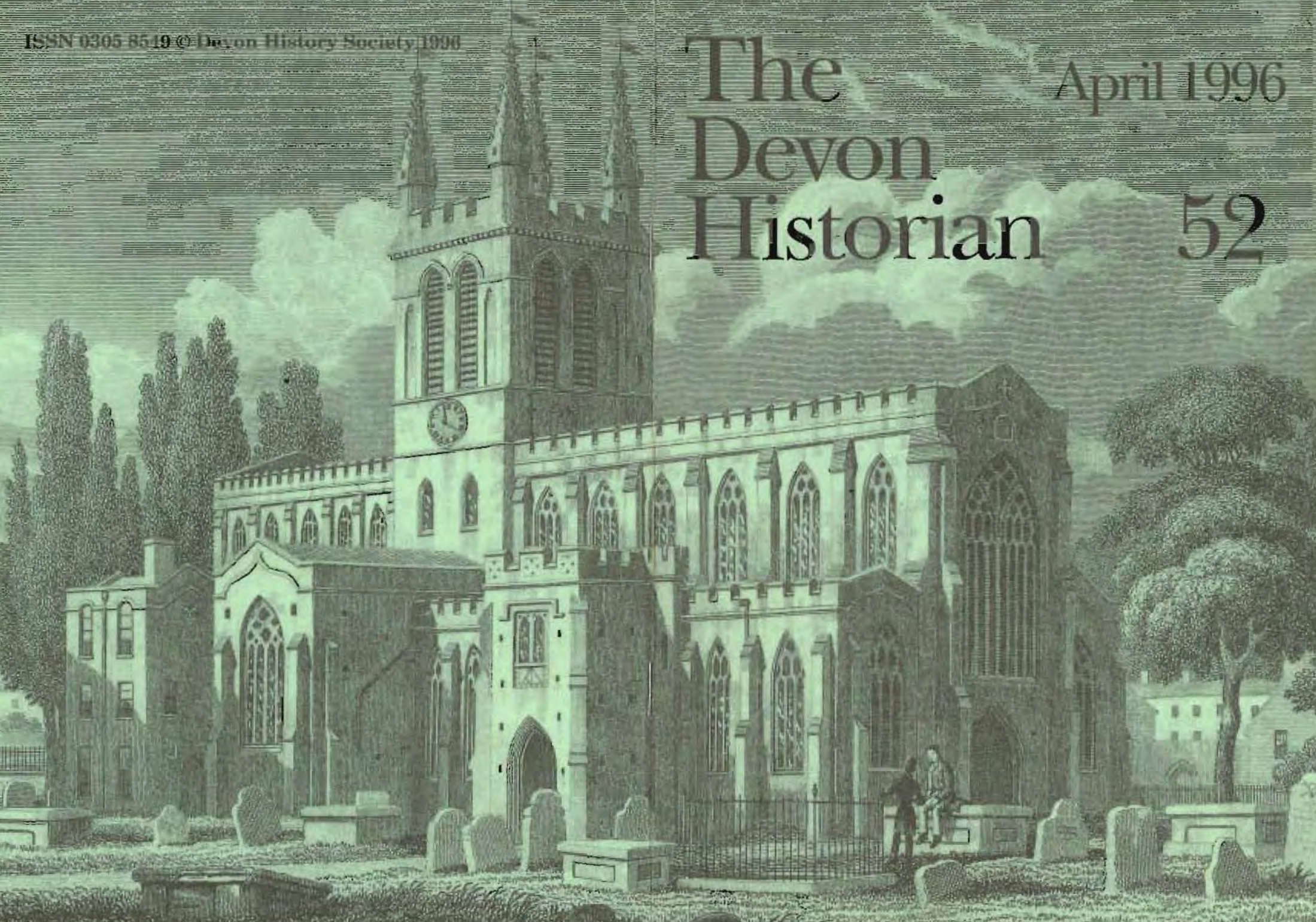


The Devon Historian

April 1996

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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*, Hirondelles, 22 Churchill Road, Whitchurch, Tavistock PL19 9BU. The deadline for the next issue is 1 July 1996. 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

The society will meet at Crediton on 30 March, and at Chulmleigh on 6 July. The AGM will be at Exeter on 19 October.

The print on the cover is *S.W. view of Crediton Church, Devonshire*, steel engraving by T.H. Shepherd after R. Brown, published Jennings, 1833. (S.C. no. 428)

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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 - 2,500 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 1996, etc.

TEIGN BRIDGE IN TEIGNGRACE

D.L.B.Thomas

To most road users Teign Bridge, with its hump backs and length of narrow causeway made effectively narrower by irregular parapets, is no more than a minor irritation, and few realise that five metres or so below the road are the remains of one of the oldest masonry bridges in the British Isles. Between 1844 and 1857 Thomas Whitaker prepared a set of drawings of the bridges maintained by the County, and the structures that can be seen today at Teign Bridge differ little from his drawings. The main bridge, over the River Teign, is a single span masonry arch bridge built of blue lias and granite ashlar in the neo classical style. The arch is segmental in shape with a rise/span ratio of 1:7.5, a span of 52 feet 6 inches (16 metres) and a width between parapets of 20 feet (6 metres). A short distance in a north easterly direction is a bridge of similar construction probably built as a flood relief structure and of 14 feet (4.26 metres) span. About 300 metres in a south westerly direction from the main bridge is a narrow hump backed bridge built of stone and brick crossing the course of the Stover Canal. This is a single span segmental arch structure with a rise/span ratio of 1:6, a span of 16 feet (4.87 metres) and a width between parapets of 12 feet (3.65 metres). The arch voussours are of a buff engineering brick with embossed keystones on either face. That on the southern side depicts the head of a bearded man, and that on the northerly the head of a goat. The latter has very realistic eyes giving it a rather eerie appearance.

The remaining bridges are connected by a continuous parapet so that the whole looks like a single causeway. Whitaker's Bridge Drawings show that, in the middle of the last century, they were independent masonry arch structures and, of course, they would have been built as such. There are seven bridges, one of two span and the others single span. Five have arches that are three centred in shape and the other two segmental. Spans range from 12 feet (4.57 metres) to 18 feet (5.48 metres) and the width between parapets is nominally 20 feet (6.09 metres). All are built of a grey limestone.

Teign Bridge must have existed before Domesday as it refers to the 'Hundred of Teinebruge'. In 1412, Bishop Stafford refers to a bequest of 3s 4d (17 pence) for the maintenance of Teignbridge Bridge.¹ On 12 January 1434-5 Bishop Lacy made a grant of an indulgence for the 'repair, alteration and maintenance' of the bridge', on 9 October 1438 he made a grant of forty days indulgence for its 'repair and alteration', and on 26 November 1452 he made a similar grant for 'the building, repair and maintenance' of Teignbridge'. Leland², in 1543, refers to 'Chiddeley Bridg of Stone' and states that 'Teigne Bridge a 3 Miles lower' but does not mention its material of construction. Westcote³ wrote in 1630 that 'Teign Bridge was 'for length very long and rather to be termed a causeway than a bridge' and Risdon⁴, in his survey of 1640, noted in relation to the river that 'In this large level, her course is crowned with a bridge of great length for so few arches; and in this regard memorable that the hundred taketh name thereof'. Curiously, none of the maps of Ogilby⁵ (1675), Donn⁶ (1765) or Mudge⁷ (1809) names the bridge although all show its position.

The first report in the Quarter Session Record is in 1599⁸, when 'Mr Carrewe of



Green's Teign Bridge

harcombe' was promised reimbursement of any money he spent on the repair of 'Tynbridge'. By Michaelmas 1600¹³, William Carew had spent £37 on repairs to the bridge and the magistrates ordered that £100 be levied on the hundreds of the South Division to enable Carew to complete the work. Despite having spent a large sum of money, Carew seems not to have made much of a fist of the job for, at the Easter Session 1605¹⁴, it was reported that the bridge was 'runous and in decaie'. Nearly two years passed and, at Epiphany 1607¹⁵, the magistrates decided that, after an inspection by some of their number advised by 'workmen of skill', £130 should be raised to put the bridge in order. Twelve months later¹⁶, it was reported that, as a result of 'the late mundecon of waters', the bridge was in a much worse state and £1,300 would be needed to put matters right. The work was carried out by John Blundell and Peter Parr and the money was to be raised on the southern grand divisions, excepting the 'Towne of Totnes'. The Constables seem to have had great difficulty in collecting the money. Some were 'Careles in payinge', it was reported in Epiphany 1610¹⁷. It became clear that £1,300 was not sufficient to complete the work and, at Easter 1610¹⁸, an order for an additional 100 marks, which 'it is thought will hardlie end the saide Worke', was made. At Baptist 1610¹⁹, a further 20 marks was ordered to be raised and, at Epiphany 1610²⁰, it was reported that, because 'the sayde bridge was much more ruinated by reason of sudden greate waters', a further £80 was needed. An expenditure of about £1,500 over three years in the early part of the seventeenth century points to works of some magnitude.

Over the next two centuries, orders relating to this bridge indicate that it was a pretty troublesome structure. It was presented as being in need of repair on eighty-eight separate occasions and, as a general rule, sums up to £10 were spent on putting matters right. There was one rather large item of expenditure in 1675²¹, when £197 16s 10¹/₂d (£197.84) was spent on repairs. A little over £700 was spent on the bridge in 1811²².

In 1808, the newly appointed surveyor of the county bridges, James Green, inspected all of the county's 237 bridges. In a report²³ dated 10 January 1809, he noted that Teign Bridge was of two arches, about 18 feet (5.48 metres) span and 9 feet (2.75 metres) between parapets. He described two smaller bridges nearby, then the canal bridge and beyond that a causeway of twelve arches of between 9 feet (2.75 metres) and 12 feet (3.66 metres), the total extent of the bridges being about 2,000 feet (609.6 metres). The narrowness of the carriageway over the bridges and causeway meant that it and the retaining walls were constantly being repaired. He recommended that the carriageway be widened.

Green's estimate of the cost of putting all the county's bridges in a reasonable state of repair was £20,000. The magistrates considered this to be 'alarming'²⁴ and, rather gloomily one imagines, they divided the county into fifteen districts, giving the magistrates of the district power to spend up to £20 per bridge where needed and selected nine bridges in need of 'immediate and pressing Reparation' for more comprehensive works. The estimated cost of this work was £5,790. 7s. 1¹/₂d (£5,790.36) and a rate to raise this sum was made. Magistrates were also given the power to contract for bridgeworks in their districts according to the county surveyor's plans and specifications as approved by quarter sessions.

Teign was not one of the nine but, at Epiphany 1813²⁵ the court ordered that a sum not exceeding £1,000 be laid out in the repair of the bridge and that tenders

for the work should be delivered by 23 February 1813. There is no doubt that the county surveyor intended to tender for the work and for similar work to Chudleigh Bridge. He had more or less completed his contract for the reconstruction of Cowley Bridge in Exeter and a further two schemes would have provided useful continuity of employment. Possibly he would have been able to do the work for the estimate: it was his estimate, anyway. But the magistrates had become concerned about the propriety of a paid official contracting to carry out works for his employers and had made an order banning the practice²⁷. An obviously choked James Green wrote to the magistrates²⁸ pointing out that his salary of £400 per annum was not 'equal to their (his family's) support' and that he felt assured that the magistrates would not wish him 'to sit down at a time when (he) ought to be doing something for a young and increasing family besides barely supporting them'. Sympathetically the magistrates raised his salary to £550 per annum. This exchange must have delayed matters and it was not until 1 February 1815 that a contract for building a bridge of ashlar of 50 feet (15.24 metres) was let to Gregory Weatherdon of 'Newton Bushell in the County of Devon Builder'²⁹ in the sum of £1,426. 13s. 4d. (£1,426.66). Chudleigh Bridge, very similar in construction but of 60 feet (18.28 metres) span, was let to Edward Taylor.³⁰

Work on both schemes got off to a slow start. By midsummer 1815 the court advised the bridge committee to withhold payments to the contractors for this and Chudleigh Bridge until the county surveyor had reported on progress. In his report Green stated that 'there had been some Deviation from the original Plan' and the contractor had made a claim for extra payment.³¹ There, apart from the matter of the extra payment, the matter might have ended but for the interest of Thomas Taylor, one of the district magistrates. Taylor, considering it to be 'his duty as a justice, resident within four miles of the spot, to pay particular attention to ... progress' on the bridgeworks, recorded certain discoveries during the works and published them in the form of a paper which was read to the Society of Antiquaries on 5 March 1818, the paper being subsequently published in its *Journal* in 1821.³²

At Epiphany 1816³³ it was reported that, because of obstruction of the course of the river in May and June 1815, surrounding land had been flooded and the owners were claiming compensation. The court's first reaction was that this was the contractor's responsibility but the magistrates seem to have relented and appointed three of their number to examine and settle any claims. Weatherdon, the contractor, persisted in his claim for extra payment to compensate him for his losses caused by delays when the discoveries reported by Taylor were investigated. Again the magistrates seem to have acted reasonably and, at Easter 1817³⁴, he was allowed the sum of £660 over and above the contract figure.

During the rest of the century two further items of major expenditure feature in the Order Book for this complex of bridges. In 1848³⁵ one of the arches of the causeway collapsed and had to be rebuilt at a cost of £137. Early in 1854³⁶ the bridge over the Stover Canal was badly damaged during flooding and the repair of the damage cost £174. 12s. 9d. (£174.64). But Green's bridge remained trouble free as did most, but not all, of his other schemes.

To get back to Taylor's discoveries. In his paper he described the existing bridge (the one that existed before the works started) as a two span structure, 'built of grey limestone in a very rough manner'. A sketch accompanying the paper shows that the arches were roughly three centred and that they sprung from the spring-

ings of an earlier bridge. Taylor refers to this earlier bridge as the 'red bridge' and states that it was built of a 'hard red sandstone' from Bishopsteignton and was a 'work executed with great care'. The arches were built in two orders, the lower order being 20 inches (508 mm) deep and dressed 3 to 5 inches (76 to 127 mm) thick and the upper order being 17 inches (432 mm) deep and oversailing the lower by two inches (51 mm). The arches were pointed in shape being fairly flat with a span of 20 feet (6 metres) and a rise of 5 feet (1.5 metres). There were five spans: the two southern forming the foundations of the grey bridge, the middle being demolished so that the foundation of Green's new bridge could be excavated and two northern were, and still are one imagines, under the present road.

The excavation for the south abutment of the present bridge was through the invert of the existing bridge and, at a depth of about 16 feet (4.87 metres) below bank level on a bed of gravel and stones, was discovered a framework of oak baulks. The frame was rhomboid in shape, the centre member being 17 to 24 inches (432 to 610 mm) square and 23 feet (7 metres) in length and the side members about 12 inches (305 mm) square. The holes where upright timbers were morticed into the frames were visible. When excavating for the northern arch of the present bridge similar timbers but framed into a different pattern were discovered at the same level as the first. Taylor surmised that these timber frames were the bases of a timber trestle bridge. As excavation for the northern abutment continued the piers of another bridge were discovered. These were rhomboid in shape and built of 'fine white free-stone' ashlar. The clear span between these piers was slightly more than the span of the red bridge arches, say 21 feet (6.40 metres), and their depth about 8 feet (2.44 metres). No ground was excavated north of the centre arch of the red bridge; if it had been, further evidence of the white bridge might have been found. Referring to the 'causeway', Taylor stated that '840 feet of it were rebuilt and widened about six years since'. Taylor concluded his paper by speculating on the age of the four bridges, the existing grey bridge he supposed to have been built in the sixteenth century, the red bridge in the thirteenth century and the timber bridge to be 'as old as the Conquest'. The white stone bridge was a Roman work and part of the Fosse Way 'connecting the chain of fortified camps which extend along the coast'.

In July 1884 at Newton Abbot, James Bridge Davidson read a paper³⁷ on 'Teign Bridge to the Devonshire Association. Apart from a dissertation on the derivation of parish and hundred names including 'bridge', the paper is a critical appraisal of Taylor's assumptions. He agrees that the lowest bridge of which the white ashlar piers remain is 'the unquestionable remains of Roman architecture'. He puts the timber bridge at 1084 when, he states, the hundred court was moved from 'Taintona' (Kingsteignton) to 'Tanebrige' (Teign Bridge). He stated in a footnote to his paper that the mortices referred to by Taylor may have been for the uprights to carry a roof for the shelter of the assembled court which seems to indicate that Davidson thought the timbers were at deck, rather than base, level. The red bridge, he states, is 'fixed' at 1434 on the basis of Oliver's translation of Bishop Lacy's registers³⁸, that is, the granting of indulgences to penitents contributing to 'the building or repairing of Teignbridge'. Davidson accepts that Taylor's supposition that the grey stone bridge could be sixteenth century but suggests, on the basis of an average life of the bridges of 243 years, it may have been a seventeenth century structure.

Commander and Mrs Woolner looked at the problem of the origin of the white bridge from a different angle. They stated, in the introduction to a paper¹ giving the results of their research, that 'As a bridge cannot reasonably be studied apart from the road crossing it, and in view of the practical impossibility of studying the foundations of the actual bridge,' their enquiry had been focused on the road. The section of road they studied was from the A38 and A380 junction at Splatford to Teign Bridge and on this length they found ample evidence of agger (Roman road pavement construction). The plotting of the survey showed that the general trend was south westerly and all comparatively recent alterations to this route were to obtain easier gradients. As to the choice of Teign Bridge as a suitable crossing location, they rightly point out that to cross further upstream would have meant crossing various tributaries of the Teign (Ventiford, Bovey, etc), and that there is an island of firm ground midway across the valley of which the road builders took advantage. In their conclusion, the Woolners wrote:

As the design and construction of a road such as we have described is not consonant with mediaeval practice we are led naturally to the conclusion that the road over Great Haldon and down to Teignbridge is of Roman origin, and that the earliest foundations of Teignbridge are, therefore, almost certainly Roman also.

The road at Splatford would have come from Exeter so that there seems to have been a Roman road from the southern gate of the Roman legionary fortress at Exeter, over the Exe by a bridge and on over Haldon to the bridge at Teigngrace. There cannot be any doubt that the Romans built the bridge of white ashlar found by Taylor. It was one of two types of Roman construction² used in Britain and, in any case, at the lower depth preceded the timber and 'red' bridge. Whether or not it was part of the Fosse Way, as Taylor suggested, is a matter for conjecture.

At some time after the white bridge was built, the deposit of alluvium carried down by the river raised the level of the bed by about 5 feet (1.5 metres). The white bridge would then be of no use and would have to be replaced by a bridge at a higher level. The morticed timbers recorded by Taylor show that the replacement bridge was a timber trestle structure but do not give any clue as to when, between the demise of the white bridge and the building of the red bridge, it was built. It could have been as early as the Anglo-Saxon Conquest. The Saxons were good carpenters and certainly made use of mortice and tenon joints. The oak base found at Teign Bridge was identical to one found in a pier of the Long Bridge at Bideford when it was being widened in 1925, and Whiting, in a paper read at Bideford in 1948³, said, without giving reasons for his statement, that a timber bridge had preceded the existing Long Bridge by 200 years, that is, since the middle of the thirteenth century. The timber in the superstructure of trestle bridges has, by its nature, to be replaced at regular intervals although good hardwoods have been preserved in a moist condition below ground level for millennia.⁴ It is probably true to say that a timber trestle bridge succeeded the white bridge between the Anglo Saxon and Norman Conquests and that the base recorded by Taylor could have been installed around the date of the Norman Conquest but could have been earlier. What a shame radio-carbon dating had not been invented in Taylor's day!

The medieval Church, as a major landowner and obliged under the threefold burden of *trinodas necessitas* to build and maintain bridges, was aware that it made good economic sense to replace timber trestle bridges with more permanent

masonry structures. Bishop Lacy seems to have been more aware than most and he was the prime mover of much of this replacement work in his diocese. Bishop Stafford's bequest of 1412 and Lacy's grants of indulgences of 1434 and 1438 indicate that the timber Teign Bridge needed a lot of attention and his grant of indulgences of 1452 for 'building' rather than 'repair' shows that he had grasped the nettle and decided on a masonry bridge. Taylor's description of the red bridge as a 'work executed with great care' and the use of arches in two orders point to a pre-Reformation structure. The rather flat shape of the pointed arches is one that tended to be used in the latter half of the fifteenth and the first half of the sixteenth centuries. This, then, is Lacy's bridge built during or a little after 1452.

The 'grey' bridge was not really a new bridge but an adaptation of the red bridge. It seems curious that the area of waterway of this two span bridge was less than that of the five span red bridge but, very probably, it was decided to contain the Teign in a narrow channel rather than to allow it to spread over the meadows. The technique of turning a new arch on the springings of a previous one to increase the freeboard as done with the 'grey' bridge was used on Plym Bridge near Plympton in 1618⁵ and tends to confirm that the grey bridge was built early in the seventeenth century. Taylor stated that the bridge was built in 'a very rough manner' and, indeed, the standard of workmanship for a century or so after the Reformation was poor. As stated previously, about £1,500 was spent on the bridge between 1608 and 1610, a much greater sum than any spent between 1600 and the end of the eighteenth century. Very probably the work carried out for this sum included the 'grey' bridge alterations and the building of arches further north of the bridge to form a causeway. When built these arches formed unconnected structures, a continuous parapet being built by Green in 1811 at a cost of £700. The three centred shape of some of the arches that exist today is the same as that of the 'grey' bridge and undoubtedly these were built at the same time. The others, segmental in shape, are early nineteenth century work.

The small bridge over the remains of the Stover Canal was built in 1798 as part of the canal project. The canal was built as a private venture by James Templer of Stover House in Teigngrace, his engineer being Thomas Cray, surveyor to Exeter Corporation, and the bridge was probably designed by him. The symbolism of the decorated keystones is obscure. The man's head is similar to heads used on keystones elsewhere and could depict Neptune. But why a goat's head?⁶ The Templers favoured projecting keystones, and two bridges on the estate have this feature as well as Stover Bridge built by the Newton Bushell Turnpike Trust in 1773. There was a tablet, inscribed with the names of local magistrates⁷, built into the outside of the northerly parapet until quite recently (November 1995). This parapet was demolished in an accident and the tablet badly fractured. The parapet has been rebuilt and the tablet is being repaired prior to being incorporated once more in the bridge.⁸

Notes and References

1. Devon Record Office (hereafter DRO) Bridge Plan Books 3 volumes
2. Chope, R. Pearse, 1926-7. Early Bridges etc. *Devon & Cornwall Notes & Queries (thereafter DCNQ)*, XIV, p 94



Keystone on northerly face of bridge over Stover Canal



Keystone on southerly face of bridge over Stover Canal

3. Dunstan, G R (ed), 1963. *The Register of Edmund Lacy Bishop of Exeter Vol I*. Devon & Cornwall Record Society (hereafter DCRS), p 289
4. Dunstan, G R (ed), 1966. *The Register of Edmund Lacy Bishop of Exeter Vol II*. DCRS, p 116
5. Dunstan, G R (ed), 1968. *The Register of Edmund Lacy Bishop of Exeter Vol III*. DCRS, p 159
6. Chope, R Pearse (ed), 1967 *The Itinerary of John Leland the Antiquary 1534-43. Early Tours in Devon and Cornwall* David & Charles, Newton Abbot, p 68
7. Westcote, Thomas, 1630. *A View of Devonshire in MDCXXX*. Edited by Rev George Oliver DD and Pitman Jones Esq. William Roberts, Exeter, p 442
8. Risdon, Tristan, 1640 *The Chorological Description or Survey of the County of Devon*. Made in 1640 and first printed in 1714. Edition of 1811, p 142
9. *John Ogilby's Road Maps of Devon & Cornwall*. First Published 1675. Reproduced by A Wheaton & Co Ltd, 1984. Devon Books, Exeter
10. Benjamin Donn. *A Map of the County of Devon, 1765*. Reprinted in Facsimile, 1965. DCRS and the University of Exeter
11. *The Old Series Ordnance Survey Maps of England and Wales*. Vol II Devon, Cornwall & Somerset, 1809. Reproduction, 1977. Harry Margery, Lympne Castle
12. & 13. DRO Ref 1/1
14. & 15. DRO Ref 1/2
16. - 20. DRO Ref 1/3
21. DRO Ref 1/11
22. - 24. DRO Ref 1/23
25. - 27. DRO Ref 1/24

28. DRO Ref A.10/354/127
29. & 30. DRO Ref 1/24
31. Taylor, P T, 1818. *An Account of Some Discoveries in taking down the old Bridge over the River Teign, etc. Archaeologia XIX 1821*. The Society of Antiquaries pp 308 - 313
32. & 33. DRO Ref 1/24
34. & 35. DRO Ref 1/30
36. Davidson, James Bridge, 1884. *Remarks on Old Teign Bridge. Transactions of the Devonshire Association XVI*, pp 444 - 452
37. Oliver, Rev George, 1840. *Ecclesiastical Antiquities in Devon Vol I*. W C Featherstone, Exeter, p 178
38. Woolner, Diana & Alexander, 1954. *Teignbridge and the Haldon Road. Transactions of the Devonshire Association, LXXXVI*, pp 211 - 227
39. The other type of Roman bridge in Britain had masonry piers instead of timber trestles. In appearance these would have been similar to Oakfordbridge, over the Exe north of Tiverton, before it was redecked in concrete by Devon County Council.
40. Whiting, F E, 1948. *Bideford Bridge. Transactions of the Devonshire Association, LXXX*, pp 129 - 136
41. Timber of a Bronze Age boat, about 3,000 years old, was discovered in 1992 during excavations for an underpass in Beach Street, Dover
42. Thomas, D I. B, 1992. *The Chronology of Devon's Bridges. Transactions of the Devonshire Association, CXXIV*, p 197
43. Rialto Bridge in Venice has a keystone with a similar man's head as does John Gwynne's English Bridge in Shrewsbury and his Magdalene Bridge in Oxford. The Honorary Editor has suggested that there may be some connection between the goat's head and the Cordwainer's company who, she believed, used goatskins in the making of fine leather and shoes.
44. Harris, Helen, 1994. *The Haytor Granite Tramway and Stover Canal*, Peninsula Press, Newton Abbot. p 54
45. I am indebted to the Devon County Bridge Manager, Mr Colin Hatherley, for this information.

TOPSHAM FORT

Sadru Bhanji

Many Topsham residents believe that there was a fort in their town during the Civil Wars of 1642-1651, although it is not listed among those known to archaeologists.¹ This paper reviews the archive and published evidence.

Instructions issued in January 1642/3 for the defence of Exeter, then in parliamentary hands, included making the nearby port of Topsham on the River Exe secure from attack.² A ship, the *Diligence*, had been hired in December 1642 for the protection of Topsham harbour, but no record survives of any land defences. Within weeks, Exeter was under siege and Topsham had been occupied by the Royalists. The first known reference to a possible fort in this town occurs in connection with the Earl of Warwick's attempt in July 1643 to relieve Exeter by sailing up the River Exe and landing men at Topsham.

A letter purportedly by an Exeter resident, I.S., and dated 3 August 1643 reported that after its arrival near Apsom (Topsham) Warwick's force demolished a fort and killed sixty or seventy of the enemy.³ In 1920, Stone drew attention to the letter and asked where the fort might have been.⁴ Responding, Holman suggested three possible positions for a fort at Topsham during the Civil War: on the Greenland mud-flat off Turf, on the Strand below Mount Howe, and on what was in 1920 the upper garden of Follett Lodge. Although the last site commands a good view of the river and he knew of cannon balls found there, Holman opted for the fort being below Mount Howe.⁵

The title page of the tract publicizing the letter by I.S. mentions Warwick arriving 'at a place called Apsom' and sending the high sheriff a demand to raise the county in his support. When this was refused, 'the Earl sent 3 or 4 small Ships, who battered down a Fort where the Cavaleirs harboured, to the ground, and slew 60 or 70 of them.' The text deals in the main with other matters, but the relevant passage reads as follows:

The Earle of Warwicke at his arrivall nere our Castle at Apsom, sent a message to the high Sheriffe, commanding him to raise the Country upon the posse Comitatus, that thereby he might land men and ordnance, commanding him in the name of King and parliament to assist him to keepe the peace of the County, but the Sherrife obstinately refused it, saying hee had a Proclamation from his Majestie to the contrary: then my Lord sent three or foure small ships which battered downe a great Fort levelled to the ground where the Cavalleres harboured, but left their freehold, as the Cavalleres terme it, with the losse of sixty of seventy of them slaine:

There are other contemporary tracts which refer to Warwick's presence around the mouth of the Exe. The title of one proclaims a letter from the earl in which is described the taking of forts and ordnance from the Royalist Cornishmen who had besieged the city of Exeter. The text provides little amplification of the title, the major theme being Warwick's lack of ships and victuals. The letter, from aboard the *Swift-sure* at Topsham-Bar and dated 19 July 1643, begins:

I Have received Yours of the 11. of this Moneth, and am now in such haste, as I cannot say much to you: I am here at Topsham Barre, and have begun by Gods

blessing well yesterday, having taken all the Forts on both sides the River, and Sixteen Peece of Ordnance, and now have sent up some small Ships to secure the River, with Eight Hundred Land and Sea-men, I hope this day, if the rain hinder not, to give a good push to the Businesse I came for:⁶

A newsletter published on 7 August 1643 gave a different version of events, but still from a stance which favoured Parliament. It was reported that Warwick's soldiers and seamen had taken Exmouth, but had been driven out and a fort re-occupied. His ships were then fired upon and one or two frigates were sunk. This reversal of fortune was said to have been due to local Royalists spreading false reports that Warwick's men were a foreign enemy. Hearing this, men flocked from the surrounding countryside and ousted the Parliamentary forces.⁷ This could have been an engagement of his which Warwick chose not to mention, but appears more likely to be describing the repelling of the force led by his subordinate, Captain Robert Moulton during the previous month. On 28 June, Moulton had sent three ships into the Exe. After some successes, a combination of an inclement wind and an ebbing tide trapped them against Exmouth bar. They were then fired at by Royalist guns placed at Exmouth and Starcross.⁸

Warwick's fleet was routed when it reached Topsham, three of the four ships being lost. The Royalists had sunk boats in the river to obstruct the progress of the Parliamentary ships, which then ran aground as the tide ebbed and were bombarded from temporary gun emplacements on the shore. First-hand accounts of the engagement do not make any mention of a fort, nor does a newsletter report based on these.⁹ More general contemporary descriptions of the Royalist and Parliamentary campaigns in the Westcountry likewise made no comment on a fort or castle at Topsham.¹⁰ Fortified buildings were, however, described at Exmouth and Powderham. Powderham Castle was held by the Royalists, but was not to surrender until January 1645/6. Exmouth Fort fell to Parliament in March 1645/6, and had been strong enough to withstand a siege lasting for over six weeks.¹¹ In an account published sixty years after the event, Clarendon described Warwick's ships sailing up the Exe and being fired upon by the Royalist defenders for some three or four hours from improvised gun emplacements. There is no mention of a fort. In his classic history of the Civil War, Gardiner devoted only a sentence to the incident, referring neither to Topsham nor a fort.¹²

A number of parishes border onto the Exe estuary and the sea either side of its mouth, and Clyst St. George lies but a short distance away along a major tributary. Clyst St. George, Dawlish, East Budleigh, Exminster, Littleham, Powderham, Topsham, Withycombe Raleigh and Woodbury all commenced their registers before the Civil War,¹³ but the first entries for Lymstone and Kenton were not to be until 1654 and 1694 respectively. Unfortunately, neither the register nor the episcopal return for Powderham contain any burial entries for 1640-1652.¹⁴ The Clyst St. George registers were damaged severely during the Second World War, but a transcription exists.¹⁵

During the month beginning 15 July 1643 the burials of fourteen men were recorded within the eight estuary parishes for which data are available. Only five male burials had been recorded during the previous two months. This was a statistically significant reverse of the overall trend during the corresponding three months in 1641, 1642, 1644 and 1645.¹⁶ The increase in the male burial rate during the month after Warwick's arrival in the vicinity was due to more burials than usual

occurring in Topsham and Dawlish (four in each). The increased male death rate in Topsham cannot be explained solely on the basis of sudden carnage in mid-July 1643. There was a rise in both male and female deaths which reached its peak in the autumn of 1643 and lasted until March 1643/4. The rise in Dawlish was an isolated event, and is in keeping with the skirmishing following the arrival of the Parliamentary fleet.

Military burials of non-parishioners would not always be recorded in the register. An alternative reflection of any loss of life is the number of wounded. At the Quarter Sessions held at Topsham in August 1643 only four men were awarded a maimed soldier's pension for their part in defending the town. Three were from Ottery St Mary and one from Bradninch.¹

Churchwardens' records for 1643 have survived for Clyst St George, Littleham and Woodbury.² The Littleham expenditure for 1643 included 22 shillings spent on a sword, musket, bandolier and rest, and ninepence on having the parish musket brought from Ottery St Mary. There is no other reference to any war-like activity. Topsham accounts exist from 1738, and mention gravel being collected from 'ye Fort' in 1743.³ However, this could have been Exmouth fort. Its site is marked on eighteenth century maps of the Exe estuary whereas no fort is shown at Topsham.⁴ The mention of gravel is consistent with a Civil War description of Exmouth fort being built on sand.⁵

Milles carried out an historical survey of the Devon parishes in around 1755.⁶ Information on a number of matters, including local ancient castles and significant historical events, was sought by postal questionnaire. Regrettably, none were returned by the incumbents of Clyst St. George, Exminster, Lymptone, or Topsham. The respondent from Powderham referred Milles to Brice's account of the Civil War siege of Powderham Castle,⁷ but otherwise there was no report of any standing or ruined fort or castle on the Exe estuary.

There are a number of accounts of the topography and history of Devon before the Civil War. Describing the River Exe, Leland mentioned a castle at Powderham and the ruins of a battlemented manor-house at Exminster, but no fortification at Topsham.⁸ In 1599, Hooker listed the Devon castles and forts as those at Exeter, Powderham, Dartmouth, Totnes, Plympton, Mount Edgecombe, Barnstaple, Lydford, Woodbury, Nutwell, Hemyock, Cadbury and Torrington.⁹ Discussing the defences of England in 1600, Thomas Wilson stated that many castles had either fallen into ruin or had been converted to dwellings. Some were being maintained as defences against Spain, but the only such castles listed in Devon were those at Plymouth and Dartmouth.¹⁰ Similarly, the sole fort or castle in Devon thought worthy of note by an anonymous army officer who toured the west of England in 1635 was Exeter Castle.¹¹ Risdon, whose survey was compiled between 1605 and 1630, referred to Exmouth once having had a castle but now no defence other than a barred haven and the inhabitants' valour. Regarding fortification higher up the Exe estuary, he stated that Nutwell Court was at one time a castle but had been remodelled as an attractive dwelling house.¹² Writing at around the same time as Risdon, Westcote and Pole described Powderham Castle and Nutwell Court, but like him made no mention of any fort at Topsham.¹³ Finally, on 13 August 1642, nine days before Charles I raised his standard at Nottingham, a letter was published listing 'Apsom', Trignmouth, Dartmouth and Plymouth as 'places of strength' in Devon with men loyal to the king. However, despite the title of the tract it is not clear whether fortifi-

cations had been erected in all these towns.¹⁴

As far as later Devon histories are concerned, the letter by I.S. was cited by the Lysons brothers, when they wrote in an influential history of Devon that the Earl of Warwick battered down a fort at 'Apsom' during the Civil War and killed seventy or eighty men.¹⁵ Although not acknowledged, it would appear also to be the basis for Worth's later statement that the Earl of Warwick had destroyed a Royalist-built fort at Topsham, with sixty or seventy defenders being slain.¹⁶ A different version was given by Lewis, but again with no reference to the source. He wrote that the Earl of Warwick brought some ships up the Exe during the Civil War and captured a small fort at Topsham. Confusing the defending commander, Sir John Berkeley with his later adversary, he added that as the tide fell the ships were then taken or burnt by Fairfax.¹⁷ By contrast, no account of any attack on a fort at Topsham during the Civil War occurs in the works of Brice, Polwhele, Moore, or latterly Hoskins.¹⁸ Jenkins' history of Exeter contains an account of Warwick's invasion similar to that provided by Clarendon, and without specific reference to either Topsham or a fort.¹⁹ The Victoria History of Devon has not been continued beyond the first volume. The intended chapter on Devon's maritime history does not refer to a fort or castle at Topsham.²⁰ Erskine, in a recent account of the coastal defences of Devon, mentions the Earl of Warwick destroying a fort at Topsham. Tracing back from the cited sources leads to I.S.'s letter.²¹

The case for a fort or castle at Topsham during the Civil War would seem to rest in two contemporary letters from I.S. and from the Earl of Warwick. However, the title page of the tract containing the letter from I.S. does not state unambiguously that the destroyed fort was at Apsom. Moreover, in the text the idiosyncracies of seventeenth century punctuation permit two interpretations of 'neere our castle at Apsom': - near to our castle which is at Apsom; or - at Apsom, which is near to our castle. Warwick wrote from a place he called Topsham Bar. There is, as Moulton found to his cost, a sand bar opposite Exmouth which restricts passage in and out of the river, but no such barrier has been known at Topsham. It is likely, therefore, that the Earl was off Exmouth and that the forts he took were those which had bombarded Moulton's ships. Warwick's reference to Topsham Bar is understandable, as in his time Exmouth was no more than an insignificant fishing hamlet whereas Topsham was a major port. Historical confusion between Topsham and Exmouth is not uncommon, but usually exaggerates the importance of the latter.

The opinion that there was a castle or fort at Topsham at the time of the Civil War appears to derive from sources which have been misunderstood and cannot be corroborated with any certainty. By present standards, it is difficult to congratulate I.S. on his charity. On the other hand, credit may be deserved for producing a piece of propaganda which still has influence three and a half centuries later.

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DEVON'S PLACE IN THE ART OF CHURCH BELL-RINGING

John Sage

The craft of bell-founding is certainly a very ancient one, and early monks probably had an influence on the use of bells, hanging them in church towers as early as 750 A.D.¹ Possibly the oldest church bell in England which is dated is one in Yorkshire, with Roman numerals MCCLIII.² The earliest recorded founder was operating in 1236.³ A national survey recorded details of numbers of church bells in towers in England in 1553, and Devon's bells were listed by the Rev. H.T. Ellacombe, who visited most towers around 1860,⁴ and by Charles Pearson in 1888. A study of bell castings and their inscriptions reveals much of the founders' individual handiwork, as with those of other ancient trades, such as mason's marks. Very early bells would have had a wooden shaft attached to the headstock carrying the bell, enabling it to be rocked sufficiently to make its clapper strike. A quarter wheel, then a half wheel, and eventually a full wheel were developed, progressively improving the control up to today's high standard. The peculiarly English way of ringing church bells to changes soon followed on from the full circle wheel control, and only a few places abroad have adopted the English system as distinct from playing bells to tunes.

Early bell-founders cast their bells near to the church needing them, or at the tower base as at St. Mary Major, the small church (now demolished) that stood to the west of Exeter Cathedral, as revealed by excavations in 1970. Today, we have only two main bell-foundries, the Whitechapel foundry in London, and that of John Taylor & Co. at Loughborough, both of which agree that modern methods of casting differ very little from those used centuries ago. The area which has seen great improvements in our electronic age is that of tuning the already cast bell. At the foundry a CORE is built on a base with brick and loam, very precisely shaped with a centrally pivoted 'strickle' and then highly polished and baked; this gives the required inside shape. An outer casing is used to contain the moulded outside shape, and any required foundry markings and inscriptions are prepared in reverse on the inside of this polished COPE, which is placed over the core and well clamped. The glowing white hot molten metal, of 77% copper and 23% tin, is run from the furnace into a huge ladle hanging from a gantry. This is moved toward the moulds, and the molten metal poured into them. Days elapse to allow cooling before removal. Each newly cast bell will be clamped upside down on the tuning stand and a cutter used to shim off metal from the inside face until the partial tones and the fundamentals are all perfect. A headstock is cast, to which the bell and its clapper will later be bolted. This has flanges for bolting on the wheel, a cast socket to receive the stay - which will be used as a rest to hold the bell upside down just over the balance when hung, and gudgeons welded for pivoting in the bearings. Modern headstocks are arched for the heavier bells, so that some of the weight will be above the pivot point. Side frames are cast, wooden wheels, pulley boxes, and stays made in the carpenters shop, and, if for a complete ring, everything is assembled at the foundry prior to delivery.

The bellhanger's task in the tower is not an easy one, often he has to work in a

very confined space, dealing with heavy and valuable bells and their gear. Mr Harry Stokes, of Woodbury, carried out much work in Devon's towers around 1900, installing new frames and repairing others in oak, and much of his craftsmanship still exists.

Learning how to ring a church bell under instruction from an experienced ringer may take only a few lessons, but to be able to be in complete command of the precise timing of the strike on both sides of the bell's swing requires patience, dedication, and some determination. The main point at which control is achieved is when the bell just passes top-dead-centre, drawing the rope tight, momentarily to be held in that position until pulled off again at split second timing, and with the precise effort required to reach the same point of balance at the next mouth-up position. The art can only be learnt by persistent practice and personal experience. Having mastered the physical handling, the mental work of ringing changes can now be attempted, and in Devon we have two ringing organisations, with slightly different objectives but being mainly complementary. The Devon Association of Call Change Ringers only alters the sequence of the striking bells as and when a conductor calls a specific change, and the bells remain in that order until another change is called. This enables each of the band to concentrate entirely on the precise strike point of the bell, and the standard reached is very high indeed. To some ears this can become monotonous. The Guild of Devonshire Ringers was formed in 1874, and was one of the very early guilds formed in the country to ring by 'method', a system which was developed in the seventeenth century to vary changes continuously, made possible by the whole wheel control of the swinging bell.

A beginner will progress from 'rounds', the bells striking in sequence from the smallest highest pitched bell called the treble, to the largest, the tenor; then to 'plain hunting', when the bells change relative positions at each strike with the odd numbered bells moving upwards towards the back and last in sequence, and the even numbered bells moving downwards towards the lead to take their places.

Having achieved a reasonable standard at this, the next step is to learn a simple method such as 'Plain Bob'. The basic rule of this method is that the bell which is turned from the leading position by the treble strikes at 'sally', and end rope after her, and then leads again. This has the effect of blocking the path of the next descending bell, and so to avoid repetition this bell steps backwards for one blow before coming in to lead a whole pull later. Similarly others following do the same. The other bells on their upward path also step back before proceeding on their original course, and so a 'dodge' takes place between each pair above the seconds place bell. With five changing bells only forty changes can be obtained with the basic principle, and so it is necessary to introduce 'BOBS' called by a conductor, which have the effect of introducing a fourths place 'Lie' instead of the seconds place lie as above; in order to achieve all the necessary changes to ring the 'extent'. This term is used for the maximum number of bells, e.g. with 3 bells 6 only, with 4-24, with 5-120, with 6-720, with 7-5040, and with 8-40320. This latter was a target aimed at for many years. It was finally achieved at Loughborough bell-foundry on 27 and 28 July 1963 by eight men ringing continuously from 6.52 a.m. on the 27th to 12.50 1/2 a.m. on the 28th; listened to and checked all the time by four umpires. Method ringing is certainly not a matter of learning a lot of figures, but rather of complying with certain rules or signposts, and these are progressively noticed and adhered to, each ringer in the band obeying the same conditions but at different times.

Early in the Second World War on 13 June 1940, a ban was imposed on the ringing of church bells because it was felt that no better warning system could be devised than their use as a signal of the landing of enemy forces. This ban was lifted for a few hours on 15 November 1942, to celebrate the victory at El Alamein, and also for one hour on Christmas Day of that year; and then finally lifted on 27 May 1943. However, due to a very real threat, and some communication misunderstandings, a few bells did ring out during the night of 8 September 1940 from some Westcountry towers.

The 1553 survey of church bells records that Luppitt then had 'i i j bellcs yn the tower their', and Rev. H.T.Ellacombe, then rector of Clyst St. George, has given us details of the four here at his visit on 11 May 1865. The oldest two, treble and third, are referred to as 'Jesus' bells because of the inscription they both carry '*Est michi collatum ihe istud nomen amatum*' translated as 'there has been conferred on me that beloved name Jesus'. They are not dated as were many early castings, but are thought to be of about 1450. The second bears a casting date of 1774, and the lovely toned tenor of 10% cwt. in F sharp with the inscription '*Ate Maria Gratia Plenia*' is considered to date from about 1550. Its founder, a much better craftsman than scholar, has also identified himself with '*NOSMESREGOREMIB*' set in the casting in reverse with the letters E.R. and S., all backwards. The arrival of the curate of Uffculme to become Vicar of Luppitt in 1927 was the inspiration which led to a complete restoration of Luppitt's ring of bells. The Rev. J.F. Prowse was a very keen bellringer and two new trebles were added and all six hung in a new cast and steel frame by John Taylor & Co., dedicated on 19 November 1928. Several teenage boys were taught to ring and method ringing was introduced. After duties at Exwick, in Exeter, and at Upottery, Mr Prowse returned to Luppitt in 1958 for a second spell of about ten years as our vicar and we set about the task of another augmentation to a complete octave. The purchase of a modern bell of 7% cwt. was a step in providing metal, and the collection and sale of waste paper, cardboard, baler string, paper feeding stuffs bags, etc. from local farmers contributed to eventual success by the band, who were able to build the extra two pits and to hang the new bells themselves. This entailed the transfer of the 1928 bells to the new pits, and then putting the 1974 bells in their places to get the rope circle correct. The new bells were dedicated at a special service on 30 November, 1974. From photographs available a record of nearly sixty slides was built up concerning 'Operation Octave'.

As distinct from ringing church bells, when the bell swings a full circle each way, the 'chiming' of bells indicates that the bell is either simply rocked to make the clapper strike, or remains stationary, mouth down, but is struck by an independent hammer, a ball of metal pivoted on an arm, manually operated by a separate rope, or by some electrically operated automatic system, as at the 'Oranges and Lemons' church of St. Clement Danes in London, where the hammer is outside and clear of the swinging bell. The rope and lever system such as we have in Luppitt tower was devised by the Rev. H.T.Ellacombe and is operated from the base of the tower. The mechanism allows each rope to be wound up and held by a ratchet, thereby pivoting the hammer upwards inside the mouth and just clear of the soundbow of the bell. When each is adjusted evenly the operator can pull the ropes in any desired order, merely to strike changes, or to play any of over fifty hymn tunes available on the octave. This ratchet must always be released so as to prevent damage to a swinging bell.

A Bellringer's Guide gives an up-to-date and very comprehensive list of nearly 6000 rings of bells, with much information about them. Devon has 368 rings of five or more, containing a total of nearly 2400 bells, to which must be added those with four or fewer bells. Only three other counties in Britain have more than 200 rings.

Details of the bells of Exeter Cathedral, with their names, use, and history, have been given by the Rev. J.Scott, 'Grandison' the full circle swinging tenor being of 3 tons 12% cwt.

So why do we ring church bells? And why over the centuries has so much money and care been spent on them? Towers and spires were erected to point the human soul upwards to its Creator and Redeemer, and before the days of clock and watches, the sound of the joyous bells conveyed their message 'Come and join us in worship'. They still do. Most brides enjoy their sound on their special happy day, but at times they have also conveyed to listeners a sad message in the ringing of the 'death bell', indicating the age of the deceased and whether male or female. At funeral and memorial services some families prefer to have the bells half-muffled. This is done by tying a leather pad to one side of the clapper bell, giving the effect of an echo sound following the open side; others prefer the bells' normal open sound as proclaiming not defeat but of victory over death. To some, ringing bells is a fascinating hobby, and change ringing by method presents an open-ended challenge which can be taken just as far as an individual desires and is able to go. But it should always be remembered that these expensive musical instruments are provided and maintained for one main purpose, that of the Glory of God.

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BARNSTAPLE'S ROYAL VISIT

Elizabeth Hammett

On a summer's day in June 1645 Prince Charles, fifteen-year-old heir to the throne, rode into the thriving town of Barnstaple in north Devon. But this was no ordinary royal visit, for the country was in the third year of civil war and the prince had recently been appointed by his father, King Charles I, 'First Captain-General of all our Forces'. The prince was accompanied by his tutor, his governor, Lord Hopton and three troops of Lord Hopton's Horse. Also with him were various members of his Council, the most important of whom was Sir Edward Hyde, later Lord Clarendon.¹

The prince was tall with long dark hair, his tutor, the Bishop of Salisbury, said he had a 'gentle and sweet disposition'. The party had come to Barnstaple to escape the plague which was present in their previous headquarters at Bristol. Although the town was strongly in favour of Parliament it had been held by the Royalists since the previous September. It is unlikely that there was much rejoicing at the prince's visit and there are reports that some of the inhabitants were rejoicing for quite a different reason - at the news of the king's defeat in the battle of Naseby. News of this defeat, which took place on 14 June, probably reached the royal party about the time of their arrival in Barnstaple, and can hardly have contributed to a cheerful atmosphere.

At least there was no shortage of accommodation or provisions. One of the royal entourage was Richard Fanshawe, Secretary to the Council. His wife was with him and much later when she wrote her memoirs of these times, she said of Barnstaple that there were 'all sorts of good provision and accommodation'. She was particularly fond of mazzard (a type of cherry) pie eaten with 'their sort of cream'. Presumably this was the clotted cream which is still a tourist attraction.²

The prince stayed with a wealthy widow of royalist sympathies, Grace Beaple.³ The exact whereabouts of her house is not known, but tradition states that it was at the southern end of the High Street, possibly with its main entrance from the Quay of what was then a busy port.⁴

We know something of this house because when Grace Beaple died five years later an inventory was made which names the rooms.⁵ There was a hall, a parlour, a study, various chambers, an inner and outer kitchen, larder and a buttery. There was also a garden walk where perhaps the prince and his followers strolled and gossiped in the summer evenings. The widow must indeed have been wealthy for the inventory gives the value of her jewels and rings as £52.00 and that of 'her wearing apparell wollen and linnen' as £60.00 with money in her purse to the value of £18.00. This was what was left after her hospitality to the prince had resulted in her persecution by the triumphant parliamentarians who are said to have plundered her of goods and money to the value of £2,000, an enormous amount in those days.

Although she presumably had servants, it was reported that his hostess prepared and served the prince's food herself. She also lent him money. Long after her death when the war was over, Cromwell had died and the prince was King Charles II, Grace Beaple's daughter-in-law presented a petition to the king for reimbursement of her losses and was granted £200, 'in discharge of money lent and services rendered to the King when at Barnstaple in the County of Devon'.⁶

However, the prince and his Council were not on holiday, but at the centre of the royalist war effort in the west of England and after the defeat at Naseby the king's only hope of success lay with the west. Unfortunately, the best efforts of Sir Edward Hyde and the council

were useless against the arrogance and self-seeking ambition of the principal generals of the western armies, Sir Richard Grenville and Lord Goring. Both made themselves thoroughly unpopular amongst the local population of whatever political sympathy. According to Hyde, Lord Goring spent his time drinking and playing, leaving his undisciplined troops to plunder the countryside and terrorise the population. The appalling behaviour of 'Goring's Crew' was remembered even a hundred years later in some parts of the Westcountry.⁷ In one of the many disputes over command Sir Richard Grenville appeared before the Prince's Council at Barnstaple to petition personally to be 're-established in the command of those men he had formally levied'.⁸ Although he was an experienced commander and the focus of a certain affection and loyalty from his own, mainly Cornish, troops, Grenville's subsequent independent behaviour was more of a hindrance than a help to the royalist cause.

At some time during their stay in the town, the prince and his Council were visited by the prince's cousin and the king's Lieutenant General, Prince Rupert. He was at Barnstaple on 28 June, but soon left to return to Bristol to prepare the city for withstanding a siege.⁹

As well as discussing matters of strategy in the west, there were constant letters being sent to and from the king and his advisers, who were then at Raglan Castle. There seems to have been a suggestion that the king should join his son at Barnstaple, but nothing came of it. On 23 June the king wrote to his son telling him that if he (the king) should at any time be taken prisoner by the rebels, 'I command you (upon my blessing) never to yield to any conditions that are dishonourable, unsafe for your person, or derogatory to regal authority, upon any consideration whatsoever, though it were for the saving of my life; ...'.¹⁰ Probably to begin with the war had seemed like an adventure to the young prince, but it was now deadly serious.

The prince stayed at Barnstaple for about a month, leaving around 9 July. A few days later Lord Goring retreated back to the town having suffered a defeat in battle at Langport. Various schemes for raising an army in the west to go to the aid of the king, or even to defend Devon and Cornwall came in the end to nothing. The prince travelled around Devon and Cornwall until, when it was obvious that the royalist armies were defeated, he left for the Isles of Scilly in March 1646. He would not return to England until he was restored to the throne in 1660.

It was a very unusual royal visit, but it seems the town gained the royal approval, for in a postscript to a letter written by Sir Edward Hyde from Barnstaple on 25 June, he says, "The Prince is much delighted with this place, and indeed it is a very fine sweete towne as ever I saw."¹¹

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WILDLIFE AND THE PURSUIT OF GAME IN THURLESTONE AND NEARBY PARISHES IN THE PRESENT CENTURY.

Neville Oswald

A hundred years ago wild grey partridges abounded in Thurlestone, together with a few wild pheasant and thousands of rabbits; the game birds were shot under licence and the rabbits, regarded as vermin, were trapped or shot by the villagers. A detailed description of the scene in the years just before World War I was recorded informally by Geoffrey Inehald, whose father had shooting rights over most of the parish. His account together with the recollections of several parishioners and others who have known the district for very many years give an insight into the changes that have occurred during this century.

Thurlestone had much to offer young Geoffrey. Given his first shot gun when he was aged fourteen, he soon learnt to use spaniels to flush rabbits out of brakes and hedgerows. He then proceeded to the more exacting task of ferreting on the sea cliffs that were honey-combed with warrens; the rabbits, having no open way of escape, scuttled from one hole to another, being visible for only a second or two before they disappeared. Those that were brought down fell to the rocks, sand and sea below and were at times retrieved only with much difficulty. Thurlestone Lea, a reedy marshland extending about half a mile inland from the sea, was alive with duck during their early morning and evening flights; in places where the reeds were not too high snipe gathered, a wisp of as many as thirty often rising at the same time, to set off on their irregular flights. Drifting silently down the river Avon at dusk from Aveton Giffard on the ebb might yield some duck or wood pigeon or perhaps a partridge or pheasant. His apprenticeship completed, Geoffrey was allowed to take his place with the guns, as the sons of the rather privileged shooting community had done for generations.

Shooting licences were cheap before and after World War I and anybody could buy one. Many farmers possessed a gun with which they tried to limit the damage done by rabbits and also sought to preserve the eggs and chicks of game birds by killing foxes on sight and ripping out the nests of magpies. Indeed, there were virtually no foxes in Thurlestone in the interwar years, until the hunting community introduced some. Village lads shot duck and snipe on the Lea and were occasionally allowed to shoot on farms, but in a small place, where everybody knew almost everybody else, unauthorised shooting was limited. Rented shooting from owner and tenant farmers usually cost a crisp white £5 note for the season, paid to the farmer with a promise not to shoot more than once a fortnight. With so many guns in the parish, there were remarkably few human casualties, although game dogs and ferrets suffered at times.

GAME BIRDS

PARTRIDGE. All the partridges in and around Thurlestone were wildstock and were sought by rough 'walked up' shooting; there were no driven birds. They nested at the foot of hedgerows and fed their young on the abundant insects nearby. Many of them later migrated to cover crops - mangolds, turnips, swedes and kale - from which they were flushed during the shooting season from 1 September to 31 January. Organised shoots, for long a feature of the South Hams, often achieved spectacular bags; in the early 1900s a small party

walked up a mile of rough ground between the village of Thurlestone and the sea and killed 60 brace before lunch. The number of birds rapidly declined after World War I, so that anybody seeking regular sport by the 1930s needed to go to estates in neighbouring parishes where the birds and their young were protected, for example to Horswell, Court Barton, Bagton or Burleigh; there they might expect to shoot up to 20 to 25 brace in a day.

There were several reasons for the decline in partridges. In order to obtain the greatest possible yield from the land, ploughing up to the edges of the hedgerows damaged the nesting sites. The replacement of cover crops by corn, with only a little kale remaining, deprived the birds of one of their favourite habitats. Later, chemical fertilisers, building development and the splitting of farms seriously damaged their environment.

PHEASANT. Pheasant have always been scarce in Thurlestone due to the lack of woodland and of an estate of sufficient size to accommodate them. They have been bred intermittently nearby; recently for example at Bowringsleigh where they thrived for a time. Now, the nearest pheasant shoots are at Kitley and Cornwood.

The shooting of game birds virtually came to an end in the 1950s, through lack of birds. Then, the passage of the Firearms Act of 1968 limited the possession of firearms. A Licence to Kill Game cost £6; in addition a Shot Gun Certificate was necessary and was issued by the police only after they had inspected any guns and ammunition and the place where they were to be kept. Written permission to shoot over their land from two local farmers often aided a successful application. For security reasons, these strict rules have been enforced since.

RABBITS. During the first half of this century rabbits seemed to be everywhere in Thurlestone. They were in the hedgerows, on the golf course, along the cliffs and on any waste ground. Some of them were born in the cornfields where they grew and remained until harvest time. When the corn was reaped, from the edges inwards, boys from the village surrounded the centre and waited for them to dash out, grabbing as many as they could with their hands. A hundred or more might be caught in a big field and they made a very useful supply of meat, especially for families where there were many children.

The rabbit season lasted from September to March, allowing the young time to grow in the summer months. Ferreting took place on Saturdays and Sundays, many of the boys taking their own ferrets that their fathers had given them when they were aged about eight or more. The boys went out on most days during the school holidays, often being allowed on the farms where their fathers worked. Indeed, ferreting was their main interest in the winters as they rarely went far from Thurlestone and an occasional trip to Kingsbridge was as much as most of them could afford. Also, having taken home as many rabbits as were needed, they might be able to sell the remainder to friends.

Many villagers had a dog for rabbiting, either a whippet which was ideal for hedgerows or a lurcher which was harder and able to penetrate prickly undergrowth. They went out with their dogs, ferrets and netting at weekends and usually caught a couple of dozen rabbits, some of which they sold for about five-pence each. Boxing day was the big occasion for rabbiting when small groups went out laden with eider; towards the end of the day they were likely to miss as many rabbits as they caught.

Few people who lived in the South Hams in World War II are likely to forget the rabbits. To farmers they were a pest, to almost everybody else they were a godsend, especially as they were not rationed. Whilst trappers were no longer able to go out at night with their lamps and whippets, they still had their ferrets, snares and nets. Many families relied on rabbits as their sole, or at least their principal, source of meat and made certain they were well stocked at Christmastime. Every day consignments, mostly caught in Thurlestone by

the village trapper Mr. Bartlett, were bundled into crates that were collected and sent by rail from Kingsbridge mainly to the Midlands where restaurants were able to offer them as a meat meal.

After World War II, rabbits continued to flourish until the 1950s when myxomatosis virtually eliminated them, leaving many hundreds dead with swollen and bloodstained faces in hedges and fields. Only a few were seen in the following years.

Whilst partridges are now rarely seen in Thurlestone, wild pheasants have made a little headway, despite a recent increase in foxes. Rabbits are rapidly increasing, but are still trivial in numbers compared with a hundred years ago. Shooting has become a rarity; occasionally farmers will try to rid their properties of foxes and sometimes a shot or two rings out from the Lea. The rabbits are left virtually undisturbed for the time being.

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I am indeed grateful to Messrs. David Balkwell, Ben Horn, Harry Huggins, Kendall MacDonald and Bill Robins without whose recollections and expertise this article could not have been written.

NEW ZEALANDERS IN SOUTH DEVON: A STORY OF WORLD WAR 1

Johu Pike

On 18 August 1995 a faxed letter, over two meters long, reached me from the New Zealand Military History Society in Auckland, together with a copy of a booklet given to all the New Zealand troops in Torquay on Christmas Day 1918. It contained photographs of several large houses around the town and included pictures of some of the men on agricultural work on Dartmoor. It also intimated that a member, Mr Herbert Farrant, would be in the country early in September. He proposed to locate as many as possible of the properties which had existed to the present time and to record them for their archive. The following account tells the story of the New Zealand Discharge Centre which was set up in South Devon. It has not been documented before.

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Early in May 1917 Captain Garner, chaplain to the New Zealand Imperial Forces, met members of the Torquay Chamber of Commerce and told them that 'a camp of permanently unfit men who had been practically invalidated out of the army was being formed in Torquay specially for the convenience of the New Zealanders who had fought and become disabled'. Later, it was disclosed that many towns had been suggested including Weston-super-Mare and Weymouth but as soon as General Richardson saw Torquay he said: 'This is [so like] New Zealand, it will suit our men to the ground'. Captain Garner also told the meeting that the first contingent would be located in St. Marychurch on the north side of Torquay. There were two large private houses with

extensive grounds suitable for this use immediately available. These were The Daison (a large mansion which was demolished about 1930) and Hampton House. This is now Hampton Court School and has lost much of its surrounding land for building and for a bypass.

As soon as the first troops arrived later in the month, the local people, both in St. Marychurch and in Torquay were offering to entertain from 'two to twenty-five' in their homes. In addition, the townspeople laid on all kinds of activities for them; some went on outings by tram, others enjoyed coaching trips and yet others went sailing in boats and yachts.'

The scale of the sacrifice by both the Australian and New Zealand forces at Gallipoli was, by 1917, well-known to the local residents and which, no doubt, accounted in part for the welcome given to the troops when they arrived. However, some eighty years later, the scale of the aid given by the old British Empire is not fully realised or acknowledged. In June 1917 the first YMCA for them was opened in St. Marychurch by the Mayor of Torquay. Brigadier-General Richardson was present and he disclosed that 'New Zealand had sent nearly 100,000 people to the Front and had subscribed £100,000 so that the YMCA could follow the men up'.

Early in 1918 even more New Zealand troops were in south Devon and they began to occupy large houses in Torquay as well as in St. Marychurch. In April a second YMCA was opened at Mayeliff (now Maycliffe Hotel but completely remodelled), a large mid-Victorian period mansion on Waldon hill near the town centre. An attempt was made to make the young soldiers, some of them recovering from wounds, feel at ease; 'on the ground floor was a hall lounge and reading room ... whilst on the right was a most cosy parlour handsomely furnished with piano ... About 40 ladies of the district have arranged to voluntarily act as helpers'. It was confirmed that about 300 men were billeted in that part of the town. At about the same time the Kia Toa Club (run by the New Zealand War Contingent Association) was opened in a large unfinished building adjacent to the Strand near Torquay Harbour. This has had a chequered career since that time. Originally intended to be a theatre, it was for a time a roller-skating rink, later a garage and, most recently, a parade to shops. Throughout the years, however, the sculptured figures which were to enhance the 'Grand Theatre' have looked down over the ever-changing scene below.

In his speech at the opening the Mayor of Torquay explained that 'within the last ten days he had had to go to the watershed on Dartmoor and there he saw a band of splendid New Zealanders at work in the matter of agriculture and they imported into the work most heroic measures ... the produce would [eventually] be divided between them [the Borough] and the New Zealanders'. This was part of a re-education programme for the troops in agricultural work. It is known that at least one of those Servicemen who worked there did become a farm-worker 'down-under'. He returned to the 'home country' some years later and his descendants still in Devon confirm this. The land at the watershed (the building of reservoirs at Tottiford and Hennock by the old Torquay Local Board of Health had started as long ago as the 1850s) was originally cultivated under the supervision of the [British] Army Canteen Committee and, by the end of 1917, 716 acres were under cultivation.' Some 243 acres of this was in the parishes of Bridford and Christow but it is not certain where the New Zealanders first worked. In June 1918 the Council was offered, and bought Laployd Barton. Soon after Captain MacGowan, who seems to have been in charge of the project, wrote to ask if his troops could cultivate Laployd Down 'which would shorten time for men to get to their work'.

This resulted in the entire Waterworks committee attending a meeting at Tottiford which allowed the New Zealanders to cultivate Laployd Down 'on the same terms as the other'. In September the Council was asked to help with the payment of paraffin, petrol and half of the cost of chemicals for spraying. After some demur, this seems to have been agreed. Finally, in December, Captain MacGowan asked for a further 300 acres (location unknown) for use by his men.

Just as World War 2 was to see the departure of GI-brides, many of the New Zealanders married British girls and it is formally recorded in its minutes that the Council would 'arrange for wives of the Servicemen to attend cookery classes at the Homelands Centre on the payment to the Council of out-of-pocket expenses'.

ANZAC Day was already well established by 1918. In May it was celebrated in 'glorious weather'. Although it was still wartime, 'with the exception of the cooks, practically every New Zealander at the Discharge Depot and the villas in St. Luke Road fell in at the church parade which was held in Belgrave Church. There was a football match and a concert in the Pavilion in the evening which included the 'New Zealand Discharge Depot Pierrot Troupe, the Tuis, [whom] encores were the order and not the exception of the evening'.

Shortly afterwards one of the few tragedies occurred. Roland Chadwick committed suicide; he had emigrated to New Zealand early in the century and, on the first day of war, joined the NZ Medical Corps. After a period based in Egypt he had landed at Gallipoli, being one of the first to arrive and one of the last to leave. Subsequently he went to France where he saw further service in the trenches. Found to be epileptic, he was declared by a medical board 'unfit for further service'. The fits he suffered were stated to be due to his exposure to shell fire. The inquest verdict was 'committed suicide while temporarily insane.' Service chiefs have taken a long time to appreciate fully the psychological problems which remain after 'active service' but it is unlikely that such a verdict would be passed today.

History usually states that World War 1 ended at 11 am on the 11th day of the eleventh month in 1918. The official situation was rather different, on that day 'there was an armistice when hostilities were suspended for 36 days'. This however, brought out the crowds around the country. In Torquay 'convalescent soldiers from the [Red Cross] war hospitals were among those who marched through the streets; the New Zealanders, having been given leave until 11 o'clock on Monday evening, formed up and paraded through the town to the Haldon Pier, pausing at Castle Circus to sing their famous song [what it was is still not known]. The masking of the street lamps was immediately removed 'being given their full quota of radiance on Monday evening'.

New Zealand troops continued to pass through Torbay for many months afterwards. ANZAC Day was again celebrated in 1919 when there was 'a large parade by New Zealand troops from Nos. 1, 2 and 4 Camps, about 600 men and 200 soldiers' wives. Altogether some one thousand were in the parade. They did homage to all who made the great sacrifice ... because it was on April 25th at the Gallipoli landing that the Commonwealth [of Australia] and the Dominion [of New Zealand] really had their birth as nations'.

However, it was towards the end of the year that the final chapters of the story took place. Early in November there were stirrings and unusual scenes when 22 officers and 328 other ranks left Haldon Pier on the New Zealand Shipping Company's *Ruihine* (10,000 tons) for home. Headed by the Mission Band, they had marched from St. Marychurch through the town cheered by local townspeople among whom they had

made many friends. About 60 wives (the English girls who had married NZ soldiers) also embarked. Another vessel had embarked some 500 homeward-bound earlier in the week and a third (carrying about 300 men) was due to sail before the end of the month. Altogether 28,000 men had passed through the Depot at Torquay of whom 3,500 were married. 'The fact that there had only been six deaths showed how admirable and salubrious the climate of Torquay was'. However, when the New Zealand flag was presented shortly before, Sir Thomas MacKenzie said that between 40,000 and 50,000 had passed through the Discharge Depot at St Marychurch. This was almost certainly an overstatement but as an indication of the numbers involved, the Town Council had, as a farewell gift, given a card of 'suitably inscribed views of Torquay' to each, some 22,000 being distributed in all.

There was one last ceremony. On 27 December 1919 a memorial in Torquay cemetery was unveiled to the six men who had died. It is in the form of a Latin cross nine feet high made of Portland stone on a moulded base with the inscription: 'And they rise to their feet as He passes by, gentlemen unafraid'. The whole is maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, the stones being in the formal style and all have been cleaned and repaired recently. Most of the houses used by the troops have been demolished, some to be replaced by concrete monoliths of doubtful taste and durability. This small corner of New Zealand will remain in Devon for far longer than these.

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REVIEWS

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

Dunkeswell. Parish and People, by Richard Broad. 172pp. 21 illus. 3 maps. 1994. ISBN 0 9523829 0 3. No price. Privately published. Available from the author at Tencery Cottage, Dunkeswell, EX14 0QZ.

This well researched history of a village reads as easily as a good novel. Dunkeswell is in the middle of the Blackdown Hills and for many, until recently, the Blackdowns were 'terra incognita'. Now archaeologists and historians have begun to reveal their interesting past, iron working since at least Roman times, cloth making along the Culm, a medieval pottery

at Clayhidon, marl digging in almost every parish, whetstone mining at Blackborough, two monastic houses at Dunkeswell and Kerswell, and a substantial late medieval castle at Hemycok. These form the background to Richard Broad's book and are a reminder that Devon extends east of the Exe and north of the A30.

In 1086 Dunkeswell was as secluded as anywhere in Devon, tucked into a remote green valley whose streams fell into the Culm, surrounded by the wastes and moors and woods of the then unenclosed Blackdown Hills. This seclusion was disturbed in a quiet way by the foundation of the Cistercian Abbey of Dunkeswell in 1201 by William de Brewer, the founder also of Torre, a tough unpopular royal servant to Richard I, John and Henry II. He was buried at Dunkeswell.

For more than three centuries, on what was for them a perfect site, the Cistercians farmed the land around Dunkeswell itself and at their surrounding granges. They exploited other local resources, they had a fulling mill by 1238 and were by then extracting and smelting local supplies of iron and building fish ponds up and down the valley. This wealth creating and perhaps benevolent - the Abbot had his own gallows - activity came to an end in 1539 and Dunkeswell returned to quiet rural obscurity for two hundred and fifty years, with no resident squire to improve or supervise. When John Swete visited Dunkeswell in 1794 he was both surprised and appalled by the poverty of the people and their rough conditions of life.

This state of affairs was soon to be altered by the arrival of General Simcoe and his formidable wife at Wolford House. The Simcoes enclosed the commons, built farmhouses, planted trees, rebuilt Dunkeswell church, built a new church out of the ruins of the Abbey with a school to match, and rebuilt, for more or less private use, the ancient medieval chapel at Wolford. Mrs Simcoe and her seven unmarried daughters exercised what seems to have been a formidable discipline over her tenants and the parish in good Victorian style. The family sold the estate finally in 1923. Despite their efforts some devout local chapel goers believed that most Blackdown people lived in the same 'ignorance and superstition as are to be found in heathen lands' and as a remedy founded the 'Blackdown Mission' in 1863!

The great World intruded on Dunkeswell with a bang in 1941 when an air field was constructed by Irish Labourers, eventually to be handed over to the US Navy, with another close by at Smeatharpe. The Americans made an impact that is still remembered and commemorated and links are still maintained. It was from here initially that Joe Kennedy jet flew to his death. US Army, US Navy, RAF, British Army and others tended to meet at Dunkeswell and occasionally fought a different war at the Royal Oak. Bombs were dropped, aircraft crashed, American drivers found the lanes difficult and American abundance was a continuous, occasionally irresistible, temptation to locals. The material legacy of the war is an airfield still in use, and a totally incongruous 'suburban' housing estate, a planning disaster, built on the top of the hill in the teeth of the west wind, quite detached from the old village.

Richard Broad records all this fascinating diverse story in careful and loving detail, he must have read everything there is to read relating to Dunkeswell and talked to everyone about the more recent past with great profit. His subtitle is 'Parish and People' and ordinary people, their activities - farming, crafts, trades - and their needs - education, health, law and order, relief of poverty - and the way these were met, fill his book as they should, to complement the Cistercians, the Simcoes and Wars. Mr Broad shows that woven into all this web of change is a thread of continuity, the landscape, the land and its cultivation, the houses and settlements and the people and their work.

This is a considerable and admirable addition to Devon's parish histories and to

Blackdown history. Opportunities exist to add to this. The Addingtons at Upottery, and the Simcoes, have left large collections of locally interesting papers, that have not yet been fully studied and published.

Robin Stanes

Through the Mists of Memory, by R.G. Richards, 1995, 183pp, 8 illust. Privately published. No price. ISBN 0 9524853 1 1. Groves Cross Cottage, Littleham EX39 5 HL.

The title of this book gives no indication of its contents. Mr Richards is a Devonian by upbringing and in his retirement, from 1908 to 1918 he lived and was educated in Okehampton as the adopted son of a town grocer. In 1918 he left to work in the Civil Service in London and thus followed the route taken by hundreds of thousands of young Devonians who could find no work in Devon in this and the last century. One calculation suggests that in the nineteenth century something like a third of the native population left the county. This, though largely unnoticed, is on a par with Irish emigration at the same period.

For readers of this journal Mr Richards' account of life in Okehampton just before the First World War is the best part of his book. Mr Richards' adoptive family were non-conformist - Baptist - grocers with a shop in the Arcade - an early shopping mall - in the centre of the town, above which the family lived. Most of their fellow tradesmen were of like persuasion Wesleyan, Congregationalist, Bible Christian, it was said there were as many chapels in the town as there were pubs. Life revolved for many around the chapel, with its treats and teas and attendance twice a Sunday - and Sunday School twice more, the visits of well known preachers and musical Moody and Sankey evenings and Harvest Festivals. Chapel people built their own chapels with pride, organised their life round them, and kept themselves to themselves. They were often teetotal, observed Sunday rigidly, and voted Liberal, their watch words were devotion to business and hard work.

Mr Richards remembers all this and much more with affection and detachment. He remembers market day at Okehampton, the cattle market for the farmers and the pannier market for their wives and the bell that rang from the Plume of Feathers to signify that the 'market ordinary', a roast dinner, was ready, always carved and presided over by a prominent farmer. He recalls the skill and knowledge it took to run a grocer's shop that provided everyone with everything in that line, from the much loved saffron measured out on tiny scales, to the large brown dry lumps of salt cod. The cellar below the shop stored sides of bacon and whole cheeses and to this audience Mr Richards' uncle, a local preacher, would practice his sermons! The shop employed eight, and some shopkeepers made enough to retire at fifty.

Okehampton business men often had farming roots and had a bit of land to keep cattle and sheep. Mr Richards' family had such links and went 'back to the land' occasionally, to Black Torrington, to get in the harvest and share in the munificent harvest tea, cream and home made butter, pasties, cutrounds and cake, all with the neighbours. Other relatives ran the Stratton Workhouse with its segregated dormitories and work of some sort for all the inmates and the regular tramps.

After Okehampton came the Civil Service in London, Customs and Excise and Labour regulation. Mr Richards joined as a boy clerk and left as a Deputy Controller. His enjoyment of the often complex work is apparent and there are engaging glimpses of the look and feel

of the City in its heyday.

Mr Richards returned to Devon to a contented retirement. Amongst the new friends he met was E.W. Martin the author of the *Shearers and the Shorn* a notable survey of Devon rural society that deserves to be read more. Maybe it was this contact that stimulated Mr Richards to write this interesting book. In his life time the world has changed almost out of recognition, and this change, often for the worse in Mr Richards' view, is well recorded in his book. It is this reviewer's belief that everyone on retirement should write their lifestories for, at least, their families and for future historians. Mr Richards has set them a good example.

Robin Stanes

Plymouth: a pictorial history by Guy Fleming. Chichester, Phillimore, 1995. [124]pp. 163 illust. £12.95. ISBN 0 85033 963 4

Already the possessor of several of this publisher's excellent short histories, I was well aware of both the high qualifications of the authors (including our own Robin Stanes) and the standard of the textual material in them. This pictorial approach, however, was new to me although I see that, according to the dust-jacket, a similar volume exists for the city of Exeter.

Plymouth has over 160 illustrations, mostly photographs, dating from the mid-nineteenth century. Each has a caption which offers an explanation or reason for its inclusion. These are rather longer than those normally found and puts the location, subject or event into the history of its time. There is a short introductory chapter telling Plymouth's history briefly and why it has become so important in the south west over the past eighty or so years. It was rather surprising, although perhaps not inappropriate, that the section called 'Plymouth Worthies' includes both Wayne Sleep and Angela Rippon. As this account is necessarily brief, there might have been a short bibliography added so that those who wish to read further, may do so.

As a Devonian, although not a Plymouthian, browsing through its pages revived many memories. The book is divided into various sections and subjects. The first group called 'The Pre-War City Centre' recalled early childhood visits. However, they do show how great was the devastation of the 'Blitz' in early 1941 and were a reminder that the burning city could be seen over thirty miles away in Torquay. 'The Post-War City Centre', towards the end of the book, records its re-birth to the plans of Abercrombie and Watson from the late Forties onwards.

There was a moment of nostalgia. Picture No 82 in the 'Transport' sequence shows a large Brush Company two-bogie tram (no 14) on Route No 12 in Church Street, Devonport, enroute to Prince Rock. This was one of those sold by the Torquay Tramway Company to the city council early in 1934. It had a new 'lease-of-life', remaining in service until 1942. There are many photographs of the townsfolk too: some were taken too long ago to be recognisable but others may even be 'family or friends'. I see that Mr Fleming thanks the Western Morning News (as well as people of Plymouth) for its assistance. It is an indication of the fine pictorial archives owned by the newspapers of Devon.

John Pike

The English Hospital 1070-1570, by Nicholas Orme and Margaret Webster, Yale University Press, 1995, 308pp., illustrated, ISBN 0-300-06058-0, £30

The title of this book does not adequately cover its contents, since it combines a comprehensive and up-to-date review of all facets of the general history of English medieval and early Tudor hospitals by Nicholas Orme in its first part, with a second part which provides his in-depth regional study of hospitals in the South West of England in the same period, accompanied by a gazetteer compiled in collaboration with Margaret Webster (who contributed many of the Devon entries) which supplies histories of individual institutions as far as they have yet been identified in Cornwall and Devon.

The synthesis provided in Part I is well overdue, for its predecessor, *The Medieval Hospitals of England*, by Rotha Mary Clay, though an admirable work, was published as long ago as 1909. Much work has been done since then, notably the list of known hospitals compiled by Knowles and Haddock in 1971, the accounts of individual hospitals on county bases in various relevant volumes of the *Victoria County History* (which are lacking for a number of counties, including Cornwall and Devon) and general discussion accompanying regional studies by more recent scholars. The sources for this large topic are particularly scattered and unsystematic, undoubtedly there will be new research yet to come on individual foundations, as exemplified by the work of both authors in Part II. But Orme's clear and comprehensive general survey displays a masterly grasp of all facets of the present state of the history of hospitals within the given period, well illustrated and with an exemplary bibliography. It profoundly and widely depicts the medieval interpretation of the Christian ethic of charity in various directions, not least by stressing the unspecific nature of the definition of 'hospital', covering as it did medical and caring functions, extending also to education and the encouragement of scholars, but some being also communities often difficult to separate from the nature of religious houses.

The clear and methodical treatment of this large and complex subject proceeds from investigation of origins to changes by the time of the Reformation. Archbishop Lanfranc's foundation of hospitals at Canterbury in the 1080s is shown to anticipate various later developments, consisting as it did of a double hospital for the care of the infirm of both sexes at the North gate of Canterbury, served for their religious needs by regular canons of the well-endowed church of St Gregory on the opposite side of the street, then on the west of the city at Harbledown, separate houses for men and women lepers. Many of these elements persisted - the position at the edge of a city to attract travellers' alms as well as offer succour, spiritual care by Augustinian canons, care for the long-term infirm segregated by sex, and a preoccupation with secluded though not closely supervised care for lepers, for special care for lepers was one of the most important aspects of hospital development. The topics of the survey proceed methodically though the nature, siting and functions of hospitals; their special contributions of worship and charity, care of the sick, admission of travellers and association with anchorites; their contributions to education and scholarship; their organization, rules, endowments, patrons, buildings and layouts (with numerous exemplary plans); and consideration about the inmates themselves, ending then with general changes over the later middle ages. This in all is an expert, engrossing and indispensable overview of the whole subject.

However, Part II, the regional study of the South West of England, is perhaps the portion of the book of most interest to local readers, which, with an introductory chapter which makes comparisons of this part of England with the whole, contains a body of individual histories of about seventy-six hospitals, almshouses and groups of lepers in Cornwall and

Devon between c.1100 and c.1540 (having made various corrections to the Knowles and Haddock lists), the sort of studies which perhaps ought to have been available to us if the Victoria Histories had proceeded for Cornwall and Devon as they had done for so many other counties. But we are more fortunate in having had to wait, these histories are the product of immediately recent research by Nicholas Orme and Margaret Webster which has given a strong impetus to knowledge in this region. Early evidence is scanty, but in the accounts of the executors of Bishop Bitton (d.1307) forty places are listed in the region where he directed charity should be paid to lepers, a most interesting indication of their distribution. The histories of individual hospitals vary of course from little more than bare identifications to quite substantial histories of such well-documented institutions as St Mary Magdalene in Exeter, which originates earlier in the twelfth century than the date of Bishop Bartholomew's grant, and particularly St John's Hospital in Exeter, of which Margaret Webster provides an interesting and succinct account - but here is an institution which is overdue for a full investigation, its cartulary still has much to tell us about the city. In fact, inevitable interest is focused on Exeter's range of hospitals and almshouses, which it is very good to have sorted out and carefully elucidated (but St Roche, existing only in the early sixteenth century, cheek by jowl with Bonville's in Coombe St, is surely an oddity of its kind?). It is not possible to do more than make a few mentions such as these of the wealth of interest to be found in these accounts of so many institutions scattered across Devon and Cornwall; but it is irresistible to mention Orme's account of the surely remarkably well-documented hospital for poor infirm priests which was founded by Bishop Walter Stapledon at Clyst Gabriel in 1309-12, which illustrated so vividly the effect of the Black Death upon the institution.

As a whole this book is an impressive achievement presented in a most accessible and clearly expressed manner, an essential tool for the study of its subject. It is well produced, and has well-chosen illustrations. Its authors have put us in their debt by providing so satisfying a volume.

Audrey Erskine

Devon: A Genealogical Bibliography. Volume 1: Devon Genealogical Sources. Volume 2: Devon Family Histories and Pedigrees. By Stuart A. Raymond. Published by S.A. & M.J. Raymond, 6 Russet Avenue, Exeter, 2nd edition, 1994, 83pp and 64pp, £8.35 and £8.10 including postage. ISBN 0-9588144-7-3 and ISBN 0-9588144-6-5.

The Devon volumes were the first to be published of Stuart Raymond's several county listings of genealogical sources. Four years later they have now appeared in a second edition printed on less dowdy paper and in a clearer, crisper typeface, and with well over 100 additional citations, according to the introduction (and over 400 according to publicity fliers). One volume lists printed materials on fifteen themes, including local journals, probate records, directories and maps, municipal and parochial administration, and emigration, while the second has four sections listing pedigrees, biographical dictionaries, occupational information and family histories.

As an aide-memoire for historians the work is remarkably useful. What was the date and the exact title of Sellman's book about village schools? Where on earth was that transcript of the will of Henry Gandy, of Exeter? Surely there was once a handy Cruwys family pedigree in the *Transactions*? To have the answers almost instantly available on one's shelf is a god-send, and for that alone all members of the Devon History Society would do well to buy it.

To the more numerous amateur genealogists and family historians at whom it is implicitly directed through those fliers in the hobby magazines they read, recommendations have to be more cautious. It could have been more strongly emphasised that these are listings only of printed sources of some length, and that the publications covered contain much more information in the notes and queries that Raymond has deliberately excluded. Despite his encouragement of readers to make use of the inter-library loan system, access to the specialised libraries in Exeter would be necessary in order to track down many of the rare books and those sent by their authors from abroad. As this is so, more attention could helpfully have been paid to the wealth of primary sources which are available in local archives and family history society collections. It would be more satisfactory, too, to know up to what date references had been culled from journals such as *The Devon Historian* and *The Devon Family Historian*, and whether the reason for there being no references to, for example, *The Devonian Year Book*, *Family History* and *Family Tree Magazine* is that they contain nothing relevant to Devonshire families or rather that they have not yet been explored.

Although, as Raymond himself states frankly in the introduction, the bibliography is not comprehensive, it was a striking achievement to record as much as he did as quickly as he did, and he has now enlarged that original product. One assumes that successive, ever chunkier editions will be produced in the future, gradually eliminating omissions. For me, as a practising genealogist, the first work to be added would be Rowe and Jackson's invaluable *Exeter Freeman 1266-1967* with its lengthy lists of names and occupations, especially of Freeman who qualified by succession to their fathers. Other readers' suggestions will doubtless be welcome to the industrious compiler.

Ian Stoyte

The Overland Way, by Hazel Eardley-Wilmot, Westcountry Books, 1995. 32pp. Paperback £2.95p. ISBN 1 898386 13 7

Issue number 44 of *The Devon Historian* contained a very favourable review by the County Archaeologist of the author's *Yesterday's Exmoor*, and this present much slighter publication is an extension of her work on prehistoric routeways. According to the back cover the book reveals her discovery of a hitherto unknown Bronze Age 'Way', although Miss Eardley-Wilmot writes more modestly of offering a new hypothesis - that of an overland trade route from Porlock Bay to Weymouth Bay.

The route proposed keeps as far as practicable to high ground, over Exmoor and the Brendons, crossing the River Tone close to its source before reaching the Devon-Somerset border at Clayhanger parish. The border is then fairly closely followed apart from a diversion almost into Holcombe Rogus village before returning to the county boundary as it climbs to the Blackdowns ridge. Then the route continues east along the boundary, and on to Castle Neroche before following the A30 for some seven miles, passing through Chard. Then it passes south of Crewkerne to ford the River Axe also near its source. It then heads for Eggardon hillfort but the final approach to Weymouth Bay is left rather vague.

Virtually all of the route can be followed today, by one means or another, but the longest 'missing' section is the climb of the Blackdowns ridge, and as no routeway is mentioned in the tenth-century Culmstock charter it seems to have been lost long ago; the ill-starred Harold would surely have had to have found an alternative to this section when he joined

his father.

The author regards the main users as having been traders in metals such as copper and gold between Ireland and France, but I could not help noting the omission of any reference to a tangible link between the two extremities. The late Leslie Grinsell referred in his pioneering *The Archaeology of Exmoor* to finds of implements of Portland chert, attributed to the Mesolithic period, in the Minehead area, but he assumed their presence resulted from coastal traffic. Is it too fanciful to suggest that the Bronze Age traders were following a route already several millennia old?

This book provides a very thought-provoking contribution to the debate on the prehistoric South-West, but whether the author has done enough to convince sceptical readers is something that the sceptical readers must decide for themselves.

Tony Collings

Walking the Stories & Legends of Dartmoor, by Michael Bennie. Peninsula Press, 1995. 88pp. Paperback. £5.99. ISBN 1 872640 35 4.

The flow of Dartmoor walking books shows no sign of drying up. Walks between pubs, thematic walks, walks described from air photographs, and now walks linking stories and legends.

This latest publication takes a number of legends and after an account of the story a route is described which conducts the walker past or to the object of the tale. Some of the walks are quite long, such as the 13-mile one from Chagford to Scorhill, across the moor to Grey Wethers and back to the start. This lengthy route illustrates 'the faithless wives of Chagford', a story first recounted by Ruth St Leger Gordon in *The Witchcraft and Folklore of Dartmoor*. Each walk is introduced with details of the start and finish, and an adequate sketch map and drawing, parking directions, length, time, degree of difficulty, and a route summary, but one wishes there was more information about the places passed on the way, and a good deal of road walking is sometimes necessary.

Brian Le Messurier

A Glimpse of Dartmoor Prison, by Trevor Jones. Peninsula Press, 1995. 34pp. Paperback. £2.99. ISBN 1 8726401 7 6

The Peninsula Press is publishing a series of small books about Dartmoor subjects with titles beginning *A Glimpse of ...* and this is the latest, and one of the best.

The author was born in Tavistock, works at Dartmoor Prison, and has been a journalist, so the book, although slight enough to have staple binding, is well researched and written. It is illustrated with 29 half-tones, including several unusual pictures reproduced from paintings kept at the prison. The inside back cover bears a useful chronology of the main events in the prison's life from its establishment to the present day, but there is no bibliography, which is a pity.

Brian Le Messurier

Memories of Mamhead and Ashcombe, collected and collated by Kate Fincham-Powell and Tim Williams. Obelisk Publications, 2 Church Hill Pinhoe, 20pp. 28 illustrations. £3.50

The purchase of an old cottage at Mamhead by one of the editors and a wish to know about the people who had lived in it started a quest that broadened out into an account of life in the two villages from the 1920s. The stories are told in their own words either by the participants or by their children. The cover is extensive giving a picture of how people were educated, employed and amused themselves in two small and intimate communities. If the cottages lacked almost all modern conveniences the people who lived in them were happy, helped each other and made much of their own entertainment. There was no crime, and illness is not remembered. Characters and incidents abounded. There was the rabbit catcher who could take eighty on a good day and whose nose was flat from repeatedly falling off his bicycle when drunk, and the boys who played practical jokes on the cocklewomen. A former housemaid at Mamhead House remembers how Sir Robert Newman, later Lord Mamhead, would sit up to let them in after they had been to dances, while there was the farmer's wife who always washed her face before opening her front door to visitors.

The older informants all regret the disappearance of much of the local wildlife and flowers following the destruction of hedges and woods but agree that though most things have changed they would not like to live elsewhere. For their part the editors have wisely limited historical background to the minimum necessary to illustrate the speakers' stories. It is a way of recording oral history that other parishes may well wish to copy. They have chosen a ring binding with broad page double columns and have assembled a good selection of pictures of people and places.

Adrian Reed

The Bloody Eleventh: History of the Devonshire Regiment Vol II 1815-1914 and Volume III 1915-1969 by W.J.P. Aggett. Published by The Devonshire and Dorset Regiment, Exeter 1995 £40. xxi plus 518pp and xviii plus 686pp, both with illustrations, maps, chronological tables, bibliographies and appendices. ISBN 0-9512655-1-2 and 0-9512655-2-0.

To write a regimental history is a daunting task. One's readership will be critical indeed, ranging from military historians in universities and military schools through professional soldiers of all ranks to the regiment's families who will expect to read of the exploits of Great Uncle Fred. The most deadly critics will be found among the old soldiers, the veterans who believe that they know exactly how it was because they were there. Major Aggett faced an additional hazard in having a hard act to follow; Colonel Robinson's Volume I, published in 1988, was widely acclaimed as a model regimental history. Many readers have waited expectantly through the intervening seven years for the new volumes to appear.

They have not waited in vain. Major Aggett has done an excellent job. In a sound tactical move he has consulted in advance the historians, the soldiers, the families and the veterans; their contributions have enhanced the fruits of extensive research in record offices, regimental archives and libraries. From all this material he has distilled an absorbing account of Devon's county regiment over a hundred and fifty years. In these two volumes the professionals and the scholarly will find good history well supported by references and source

notes, families will find all that they may wish to read of Great Uncle Fred, with a nice discretion exercised in the reporting of some exploits. Even the veterans will approve the careful weaving of differing accounts to present a coherent picture of complex battle situations. Above all, the books are thoroughly readable; this critic found himself reading long into the night, fascinated by the narrative.

The Eleventh Regiment of Foot was, like all British regiments in the eighteenth century, a marching regiment with no permanent home. In 1782 the authorities sought to allocate recruiting areas to the various regiments. The then colonel of the Eleventh expressed a preference for Wiltshire; as might have been expected he was given North Devon. It mattered little. Then, and for many years to come, the ranks of the regiment were filled with Irish soldiers. Many of their officers, too, came from Ireland among other places. Serving with Wellington's army in the Peninsula, and in the garrisons of Ireland and Australia, the regiment saw little of Devon until the Cardwell reforms of the 1870s brought a permanent depot in Exeter. The two regular battalions of the Eleventh then became the Devonshire Regiment, to be joined soon by the two battalions of the Devon Militia, and by the county's five Volunteer battalions. The roots of the regiment became firmly planted in the county.

The last chapters of Volume II and the whole of Volume III are concerned with the twentieth century, years of war and change. The turn of the century saw both regular battalions and a volunteer company fighting the Boers in South Africa. In World War One many battalions, regular, territorial and wartime service, served in France and Flanders, in the Mediterranean and Middle East, in Russia and on the North West frontier of India. World War Two brought more action to the Devons - again in Northwest Europe and the Mediterranean, also in Burma. The years between and after saw the regulars engaging enemies in China, on the North West Frontier, in Malaya and in Kenya. Major Aggett's narrative follows all these campaigns, with many a tale of endurance and gallantry, as well as lighter moments adding variety to the saga.

The Bloody Eleventh is all about soldiers, but it is not all about fighting; here, too, is social history. We learn of life in mid-nineteenth century Sydney, how Victoria's soldiers, other ranks as well as officers, lived in India, and of long voyages in troopships. There is the curious episode of the *Lavonia*, sunk by a U-boat off the West African coast, and the efforts of the German and French navies to save the British families and Italian prisoners, hindered by the hostilities of the allied air forces. There is hunting and shooting for game in India - by private soldiers; and there are the deadly ravages of cholera.

With the publication of these volumes the Regiment has completed the best of all the British Army's regimental histories. Major Aggett, and the regimental committee that have so ably supported him, have reason to be proud indeed. At £40 these volumes are not cheap, but they are, without doubt, well worth the price.

John Rowe

Minutes of the 25th Annual General Meeting held at the School of Education, University of Exeter, 21 October 1995.

Present: In the Chair, the President, Dr Basil Greenhill; c. 40 members of the Society.

- 1 **Apologies:** Mesdames M. Drewe and M. Stanbrook; Dr M. Rendel
- 2 **The Minutes** of the last AGM, as printed in *The Devon Historian* 50, were approved, and signed by the Chairman. There were no Matters Arising.
- 3 **Secretaries' Reports** Mrs S Stirling reported an increase in the society's activities; Dr Margaret Gelling had spoken on the subject of place-names at a well-attended meeting held jointly with the Devon Archaeological Society in February. Suggestions for joint meetings with other local societies would be welcome. At the spring conference in Plymouth Paul Brough and Elaine Downing had spoken on the photographic archive of the *Western Morning News*, and the TSW Film Archive, respectively. The attendance had been disappointing, but a large number of local people as well as DHS members had attended the summer conference at Honiton where Robin Stanes spoke on the corrupt elections in Honiton and Mark Stoye on local loyalties in East Devon during the Civil War. Mrs Stirling thanked all concerned with organising these events.
The Society continued to be involved in matters of importance to local historians, and its prompt action over proposed road-building over part of Brauntton Great Field had helped to lead to a modification of those plans. The Secretary has sent follow-up letters to the Local Government Commission on the subject of the preservation of the county's archive and local studies resources, and had written to libraries urging the maintenance of the local history book fund. Another letter to Devon County Council had warned of the danger to the water-supply to the Grand Western Canal posed by works at Westleigh Quarry near Burescombe. Mrs Stirling thanked her fellow secretaries and the treasurer for their help, and asked if anyone would like to volunteer to act as minutes secretary in place of Dr Grant.
The Chairman thanked Mrs Stirling for her report and work over the year.
- 4 **Treasurer's Report** Mr E. Haydon reported a net deficit of only £1.04, compared with £164 last year, due to a number of members taking out life membership. The increased cost of stationery and printing had been offset by sales, which had trebled, and interest from the building society, which had quadrupled. He presented the accounts, explaining that the Charity Commission now allowed an independent examination instead of a full audit for accounts of less than £10,000. The Society's reports had therefore been independently examined by Mr A.W.F. Gore of Honiton. The meeting adopted the accounts and appointed Mr Gore as the Society's official independent examiner.
The Chairman proposed a vote of thanks to Mr Gore, and thanked the treasurer also for his work over the year.
- 5 **Editor's Report** Mrs Harris thanked all researchers and writers concerned with issues number 50 and 51 of *The Devon Historian*, and was pleased to report that they had provided material for some of the remoter parts of Devon. 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. She particularly asked contributors to remember to use double-spacing, to avoid extra charges from the printer. In the interests of balance, articles will be limited to 2,500 words in future, but shorter pieces or those with a light touch will still be very welcome. Mrs Harris asked for copy for the spring issue to be submitted by 30 November, and thanked Mrs Stirling and her helpers for dispatching copies by post twice a year.

6 Election of Council 1995-96

In the absence of any new nominations, the current officers and members of Council, whose names appeared on the agenda, were proposed, seconded and elected en bloc. A new minutes secretary will be elected by the Council. A list of officers and Council members is printed inside the front cover of every issue of *The Devon Historian*.

7 Conference Programme 1996

Mrs Stirling reported that the Society would hold its spring conference at Crediton, probably on 30 March, and visit Chulmleigh in the summer, possibly on 6 July. It was hoped that the thriving local history societies in both places would help to make these events a success. The 1996 AGM would be held on 19 October. Dr H. Fox and Dr P. Morgan would be asked to speak.

8 Any Other Business

The treasurer reminded members to pay any outstanding subscriptions.

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE EDITOR

Referencing of Sources

I should like to draw attention to a not uncommon failing among historians regarding the correct referencing of sources.

In the past few years I have noticed several instances where writers have given a primary (manuscript) source as a reference, when in fact they have used only a secondary source (usually a printed article) and taken the reference from there.

I know this to be so because, in every case, I have seen the original document myself, and know that writer (1) made an error in their reference, which is repeated by writer (2).

It may seem a small point, but it is misleading to the reader to give the impression of having consulted original material when you haven't. Such false referencing gives credibility to writing which is not necessarily justified (which may be why some adopt this practice!).

So I would urge writers to be honest to themselves and their readers, and to resist the temptation to pretend that they have consulted an original source. There is nothing wrong with giving secondary sources if that is where your information has been gained - it also protects your reputation as a writer, should the previous researcher have made a mistake.

Tom Greeves

Queries on the Land Tax

1. According to J.J. Bagley's *Historical Interpretation*: 2 (Penguin edition 1971) the land tax assessment was based upon a survey of 1692. Was the whole country surveyed? If so this must have been an exercise comparable with both the Domesday survey and Lloyd George's 'Little Domesday' of 1910, and have placed an enormous burden on the emerging surveying profession. Does anything survive of this survey anywhere?

2. It is quite common in the rural land tax assessments for the estate to be designated by a personal name. For instance, from Stoke Fleming for 1807: Owner: Arthur Hunt Esq.; occupier: Thomas Dunning; estate: Crispin's. But who was Crispin? Presumably a previous occupier, but he wasn't the previous occupier. Could he have been the occupier in 1692? Perhaps for those parishes where estate surveys or rentals survive from the 1690s, it might prove to be the case that the surnames of the then leaseholders have been preserved in the assessments of around a hundred years later. Has this research ever been attempted and with what results?

Tony Collings

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New Books of Interest to the Local Historian:

Landscape and Settlement in Britain AD 400-1066

edited by Della Hooke and Simon Burnell

PB £12.95 1995 ISBN 0 85989 386 3

The Garden History of Devon: An Illustrated Guide to Sources

by Todd Gray

PB £14.95 1995 ISBN 0 85989 453 3

Loyalty and Locality: Popular Allegiance in Devon during the English Civil War

by Mark Stoyle

HB £25.00 1994 ISBN 0 85989 428 2

Man and the Maritime Environment

edited by Stephen Fisher

PB £12.50 1994 ISBN 0 85989 393 6

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