks after the affray.⁶ Is it foolish to wonder if this was the injured Peter Salter? It certainly seems to indicate that the incumbent at the time was at the least not indifferent to the 'Fair Traders'.⁷ The fact that he recorded their deaths in the parish register also indicated some sympathy for their plight.

The trial took place at the Assizes in the Castle in Exeter on 17 March 1788 before Sir Beaumont Hotham and Mr Justice Buller. The accused were William and his son Peter Salter, George Salter, Daniel Gosling and William Voisey who was still at large at

the time of the trial. From the Crown Minute Book it is possible to find the names of those called to give evidence against the accused although there does not seem to be any records of the trial itself. The Crown Minute Book Calendar gives a graphic account of the end of the trial.⁸

William Salter, Peter Salter, George Salter, Daniel Gosling

Attainted of Murder Let them be severally hanged by the Neck until they are dead on the twenty second of March Instant ... and let their bodies be delivered to Robert Patch – a Surgeon to be dissected and anatomised and let the Gaoler until the time of their Execution as aforesaid confine them in some cells or Places separate and apart from other prisoners and no person or Persons whomsoever except the Gaoler or his servants have access to them without a licence from the Judge the Sherriff or his under Sherriff and until the time of their Execution let them be fed with bread and water only except they shall be desirous of receiving the Sacraement of the Lord's Supper

A note beside this states that the executions were held over until the Monday when William, Peter, and Daniel were eventually hanged. According to the *Flying Post* the men were taken to the Gallows at Heavitree (an area still known to local people as Gallows Corner)

'at their arrival at the fatal Tree ... the behaviour of the Smugglers was penitent and becoming to their unhappy station'

In a note beside George in the Crown Minute Book Calendar⁹ it states that he was to be reprieved and transported for seven years. According to the Gaol Calendar for Easter 1788¹⁰ he was still in Exeter Prison, but at some time after that he must have been taken to the hulks for transportation. This was about the time that the first convict fleet sailed to Botany Bay, the new colony in Australia. It seems probable that George sailed with the second fleet, leaving England in 1789. In *The Index to the New South Wales Convict Indents 1788-1847* (usefully held in the West Country Studies Library) George is listed with the dates 1788-1800 which indicates that he certainly reached Australia. It is now a case of waiting to see if more information is forthcoming from the Australian archives of his life in the colony and possible return to England. As yet it has not been possible to find out what happened to the other two men, William Voisey and Thomas Godard.

A little more information about William and Peter has come to light from the Kentisbeare Parish Registers. William married Joan Gosling on 30 December 1751 and this gives the link with Daniel Gosling. According to the International Genealogical Index registers a Daniel Gosling was born to Robert and Elizabeth Goslin (sic) on 12 February 1759 – so that would make him about the right age – in Salcombe Regis, a known centre for smuggling activities. Daniel could have been a nephew to William but this has yet to be proved. Peter Salter was baptised 1 March 1762, the son of William and Joan in Kentisbeare and on 27 May 1784 he married Betty Salter. At the time of his execution he left a wife and two children, William and Mary.

George was more difficult to find as there is no indication of his age from the documents held in this country – but there was a family in Kentisbeare where the Christian name George was widely used. Certainly there was a George Salter, son of George and Elizabeth, who was baptised 13 December 1861. His elder brother John baptised 1 October 1783 was my great, great, great, grandfather!

References

DRO Devon Record Office

PRO Public Record Office

TDA Transactions of the Devonshire Association

1. Hipplesley Coxe *Smuggling in the West Country*, Tabb House, 1984, p 23
2. Chalk Rev E.S. 'Kentisbeare' TDA 1934 p 91.
3. Ordnance Survey 1:25000 SY 09/19.
4. Rogers T. *Six Centuries of Work and Wages*, Swan and Sonnenschein, 1903, p 487.
5. Waugh M. *Smuggling in Devon and Cornwall*, Countryside Books, 1991, p 13.
6. Chalk Rev E.S. p 91.
7. Newcombe L. *Smuggling in Cornwall and Devon*, Jarrold, 1898, p 2.
8. PRO Chancery Lane, Crown Minute Book, Western Circuit, Lent Assizes 1788 28 Geo III, Assi/21/12.
9. PRO Assi/21/12.
10. DRO Quarter Sessions, Gaol Calendar, Easter 1788 QS 1/21.

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Gaol Calendars DRO

Crown Minute Books PRO

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Note

Where contemporary sources have included the letter 's' written as an 'f', quotations used in this article have been amended to the modern style.

NEW CONTRIBUTORS

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DEVONSHIRE LAWYERS

David Pugsley

Devon has produced far more eminent lawyers than it has eminent seamen, but they are less well known.¹ A start has been made on the lives of individual Devon lawyers, but there is a long way to go to redress the maritime balance.² But the overall picture is clear enough.

'Devonshire has been from early times distinguished as the nursing mother of eminent lawyers. It was long since remarked by Fuller, that this county seems innated with a genius to study law, none in England (Norfolk alone excepted) affording so many legal men. "Cornwall, indeed," he says, "hath a famine, but Devonshire makes a feast of such, who by the practice thereof have raised great estates." These occur among other great names: the two Fortescues, Aland, an able judge, Sir W. de Bathe, Sir Thomas Littleton, Sir John Dodderidge, Sir John Maynard, and Peere Williams. Another century has added to this proud array the still more noble names of Caunden, Dunning, Buller, Lord Chancellor King, Gifford, Heath, and Gibbs, the four last of whom are natives of Exeter. Nor is the race of legal worthies likely soon to degenerate or become extinct, since the Coleridges and Folletts are even now claiming fresh forensic honours for this highly favoured county.'

That was written in 1835.³ Thomas Fuller's *History of the Worthies of England* was published posthumously in 1662. And the race of legal worthies from Devonshire has not degenerated or become extinct. So after John Taylor Coleridge (Justice of the King's Bench, 1835-58), we have John Duke Coleridge, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, 1873-80, Lord Chief Justice of England, 1880-94. And if Follett (Solicitor and Attorney General, 1835, 1841-45) had no eminent lawyer among his sons, his wife's cousin, Lord Halsbury, was Lord Chancellor, June 1885 - January 1886, July 1886 - 1892 and 1895 - 1905. So that from 1886 to 1892 the two top lawyers in the country, the Lord Chief Justice and the Lord Chancellor, were both Devon men.

Devon's pre-eminence in this field is confirmed by the statistics. A league table of the counties of origin of the judges appointed between 1727 and 1875 has been compiled by Daniel Duman.⁴ Middlesex comes top with 59, but that is a special case because of the centralised character of the English legal system. Thereafter Devon has 9, ahead of Yorkshire and Lancashire with 8 each, Somerset and Dorset with 5 each, and Cornwall with 1. But those figures are not quite right. For the period 1760 - 1790 Duman says, Devon 1, Cornwall 1. The Devon judge is obviously John Heath, successively Town Clerk and Recorder of Exeter, and Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, 1780 - 1816. The Cornwall judge is presumably Sir Francis Buller, Justice of the Court of King's Bench, 1778 - 1800. It is true that he came from an old Cornish family;⁵ but he was born at Downes, Crediton on 17 March 1746, baptised at Crediton on 16 April 1746, married Susannah Yarde at Ottery St Mary on 5 December 1763, and both he and his family clearly belong to Devon.⁶ The correct score is therefore: Devon 10, Cornwall 0; and Devon's position at the head of the league table is even clearer.⁷

Notes

1. Adrian Reed, Devon Worthies - Time for a Re-count?, *Devon Historian*, 44 (1992) 20-21.

2. Stebbings: *A Man of Great Learning: Life of Sir John Dodderidge, 1555-1628* (Exeter 1989); Pugsley: *Follett, Our Great Lawyer* (Exeter 1991).
3. *Law Magazine & Review*, 14 (1835) 58. It is the opening paragraph of a Life of Sir Vicary Gibbs.
4. *The Judicial Bench in England 1727-1875: The Reshaping of a Professional Elite* (London 1982) 66-67.
5. As is emphasised in Foss, *Judges of England*, Vol. 8, p. 252, and Simpson, *Biographical Dictionary of the Common Law* (1984) 87.
6. The DNB has it right. At 32 he was the youngest English judge ever appointed.
7. I have not checked the whole table for accuracy, and its mathematical precision is in any case misleading. For example, Lord Halsbury was born in Middlesex but was clearly a Devon man. But there is no reason to doubt Devon's overall lead.

CORRECTIONS

We regret that two errors occurred in the April 1993 edition of *The Devon Historian* (46):

1. In the third paragraph of the article on F.W.L. Stockdale (p.3) a line of type was omitted. The penultimate sentence in this paragraph should have read: 'Somers Cocks³ listed some prints by F.W.L. Stockdale, c.1820, and two later prints of 'Torquay by F.C. (or C) Stockdale, presumably the son.'
2. In the article on the Kennaways of Escott, p.10, the sentence beginning 13 lines from foot of the page should have read: 'He returned by the newly-opened Trans-Siberian Railway'.

From *The Observer* Sunday 4 December 1791, page 2.

LONGEVITY

In a village, two miles from Honiton, the combined ages of the Parson, Clerk, and Sexton, make 270 years.

The duties of these three persons are performed by their respective sons, whose ages united amount to upwards of 180 years.

N.B. — There is not a physician near the place!

(Contributed by Walter Minchinton)

URBAN COMMUNITIES IN CONTEMPORARY DEVON: AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Simon Timms

A recent report from English Heritage supports the view that Devon has more historic towns than any other English county by identifying sixty Devon settlements as having functioned as centres of urban life at one time or another in their history (English Heritage, 1992). Other commentators have gone further and extended the list of historic towns in Devon by including all places with medieval documentary evidence for markets as well as those with formal borough status. This gives a county total of close on one hundred historic urban settlements (Hoskins, 1966, 174-5; Shorter, Ravenhill and Gregory, 1969, 119; Farmer, 1991, 331).

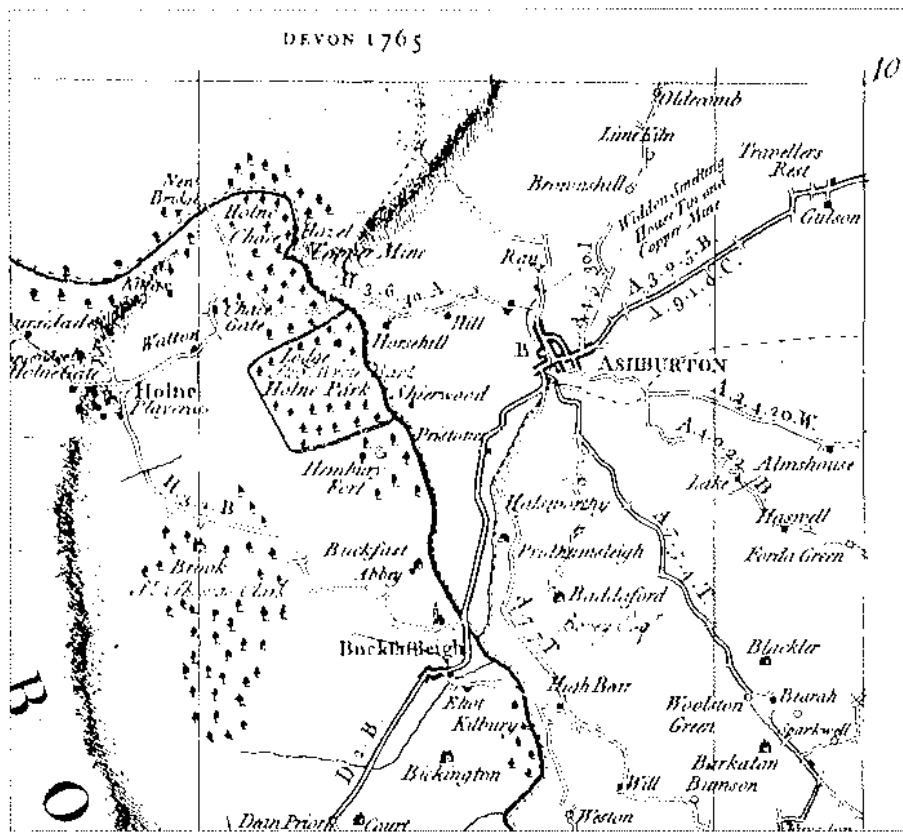
The great majority of urban settlements defined in this way fell into the category of the small market town, which was a key element in the social and economic growth of medieval Devon. Many of these towns were never of any real size and some shrank back into their village roots within a generation or so. But out of the hundred medieval towns, a core of Devon settlements established themselves to form a stable network of communities which has remained largely intact to the present day. Indeed it is a remarkable fact that, with the exceptions of perhaps Torquay and Exmouth, all the main commercial centres in Devon today can trace their urban origins back as far as the Middle Ages.

This ancient solidity of urban life has granted Devon towns a sense of place which plays a lively part in giving them each their own character today. Thus Barnstaple is quite different from Bideford, Plympton retains its own cattle market within the modern boundary of the City of Plymouth, and you run a risk if you ask a resident of Hatherleigh the way to the village (rather than the town) hall.

Yet the evidence — both from today and from history — places towns such as Barnstaple and Bideford on a different plane from smaller places such as Modbury or Winkleigh. This raises the question of which Devon settlements can be identified as the key urban communities in contemporary as well as historical terms.

Forty years ago, W.G. Hoskins, in a short piece on Devon towns which superbly catches their essence, considered there were some thirty urban communities in the county (Hoskins, 1954, 307-11). This total he compared with a figure of thirty-eight identified by Hooker around 1600 and the forty listed by Lysons in 1822. How then can we combine the evidence of past and present to provide a list of the key historic urban communities in Devon for the 1990s? The answer to this question takes on a special relevance with the forthcoming proposals to reorganise distinction between City/District Councils and the County Council by creating a single, 'unitary' council system. Whatever the outcome of these political reforms, the time-honoured network of local urban communities looks set to undergo something of a revival.

In preparation for these changes, a small group of County Council officers consisting of Ian Maxted (Local Studies Librarian), Margery Rowe (County Archivist) and Simon Timms (County Archaeologist) has been looking at how these key historic urban communities can be identified. Following the initial identification of over 100 Devon settlements with claims to urban status, it was decided to base selection of the key communities on the following documentary criteria:



– *Market* The possession of a regular market in 1822, as recorded by Lysons
 – *Administrative Status* Centre for at least two from the following: Quarter Sessions, Petty Sessions, Borough Status, name given to Poor Law Union, Hundred or Deanery.

From these criteria, a list of the following 33 key urban communities could be drawn up:

Ashburton	Axminster	Bampton	Barnstaple
Bideford	Brixham	Chulmleigh	Colyton
Crediton	Cullompton	Dartmouth	Devonport
East Stonehouse	Exeter	G. Torrington	Hartland
Hatherleigh	Holsworthy	Honiton	Ilfracombe
Kingsbridge	Modbury	Moretonhampstead	Newton Abbot
Okehampton	Ottery St Mary	Plymouth	Plympton
South Molton	Tavistock	Teignmouth	Tiverton
Totnes			

This list appeared to include the majority of significant pre-Victorian urban centres, extending as it does to some of the smaller local communities such as Chulmleigh and Hartland. It was clear however that it did not reflect the rise of a number of important

settlements during the nineteenth century. A second list was drawn up therefore to include those urban communities that did not meet the original criteria but which had enjoyed municipal borough or urban district status prior to the local government reorganisation of 1974. Twelve communities fell into this category:

Buckfastleigh	Budleigh Salterton	Dawlish	Exmouth
Ivybridge	Lynton	Northam	Paignton
Exeter St Thomas	Scaton	Sidmouth	Torquay

The combined total of these two lists includes 45 historic communities, which seem to give a good historical perspective as well as forming a fair reflection of the contemporary state of urban centres in Devon today. We are conscious however that our chosen criteria may be improved upon and we would be interested to receive (via the Editor of the *Devon Historian*) suggestions from readers about how this might be done. For example, we are aware that we have not deliberately taken into account topographical or archaeological data (eg the survival of a well-preserved historic town plan). However, a brief check after our lists had been compiled showed that all the listed urban communities have designated Conservation Areas suggesting recognition of their heritage value, whilst many also possess their own museum or are home to a local history society – a clear indication that their history plays a strong part in their community identity.

Note: Any comments on this article would be gratefully received and should be sent to the Editor, *Devon Historian*, c/o 7 Cathedral Close, Exeter. EX1 1EZ. The detailed data, upon which the lists of urban communities are based, will be published in the Autumn 1993 issue of *Devon and Cornwall Notes and Queries*.

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REVIEWS

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

Tudor and Stuart Devon: Essays Presented to Joyce Youngs, edited by Todd Gray, Margery Rowe and Audrey Erskine, University of Exeter Press, 1992, xix and 230pp, £25.00, ISBN 85989 344 7.

No introduction is needed here to the entirely worthy recipient of this handsome *festschrift*. The interests of the Devon History Society have over many years drawn upon Professor Joyce Youngs's unflinching enthusiasm, energies and capacities, the extent and depths of which are celebrated in a typically incisive encomium by Frank Barlow, under whose headship of the Department of History she served during three decades from the 1950s to the 1970s at Exeter University. His successor can underline those remarks. Joyce has always been a loyal friend and colleague, dedicated to the life and work of the department, the university and the discipline of history, whether in teaching, research or administration, within or without the grove of academe. She is, indeed, as someone put it lately, both 'kindly and formidable'.

Joyce has had the immense advantage, denied to many of us, including some of the contributors to her *festschrift*, of being Devon-born and bred. The county has always lain close to the centre of her concerns, but she has never been merely parochial. The contents of *Tudor and Stuart Devon* and its subtitle testify to her wider vision: 'the common estate and government'. The contributors' interests run along with hers: economic, religious, cultural, political and social history, men and women working, thinking, getting and spending. All of these she has measured variously by local and national, even international, yardsticks. Joyce Youngs's Drake, a recognisable human being, went on to circle the globe and at length to die on, and lie under, remote waters. Her Raleigh glowed at Court 'like rotten wood' under Elizabeth I, yearned for freedom and Eldorado under James I, but spoke broad Devon to the very morning an axe gave him his *quietus est*.

The first impact of the *festschrift* is made by the dust-wrapper and a folding coloured plate reproducing a part of a hitherto unknown map of Elizabethan Exeter painted on a wood and leather screen. Clearly derived from John Hooker's 1587 map, though with differences, and engraved by the refugee Remigius Hogenburg, the screen version is expertly analysed by William Ravenhill and Margery Rowe. They suggest appealingly that it was made as a gift, a token of appreciation of favours past and of hopes of benefits to come, to William Cecil, the great Lord Burghley, 'the most cartographically minded statesman of his time'. We may envy those who have had the good fortune to see this remarkable artefact, still in undisclosed private hands.

Margaret Westcott looks back from the expensive funeral at Tiverton of Katherine, Countess of Devon (1479-1527, pregnant years), 'daughter, sister and aunt of kings' – she was the youngest daughter of Edward IV – whose Courtenay marriage ought to have presaged good fortune for her in-laws. But she was a widow for more than twenty years, running the large estates of the earldom of Devon, given her for life by Henry

VIII, not often so generous. It seems that quite aside from her royal blood she was a woman of parts. Using her accounts, Ms Westcott establishes the elaborate routine and manifold requirements of a substantial household. There are payments to players and minstrels, for glass and paper, and to 'the fools Dig, Mug and Kif'. The post-mortem inventory mentions books and manuscripts, chiefly religious, but including a law book, which Katherine might well have read herself.

Tom Greeves's Ph.D. thesis on the Devon tin industry was supervised by Joyce. The interest she aroused then remains, and he offers her now a well-documented – Joyce would expect no less – comparative study of tin working here in the sixteenth century, bringing out the complexities of that activity in four thoughtfully selected stannaries, showing inertia mingling with innovation. He concludes that there is a lot more to be learned about both – an observation that his supervisor would certainly applaud, as one who has always appreciated that any historical work can never be more than an interim report, though some may have more permanence than others.

Another Barnstaple lass, Alison Grant, extends her own earlier work with a survey of north Devon maritime enterprise between 1560 and 1640, a period during which attention has commonly been given rather to the southern ports. Fishing off Newfoundland, increasing world trading – to New Guinea, North America and the Caribbean, helped out with a spot of privateering and sporadic colonial interest – point to genuine enterprise, limited perhaps in comparison with better-placed areas but displaying continuity and progress, throwing up some understanding personalities. Trade is also W.B. Stevens's theme. With statistical support he tackles English wine imports through Devon ports under the early Stuarts – a particularly lively period. Wine was vital enough to Exeter's economy for its importers and vintners to protest vigorously against extra taxes on wine during the fund-raising personal rule of Charles I. For his part, Todd Gray, one of Joyce's former research students, probes into 'fishing and the commercial world of early Stuart Dartmouth' – 'world' is well-chosen. Dartmouth's maritime character was determined largely by fishing inshore and offshore. But as in other Devon ports there was diversity of activity. War with both France and Spain in the late 1620s disturbed routine, it seems, to the point of crisis, but during the 1630s, so-called 'haleyon years', it picked up again. All this economic activity in a major county facing two seas calls out for enquiries taking us into the later seventeenth century and beyond.

Hearth tax returns are prime among Steven Pugsley's sources for an examination of the emergence of country houses in Tudor-Stuart Devon. They indicate the modesty of buildings which themselves reflect limitations upon the wealth of estates. 'The great rebuilding' seen in some other parts of the country expressed itself here in refurbishment, inside and out, much of it architecturally and otherwise conservative. The county did throw up rich men but they tended to live and build elsewhere as the Patres did in Essex, nearer to 'the heart of the realm' by which they meant the Court and London, as powerful a magnet as great a wen. A churchwarden, Joyce has written extensively and persuasively on aspects of religion across Devon – the Dissolution, the Prayer Book rebellion, Tudor bishops of Exeter. Ian Gow makes a case-study of the doings of the clergy in the two decades between the outbreak of civil war and the Restoration, a period of crisis for an 'Anglicanism' which yet somehow survived to ensure the presence in the Cavalier parliament of young men who had clearly been brought up on the prayer book and knew at least the ceremonial of Laudianism. The intelligent suggestion made here is that the majority of Devon parishes conformed to the requirements of changing regimes just about enough to allow a more or less 'continuous ministry' – 'deformation'

as a contemporary put it, rather than reformation. More case studies are called for if we are to grasp the consequences, short and long term, of what are coming to be called, perhaps with some justice, England's wars of religion.

Constitutional history turns up in the final essay by David Dean, whom Joyce met and encouraged on her trip to New Zealand. He investigates the legislative activities of Devon MPs under Elizabeth I, with results reinforcing the view that the big noises among historians of early modern parliaments – like Sir John Neale – by concentrating on conflict over large issues have distorted the true picture. MPs, returned for Devon, often really local men, showed an urge and capacity for pushing legislation of a regional or a community concern, such as in cloth regulation. This is, indeed, very much what parliaments were for from the point of view of a great part of the political nation, not only under Elizabeth, who had her own priorities, but even in the aberrant assemblies of the 1650s, when it was claimed that private legislation 'jostled all else out'.

The editors, contributors and the University of Exeter Press are to be felicitated on the concept, context, content and physical dress of this attractive *estschrift*. It is a tribute to the affection and respect in which Joyce Youngs is universally held. There is but one matter for regret. If Joyce had been in on the secret of the project she would never have let the book go out into Devon and a wider world without an index.

Ivan Roots

The New Maritime History of Devon. Volume 1. From Early Times to the late Eighteenth Century. Edited by Michael Duffy, Stephen Fisher, Basil Greenhill, David J. Starkey and Joyce Youngs. Published by Conway Maritime Press in association with the University of Exeter, 256pp, illustrated, £35.00, ISBN 0 85177 611 6.

To write the maritime history of a county is a bold undertaking and one hitherto attempted for no other English shire. It is not an easy task. Some fishing, smuggling and the shorthand coastal trade are about the only seaborne activities limited to a country's own waters. Everything else is necessarily shared with other people's shipping. Even though a county may predominate for a time in a particular trade that trade will never be the exclusive domain of its ships and merchants. Devon, for example, was important in the Middle Ages in both the Bordeaux wine and the Spanish pilgrim trades and later in the Newfoundland fisheries but never dominated any of them. Moreover, in maritime affairs it is not easy to separate local endeavours from national or the reverse. Plymouth became a great naval base as a consequence of national strategic policy: had the enemy always been to the north-east, its development might only have been as a minor commercial port and naval coaling station. This volume and its sequel, expected later this year or early in 1994, therefore are essentially ventures whose only precedents are the chapters written by Michael Oppenheim for the Victoria County Histories. Devonshire never got beyond the introductory volume and its chapter did not appear until edited and published in 1968 by Professor Minchinton. Since Oppenheim's day (1906) much has changed. Research has revealed information not available to him, the direction being attached to economic factors. A group based on Exeter University rightly thought that the time had come for a major attack on the subject. The result has been a work of many hands with contributions from both sides

of the Atlantic.

The contents of Volume One consist of 36 articles of different lengths falling into three broad groups. The first of these is made up of general background articles. The geology of the land and the nature of the surrounding waters and seabed are described together with its piscine and other marine resources. There are brief histories of navigation and of the marine cartography of the south-west and a description of the handling of a square rigged ship. In the second group the related themes of trade, ports and shipping, privateering and the county's part in naval affairs are arranged in broad chronological order while in the third group are short pieces relating to the main topics. These include an interesting account of an early seventeenth century Devon fishing station on an island in the Gulf of Maine and of the transportation of convicts from Devon to America. Two contributions, those on smuggling and military coast defences, cover their subjects down to the present day. It seems possible that a few topics originating during the period of the present volume will be so treated in its successor.

Before the late Middle Ages there is little firm evidence on the details of trade from Devon ports, and even then official measurements of ships by carrying capacity rather than by dimensions makes scholars reluctant to hazard more than a general description of individual types. From around the mid sixteenth century the picture is clearer. By then the old trans-channel and Iberian trades are being overtaken in importance by the oceanic, notably the New England and Newfoundland. Precise illustrations and indeed some plans of ships are available. Privateering becomes a legitimate and profitable source of investment commanding most interest, surprisingly, during the Stuart wars with France and Spain in 1625-30. With the rise of French maritime power comes the development of a main fleet operating from Plymouth and Torbay and the growth of the former as a base and a great consumer of water-borne supplies. The chapters covering this period are of especial interest while as a pendant to them Dr Rodger gives a convincing explanation as to why Devon produced no great commanders at sea after the Second Dutch War.

The format of the book is two columns to a page which means that it contains far more material than its advertised 256 pages would suggest. The illustrations are well chosen and there is full complement of tables and maps. At £35.00 it is not dear for what it offers and positively cheap in comparison with most academic publications. The references to each chapter can only be called copious. It is probably best described as a book by historians for historians – professional or amateur – rather than for the general reader. While naturally a reviewer can find points to criticise and omissions to note the total effect is most impressive and a major contribution to the history of the County.

Adrian Reed

Road transport before the railways: Russell's London flying waggons, by Dorian Gerhold. Cambridge University Press, 1993, xcii, 316pp, ill, maps, ISBN 0 521 41950 6.

The heavy waggons, hauled by teams of eight horses and lumbering along the early eighteenth century roads at a speed of under two miles an hour, lack the glamour of the

stage-coach arriving at a gallop with a noisy fare before the town's main inn. In fact the world of the long-distance carrier has been more neglected by the economic and social historian than all other means of transport, whether coaches, canals, railways or coastal shipping. The resulting gap in the literature has now been admirably filled for the Westcountry by Dorian Gerhold's detailed and meticulously researched study of the main firm of Exeter carriers during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The book concentrates on the period 1816 to 1821, for which the author has located 2,600 letters and other documents in the Chancery records at the Public Record Office relating to a long-running lawsuit between the firm's two London partners. Other Chancery suits relating to the firm from as early as 1681, as well as a wide range of additional sources, printed and manuscript, are used to chart the development of the Westcountry road haulage industry over a period of more than two centuries.

Roads prior to the coming of the railways have often been dismissed as virtually impassable and with very little traffic. In fact there was an extensive network of reliable and regular carriers, certainly from the 1630s and probably from late medieval times. Packhorses, in use until the 1730s on the main Westcountry routes, were actually faster than the heavy wide-wheeled waggons which succeeded them, but they were more expensive to operate. By the early nineteenth century Russell & Co had exhausted virtually all possibilities of improvement in speed. The main development had been the introduction of fly waggons in the 1760s which ran day and night, changing teams of horses and making it possible to cover about 40 miles a day. Improvements in roads did little to increase the speed, which was limited by the physical characteristics of the horse, although smoother and more level roads cut costs by enabling each horse to pull heavier loads. The lighter fly vans, which incorporated springs and were drawn by only four horses, more than doubled the speed to almost five miles an hour, but they enjoyed only a limited success in the 1820s as their charges were higher.

All these developments are charted in detail, with insights into such matters as the changing prices of provender (which accounted for at least half the costs of running a carrier service) the variety of goods stowed on the waggons (which ranged from sail-cloth, buttons and gloves to butter, trees and pianos, with bullion forming one of the most profitable loads) or the effects of competition, at first from other carriers which were few in number, then from steamships and finally from the railways. Coastal shipping before the steamships was not a direct competitor. While charges per hundred-weight were lower, the sailing ship was much less reliable and also slower. Even the railways did not kill off the carriers' trade; they changed its nature to more local distribution from the railhead using agents in London and elsewhere.

There was remarkable continuity in the firms of carriers operating from the Westcountry to London. Russell's firm resulted from the merger in 1785 of the Exeter firm of Morris, known from 1676 and the Andover firm of Bird, recorded from 1666. In 1816 Robert Russell sold to eight partners who divided the road from London to Falmouth into five districts which operated virtually as separate concerns with complex arrangements for sharing profits. In fact the running of a business extending over a distance of 273 miles between London and Falmouth and, in 1816, using some 30 waggons and 200 horses is a complex operation, and the organisational details and calculations of costs, prices and profits do not always make easy reading. Nevertheless the wealth of detail continually provides interesting and sometimes amusing vignettes, particularly where the author quotes from the original letters. He also fills in the necessary background to a wide range of local industries whose products were carried by

Russell's waggons.

The book is provided with maps, illustrations and tables as well as appendices listing, among other things, all known Westcountry carriers between 1681 and 1840. Above all there is an excellent index which is not just a trawl of proper names but also a detailed analysis of subjects. The author has examined a large body of previously unrecognised source material but together they do not make up a full set of archives. A large part of his achievement lies in the way he has been able to fill the gaps in the record by reference to other documentation. He has provided a work which belatedly reveals the important contribution of the long-distance carrier to the economy of the Westcountry, and which will become an essential source of reference for economic historians.

Ian Maxted

The forgotten trade, comprising the log of the *Daniel and Henry* of 1700 and accounts of the slave trade from the minor ports of England 1698-1725 by Nigel Tattersfield. Jonathan Cape, 1991, xx + 460pp, £20, ISBN 0 224 02915 0.

With the immense amount of writing on the history of the slave trade, this book, whose contents are described in its sub-title, scarcely deserved its claim to be concerned with the forgotten trade. It owes its origins to the chance discovery of the log book of an Exeter slave ship on a book barrow in Farringdon Road, London. With preliminary chapters on the nature of the English slave trade based, as the author acknowledges, on James Rawley, *The transatlantic slave trade*, the first half of this book is concerned with reprinting with commentary the contents of the log book of the Exeter-owned slave vessel *Daniel and Henry*. Under the command of Captain Roger Mathew, the *Daniel and Henry* sailed from Dartmouth on 24 February 1700 with a cargo of trade goods – textiles, metalware, guns, powder and other articles – with which 452 slaves were purchased on the Guinea Coast. An unusually large number of slaves, 206, were lost on the middle passage and on 17 November 246 slaves were delivered to Jamaica. Seized by Customs there for some unexplained reason, the vessel was released in June 1701 and returned to Dartmouth, arriving on 23 July 1701 laden with 104 cwt of muscavado sugar. Although he does not comment on the log in detail or provide a chart of the voyage, the editor does provide a speculative balance sheet. He concludes that this voyage neither made rich men out of its participants nor tempted any of them to engage in further slave voyages. In this, the experience of the *Daniel and Henry* was typical of the Atlantic slave trade as a whole. Recent studies of the trade have shown that, apart from some spectacular windfall gains, the slave trade was not the source of enormous fortunes. Nor was it a trade which involved many constant traders; the majority of British vessels (and of Dutch also) made only one voyage in the trade. This implies also that most of the vessels which carried slaves across the Atlantic were not built especially for the trade but that such vessels consisted of a variety of craft, of varying rig, tonnage and build, drawn from the general merchant fleet. We thus need to take account of such information in our assessment of the British slave trade.

Taking the coast in a clockwise manner, from Berwick upon Tweed in the north-east round to Carlisle in the north-west, Mr Tattersfield then provides information about

the minor English ports which participated in the trade between 1698 and 1725, omitting in consequence not only London but also Bristol and Liverpool. Two chapters are concerned with Exeter, Topsham and Dartmouth and with Plymouth, Barnstaple and Bideford. The vessels involved, including the *Elizabeth Galley* of Bristol freighted by Bideford merchants to Africa in 1700 and those clearing Plymouth for the West Indies, 1697-1704, are listed in the Appendices. A handsome and well-illustrated volume, reasonably priced, this book provides a useful addition to the literature dealing with the participation of minor English ports, including Devon ports, in the Atlantic slave trade in the first quarter of the eighteenth century.

Walter Minchinton

Sir John Bowring 1792 - 1872. Aspects of his Life and Career. Edited by Professor Joyce Youngs. Devonshire Association 1993. ISBN 0 85214 052 5. Copies from Registrar, Devonshire Association, 7 The Close, Exeter, £7.95 + £1 p and p.

A pacifist who bombarded Canton. A radical who sought a peerage. A financial reformer whose own business twice failed. John Bowring was a man of many contrasts and many talents with interests ranging from linguistics to penal reform. He achieved much but it is possible that if his circumstances and character had been different he could have accomplished more. He was a man who seemed never quite to have fitted into any one of the social and political groupings of his day. This may be the reason why he has never had a biographer. His own autobiographical recollections written in late life and published posthumously by his son Lewin are all that we have besides his obituaries. Professor Youngs is therefore to be much congratulated on having organised the conference last October at which the papers now published were read. (The illustrations, incidentally are excellent.) It would be a happy consequence if they stimulated someone to attempt a full biography.

John Bowring was born in Exeter, went to a Unitarian school at Moretonhampstead where he toyed with the idea of becoming a minister, and then began his commercial life in Exeter. Sent to London in 1811 by his employer, like many other Devonians before and after him, he spent his working life away from the county, returning nearly 50 years later to settle in a house a few hundred yards from where he was born. In between he seems to have had little contact with Devon. His early years and the origins of the Bowring family are considered by Professor Youngs in the first of eight papers – 'The Bowring Ancestry' – while the last two papers, those of Dr Laver on his interest in the Devon dialects and of Dr Stanyer on his attempts to reform the Devon Quarter Sessions consider two of his more important retirement activities. Dr Laver sees Bowring as a pioneer in the recognition of dialect as important ethnologically and historically and as a form of speech which should be studied and recorded. From his pleadings came ultimately the systematic recording of Devonshire words and phrases by the Association, now, after nearly a century, totalling around 17,000.

In 1862 the suggestion 'Try Bowring' resulted in his becoming the Devonshire Association's first President. In 1860 he had been President of the Devon and Exeter Institution. These two bodies were sponsors of the conference and as current chairman of the latter your reviewer had taken a preliminary look at Sir John's relations with it.

While his presidential year was purely formal he later sought and barely secured election to the governing committee in order to begin a series of controversial moves towards reforming the Institution. These culminated in a resolution to an AGM which blended the fundamental with the banal and, as he failed to turn up lapsed for want of a proposer. Thereafter he abandoned any ideas of reform. Arguably, he had misunderstood the nature of the Institution, rejecting practical measures which he could have achieved in favour of obviously unacceptable radical ones. Dr Stanyer reports something very similar in his paper on Bowring and the reorganisation of Devon Quarter Sessions. Dismissing the idea that age or ill-health might have weakened his powers he concludes that Bowring's failure to make real progress, notably in financial reform, was due to his lack of common background with the county's leaders: they were rural and conservative, he was urban and radical. Some of them had also been involved with him in the Institution. In both places he was treated with consideration.

Bowring's career is examined in Professor Rosen's paper on his relations with Jeremy Bentham and his circle, in Dr Conway's on his government service and by Professor Parker as a financial reformer. Bowring's association with Bentham brought him on to the public stage. He became editor of the *Westminster Review* and secretary of the committee for aid to Greece. With the latter came involvement in the two loans to that country, at the time without a legal government. Bowring's hopes of a fortune from the stock as well as from commissions were not to be realised and 40 years later cartoonists were to remember the 'Greek Pie' when his son Edgar stood for Exeter. He was accused of using Bentham but Professor Rosen concludes that his knack of accumulating enemies was due in part to his flattery of those he admired and to 'his romantic ruthlessness and ambition and a kind of moral triumphalism'. By 1827 his firm was bankrupt and the following year he began a series of official visits abroad to study foreign governmental accounting methods, conditions for trade and to negotiate commercial agreements. This work stopped with his second term in parliament from 1841-48. In 1847 his business affairs collapsed and the following year Palmerston appointed him Consul at Canton. In 1854 he became Governor of Hong Kong and following the 'Arrow' incident two years later bombarded Canton and started a war that was to go on for three years. In 1859 he retired to Exeter.

Dr Conway considers that his radicalism was not impaired by his working for non-liberal administrations. In his reports he was able legitimately to advance his own views on free trade and the repeal of the corn laws which may have had more influence in securing these ends than did outside radical pressures. However, he did not hesitate to attack his employers' policies when he thought they were wrong, as with Mehemet Ali and Syria. A youthful pacifist and lifelong opponent of war he nevertheless started one with China. The author suggests that his experience of Chinese obstructionism convinced him that Chinese were different from Europeans and so required different treatment. His fellow radicals did not see it that way and broke with him.

Bowring's contribution to the reform of public accounting and towards a decimal currency was in Professor Parker's view, if minor, an important one. His memorial, the florin coin, was withdrawn in his bicentenary year.

Finally, there are two papers on Bowring as a linguist. Dr Hitchcock has no doubt as to his attainments as a Hispanic translator and poet in spite of later criticisms. His knowledge of the country was extensive and it was this that brought him, via Blaquiére, into touch with Bentham. His relations with George Borrow were not so happy as Sir Angus Fraser notes when comparing 'two men of many tongues'.

Bowring's method was to get lesser known languages translated into one of the commoner European ones from which he could work. The origins of their quarrel lay probably in Borrow's performing this task in relation to Danish literature. It reached its irreversible climax in Borrow's splenetic attack on the 'old Radical' in the appendix to his *The Romany Rye*.

It would be surprising if the character which emerges from these papers was not a complicated one. There are some aspects which never changed, his strongly Unitarian faith and his practical radicalism which concerned itself with such issues as penal and financial reform. As a radical he tended to work from inside the system and so never achieved the popular appeal of Cobden or Bright. His management of his own financial affairs was not impressive. The Greek Loan scandal did not help his reputation and commercial failure drove him first into government employ and then to Canton and so to the final breach with his old radical friends. Lack of funds may have added to the sense of being an outsider which his religion emphasised. Yet most of those with whom he dealt in middle and later life were insiders. An ambitious man, he seems to have attracted more respect than friendship. Although his linguistic achievements were not as great as popularly believed his work in other directions was important. Perhaps he would have achieved more had he concentrated his efforts on fewer goals. If he had we should have been the losers.

Adrian Reed

Plymouth a new history by Crispin Gill. Devon Books, single volume edition 1993, 302pp, hardback, £16.95, ISBN 0 86114 8827.

Crispin Gill's earlier works under the same title, Volume One, *Ice Age to the Elizabethans*, first published in 1966, and Volume Two, *1603 to the present day* (1979), both attracted much interest and appreciation. Now, that 'present day' is actually fourteen years ago and times have moved on. Devon Books, with support from the College of St Mark and St John, and following a full revision and updating by the author, have now produced this welcome combined edition. In appearance the new book is totally different from the earlier ones. It is beautifully produced, set in two columns on wide pages, and copiously illustrated. Although much of the text is substantially as before, the first volume, which went into considerable detail in dealing with the Elizabethan period, has been shortened, but with the subject matter retained as notes. This gives the effect of better balance with the second volume, which records the great development of the last four centuries, although distinction between the two is observed. In addition, Crispin Gill has provided an extra chapter to bring the history fully up to date. Entitled 'Thinking the unthinkable' it hinges on the shadowed prospect of Plymouth losing its 700-year old link with the Royal Navy, a decelerating factor in the further implementation of the plans of the 1980s. Devonport Dockyard, formerly the area's biggest employer, which in 1947 had a workforce of 21,000, by 1992 – leased to a private company – was employing less than a quarter of that number. This reduction has, however, been offset by other industrial developments, including some involving a very high degree of technology. Mr Gill outlines these changes, and also records numerous other progressions in the city's structure and life. He observes the extent to which

its population has increased – 20,000 in the last twenty years – making it one of the few urban areas of Britain where population is growing.

Whilst many, though not all of the original publications' photographs have been retained, many new and splendid ones have been added, including some in colour. Also included are clear maps, and drawings. There are still no tables of statistics (an omission noted concerning the earlier volumes) but supporting figures are amply included in the new chapter. (Substitution of a space for the usual comma in the writing of figures involving thousands is something to which one must become accustomed.) Interestingly, possibly in response to another earlier quibble, the index relating to the city's football team has now been changed from the former 'Argyle F.C.' to 'Plymouth Argyle'.

The book invites attention as soon as it is opened and it is easy to get caught up in its contents. The fascinating pictures, drawn from a wide range of sources, many of them depicting by-gone scenes of Plymouth and others showing new developments, are of compelling interest. And the text, the product of deep knowledge and research is nevertheless thoroughly readable, flowing as it does from the hand of a journalist of high calibre. Crispin Gill has even managed to conclude with a picture of the new (1993) ship-like headquarters of the *Western Morning News* – appropriate recognition of the newspaper which he served through most of his working life.

Helen Harris

Historic Sidmouth, Life and Times in Sidmouth, A Guide to the Blue Plaques. by Julia Creeke, with drawings by David Bridgeman. Sid Vale Association, 1992, 56 pp, ISBN 1 85522 179 9.

The Sid Vale Association, one of the oldest and deservedly respected preservation societies in the country has with the author and artist had the valuable notion of providing a guide to their 'Blue Plaque' buildings in the town. Over 30 buildings are described and such historical details as available of their owners and visitors delineated. Sidmouth then as now kept a very respectable distance from the common though one might suspect that some of the more distant aristocratic visitors were in search of a cheap respectability. Nevertheless it remains true that Sidmouth never had the difficulties that Ilfracombe had with drunken south Wales colliers on day trips. The most romantic architectural style relates to 'Sidmouth Gothic' – as in the case of the Beach House. Famous names do abound and in modern times perhaps Sidmouth ought most to remember the Duke of Connaught because of the splendid gardens the town eventually created on that site. The affection of the residents today is clearly revealed in the benches in that area donated in memory to their loved ones by residents. The principal periods of development of the principal buildings appear to fall into two periods: the first two decades of the nineteenth century and the last two and it would have been helpful to have a broader introduction to the town's development. Finally, to comment on the illustrations by David Bridgeman, they are splendidly clear and a great asset to the text and to the history of the town.

J.H. Porter

English Local Studies Handbook, by Susanna Guy, University of Exeter Press, 1992, £11.95.

A variety of lists of addresses for local historians are already available, and one might be forgiven for wondering whether there is any justification for yet another. An examination of this volume reveals that there is. If Guy's intentions were adequately executed, the local historian could toss most of the others out. Her aim is to bring together in one cover, county by county, the addresses of all libraries, record offices, societies and museums concerned with local studies, and to list local historical journals. The idea is excellent, and the result is a most useful volume. Not, however, as useful as it could be: there are too many omissions. The addresses of libraries are reasonably accurate, although our own Devon & Cornwall Record Society's library might have been included under 'libraries' as well as societies. The libraries of local genealogical societies are totally ignored, despite the fact that an increasing number now have permanent headquarters, and have considerable value to local historians. The many branch libraries of the Mormons, which are much neglected by local historians also deserve a mention. Under 'local record offices' I would have expected the Duchy of Cornwall Record Office to rate a mention. Further afield, Guy misses the fact that the Yorkshire Archaeological Society has one of the most venerable archive repositories in that county. Even more surprisingly, the Borthwick Institute at York fails to get in altogether. The major omissions, however, relate to the lists of 'local history journals'. That is not surprising, given that, unlike the addresses, Guy had no adequate existing list to work from. Most of the important county journals still current are recorded, but many which have ceased publication are missed, for example, our own *Western Antiquary*. Local journals are generally excluded – a pity, since many of them contain valuable work which ought to be more widely known; a good example is the Banbury journal, *Cake & Cockhorse*. A few genealogical journals are included, but many escape a mention – despite, frequently, the listing of their parent society. Oxfordshire suffers particularly badly; I can count no less than ten journals which I would have included.

These criticisms should not, however, hide the merits of the work, which will earn its place on my bookshelf. A second edition will undoubtedly be required soon, especially as addresses change so quickly. A few suggestions for the next edition seem in order. The volume includes a list of national bodies concerned with local history, but it would also be worth identifying those libraries which have collections of national importance to local historians, such as those of the Society of Genealogists or the University of Leicester. Such a listing might also include overseas libraries such as the Huntington in California, or the Barr-Smith Library of the University of Adelaide. Some means should be found to indicate those local libraries which have substantial collections of material relating to other counties – such as those of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society or the Somerset Archaeological & Natural History Society. The listing of 'societies' could also be expanded to include more 'institutions' – the Centre for South Western Historical Studies is in, but neither the Centre for East Anglian Studies nor the Institute of Cornish Studies are mentioned. This would be an excellent place to list the many county archaeological units. A final suggestion: should not be a local studies handbook compiled by a librarian include a listing of local bibliographies? Or perhaps that is another book.

Stuart A. Raymond

Thorverton, Devon, by Ian Stoyle. Published by the author 1993, 72pp, 50 maps and photographs, paperback. £8 + £1 p & p, obtainable from Ian Stoyle, Fairfield, Thorverton, Devon EX5 5NG. (Profits to be shared by the Church and Baptist Chapel.)

Thorverton, in the Exe Valley, is surely one of Devon's pleasantest villages. Located a little west of a point where in early times the Exe was forded, and where the first bridge was reputedly built in 1307, Thorverton grew up on an important trade route from London to Cornwall. The author, who was educated at Exeter School and Exeter College, Oxford before working in education, and is Clerk to Thorverton Parish Council, does not claim this to be a history of Thorverton, but rather 'a miscellany of information and impressions'. Nevertheless, the work is the product of considerable research and thus will be regarded as a valuable record of much that has gone on at Thorverton through the centuries. Besides concentrating in a very readable way on parish history in general, and with reference to the Coldridge map of 1814-15, Ian Stoyle discusses street names, the Baptist Church, eminent Thorvertonians, and myths, fires, floods and snow. Further short chapters record events and personalities which bring the account virtually to the present day.

The book contains a wealth of photographs, both ancient and modern, and good clear maps. The actual reading is made a little laborious by the smallness and slight faintness of the print, necessitating close holding for short-sighted readers and consequent wide line-by-line sweeps for the eyes across the rather broad pages. Apart from this minor criticism, however, the book is most attractively produced, with a splendid aerial colour photograph of Thorverton on the cover.

Helen Harris

Huxtable, the story of a Devon farm, edited, partly written and published by Barbara Payne, 1993, 104 pp. many illustrations, plans, maps, £5 + £2 p & p, obtainable from Mrs B. Payne, Huxtable Farm, West Buckland, Barnstaple, N. Devon EX32 0SR, ISBN 0 9521055 0 0.

Over recent years Barbara Payne has carried out research on the farmhouse which is now her home, and of the Huxtable family whose name derives from it. This is the basis of the study, which includes contributions from other participants. The 80-acre farm on the Exmoor fringe is actually in the parish of East Buckland, and the name is first noted in 1330, with a reference to John de Hokestaple, having the meaning of 'a spur of land with a post'. (The spur or hook is still discernible on the OS map.) The farm is believed to be the origin of the surname which is still prevalent in north Devon and now also widespread, although Huxtables have not occupied the farm for perhaps 300 years. Names associated with the property through the years are ones long known in the neighbourhood: Nott, Fortescue, Heddon, Slader, Ridd.

The book is, however, more than just an account of one farm and one family. After Barbara Payne's introductory chapter on the farm's history, John Huxtable writes on his family research and John Thorp of Keystone Historic Buildings Consultants on the farmhouse archaeology. Lady Margaret Fortescue, whose family owned Huxtable for nearly 200 years, writes on her family and nearby home at Castle Hill, and Mary

Cameron contributes a chapter on neighbouring West Buckland School (This, which describes briefly the mid-nineteenth century movement towards providing public schools for 'middle classes', and West Buckland's particular establishment for benefit of farming families, is worthy of separate expansion.) The time of the Ridds at Huxtable (1941-80) and of the Paynes (from 1981) are described by respective family members, Doreen Ridd and Jackie Payne.

Besides making extremely pleasant reading the book gives an exemplary account of the development of a typical small north Devon farm, through decline from possible higher status to subsistence farming and neglect and decay earlier in the present century, wartime revival called for by needs of increased production, post-war modernisation and improvements, and further developments through the 1980s with diversification to include high standard farm holidays business. Said by its editor to have been written chiefly for family and for visitors, the book will undoubtedly be of interest also to many people, particularly those with north Devon associations.

Helen Harris

The ancient chapels of north Devon, by James Coulter. Published by the author, 1993, paperback, 78pp. Obtainable from D.J.B. Coulter, Somers, Yarncombe, Barnstaple, N. Devon EX31 3LH. £5.95 incl. p & p, ISBN 0 9521043 0 X.

The area of this study is that which lies within an approximate 20-mile radius of Barnstaple, extending from Lundy and Hartland eastwards to Bampton and south to Chulmleigh. More than fifty chapel sites have been investigated within this area, and in the book they are conveniently noted within their respective parishes, which are listed alphabetically. Individual OS grid references are given, together with information on historical backgrounds and on present conditions of the buildings or remains. Despite the varying use of the description 'chapel' in its application to different religious foundations, in this context it is the pre-Reformation chapels that are being considered. These are mainly of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries – a prolific period for their building with more than 1200 chapels being founded in the diocese of Exeter between about 1300 and 1450. They were mostly private chapels or oratories. Some became parish churches, others fell into disrepair after the Reformation or were converted to alternative use.

Chapels that remain intact include the former leper hospital of St Mary Magdalene at Taddipport, Great Torrington, St Anne's at Barnstaple, and St Nicholas's, Ilfracombe. Others, such as St Michael's at Braunton, remain as ruins, while many have disappeared, leaving perhaps a clue in just a name, such as Chapelton, or fragments of ancient ecclesiastical structure.

Clearly set out and printed, the text is easy to follow and to refer to. It may be surprising to learn that the parish of Hartland had fifteen chapels, South Molton had eight. There were two, perhaps three, on Lundy. Illustrations comprise 24 photographs, taken by the author, and 15 text figures consisting of drawings and maps. The gazetteer style of arrangement is supported by previous pages of introduction and historical background, and 8 pages of documentary notes plus a useful glossary at the end.

Helen Harris

OTHER PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Yelverton & District Local History Society Newsletter No. 10 1992-3. Ed. Peter Hamilton-Leggett. 24pp. Free to members, £1 to non-members, obtainable from the Editor, The Old Sunday School, Walkhampton, Yelverton, Devon PL20 6JN. Tel. 0822 853760.

Now in handy A5 format, the newsletter keeps up its high standard and pleasant lively style. It is well stocked with information, well-written articles on various aspects of local history, news and queries on research, etc. Great value – well worth becoming a member for the newsletter alone.

Newsletter of the South West Maritime History Society, 26. February 1993. Ed. Adrian Reed. 24pp. (Society subscription £6 p.a. Enquiries to Hon. Sec. Tony Pawlyn, 22 Millers Way, Tedburn St Mary, Devon EX6 6RS.) In addition to society information this issue contains an article on the Church Rock wreck (dealing with a survey carried out off Teignmouth in 1992) by Malcolm Rae, also notes and queries, and reviews.

Research on Modern History, March 1993. This booklet from UMI, White Swan House, Godstone, Surrey RH9 8LW, is a catalogue of Doctoral Dissertations 1988-93.

A walk round the village of Ringmore in the South Hams. First published 1986, revised edition 1991. Produced by Ringmore Historical Society. 18pp. A5. A pleasantly conducted tour of the village, with drawings. Although Ringmore covers a small area on the south Devon coast it has plenty to commend it to interested visitors, and this booklet provides a welcoming guide. (See also under News from other Societies.)

St. Andrew's Church, Cullompton, by David Pugsley. English Life Publication, Derby, 1993. 12pp. £1.50. ISBN 0 85101 302 3. This is the new St Andrew's Guide, which David Pugsley has completely re-written as a history of the church. Professionally produced, it is a most attractive publication. The front cover is adorned with a reproduction of an original water colour of the church and its approach road. The generous illustrations comprise both black and white and colour photographs of high quality, which faithfully portray features of this beautiful church, including the colours of the screen, and of the wagon roof, and the fine fan-vaulting.

Buckfastleigh and Buckfast, produced by Buckfastleigh & District Society. (Price not given.) This is basically a booklet of useful information, particularly aimed for visitors, and includes advertisements. It does, however, contain a resume of facts of historical interest, ably provided by veteran local historian Wilf Joint, and as such will be equally welcomed by residents and those new to the area. Enquiries to Mr Joint, 93 Oaklands Park, Buckfastleigh, Devon TQ 11 0BP. Tel. 0364 43612.

NEWS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES

WHIMPLE HISTORY SOCIETY

During 1989 Mrs D. Tastall, Curator of the Parish Chest on behalf of the Parish Council, and Mr R.J. Shepherd, who had collected a great deal of information on the village and created a file of notes, decided that it would be useful to co-ordinate all this work and pursue further investigations on a joint basis. As a result of this decision, several local people were contacted and soon there was a great deal of enthusiasm for the formation of a specialist group.

Hence, Whimple History Society was inaugurated on 27 September, 1989. The society soon received the blessing of the Parish Council who were pleased to see that the Parish Chest and all its records would benefit from this combined venture. A trust was then formed and a set of comprehensive rules drawn up. Three trustees were appointed and the group was quickly in business.

From these small beginnings, to this date we have grown to an enthusiastic membership of 44 people with a wide age range and a great variety of interests. The society regularly provides articles for the Whimple Newsletter. These, quite often, pose a question which soon receives a response from someone in the village. The points raised invariably lead on to another topic and we find that through regularly contributing to this bi-monthly magazine we are able to add considerable notes to our files.

There is a strong link with Whimple Primary School and we have presented a file of all our notes (about 400 A4 pages) to the Headmaster. In return he has been most cooperative in our research into education in the village and has loaned us the complete collection of school log books and helped us with preparing information for our exhibition on the subject. We also help him by giving talks to the children to assist them with their local studies.

Our committee members undertake specific research projects, individually and with the assistance of others in the society, and present their findings to other members at a special meeting or at an open exhibition. Topics covered include medical care in the village, location education, parish property dating and a pictorial history of events, buildings and inhabitants.

Since its inception, the society has made extensive use of computers and is currently compiling a database cross reference system to allow us to refer quickly to any surname in our collection. We find that we get requests, particularly during the summer, from visitors and by mail for information regarding ancestors. Our main computer operator is our youngest member, aged 11, who regularly sits at the keyboard, accompanied by one of our committee members, logging information from all the documents in the Parish Chest.

Sound recording is also used quite a lot. We have examples of a wedding, a funeral, a carol service, handbells and the church bells. There is also a large collection of local personalities reminiscing on their experiences in the village. From these very informal chats, often preceded by a 'glass of something' to loosen the tongue, we are able to collect some very useful information -- and interesting gossip!

This year we have revived the wassailing ceremony in the village with tremendous success. Despite a very wet evening and no previous public advertising, around 70 people turned out to enjoy this traditional event which was last performed in the village on

17 January 1931. A 'local maiden' was chosen to be the Wassail Queen and as 'Whimple Mayor' (a mock mayor) was always a key figure in Whimple Wassailing this post was also revived.

All artefacts and ephemera are currently housed by various committee members in their houses. This is obviously very inconvenient both in terms of space in individual homes and when locating particular items in our collection. We urgently need a central workshop/storage room from which to base all our activities and the committee is constantly on the look-out for somewhere suitable.

(Contact: 49 Grove Road, Whimple, Exeter, Devon EX5 2TP. Tel. 0404 822076.)

RINGMORE (KINGSBRIDGE) HISTORICAL SOCIETY

This society was formed on 17 October 1984 with the object of collecting, recording, preserving and providing safe keeping for documents, pictures and tapes about Ringmore Manor and the parish of Ringmore. Research and publishing are included in our brief and, in 1986, we produced a booklet 'A Walk Round The Village Of Ringmore In The South Hams' (revised 1991).

We built on work which had already been done locally, including an excellent set of slides of old Ringmore and its past inhabitants and we try to link our history to pictures and voices of people and their writings. Family trees of the Randle and Coker families have been worked out. We have copied all our church records and we get a number of enquiries about these. We are now working on the monuments in our church yard.

We have recently completed a Parish Check List for the Devon County Sites and Monuments Register.

We have had enormous help from Dartington Rural Archive; Devon Record Office; Devon Studies Library and many of the organisations, including the Devon History Society, which come under the hats worn by Sheila Stirling.

Prebendary F.C. Hingeston Randolph and his son were Rectors of this Parish for 75 years and they have left us a wealth of information, including photographs of life in a Victorian rectory. Among the writings is a small book 'Records of A Rocky Shore; or Annals of our Village No 1 Our Sextons'. If you can bear with the flowery language, it is fascinating reading. Rev Hingeston Randolph intended to write 'No 2 Our Church' and we believe we have some of the material intended for this in articles written for the Salcombe Parish Magazine and reprinted in the Kingsbridge Gazette of 1886-1889 under the title of 'Up and Down the Deanery' by the Rural Dean. We want to republish this material, at least for local consumption, but would like to know if a wider interest would justify more than a photo-print issue. Views on this would be very welcome.

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EXMOUTH HISTORICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

A recently-joined corporate member of the Devon History Society, the Exmouth Historical & Archaeological Society is one of several similar societies in Exmouth. Because the other societies: the Exmouth Society, the Friends of Exmouth Museum, and the Exmouth Family History Society all undertake research work, the new formation is more a social group, writes its Hon Secretary, Mrs Jeanne Mallett. The E.H. & A. Society arranges talks for members for six months of the year and outings of historical interest during the summer months. Meetings for the remainder of 1993 comprise:

4 October The archaeology of the early church from Rome to SW Britain. (Professor M. Todd).

1 November Illustrated history of English garden design. (Mr K. Spackman).

6 December Annual lunch.

Meetings are held at Glenorchy Church Hall at 7.30pm. Membership subscription is £2.50 per annum and non-members are welcome at any meetings for an entrance fee of 50p.

Contact: Mrs J. Mallett, 26 Maristow Avenue, Exmouth, Devon EX8 3JE.

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.

A RAMBLE ON DARTMOOR

A copy of an article taken from *The Gentlemen's Magazine* for May 1796.

A map (or guide) must be a very convenient, useful, and agreeable companion to strangers in all moor-excursions, and the sketch we had of Donn's map of the county of Devon was certainly of very great use to us; yet we did not find it so complete and sure a guide as we had been led to imagine; nor was it easy to find objects thereby, supposing them to have been laid down with peripatetic and accuracy; neither is it always practicable to travel in a direct line, and troublesome, particularly on horseback, in unfavourable weather, to refer to a map and take bearings by it. The distance of places on the Moor appear to lie considerably greater than we supposed from measuring on the map in a straight line; this possibly may arise from the rising and falling of the ground; Cranmere pool appearing to be a little more than six miles from the town of Lidford per map, whereas we found it near ten miles; and, after passing Linx Tor, we expected to have met with it in the course of an hour, but were much disappointed. There are also many tors and brooks not noticed in the map, particularly three adjacent to Linx Tor, bearing the names of Beattor, Sharptor, and Haretor; from which circumstance we found it not an easy matter to ascertain those which are inrolled in the map, and we doubted whether they are laid down exact. From every appearance, we were strongly led to believe the unknown river we met with in our tract from Lidford, in search of Cranmere pool, was the West Okement; the valley and the

Gentleman's leat, which answers to the situation of Scobchester, seem to make it pretty clear; however, if so, the course of the river must be more curvilinear than the map expresses it, otherwise we must have gained sight of it a second time. Returning a little to the East of Kerbeam tin-work, we crossed a brook, not noticed on the map, called Rattle brook, which we judged to fall into the river Tavy rising South of our outward track, as we have no recollection of meeting with any such. Then proceeding from Tavistock on the Exeter road, we found the house at Merrivil bridge, known by the name of Dartmoor Inn on the Northern side instead of the Southern. The river Walkham is not named in the map, branching off to the right a little to the East of Merrivil bridge, could not be found, or is so inconsiderable that we did not notice it. Two-Bridges is in fact but one bridge of that name with two arches, the streams meeting above the bridge, and not below it. North of the road, a little to the west of Two-Bridges, is a neat house, called Beardon. A little to the East of Two-Bridges a great road turns off towards Ashburton, which passes by Dunnabridge pound, and thence to Newbridge. The road is taken no notice of in the map. Crockern Tor, which anyone would suppose impossible to pass over, is neither conspicuous from the road, nor so easy to be ascertained by a stranger, as it seems to be by the map. Exactly in the situation where we expected to find it a small torr raises his head, which we looked upon to be too inconsiderable to be fixed on for the seat of a stannary parliament; and we judged the next torr, about a quarter of a mile to the North of it, to be the one we were in search of. On enquiry we found it to be true. For farther satisfaction, we examined two or three of the tors further to the Northward. The last of such stands rather North of Wistman's wood, high and conspicuous, and must be that called in the map Longle Tor (*vulgo* Longabeer Tor); but there are two other tors between this last and Crockern Tor left out. Wistman's wood appears to be nearer the river Dart than it seems to be on the map. A little to the West of Dunnabridge pound, on the Ashburton road, is a gateway on the South leading to a seat called Prince's hall, belonging to Mr Justice Buller. Here, I am informed (since writing the former part of this ramble), the table, seats, &c, belonging to the Stannary parliament at Crockern Tor, are removed by the late proprietor, a Mr Gullet, and still remain. East of Dunnabridge pound there appears, to the South of the road, a new stone bridge, called Hexworthy bridge, and a pretty considerable farm, called Huggaby. The Dart river, which we forded just below Coombestone rock, we were told was the West Dart. The East Dart river, falling into it from the Northward near Buckland, is not inserted in the map. The little hillocks in the map, which we imagined were intended to denote boundstones, represent, as we found, piles of black wood which resemble them, and abound in that part of the moor. From information, we understand that the river Aune (which empties itself into Bigbury Bay) rises not far from Fox Tor; and, indeed, it seems probable that its source is farther up than the map carries it, being by the same not above three miles above Brent bridge, where the stream seems too considerable for so short a course. At the head of this river there is a very dangerous bog of some bigness, called Aune-head Mires, which can never be crossed even on foot. If any cattle stray onto it, they are irrecoverably lost. Tradition says, a man on horseback unfortunately sunk in this bog some years since, and have never been since found. I beg here to inform your correspondent Incompertus, that, during my Ramble on Dartmoor, nor in the excursions since in the same wild, I have never met with the single yellow rose growing spontaneously, and suppose the plants seen by him on Exmoor to derive their origin from seeds carried thither by birds or hoisterous winds, from some neighbouring garden, as

I always understood the yellow rose to be an alien. I beg farther to observe, the spontaneous or native roses of England amount to no more than six, namely, the Apple Rose, White Dog-rose, Red Dog-rose, Scotch Rose, Red Scotch Rose, and Sweet-brier.

J. Laskey

(Contributed by George Tatham)



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