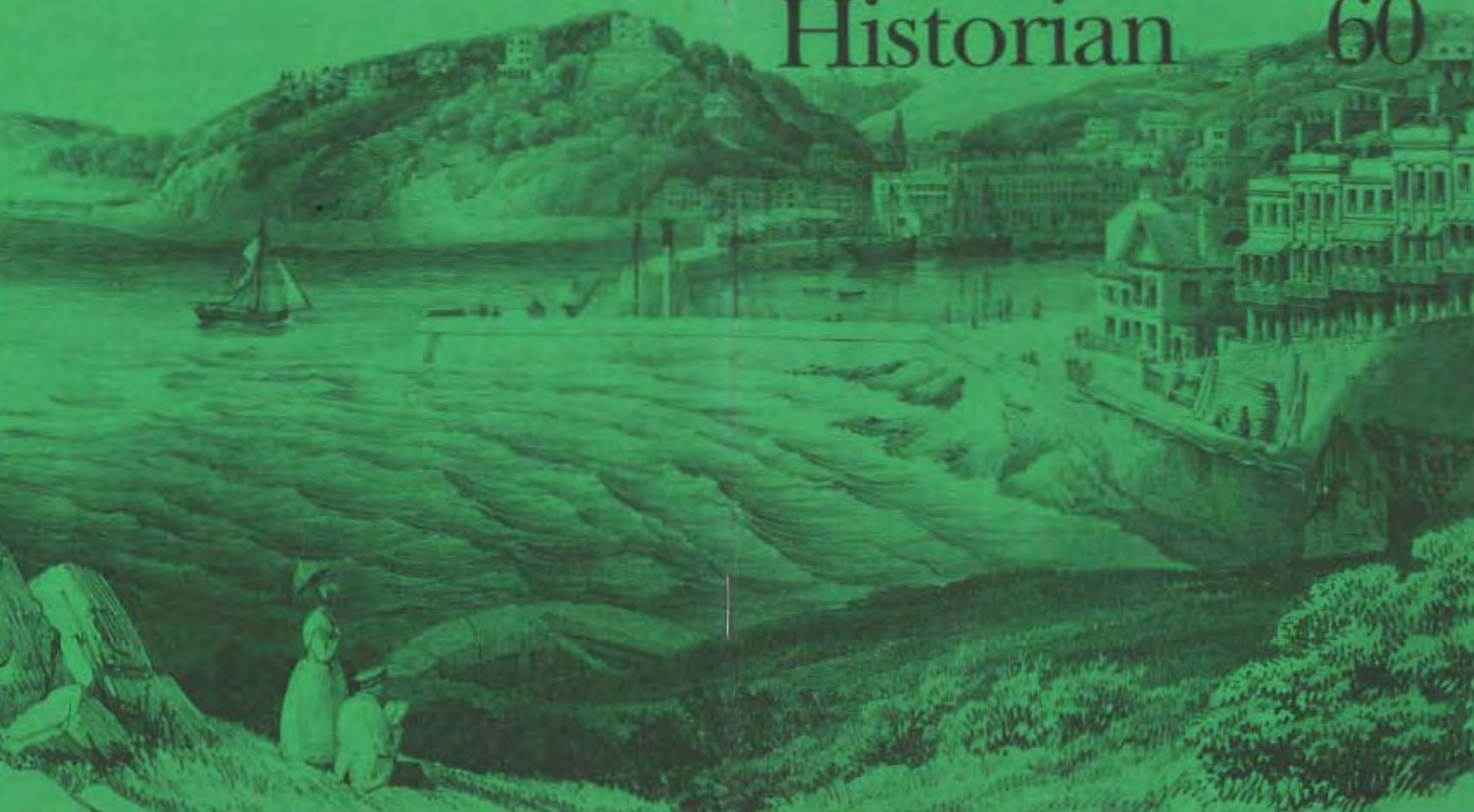


ISSN 0305 8549 © Devon History Society 2000

# The Devon Historian

April 2000

## 60



# THE DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY

## Past Presidents

Professor W.G. Hoskins (1969-73); Lady Aileen Fox (1973-5);  
Dr C.A. Raleigh Radford (1975-7); W. Best Harris (1977-81); Frank Booker (1981-2);  
Professor Joyce Youings (1982-6); Crispin Gill (1986-9); Professor Ivan Roots (1989-96);  
Dr Basil Greenhill (1993-96); Dr Harold Fox (1996-98)

## OFFICERS

PRESIDENT	Dr W.B. Stephens
CHAIRMAN	Adrian Reed
VICE-CHAIRMAN	John Pike
HON. SECRETARY	David Thomas
HON. TREASURER	Dr Sadru Bhanji
HON. EDITOR	Mrs Helen Harris
COUNCIL	Brian Clist, Tony Collings, James Coulter, Dr Todd Gray, John Leach, Ian Maxted, Robin Staines, Co-opted: Professor Joyce Youings

## MEMBERSHIP

All correspondence relating to membership, personal local history interests and offers of work or assistance should be sent to the Vice Chairman, Mr John Pike, 62 Hawkins Avenue, Chelston, Torquay TQ2 6ES.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

*The Devon Historian* is available free to all members of The Devon History Society. Membership subscriptions run annually from 1 May to 30 April and for the coming year will be as follows: Individual: £10.00; Family (that is two or more individuals in one family): £15.00; Corporate (libraries, institutions): £15.00; Affiliated societies: £10; Life Membership (open to individuals only): £100.00. Please send subscriptions to the Treasurer, Dr Sadru Bhanji, 11 Elm Grove Road, Topsham, Devon EX3 0PQ.

## THE DEVON HISTORIAN

Correspondence relating to *The Devon Historian* and contributions for publication should be sent to Mrs Helen Harris, Hon. Editor, *The Devon Historian*, Hirondelles, 22 Churchill Road, Whitechurch, Tavistock PL19 9RU. The deadline for the next issue is 1 July 2000. Books for review should be sent to Mr David Thomas, 112 Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4RW, 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 Sampford Courtenay on 25 March and at Barnstaple on 1 July. The AGM will be held at Exeter on 28 October.

The print on the cover is *Torquay, from the Beacon*. Lithograph by & after W. Sprent, publ. Sprent & Wallis, Exeter and Hamilton Adams, London. c. 1845. (Somers Cocks no.S.196)

# CONTENTS No. 60

April 2000

Notices	2
An eighteenth century carpetbagger: Barnstaple's MP, Thomas Whetham	WILLIAM LAWS 3
Limeburning in Tiverton	JOHN LEACH 8
The Iron Bridge, North Street and St David's Hill, Exeter	BRIAN GEORGE 15
The Court Barton of the Manor of Ilsington	BILL RANSOM 19
The Naval Bank	ARNOLD SAYERS 26
'In aid of the civil power' some exploits of the Devon Yeomanry	ANTHONY GREENSTREET 28
Wartime evacuees in south Devon	JOHN PIKE 33
Reviews:	
Gentry leaders in peace and war, by Mary Wolfe (Ivan Roots)	34
The Letters of Sir Walter Raleigh, ed. Agnes Latham and Joyce Youings (Todd Gray)	36
The lost chronicle of Barnstaple 1586-1611, by Todd Gray (John Carvosso)	36
Buckland Monachorum, a west Devon down and its history, by Alan Rowe (Helen Harris)	37
Other publications received	38
AGM Minutes	39

## 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 £2, post free, and from No 37 onwards £3. 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 £1 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 2000, etc.

---

## DEVON BOOK OF THE YEAR

At the annual general meeting of the Devon History Society held in Exeter on 23 October 1999 the Devon Book of the year for 1998 was awarded for the following three titles:

For a county-wide work: *Devon's century of change*, by Helen Harris (Peninsula Press).

For a local history: *A history of Axminster to 1910*, by G.M. Chapman (Marwood Publications).

For a work on a special topic: *John Graves Simcoe 1752-1806: a biography*, by Mary Beacock Fryer and Christopher Dracott (Dundurn Press).

The award was established by The Devon History Society to encourage excellence in local studies publishing and support well-researched studies in this field. This year the committee had great difficulty in selecting from the many titles that had been published. For further information concerning nominations for 1999 publications contact Ian Maxted, County Local Studies Librarian, Exeter Central Library, Castle Street, Exeter EX4 3PQ. Telephone: 01392 384224

## AN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY CARPETBAGGER: BARNSTAPLE'S MP, THOMAS WHETHAM

William Laws

Barnstaple's second MP<sup>1</sup> elected in 1722 was Thomas Whetham. A Dorset family in medieval times had taken the name of Whetham from a hamlet in the parish of Burstock, which lies west of Broadwindsor. The family in due course bought land in Devon and by the end of the fourteenth century a Whetham sat in parliament, as MP for Tavistock. But the lineal descendants of the family left the Westcountry. In nineteenth-century editions of Burke's *Landed Gentry* Thomas Whetham's grandfather - London master baker and Civil War soldier, Colonel Nathaniel Whetham - heads the pedigree of the family of Whetham of Kirklington Hall in Nottinghamshire. While Barnstaple's new MP could therefore boast some historical Devon credentials, and had cousins in the Westcountry, he himself - unlike his fellow member for the borough, an Acland - was not a prominent local man: rather, he was a professional soldier with mainly Midlands and Northcountry connections and came as a carpetbagger to Barnstaple. He was made a freeman of the borough at this time only because the town 'regularised' carpetbaggers by making them burgesses in the period after election results were known and before parliament met.<sup>2</sup>

By and large local business or landed families spoke for the county's constituencies in parliament and over the years a family like the Aclands, substantial Westcountry landowners, provided many MPs. So it is no surprise that Barnstaple's sitting MP, re-elected in 1722, was an Acland - Sir Hugh, sixth baronet. Nor is it surprising that Sir Hugh had succeeded John Bassett whose mother was an Acland, while Bassett's predecessor, returned for the parliament of 1708, had been Sir Hugh's uncle, Richard Acland. Yet carpetbaggers were no strangers to Barnstaple's electors (and they were not of course confined to Barnstaple). What is so marked about the period 1689 to 1832 is that at least twelve MPs - including Whetham - of the thirty-eight returned by the borough were carpetbaggers<sup>3</sup> - and Whetham provides a fascinating case-study of one of these.

Barnstaple's MPs from the ranks of prominent local families have been credited with 'knowing the wants and wishes of those they represented' and, equally pertinently, addressing parochial wants and wishes.<sup>4</sup> Those words would have had wide resonance in the eighteenth century. Borough interests and those of families such as the Aclands were seen as complementary if not identical. In contrast, carpetbaggers represented a constituency with which they had, until elected, little or even no connection, and as MPs their interests invariably lay elsewhere. Typically, a carpetbagger manoeuvred himself into parliament from where he could manipulate politics to serve his own ends.

Such a practitioner was Thomas Whetham. Being a professional soldier and from outside the county he would have expended considerable sums courting voters (this was not unusual in his day) and we can at least circumstantially conclude that once elected he used his energies furthering his own rather than Barnstaple's interests (again, not unusual), so much so that he was able to stand down as the borough's MP in 1727 having made a comeback in a military career which, prior to his stint at Westminster, had become tarnished. Advancement in the army - as well as in the navy, the church, the law, the universities - was smoothed by 'influence' and it was observed by a contemporary, Lord Chesterfield, that 'Parliamentary influence' was 'the known way to military preferment.'<sup>5</sup> Whetham, as we

shall see, climbed through parliamentary 'influence' to occupy one of the highest positions in the army.

No real surprises here for the borough. Electors were familiar enough with carpetbaggers and, we have every reason to suspect, more or less unperturbed being courted with electoral bribes. People may not have exactly welcomed the likes of Whetham but it is fair to say there was a degree of acquiescence. In fact, just to put things in perspective, the borough's electorate, judged in the harsher climate of the nineteenth century, achieved notoriety when parliament was informed that Barnstaple 'had been as corrupt a borough as could possibly be imagined.'<sup>6</sup> And local historian W.F. Gardiner, writing in 1897, admitted he could not deal with the political history of the borough 'with anything approaching pleasure' as 'charges of bribery and corruption followed almost every election in the days of the limited franchise.' He concluded: 'There is no doubt that the borough had a bad reputation even at a time when the standard of electoral morals was vastly different.'<sup>7</sup> To be sure, there were extreme instances. Take the election of 1713, close to Whetham's own time: the borough elected John Rolle after he had personally paid off the town council's current debts. Or an election a century later: the borough elected in 1818 Sir Manasseh Lopes 'for a consideration of £3,000' and at a time when he was awaiting trial elsewhere on charges of bribery and corruption.<sup>8</sup> But to return to Thomas Whetham: his career reflects upon practices in early eighteenth-century public life, alien to our ideas yet not altogether unacceptable to the political classes of the day, including the electorate of Barnstaple. Whetham, as we noted, bought his Barnstaple seat and did so in order to benefit from parliamentary 'influence', for he was seeking to salvage a chequered career as an army officer. To understand how he had reached this point we need to know what had happened in his military service.

The military historian, David Chandler, writing about professionalism in the army in the early eighteenth century, has commented: 'In a period when promotion was determined as much by purchase or influence as by proven merit, it is remarkable how good a great many were. On the other hand there were also patent disgraces.'<sup>9</sup> What, then, of Barnstaple's new MP? How does he measure up? According to an early nineteenth-century military historian Whetham as a young officer 'acquired a reputation for gallantry and attention to all his duties.'<sup>10</sup> Perhaps - and if so, creditably - there was at least some 'proven merit' Yet early on he also enjoyed 'influence'. Thus in 1696, after service as an ensign, he obtained command of a company in the regiment of Colonel Emmanuel Scrope Howe, his mother's cousin; this colonel was the regiment's proprietor as well as its commanding officer and therefore influential in the arena of military patronage.<sup>11</sup> Five years later Whetham himself was commanding at regimental level.<sup>12</sup> But how 'good' was he? Consider the year 1703 when he led his troops, who were garrisoning the West Indian Leeward Islands, against the French in Guadeloupe; the expedition was a failure. Early in 1706 the French retaliated; Whetham, though times were dire, was by then an absentee commander and his garrison put up poor resistance. In 1709, after a year's service in the Irish garrison, he was appointed commander of a small-scale expedition against the French in Canada; this one faltered and he was superseded. Even so, he was later appointed a brigade commander in Scotland; his patron, Lord Scrope, had spoken strongly on his behalf, and afterwards wrote to the Earl of Oxford, who had been instrumental in obtaining the appointment, referring to 'the honour you have been pleased to confer on Mr Whetham' and offering 'most humble thanks to your charity to him', especially 'as he is my relation'. In 1715 Whetham fought in Scotland against the Jacobites; they forced him and his men to retreat from Sheriffmuir to Stirling. We can have only a low opinion of his military record.<sup>13</sup> But there is a wider story here, one which presents him in a most unattractive light: he was, it seems, also a 'patent disgrace'.

Then as now the greater part of any soldier's attention was fixed upon mundane matters

- such as pay, food and clothing. But, ethical frontiers being different then, commanding officers in supplying their troops acted routinely on the fringes of honesty, usually not cheating too outrageously. Even in the climate of opinion of the early eighteenth century, however, there was concern over exceptional cheating in these matters, and the nettle was grasped in 1706 with the setting up in London of a standing Board of General Officers to look into 'Misbehaviour' in supplying pay, food and clothing.<sup>14</sup> The man who became Barnstaple's MP had been discredited with just such 'Misbehaviour' whilst commanding, as an absentee, the garrison in the Leeward Islands.

The West Indies was one of the most dreaded postings, with disease - in particular yellow fever - being a more savage enemy than our colonial rivals, the French. Duty in a colony like the Leeward Islands was regarded almost as equivalent to a sentence of lingering death. Thomas Whetham survived - he became an absentee commanding officer, living in London with his wife, Mary. The colony's governor, Colonel Daniel Parke, wrote in 1706 to Sir Charles Hedges in London: 'Col Whetham has not been here 4 months in the five years.'<sup>15</sup> Later he complained to the Council of Trade and Plantation: 'The Collonell had the regiment given to him to come over to it', but he left for home after a short stay and 'has never been with it since.'<sup>16</sup> There was nothing new about absenteeism among senior ranks but Parke believed Whetham's to be excessive, breaching acceptable conduct for a garrison commander in a war zone.

Additionally, and worse, soldiers received neither pay nor clothing from Whetham. In 1707 three of his companies petitioned the government, stating: 'we have not received any pay since we came about five years....nor till this year any cloaths.'<sup>17</sup> Governor Parke found that officers 'were forced to buy clothes for them here' and he reported that some soldiers, even officers, had been forced to take up civilian jobs: he told the Council of Trade and Plantations: 'If the people here had not been very kind to them, they must all have starved.'<sup>18</sup> A cause of even more disquiet was that desperate elements in the garrison 'instead of protecting and defending' colonists, 'did robb and plunder them of their stock, cattle, goods and effects.'<sup>19</sup> Meanwhile Whetham, from London, filled officer vacancies charging, for example, seventy guineas for an ensign's commission.<sup>20</sup> In a letter to the Earl of Sunderland the governor summed up as follows: 'Col. Whetham lives at his ease in London, and gets more money by this regiment than any five collonells that have been in the Battles of Blenheim and Rammalies.'<sup>21</sup>

Such ease and income were not to continue much longer, however, for Whetham was replaced and sent to Ireland in 1708. But morale in the Leeward Islands' garrison was so low that the governor wondered 'what more service can be expected from men thus used'. Colonists were particularly concerned because Whetham's men had not stopped the French in 1706 from despoiling two Leeward Islands, St. Kitts and Nevis, and now they were 'under very great apprehensions' the French would attack again.<sup>22</sup> (The French did attack again, though much later, in 1711 and 1712, after Whetham had been relieved, but the garrison had hardly recovered so the attacks, especially against Montserrat, were destructive.<sup>23</sup>) Some 'poor and distressed' soldiers - transferred to other regiments including that of the new commander in the Leeward Islands - were still complaining in 1710 that Whetham had left them 'without being paid and cloathes we had due to us.'<sup>24</sup> Thus Barnstaple's MP had treated his command, as he was to treat his parliamentary seat, as a business proposition (and there were other such cases in the eighteenth century) collecting perquisites. As well, pay and clothing were convenient sources of speculation, for a dishonest colonel. Governor Parke concluded: 'Had he been obliged to live here, the clamour of his own men, and people, would have obliged him to have used them better.'<sup>25</sup>

There had been, then, operational failures, campaigns beset by bungling, when Whetham

commanded in the field - but these failures, while public knowledge, were later not necessarily brought to the attention of Barnstaple's voters, distant in eighteenth-century terms from the political centre, London. That said, we can as well see a darker side to his career which, even in those rather complacent times, had given rise to censure. Years before buying votes in Barnstaple - and, to be fair, quite possibly unbeknown to local people as evidence was mainly in official correspondence - the professional soldier had been highly unprofessional. From about 1715, when he would have been in his early 40s, his military career stagnated. Facing a career hiatus he therefore needed that seat in parliament.

To his credit, of course, Whetham did take some cognisance of his constituency after Barnstaple's citizens made him an MP in 1722. This can be seen when looking at the trade war between the rival ports, Barnstaple and Bideford. The compilers of *Magna Britannia*, published in 1720, considered that Bideford had 'almost drawn the trade of Barnstaple to itself' and 'customs amount to considerable sums yearly'.<sup>26</sup> When Bideford then sought to wrest from Barnstaple the collection of Appledore's port dues, the corporation of Barnstaple became very concerned and petitioned the Commissioners of Customs in London. Siding with the corporation, Whetham petitioned the Treasury on Barnstaple's behalf, arguing that 'annexation' of dues by Bideford would have 'most fatal consequences' for the port of Barnstaple and its 'revenues and privileges' Barnstaple was allowed to retain its 'revenues and privileges'.<sup>27</sup>

None the less Whetham's chief interest remained his military career. Even such a poor track record as his was sanitised by his having a seat in parliament and he was able, having gained parliamentary 'influence', to resume his career. David Chandler observed that 'privileged officers - Peers of the Realm, Members of Parliament, and their connections - clustered thickly in the upper reaches of the military hierarchy'.<sup>28</sup> Whetham gained a foothold in these 'upper reaches'. Instead of seeking re-election for Barnstaple in the new parliament in 1727 he obtained the rank of lieutenant general, in 1727, upon stepping down as one of Barnstaple's two MPs. There then followed comfortable home service with promotion to full general, culminating in the military governorship of the large garrison of Berwick-upon-Tweed.<sup>29</sup>

Thomas Whetham's career was a disagreeable brew. He certainly made best use of 'influence'. Yet it could be said of course that he was simply playing by well-established rules. Much less edifying were his shortcomings as a military commander. And as Barnstaple's MP his mind was on relaunching his military career. How much had been known about him in Barnstaple when he stood for parliament here in 1722 remains a matter of speculation. Something of his shortcomings may have trickled down to the Westcountry. On the other hand, what was public knowledge in London was not necessarily common knowledge, especially among those far outside London circles. A second caveat: there was no tradition then for scrutinising in depth the backgrounds of parliamentary candidates. That becomes a particular focus of attention only much later. In any case, the people of Barnstaple, though deemed at a later date 'corrupt', must be seen in the context of what in their day was acceptable, and that included the quite commonplace wooing by carpetbaggers. Given the times, therefore, the electorate does not come out of this particular story too badly. Much more could not have been expected in the early eighteenth century.

## References and Notes

1. Until 1885 Barnstaple returned two MPs.
2. For general family history as well as the career of Nathaniel Whetham see Whetham,

C.D. and Whetham, W.C.D., *A History of the Life of Colonel Nathaniel Whetham* (London, 1907). See also Burke's *Landed Gentry* (London, from 1836) and Daphne Drake's two articles: 'MPs For Barnstaple, 1492-1688', *Transactions of the Devonshire Association*, 72 (1940), 251-64 and 'MPs For Barnstaple, 1689-1832', *Transactions*, 73 (1941), 181-93. Whetham's burgess oath is found in Barnstaple Borough Records, B1/1334.

3. Drake, *ibid.*, 73 (1941), 181-93.
4. Harper, S., *History of Barnstaple* (Barnstaple, 1910), 47.
5. Quoted in Namier, L., *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III* (London 1970), 25.
6. Quoted in Newton, R., 'The Barnstaple Election of July, 1852', *The Devon Historian*, 21 (1980), 2.
7. Gardiner, W.F., *Barnstaple* (Barnstaple, 1897), 121.
8. Newton, *op.cit.*, 2; Drake, *op.cit.*, 73(1941), 189; Harper, *op.cit.*, 48. Lopes was later convicted and sentenced to two years' imprisonment.
9. Chandler, D., ed., *The Oxford Illustrated History of the British Army* (Oxford, 1994), 78.
10. Cannon, R., *Historical Record of the Twelfth* (London 1848), 98.
11. *Calendar of State Papers Domestic* (1696), 49. See also Whetham and Whetham, *op.cit.* and Burke, *op.cit.* The Scropes (variously Scrope, Scroope or Scroop) were a Yorkshire family, with Oxfordshire cousins.
12. *Calendar of State Papers Domestic* (1702-3), 240, 384.
13. See *Calendar of State Papers Colonial: America and West Indies* (1702-3), 737 and (1708-9), 497, 498; Portland MSS, *Historical MSS Commission*, 29 (X), 309; Drake, *op.cit.*, 184-5; Cannon, *op.cit.*, 98; also see below references to CO documents on Leeward Islands.
14. Chandler, *op.cit.*, 79
15. Parke to Hedges, 28 August 1706, CO 239/1, 12. CO documents are deposited in the Public Record Office, London.
16. Parke to Council, 15 February 1707, CO 152/7, 3.
17. Petition is enclosed in CO 152/7, 3. Whetham received regular payments for his men; for example £650 for 28 days' subsistence, March 1707 - see *Calendar of Treasury Book* (1706-7), ii, 195.
18. Parke to Council, 15 February 1707, *op.cit.*
19. Address from Council and Assembly of St. Kitts to the Queen, 22 October 1707, CO 152/7, 31.
20. Parke to Council, 15 February 1707, *op.cit.*
21. Parke to Sunderland, February 1707, CO 7/1, 14.
22. Parke to Council, 15 February 1707, *op.cit.*
23. See, for example, Parsons to Douglas, 2 August 1712, CO 152/9, 135.
24. Petition, 24 April 1710, CO 152/9, 21. There are 110 signatures.
25. Parke to Council, 15 February 1707, *op.cit.*
26. Quoted in Glanville, R., *History of Bideford* (Bideford, 1883), 84.
27. See, for example, *Calendar of Treasury Papers* (1720-8), CCXLI, 6. In the nineteenth century Bideford lost the title of 'Port' (though it was restored in 1928).
28. Chandler, *op.cit.*, 102.
29. See *Gentleman's Magazine*, X, 261; Cannon, *op.cit.*, 98; Drake, *op.cit.*, 73(1941), 184. Whetham died in Berwick in 1741.

## LIMEBURNING IN TIVERTON

John Leach

Located at an ancient crossing point of the River Exe, Tiverton is a long established market town serving a widespread agricultural industry. Historically, it has also maintained extensive wool, lace and engineering industries, and so by the mid-nineteenth century it had become a relatively large town. Unlike other Devon towns, this physical growth was in brick, stone and slate, because an Act of Parliament, dated 1732, forbade the use of cob, wood and thatch. Lime for mortar and plaster would then have been in great demand from an early date. Commercially however, the largest local market for lime was in agriculture, where it was (and still is) used to improve acidic soils. It was in great use from the seventeenth century when Thomas Westcote described the various manures that were available in Devon:

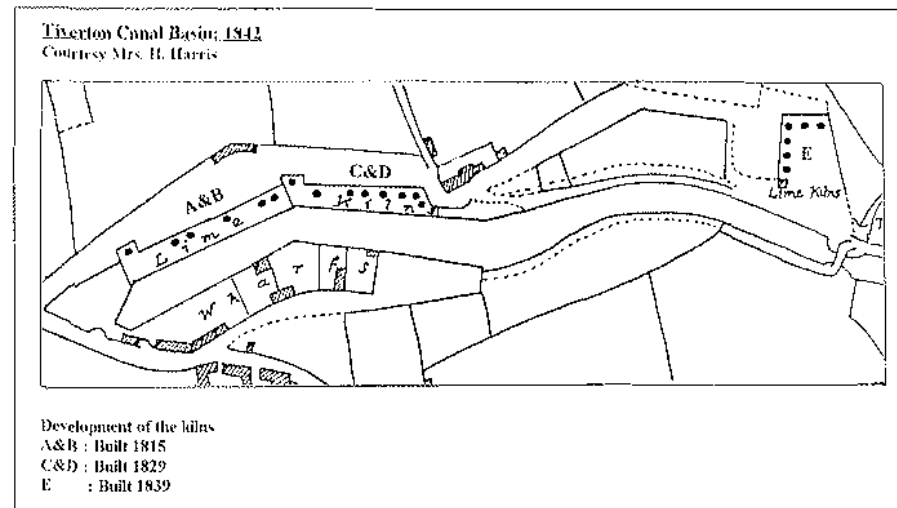
‘...and now newly and most in use, lime which is employed many several ways...do yield (though with no small charge) good increase at harvest and better the succeeding pasture.’<sup>1</sup>

Describing wheat production in Bampton in 1808, Charles Vancouver recorded the use of ‘40 double Winchester bushels [approx. 4 tons] of lime per acre’, when preparing the ground.<sup>2</sup>

An early record of such use comes from Salcombe Regis when, in 1281, Canon Nolan of Exeter limed and marled the new intakes.<sup>3</sup> Whether knowledge of this practice had spread to mid Devon is not known, but by 1305 there were limkilns operating in Tiverton.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps, alternatively, they were associated with building at the castle. The next reference, in December 1530, concerns a debt, where in the Court Rolls mention is made of, ‘...five of the Lord’s limkilns called Shomekisburn’.<sup>5</sup> The exact site is unknown, but the reference suggests more than five, which would be an extensive industry at this early date. The source of the stone is not known, but was probably supplied from the calcareous rocks in the Hockworthy and Huntsham area. The use of the lime was also extending to industry with evidence of tallow and tanning trades at an early date. According to Pigot’s directory for 1830 these were still ongoing, and another lime dependent industry - soap boiling - had been added. Agriculture remained the largest consumer of lime, and during the height of land improvement the application of manures was made a condition of farm leases. In 1785, Lower Gotham, Tiverton (33 acres), was let for a rent of £49pa and a condition:

‘...to spread on each acre tilled 10 hogshead of lime or 150 seams of good black well rotten dung or 50 seams of soap ashes, no more than three successive crops without such dressing’<sup>6</sup>

Demand was insatiable, and farmers were travelling up to thirty miles via Tiverton from the cold clay lands around Witheridge to collect lime from the Canonsleigh lime-works.<sup>7</sup> In the mid 1790s when this works was producing 20,000 tons annually, William Marshall reported that some farmers were carrying the better ‘stone lime’ by packhorse ‘to a great distance’.<sup>8</sup> Of note in this period were the Dunsford family of Tiverton. In 1779, Henry (a mercer) was a lessee of the limeworks at ‘The Hill’, Burescombe. His



son, also Henry (a banker), acquired this freehold in 1822, and leased the first of the kilns at the Tiverton Canal Basin in 1814-15. He is also recorded, with a man called Talbot, as having kilns in Gold Street in 1821,<sup>9</sup> but as they were then both established at the canal basin, the significance of this remains unclear.

The era was also one of ‘canal mania’ and the Grand Western Canal was promoted to link the Bristol and English Channels. Its Act of 1796 proposed a line from Taunton to Topsham with several branches, including one to Tiverton.<sup>10</sup> Because of the extensive lime trade with the country to the west of Tiverton, it was anticipated that there would be extensive traffic along this branch, so building was commenced at Canonsleigh, and this canal opened in August 1814. Earlier, in May, a proposal was made to extend the canal by means of horse drawn tramways to Chulmleigh via Cadeleigh, and to Crediton to link up with another proposed canal. The area to be served obtained an estimated 30,000 tons of lime from limeworks at Barnstaple, Canonsleigh and Topsham. It was hoped, by means of the tramway, for this district to be supplied solely from Tiverton, but the scheme did not proceed.<sup>11</sup>

To service the trade, two large banks of kilns were built. For discussion purposes only, the developmental stages have been annotated A to E. The plan notes their development in three stages - A & B, C & D, and E - and shows the complex at its fullest extent, with twenty kilns operational.

The earliest leases relate to plots A and B and each comprised, ‘...a Wharf upon which a Wharf Wall, Lime Kilns [number not specified], Arches and a Wall to support the bank have lately been erected by the said [Grand Western Canal] Company’. Henry Dunsford and Hugh Talbot (yeoman) of Holcombe Rogus leased them respectively for 21 years from 25 March 1815 for £63pa.<sup>12</sup> That Dunsford was producing lime there before that date is evidenced by an advertisement in the *Exeter Flying Post* dated 9 January 1815. He and a colleague called Browne were selling lime and ashes for 5s6d and 3s6d (25.5p & 17.5p) per hogshead with a 6d (2.5p) discount for early payment. A hogshead of lime was approximately five hundredweights. Accounts were normally to be settled at the Phoenix Inn, Tiverton in February and March. The advertisement also hints at an earlier custom of part payment ‘in kind’:

'Many customers having expressed a wish that the old established custom of sending meat and drink by the carriers be discontinued; the limeburners signify their consent to receive 1.5d per hogshead in lieu of same.'

Rather curiously in the same newspaper on 14 November 1822 there is an advertisement for the lease of Dunsford's *three* kilns at Tiverton, and his own limeworks at Burllescombe. Perhaps he wished to sub-let them rather than operate them directly himself.

New kilns (plots C&D) were let together for 21 years from 1 May 1829 for a rent of £84 10s 0d (£84.50p). John Talbot, limeburner of Holcombe Rogus, took plot C (next to that of Hugh Talbot) and John Potter, limeburner of Westleigh, took the other. Each leased, 'All that Lime Kiln [singular] and Lime Wharf.'<sup>13</sup> The building of these kilns and a wall at Ebear cost £104 10s 11d<sup>14</sup> (£104.59.5p). At Christmas 1841 Henry Dunsford took Potter's kiln(s) and wharf, and negotiated a new lease for both plots (A&D) for twelve years for £140 16s 3d (£140 81.5p).<sup>15</sup> Interestingly, the plan accompanying that lease shows that John Talbot was then in possession of his own and Hugh Talbot's plots (B&C). After this date the occupancy of the kilns becomes confused with few contemporary documents to consult. The following are the known occupants:

**Table 1: Occupants of the Tiverton Lime Kilns - post 1840.**

Date	Occupants	Plots	Source	Notes
1841	Henry Dunsford John Talbot John R. Chave	A&D B&C E	DRO 2062B/L7 ditto DRO 2062B/L5	James Talbot in Canal accounts See text below
1842	Richard Davey John R. Chave	?ABC&D E	Tiverton Title Award ditto	Presumably Talbot omitted
1844	Davey & Cosway? James Talbot John R. Chave	A&D ?B&C E	C. Edginton <sup>16</sup> ditto ditto	Richard Davey, died 1849
1847	Mr Buckingham	E	DRO, 589	
1848	Tristram Whitter	E	ditto	
1850	Davey & Cosway James Talbot	?A&D ?B&C	White's Directory ditto	Robert Davey
1853	Robert Davey		<i>Tiv. Gazette</i> 19.5.1863	
1866	Robert Davey		Post Office Directory	
1873	Wm. & Phillip Cosway		ditto	
1878	Henry B. Russell		Bill in Tiverton Museum ?Additional to the Cosways	
1893	Cosway		Harris <sup>17</sup>	Two kilns

Note that the Tiverton branch of the Bristol & Exeter Rly. Co. opened in this year.

The six kilns on plot E were let to John Richard Chave, lime merchant of Ashford near Burllescombe, for eleven years from Christmas 1839 for rent of £55 6s 8d (£55 33p) annually. The wharf or 'New works' was built by the canal company at a cost of £557 5s 5d<sup>16</sup>, (£557.27p), but the kilns were erected by Chave.<sup>19</sup> By 1847 they had passed to the occupancy of a Mr. Buckingham who operated his lime business from Tiverton and

Thelbridge. Possibly due to financial problems he was working with Mark Kennaway, solicitor, of Exeter, and Tristram Whitter, solicitor of Cullompton, who declared himself bankrupt as a limeburner in February 1848.<sup>20</sup> After only nine years it would appear that these kilns fell out of use for ever.

From the existing documents the financial position and relationship of Buckingham, Kennaway and Whitter is not clear. However there are a number of documents which shed light on the limeburning business. Possibly as a prelude to acquiring the kilns, a valuation was made of the six kilns (E) based on the financial year 1842-43 and the details are given in table 2.

**Table 2: Valuation of the Lime Kilns at Tiverton: 1842-43.**

*Tiverton Lime Kilns.*

The property of Mr. John Richard Chave of Sampford Peverell.

The quantity of Lime and Ashes sold at these Kilns from 5th August 1842 to 5 November 1843

6,042 Hogshead of Lime and 625 Hogshead of Ashes.

The cost of producing same as follows. Viz:

	£	s	d	£	s	d
				1107	13	11
The limeburner	114	3	3			
Quarryman inc. powder and freight to Tiverton	113	5	0			
Horse	25	0	0			
Carpenter	7	0	0			
Ground rent for kilns and the lease	55	6	8			
Per tonnage on the stone	108	17	11			
Rates and taxes	7	0	0			
Collecting cash & repair of boats	71	1	1			
	807	13	11	807	13	11
Nett Profit				300	0	0

Source: DRO, 589, Box 733

Included in the same document is a similar valuation for Chave's limeworks at Sampford Peverell. Together they made a profit of £695 which was very good. However it should be borne in mind that this was five years before the opening of the railway line to Tiverton. As the main line from Bristol to Exeter opened in May 1844, it may be that Chave perceived the threat and reduced his limeburning interests.

The enterprise of Buckingham extended well to the west of Tiverton, and customers to the south and east suggest that perhaps he also acquired Chave's limeworks at Sampford Peverell. Table 3 notes the numbers of individuals (named in the document) by parish who had not paid their lime debts. Presumably there were many more who had paid. Accounts were paid at 'lime dinners' held at Tiverton and Thelbridge. These cost £4 17s 6d (£4.87.5p) and £6 1s 6d (£6.7.5p) respectively in 1847.<sup>21</sup>

**Table 3: Lime debts assigned by Mr Whitter to Mr Kennaway not paid.**

	1847	1848		1847	1848		1847	1848
Burlescombe	1	-	Morehard B.	2	-	Washford	3	-
Batterleigh	2	-	Plymtree	1	-	Washford Pyne	-	2
Cadeleigh	1	-	Poughill	1	-	Witheridge	2	5
Cberiton	2	1	Puddington	-	4	Woodserysick	-	3
Crawys M.	3	8	Stoodleigh	1	-	Worlington	-	5
Cullompton	1	-	Templeton	-	2	Uffculme	3	-
Halberton	3	-	Thebridge	2	5	[Not listed by		
Kennerleigh	-	1	Tiverton	7	3	parish]	-	3
Lapford	1	-	Washfield	1	4			

Source: DRO 58/9, Box 74/3.

Whitter failed to pay the half year rent for the Tiverton kilns at Christmas 1847. Accordingly the canal company sent in a bailiff, John Norrish, to distrain goods equivalent to £27 13s 4d (£27.67p) These included a quantity of items from the dwelling house (not listed here) and from the kilns: 7 lime tubs, 5 shovels, 5 planks, 2 spades, 2 sledges, 1 bucket, 1 iron bar, sundry tools and quantities of culm and limestone.

Because the limeburners were small businessmen they left few records of their activity. One can only speculate as to the success of their ventures with so few documents to consider. It is equally frustrating that so few records of the canal company have survived. The tonnages carried for the years 1847-54 and for 1888-1905 are given in table 4.

**Table 4: Tonnages carried on the Grand Western Canal**

Year	Limestone	Coal/Culm	Lime/Manure	Other	Total
Ended 31.5					
1846-47	21,230	19,927	92	9,077	50,326
1847-48	22,989	22,128	195	11,200	56,512
1848-49	20,815	10,143	140	6,320	37,418
1849-50	14,341	10,818		4,617	29,776
1850-51	14,708	9,427	75	5,837	30,047
1851-52	14,970	10,574	326	7,682	33,552
1852-53	16,519	10,645	191	9,999	37,354
1853-54	19,229	6,122	103	10,300	35,754
1888					4,113
1890	4,539				
1898					1,952
1905					5,182

<sup>1</sup> Note that the railway to Tiverton opened on 12.6.1848.

Sources: H. Harris, *The Grand Western Canal*, Newton Abbot, 1973, pp134 & 194

C. Radfield, *The Canals of South West England*, Newton Abbot, 1967, p115

Whilst these figures are for all traffic on the canal it can be reasonably assumed that the limestone traffic would be almost entirely for Tiverton.

The opening of the Bristol and Exeter Railway ended the scheme to extend the canal to Topsham, and the connection to Tiverton (opened on 12 June 1848) threatened the existence of the canal company itself. Initially an agreement was proposed that the railway company should carry all the coal traffic and the canal company all the limestone, but in 1852 the canal company decided to join the Bridgwater and Taunton Canal and fight for all the traffic. It did not succeed, and after a period of decline the canal was sold to the railway company under an Act of July 1864.<sup>22</sup> Before this, however, traders took advantage of Tiverton being connected to the emerging railway system. Sidings and a goods yard were established and general traders, such as Messrs. Goodland and Quant, removed their business from the canal wharf. The railway was also importing new manures such as guano, which competed with lime for a short period. In 1850 there were two guano merchants in Tiverton (Thomas Haydon & George Sanders),<sup>23</sup> and by 1866 two new lime merchants (John Carpenter & Richard Stone)<sup>24</sup> were established in the railway yard.

Despite the competition, the canal continued for many years to carry limestone. The Cosway family used two kilns until 1895 and employed a Mr. Berry as their limeburner. The main kilns (A-D) were filled in by William Punchard around 1905. They have survived and are now a Grade II listed structure. It is not known when the other kilns (E) were demolished, but the site is now covered by a housing development appropriately named Lime Kiln Road. The canal continued to carry limestone up to 1925, to William Elworthy's roadstone depot near the Tiverton Road bridge.

At their peak there were twenty lime kilns operating in Tiverton - one of the largest complexes in Britain. Whether they were a successful commercial operation is hard to know without further information. There was an extensive lime trade prior to the construction of the canal, and an obvious market. However, it would seem that to build twenty kilns was over ambitious and doomed when the railway network spread. The Tiverton kilns were also at a serious disadvantage as they were not immediately adjacent to their necessary raw materials - coal (from South Wales) and limestone. Both had to be imported, which would ultimately make the unit cost of lime uncompetitive.

Acknowledgements: In preparing this article I would like to acknowledge the help of the Devon Record Office and its staff, and also that of Mrs D. Butler, Mrs H. Harris, Mrs B. Keene and Mr M. Sampson.

## References

1. Westcote, T., *View of Devonshire*, 1630, (ed. Oliver & Jones, 1845), p56.
2. Vancouver, C., *General view of the agriculture of Devon*. (London, 1808), p153.
3. Anderson-Morsehead, J.Y., 'A history of Salcombe Regis', in *Transactions of the Devonshire Association*, 30, 1898, p139.
4. Collinson, M.P.D., *Courtenay Cartulary from Powderham Castle*. Exeter Univ. thesis, 1972, vol.1.
5. Devon Record Office (DRO), Tiverton Court Rolls, CR262.
6. DRO, 1926B/W/L28/3.
7. Harris, H., *The Grand Western Canal*, (Newton Abbot, 1973), p41.
8. Marshall, W., *Rural economy of the West of England*, (London, 1796), vol. 1, pp157-8.



9. 'Survey and estimate for a new Pools rate', 1821. Information courtesy of Mrs. B. Keene.
10. See Harris (*op.cit.*) for a full account of the Canal.
11. Harris, *op.cit.*, p52
12. DRO, 2062B/L1 & 2062B/L2.
13. DRO, 2062B/L3 & 2062B/L4.
14. Tiverton Museum, *Account book of the Grand Western Canal, 1819-1851*, Ref: 1997.374.
15. DRO, 2062B/L7.
16. Edginton, C., *Tiverton's Industrial Archaeology*, (Exeter, 1976), p25.
17. Harris, *op.cit.*, p133.
18. Tiverton Museum, *Account book of the Grand Western Canal, 1819-1851*, Ref: 1997.374.
19. DRO, 2062B/L5.
20. *Exeter Flying Post*, 24.2.1848.
21. DRO, 58/9, Box 74/3, Accounts 1847.
22. Act of Parliament, 27 & 28 Vic., cap 184.
23. White's Directory of Devon, 1850, p320.
24. Post Office Directory, 1866, p1023.

---

**Society of Genealogists.** The Society of Genealogists, a major resource for local historians with books and pamphlets about many towns and villages, is keen to build up its holdings and would welcome donations of local histories and local history journals. They can be on any aspect of local history - traditional local histories of parish or place, also of local friendly societies, breweries, railways, etc. Readers could help the project along by donating material or suggesting publications the SoG should buy or journals to which it should subscribe. If you have material to donate, or would like further information, please contact the Society's librarian, Sue Gibbons, at the Society of Genealogists, 14 Charterhouse Buildings, Goswell Rd, London, EC1M 7BA; tel: 0207-250 0291 or e-mail - library@sog.org.uk.

## THE IRON BRIDGE, NORTH STREET AND ST DAVID'S HILL, EXETER

Brian George

In February 1830 the Hon Newton Fellowes had given notice to the Exeter Turnpike trustees that in view of the new road then being formed from Eggesford to Copplestone and from Stoke Bridge to Cowley they would both be incomplete without a new line of road to avoid the steep gradients of St David's Hill. Thereafter Mr John Coldridge appears to have been involved for the Turnpike Trust in making a route for what was to be New North Road and also for easing the gradients of St David's Hill.

In 1833 some responsibility for the improvement of North Street to St David's Hill, Exeter also lay with the Exeter Commissioners of Improvement, whose minute book commences from that year. However it has to be noted that in 1816 the Exeter Turnpike Trust had listed this road as extending from Paul Street to Cowley Bridge and beyond towards Barnstaple as one of their roads. The surveyor for the Exeter Commissioners was again Mr John Coldridge. At a meeting of the commissioners in December 1833 two alternative schemes for reducing the steep gradients down to the crossing of the Longbrook were considered, one to build retaining walls parallel to the existing road and fill between them with rubble at a cost of £2,042 while the other was to carry the new road on arches from a point above the Plume and Feathers Inn, beside the Barnstaple Inn to the Crown and Sceptre Inn at a cost of £3,588. It was noted that in addition to either scheme the acquisition of buildings would cost an additional £2,132. The scheme for the arches was accepted.<sup>1</sup>

Later in December estimates for an iron structure were requested from the Blaina Ironworks and from the Neath Abbey Ironworks. Only Blaina replied, quoting for eight arches of 30 feet span at £450 each. Butterleigh works had asked for a plan but the Commissioners of Improvement at that time appeared to prefer a masonry structure.<sup>2</sup>

In January 1834 it was reported that the adoption of iron for the bridge was again to be proposed to the commissioners. It seemed that Mr Russell 'of the celebrated firm of that name', Russell and Brown, Ironfounders, was at that time in Exeter possibly negotiating the sale of lamp pillars which he later supplied to the city. Having learned that he might be of assistance he had brought with him from his works an engineer and with the plans before them these men were engaged in the formation of another estimate. Also on the scene was 'Mr Julian of this city' who had laid a plan before the committee which was much commended.<sup>3</sup> Mr Julian appears to have been the architect of Peak House, Sidmouth, who at the end of 1834 was engaged in the design of Sidmouth Sea Wall. Also in January 1834 the commissioners discussed the alternative schemes for iron construction which would give a rise off the existing North Street of 21 feet at Mr Salter's property. Mr Julian's tender was £5,150 and Mr Russell's was £5,229.<sup>4</sup> With scheme costs rising, an approach was made in February to the Exeter Turnpike Trustees, who responded by voting a contribution of £2,500 towards the North Street to St David's Hill highway scheme which would include the bridge.<sup>5</sup>

By March, despite the slight difference in the estimated cost, Mr Russell's scheme appears to have prevailed over Mr Julian's. The commissioners had met the Turnpike Trustees on the 11th to consider the gradients on the road from Red Cow gate to the Crown and Sceptre Inn and an iron bridge had been discussed from a plan by Mr Russell. It would be 88 yards in length with six iron arches, would have a rise of 21 feet



Iron Bridge, North Street and St David's Hill, Exeter. A.B. George.

at Mr Salter's and would terminate in front of the Barnstaple Inn. The total cost of Russell's iron bridge and of Whitaker's masonry would be £8,972 and it was agreed to go forward on the basis of £6,500 from the Improvement Commissioners and £2,500 from the Turnpike Trust.<sup>6</sup>

In May 1834 it was reported that Messrs Russell and Brown would have the cast-iron forged at the iron works at Blaina in Monmouthshire (Gwent). In 1828 a horse-drawn tramway had been opened along the valley of the Ebbw Fach and thus past Blaina to connect with canals to Newport. The iron would then be shipped from Newport to the Exe Basin, recently constructed by James Green. The bridge would be 26 feet wide in the clear at a cost of £3,050. Mr Russell expected working plans and models to be ready in ten days. Mr Coldridge, surveyor, would prepare plans for the masonry work that would be requisite.<sup>7</sup>

Within a week Mr Coldridge had offered his resignation on the grounds that the

work of the commissioners was taking up too much of his and his son's time, particularly because of the additional work entailed in the consideration of the proposed iron bridge.<sup>8</sup> His post was advertised as whole-time with a salary of £200 per year plus £20 for the rent of a surveyor's office, and in June Mr Thomas Whitaker was appointed as surveyor.<sup>9</sup> Mr Whitaker was at the time a contractor to the commissioners for flag paving and for the construction of a conduit, and inspector for works for the viaduct. Later, in 1844, he was to become the second County Surveyor of Bridges in succession to James Green.

In December, Mr Golesworthy, a Commissioner of Improvement and chairman of the North Street committee, went to Wales to ascertain the progress in making the iron-work. He saw the manufacture of four of the six arches completed and described it as one of the most magnificent and beautiful works he had ever seen, saying that it was now rapidly progressing and would shortly be completed.<sup>10</sup> Early in April 1835 £600 was paid to Messrs Russell and Brown on account for their work and at the end of the month the commissioners noted that their outstanding liability for the balance of the contract was £2,600.<sup>11</sup> In June the copings and railings for the walls were ordered, the width of flagged footpath on each side would be 3 feet 6 inches, and by August extra costs in Mr Russell's account were being examined.<sup>12</sup> The bridge appears to have been completed in July, for 12 months later the retention money was paid.

However there was still work to be done on the scheme for as late as 7 January 1836 an advertisement was placed in the *Exeter Flying Post* for tenders for providing and fixing granite copings on the walls of the approaches to the bridge and tenders for fixing the cast iron palisading to the coping. In April 1836 the surveyor produced a certificate from Mr Boswell, the sub-surveyor of the Exeter Turnpike Trust, stating that the trustees had accepted the road from the Packhorse Inn to the Crown and Sceptre over the Iron Bridge,<sup>13</sup> the trustees having paid £1,300 towards their full contribution of £2,500 the previous December.<sup>14</sup> Also in April the commissioners agreed to publish handbills offering to let arches 2, 3 and 4 (under the approach) and all arches or cellars opposite the entrance to Exe Lane (Street) which were beneath the old road and underneath the viaduct.

In July 1836 the balance of £300 (the retention money mentioned above) was paid and the Commissioners of Improvement made this handsome statement:-

'This Committee cannot conclude this transaction with Messrs Russell and Brown without expressing its entire approbation of the excellence of both the material and works which have been executed by Messrs Russell and Brown and offering their very best thanks for the efficient and valued assistance Mr Russell afforded this Committee in originally furnishing designs and suggestions for the accomplishment of this object and for the highly honourable manner in which business has been conducted from the commencement to the termination of this transaction'.

In October 1836 the Exeter Turnpike Trustees paid the balance of their North Street vote to the Exeter Improvement Commissioners. It remains to be noted that 160 years after construction this structure is in excellent condition and capable of carrying the weight of traffic for which it was designed. In 1891 traction engines were forbidden and in 1907 a restriction of 5 tons was imposed. At this time the 12 inches thickness of soil that had been originally laid over the cast iron plates supported by the main arches was replaced by concrete. In 1976 the weight restriction became 3 tons. In 1984/85 the

concrete was replaced by a reinforced concrete slab to ensure a more even distribution of wheel loads. At this time a width restriction of 6ft 6in was imposed to ensure that the weight restriction was effective.

In the original design the decision to split the 40 feet span arch spandrels into two 20 feet halves and to join them by bolts at the centre ensured that the centre acted as a pinned joint and that any bending at the centre of the arches would be almost eliminated. In this way the care of the designer and succeeding highway committees has ensured that the strong but brittle cast iron has not fractured and should also ensure many more years of useful life for this historic structure, which must be the foremost example of cast iron bridge construction now remaining in the south-west peninsula. The viaduct is listed Grade 2.

Two routes were now available from Cowley Bridge Road to Exeter, the New North Road, opened on 4 February 1835<sup>15</sup> and the improved St David's Hill/North Street over the Iron Bridge. Heavy loads from Stoke Canon no longer had to be worked over Stoke Hill via the Old Tiverton Road or Pennsylvania Road as the Exeter Turnpike Trustees had built a new length of road alongside the river Exe to Cowley Bridge Road soon after 1830.

#### References:

1. *Exeter Flying Post* 12 December 1833.
2. *EFP* 26 December 1833, 4b.
3. *EFP* 9 January 1834, 3b.
4. *EFP* 16 January 1834, 3a.
5. *EFP* 6 February 1834, 3c; Exeter Turnpike Trust, 2/5, 25 March 1834.
6. *EFP* 20 March 1834, 3c.
7. *EFP*, 1 May 1834.
8. *EFP* 8 May 1834, 4b.
9. *EFP* 15 May 1834, 2c, and 12 June 1834, 3c.
10. *EFP* 25 December 1834.
11. Commissioners of Improvement, Exeter, minutes 4 and 29 April 1835.
12. CIE minutes 30 June, 16 July and 20 August 1835.
13. CIE minutes 6 April 1836.
14. Exeter Turnpike Trust minute book 2/5, 2 December 1835.
15. ETT minute book 2/5, 4 February 1835.

## THE COURT BARTON OF THE MANOR OF ILSINGTON

Bill Ransom

Barton and demesne lands were those over which only the lord or lady of the manor had proprietary rights but were usually cultivated for the lord by his dependent tenants. The Court Barton consisted generally of the manor house occupied by the lord together with adjacent lands contributing towards his maintenance. However, both house and lands were often leased in return for services and rents and sometimes the services were waived in return for a payment. Leasing of land had a long history preceding the Conquest. It conveyed no more than the use and enjoyment of the land for a term of years but later, probably from the late fifteenth century in Devon, it became quite usual to grant leases for three lives, those of the lessee and two others nominated by him. Most often these were close relations, commonly his wife and eldest son.

The descent of the lords of the manor of Ilsington has been traced from early times to the present day.<sup>1</sup> From 1284 and possibly earlier until 1501 the manor was held by the Dynham family often as tenants of the Beaumonts.<sup>2</sup> The last Dynham to hold the manor was John, born in 1433, who when he died in 1501 was Lord Dynham and High Treasurer of England. His heirs were his four sisters or their heirs. He left them each a quarter share of the manor, and of many others in Devon and Cornwall.<sup>3</sup>

The first known reference to the barton and demesne lands of Ilsington is that in a lease dated 20 November 1543 granted by Joan Arundell.<sup>4</sup>

*Johanna Fforde vidue nuper uxorem Johannis Fforde defunctis et Johanni Seynckler armigero filio suo totam partem sive partem meam totius bartonis sive mancionis mee iacentum in Ilystington in comite Devoniae cum omnibus terris pratis parc pastuque cum omnibus terris vocatis le Domayne Londres...*

(Joan Ford widow recently the wife of John Ford deceased and John Seyntclere esquire her son the whole property or my part of all the barton or mansion lying in Ilsington in the county of Devon with all lands meadows park and pasture with all the lands called the demesne lands...)

This lease, granted to Joan Ford and John Seyntclere, was of the Court Barton with, seemingly, a specific reference to a manor house. It was granted for a term of sixty years at an annual rent of 35s 4d. It ceased on the death of either lessee but the inheritance of the survivor would be allowed following a payment of 3s 4d. It required the upkeep of buildings, fences and ditches and in this connection rights of firebote, foldbote, ploughbote and gatebote were granted, i.e. the right to take wood for burning, maintenance of sheepfolds, making and repairing of gates and similar work. (The lease also implies that Joan Ford and a William Bradleigh had earlier possession as lessees of Joan Arundell).

The lessor was a granddaughter of Katherine, the third sister of Lord Dynham, and her husband Sir Thomas Arundell. She died in 1577. The lessee was the daughter of William Throwbridge and the widow of Gilbert Seyntclere. Gilbert died in 1528 leaving eight children: the eldest was John.<sup>5</sup> After the death of Gilbert, Joan soon married John Ford, a prosperous Ashburton attorney: she was his fourth wife. John Ford died in 1538 so by 1543 Joan could reasonably be described as recently his wife. (Intermarriage between the Fords and the Seyntcleres and the preponderance of the name Joan or similar can be confusing. John Ford's

four wives were all Joan, Joanna or Jane. His daughter by his first marriage, also named Joan, married John Seyntclere the joint lessee of 1543: his eldest son George by his third marriage married Joanna Seyntclere a daughter of Gilbert Seyntclere).

Lord Dynham's eldest sister Margaret married Nicholas, Baron Carew, and through that marriage the Carew family inherited one quarter of the Dynham estates. This portion seems to have soon been sold and passed to Sir William Compton of Compton Wynyates and thence to his grandson Henry Compton. In 1566 a survey was made for Henry to establish the detail of this quarter share in IIsington and other Devon estates.<sup>6</sup> The survey showed that George Ford held one half and Arundell the remaining quarter. One specific section dealt with the demesne and barton lands. In all sections the total rental was stated, not just the quarter share of Compton. Court Barton comprised the following:-

John Bolle held 'without indenture at will 1 granary house and bakehouse in IIsington with 3 gardens, 1 acre; contains 1 close Wester Bowthill, 8 acres; contains 1 close Ester Bowthill 6 acres; contains 1 close Bashesley 10 acres; contains 1 close Boysley mede 3½ acres; contains 1 close Lameparke 2 acres; contains 1 close Furze park cleves with moor and aldergrove 20 acres; contains 1 close the Beare and Newe close 3 acres; contains 1 close of wood called Northe Wood where is growing oak and other wood 30 acres; 1 meadow 1 acre; 1 little close Chenyshays 2 acres; and pays 35s 4d.'

The total area of barton lands under this section sums to 86½ acres. Not specifically in this section but elsewhere stated to be barton lands was a close called Cowdowne Close

'now called Bowdens Park now lying in three parts which contains in all 25 acres for which he pays 8s per annum'

This was held by John Bowden. Additionally Gabriel Wyger held two closes of barton land, Higher Park and Lower Park each of 5 acres. He paid 15s 10d but this seems to have included 4s 10d for a cottars holding 'with appurtenances'.

Clearly, despite the lease for sixty years neither Joan Ford nor John Seyntclere had continued until 1566 as lessees: Joan is likely to have died before then and John died in 1569.<sup>7</sup> It is reasonable to suggest that the barton land leased in 1543 by Joan Arundell is broadly the same as that held by John Bolle, the rents being identical at 35s 4d. Little is known of John Bolle. Elizabeth, wife of John Bolle, was buried at IIsington on 5 May 1574 and John on 2 September 1578.<sup>8</sup>

A survey roll of the lands of John Arundell of Lanherne dated 9 August 1609 itemised the quarter part of the manor belonging to his son.<sup>9</sup> Thomas Ford, Elizabeth his wife and Henry their son were shown as tenants of 'the capitall messuage 30 acres' for which they paid 8s 10d, again equal to 35s 4d for the whole. (Thomas is shown in that survey roll as 'mort' but that must have been a later superscription for he died in 1610). There is close similarity though not exact parity between the 1543, 1566 and 1609 holdings of barton land. In the 1543 lease the amount of land is not stated and it appears that the manor house forms part of the holding: in 1566 the manor house is shown separately from the holding of John Bolle:-

'George Fourd esquire holds the capital mansion or house called the Manor Place of IIsyngton with all house buildings gardens and orchards belonging to the same and pays per annum 2s 8d'

The 1609 survey implies a total area of land of 120 acres compared to the 86½ held by Bolle and the house is included in the rental.

Thomas Ford was the eldest son and heir of George Ford and Joanna Seyntclere. He was

born in 1556 and married Elizabeth Popham. In his will dated 5 May 1609 he conveyed to his wife:-

'all my three parts of the Manor of IIsington together with the mansion house of IIsington and all messuages and land thereunto belonging'.

The Ford holdings passed from Thomas through his son Henry born about 1585 to Henry's son born in Littleham in 1616. He became Sir Henry, M.P. for Tiverton and Secretary of State for Ireland. He died in 1684 seriously in debt and in his will dated 11 September of that year he left the bulk of his estates to his devisees<sup>10</sup> including:-

'all that my Barton of IIsington or Court Barton...and all that my three parts of the whole in three parts divided of the manor of IIsington...'

His devisees, the Earl of Londonderry, his son Charles, John Egerton of Lymptone and Edward Holwell of the Middle Temple, London were to dispose of the estate in whatever manner they chose to pay his debts, funeral expenses and legacies to his four daughters. The wording of the will suggests that he owned the whole of Court Barton though only three quarters of the rest of the manor. There was continued dispute over the terms of the will which was finally resolved by an arbitration award made by Hugh Stafford and others on 27 April 1692.<sup>11</sup> The award made no mention of Court Barton and the assumption must be that it was sold to help pay the debts or passed without dispute to his son Charles.

The next reference found to Court Barton was that in the IIsington Parish Register for 22 September 1726:-

'Mrs Sarah Paynter ye widow of ye late William Paynter DD Rector of Exeter College in Oxford was buried in ye west end of Court Barton Isle close by ye North wall of ye church as being nearly related to Philip Nanson ye owner of Court Barton estate'.

Nanson was then vicar of St. Michael's Church, IIsington, and the son-in-law of Sarah. He was vicar from 1715 until his death in 1739. Though not impossible it seems unlikely that he would have acquired Court Barton before his appointment. If that is so then it is probable that there was another owner after Sir Henry's death. In the absence of any exact knowledge it seems reasonable to suppose that this was Charles the residuary legatee.

It has been stated that Nanson's daughter sold Court Barton to a Mr Cock and Cock to Hale.<sup>12</sup> Nanson seems to have married twice firstly to Dorothy Maria Fisher on 9 September 1711 at St. Helen's, Bishopgate, London. She died in 1721 and Nanson then married Mary Paynter on 11 July 1723. A Catherine Nanson was buried at IIsington on 10 November 1769 and it would be reasonable to suppose that she was the daughter in question and probably by the first marriage as no baptism for Catherine appears in the IIsington parish register. We know no more of Cock but a Charles Cock features in a lease of 1773<sup>13</sup> and a Thomas Cock owned Liverton mills by 1780.<sup>14</sup> In 1756 we have the first known account of the manor house by Dr. Milles.<sup>15</sup>

'Next adjoining to the church on ye east side is ye Barton of Court. The house shows some signs of ancient grandeur. In one of the kitchen windows I observed the following coat of arms: In a border engrailed, party per fesse argent and sable, a greyhound running in chief, and an owl in base, counter-charged impaled with argent.

Three bulls heads sable charged with a crescent. These last are the arms of Waldron...The same coat in another window is impaled with party p.pale or at a star of six points counter-charged.

The description of the principal arms corresponds with that of the arms granted to John Ford of Ashburton in 1524 by the Herald's College.<sup>16</sup> The Waldron arms were no doubt incorporated by reason of his daughter becoming John Ford's third wife and the mother of George.

By 1780 Charles Hale was the owner with James Mudge the occupier.<sup>17</sup> Three years earlier the estate was available for letting and it may have been then that Mudge took the tenancy<sup>18</sup>: 'To let for 14 years, Court Barton consisting of a good mansion house, barn, stables and all other necessities with convenient outhouses, gardens, about 2 acres and a half orchard and 63 acres of good arable meadow and pasture ground with unlimited right of common on Haytor Down...' Hale and Mudge continue to be thus shown until 1795 when Charles Hale's wife, Ann, is shown in the land Tax Assessment Records as owner and Robert Petherbridge as occupier. Ann died in 1805 and that year John Samber is shown as owner. This is a mistaken entry for James, and James Samber continued as owner until 1821 with, from 1809, Charles Wills as occupier.

James was a captain in the Royal Navy. He married Maria Biata(?) Knapton at Lymington, Hampshire on 12 November 1775 and had a daughter, Martha Ann, born 1778.<sup>19</sup> Charles Hale's will gave his wife Ann and James life interests in the Court Barton estate which passed on their deaths to Martha Ann and her descendants.<sup>20</sup> The will referred to James Samber as 'kinsman'. Charles's father, also Charles, married a Martha Samber at St. Anne's Soho in 1720: maybe she was James's great-aunt. When Charles of Ingsdon died in 1795 Martha would have been sixteen or seventeen years old.

In 1822 Charles Hale Munro became owner. He was the son of a marriage between Martha Ann Samber and James Munro, also of Lymington, on 9 March 1805 and was born on 23 January 1806.<sup>21</sup> His mother died in 1813 and his father in 1849.<sup>22</sup> Not long in to his ownership there is evidence that the mansion house had deteriorated.<sup>23</sup>

'The manor or Court Barton is close to the Church and was the residence of the Dinham's. The present house is dilapidated, is Elizabethan and was originally in the shape of an E. The end buildings remain but the intermediate range has gone. The granite arched entrance is perfect. In 17th cent. a branch of the Ford family resided here and painted glass with their arms is in the Hall...'

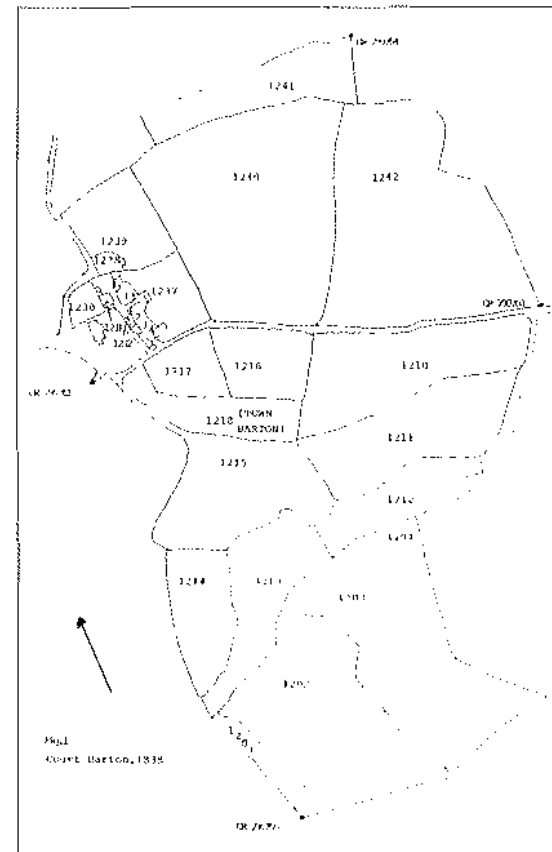
By 1829 the Land Tax Assessment Records show Charles Hale Munro as part owner of Court Barton together with William Northway. The latter also occupied part of the Barton and Charles Wills also part. William Northway's part ownership would have occurred through his purchase of the building, probably of late seventeenth century date, now the Carpenters Arms. This building may have been the farmhouse to the adjacent manor house. There is evidence of an earlier association of Northway with the inn in 1816.<sup>24</sup> Charles Wills must have rented the manor house for his employees, the Southards, who combined farming with charcoal burning and lived there in 1811, for on 28 May of that year Sam Southard was born in 'Ct Barton House Elsington Parish...'<sup>25</sup> They are believed to be the last human occupants of the manor house which continued to fall into disrepair. In 1852 the *Exeter Flying Post* gave the following description:

'The remains of a mouldering mansion house, once vast and venerable form a pleasing object from the vicinity of the church...There are traces of a quadrangle, of an arch which connected it with a second, and the mullions, now masoned up, of the old windows in the kitchen and out offices are still traceable in ruined condition, in once busy abodes, turned now into

cow-houses and repositories for farming gear and waste matters of all varieties. The elegant porch which formed the entrance also exists, and the sites of various halls and chambers and fire-places are still traceable. Years back the house was inhabited by divers families, till it became in too tottering a state for the safety of the inmates'.<sup>26</sup>

Charles Hale Munro died in 1867 and was succeeded by his son and heir Captain Charles James Hale Munro of the 36th Foot Regiment. He, by an indenture of 1 November 1871, conveyed to the vicar, the Reverend Robert Lovett and the churchwardens John Hill Clark and George Reeves a piece of the Court Barton estate adjacent to the old manor house then in near total ruin.<sup>27</sup> This conveyance was to provide land for the building of Ilington School which opened in 1873. Thus passed away the bulk of the manor house which, no doubt with phases of alteration and re-building stood on, or near, that site from the time of the Dynham's. Today only vestiges remain, an ivy-covered wall in the north-eastern corner of the churchyard with an overmantel and several carved granite stones. Hedges and walls around the parish contain pieces of granite mullions and lintels, carried away when the ruins were used as a convenient quarry. Changes there have been also to other parts of the estate. Standing in the field which was Drew Meadow on the 1838 tithe map, (see fig.1 and the accompanying notes), are now the village hall, the Methodist homes and new houses.

On 7 June 1838 an agreement for the commutation of tithes for Ilington parish was confirmed by the tithe commissioners for England and Wales. This substituted a money charge for the bushels of wheat, barley and oats which had hitherto been required. The survey upon which the agreement was based took the form of a map and an accompanying schedule. The former was the earliest detailed map made of Ilington. It was on a scale of 1/2500 and numbered each piece of land. The schedule related each number to the size and nature of the land, for example whether arable, meadow, pasture, furze and listed both the owner and occupier. Figure 1 shows the Court Barton entry and below is given the corresponding schedule entry. (Field 218 was part of the adjoining Town Barton owned and occupied by Charles Corbyn Wills). Town wood, now called Ilington wood, though part of the barton was not included for no tithes were paid on it. The owner of Court Barton was Charles Hale Munro and the occupier Charles Corbyn Wills.



Field No.	Name	Type of Land	Size		
			a	r	p
1201	Church Lake	W	-	3	10
1202	"	A	7	3	6
1203	Newtake	A	9	2	29
1204	"	W	-	2	-
1210	Higher Basley	A	5	-	8
1211	Lower Basley	A	4	-	32
1212	Lower Court Moor	P	2	-	11
1213	Higher Court Moor	P	3	1	18
1214	Lamb Park	A	2	2	30
1215	Basley Meadow	P	5	-	10
1216	Drew Meadow	P	2	-	27
1217	Court Orchard	O	1	-	2
1230	Church Yard Orchard	O	-	1	16
1231	Garden	G	-	-	8
1932	Plot	A	-	-	15
1233	Garden	G	-	-	24
1234	Barn, Linhay & Yard	Buildings	-	1	16
1237	New Orchard	O	1	1	-
1238	Cottage and Garden	Cottage etc	-	-	23
1239	New Close	A	2	-	38
1240	Broom Park	A	11	1	20
1241	Stray Park	A	3	-	20
1242	Riddle Field	A	11	2	4
			75	-	7

With right of depasture on Haytor Down

W=Waste A=Arable P=Pasture O=Orchard G=Garden

The sizes are in acres, roods and poles with 40 poles to the rood and 4 roods to the acre.

There are some similarities between the names and sizes of fields in the 1566 survey and that of the 1838 tithe map and schedule. Probably Basheley and Boysley of the former equate to Higher and Lower Basley and Basley Meadow, Lamb Park with Lamb Park and Newe Close with New Close. Northe Wood is now Ilsington wood. The passage of 272 years will have led to changes, however, which must make close comparison more guesswork than reason: the area itself seems to have changed from some 121 acres to 105, (including Ilsington wood).

#### Notes and References

1. Ransom, B., 'The Descent and Dispersion of the Manor of Ilsington', *Transactions of the Devonshire Association*, 131, 1999
2. Deputy Keeper of the Records. Inquisitions and Assessments Relating to Feudal Aids 1284-1431, vol.1, H.M. Home Dept. London, 1899.
3. Chope, R.P., 'The last of the Dynhams', *TDA* 50, pp431-192, 1918.
4. Cornwall Record Office, Lease of the Barton of Ilsington, Arundell Archive AR4/2073, 20

5. Hanham, H.J., 'The Seynteleres of Tidwell', *TDA* 99, p140, 1967.
6. Devon Record Office, Survey of Lord Dynhau's Lands, Z173/19, 1566
7. Hanham, H.J., 'A Tangle Untangled: The Lordship of the Manor and Borough of Ashburton', *TDA* 94, p445, 1962.
8. Ilsington Parish Registers, transcribed and held by the Devon and Cornwall Record Society.
9. CRO, Survey of Lands in Devon of John Arundell, Arundell Archive AR2/1393, 1609.
10. DRO, Will of Sir Henry Ford, 64/84/2a-b, 1684.
11. DRO, Award by Hugh Stafford and others, 57/3/10/5, 1692.
12. Jones, J.P., (MS) The Historical and Monumental Antiquities of the Hundred of Teignbridge, County of Devon. In the 1820s the Reverend John Pike Jones was compiling this history which was to form part of a history of Devon. The latter never materialised and, on 22 December 1849, he donated his manuscript to the Devon and Exeter Institution where it now resides.
13. DRO, Wills of Ilsington, Title Deeds, 2644M add 2, T28 & 29, 1773.
14. DRO, Land Tax Assessment Records held on microfiche.
15. Milles, Parochial History of Devon, vol.2, c.1755-6. Dr Milles, Precentor of Exeter Cathedral, later Dean, issued a series of questions to the parochial clergy of the diocese around 1755-6. Replies were sketchy but included some from Ilsington.
16. Worthy, C., 'Berry Castle and its Ancient Lords', *TDA* 15, pp435-6, 1883.
17. DRO, Land Tax Assessment Records.
18. *Exeter Flying Post*, 2 May 1777, p2d.
19. Lymington Parish Records held at the Hampshire Record Office and tablet from the south wall of the chancel of St. Thomas parish church, Lymington.
20. Public Record Office, Will of Charles Hale PROB 11/1269.
21. As for reference 19.
22. As for reference 19.
23. Devon and Cornwall Record Society, Parish Information File, Ilsington sheet A2. This unsigned and undated manuscript, held at the West Country Studies Library, is clearly in the handwriting of John Pike Jones, (see ref.12), and probably dates from around 1825.
24. DRO, 4932M, Ilsington Way Book 1798-1820.
25. Southard Family Association News, vol.1, no.2, p.6, July 1984 13302, Alchester Lane, Houston, Texas.
26. *Exeter Flying Post* 15 January 1852, p6d.e
27. Charity Commission, Endowed Charities (county of Devon) Parish of Ilsington, Return to an order of the House of Commons, 31 July 1907.

#### Acknowledgements

I wish primarily to acknowledge the generous help from Mr R.N. Wills of Narracombe Farm, Ilsington who placed at my disposal records collected over many years and his own extensive knowledge of the history of Ilsington. My thanks also to Lord Munro of Langholm, Mr M.J. Wills of Lymington, Valerie Ransom for the Latin transcriptions and to staff at the Record Offices of Cornwall and of Devon.

## THE NAVAL BANK

Arnold Sayers

The Harris family of Radford House, Plymstock was long established and one of them, John Harris, founded the Naval Bank in 1773. He was a man of some substance, owning Radford, a large property, and several others in Devon and Cornwall as his will of 1778 witnesses. The town of Plymouth and Dock (later Devonport) had a thriving mercantile trade which no doubt contributed to this bank's early success, and even enabled John Harris to acquire an African slave.<sup>1</sup>

He was succeeded by his nephew, another John Harris, who married Catharine Bulteel of Flete, whose family were of some importance in the area as well as a valuable connection with the bank, 'the name of Bulteel being of great respectability in the County of Devon'. Many of the family deposited their funds there. John Bulteel in 1810 asked the Attorney General's opinion as to whether his name 'being retained as the head of the firm', and having his cash at the bank could 'in any manner be considered as proof of his being made a Partner'.<sup>2</sup>

Thus the Naval Bank was one of at least eight founded in the county between 1769 and 1793 but only four of them survived to become absorbed by the local joint stock banks. In the country as a whole the disastrous year of 1825 witnessed seventy-nine banks suspending payment.<sup>3</sup>

One of the reasons for this was that banks were allowed to issue their own notes at a minimum of £5, and they were easy to forge. This minimum was later reduced to £1 at a time when several small banks started without adequate cover.

The Naval Bank prospered in its early years, establishing branches in Plymouth, Devonport, Ivybridge, Plympton, Saltash, Yealmpton, Totnes and Dartmouth. Indeed in 1823 the Plymouth branch moved into imposing new premises on the corner of Kinterbury Street, built in the Italianate style. However, for the last fifty years of its life it was probably trading whilst insolvent until it finally crashed in 1914 with a deficiency of £307,784. The two partners at this time, M.P. Parker and P.F. Bulteel, were sent to prison for six months. Parker had been chief clerk and in 1899 he was invited to become a partner. He rashly accepted, choosing honour rather than cultivating prudence. In spite of its precarious financial position the Naval Bank assisted with a mortgage on the Membland estate in 1894 because the Baring's bank crisis of 1890 had obliged Lord Revelstoke (formerly E.C. Baring) to sell this magnificent estate. Percy Francis Bulteel became a partner in 1907 and indulged in heavy gambling on the stock exchange in the vain hope of restoring the bank's fortunes.

His father, Thomas Bulteel, who died in 1908, having incidentally fathered thirteen children, joined the Naval Bank as a clerk in 1855 and progressed through the firm. He must have had misgivings because in 1884 he drew up a history of the bank since his involvement with it, entitled 'Notes of Life in Naval Bank for information of children'.<sup>4</sup> For instance he mentioned that in 1859 (when as a junior partner his salary was £200 per annum) 'there was no division of profits because of large losses sustained'. Thomas Bulteel did not, however, insist on an investigation. Two years later Colonel H.B. Harris 'got in his dotage' and was passing cheques profligately. The same year another partner, J.H. Dawe, died and although he was ostensibly a rich man he left various legacies including an annuity with which the bank was saddled.

In 1863 Colonel H.B. Harris, presumably the senior partner, died and W.H. Harris

reigned in his stead. 'W.H. Junior spent money lavishly, took to drink, got into debt to the Bank £11,000'. At this stage the Radford House and estate was sold to the bank at the price of W.H. Harris's debt plus an annuity. Thomas Bulteel then complained that 'the whole conduct was simply handed over to me in addition to the ordinary work of the Bank which having need of reform'.

In 1866 several other banks failed as well as many being hard pressed. 'It is a marvel to me now how the Naval Bank weathered the storm' Thomas Bulteel remarked. The trouble continued and in 1878 other banks became insolvent and 'we paid out over £230,00 about one third of our total liabilities, the largest proportion ever withdrawn in the annals of the Bank'.

Thomas Bulteel was obviously battling against fearful odds and should have liquidated what assets there were but was begged by his relations to carry on. He did say that the bank's position improved after this crisis but the only time a proper investigation was carried out was in 1871 when the result was a fearful surprise to all. The accounting and annual reports seem to have been most haphazard.

Thomas Bulteel must have been partly to blame for this dreadful state of affairs as an agreement with the bank in 1898 awarded him a salary of £2,700, rent free accommodation at Radford House and his domestic servants paid for. After bank losses in the three years after 1898 Thomas Bulteel only drew £1,700-£1,800 per annum. The official receiver, at the bankruptcy hearing in January 1915, could not resist the comment 'I suppose he could rub along very comfortably on that?'<sup>5</sup>

Lloyds Bank paid the creditors five shillings in the pound when the Naval Bank collapsed and this 75% loss meant much anguish to many local depositors.

### References:

1. Langdon, Ivy, *The Plymstock Connection*.
2. West Devon Record Office 81/A289.
3. *Totnes Times* 18.12.1965 (Totnes Museum)
4. West Devon Record Office 567/62/28
5. *Totnes Times* 6.1.1915 (Totnes Museum)

## 'IN AID OF THE CIVIL POWER': SOME EXPLOITS OF THE DEVON YEOMANRY

Anthony Greenstreet

In March 1794 Prime Minister Pitt coupled measures to augment the regular army with an appeal for Volunteers for Home Defence, including a 'species of Cavalry' of gentlemen and yeomanry who could not be called upon to act out of their counties except under pressure of invasion or urgent necessity'. Besides the threat from France, Britain faced serious internal discontent. The French Revolution had promoted dissatisfaction with the system of parliamentary representation, wages were low and food dear, 'domestic' industries being destroyed by factory production, and (though scarcely so in Devon) enclosure acts had caused many grievances. Treason trials had already taken place under the Traitorous Correspondence Act 1793 and Habeas Corpus was about to be suspended until 1802. Even in London there were no regular police until 1829: enforcement of law and order was left to inefficient parish constables - backed up, in serious disturbances, by calling in the army in aid of the civil power. A mounted yeomanry of employers of labour (especially of tenant farmers), with landlords and magistrates as officers, would be just the thing to deter and put down internal unrest - as well as reinforcing the army and militia in case of invasion.

Pitt's proposals were quickly enacted, and national guidelines for Yeoman Cavalry drawn up which provided that it was 'only liable to be called out of the County or embodied by the Lord Lieutenant by Royal Warrant, or by the High Sheriff of the County for the suppression of riots or tumults within their own or adjacent counties, or by Royal Warrant in the case of invasion.' In Devon a prompt meeting of county grandees in Exeter Castle on 22 April resolved to raise troops of Volunteer Cavalry. These began to be formed in May, the first being that of Sir Stafford Northcote of Pynes near Exeter on 15 May: it comprised three officers, and fifty-one other ranks.

Enthusiasm to enlist in the yeoman cavalry was spurred by two new factors - the landing of 1,500 French troops at Fishguard in February 1797; and the Provisional Cavalry Act 1797 which provided that, where a county did not provide sufficient volunteers, every tenth horse and man could be embodied into army service under militia conditions. By autumn 1798 seventeen troops of Devon yeomanry had been raised; and by 1820 the county's yeomanry was 2,623 strong. Individual troops soon coalesced into regiments, with the Crediton, Tiverton, Bicton, Exmouth and Woodbury, Cullompton, and Exeter Troops becoming the Royal First Devon Yeomanry Regiment in 1801, with an establishment of twenty-two officers and 280 other ranks. The Royal North Devon Regiment was formed in 1803 from nine individual troops with thirty-four officers and 550 other ranks.

Yeomanry members had to provide their own horses, and were only paid when called out on duty. Except during harvest and sheep-shearing they had to attend weekly drills, and occasionally exercised with regulars on field days. Sometimes they performed escort duties. These might be ceremonial, (as when the Exeter Troop in January 1801 met Nelson two miles outside the city and escorted him to his hotel); or of a military character (as when in 1800 the Cullompton Troop offered to escort to Taunton 450 French prisoners being marched from Plymouth to Bristol).

However, the Yeomanry's main activity was to aid the civil power in keeping order, and they were soon called on to act. In April 1795 there were riots across England due

to the high price of bread, and as the *Exeter Flying Post* described, on 13 April the First Devon Troop first acted in aid of the civil power:

'On Monday morning last, a number of people assembled in a riotous manner at Crediton, on account of the dearth of provisions, but on Mr Butler's arrival, he addressed them in a very proper manner, when the greater part of them (the women excepted) dispersed. Intelligence, however, having been dispatched to this City, the 25th Light Dragoons, quartered here, and Sir Stafford Northcote's Volunteer Troop of Cavalry galloped over and soon restored peace. Several women were taken in custody and committed to the high Gaol.

Next, at the July Assizes, a man was sentenced to death for helping destroy a Kingsteignton mill and being ring-leader in destroying Bellemarsh mills. He was conducted on 6 August in a mourning coach from Exeter to gallows on Bovey Heath escorted by the First Devon and East Devon Troops, 25th Light Dragoons, and Volunteer Infantry Companies from Exeter, Honiton and Cullompton. The soldiers surrounded the gallows to prevent rescue by the vast crowd.

Although the yeomanry were often represented as a landlord's force concerned to protect property and keep up the price of corn, its members were evidently not indifferent to the plight of the labouring classes. Thus, on 5 November 1795 the *Exeter Flying Post* reported:

'We are happy in being able to state that the 1st Troop of Devon Volunteer Cavalry have unanimously agreed, in consequence of the high price of grain, each of them to send to Exeter market on Friday, the 14th November, from ten to twenty bushels of wheat and barley, to be rendered by them in small quantities to the purchasers, at the reduced price of 9s per bushel wheat, and 4s per bushel barley, an example so laudable, we trust will be speedily followed by the Gentlemen and farmers in their respective neighbourhood'.

The high price of food caused outbreaks of rioting for the next fifty years, even after the Corn Laws' repeal in 1846 eased the situation. On 30 March 1801 the Plymouth Yeomanry were called to a riot when two cart-loads of potatoes going out of Old Town Gate were seized by a mob and retailed at popular prices. Next day the mob upset Plymouth Dock market and broke into the premises of bakers and provision dealers. The Riot Act was read, and the Plymouth Dock Troop and Infantry Volunteers paraded through the streets. The Queen's Bays then charged down Fore Street and some rioters were arrested. Unfortunately, as the *Exeter Flying Post* reported, 'it is believed the business would have ended here, but about four o'clock, on the dockyard men coming out of the yard, the tumult again commenced'. The mob brushed aside regulars and volunteers, and secured from the magistrates the prisoners' release. It was some consolation that the newspaper could assert, 'It is but justice to add that the troops of the garrison, together with the Dock Associated Cavalry behaved with a steadiness and patience not to be surpassed'.

The Yeomanry were also commended for preventing simultaneous disturbances at Exeter. Meetings had been held on Southernhay to secure lower food prices, and parties of men visited neighbouring farmers to compel them to sell corn at reduced rates. The Mayor declared these meetings unlawful, enrolled 300 special constables and called out two Yeomanry troops for 6am on 31 March. The *Exeter Flying Post* reported,



'We are happy to state to the honour of that respectable body of men, although the orders were issued on Sunday afternoon, and most of them lived at a distance from five to twelve miles of the place of rendezvous, the whole of both troops punctually attended at the hour appointed, and immediately made an offer of their services to their Commander to remain on duty every day during the present week, or as long as their services may be required; they have met every morning at the Barracks by seven o'clock, and will continue as long as it is deemed necessary'.

Patrolling by Yeomanry and regulars then prevented any rioting.

Potatoes also caused the calling out of the North Devon Yeomanry on 16 May 1816. A cargo of potatoes was being shipped at Bideford when a large crowd armed with bludgeons assembled to stop its export. The parish constables arrested three ring-leaders, but a mob of shipwrights released them from the gaol. Four officers and forty men of the Yeomanry dispersed them and sent four rioters to Exeter. Trouble then spread to Appledore and Clewhouses, and the Yeomanry were ordered to secure some forty variously armed malcontents. These, when the Yeomanry appeared, ran to the waterside, boarded a tide-surrounded ship, lowered its boats and rowed to safety at Braunton. Despite this failure Woolmer's Exeter and Devon Gazette commented: 'Too much praise cannot be bestowed on the North Devon Yeomanry for their exertions in quelling the mob in its infancy'. The Yeomanry's bill for suppressing this dangerous tumult was £22 3s 4d.

Another duty falling to the Yeomanry was to prevent looting of cargoes of wrecked ships. On 11 September 1829 a detachment of the Bideford Troop was called out to protect the *Daniel* wrecked at the back of Northam Burrows. On 17 December 1833 the *Elizabeth*, for Calcutta from Liverpool, stranded on the South Tail of Bideford Bar with a cargo worth £10,000. The Bideford and Monkleigh Troops, about sixty strong, arrived promptly together with a crowd of about 2,000. Thirty Yeomanry remained on the beach for nine days while men and women discharged cargo into carts. Their presence prevented looting and ensured the crowd conducted itself 'with propriety and industry'. This service cost the government £194 12s 6d.

In September 1830 serious agrarian riots, provoked by low wages and introduction of labour-saving machinery, erupted across southern England. In December thrashing machines were broken near South Molton and Bideford, coupled with threatening gatherings of farm labourers. These were contained by magistrates calling out the Swimbridge, Fremington, Sheepwash and Hatherleigh Troops - although some incendiarism continued for several months. Yeomanry also prevented trouble at Barnstaple where workers at the Rawleigh factory were locked out on 8 December, having shown signs of 'insubordination'. Next year the yeomanry intervened in another industrial dispute. Due to wage reductions in the lace industry many Tiverton men struck work on 24 October and attacked a foreman's house. The Tiverton Troop did not turn out until the following day, and order was only restored when an Exeter Troop arrived. On 29 October came the Bristol Reform riots, and it was feared that bonfire celebrations on 5 November would be used by radical politicians to provoke a similar outbreak in Exeter. Eight troops of the Royal First Devon Yeomanry were called out, but their services were not needed.

In February 1836 a new source of rural disturbance arose in protests at introduction of the new Poor Law. The Fremington Troop was called out to protect proceedings of the Barnstaple Guardians at Wistland Pound. On 10 February another mob assembled at

Sheepwash. When the Torrington Union Relieving Officer arrived there to pay the poor, partly in money and partly in bread, he was dragged from his horse and taken to Petrockstow. There he escaped, while the mob destroyed the bread depot, having already destroyed that at Sheepwash and broken the windows of his house. The 300 rioters then returned to Sheepwash and attacked the house of the Parish Guardian. On 12 February the Monkleigh and Sheepwash Troops, about 100 strong, were summoned to prevent gangs of labourers armed with bludgeons rescuing five ring-leaders being examined by magistrates at Great Torrington. Next day the Yeomanry escorted the prisoners to Exeter Gaol.

Food riots continued in the 1840s. On 14 May 1846 a serious one erupted at Exeter when middlemen tried to forestall the market by buying up potatoes to raise prices, when the price of corn was already high and the poorer classes distressed. An Exe Island warehouse and several carts of potatoes were attacked, and the mob drove farmers from the Cornmarket. Having failed, with police and pensioner-soldiers, to prevent the mob from attacking corn-mills, shops and stores of corn-factors, bakers and butchers, the mayor called out the Yeomanry. Arrival of the Kenn, Exeter, Bicton and Powderham Troops - basing themselves at the Cavalry Barracks, with their commander, Colonel Buller, making his headquarters at the New London Inn - temporarily stopped the looting. But as the *Exeter Flying Post* reported,

'Between 9 and 10 at night it was reported from St Thomas's that disturbances had commenced anew there, and a detachment of Yeomanry was ordered to march from the Barracks to the scene of the riot. On entering the city from Longbrook Street, the detachment was received with yells and hooting, which was continued by the masses of disorderly persons until the Yeomanry reached Exe Bridge. In crossing this, into St Thomas's, they were met with a volley of stones, and this was repeated as they proceeded up Cowick Street. The men, though frequently hit severely, and not escaping without personal injuries, bore this with excellent temper, and presented a fine instance of steadiness and discipline. The mob retreated before them, until they had been fairly driven beyond Durnsford turnpike gate. Here the detachment halted some time, but, on commencing to return, the volleys of stones were renewed; nor was this all, for, on coming into the city, the same improper course of conduct was continued, and frequently repeated, until the detachment had passed the New London Inn.'

The Yeomanry bivouacked in Castle Yard and the mayor, magistrates and Colonel Buller sat up all night. Next morning the Yeomanry was reinforced by the Broadclyst and two Tiverton Troops - though the latter returned that afternoon to Tiverton to quell disturbances there. On 17 May much alarm was caused by a body of navvies building the branch railway leaving work and marching into Tiverton. The Riot Act was read, the Yeomanry readied, prisoners secured and disturbances snuffed out. On 27 May Lord Grey, for the government, wrote to the Lord Lieutenant, 'I beg to acknowledge the valuable services rendered by the Yeomanry Cavalry on this occasion'.

The last case of Yeomanry intervention in aid of civil power was in 1867 when there were serious food riots in Teignmouth and Exeter. On 4 November most provision shops in Exeter were looted and eleven people hospitalised, and the riot coalesced with Bonfire Night disturbances. Exeter, Powderham, Exmouth and Bicton troops, numbering about 112, were called into Higher Barracks to reinforce special constables and 200

regular soldiers from Plymouth, and the Riot Act was read. The *Exeter and Devon Gazette* reported.

'At about half-past nine it was thought fit that the Devon Yeomanry Cavalry should make a demonstration in the High Street, and they appeared before the Guildhall in a large body, and with drawn swords. This appeared to be the most unlucky and inauspicious event of the evening. The Yeomanry were evidently very unpopular and were received with hooting and yells, and showers of fireworks, which the horses did not like, and many in the crowd cut the horses with sticks and canes, and sent them curvetting in a very undisciplined fashion. After making a fair show of themselves, the Yeomanry left the High Street by North Street, in the direction of the barracks, followed by the roughest portions of the assembly at the run, who did all they could by their absolute violence to irritate the horses and annoy the horsemen, and one of the Yeomanry who held his sword down had it smashed by a stick... The order for their marching in the streets was given, doubtless, under some misapprehension, and was the means of subjecting the Yeomanry unnecessarily to the unpleasantness of causing irritation to the crowd; but the manner in which they appeared in obedience to orders showed how prompt they can be on emergency and how useful they will be if occasion arises, when their services might be readily required.'

With order restored the unpopular Yeomanry were next day marched out of Exeter and dismissed 'in order that they might not be seen in uniform in the town'.

Although it is easy to view the Yeomanry as interested protectors of the propertied classes, in Devon, as elsewhere in England, their efficient performance of duty in aid of the civil power for half a century prevented anarchy.

The main source of material for this article is

*The Yeomanry of Devon, 1794-1927* by Engineer Commander Benson Freeman, RN, (Editor, Earl Fortescue, KCB)

Published by guaranteed subscription, St Catherine's Press, 1927.

## WARTIME EVACUEES IN SOUTH DEVON

John Pike

It must be presumed that the first families to arrive in Torbay were from Nazi Europe, and possibly after 'Munich', as the first indication of the existence of 'evacuees' (or perhaps more correctly 'refugees') was an announcement in the *Jewish Chronicle* in October 1939. It reported that 125 Jewish families were residing in the area with about 75 children who would need religious instruction and that the provision of Kosher meat etc. was a matter of serious concern.<sup>1</sup>

English evacuee children arrived from London in the days immediately before, and following, the outbreak of the war in 1939, and also at later times of crisis. Settling them in homes of the local community was often not easy and problems could arise. The arrangements for the journeys of the official evacuees were made by the Ministry of Transport. They left from their schools dressed in school uniform and carrying a gas-mask in the 'regulation cardboard box'. Each took a small bag (or carrier) which contained spare clothing and underwear. Each child had an identification label pinned on coat or jacket.<sup>2</sup> Those coming to Torbay left from Paddington or Waterloo stations. Ealing was closed totally to the public so that it could be used exclusively for the children coming to Devon. Some recipients of children were shocked with the appearance and manners of those from the poorest communities. They had arrived tired, crying and very hungry and many were billeted with people who had been forced to take them in.<sup>3</sup> Mrs Clare Wilkins, a billeting officer in Paignton, saw something of the poverty which existed then. Head lice and skin clinics had to be set up in the town and one lady had to be billeted for a short time in Palace Avenue Methodist Church because of her large family, telling an enquirer that 'she was a yearly breeder'.

The scale of the influx was huge and the effect on both incomers and residents must have been traumatic. In July 1940, for example, 1,795 children and 170 adults arrived in Paignton.<sup>4</sup> Compulsory billeting became necessary when 550 boys and girls from Plumstead and Woolwich arrived in Torquay. 550 had come earlier and a further 400 from south-east London were expected shortly. This was soon after 'the fall of France'. Although it was quite a small fishing town at the time, Brixham was required to take 699 children and 58 adults (who 'disembarked' from trains at Churston and were taken into the town in Devon General buses). The list of schools from which these children came included schools in Peckham and Deptford.<sup>5</sup> However, by August, 542 evacuees had returned leaving 790 in the town.<sup>6</sup>

The areas from which the evacuees came has been recorded by Gerald Wasley.<sup>7</sup> During the 'crisis period in 1939' most came from Essex, London, Middlesex and Surrey; from London during the 'Blitz' (1940); from Bristol (also in 1940); Plymouth (1941); Exeter Baedeker (1942) and from London and South East England in 1944. He states that in September 1939 over 82,000 evacuees arrived in Devon, private evacuees outnumbering those sent by the government by 700%. (A report to Paignton Council in March 1941 noted that there were over 2,000 unaccompanied children billeted in the town; by July the total number billeted was 4,909 people). At the end of 1943 people evacuated from the South Hams battle area arrived in Paignton and had to be found accommodation.

As late as July 1944<sup>8</sup> evacuees were still arriving, 2,167 were in Paignton 'escaping from London V1 and V2 attacks'. Another 500 came to Torquay where 'plenty of accommodation has been most willingly offered'. This was after D-Day, and the liberation of

Europe was apparently under way: however '220 arrived in Paignton in one day and 210 in Dawlish' (this was on 13 July). Later in the month it was reported: 'There will be another 600 arriving this evening - this time mothers and children. There may have to be compulsory billeting'. Totnes and Newton Abbot had problems with so many arrivals also.<sup>7</sup>

Their stay was short-lived: soon the sea-fronts were being cleared of barbed-wire and the Great Western Railway announced at Paddington Station: 'We expect a big rush of holidaymakers to the South West'.

## References

1. Torquay Directory 25 Oct. 1939. p1.
2. Wasley, G. Devon at War. p2
3. Powell, B. ed. Devon's glorious past, 1939-1945. p51.
4. Torquay Directory 10 Jul. 1940
5. *Brixham Western Guardian* 20 Jun. 1940. p5
6. Brixham Urban District Council Min. 423/8/1940.
7. *Herald Express* 11, 13, 17 Jul. 1944

---

## 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)

**Gentry Leaders in Peace and War: The Gentry Governors of Devon in the early seventeenth century.** By Mary Wolfe. University of Exeter Press. 1997, xv + 306 pp. Illustrated. £35.00. ISBN 0 85989 5130.

This well-presented addition to the University of Exeter Press's impressive list of academic studies of south-western history derives from a Ph.D pursued in the history department there. Dr Wolfe has taken on the county government of Devon on the 'halcyon years' of the so-called personal rule of Charles I and a bit before and aft. The treatment of this worthy topic falls, somewhat awkwardly, into two parts. The first considers the diversified work of the leading JPs - whether judicial, administrative or fiscal - on both a countywide and a more parochial basis, relating it, too, to the requirements of the national government. Some resentment is identified at such central interference as the Privy Council's pressure to have the Books of Orders, dealing with social matters - e.g. engrossing and regrating - implemented, thereby bringing in 'other eyes besides those of [the JPs] consciences', which were always tender. As tax collectors, particularly, they were often hard put to make the demands of the crown, considerable in the late 1620s - a time of war - consistent with what they regarded as a proper concern for the interests - which included their own - of Devon payers. This might

suggest the concept of some sort of 'county community', but Dr Wolfe sees rather the emergence of a 'group of county leaders' - men of leisure and education, including a baronet or two, and a few knights 'drawn together by relationships', kinship, for instance, and by long residence 'into a collegiality' - an unusual term which carries ecclesiastical connotations, possibly appropriate here.

The strength of the position of these men, no doubt, owed something to the lack of a really dominant landed magnate in Devon. Sometimes some of the governors might think in terms of 'our county', but it is suggested that this was a view less likely among the bulk of the gentry, whose horizons were presumably set by their neighbourhoods. However, other work on Devon, a large area, topographically and economically diverse, pulled north and south between two seas, has found concerns even there about what was going on in a wider world. Dr Wolfe might have made rather more points of comparison and contrast than she does with other shires. But the nature of Devon material for much of this period, now thick, now thin, may have been inhibiting.

Part two offers biographical studies, of varying length and depth, of a few governors, taking some into the civil war, away from 'the peace and harmony' which runs, perhaps a little too confidently, through Part One. The most substantial is the examination of Sir George Chudleigh, from his rise to county prominence to his role as a rebel, a development regarded as displaying consistency in a belief that government was and ought to be in king and parliament. This suggests that the Parliamentary slogan 'For King and Parliament' represented a reality. But Charles was so patently not misled by evil counsellors, but rather in pursuit of his own agenda, Chudleigh must have been at best naïve. Richard Reynoll of Creedy died in 1631, before the impact of the Books of Orders was felt. He serves as an example of decent conscientiousness in local judicial and administrative duties, undertaken around what Richard Symonds, during the war, would call 'a great lousy town', Crediton. He is followed by Walter Yonge, much better-known, a puritan whose diaries of peace and war as much as his position as a governor thrust him forward here. They reveal a deepening interest in matters well beyond the local - he records details of the Five Knights case, the third Caroline parliament and what would become the Thirty Years War. Yonge, of course, became MP for Honiton in the Long Parliament, turning more or less completely from Devon affairs during the 1640s.

Another chapter surveys the five Ship Money sheriffs, holders of an office declining in powers since early Tudor times, but given renewed responsibility by the repeated demands for payment of the charge during the later 1630s. These men responded effectively, though not without meeting criticism from below and uttering some of their own, if muted. Their later careers, Dr Wolfe reminds us, 'underline the fact that competent local administration did not necessarily signify support for royal policy'. Quite. John Willoughby, of lower social origins and status, gets a chapter of his own largely because, as is freely admitted, of the chance survival of his papers, some of which have been published, ably edited by Dr Todd Gray, by the Devon and Cornwall Record Society. Willoughby was not conspicuous in county matters, but his records of his own concerns do throw some welcome light on Devon during the civil war.

Finally, contemplating 'the character of the county government'. Dr Wolfe stresses how much the personal qualities of the governors themselves, individually and collectively, mattered. The breakdown of 1642, which tested them profoundly, might have been more closely considered. 'The gentry who had led the county in peacetime no longer ruled it in war'. Why not? A fuller answer to that big question must be sought elsewhere. Nevertheless, within its own parameters this is a notable contribution to the study of the local dimension of the reign of Charles I.

Ivan Roots

**The Letters of Sir Walter Raleigh.** Edited by Agnes Latham and Joyce Youngs, University of Exeter Press, 1999. Hardback, 452pp, 12 illus, ISBN 0 85989 527 0. Price £45.

Raleigh continues to fascinate historians and the first edition of his letters in well over a century will be of considerable interest far beyond Devon but is a special treat for those interested in his home-county's history. The book is also significant because it is a reminder of the standard of meticulous research and attention to detail that has been steadily disappearing from university life now that research (or more to the point, publication) is measured by output within five-year periods. The book has a lineage of eight decades in its collation and editing: it perhaps pushes the point, but when the research for this book was begun the Tercentenary of Raleigh's death had fairly recently been marked and now with the book's publication it will not be long before thoughts are given to marking the 400 years since his execution. To put it bluntly, the scope of the book would place it beyond being considered as a viable project by today's career academics unless it was a large-grant research project with a team of historians. The book will no doubt be highly envied by those forced to work within these limited constraints and test the strength of their generosity in reviews.

There is no single collection of Raleigh's papers and like the man himself, the letters are well-travelled. In consequence Miss Latham, the first of the two editors, was forced, as early as the 1920s, to conduct a global search in order to identify the surviving letters. The task was compounded by the considerable number of copies which were made of Raleigh's letters (gentlemen were copying his letters as early as the first few years of the seventeenth century), the differences between these copies and moreover, the loss of some of the original letters. Professor Joyce Youngs joined Miss Latham in 1990 in the second phase of the project that brought the letters forward to publication. Sadly Miss Latham died shortly afterwards leaving the brunt of the task to Professor Youngs whose long-standing interest in Raleigh and some forty years' work with the Devon & Cornwall Record Society are more than evident in the completed work.

The volume comprises 228 letters printed in chronological order and includes a considerable number of discoveries. Perhaps the one that will be of most popular interest is a letter claiming that Raleigh had an illegitimate Irish daughter. The editors have retained Raleigh's original spellings and while this may challenge some general readers not used to the period it is worth striving with the text. The language can be a joy to read such as his letter written from Plymouth in 1597: 'Wee only attend the winde, havinge repayed as much as wee can our bruses, but we shall not be in any great corage for winter weather and longe nights in thesh ships'. The letters begin in 1581 and finish shortly before Raleigh was executed in 1618. A considerable number of the letters are concerned with his overseas enterprises, notably Ireland, Virginia and Guiana, as well as privateering and the long Spanish conflict.

One of the great pleasures of a book of this kind is that it will prompt discoveries of other letters and readers will hopefully be enjoying additional Raleigh letters in the years, if not months, to come.

Todd Gray

**The Lost Chronicle Of Barnstaple, 1586-1611.** By Todd Gray. Published by the Devonshire Association in 1998. ISBN 085214 063 0. 118pp, 26 illus. and 6 maps. £10.

What interesting train journeys (B'ple-Exeter return & B'ple to Andover return) with this fascinating book - thank you, Todd. I suppose I spent about nine hours delving into this historical document. The original, as the title tells us, has been lost, and we are indebted to Dr. Gray for collating two transcripts of that lost original. These are by Messrs. Chanter/Palmer

and by Revd. Hammer. The main section of the book (pages 59-101) allows us, through these two copies, to get an authentic flavour of the period of twenty-five years during which the chronicler (Adam Wyatt) was town clerk of Barnstaple.

I am no historian, though very interested in local history especially where it is directly relevant to my work as a rural vicar, and so cannot give a proper *historian's* critique of Todd's book. So what follows is my layman's view.

The first 55 pages give a comprehensive introduction to the actual text mentioned above, in a multi-media kind of way which I particularly liked. No computer graphics or anything but good old interesting descriptive narrative, well chosen illustrative photographs and historical sketches by children from local schools. (Very good they are too!)

The last 15 pages (103-118) contain two interesting 'appendices':-

1. The Spirit of North Devon Journals - a poetic description of the years covered by the Chronicle.
2. The Chronicle of Richard Wood & Mr Frayne (1533-1678).

Both of these appendices, together with the three page index which follows, fill out our understanding of this short glimpse into our past which Todd has made possible through this excellently produced and very readable addition to our local history.

Further information about this excellent book.

1. Coffee table sized (21cm.wide/23.75high/1cm thick)
2. The book has been very well and interestingly produced by the Devonshire Association. The front and back covers, for example, give the reader a topographical map of old north Devon complete with appropriate names underneath the title/line drawing/information block drawing and on a yellowy pink background. Inside cover - Adam Wyatt's signature over a grey background.
3. Some little gems of unusual information which future historical researchers will find most useful (e.g. a generous use of notes and quotes from other researchers, 138 in all!)

John Carvosso

**Buckland Monachorum, a West Devon Down and its History,** by Alan Rowe. Pub. by author, 3 Great Mis Tor Close, Yelverton, Devon PL20 6DH. 60pp. 9 b&w photos, + plans + maps including pull-out sheet. £3.25 ex p+p. ISBN 0 9535659 0 4.

This learned but very readable study of the section of Roborough Down that is closely linked with the west Devon village of Buckland Monachorum will be of absorbing interest to walkers and others familiar with that stretch of moorland, most of whom can have hardly failed to notice the area's abundance of low banks and other ground features which have previously been unexplained.

The result of nine winters' walking and methodical observation, careful recording and extensive research, the work describes the relation of the various features to known aspects of the area's prehistory and history. They include banks and ditches, abandoned settlements, signs of cultivations over centuries, and pits and openworks from medieval and later mining. Old routes that traverse and lead from the down are described and discussed, as are the effects of the establishment of Buckland Abbey in 1278. Findings in the field are supported by reference to ancient documents and to numerous bibliographical sources, and considered by the author in the light of experience acquired during working years which took him away from Devon to other counties. An added bonus is the provision of lists of inhabitants of Buckland from the Court Rolls of 1445, 1537 and 1538, from the Court Lect of 1602 and that

of 1603, leases of the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, eighteenth and nineteenth century presentments, and other information, all of which will be of value to family historians.

Mr Rowe is to be congratulated on this well-researched and well-written book, in which he acknowledges the co-operation of Dr Tom and Elisabeth Greeves in the surveying and charting of sites. He notes that the study, as it progressed 'seems to have raised more questions than answers' Nevertheless, it has shown that this particular area of Roborough Down displays a wealth of antiquarian evidence that indicates past times of much activity.

A further benefit of such published work is the encouraging effect it can have for people living in other areas which could benefit from similar investigations.

Helen Harris

---

## OTHER PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

**The Totnes Historian 2.** The second annual issue of the journal published by Totnes Museum Society, under the editorship of Bob Mann, contains articles on nineteenth century Totnesians (Donald Brown), the Study Centre (Caroline Hayman), Wartime Memories (Kristin Saunders), Totnes Home Guard (Ray Baldwin) and old Totnes walls (James Belchambers). Attractively produced in A5 format, with pictorial card cover and 24 pages, the booklet is free to society member, to others £1. The TMS is to be congratulated on its developing Study Centre, with its growing library and archival material, and much that could be of value to researchers. (Contact the Curator for opening times).

**The Western Rising 1549: the Prayer Book Rebellion,** by Philip Caraman. Tiverton, Halsgrove, 1999. 140 pp. ISBN 1-898386-03-X. £9.95.

This account of the risings, written from a robustly Catholic perspective and first published in 1994, is now reissued to mark the 450th anniversary of the Prayer Book Rebellion. It was described by Professor Joyce Youings, in her review in *The Devon Historian*, no.50, 1995, as 'an excellent introduction', though adding little new to our understanding of what lay behind the risings.

---

**Heavitree Local History Society.** In just two years since it came into being, the Heavitree Local History Society has already embarked on some fruitful work. This has included research in trade directories and census returns and, as a result, publication of a 19-page A5 pamphlet giving a brief account of retailing in Heavitree's Fore Street during the last 150 years. Following four pages of general and summarised information the remainder comprises listings of the names and trades of the street's proprietors at different dates. Chairman of the society is Councillor David Merrish, and the secretary Den Perrin. The pamphlet is for sale at £1.00. Contact the secretary on 01392-216395. Also shortly to be published is a guide to the Higher Cemetery, Heavitree, based on the society's research.

## Minutes of the 29th Annual General Meeting held at the University of Exeter School of Education, 23 October 1999

Present: the retiring President, Dr Harold Fox in the Chair, 51 members of the Society (names listed in the attendance register).

**1. Apologies:** Mr J. Coulter, Group Capt J. Goodman, Mrs J. James, Prof. N. Orme, Prof. I. Roots, Prof. J. Youings, Miss G. Westell, Officers of the Thorverton Local History Society.

**2. Minutes of the 28th AGM:** printed in *Devon Historian* 58, were approved and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

**3. Hon. Secretary's report:** Members had turned out in force to meetings at Lymington and Dartmouth, both occasions kindly hosted by the resident Societies (led by Maj. C. and Mrs R. Smith, and Mrs R. Freeman respectively). The help and cooperation of host societies had always proved vital in providing enjoyable and interesting conference programmes.

It was sad to report the deaths of past President Dr C. A. Raleigh Radford and of Mr Kenneth Stoneman, a long-standing member of Council. Good wishes for continuing recovery had been sent to Professor Joyce Youings and Dr Alison Grant.

Mr Maxted and Mr Stanes had advised on the production of parish histories in connection with the DCC Millennium Project, while Mr Pike had written a series of articles on Torbay. Letters had been written to the DCC in support of the DRO's projected move to larger premises at Sowton and also to affirm the Society's role in 'protecting the historic environment'.

A contribution would be made to a commemorative stone at Fenny Bridges to mark the battle of 1549.

Disposing of surplus *Devon Historian* stock has become an urgent problem with free storage no longer available in the Devon & Exeter Institution. Offers of selected issues would be made to schools and museums. Anyone with storage space was asked to contact the Secretary.

Mr Collings was thanked for taking minutes and Mr Stirling for help with mailing the *Devon Historian*.

Good wishes were sent to Mr David Thomas, the new Hon. Sec., who would take over in January 2000. The new post of Programme Secretary would be shared by Miss Maycock and Mr Stanes.

Mr Maxted asked about the current position regarding the Society's offer to donate back numbers of *DH* to Devon Learning Resources and was told that a response from schools was still awaited.

This being the Hon. Secretary's last report before her retirement, the President praised her great efficiency and calmness during the twelve years of her office, which followed seven years as Editor of *Devon Historian*. He presented her with a very large number of book tokens.

**4. Hon. Treasurer's report:** The Hon. Treasurer expressed his gratitude to the family of his late predecessor for passing on his records in excellent order. Following his death it had been necessary to sell some of the Society's investments, while the capital value of the remainder showed a steady decline that outweighed the relatively high interest rate. These latter had also been sold and the money temporarily placed in a building society account while the stock markets continued to show volatility. The number of members who allowed their subscriptions to become overdue had reduced from some 25% to around 17%, perhaps due to more paying by bankers' order. It was hoped this trend would continue.

Latest membership figures available showed 243 Ordinary members, 2 Honorary, 12 Life, 32

Family, 37 Affiliated and 32 Corporate Members. Questions were asked regarding the Society's bank and insurers and what benefit members received from the block subscription to the Devon Record Office. The President congratulated the Treasurer for husbanding the Society's resources so well.

**5. Hon. Editor's report:** Numbers 58 and 59 of *Devon Historian* had been published. Contributors were thanked for submitting sufficient material to enable the established 40-page format to continue, and its broad range of coverage, both geographical and over time, was appreciated. Mrs Harris also praised the standard of both research and presentation, but intending contributors were reminded of the maximum length stipulated on p.2 of the journal while there was a continuing demand for shorter pieces. Thanks were also expressed to Mr and Mrs Stirling for dispatching the copies. Members were reminded that the next issue, no.60, would be an indication that the Society will achieve its thirtieth birthday in the year 2000. In reply to questions about the next index, due following issue no.60, Ms Lorna Smith confirmed that she had it in hand. Mr Collings asked if the *Devon Historian* was being sent to the British Association for Local History, which had instituted awards for articles published in local journals. The matter was referred to Council for discussion.

The President congratulated the Hon. Editor on the last two issues.

**6. Elections 1999/2000:**

- a) The President proposed that Mrs Sheila Stirling be admitted to Honorary Life Membership. This was seconded by Mr Tony Collings.
- b) Council nominated Dr W.B. Stephens as President for 1999/2002. Handing over, Dr Fox paid tribute to his successor's wide-ranging academic interests. Dr Stephens thanked Dr Fox for his generous words and expressed his gratitude that he had been asked to succeed him.
- c) The existing officers were re-elected nem.con. with Mr David Thomas to take over as Hon. Sec. in January 2000.
- d) Mr Robin Stanes and Miss Elizabeth Maycock were elected joint Programme Secretaries.
- e) The three members due for re-election, Mr Tony Collings, Mr Ian Maxted and Mr Robin Stanes, were re-elected. There were no nominations for the two vacancies on Council. Prof. I. Roots did not wish to continue as a co-opted member.

**7. Future Programme 2000**

Spring Meeting 25 March at Sampford Courtenay would be held in the Village Hall. It was hoped that Dr Mark Stoye would be available to speak, but suggestions for other speakers were required.

Summer Meeting 8 July at Barnstaple would be organised by Council member Mr Jim Coulter.

AGM 28 October at Exeter. The theme would be Time. Mr Clive Ponsford had agreed to speak on Devon clock and watchmakers. It was hoped to find a speaker on archaeological dating methods.

**8. Any other business:**

In response to a request for a list of members, Mr Pike pointed out that this had previously been rejected on grounds of cost, but it was agreed that Council would reconsider the matter.

## University of Exeter Press

### *Recent titles*

### **Historical Atlas of South-West England**

edited by Roger Kain and William Ravenhill

395 maps : 150 illustrations including over 30 in colour

0 85989 434 7 : 588 pages : £55.00

*Approximately 12" x 12" hardback, in slipcase*

### **The History of the Honiton Lace Industry**

H.J. Yallop

0 85989 379 0 : 97 illustrations : 366 pages : £20.00

*reprint of paperback original*

### **The Letters of Sir Walter Raleigh**

edited by Agnes Latham and Joyce Youngs

0 85989 527 0 : illustrated hardback : 464 pages : £45.00

### **Power and Politics at the Seaside**

The Development of Devon's Resorts  
in the Twentieth Century

Nigel Morgan and Annette Pritchard

0 85989 571 8 : illustrated hardback : 256 pages : £45.00

*available from all good booksellers*