

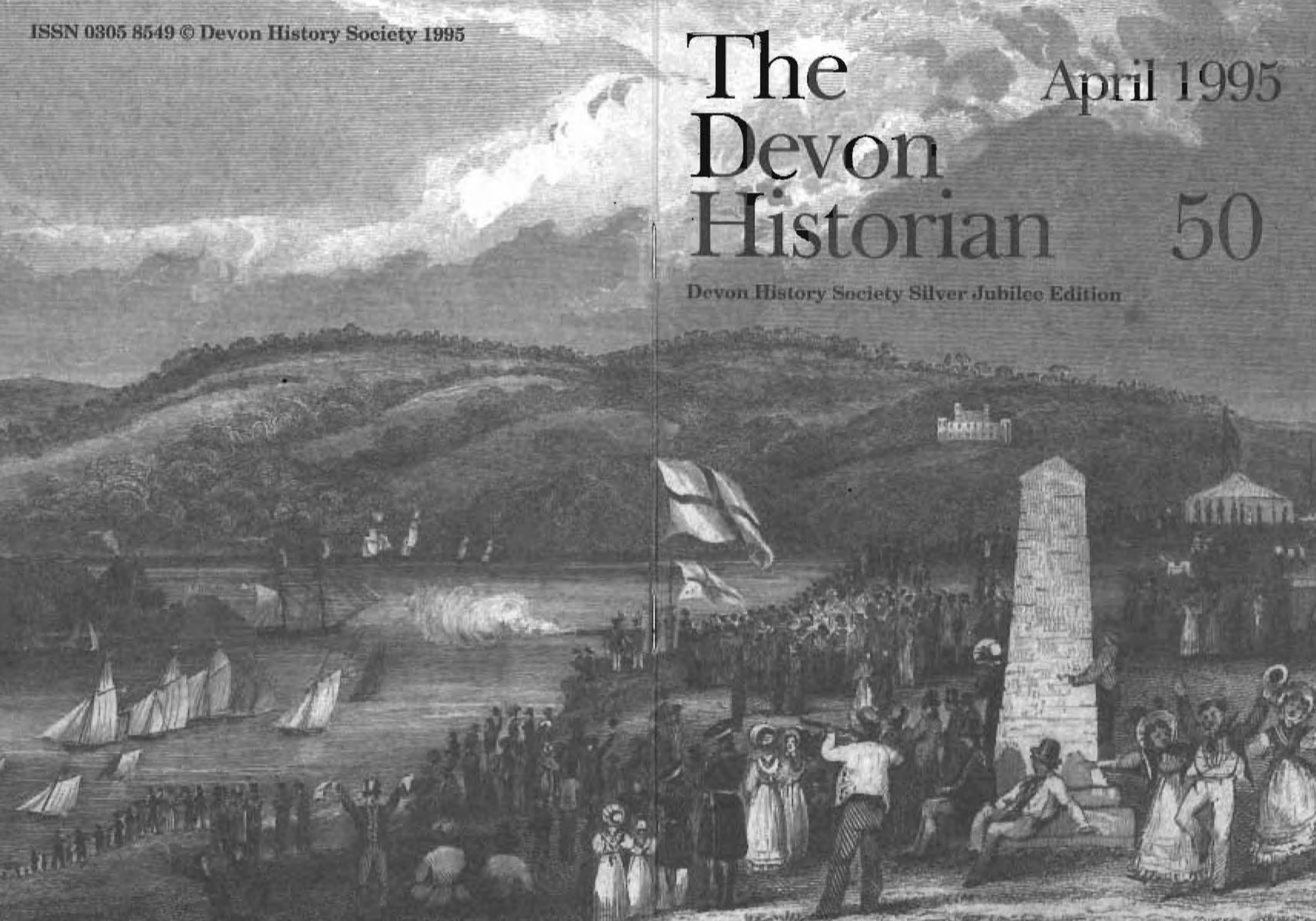
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The Devon Historian

April 1995

50

Devon History Society Silver Jubilee Edition



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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 coming year will be as follows: Individual: £10.00; Family (that is two or more individuals in one family): £15.00; Corporate (any society or organisation): £15.00; Life Membership (open to individuals only): £100.00. Please send subscriptions to the Treasurer, Mr Edwin Haydon, Ford Farm, Wilmington, Honiton EX14 9JU.

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Correspondence relating to *The Devon Historian* and contributions for publication should be sent to Mrs Helen Harris, Hon. Editor, *The Devon Historian*, Hironnelles, 22 Churchill Road, Whitchurch, Tavistock PL19 9BU. The deadline for the next issue is 1 July 1995. Books for review should be sent to Mrs S. Stirling, c/o Devon & Exeter Institution, 7 The Close, Exeter. EX1 1EZ, who will invite the services of a reviewer. It is not the policy of the Society to receive unsolicited reviews.

DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY CONFERENCES

See page 31.

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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 £3, post free, and from No 37 onwards £4. Also available post free are *Index to The Devon Historian* (for issues 1-15, 16-30 and 31-45), and *Devon Bibliography* (1980, 1981, 1982, 1983 and 1984) all £2 each. Bibliographies for more recent years are available from Devon Library Services.

The Vice-Chairman, Mr John Pike, 82 Hawkins Avenue, Chelston, Torquay TQ2 6ES, would be glad to acquire copies of the out-of-stock numbers of *The Devon Historian* listed above.

NOTE FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Articles are welcomed by the Hon. Editor to be considered for publication in *The Devon Historian*. Generally the length should not exceed 2,000 - 3,000 words (plus notes and possible illustrations), although much shorter pieces of suitable substance may also be acceptable, as are items of information concerning museums, local societies and particular projects being undertaken.

To assist the work of the Editor and the printers please ensure that contributions are clearly typewritten, on one side of the paper only, with **double spacing** and adequate margins, and also, as far as possible, that the journal's style is followed on such matters as the restrained use of capital letters, initial single rather than double inverted commas, the writing of the date thus e.g.: 1 July 1995, etc.

The Devon History Society – Twenty-Five Years.

The Devon History Society was founded twenty-five years ago, in May 1970. No 1 of *The Devon Historian* appeared in the autumn of that year with articles from Joyce Youngs on 'Devon's First Local Historians' and Walter Minchinton on 'Tasks for Devon Historians' and an editorial by the present writer. The inside cover page shows that the late Professor Hoskins was the Society's President and that at least eight of its founder officers and committee members are alive and well and still living in the county and active in the local history world.

The current *Devon Historian* is No 50. The Society has had until this year two Chairmen, Professors Minchinton and Youngs, and eight distinguished Presidents. The society came into existence to fill a need. The only specifically historical county organisation existing in 1970 was the Parochial History Section of the Devonshire Association. This met on Monday afternoons at No 7 The Close every month. The Devonshire Association, though publishing a great deal of Devon history in its *Transactions*, was formed for the promotion of 'Science, Literature and the Arts' with no particular historical brief. There were in the county many local history societies based on towns or villages or districts but no county history society to match those in other counties. A need was felt to give a forum to all the local history societies in the county and among much else to pass on information, ideas and literature from the then flourishing Standing Conference for Local History which published *The Amateur Historian* that later became *The Local Historian*. The first title of the Devon History Society was in fact the Standing Conference for Devon History. It has held Saturday meetings all over the county, and in Exeter, attended by individuals and representatives of local societies. The society has met almost everywhere in Devon and is now on its second round of the county.

Over the years the society changed its name to the tidier Devon History Society and, in this writer's view, rather lost one of its original functions, to be a forum for other local history societies in the county. This function has been to some extent revived in the last two or three years by holding meetings where societies are invited to talk about their activities and put their publications on view.

The Devon Historian has attracted many distinguished contributions and is bigger and better than it was at the beginning. It provides an outlet for articles too short for the *Transactions of the Devonshire Association* and rather different in nature from those of the *Devon and Cornwall Notes and Queries*. There seems to be room for all three publications.

The founder members of the society are all twenty-five years older, needless to say, than when the society began and though many are still active in the local history world there is and will always be a need for new and younger members and committee members to carry the society and *The Devon Historian* on for another twenty-five years.

Robin Stanes

FENNY BRIDGES IN FENITON AND GITTISHAM

D.L.B.Thomas

Fenny Bridges lies on the line of a Roman road and the Roman engineers would have built a bridge over the Otter here. Almost certainly it would have been a fairly long timber trestle type spanning the river and the part of the surrounding area subject to flooding. The Saxons would probably have continued to use this structure, renewing the timber members when necessary. Bishop Stapledon bequeathed 11s 6d (58 pence) for the repair of the bridge and 'causeway' in about 1326¹ and it seems likely that, at that time, the bridge and causeway would have been basically the same timber trestle construction left by the Romans. Why Fenny 'Bridges' in the plural? There are certainly two bridges fairly close to one another: a large bridge with County Council nameplates 'Fenny Bridge' and a smaller structure with steel parapets a short distance to the west. As with 'Two Bridges'² on Dartmoor, the answer is not the one immediately apparent and we have to turn to Leland to get the true answer. John Leland visited the area between 1536 and 1543 and, in his *Itinerary*³, wrote that the River Otter was divided into four channels at 'Veniton Bridge' to feed grist and tucking mills. 'Three of the watercourses were crossed by bridges but the 'first', which was the smallest, did not have a bridge. Leland did not make it clear whether the 'first' bridge was the most easterly or westerly but the Order Book of 1711⁴ states that two bridges and the half of one were in the parish of Feniton and the other half in the parish of Gittisham. Thus, in 1543, the western watercourse had no bridge, the next two were crossed by smallish bridges and the eastern by a larger bridge. Ogilby, on his 1675 strip map, marks the crossing as 'Hinnyton bridge over the Otter or autrey flu'⁵ while Donn, on his 1765 map, marks it as 'Fenny Bridges'⁶ as does Mudge's 1809 one-inch Ordnance map⁷. Dr Richard Pococke in 1750 recorded that one afternoon he and his companion came to 'Venne bridges' over some tributaries of the 'Autre' which flooded the road to such an extent that it was sometimes impassable for a few hours⁸. The Rev Shaw came this way in 1788 and noted 'a very picturesque scene of cots and ivy-mantled bridges'⁹. Polwhele, in 1793, described 'Fennyton Great Bridge', the most easterly bridge, as having two arches and built of 'quarry-stone'. He continued that the 'middle-bridge and chapel or westernmost-bridge, have each one arch, on the same river. There is, also, a bridge on the Vine, built a short time since, of stone and brick'¹⁰.

Fenny Bridges has rather a sad place in the history of Devonshire. The majority of people in the Westcountry were not much affected by the Reformation until 1539 when it was enacted that on Whit Sunday, 9 June of that year, the Latin Mass was to be abandoned and the new Prayer Book in English used exclusively in its stead. This deprivation of a birthright by the state is the stuff that rebellions are made of and on Whit Monday, the parishioners of Sampford Courtenay 'persuaded' their priest, Father Harper, to don his vestments once more and say the Mass in Latin. This was overt contempt for authority and the local magistrates hastened to the village to remonstrate with the people. But the rebels were in no mood to listen and burned their boats by slaying a local farmer who had rebuked them rather tactlessly. Mustered by their leaders and gathering strength as they went they marched towards Crediton, to be joined by a contingent from Cornwall, and on to Exeter where they called on the city to surrender. There was sympathy with the cause from within the

city walls but no one, least of all the mayor, wished to get involved and the gates remained firmly closed. Faced with this unexpected rejection, the rebels made a serious tactical blunder by laying siege to the city and wasting the advantage of time that they had. This gave the government the opportunity to despatch Russell, the Lord Privy Seal, westward with an army of German and Italian mercenaries. By late July he was in Honiton, impatiently drumming his fingers and waiting for reinforcements, ammunition and money. On 28 July news reached Russell that a detachment of rebels had advanced on the London road to Fenny Bridges, where they were camped in the meadow on the north east side of the bridges. Encouraged by the bloodthirsty Carews, Russell marched on Fenny Bridges and, after a fierce battle, forced the rebel army to retreat back to Fairmile. As they made the long climb up the Roman road to what is now called Straightway Head, they were met by 'a newe crewe of Cornyshe men to the number of two hundrethe or eighte score persons'¹¹. Taking advantage of the element of surprise, the combined force moved stealthily back towards the meadow and, under cover of the hedgerow, let off a fusillade of arrows followed by a concerted charge. The mercenaries, who were engaged in plundering the dead and wounded from the earlier battle, fled leaving their casualties behind. But the rebels' triumph was short lived, for Russell, probably encamped somewhere north of Gittisham, rallied his troops and swept down on the enemy. A fierce battle followed until the Cornish arrows were spent and the superior training of Russell's troops won the day. About 300 rebels were slain and probably the same number of Russell's men giving the battleground the well deserved name of Bloody Meadow. Reinforced by Lord Grey of Wilton and his cavalry, Russell followed the rebels to Clyst St Mary and, after crushing them at the Battle of Clyst Heath, set about the grisly business of retribution 'without mercy and without form of law'¹².

The first mention of the bridges in the Quarter Session Order Book was at the Epiphany Session 1704 when it was reported that the eastern arch of 'ffenny bridge als St Annes bridge' was in a poor state of repair¹³. It was normally repaired by the parishioners of Gittisham but they were able to show that the parish was 'of a small Extent and vallue' and the poor state of the bridge was caused by 'great and extraordinary carriages' and 'the rapidness of the River'. Initially the court made an order giving a gratuity of £15 towards the repair. However, other parishes got wind of the magistrates' unusual generosity and made similar applications for their bridges. The court, after 'considering the ill consequences that might happen to the publick by gratuities of that nature', rescinded the order. However, something needed to be done to regularise the maintenance of the three bridges and the Treasurer, James Sheppard, was charged with investigating the matter with Mr Sarjeant Gibbon, retained as Counsel at a fee of one guinea (£1.05). Evidently Sheppard did not treat his task as very urgent because no report was made until 1711 when the court was told that Lady Kirkham had conveyed certain lands adjacent to the bridges in trust to provide monies for the repair of the bridges¹⁴. The Kirkhams of Blagdon were Catholics and it seems likely that Lady Kirkham's gift was as a memorial to the Catholics lost at the battle of Fenny Bridges. The trustees, Philip Wright and John Skinner, refused to repair the bridges because, they said, the profits from the land were insufficient to finance the repairs. Also the trustees had maintained only the part of the bridges in Feniton and had never contributed anything towards the arch of 'ye greate Bridge' in Gittisham. The original deeds were read and the opinion was given that the charity was not confined to any bridges or parish but applied to 'ffinney Bridges generally'.



Fenny Bridge

The court decided to take the custody and disposition of the charity into its hands. A few years later, in 1714, it occurred to someone that Wright and Skinner had been collecting the revenue from the charity and not spending it on the bridges and they were ordered to give an account of their receipts and expenditure¹⁵. This they did nine years later and the magistrates decided that they did have monies in their hands which should have been used for the bridge repairs¹⁶. They were ordered to pay the money into court but refused. The case dragged on and eventually ended up in the High Court of Chancery. In 1750, the High Court decreed that the trust should be permanently administered by ten magistrates. Skinner had died early in the proceedings and no mention is made of Wright¹⁷.

In 1769 it was decided to build a fourth bridge at Fenny at the west end over the River Vine¹⁸. A contract dated 28 February was made whereby John Lee was to build a brick arch bridge of 16 feet (4.88 m) span with abutments 'at least a foot (305 mm) Under the Bottom of the River to be 2 foot 6 Inches (706 mm) above Do'. The work was to be completed by 5 August 1769 and Lee had to maintain the bridge at his own expense for seven years¹⁹, this latter onerous condition being expressly permitted under an Act of 1739²⁰.

In 1797, a number of 'gentlemen' living near Fenny Bridges presented to the court that the bridges should be rebuilt²¹. The local Bridge Surveyor, William White, was required to inspect the bridge and, after having done so, formed the view that the weir associated with the bridge needed repair. However, in 1806, the county was indicted for not keeping the bridge in repair and the court appointed a committee of magistrates to inspect the bridge and decide whether to repair the bridges or rebuild them²². Having received a recommendation from the committee, the court decided at the Midsummer Sessions 1806 to build a new bridge and made an order to advertise for tenders and empowering the committee to enter into a contract for the work²³. On 2 September 1806, Sir John Kennaway of Escott House, John Burr ridge Cholwith of Farrington House and William Tucker of Coryton entered into a contract with John Perriman 'Mason and Builder' of Silverton to build a new bridge for the sum of £1,850. The bridge was to be a three span masonry arch structure with two outer spans of 30 (9.14 m) and a central span of 37 feet (10.67 m). Foundations of the abutments and piers were to be excavated to firm ground and then 'good strong Piles driven with an Engine and planked on the Top with Elm or Oak Board at least three Inches thick'. The surveyor was William White of Alphington and the work was to be completed by the due date, but a little less than six months later the court was told that Fenny Bridge had 'lately (been) washed away by a Flood.'²⁵ This did little to increase the popularity of William White, the surveyor, or John Perriman, the contractor. White was already under a cloud over repairs carried out to Newton Poppleford Bridge and the rebuilding of St Saviour's Bridge, both under his direction, and Perriman was in similar difficulty as the contractor of St Saviour's. A high profile committee, including Lord Rolle, Lord Graves, Sir William Pole and Sir John Kennaway, was appointed to look into the matter and advised that it should first 'call in the Assistance and Advice of any Civil Engineer or Architect'²⁶.

The committee retained one James Green, a twenty-seven year old engineer from Birmingham, to advise them and, at the Epiphany Sessions 1808, reported their findings to the court and made a number of recommendations²⁷. It reported that, while the bridge had been built generally in line with the contract, the mortar used in the masonry was defective. The fact that the bridge had not lasted for two years in itself

meant that the contractor was in breach of this particular contract. A written contract for Perriman's bridge had been drawn up by the clerk but, despite two reminders, White had not brought Perriman and his bondsmen to Exeter to execute the contract. It recommended that, in future, the treasurer should make no payment under a contract until he had a certificate from the clerk that the contract in question had been executed by the parties. The committee had examined a number of designs for a replacement bridge and it recommended one prepared by Green subject to certain alterations in detail. Lastly the committee expressed the view that, in order the better to manage the county's bridges, a civil engineer of 'approved Talents and Ability' should be appointed instead of the present five surveyors.

The court accepted all the committee recommendations and, at the Epiphany Sessions 1808, ordered that the Clerk of the Peace enter into a contract with James Green for his amended design of bridge at a cost of £4,073. Green's design was a three span brick arch structure with two outer spans of 41 feet 6 inches (12.65 m) and a central span of 47 feet (14.33 m) and a width between parapets of 20 feet (6.10 m). The piers and abutments were of Purbeck ashlar²⁸. Curiously the finished bridge has a stone tablet over the arch on the downstream face with no inscription on it. The final cost, which included the cost of land and fairly extensive river works, was £5,761. 4s. 11d (£5,761.25).

The idea of appointing one surveyor of county bridges for the whole of Devon was not new. At the Midsummer Sessions of 1757, it was ordered that an advertisement should be placed in the Exeter and Sherbourne papers inviting applications for the post of 'one General Surveyor of the Bridges of this County'²⁹. Again in 1786, a 'General Surveyor...to inspect into and look after the County Bridges' was sought through advertisement³⁰. None of these ventures came to anything for, when Perriman's ill fated bridge was being built in 1806, there were five surveyors of bridges, one in each Grand Division of the County. The Bridges Act of 1803 enacted, among other things, that most of the powers under the Act should be vested in the surveyor³¹. Although there is no record of their having done so, Devon magistrates must have considered the implications of the Act and decided to stick with their contemporary arrangement. However, problems with indifferent workmanship and financial irregularities were being reported to the court more often and the collapse of Fenny Bridges must have been the last straw. The court accepted the recommendation of its committee and, at the Midsummer Sessions 1808, it decided that it would be 'very economical and advantageous to appoint a Civil Engineer to look after the County Bridges'³². The magistrates must have found fixing a salary a little difficult. The total salaries of the five surveyors was £145 but the court knew that, for example, the salary of Thomas Telford, County Surveyor of Shropshire, was £500 per annum. Telford, who had been appointed in 1787, was a well established engineer of some repute. On the other hand, Shropshire had a mere thirty county bridges to Devon's 237³³. At Michaelmas Sessions 1808, they decided to appoint James Green, who had obviously acquitted himself well as adviser on St Saviour's, Newton Poppleford and Fenny Bridges, at a salary of £300 per annum³⁴. It also instructed the clerk to give notice to the five surveyors that they were to quit at the following Christmas and that in the meantime they were to work under Green's direction. The young Green tackled his duties promptly and efficiently and, in three months, inspected all the county's 237 bridges and submitted a report on their condition to the magistrates with an estimated expenditure of 'the alarming sum of £20,000' to put the bridge stock in a rea-

sonable state of repair³⁵. By the time he left the county's employment in 1841, he had been involved in some way or other with the building of over seventy bridges.

Fenny Bridges stands today much as Green built it and now has the distinction of being one of the last, if not the last, hump backed bridge on a trunk road in Devon. The bridge over the River Vine built in 1769 was rebuilt in 1809 and is now called Fenny Mill Bridge. It was washed away in exceptional flooding caused by 5.25 inches (133 mm) of rain falling in the upper Otter valley between 4 pm and 10 pm on 10 July 1968³⁶. It was replaced temporarily by a Bailey bridge erected by sappers and permanently by the present prestressed concrete bridge completed on 27 February 1970³⁷.

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COB WALLS, AND SHOES AND BOOTS

Babs Stutchbury

The discussion at the recent AGM about why shoes and boots should have been found in or on the top of old cob walls of houses reminded me of other places in which they could have been left, although, this time, accidentally.

Aunty Gladys used to live in one of Aller Cottages, no longer in existence. Three habitable cob cottages were there in the 1940s and 1950s. Attached to the third cottage was the remains of the fourth, a ruin with a chimney. Water was from a spring at the very foot of the lane, where there was a round washing bowl of, I think, stone. I remember the bowl was red like the surrounding fields. The cottages were down the lane from Aller Gate, to be found off the B3215 at Clannaborough Cross, taking the first on the left which leads to Zeal Monachorum by way of Serstone and Clapper Cross, and were probably for the farm workers of Merrifield Farm originally, which is a little to the north.

When it could be afforded it was a great treat to take the old 'Bow Belle' (the engine part of the bus, it was said, began to move before the passenger part!) into Crediton and sometimes into the still wrecked, Exeter. Here the bus remained in the yard of the Crown and Sceptre near the North Gate.

After and during rain Aller Lane was a 'running stream' and what we would now call 'wellie-boots' were needed, or very old shoes, in neither of which we wished to be seen in town. The bus stop was at Aller Cross, the bus on Tuesdays and Fridays only. Our boots and shoes were left buried in the long grass of the hedge at the corner. I often wonder, when I drive past the place, if there are the remains of any pairs of fifty year old footwear still waiting to be found and wondered about.

(J.W.B. STUTCHBURY is Chairman, Crediton Area History & Museum Society)

THE 'COAST'GUARD STATIONS' AT BABBACOMBE AND TORQUAY 1818-1826

Robert Perkins

The Preventive Boat's Crew.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the forces engaged in the protection of the revenue and the prevention of smuggling included the customs officials in the 'ports, sub-ports and creeks', the riding officers along the coasts, and the revenue cruisers. There were the customs-house boats and military detachments which could be called out when smuggling was suspected. Within the customs port of Dartmouth in 1813-14, for example, the collector and eleven staff based at Dartmouth included an inspector of riding officers and a riding officer of the first class to assist him. In addition, a first class riding officer, John Bunden, patrolled the coast from Dawlish to 'Babicombe'; others patrolled around the Start Point to Portlemouth and from Salcombe to the River Erme. Coast waiters were stationed at Torquay (Henry F. Weeks), Paignton, Brixham, 'Totness', Salcombe and Bautham¹.

The 1807 Act 'to make more effectual provision for the Prevention of Smuggling...' provided for the prohibition or licensing of certain classes of vessel and boat, and for boats to be navigated by a certain number of men in proportion to their tonnage². In 1809 the government established a Preventive Water-Guard; a 'Smuggling Preventive Boat Service', as a later Act³ called it, was to operate in coastal waters in support of the revenue cruisers. It became effective 5 July 1810. The south coast district, from London to Lands End, had twenty-three revenue cutters and forty-two preventive boats, under an inspecting commander, Captain William Blake, based at Cowes. It appears that land was leased in relation to stations at Dartmouth 28 September 1810 and Hope Cove 4 January 1813⁴.

In February 1816 Capt. J.M. Hanchett RN. was appointed the first Comptroller-General of the Preventive Boats which were now placed under the control of the Treasury. The preventive boat service was re-organised into thirty-one districts, each under the control of an inspecting commander, and some 140 stations. It seems possible that a preventive boat crew were first stationed at Babbacombe at some time after 1809, probably after the re-organisation of 1816, when there was an inspecting commander at Brixham, and certainly by 1818. The surviving establishment records show there were preventive stations within the port of Dartmouth at 'Babbicombe', Brixham and Torcross before 1822⁵.

Lieut. Dombtrain's Report.

Lieut. James Dombtrain was appointed Deputy Comptroller-General, Preventive Boats, 11 November 1817⁶. In January 1819, 'The Lords having had under consideration the present state of the contraband trade on the coasts of Devon and Dorsetshire,' he was directed to 'proceed thither without delay and to report...for their Lordships' information such observations and suggestions as may appear to him best calculated for the further protection of the revenue in these districts'⁷. At some time before 4 January 1819, Lieut. E. de Montmorency, inspecting commander for the Brixham district, wrote to Captain Hanchett to recommend 'that a cottage at Babbicombe may be hired for a warehouse.' On 5 February 1819 the Treasury Commissioners asked Lieut.

Dombrain to inquire into the subject in the course of the survey in which he was then engaged⁸. Lieut. Dombrain submitted his report on 16 February 1819; on 25 February the Commissioners of Customs were authorised to purchase the cottage in question provided it appeared on survey to be properly built. Care was to be taken that the preventive crew paid rent at the established rate⁹.

The Watch and Boat House at Babbacombe Beach.

Lieut. de Montmorency's duties as inspecting commander at Brixham ceased 2 September 1819. Responsibility for Babbacombe passed to Capt. Hawkins, the new inspecting commander for the Dartmouth district¹⁰. It appears that the hire of a cottage at Babbacombe was not proceeded with, but during 1819 the building of a new watch and boat-house was commenced at Babbacombe beach, apparently making use in part of materials already on site. It was built next to the summer-house belonging to 'The Glen'. On 9 June 1820 Capt. Hawkins noted that 'it is a thatched building with the wall stones arising on the spot, and in clearing away the work I have been obliged to make a good entrance for the boats. A man undertook the labour for the stone'¹¹.

The building contractor was J. Rendle of Teignmouth who submitted his bill 'for erecting the Preventive Watch and Boat-house at Babbycombe as per estimate, £200-4s.-4d.' to the Commissioners of Customs at Dartmouth. He wrote to Capt. Harding 30 March 1820 asking him to report the work finished and added; 'The mast shall be fixed at any time when the rigging is ready and if any little thing remains which you deem necessary it shall be done'¹². Capt. Harding, however, did not think it right to attach the usual certificate to Rendle's bill. He did not consider the flooring to the watch room to be truly and well executed; part was 'not now either ploughed and tongued or ceiled and my observation is it admits so much wind as to render the Watch Room uncomfortable and on every washing of the floor the stores stowed in the Boat-house underneath will be injured. The builder had accepted that the chimney in the men's watch room was not of the customary height. Capt. Harding knew nothing of the extras charged and, singularly enough, Mr. Rendle said not one word about them in requesting certification of his Bill. 'As to the fifth item where my order is again given, I remarked that the painting was badly executed and so long in hand that the crew could not get in so soon by a Quarter of a Year I had reported to the Comptroller-General they would be expected to do'¹³.

However, one matter did meet with Captain Harding's approval; in June 1820 he complained to G. Delavand, the Secretary of the Preventive Water-Guard Office, that the officer's bed space in the new watch house at Torcross was 'much inferior to the plan of the one at Babbacombe where the chief officer has a small Sleeping Room to himself.' An alteration to the plans was approved provided the work could be carried out at no extra cost¹⁴.

Apparently the problems with the building at Babbacombe were overcome. The preventive boat crew settled to its duties in the new station at some time after March 1820. Details of the lease of the site from the Cary estate were settled 14 August 1821.¹⁵ It was to be several years before cottages were to be provided but they were clearly better accommodated than many: the 1820 Act empowered commanding officers of vessels employed to prevent smuggling to haul their vessels on shore, 'not being a Garden or Pleasure Ground, or Places which have been ordinarily used for Bathing Machines...' because 'at divers Stations on the Coast of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and on the Shores and Banks of the Rivers, and of the Breaks and

Inlets thereof, the Officers and Crews of the Ships, Vessels and Boats employed in the Prevention of Smuggling, have no Dwelling Houses appropriated for their Habitation...and it is expedient at some of them that such Officers and Crew...shall and may reside and remain in the said ships, Vessels and Boats'.¹⁶

The Establishment at Babbacombe.

Few if any of the crew at a station could have been local men. Those nominated for appointment to the preventive boat service under the arrangements laid down by the Treasury 8 February 1817 were examined by an inspecting commander, usually at a flanking district, and appointed by the Treasury following receipt of a satisfactory report of qualifications. They were immediately sent to serve as probationary boatmen at stations elsewhere as a matter of policy, to avoid collusion and intimidation. The establishment at Babbacombe preventive station before 1822 was six, including the Chief Officer¹. He changed frequently: Richard Heale was Chief Officer for a period before 13 January 1820; Lieut. Wm. Porter RN, appointed to the Water Guard from London subsequent to February 1820, became probationary Chief Officer at Babbacombe before being ordered to Sconce Point, Cowes, 17 March 1821.¹⁶

Preventive boat stations were usually equipped with four or six-oared gigs. On 27 September 1821 extensive repairs to the four-oared boat at Babbacombe were authorised.¹⁷

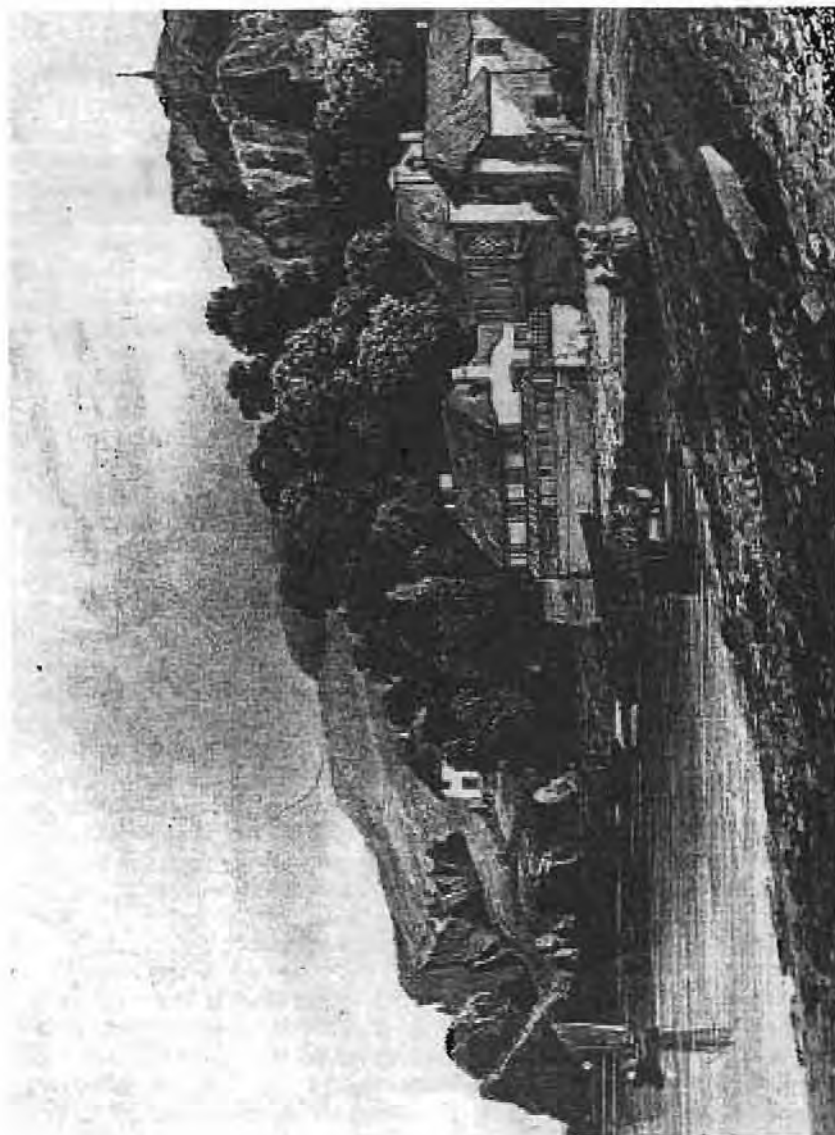
The Preventive Station at Torquay.

Meanwhile the protection of the revenue in Torbay faced increasing difficulties. There were revenue cruizers stationed in the Dartmouth district, but much effective action in Torbay depended on the boats stationed at Brixham. The Commissioners, as ever conscious of the cost of the service, came to question why there were 'three Glut boatmen in the King's boat at this place'. The inspecting commander argued that Torbay was a large expanse of water and any reduction would inhibit the interception of vessels suspected of smuggling. Four Dragoons were stationed at Paignton. In 1820 an officer of the 4th Light Dragoons complained of the frequency of calls made upon them where smuggling was suspected¹⁸.

On 9 July 1821, S.R. Lushington, Secretary to the Treasury, wrote to Lieut. Dombrain, then acting Comptroller-General: 'the Inspecting Commander at Exmouth having represented that a convenient spot of ground for the erection of a watch and boat-house for the preventive station at Torquay, which is much needed, may be had of Sir Lawrence Palk for a term of 99 years or 3 lives at the annual rent of 3 gas, I am commanded by the Lords. Comm. of H.M. Treasury to direct you to cause a watch and boat house to be erected for the preventive station at Torquay'^{19,20}.

The Coast Guard

In 1822 the preventive boats, the revenue cruizers and the riding officers were united to form the Coast Guard, under the control of the Board of Customs²¹. Captain William Bowles RN, was appointed Comptroller-General and an extensive building programme of cottages and watch houses was commenced. In the period 1822-25 land was leased for Coast Guard purposes within the port of Exeter at 'Great Weston', Sidmouth and Exmouth, within the port of Dartmouth at Babbacombe, Torquay, Brixham, Prawle, Salcombe and 'Charlaborough'; and within the port of Plymouth at Mothecombe and 'Wembury or Yealm'².



Babbacombe c. 1828 from the lithograph after an original drawing by the Tiverton artist Launcelot Elford Reed, showing the Preventive Watch and Boat House on the right. (S.C. 3036). (Kindly supplied by Torquay Library.)

In 1820 the Treasury had obtained powers to procure the lease of land not exceeding half an acre at any one station and within half a mile of the sea shore or the tideway of any navigable river...for the Purposes of erecting and maintaining Watch Houses, Dwelling Houses and other Buildings requisite and necessary for the Security and Protection of the Revenues of Customs and Excise... These powers did not pass to the Board of Customs until 1825 but must have been an inducement for owners to treat and agree even though they had the right to propose a suitable alternative site to that marked out by the Commissioners' surveyors²².

Coast Guard Cottages and a Customs House at Torquay.

At Torquay after 1822 the Commissioners had need of premises for both the Coast Guard and the coast officers of Customs. A number of leases were entered into or surrendered between 1823 and 1826. The lease of a plot of ground for Coast Guard cottages at Torquay was obtained from George Carey for sixty years from 29 September 1823, and the lease of a boathouse from Joseph Whiteway for seven years from 10 October 1823²³.

Torquay was a customs creek of the port of Dartmouth, but was twelve miles from the Customs House. In 1824 Torquay merchants petitioned for the establishment of a Customs House there owing to the increase of trade; the Collector advised that 180 vessels had entered or cleared in the previous year. On 9 June 1824 the Commissioners extended additional privileges to Torquay, notably the power to receive coast documents but not duties. A Principal Coast Officer was now stationed there, but he had to transact business at his own dwelling house and needed an office. On 6 July 1824 Joseph Whiteway of Torquay offered a store for fourteen years at £12-12s.-0d. a year, fitted up however required. The Commissioners considered that the rents at Torquay were too high and were advised that this was because it was a place of resort. They considered £5 to £6 a year quite enough; the Coast Officer's suggestion that he could rent the room in his own house to them for that amount appears to have been ignored. On 3 August 1824 Robert Abraham wrote from Ashburton on behalf of Sir Lawrence Palk enclosing a sketch 'drawn by Mr. Foulston for the House at Torquay but Sir L. Palk thinks it would be very objectionable to have it two stories and thinks it will be necessary the whole house be on the ground floor.' Sir L. did not want to build but would grant the lease of a plot of ground for sixty years²⁴.

Coast Guard Cottages at Babbacombe.

After 1822 the establishment at Babbacombe was increased from six to eight: one chief officer, one chief boatman, two commissioned boatmen and four boatmen⁵. In 1825-6 a terrace of five Coast Guard cottages with outbuildings and gardens was built in a strategic position on the cliff-top at 'Babbicombe Hill', where the way down the cliffs 'to Babbicombe' crossed the paths over the Downs and Walls Hill. These are the cottages next to the Roughwood Inn and below what is today known as Babbacombe Downs Road. The land was leased from George Carey 29 September 1823. On 28 November his solicitor, James Cosserat of Torquay, wrote to the Commissioners: 'The inhabitants of Babbicombe, Mr. Carey and others interested in preserving the Beauties of that place are excessively anxious that the Buildings about to be there erected by the Commissioners of His Majesty's Customs should be built in such a manner as to harmonise with the peculiar Scenery of the place and add to the general admiration which it has hitherto excited. Babbicombe is universally allowed to be one of the prettiest

places on the Coast and although all the buildings are thatched yet still we think a Slate roof if required may be so formed as to give satisfaction to all'. The Commissioners sent Mr. Carey the plans, an architect was consulted and on 5 August 1824 Cosserat wrote to the Commissioners to ask that the roof be made more flat and to project beyond the wall. Apparently this suggestion of Regency style was not entirely effective. Six tenders for the erection of the cottages were submitted by 12 July 1825²⁵.

The Office of the Coast Guard Surveyor for Buildings noted between 1828 and 1831: 'Dartmouth District:...Babbicombe; the Cottages having been Erected (in 1826) Outside Painting only is necessary. the Coll. and Comp. may cause Estimates to Paint twice in oil with good white Lead, etc.' Wm. Pentecost submitted the lowest estimate to paint the outside of the cottages for £9-11s.-6d., 'and for colouring the external walls by Mr. Davey twice over, and to the Wch. and Boat House at £6-15s.-7.1/2d'²⁶.

Notes

1. 'A List of the Commissioners and Officers of His Majesty's Customs in England and Wales with their Established Salaries for Christmas Quarter ending the 5th. January 1814...Dartmouth' PRO/CUST/39/17 p.73
2. 47 Geo.III, sess.2. c.66. [13 Aug. 1807]
3. 'An Act to amend two Acts passed in the Forty Fifth Year of His Present Majesty and in the last session of Parliament for the making more effectual Provision for the Prevention of Smuggling'. 57 Geo.III c.87. [10 July 1817]
4. Other premises at Dartmouth with leases dating from 1782 appear to have been in preventive service or Coast Guard use at various times before 1857. PRO/CUST/42.66.
5. Station Book No.6, England, Ireland and Scotland 1816-1822, PRO/ADM/175/1. Establishment Book, England, 1816-1819, PRO/ADM/175/2. Establishment Book, England, 1821-1827, PRO/ADM/175/4.
6. Warrant 11 Nov. 1817. PRO/T/28/40 p.202.
7. Letter from S.R. Lushington to Capt. Hanchett, 19 Jan. 1819, PRO/T/28/40 p.360.
8. Letter from S.R. Lushington to Lieut. Dombain, No.1069 of 5 Feb. 1819, PRO/T/28/40, p.362.
9. Letter from S.R. Lushington, No. 2836 of 25 Feb. 1819, PRO/T/28/40, p.368.
10. Registers of Treasury Board papers 1777-1920. Digest of Treasury In-Letters. Letter dated 16 Nov. 1819, from Captain Shortland to Lords Comm. Treasury, under 'Smuggling, Office for Suppressing.' PRO/T2/85, part II. Captain T.G. Shortland was successor to Captain Hanchett as Comptroller-General, Preventive Boats, and held the post for three years from April 1819.
11. Letter of 9 June 1820 from Captain Hawkins to the Collector and Comptroller H.M. Customs, Dartmouth PRO/CUST/65/20.
12. Letter from J. Rendle to Captain Hawkins, dated Teignmouth 30 March 1820. PRO/CUST/65/20.
13. Letter Capt. Hawkins to G. Delevand, 14 June 1820, PRO/CUST/65/20. Land leased at Torcross 8 December 1819, PRO/CUST/42/66.
14. PRO/CUST/65/58.
15. 'An Act to amend the Laws relating to Smuggling, and the Coasting Trade in Great Britain.' 1 Geo.IV c.43, section XVI. [15 July 1820].

16. Order 17 March 1821. PRO/CUST/65/57.
17. Order 27 Sept. 1821. PRO/CUST/65/58.
18. PRO/CUST/65/20. 'Glut' in the nautical meaning of 'strengthening'.
19. Letter to Lieut. Dombain (acting Comptroller, Preventive Boats) from S.R. Lushington, Treasury Chambers, 9 July 1821. PRO/CUST/65/58.
20. Registers of 'Treasury Board papers 1777-1920. Digest of Treasury In-Letters 1821, under 'Smuggling, Office for Suppressing', No.11633 of 1821. PRO/T2/93/part II, p.577 et seq.
21. The single word 'Coastguard' appears to have been in use by the early 1830s and was used officially for the Committee of Inquiry set up in 1839.
22. 1 Geo.IV c.43 Sections IV-VI, see (15), supra., and 'An Act for the Management of the Customs'. 6 Geo.IV c.106 [5 July 1825], and see cc.104 to 108.
23. Counterpart lease and surrender endorsed 30 March 1824; counterpart lease 29 September 1823; surrender of lease 4 August 1826; PRO/CUST/42/66. Letter from James Cosserat to the Collector at Dartmouth of 20 November 1823 about fees and from the Collector, James Edgcome, to the Commissioners of 3 February 1824: Edgcome refers to Mr. Carey 'from whom two pieces of land have been taken for the Erection of Cottages at Babbicombe and Torquay within this port for the Coast Guard', PRO/CUST/65/24 folio 82 No.46. See also letter from Collector to Commissioners of 5 December 1825 forwarding deeds, PRO/CUST/65/25 folio 260 No.330.
24. Petition noted in 'A Chronological Record of Events relating to Torquay and Neighbourhood' Dymond, R. and White, J.T. Correspondence in Letter Book, Dartmouth, Collector to Commissioners, 3 November 1823 14 December 1824 PRO/CUST/65/24.
25. Lease PRO/CUST/42/66; Letters PRO/CUST/65/24, folio 28 No. 403, folio 235 No.221. tenders forwarded under PRO/CUST/65/25 folio 179 No.202.
26. 'Register of Reports, etc., relating to the Coastguard.' (Orders of the Surveyor for Buildings Office, Coast Guard), 1828-1831. PRO/ADM/7/7, pp. 50 and 51.

(Robert Perkins was educated at Torquay Grammar School and at Manchester University, where he studied town planning. He worked in local government in London, Plymouth and Swindon from 1965 until 1993. He lives in Bath).

CASTLE HILL AT WIDWORTHY

Edwin Haydon

When in the last decade of the eighteenth century the Reverend Richard Polwhele was collecting material for his *History of Devonshire*, he posed queries to his fellow clerics. The Rector of Widworthy, the Reverend William John Tucker, A.M., answered in 1791, by sending him 'A concise Account of the Parish of Widworthy in the County of Devon.'

In that answer the following passage occurs:

'...and near the church, on an eminence having a descent every way, in a field still called Castle Wood, are remains of a small entrenchment.'¹

Volume 2 of Polwhele's *History* was published in 1797 and contains the following reference:

'...nor have I overlooked the vestiges of a smaller fortification, that stands on an eminence near the church, in a field called Castle-wood.'²

The Lysons writing of Devonshire in their *Magna Britannia* in 1822 stated:

'At Widworthy...there is an ancient earthwork also near the church, in a field called Castlewood.'³

Stirling, master of the Free Grammar School of Colyton, wrote in 1838:

'and on an eminence near the church, called Castle-Wood, are vestiges of a fortification supposed to be the foundation of the castle of the De Widworthies, the early lords of the land.'⁴

A fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, Henry Woolcombe, repeated that description in 1839.⁵

Hutchinson gave a brief description of this earthwork at Castle Wood in 1867 and listed various rival conjectures.

that it was an out-post of Widworthy Camp, a circular enclosure on top of Widworthy Hill, 'in British times;'

that it may have been a *castellum* of the Roman period placed near the Ikenild which runs east and west through Wilmington, half a mile away, and employed as a place of protection and for military supplies; and that in later times the De Widworthy family may have had a medieval castle on that spot.⁶

Ramsden described Castle Hill at Widworthy in great detail and produced a plan of his survey. He observed that the flat-topped mound seemed to have been one of the Saxon *burhs*, which were the fortified homes of the chiefs of their settlements, constructed between AD750 and AD1000 during the times of the Danish raids; those forts were generally sited away from the main routes, to escape the notice of raiding parties who followed those routes.⁷

Higham on the other hand notes that where, in a very small number of cases, late Saxon defended manor houses, private *burhs*, have been excavated, they have been enclosures rather than raised mounds.⁸

The Devon County Sites and Monuments Register records that at an unknown date but after the 1939-45 war a surveyor from the Ordnance Survey visited the earthwork on Castle Hill and described it as an unusual small fortified site, possibly a late Saxon manor or *burh*, or counterpart of the medieval moated sites of the lowlands.⁹

Higham observed that no bailey was visible and that it was most likely to be a medieval



Castle Hill, Widworthy

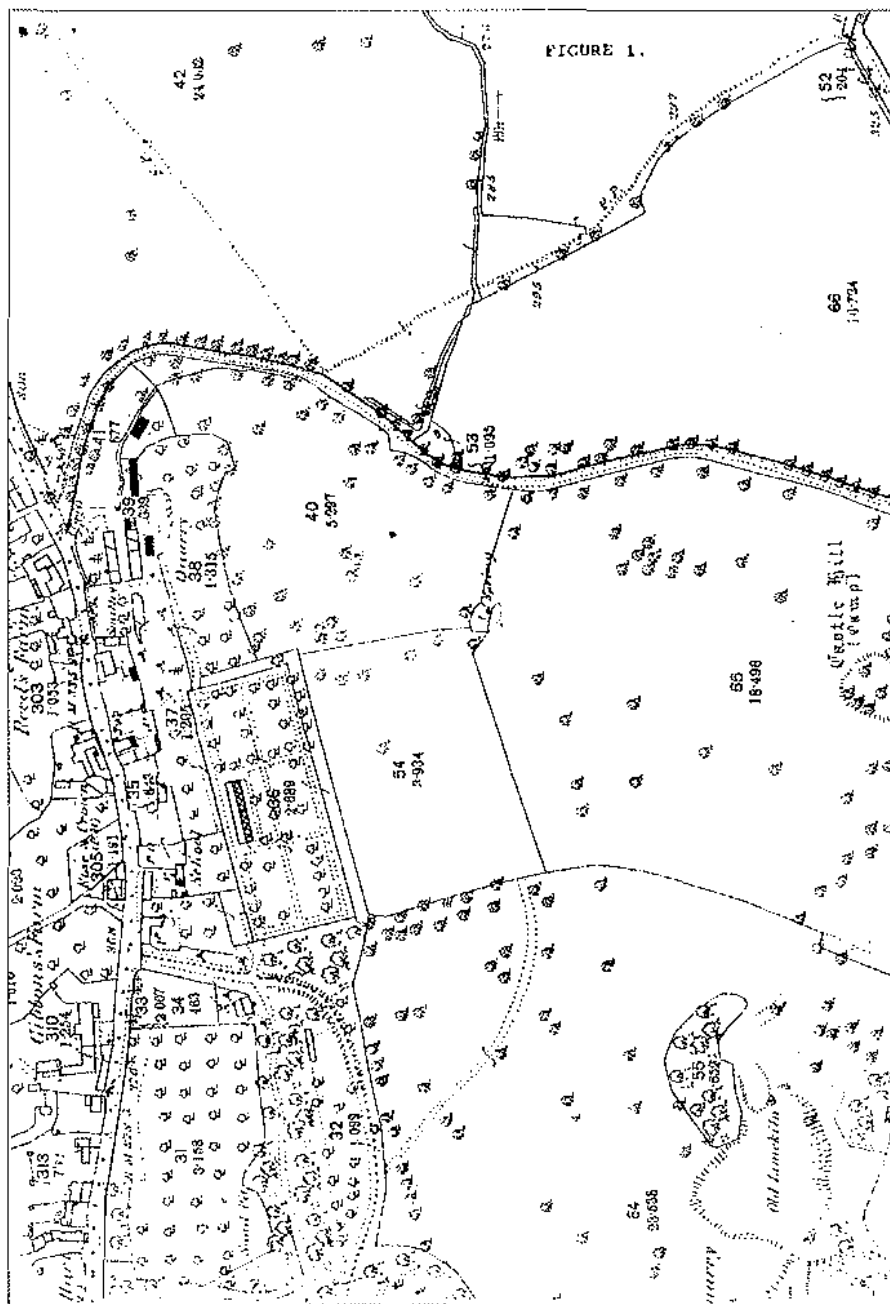
fortification modified by later landscaping. He also pointed out that this earthwork had a long tradition of antiquity, the field name 'Castle Hill' going back to at least 1780 and the adjacent field between the earthwork and the church being known as 'Barbarry', possibly a corruption of 'barbican'. The field names of 'Lower Black Lands' and 'Higher Black Lands' to the west, a field's distance away from Castle Wood, may indicate a larger hamlet there in medieval times. Higham concluded that the fort was possibly founded at the time of the Norman Conquest, but more probably during the civil wars of Stephen's reign in the twelfth century.¹⁰

If one turns from the literature concerning this feature to the cartographic evidence, one finds that its earliest appearance is on the Estate Plan of the Parish of Widworthy and adjacent lands drawn up for J.T.B. Marwood Esquire, by J. Sturge in 1780.¹¹ The first edition of the one inch Ordnance Survey (Sheet 21 Tiverton) was based on survey undertaken between 1801 and 1807 and was published in 1809. It shows the outline of the embanked earthwork on Castle Hill.¹² The Tithe Map of the Parish of Widworthy produced by the surveyors Summers and Slater in 1839 read with the Tithe Apportionment gives the field names of 'Castle Wood' for the field in which the earthwork stands and 'Barbarry' for the field between it and the church.

The first edition of the Ordnance Survey map of 25 inches to the mile was surveyed in 1888 and published in 1889 (Sheet LXXI.2). It shows the site and in the lettering used for antiquities calls it 'Castle Hill' adding '(camp)'. Six bushy topped trees are shown on top. (Figure 1)

The second edition of that large scale map was revised in 1903 and published in 1904. The designation is similar save there are five trees on top of the site.

The first edition of the Ordnance Survey map of 6 inches to the mile was likewise based on the 1887-8 survey and was published in 1890 (Devonshire Sheet LXXI N.W.) It depicts four



trees on top of the site but otherwise designates the earthwork as in the larger scale maps.

Finally the second edition of the Ordnance survey map of 6 inches to the mile was revised in 1903 and published in 1906 (Devonshire Sheet LIX NE). The designation of the site is identical to that on the first edition of this scale.

On perusing the Sites and Monuments Register in the office of the County Archaeologist, the writer came across notes recording that Grinsell had suggested that this earthwork might possibly be part of the landscaping of Widworthy Court by George Stanley Repton c.1830, rather than a barrow. Grinsell had also stated that Repton's plans and drawing of Widworthy Court and its landscape design, showing two conical hills in the background, were in the Library of the Royal Institute of British Architects.¹³

The suggestion that the earthwork on Castle Hill might be part of a nineteenth century landscape feature in the park of Widworthy Court conflicted with all the previous documentation and called for investigation. Grinsell, of course, is a well-known professional archaeologist who is an authority on barrows. Perhaps that was why on his visit in 1982 Grinsell felt it might be part of the landscaping rather than a barrow. Certainly in his article¹⁴ the following year he lists a round 'Bronze Age barrow or earthwork of later date' but that was on the north-western spur of Widworthy Hill, below Widworthy Camp, to the west of the Hollow Way which runs up southwards towards Colyton from the back of Widworthy Barton. (National Grid Reference SY 21369896 as opposed to the National Grid Reference of Castle Hill which is SY 21269947). No-one had ever previously suggested that the earthwork at Castle Hill was a barrow.

Widworthy Court was designed and built for Edward Marwood Elton, Esquire, in 1830, in place of the old manor house, now Widworthy Barton.¹⁵ He did not become a baronet until 1838 (*pace* Cherry and Pevsner). Grinsell's suggestion made a visit to the Drawings Collection of The British Architectural Library of the Royal Institute of British Architects essential to get to the truth of the matter. There are five drawings in that collection being designs of Widworthy Court for E.M.Elton (later Sir Edward Elton, Bart.) by G.S.Repton.¹⁶ None of the plans or perspectives which those five drawings comprise shows any such landscaping feature, as Grinsell suggested; indeed none of the three perspectives can be orientated toward the east-south-east of Widworthy Court where Castle Hill stands.

Before leaving this suggestion it is pertinent to refer to the various middle and lower terraces on the west of the fort, which Ramsden described.¹⁷ No squire, least of all Edward Marwood Elton who was noted for his frugality, would be likely to indulge in such extended earthworks to surround a landscaped mound.

On the mound stand five trees which are from the north clockwise:

a sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus* h) with a girth of 10 feet 11 inches at 5 feet above ground;

a field maple (*Acer campestre*) of 8 feet 3 inches in girth at the same level above ground;

a sweet chestnut (*Castanea sativa* Mill) with a girth of 16 feet 6 inches at a like height;

a common lime (*Tilia x Europaea*) of 9 feet 2½ inches girth at a similar height;

and finally a beech (*Fagus sylvatica* L) of 15 feet girth at that height.

All five are mature trees and Steve Rippin of the East Devon District Council observed that the sweet chestnut is going into decline which makes it about 250 years old. That tree alone disproves Grinsell's suggestion because it predates Repton by some ninety years.¹⁸

To sum up the facts against Grinsell's suggestion that the earthwork at Castle Hill is a landscaped feature constructed about 1830, one can marshal the following:

- (a) the earthwork is shown in the estate plan of 1780;
- (b) the Reverend J.T. Tucker described it in 1791;
- (c) the Reverend R. Polwhele reiterated that description in his great *History of Devonshire* in 1797;
- (d) the first edition of the Ordnance Survey in 1809 shows the outline of the earthwork;
- (e) the Lysons mentioned it as an ancient earthwork in their great history in 1822;
- (f) G.S. Repton's plans and perspectives contain not the slightest suggestion of such landscaping in 1830;
- (g) Stirling described it in 1838;
- (h) Woolcombe repeated that description in 1839:
- (i) the Tithe Map of 1839 read with the Tithe Apportionment gives the field names of 'Castle Wood' and 'Barbary' which confirm the antiquity of the site;
- (j) Hutchinson in 1867, which year is only about 35 years after the landscaping is suggested to have taken place, does not mention such a modern possibility among his conjectures for this site but lists three very ancient ones;
- (k) the Ordnance Survey in 1887-8, less than 50 years after the suggested landscaping, accepted the earthwork as an antiquity;
- (l) Some time after 1945 a surveyor of the Ordnance Survey described it as a small fortified site, possibly a late Saxon manor or *burh*;
- (m) Ramsden, a gallant colonel with skill in survey and knowledge of the local history, was in no doubt as to the site's antiquity in 1947;
- (n) likewise Higham in 1979;
- (o) finally the dendrology gives the *coup de grace*.

That this earthwork is a landscaped feature appears as fanciful as another suggestion mentioned by Higham¹⁹ that it was a windmill mound.

What the history of the earthwork really is and when it was formed remain open questions; Hutchinson's third conjecture that the De Widworthy family may have had a medieval castle on that spot ties in with Higham's favoured conclusion that the fort was founded during the civil wars of Stephen's reign (1135 – 1154). That possibility was considered by the Ordnance Survey but so was the attribution of a late Saxon manor. The Vikings first raided England in 789, landing probably in east Devon. Those raids continued until early in the eleventh century.²⁰ Ramsden considered that the earthwork was apparently a Saxon *burh*, such as were built in considerable numbers at the period of the Danish raids. Higham still thinks his original suggestion in 1979 that we have here a landscaped medieval *motte* is still the most likely answer.²¹

As Tacitus wrote: *Quot homines tot sententiae*.

NOTES

1. *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol LXI, Part ii, London, 1791, p.609.
2. Polwhele, *The History of Devonshire*, 3 vols. London and Exeter, 1793, 1797 and 1806, p.318.
3. D. & S. Lysons, *Magna Britannia*, London, Vol. 6, 1822, p.ccc1.
4. D.M. Stirling, *The Beauties of the Shore*, Exeter, 1838, p.74.
5. H. Woolcombe, *Some Account of the Fortified Hills in the County of Devon whether British, Roman, Anglo-Saxon or Danish*, Mss in Devon and Exeter Institution, Exeter, 1839, p.95.
6. P.O. Hutchinson, 'On Hill Fortresses, Sling-stones, and other Antiquities in South-Eastern Devon,' *Transactions of the Devonshire Association (T.D.A.)*, Vol.2, 1867, pp 373-4.

7. J.V. Ramsden, 'The Hill Fort and Castle Hill at Widworthy,' *T.D.A.* Vol. 79, 1947, pp 193-6.
8. Letter from Dr. R.A. Higham to the writer dated 2 March 1994.
9. Devon County Sites and Monuments' Register, (SMR) SY 29 NW-064. The site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act, 1979, and is on private land, but a public footpath passes around the site.
10. R.A. Higham, *The Castles of Medieval Devon*, Ph.D. Thesis, Exeter University, 1979.
11. Devon Record Office, Marwood Elton paper No. 281 ME4.
12. Reprint of the first edition of the one inch Ordnance Survey of England and Wales, Taunton and Tiverton (Sheet 83) published by David and Charles, Newton Abbot, 1970.
13. SMR, SY 29 NW-064.
14. L.V. Grinsell, 'The Barrows of South and East Devon,' *Devon Archaeological Society Proceedings*, No 41, 1983, pp. 5-46, at p.45.
15. B. Cherry and N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England, Devon, 2nd Edn.*, London, 1989, p.911.
16. Catalogue of the Drawings Collection of the Royal Institute of British Architects, Vol. O-R, p.117, no. (39).
17. *op.cit.*, pp 194-5.
18. I am indebted to Steve Rippin, Grounds Maintenance Manager of Direct Services Organisation, East Devon District Council, not only for his advice on site but also for providing the following references:
W.J. Bean, *Trees and Shrubs hardy in the British Isles*, Frome, 1914, 8th Edn. Revised 1970 pp. 177-8, 225-7, 527, 531-3, 597-9.
Royal Horticultural Society, *Dictionary of Gardening*, Oxford, 1951, pp. 23, 804, 2115.
A. Mitchell, *A Field Guide to the Trees of Britain and Northern Europe*, Glasgow, 1974, p.25.
19. *op.cit.*
20. S. McGrail, 'From Ice Age to Early Medieval Times' in *The New Maritime History of Devon*, Vol.1, Chap.4, Teignmouth, 1993, pp 41-2.
21. Letter from Dr. R.A. Higham to the writer dated 2 March 1994.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to Simon Timms, the Devon County Archaeologist, for his interest in this problem and his encouragement in my attempts to solve it. He also very kindly read this note in draft, made helpful comments thereon and gave me the necessary permission on behalf of Devon County Council to quote from the Sites and Monuments Register.

I am also grateful to Dr. Robert A. Higham of the Department of History and Archaeology at the University of Exeter for perusing this paper in draft and making some valuable comments.

I acknowledge that Figure 1 is based on a copy of the Ordnance Survey map of 25 inches to the mile, 1889, Sheet LXX1.2.

By permission of the British Library the microfiche photograph of that map is reproduced (reference RR 8005).

By permission of the Devon County Local Studies Library a photocopy of that microfiche is reproduced as Figure 1.

A WEDDING THAT RANG ALARM BELLS

Norman Hillyer

Parish registers nowadays tend to be pedestrian lists of names and addresses. Time was when church officials were not so prim. Occasionally they deemed it necessary to paint in the background.

On 17 April 1763 the marriage register of Hatherleigh has this entry:

'Thomas Lillycrop, blacksmith, and Mary Able, spinster, both of this Parish: witnesses John Angel & Samuel Morecombe.'

Far from the couple living happily ever after, the outraged Parish Clerk made sure that the world knew what did happen after that wedding. The Clerk fumed in the register:

'This wench was without constraint from friends married on Sunday to a young lusty fond husband, and without provocation from him ran away the next Wednesday with a soldier. She was assisted in her escape by Mary, the daughter of James Angel senior, which latter wench knew her to be going to her adulterer.'

The double disclaimer ('without constraint...without provocation') hints that the families were anxious to wash their hands of any blame. How could it possibly be their fault?

We should like to have the bride's side of the story. There was surely more to it than appears from the Parish Clerk's broadside. Could this have been something of an imposed match? Mary Able can have had scant regard for the 'lusty fond' groom she immediately deserts for a soldier she must have known already.

Her fellow-conspirator Mary Angel, according to the baptism register, was still only 18 at the time of the wedding. Probably the bride was about the same age. The information is not recorded.

The name of the conspirator Mary Angel does not appear among later marriages or burials. She must have left Hatherleigh for good, no doubt banished and disowned for aiding and abetting. The thwarted bridegroom, the lusty blacksmith, also seems to have gone away, for his name too is absent from later registers.

The Lillycrops, the Ables and the Angels were long-established local families, and highly embarrassed by what had taken place. Tongues were sure to wag yet again when later marriages involved these households.

As for James Angel senior, whose daughter Mary was implicated, he was fated not to be able to put the matter behind him for long. He had a son, also called James, who himself became Parish Clerk six years later. James junior would have kept a beady eye on the weddings he attended during his thirty-six years in office, from 1769 until his death in 1805 at the age of 91.

By that date, Hatherleigh's churned up waters had settled, steadied by a saintly vicar and old friend of the Wesleys, Cradock Glascott, then at the midpoint of his fifty-year incumbency.

Two centuries after the event, it needs a novelist or a playwright to suggest how to fill the tantalising gaps in the tale of the blacksmith's bride, married on Sunday, missing on Wednesday. But no writer of fiction is required to conjure up some idea of the hurt feelings that the runaway couple thoughtlessly left behind.

(The Revd. Norman Hillyer was Vicar of Hatherleigh 1979-86, and helped launch the Hatherleigh History Society following the town's millennium in 1981. He retired to Sheborne, Dorset.)

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.)

The New Maritime History of Devon. Volume II. From the late eighteenth century to the present day. 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, 272pp, illustrated, £35.00, ISBN 0 85177 633 7.

This concluding volume (the first was reviewed in *The Devon Historian* No. 47) brings the maritime history of the county down to the present decade. It is therefore very much the chronicle of a rise followed by a steady decline which has left the county today with a few small ports, a tenuous shipbuilding industry, a much reduced naval presence and a still effective fishery. Yachting and seaside tourism seem likely to be the predominant 'maritime' activities of the next century. Devon's diminished domestic seafaring interests in the twentieth century have been masked by the operation of external factors, the principal of which has been the presence of the Royal Navy. Geography made Plymouth the ideal base for a western squadron covering the French Atlantic ports and by the end of the nineteenth century Devonport had developed from a ship repair yard into one which could build battleships of the largest classes. It employed and trained thousands of skilled craftsmen while as a manning port the area was home for numerous sailors and their families. Since the last war the Dockyard has been continuously reduced. It no longer builds ships while the base supports only a small number of warships. Shore training establishments have been run down and Devonport will soon cease to be the centre for the education of engineer officers. Dartmouth for naval officers and Lympstone for the Royal Marines remain. Six chapters are devoted to the Navy in Devonshire, one of which considers the place of the Dockyard in the local economy and finds that it may have had a stultifying effect on industrial development outside its walls.

Emigration was another aspect of Devon maritime life inspired largely from outside the county. Plymouth was a main port of despatch for government emigrants from all parts of the kingdom, mainly to Australasia and in lesser numbers to Canada and South Africa, while the smaller Devon ports tended to carry fare paying passengers to North America. A separate chapter describes conditions in the emigrant ships. A third gift of geography was the position of Plymouth as the first or last port of call for the embarking or landing of passengers and mail by the great ocean liners, a practice which continued down to the 1960s.

Perhaps of most interest to the local historian is the group of chapters describing Devon ports, shipping and shipbuilding during the period. Here there is much useful economic and social material including studies of individuals engaged in different aspects of shipping during the last century. Although Devon built and operated wooden ships as long as these were economic it never really made the transition to iron and steam. Successful shipping operators tended to move their businesses to larger ports serving economically more important areas. The fishing industry, by contrast, did reasonably well.

This is the first major maritime history of an English county. As such it does raise the question whether or not it is possible to separate those activities which are locally

generated from those which are national. The editors have not attempted to make this distinction, probably wisely, because Devon without the Navy, the government emigration trade and the visiting ocean liners would have had a maritime history in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries of no greater significance than that of a number of other, minor, English seafaring counties. The scope of the work is so wide and the amount of detail so extensive that assessment of the component chapters is not practicable in a review of this kind. Nevertheless, although there is much information about ships built or owned in Devon there is no assessment of the numbers of Devon seafarers, in the Navy or merchant service, at different times or of the importance of their earnings to the economy of the county. Some were sailors of distinction. It might have been more appropriate to have heard about them than about sea-side holidays.

As with its predecessor this volume is well produced and illustrated with extensive references where appropriate. It is encouraging that the publishers have not found it necessary to raise the price which remains very reasonable for what is offered.

Adrian Reed

The Western Rising 1549: the Prayer Book Rebellion, by Philip Caraman, Tiverton 1994, 140pp, ISBN 1-898386-033-X, £9.95.

The rebellions against the government of Edward VI which erupted in Cornwall and Devon in 1548-9, but especially in the summer of 1549, continue to arouse the interest of authors and this new study by a well-known historian of Tudor Catholicism, although drawing very heavily on the great work of Mrs Rose-Troup, will stand comparison with any of the offerings of her many successors. Its great strength is that it tells a coherent story which will be enjoyed even by those who have read John Hooker's near contemporary narrative. For those new to the episode it will serve as an excellent introduction. They will be left in no doubt as to the author's sympathies, which are entirely with the rebels, but it is a pity that, in his concluding chapter, he should allow his natural bias to take over to the extent that he can write that the failure of the rebellion was followed by 'a decline of religious devotion', and by 'religious inactivity and widespread disinterest'. However Hooker, following what he called his 'godly' proclivities, was wont to be much less charitable in the other direction.

By and large Father Caraman has little new to add to the solution of the many problems which still cloud our understanding of what lay behind the risings. In fact too often he begs the question, such as in his apparent conviction, in spite of evidence – which he himself cites – of considerable involvement by the gentry and other men of standing in their communities, as well as their considerable distancing from the forces of law and order, that this was essentially a rising of 'the commons' of the two counties against their betters. Then there is the question of why Plymouth put up little or no resistance while Exeter stood so firm. It was not simply because of their differing religious affinities, Exeter at least being very divided, as Father Caraman, following Hooker, clearly shows. Was it not something to do with the existence, on the one hand, of a traditional preoccupation with seaborne marauders and on the other of ancient city walls? Or did the inhabitants have different attitudes, born of experience, towards the need to protect their womenfolk? Given that the majority of the rebels were Cornishmen they were all the more 'strangers' to the people of Exeter than to those of Plymouth and that much more desperate by the time they reached the Exe than when

they swarmed across the Tamar. It says much for this book that while it answers few such questions it bids fair to spark off a new phase of local inquiry and discussion.

One final message, directed particularly at the publishers: why, when they have a book based on such wide reading, at least of printed sources, don't they make the book really useful by encouraging the author to provide more than minimal source references?

Joyce Youngs

Devon Gardens. An Historical Survey. Edited by Steven Pugsley. vi + 186pp, maps, illustr., Alan Sutton in association with the Devon Gardens Trust. ISBN 0-7509-0055-5 (hb) £19.99; 0-7509-0662-6 (pb).

With this handsome and informative volume the Devon Gardens Trust has some claim to have overtaken its pioneering Hampshire counterpart. *Devon Gardens* fully stands comparison with *Pleasure Grounds: The Gardens and Landscapes of Hampshire* on which it is modelled, and the two stand alone as wide-ranging modern surveys of the garden history of individual English counties. Each includes a gazetteer of major parks and gardens in the county, and the Devon volume scores by the highly useful inclusion of an index. Each is very fully illustrated from contemporary material, extensive use being made in the Devon volume of the valuable pictorial record provided by the early-eighteenth century Pridcaux drawings. The ten articles on various aspects of Devon's garden history exceed the eight for Hampshire and indicate the wide range of topics for consideration in this burgeoning field of enquiry. Hopefully they will be seen in the future as the inspiration for much further research, for they show how there is still much to do. Two, by Robert Iles of medieval, Tudor and Stuart parks and by Todd Gray on fruit trees and the walled garden in early modern Devon, clearly break ground for further investigation. Iles specifically calls for more work, pointing out that only Okehampton Park has been studied in detail and it cannot be considered as typical. Todd Gray, who has provided much of the means for further research by his painstaking survey of the documentary sources available for Devon garden history, shows in his article how such material could be exploited for a solid study of fruit farming and the cider industry. Three fine articles, by Robin Pausset on Castle Hill, Richard Stone on Endsleigh, and David Mawson on Wood show how such research can be applied to particular gardens, and Steven Pugsley's introductory survey, Rosemary Lauder's sketch of some vanished gardens, and David Richardson's account of public parks and gardens indicate other gardens available for study.

This reviewer was left with a sense of how quickly gardens vanish and in particular of how even the garden history of the last two hundred years is slipping away from us fast. Audrey le Lievre's very informative account of the nurseries and nurserymen of the nineteenth century shows the solid commercial infrastructure that was built up to support the Victorian and Edwardian gardeners of Devon. However until recently garden history has been obsessed with earlier periods. Even in this book gems of this period tend to get a passing glance. The gardens of Oldsway Mansion, if they are indeed by the great late-nineteenth century French garden designer Achille Duchene, need to be publicised far more, since recently Christopher Thacker in *The Genius of Gardening: The history of gardens in Britain and Ireland* has described the water garden at Blenheim as Duchene's only English work. Oldsway is now a free public garden and

Richardson reminds us of the wealth of public parks and gardens in Devon (including what is regarded as the first in the country at Northernhay, Exeter, from 1612), a rich field of study that is only just being discovered nationally.

These studies also bring out the importance in garden history as in all other fields of applying the wider facets of the historian's craft. We do need to date and form a sense of accurate chronology. In his wide-ranging introductory survey Steven Pugsley rightly uses this to point to the conservatism of Devon gardeners. There are grounds to suspect that this will be the general conclusion as more county studies are made. Garden historians have too readily assumed that when new ideas emerged they became general almost overnight – untrue even in individual gardens. For example, while a new Kentian landscape appeared around the edges of Stowe from the 1730s onwards, Bridgeman's formal central axis with its geometric pond remained until after mid-century and may well have had a far greater influence on Castle Hill than the French examples Robin Fausset credits. We need also to be aware of the distinctly social purpose of gardens until recent times – they were part of the up-with-the-Joneses game of the ruling elite. Pugsley attributes the backwardness of Devon gardens to the county's distance from Court and from the leading practitioners of that game. He might also consider the internal social composition of the county which was too big and where there were too few great landowners for there to be the competition for domination as elsewhere. Such competition involved lavish expenditure, with building and gardening playing key roles, the possibly ruinous consequences of which meant that landowners didn't get involved unless they had to. Fausset provides a very salutary example in Matthew Fortescue's decision to build a temple in memory of his half-brother at Castle Hill in the 1750s. Projected for £100, its final cost was £700 – after which he resolved to spend no more on garden improvement!

Lastly there is a need for a historical understanding and clarification of the theoretical concepts behind garden trends in order to understand their design. Two of these articles, by Peter Hunt on Swete's journeys and by Stone on Endsleigh describe 'picturesque' landscapes with a minimum of explanation of what contemporaries meant by that term. Hunt contents himself with citing Gilpin's remark on the subject, which is awkward for him since Gilpin found Devon a most un-picturesque county in his published *Observations on the Western Parts of England* whereas Swete enthusiastically saw the picturesque everywhere in the county. More has to be said of the great debate of the 1790s which we know, from his journal entry on Combe, Swete followed and on which his travels are to some extent a commentary. He had a distinct view – he admired the work of Capability Brown at Mamhead and Combe, whereas Payne Knight and Price developed their theories of the picturesque in reaction against the Brown style. There are nuances to this style which require greater consideration than is given here, difficult though it is to attempt it. Repton said in his Red Book on Endsleigh that the picturesque was 'more easy to understand than to define' and Hunt provides a delicious account of how the aesthetics of a style which worshipped decay and disorder were beyond a miller who shook his head in disbelief at Swete's admiration of the dilapidated state of his mill! Vignettes such as this provide vivid human links between these present articles and the rich gardening past which they describe and make this an entertaining as well as an educative volume. We look for more to follow!

Michael Duffy

We Remember D-Day and A Wrens-Eye View of Wartime Dartmouth, Dartmouth History Research Group, Papers 11 and 12, both compiled by Mrs. Ray Freeman, 1994, available from the Dartmouth Museum or The Harbour Bookshop, Dartmouth, at £2.50 each. ISBN 1 899011 00 5 and 1 899011 01 3.

These, the two most recent papers issued by the Dartmouth History Research Group, deserve a warm welcome. They are similar in format, which in the case of the D-Day volume is defined as follows: 'This then is not an official history but a collection of personal stories about a dramatic period of the war by those who were actually there.'

The stoicism of the people of the South Hams when faced with the prospect of total evacuation from their homes and land is deftly drawn out in the early part of Paper 11. The segregation practiced by the U.S. contingents will surprise many readers. Eye-witness accounts of British, U.S. and Canadian participation demonstrate the thoroughness of the preparations for the real event, while the circumstances surrounding the tragedy of Exercise Tiger are explained in detail. The assembly of 485 craft in the Dart before D-Day was clearly a remarkable achievement; one observer commenting that they were so thickly packed 'that one could almost walk across the river on them.' The heroism and courage of the men and women involved places D-Day alongside the greatest military feats of any age, as this paper modestly but effectively demonstrates.

Paper 12 is concerned with the WRNS, many of whom in the early days were recruited in a place like Dartmouth as 'immobiles', and promptly took over jobs in establishments like the Royal Naval College formerly done by naval men. The careful documentation of Wren accommodation in Dartmouth will be of particular interest to local historians and individual property owners alike. The graphic accounts of air attacks upon Dartmouth in 1942 and 1943 make moving reading and reflect the close relations between service and civilian residents in what had become a front-line town. The impact of the arrival of American personnel in the town, and the highly confidential role played by the members of the WRNS in Dartmouth, prior to D-Day, are both clearly demonstrated. All this, and the strain and tension of the situation, is vividly conveyed in the words of those involved.

Mrs. Ray Freeman is to be warmly congratulated: she has compiled both these papers but has allowed the actual participants to speak for themselves. Seeking out such a wide range of contributors represents a great challenge. Added to this, the weaving together of quotations for a variety of sources, never an easy task, has been accomplished with great skill. Both papers are well worth reading and are significant contributions to the available literature on the history of World War II in Devon.

John Bosanko

Brittle glass: a history of the Holland and Beavis families, by Susan Hartnell-Beavis, Yeovil: Beaufort Press, 1992.

This is as much an account of how an enthusiastic (over-enthusiastic?) amateur set about tracing her husband's family tree as it is a history of the families she researched. Much of the information on the early Holland family is derived from standard sources; the main interest, from the point of view of the Devon Historian, is the author's discussion of the will of Henry Beavis of Barnstaple, made in 1823, and of the social life and ramifications of the family which it reveals. The most exciting parts of the book, however, are the accounts of a surgeon's life in First World War Belgium

and Serbia, and (more unusually) of an Englishwoman's experiences in Nazi occupied Paris.

Stuart A. Raymond

The Haytor Granite Tramway and Stover Canal by Helen Harris. Peninsula Press. 1994. 64pp. Paperback. £4.99. ISBN 1 872640 28 1

Back in 1964, while still a cottage industry, the publishers David and Charles produced a paperback study of the Haytor Granite Tramway and Stover Canal by M.C. Ewans. This drew attention to a previously little regarded feature of Devon's industrial history, which included the county's oldest railway and second oldest canal. The public interest was sufficient to justify an enlarged hardback edition two years later.

While that book has long been out of print, officialdom has become involved and the remains are now regarded as 'Heritage', and partly incorporated into a route called the Templer Way, after the family dynasty that promoted the schemes. This route was declared officially open in 1987, although not continuous. Leaflets are available from local Tourist Information Centres, and interpretation panels are sited at various points *en route*, but for those requiring more substantial fare there had been only Derek Beavis's guide to the route published by Obelisk Publications in 1992. Since then the towpath along the middle section of the Stover Canal has been opened to the public, something of which I was quite unaware of until reviewing this book.

The author's credentials as the foremost authority on Dartmoor industries will be familiar to Devon History Society members. The book is illustrated with line drawings by George Thurlow, although my personal preference in a work of record is for photographs. Few would venture to challenge the author on her own chosen territory of granite working and canal history, but there were two occasions when I raised a critical eyebrow. James Templer, the founder of the dynasty, is said to have been born of a poor Exeter family, but apprenticed as a joiner; presumably not too poor to have afforded the premium necessary for a skilled apprenticeship. This aroused my curiosity sufficiently to justify an hour in the Westcountry Studies Centre in search of further information. James's father had been a blacksmith in Exeter's Preston Street, but died when the boy was only six. Even then his mother continued to lease the property and contribute to the poor rate, so my interpretation of the sources is that James's rise to riches was one from modest respectability rather than rags.

The other point concerns public access, and is very much a matter of opinion; the author writes that much of the route of the tramway is accessible by public footpaths. Of course it depends on one's expectations, but although it is several years since I walked the upper section, I was left with the opinion that much of it was inaccessible, even within the National Park boundary.

Further improvements to the route are in prospect, and it is to be hoped that some alternative to the sections along roads will be provided very shortly; but until then this is not one of the World's Great Walks, although it is now well served with guidebooks.

A.G. Collings

Tavistock's Yesterdays. Episodes from her history, 10, by G. Woodcock. Published by the author 1994. 88pp. Numerous illustrations. £3.95.

Historian and author Gerry Woodcock is to be congratulated on producing his tenth annual volume of his series about Tavistock's past. He has marked the milestone (perhaps in response to a request last year from this direction) by including on a separate sheet an index to articles contained in the collection so far, and this is much appreciated. Set in the usual attractive format this latest issue includes a general brief history of Tavistock, and a valuable section on the portraits in its Town Hall – with nineteen clear monochrome reproductions of the paintings together with a section of text on each, which help to bring the history to life. The emphasis throughout the book is greatly on people, which is doubtless as it should be in view of its dedication to them. Sections on the town's foundries – recalling the busy mining era – Tavistock and the Great Reform Act, and details of the history of the town clock are amongst the interesting subjects covered.

Helen Harris

LOOKING AHEAD

The DHS 1995 Summer Conference will be held at Honiton on Saturday 8 July, based in the Mackarness Hall. The morning talk will be given by Robin Stanes, and there will be another in the afternoon yet to be arranged. There will be opportunities to visit St Michael's Church and Allhallows Museum, and finally tea in the Mackarness Hall.

The theme of the AGM in our Silver Jubilee Year, to be held in Exeter on 21 October, will include a talk by Dr. Kate Tiller on the state of the art in local history, and in the afternoon a review of the past twenty-five years in this field, and a look ahead. 'Past, Present, and Future' with, it is hoped, three appropriate speakers.

FULL DETAILS WILL BE SENT TO MEMBERS IN DUE COURSE

Every issue of *The Devon Historian* includes a 'Note for Contributors' which asks authors to submit their papers to a consistent style. A similar request in the *Transactions* of the Devonshire Association asks writers to 'consult recent numbers of the *Transactions* as to style, layout, etc' and adds 'Further information on style can be obtained from the Editor'.

All professional publishers have their own house or preferred style, and most large firms provide their authors with a copy. This is to ensure that all manuscripts arriving on the editor's desk are produced as near as possible to the house style of the company, thus saving work for the editor. Large publishers insist that all books coming from their establishment are consistent in matters of detail like the representation of dates, the use of initial capital letters, the expression of distances and whether single or double quotation marks are employed.

With the availability of word processors in the home over the past few years the possibility of desk-top publishing has arisen. Numerous cottage-industry publishers of historical and topographical books have appeared, produced by people working in their spare time to produce their own titles, and sometimes publishing other writers' work.

Not having been involved in the professional discipline of mainstream publishing they are unversed in the details of quality book production, so the lack of a house style and frequent misprints through careless proof reading means that a shoddy book is the result. I feel that this failure to observe publishing conventions is sad, and seems linked to a lowering of standards in manuscript presentation. If an author is producing his or her own book it would seem sensible to ask a trusted and critical friend to read the manuscript before it is printed to eliminate as many errors as possible.

I could go on at length to list the kind of error which irritates the reader and distracts from the usefulness of the book, but considerations of space must limit my observations to a few of the more common howlers.

Spelling mistakes of proper names are the most unforgivable of errors. The misuse of the apostrophe is another common fault, and even otherwise well-produced books will sometimes insert one in, say, 'the 1870's' when none is required. The correct form is 'the 1870s'. And the apostrophe will creep into 'its' when it isn't necessary and be omitted when it is. Consistency of style means carrying through the book the same forms of expression in dates, distances, heights, and so on. And centuries should be consistently spelt. Sometimes one sees '19th century' and 'eighteenth century' on the same page.

Initial capital letters should be used sparingly, and there is no need to have capitals for the seasons, or compass points (though West Devon Council, for example, would be an exception). Italics should be used for foreign words and phrases like *double entendre* and *faux pas*, and ship names like HMS *Nelson*. If one's word processor or typewriter cannot produce italics, the instruction to the printer to italicise is assumed by underlining the words. (Sometimes it is wise to pencil the instructions 'ital' in the margin alongside).

When one embarks on reading a new book and finds misprints cropping up, my faith in the author flags, and I find that instead of reading the book for its content I am constantly wondering what solecism I will find next!

Brian Le Messurier

At the recent AGM of The Devon History Society mention was made of the usefulness of parish exhibitions as means of interesting people in the historical past. Many parishes, of course, have already staged impressive exhibitions. Others have not yet done so, possibly because of apprehension as to what it would entail. One of our members, Mr John Sage, of Luppitt, near Honiton, has written some notes of one such event in his own parish, and they are reproduced here in the hope that they may encourage others to launch out in similar fashion. It must be hard to find a parish anywhere that does not have, on investigation, a fair amount of truly interesting material. As many members will know, often an exhibition of local history can be combined with a flower festival in the church, and there can be few pleasanter ways of spending a summer weekend afternoon than going out to a parish – familiar or otherwise, and seeing what it has to offer. And sometimes cream teas are also made available! Here then, is John Sage's account:

A Luppitt event

The seed for the idea of the Luppitt Parish Exhibition was planted several years ago when the Devon Record Office offered to bring material from their archives to the parish for display. However, the work of demolishing the wooden village hall building and the erection of a more permanent structure delayed any possible progress towards taking advantage of the offer. The possibility materialised at the completion of the main hall building and the DRO was again contacted and were able to help.

A small committee, with representatives from the Parish Council and the Parochial Church Council, was formed to arrange the details. The DRO material was to be set up by them in the centre of the floor area, and the local material along the sides and the stage end, arranged and grouped under suitable subjects.

Parish Council Pride of place was to be given to the parish Tithe map of 1842. Its size was the first problem, and how to present it, as it is 10ft 6in high and 7ft 3 in wide. The solution was to fasten top and bottom to rollers and these to a freestanding frame. Handles to the rollers enabled any part of the map to be at eye level as required, and the system proved to be quite satisfactory. A study of its detail was quite revealing in conjunction with the apportionment lists, which gave information in the nine columns as to owner, occupier, area, cultivation, name and computation values for each of 1,576 plots. A David & Charles reprint of the nineteenth century first edition of the one-inch to the mile map of the area was on view, and a few of the more important items concerning Parish Council meetings since 1894, and Vestry meetings prior to that date. Also lists of dwellings shown on the Tithe map but not now in existence – in the days of thatched roofs many were destroyed by fire – and of dwellings built since 1842 were shown.

Church and School The stage end of the hall was occupied with many records and exhibits concerning our early fourteenth century parish church as well as the village school, built in 1873 and in use as such until 1966. A valued album of nearly 200 photos of the church kindly taken in the early part of the last war in case of damage by enemy action, and rarely seen, was on view, copies of church registers from 1711, a record book of the accounts of a 'Church Lands' charity from 1865, first mentioned about 1750, a church and yard plan of 1928, a flake of chert found in the churchyard in

1970, reputed to be of 2,000 BC plus, and an income tax assessment book of 1910 lent for the occasion, as were several old photographs. The school attendance register with 1,368 entries, a complete list of the 100 children at the school in 1893, some photos taken by the first master's son, probably about the turn of the century, were also all on display.

Church Bells and Bellringing Tower plans from the foundry of John Taylor & Co. of Loughborough for the augmentations of 1928 and 1974, dates and details of the ring of eight bells, a model bell as hung for ringing and considerable information on method ringing and publications in book form dealing with it were shown.

4th Luppitt Platoon 'D' Company, 19th Scuton Batt. Devon Home Guard. Publications concerning the activities in many spheres of the national war effort 1939-45, with information about the two sections of Luppitt platoon. A framed and illustrated list of the sixty-three members, our duties in guarding the Honiton railway tunnel east of the town during the period 24 April to 10 July 1944, local exercises, and details of a few amusing incidents in the midst of our anxieties.

The Mary Rose Due to the raising of this ship in October 1982 there was particular interest due to the fact that Sir George Carew who was in command as Vice Admiral of Henry VIII's fleet, went down with her in the Solent, and his home was one of the four Domesday Manors listed in Luppitt parish. His younger brother Sir Peter had a very notable career in both English and French courts in the turbulent times of the sixteenth century. The display gave some details of the vessel, her building, refit and sinking, and more recent raising and plans for restoration, as well as some information about the Carew family whose home here was in their occupation for about 270 years.

General and Historical The last section of the local contribution dealt with various matters, a list of publications with authors and dates which gave some information about Luppitt and its people, census numbers, exceptional weather dates, including floods of 10 July 1968 and the snow blizzards of 1962-3. During the latter, reminders of the convoy of 6 February which took 3½ hours to get to Honiton only four miles distant, with tractors and trailers containing churns of 700 gallons of milk by twenty-three men with eleven tractors, shovelling snow where possible from the high banked lanes, and where impractical finding a route through fields to avoid drifts. A list of the names of thirty-four Luppitt men who joined the Duke of Monmouth as he moved through the area to his ill-fated battle at Sedgemoor, three of whom were apprehended and shipped off to the West Indies, probably as plantation labour, the rest noted to be 'At Large' by W. Macdonald Wigfield. At least ten different spellings of the parish name known over the centuries were noted, and a few of the more important national dates and what occurred.

Devon Record Office Material was exhibited on prepared stands arranged by staff, and showed plans of church, school and a new vicarage of 1881, Land Tax records, some local farm sales, public house licence documents, a will of 1741, manors, nineteenth century directories, school logbooks, poor law detail, and apprenticeship indentures of 1747-1771, much material we did not know existed. The Village Hall was the centre of much activity on that day: in the morning the necessary laying out of the material for viewing, and from 2 p.m. onwards the building was full of interested people, many of whom afterwards expressed pleasure and appreciation.

Okehampton Local History Society has forty-three members amongst whom are some well known to DHS members, including Dr R.L. Taverner, its Patron, Chairman

Major J.D. Shebbeare, and Secretary Mrs M. Bird. Monthly meetings usually consist of talks – generally with slides – and in the past year included Mrs Helen Harris on Dartmoor farming through the ages, Dr Christopher Brooks on stained glass in Devon. Mrs Audrey Erskine who spoke about the architects and workforce of Exeter Cathedral, and Mr Adrian Reed on the French prisoners of war on parole in Devon during the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. In January, instead of a talk, the OLHS holds an annual dinner, and in April the AGM, following which members Mr and Mrs John Comyn customarily show holiday slides. Members share car transport for an expedition each June – last year to churches and a garden in the Lapford and Nymet Rowland area, followed by tea at the chairman's medieval manor house home.

Milton Abbot Discoverers (referred to as MAD). This lively group has recently been formed by enthusiastic members and has already held an exhibition and flower festival which brought overwhelming interest. The bias is strongly towards local history, combined with sociability. Talks are held regularly and a newsletter provided. Contact: Jane Williamson tel. 0822 617311

Old Plymouth Society. The now up-and-running OPS produced its first newsletter (two-sided single sheet, well-filled) in September 1994. It has also published a second study booklet, on Plymouth Palmerston Forts, being the text of a lecture given to the society by Freddy Woodward in 1993. This is an informative paper on a fascinating subject, illustrated with photographs and a map. The coming year's programme includes Dr John Grier on 'A history of Plymouth hospitals' on 18 August, and Mr Ray Bush on 'The Plymouth leats' on 12 February 1996. Details from Secretary Nicholas Casley, 94 Glendower Road, Plymouth, PL3 4LD.

Yelverton & District Local History Society has recently produced its 12th Newsletter, for 1994-5 (34 pages of information including card cover), free to members, £1.30 to non-members. As always the newsletter is closely packed with numerous short articles which are both informative and entertaining. Both society and newsletter now owe much to current chairman/secretary and editor Paul Rendell (who is now also a council member of the Devon History Society). His address is 20 Rolston Close, Southway, Plymouth, PL6 6PE.

(It has become apparent that in 1991 we 'jumped a year' in numbering the sessions of the Annual General Meeting, describing the AGM of the previous year as 'the 21st'. In fact, of course, 1990's meeting was the 20th, that for 1991 (reported April 1992) the 21st, and so on until the recent one, for 1994, reported here, which was the 24th. Members may like to amend their recent past copies so that they are accurate for record purposes. We apologise for these errors and for any confusion caused. Ed.)

Minutes of the 24th Annual General Meeting held at the School of Education, University of Exeter, 15 October 1994

Present: In the Chair, the President, Dr. Basil Greenhill; c. 30 members of the Society.

1 Apologies: Mrs. M. Stanbrook, the Misses P. Salter, L. Smith and E. Stanbrook, The Rev. P.F. Atherton, Messrs. M. Beaumont, J. Bosanko, J. Dilley, Dr. T. Greaves, Col. G. Grimshaw, Prof. N.I. Orme, Mr. B. Screech, Dr. R.R. Sellman, Messrs. G. Tatham, C. Taylor, S. Timms.

2 The Minutes of the last AGM, as printed in *The Devon Historian* 48, were approved, and signed by the Chairman.

3 Matters Arising: None.

4 Secretaries' Reports

Mrs. S. Stirling reported enjoyable day conferences at Teignmouth in March and on Torridgeside in July, and thanked Mr. Pike and Dr. Grant for organising these. Professor Youings had represented the society at the Public Enquiry over whether a road should be built over part of Braunton Great Field. This danger had now been averted. The Council had sent letters urging the safeguarding of resources for local historians after local government re-organisation. It had also sought re-assurance that the change of status envisaged for the Exeter Archaeological Field Unit in 1995 would not affect its valuable work. Mrs. Stirling thanked her fellow secretaries and the treasurer for their help. She also urged the secretaries of local societies to send notices of their meetings for inclusion in *The Devon Historian*, and to let her know if this publicity proved useful. Mr. Pike reported that membership records were now up to date, and thanked the treasurer for his help in this matter.

The Chairman invited questions from the floor. Mr. Collin requested that the Council try to avoid conferences and other meetings clashing with those of other societies, and suggested phoning their secretaries when choosing dates. These suggestions were noted.

5 Treasurer's Report

Mr. E. Haydon reported an excess of expenditure over income, due to the rising costs of publication and postage. There was now a net deficit of some £214. After discussion, Mr. Pike proposed that the accounts be adopted. This was seconded by Mr. Reed, and passed unanimously.

6 Notice of amendments to the Revised Constitution of the Society proposed by the Charity Commissioners

The Amendments as circulated to members and recommended by the Council were tabled, viz.:

Clause 4 (b) to be amended by the addition of the words underlined...

...The Council shall normally meet at least three times during the year and shall be able to appoint committees which shall be answerable to the Council, provided that all actions of such committees are reported back to the Council as soon as possible.

Clause 11 to be amended by the insertion of the words underlined, and by the substitution of the word 'twenty-one' for the word 'twenty-eight' in the penultimate line thereof...

Amendment of...Constitution may be made... provided that no amendment shall be made which would have the effect of causing the Society to cease to be a charity at law. Notice of...such amendment must be given in writing to the secretary not less than twenty-one clear days before the meeting...

The amendments were proposed by Mr. Haydon, seconded by Mr. Staues, and passed unanimously.

The amended constitution would be published in the next issue of *The Devon Historian* (Spring 1995).

7 Subscriptions

The treasurer submitted that the subscription of £5.00 p.a., unchanged for 14 years, no longer covered publication and postage. With conference and other expenses, there was a deficit of £3.42 per member per annum. The Council recommended raising subscriptions to £10 for individuals, and £15 for families and institutional members, with life membership available to individual members for £100. In the course of discussion it was pointed out that £10 was a lot in the current economic climate, and some members would leave rather than pay the new rates. One member wished to know if there would be more, or improved, services. The treasurer replied that by comparison with other societies, £10 was reasonable, and there would be no need for another increase for some time. In response to the argument that inflation might eventually cause the Society to lose over life subscriptions, he pointed out the advantages of extra capital to invest in the first years. The Council's recommendations were then proposed by Mr. Haydon, seconded by Mr. Pike, and passed by a large majority.

8 Editor's Report

Mrs. Harris thanked all researchers and writers concerned with the spring and autumn editions of *The Devon Historian*. They had covered all parts of Devon, and dealt with a broad range of subjects, ranging from intensive studies relating to particular parishes, to more general appraisals of the county's history. She reported an improvement in the presentation of copy, but urged all intending contributors to adhere to the 'house style' as set out on page 2 of every issue. Mrs. Harris acknowledged the valued help given by Mrs. Stirling in dispatching copies by post twice a year - no light task - and also as reviews secretary. She asked members to note that books for review should be sent to Mrs. Stirling. Mrs. Harris had some material in hand for the spring issue, which would be the 50th, but she needed more. She emphasised that shorter pieces, or those with a light touch would be very welcome, as would reports and outlines of future plans from parish and other local history societies. All copy for the

spring issue should be submitted by 30 November.

9 Election of Council 1994-5.

As Professor Youings was standing down as chairman, Mr. A. Reed was proposed by the Council. There were no other nominations, and Mr. Reed was duly elected, *nem. con.* Mr. Bosanko, Mr. Tatham, and Mr. Taylor had tendered their resignations from Council. Dr. T. Gray, Dr. T. Greaves, and Mr. Rendell, all duly nominated and seconded, were elected to fill the vacancies, and Dr. Grant and Mr. Timms, who stood down under the three-year rule, were re-elected.

10 Any Other Business

Conferences 1995. The spring meeting on the theme 'Sound and Image', would be held at the Plymouth Athenaeum on 18 March. The summer meeting at Honiton in July, would be concerned with that borough's infamous election record, and the (not unconnected) history of local cider. There would also be a joint meeting with the Devon Archaeological Society on Tuesday 7 February at Exeter. It was hoped that this new venture would be well supported.

The new chairman then thanked Professor Joyce Youings, the retiring chairman, for many years of hard work for the society. He paid tribute to her scholarship, administrative skills, and energy in the post, and presented her with honorary life membership, and a handsome north Devon harvest jug commissioned from Harry Juniper by the Council. Professor Youings, 'delighted, thrilled, and overwhelmed', thanked Mr. Reed for the tributes, and said she had enjoyed her time as chairman, a task made pleasant for her by other officers and members of the Council and Society. She wished them and the new Chairman every success in the future

THE DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY THE CONSTITUTION

NAME

- 1 The name of the Society shall be The Devon History Society (hereinafter called 'The Society').

PURPOSES

- 2(a) The Society is established for charitable purposes only.
- (b) The object of The Society shall be to promote the advancement of education by furthering the study of Devon History.

MEMBERSHIP

- 3 Membership of The Society shall be open to any person, and Corporate Membership to any society or organisation, on payment of such annual subscription as shall be determined at the Annual General Meeting.

MANAGEMENT

- (a) The Officers shall comprise a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Editor, elected annually at the Annual General Meeting.
- (b) Management of The Society shall be vested in a Council consisting of the five officers, with nine other members who shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting to serve for three years, one third retiring each year, retiring members being eligible for re-election. The Council shall have the power to co-opt up to four other persons and to fill casual vacancies. The Council shall normally meet at least three times during the year and shall be able to appoint committees which shall be answerable to the Council, provided that all actions of such committees are reported back to the Council as soon as possible.

PRESIDENT

- 5 A President shall be elected at an Annual General Meeting to serve for three years, beginning at the next Annual General Meeting (at which he or she shall be invited to give a Presidential address). The President shall preside over General Meetings.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- 6 The Annual General Meeting shall normally be held during October each year in Exeter (when the formal accounts for the previous year will be presented). Each corporate member may send two representatives who, together with every other person attending (being an individual member) shall be entitled to vote. At least twenty-one clear days' notice shall be given in writing by the Secretary to the members.

BUSINESS OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- 7 The business of the Annual General Meeting shall include the appointment of an Auditor and the presentation for adoption of the Annual Reports and the Audited Accounts.

FINANCE

- 8 The Society shall have power to raise money by means of affiliation fees, subscriptions, donations, legacies, grants-in-aid, loans and other sources. The income and property of The Society, whencesoever derived, shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the purposes of The Society as set forth in this Constitution and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly, by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise howsoever by way of profit to any member of The Society. Provided that nothing herein shall prevent the repayment of out of pocket expenses.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

- 9 Subscriptions shall be due on 1st May. A member whose subscription is more than twelve months in arrears shall be deemed to have resigned from The Society.

EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETINGS

- 10 Extraordinary General Meetings of The Society, of which not less than fourteen days' notice shall be given to members, shall be called by the Secretary either on the motion of the Council or as soon as may be after the receipt of a request in writing from not less than twenty members, stating the object of the meeting.

ALTERATION TO THE CONSTITUTION

- 11 Amendment of, or addition to, this Constitution may be made if approved by not less than two thirds of the persons present and voting, at a General Meeting for which twenty shall form a quorum, provided that no amendment shall be made which would have the effect of causing The Society to cease to be a charity at law. Notice of any motion for such amendment or addition must be given in writing to the Secretary not less than twenty-one clear days before the meeting and a copy of such notice shall be sent by the Secretary to each body and person in membership of The Society.

DISSOLUTION

- 12 The Society may be dissolved at a General Meeting by a resolution of which at least twenty-one clear days' notice in writing shall have been sent to all members, if the resolution is supported by the vote of not less than two thirds of the persons present and voting. Such resolution shall give instructions for the disposal of any assets held by or in the name of The Society provided that if any property remains after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities, such property shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of The Society but shall, in such way as the General Meeting shall determine and with the approval of the Charity Commissioners or other authority having charitable jurisdiction, be given to or transferred to other charitable institutions or institution having objects similar to some or all of the objects of The Society.

15 October 1994

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