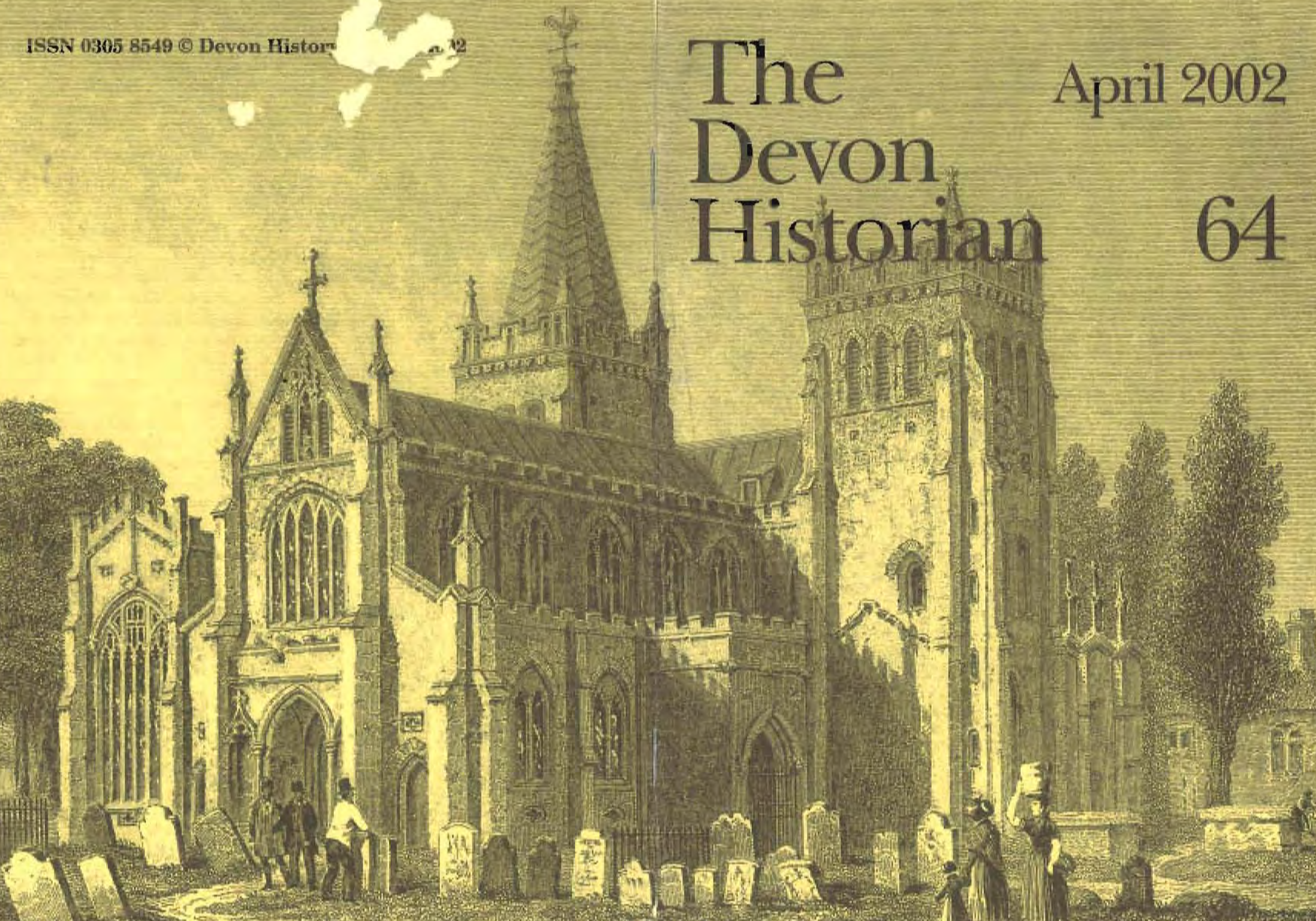


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The Devon Historian

April 2002

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The Devon Historian is available free to all members of The Devon History Society. Membership subscriptions run annually from 1 May to 30 April and for the coming year will be as follows: Individual: £10.00; Family (that is two or more individuals in one family): £15.00; Corporate (libraries, institutions): £15.00; Affiliated societies: £10.00; Life Membership (open to individuals only): £100.00. Please send subscriptions to the Treasurer, Dr Sadru Bhanji, 13 Elm Grove Road, Topsham, Devon EX3 0EQ.

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Correspondence relating to *The Devon Historian* and contributions for publication should be sent to Mrs Helen Harris, Hon. Editor, *The Devon Historian*, Hirondelles, 22 Churchill Road, Whitchurch, Tavistock PL19 9BU. The deadline for the next issue is 1 July 2002. 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 Ottery St Mary on 16 March and at Buckfastleigh on 6 July. The AGM will be held at Exeter on 26 October.

S.W. view of Ottery St Mary's Church, Devonshire, Published London 1832 by R. Jennings & W. Chaplin, 62 Cheapside. (Somers Cocks 1855).

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DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

Current and back issues of *The Devon Historian* (except for numbers 7, 11, 15, 16 and 23) can be obtained from Mr David Thomas, 112 Topsham Road, Exeter, EX2 4RW. All issues are priced at £3, post free to members. Also available post free are *Index to The Devon Historian* (for issues 1-15, 16-30 and 31-45), and *Devon Bibliography* 1980 (i.e. No 22 of *DH*, which was entirely devoted to our first *Bibliography*), 1981, 1982, 1983 and 1984, all £1 each. Bibliographies for more recent years are available from Devon Library Services.

Committee member Mr John Pike, 82 Hawkins Avenue, Chelston, Torquay TQ2 6ES, would be glad to acquire copies of the out-of-stock numbers of *DH*.

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 2002, etc.

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MEDIEVAL TAMAR BRIDGES

D. L. B. Thomas

Rising in a marsh near Woulley Barrows in north Devon the Tamar is crossed by 27 or so bridges before it reaches the sea in Plymouth Sound. Youlstone Ham Bridge is the first - no more than a culvert really - and Brunel's Royal Albert Bridge the last and most impressive. Roughly within the middle third of the river's course are six bridges with strong medieval connections.

Druyton Bridge (SX 344883), which links the parishes of St Giles on the Heath and Werrington, is the most northerly of these and is a four span masonry arch bridge founded on rock with walls of uncoursed random rubble. The three western arches are semi-circular, the eastern arch segmental and all have dressed granite voussoirs and rubble vaults. The parapets oversail the spandrels and the overall span is 23 yards (21.03m), the width between parapets being 10 feet 6 inches (3.20m). This bridge is referred to as *Durkesonbrugge* in the Cartulary of Launceston Priory, 1370¹. It was reported as being in need of repair at the Epiphany Sessions 1662² and, in 1809³, James Green, the Surveyor of County Bridges, considered this to be 'a very inferior sort of Bridge'. In 1852⁴ the arch on the eastern side was in a bad state and it was decided to take down and rebuild it at a cost of £40. During this operation the abutment and pier were found to be built of dry rubble only and these had to be rebuilt at a cost of £25 before the new arch could be turned. The replacement arch is 15 feet 6 inches (4.72m) span compared with that of its predecessor at 10 feet 9 inches (3.28m). In 1909⁵ the parapets were rebuilt, at the same time giving a little extra road width. The mixture of styles - the semicircular arches with dressed granite voussoirs contrasting with the even number of arches and the rubble walls - suggests a period of transition from medieval to post-Reformation so that the present structure could well have been built early in the sixteenth century.

Just over a kilometre downstream from Druyton and to the north-east of Launceston is Higher New Bridge (SX 349867), so called to distinguish it from New Bridge in Gunnislake. Since 1985 it has carried a layby alongside the Holworthy to Launceston road (A388). It is a three span masonry arch bridge built of squared granite rubble. Each pier face has pointed cutwaters that are carried up to the parapets to form refuges. The arches are nominally semicircular in shape but rather irregular, particularly the centre arch which has a pointed shape with a rounded crown, something that might have happened during construction or during its subsequent life. All arches spring from moulded imposts and are built in three orders, the outer ring oversailing and the middle ring chamfered. There are square putlog holes above the imposts which would have supported the arch centering during construction. There is an additional flood arch, semi-circular in shape, on the Cornish bank. Each face has a string course. The parapets are 12 inches (305mm) wide and the copings are deep chamfered granite replaced in places by rectangular concrete and stone on edge. The overall span is 31 yards (28.34m) and the width between parapets 11 feet 9 inches (3.58m). The depth of the refuges is 4 feet 6 inches (1.37m).

Henderson and Coates (1928)⁶ states that 'Netherbridge over the united streams (Attery and Tamar) has disappeared' and goes on to refer to the present New Bridge. Mudge's 1809 OS Map shows and names 'New Bridge' and, about 500 metres upstream, a further bridge named as 'Nether Bridge'. There appears to be no instance of use of the



Higher New Bridge.

latter name in Devon documents, although there is a farm to the north east, built in 1869 by the Bedford Estate, that bears this name. Thus the generally held belief that Higher New Bridge was once called 'Netherbridge' is probably incorrect. Cornwall County Council named the 1985 replacement bridge 'Netherbridge'.

Bishop Oldham granted an Indulgence on 21 August 1504⁷ for '*Pons Novus () juxta Launceston*'. Leland (c1543)⁸ recorded that about a mile from Launceston he 'passid over a bridge of stone having 3. Arches, and a smaull, caullid New Bridge...'. He continued that the bridge was built by 'the abbates of Tavestok and maintainyd by them: for Tavestoke abbay had fair Possessions thereabout'. At the Michaelmas Sessions 1614⁹ 'one bridge called Newbridge' was reported to be in 'great decaie'. The sum of 261l 13s 4d (£26.66), a fairly large sum of money, was spent on repairs in 1633¹⁰. In 1764¹¹ William Richard Labr of Launceston' was paid £15 for 'Building a Proper Arch at the North end of New Bridges' and, in 1768¹², Edmund Moone was paid the same sum for 'rebuilding an Arch of Higher New Bridge'. The bridge is of a style that would have been used shortly before the Reformation and it seems highly probable that it was built with the funds raised by Oldham's 1504 grant of Indulgence.

The present Polson Bridge (SX 357849), until recently on the A30 trunk road into Cornwall, now carries the Liffdown to Launceston road due east of Launceston. It is a twentieth century masonry arch bridge built of white granite ashlar that replaced a cast iron arch structure built in 1834 and described by Henderson and Coates (1928)¹³ as 'the monstrous bridge of stone and iron'. This is 'Pouleston Brigg' in the 1338 Rentals and Survey¹⁴. Indulgences were granted in 1466¹⁵ to help the townspeople of Launceston raise funds to maintain the bridge and William of Worcester, in 1478¹⁶, noted that it contained 'about six arches built by the country (sic)'. At the Epiphany Sessions 1608¹⁷ the court ordered that four justices should inspect 'polson bridge' and others and make an order for repair 'as the lawe appeareth'. Green (1809)¹⁸ reported that the bridge had three spans of 17 feet each plus three 'Floodwater Arches' and a roadway of 9 feet 6 inches wide. He considered the bridge to be 'altogether inadequate' and 'extremely inconvenient from its great length and narrowness'. In 1831¹⁹ it was decided to replace the bridge and a three span structure, the centre span being a cast iron arch to James Green's design, was completed in 1834.

Greystone Bridge (SX 368803), formerly Greyston Bridge, carries the Tavistock to Launceston road and is an eight span masonry arch bridge, four across the river and two dry spans on each bank. The abutments and piers of the main spans are of snecked rubble of a slaty nature, the piers having triangular cutwaters carried up to the parapets to form 4 feet (1.22m) deep refuges. The river arches are semicircular, spring from imposts and are built in three orders with a total depth of 33 inches (838mm). The top and bottom orders are of a grey stone while the middle order, of a buff granite, projects about 9 inches (228mm) and is chamfered. There is a moulded string course a little above the top order on either face. The parapets are 15 inches (381mm) wide with rectangular moorstone copings with deep chamfers. The land arches are semicircular and have 18 inch (457mm) deep voussoirs, the second arch on the Cornish side being skewed. The overall span is 76 yards (23.16m) with the river spans 22 feet (6.70m) each and the land spans 15 feet (4.57m). The width between parapets is 11 feet (3.35m).

This bridge is 'Greyston' in the 1333 Feet of Fines for Devon²⁰. On 27 December 1439²¹, Bishop Lacy made a grant of Indulgence of forty days to all who contributed to '*construccionem, reparacionem, emendacionem et sustentacionem pontis vulgariter nuncupati Greystonbrygg*'. His use of the word 'construction' must mean that it was his intention that a new bridge should be built. To judge by the style of the present structure, it

was this bridge that was built, although it appears to have been substantially altered. William of Worcester referred to 'Greston bridg' in 1438²² and Leland to 'Greistoun Bridge' in c.1543²³. In 1612²⁴, five justices inspected six bridges, including 'Greston' bridge and considered that the cost of repair of the bridges would amount to 'one hundred and thurte pounds att least...' Repairs to Greystone may have entailed reconstruction of the river arches which are quite different in style from the land arches.



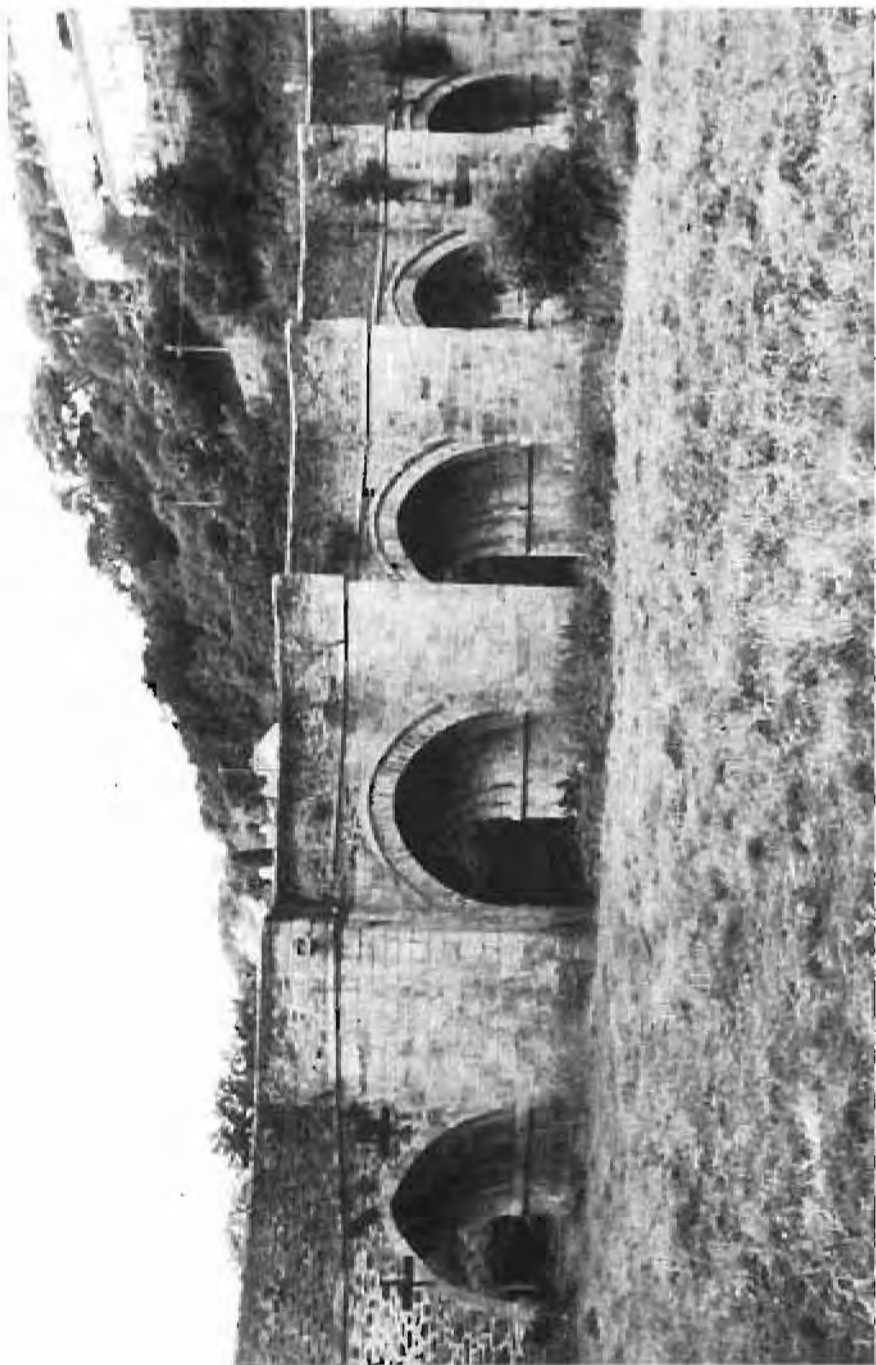
Horse Bridge. Land span on Cornish bank.

Horse Bridge (SX 400749) carries a road between Milton Abbot and Stoke Climsland in Cornwall. It is a seven span masonry arch bridge, five across the river and two on opposite banks normally across dry land. The piers are built of coursed squared rubble of a slaty nature and have triangular cutwaters that extend to the parapets to form refuges. Protruding from the upstream cutwater quoins are six sided stones about 6 inches (152mm) deep. The arches spring from weathered impostes and, excepting the land arch on the Cornish side, are semicircular in shape and built in three orders, the middle order being chamfered and oversailing the inner order. The Cornish land arch is segmental Gothic with a rather indistinct point at the crown and is also built in three orders. The parapets are 13½ inch (343mm) wide with rectangular deep chamfered granite copings cramped together. There is a moulded string course on either side with the parapets oversailing the spandrels. Protruding from the upstream cutwater quoins there are hexagonal dressed stones about 6 inches (150mm) deep²⁵. The overall span is about 62 yards (56.70m) and the width between parapets 12 feet (3.66m). The depth of the refuges varies between 6 and 4 feet (1.83 and 1.22m).

On 12 July 1437²⁶, Bishop Lacy made a grant of Indulgence to those contributing to the 'repair or alteration' of '*pontis de Hautesbrygge*'. Unlike the Greystone Bridge grant this was for the repair of an existing structure and it is unlikely that at this time, when timber bridges were systematically being replaced by masonry bridges, Lacy would have



Horse Bridge. River spans.



New Bridge, Gunnislake. Land span on left.

permitted short term expenditure on a timber bridge. This and existence of the Cornish segmental Gothic arch, which suggests fourteenth or fifteenth century construction, makes it a reasonable possibility that Horse Bridge was a masonry arch structure when Lacy made his grant in 1437. Leland refers to 'Hawte bridg' in 1542²⁷ but unfortunately does not mention whether it was a masonry bridge. Fairly major reconstruction work has been carried out on the bridge, although not as early as 1437. The river arches are of much later vintage than the Cornish arch and the masonry above arch springing level is of a different nature from that below. During the Civil War, according to Sir Edward Walker 'who had exceptional opportunities of knowing the facts'²⁸, Horse Bridge was 'broken down' when the Earl of Essex launched an attack on this and New Bridge downstream on 26 August 1644. The words 'broken down' suggest that the damage was pretty severe. It was 'in decaie' in 1651²⁹, again in 1667³⁰ and in 1677³¹ and was probably in a pretty fragile way in 1685³² when 'thro the violence of the river' sections had been 'broken out of the east pte' of the bridge. To add insult to injury three Cornish masons had unlawfully carried away 'a greate quantity of stones of a Considerable value' from the damaged bridge. Reconstruction of the superstructure, that is from impost level upward, in a style similar to Greystone river arches, would probably have followed soon after.

New Bridge in Gunnislake (SX 433722) carries the road between Tavistock and Lostwithiel (A390) and is a six span arch bridge built of coursed granite ashlar. The piers have triangular cutwaters that extend up to parapets to form refuges. Five arches cross the river and one, on the Devon bank, is normally dry. All arches spring from imposts. The dry arch is equilateral Gothic and built in a single order. Unusually the arch is ribbed but the space between ribs is filled with rubble. The river arches are semi-circular and built in two orders, the top ring being chamfered and oversailing the lower. The parapets oversail the spandrels and are of uncoursed random rubble as are the spandrels of the land span on the Devon bank. The overall span is 63 yards (57.61m) and the width between parapets is 12 feet 6 inches (3.81m). The depth of the refuges is 5 feet (1.52m).

The date of construction of this bridge can be narrowed down to a fairly short period. William of Worcester mentioned Greystone and Horse Bridge in 1478³³ but not New Bridge. Leland however (1543)³⁴ included 'Another bridg caullid New Bridg, Caulstok bridg next the se begon by Sir Perse Eggecumbe...' in his Tamar bridges. Sir Piers Edcombe died in 1539 and Leland's choice of the verb 'to begin' suggests that Sir Piers died before it was complete, making it reasonable to put the date of construction of the bridge at or a little before 1539. Of the Tamar bridges this seems to have been most used during the Civil War, probably as the lowest crossing. When the Earl of Essex launched his two pronged attack on Horse Bridge and New Bridge on 26 August 1644³⁵, a 'hot encounter' took place with Sir Richard Grenville's force of three regiments of foot. Essex lost about forty men but took the bridge. Damage to the bridge, to hinder the enemy or during the battle, would have been inevitable. Certainly it was 'in decaie' in 1647³⁶ and four Devon justices were asked to meet their opposite numbers from Cornwall to decide how 'to repair the bridge. Perhaps the river arches, which are later than the land arch, were rebuilt at about this time. At the Easter Sessions 1772³⁷, a committee of magistrates was appointed to 'Consider of the necessity and Propriety of Rebuilding Lower New Bridge'. The committee decided that it was necessary to rebuild the bridge and were authorised to have the work carried out for a sum not exceeding £60. The work, later described as 'Building New Bridge', was carried out and cost £35 6s 6d (£35.32). This sum of money is not nearly enough to build a bridge of this size and the work may have involved rebuilding the walls near the dry arch in uncoursed random rubble only.

The parapets were rebuilt in 1842³⁸ when, after just having been renewed by William Nicholson, they were washed away in a flood. Nicholson quickly set to and restored the work he had just completed and was awarded his costs, which amounted to £33. 19s Od (£33.86), by the court.

Summarising, Druyton, Polson, Greystone Bridges and possibly Horse Bridge crossed the Tamar as early as the fourteenth century. There is no evidence that any of the first three was a masonry arch bridge then but, on the basis of the style of its land arch, Horse Bridge probably was. Higher New Bridge, probably, and New Bridge in Gunnislake, certainly, were built in the sixteenth century and are unlikely to have been preceded by earlier structures. Horse Bridge and New Bridge were damaged in the seventeenth century during the Civil War and the superstructure of the former was probably reconstructed towards the end of that century.

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- 6.&7. Henderson, Charles & Coates, Henry. 1928. *Old Cornish Bridges and Streams*. Simpkin Marshall Limited, London. p44
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20. Gover etc. 1931 reprinted 1969. *op cit* p. 173
21. Dunstan, G R (ed). 1966. *The Register of Edmund Lacy Bishop of Exeter*. Vol 11. Devon & Cornwall Record Society (DCRS), Exeter. p.171
22. Worth, R N. 1886. *op cit* p.481
23. Smith, Lucy Toulmin (ed). 1964. *op cit* p. 174
24. DRO ref 1/3
25. The purpose of these stones is not apparent. They could have been support for scaffolding when the face masonry was being built although, if this were the

26. Dunstan, G R (ed) 1966. *op cit* p.59
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35. Cotton, Richard W. 1889. *op cit* pp.292 & 293
36. DRO ref 1/8
37. DRO ref 1/20
38. DRO ref 1/29

case, one would have expected to find similar stones on the downstream side. There are similar stones on New Bridge over the River Lynher (SX 347680) and Henderson & Coates (1928) suggests that there may be some connection with a salmon weir or stakes net.

SOME CONTRIBUTIONS TO MEDICINE BY DOCTORS FROM DEVON AND THEIR ANTIPODEAN FLORAL MEMORIALS

John Pearn

The English South West has produced men and women whose inventions and discoveries have changed the world. Devonians are among many who have gone out into the wider world; and in the New World and Australasia have mapped the unknown. In the wider world of medicine, and more broadly in that of health, the South West has also produced those who have been pioneers.

Most advances in medicine consist of small incremental steps which advance a segment of knowledge, or modify a drug, or make public health a little safer. Such developments are so often achieved by those whose efforts remain unheralded in the broader sweep of human endeavour; and remain unrecorded in those fragments of history with which most of us are familiar. This short account brings together a precis of the lives of six Devon doctors whose contributions to medicine are acknowledged in the antipodean world. Such acknowledgement takes the form of those most enduring and beautiful of memorials, the scientific names of plants or trees. In their annual re-bloom such live again. In their annual blossoms are recorded afresh the endeavours and advances to which their namesakes contributed - that health might be improved and that the world might be a place less afflicted by illness and pain.

DEVON DOCTORS

Dr James Parsons (1705-1770)

On James Parsons' tomb (Royal College of Physicians, 1751) is inscribed:

'Physic, Anatomy, Natural History, Antiquities, Languages, and the Fine Arts, are largely indebted to his skill and industry in each, for many important truths discovered in their support or errors detected in which they were obscured.

Sage, Scholar and Philosopher.

He died April 1st, 1770, in the 66th year of his age'

James Parsons was born in March 1705, in Barnstaple. The son of a soldier and barrack master, he received his early education in Dublin, before graduating in medicine.

Dr James Parsons became a leading physician and scientist of his age. He was appointed Physician to the Public Infirmary at St Giles, in London, in 1738 where he concentrated his interests in obstetrics and what today is the speciality of neurology. It was recorded that:

'...as a practitioner, he was judicious, careful, honest and remarkably human to the poor; as a friend obliging and communicative, cheerful and decent in conversation, severe and strict in his morals, and attentive to fulfil with propriety all the various duties in life' (Royal College of Physicians, 1751).¹

His research into early muscle action led to his elevation to Fellowship of The Royal Society, and to the award of its Croonian Medal. In 1754 he delivered the Croonian Lecture to The Royal Society in London, taking as the title of his text 'On Muscular Motion' (Royal College of Physicians, 1751).



*Sir James Parsons (1705-1770), physician and surgeon, botanist and zoologist, born in Barnstaple. The tropical Silk Pods, *Parsonsia*, are his living memorial. Portrait, dated 1762 by Benjamin Wilson, courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery, London, with acknowledgements.*

Parsons undertook pioneering work also on the bladder and published in 1742 his text 'A description of the human urinary bladder and parts belonging to it'. He was an ardent botanist also, and became interested in medicinal plants (Desmond, 1977)² In 1752 he published *Pharmacopoeia Edinburgensis*. The genus *Parsonsia* blooms today in the Australian rainforests as his floral memorial. The *Parsonsiads* are called, in lay terms, The Silk Pods, and are found throughout tropical and temperate Australia (Pearn, 1990, 107).³ Different species of the genus are tough forest climbers or robust woody liana vines. There are twenty endemic species native to Australia including *Parsonsia brownii*, the Twining Silk Pod, a species which links James Parsons with Surgeon Robert Brown, the former Scottish military surgeon who became the 'Father of Australian Botany'.

Sir James Frederick Palmer (1803-1871)

James Palmer, a Devon man, was born on 7 June 1803 at Great Torrington. While still a teenager he was apprenticed to Sir John Gunning, Surgeon-in-Chief of the British Army, and in 1824 was appointed House Surgeon at St George's Hospital in London. Palmer failed repeatedly to obtain surgical appointments in English hospitals, and emigrated to Australia to commence a new life across the world. In Melbourne he practised as a doctor and also established himself as a businessman with interests in cordial manufacturing and in wine and spirit merchandising. Palmer involved himself in major public interests and after his service as Mayor of Melbourne in 1845 became Sir James Palmer. His life was one of great community service particularly in the field of medicine. It was he who proposed the motion that the Melbourne Hospital, later the Royal Melbourne Hospital, be established. He was President of the Royal Melbourne Hospital for almost 20 years (1851-1870). Palmer's memory is conserved in the plant genus, *Palmeria*, raised by von Mueller in 1864.



Sir James Frederick Palmer (1803-1871), born in Great Torrington, Devon. A surgeon, churchman and businessman he emigrated to Melbourne where he became Vice-Chancellor of Melbourne University and Mayor of Melbourne. The Anchor-plants, genus Palmeria, found in many tropical countries, record his life and works. Photograph circa 1866, courtesy of the State Library of Victoria, with acknowledgements.

Palmer was described as:

'an old Torrie with a trace of the oddly positive' (Gross, 1974).⁴ He was elected to the Victorian Legislative Council and served as its foundation Speaker; and was elected Vice-Chancellor of Melbourne University (Faculty of Medicine, 1914)⁵ The genus *Palmeria* comprises the Anchor Plants (Pearn, 1990, 105) which grow and bloom today in the rainforests of northern Australia. Such had been known to the Aboriginal Peoples for millennia; but since their 'discovery' by Western science in 1864, some 70 other species within this large genus have been identified in many tropical countries.

Surgeon George Bennett (1804-1893)

Surgeon George Bennett was an eminent surgeon, botanist and zoologist of Sydney and a founder of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Sydney (Pearn, 1990, 18).⁶

Originally a Devon man, he was born in Plymouth on 31 January 1804⁷. His early childhood was marked by a love of natural history. His natural questing personality led him to leave home at the age of 15 years to seek his fortune, initially across the world. He travelled for several years, returning home to commence his studies of medicine at Plymouth at the relatively late age of 21. He was greatly influenced by Sir Richard Owen, the surgeon-naturalist and Conservator of the Hunterian Museum of The Royal College of Surgeons in London (Coppleson, 1955).⁸ Bennett wrote about the physique of the Aboriginal Australians and in his book, *Wanderings in New South Wales, Batavia, Pedir Coast, Singapore and China*, noted the comparative differences in physique between the Aboriginal Peoples and his native Devonians.

Bennett emigrated to Sydney in August 1832 and began there a life of medicine and of natural history which was to promote greatly an understanding of both zoology and



The Old Medical School, The University of Sydney. Surgeon George Bennett (1804-1893), of Plymouth, was a champion for its establishment and one of its foundation Faculty members - from an 1883 painting by Brian Dunlop, courtesy of Professor Richard Gye, former Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Sydney.

botany. He wrote prodigiously on scientific and medical subjects. He explored on the Darling Downs in Queensland (in 1871), in Tasmania and South Australia and travelled to Norfolk Island and New Zealand. He wrote about tetanus and developed a large medical practice. He became a champion for the establishment of a Faculty of Medicine at the University of Sydney and was appointed one of the first members of its Faculty.

Bennett's life was one of an ambassador between the worlds of clinical medicine and natural science. He was appointed as the first Secretary of the Australian Museum. One of his greatest scientific contributions was his study of the platypus, and his delineation of the mysteries surrounding the births of both marsupials and monotremes. He was the first to demonstrate that platypus eggs could be found in the oviduct of the living creature (Bennett, 1884).⁹ Many honours were bestowed upon Bennett. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Medicine from the University of Glasgow (1859) and the Fellowship of The Zoological Society of London which latter body also awarded him its Silver Medal (in 1862). Bennett died in Sydney on 29 September 1893. Of his many memorials perhaps the most beautiful is Bennett's Ash of New South Wales and Queensland, *Flindersia bennettiana* (Pearn, 1990, 17-18).¹⁰

Dr Charles Brightly Prentice. (1820-1894)¹¹

Charles Brightly Prentice was to become a greatly respected medical practitioner in Brisbane, from the time of his emigration to Australia *circa* 1865. After apprenticeship as a surgeon he was admitted as a Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries of London (in 1845), and thereafter practised in Exeter, where his first wife died.

Prentice is best remembered for his contributions to natural history (Pearn, 1990, 109). A keen botanist and zoologist he collected throughout Queensland and became a regular contributor to the meetings and publications of The Royal Society of Queensland. His particular interests were ferns and grasses; and it is particularly fitting that the grass species, *Panicum prenticeanum*, is one of his several living memorials.

Charles Prentice combined the joys of clinical practice and the promotion of all that is highest in the profession of medicine with the furtherance of scientific knowledge in his chosen antipodean land. He was appointed as a Member of the Queensland Medical Board, a body established to supervise the registration and ethics of Queensland doctors (Gibbney and Smith, 1998).¹² The beautiful North Queensland fern, *Asplenium prenticei*, also records his life and works (Pearn, 1990, 109).

Dr Walter Balls-Headley (1841 -1919)

Dr Walter Balls-Headley was one of the leading obstetricians in Australia in the nineteenth century (Macdonald, 1969).¹³ A tall, courtly and prepossessing man, he must have felt that his original surname, 'Balls', was unbecoming to a professional gentleman, especially one who was to become one of the nation's senior consultants in obstetrics and gynaecology. Early in his professional life he changed his surname to 'Balls-Headley'.

Balls-Headley performed one of the first caesarean operations in Australia (Forster, 1920),¹⁴ and was appointed President of the Section of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the Intercolonial Medical Congress held in Sydney in 1892. He published the first major gynaecological textbook in Australia, a work entitled 'On Internal Tumours: their characteristic distinctions and diagnosis'.

In 1907 Dr Balls-Headley returned to England to practise in Bideford. He left no children; but it is fitting that his name is perpetuated in the beautiful *Mulinilla balls-headleyi* whose white and pink flowers are to be found growing near water in the mountain ranges of tropical North Queensland.

Dr Arthur George Harrold (born 1918)

One of the great issues in the twenty-first century is the preservation of the environment and its protection from continued degradation. A significant antipodean champion of ecoprotection is Arthur George Harrold, who was born on 10 October 1918 at Braunton in Devon. He was educated at Hartford and graduated in medicine from Cambridge University and at St Bartholomew's Hospital in London.

After war service with the Royal Navy, Dr Arthur Harrold emigrated to Australia where, since 1961, he has collected and identified some 800 species of flowering plants and ferns from the coastal lowlands of south-eastern Queensland. He founded the Noosa Parks Association in 1962; and in the face of the threat of great predation and potential destruction of native habitats, his significant advocacy helped establish and preserve, for posterity, the Cooloola National Park. One of his published works, *Wildflowers of the Noosa-Cooloola Area*, is a reference text for all who love the unspoiled parts of the Australian bush.

In 1993, the Queensland botanist, Dr L.W. Jessup named the new species *Symplocos harroldii* in his honour - a fitting commemoration of the services to environmental protection of a former Devon son.

Devon's sons include a great many famous names, of those who have gone out across the world and have their grand memorials, fitting tributes to the progression of humankind. To these might be added, in humbler vein, the floral memorials of these Devon doctors whose lives bloom afreash across the world.

Acknowledgement

I thank Dr Christopher Gardner-Thorpe of Exeter for much encouragement

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John Pike

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Major General John Pearn is the former Surgeon General of the Australian Defence Force; and in his civilian life is the Professor of Paediatrics and Child Health and Deputy Head of the School of Medicine at the University of Queensland.

He is sometime President of the Australian Society of the History of Medicine and a member of the Executive of the International Society of the History of Medicine. He is the author of some fifty articles and fifteen books on the history of health both in the United Kingdom and in Australia. He has specialty interests in medical botany and toxicology and in the history of botany as this applies to medicine.

His name 'Pearn' is from the Cornish 'Trespearne', the 'place of the thorn bushes'. His ancestors, of the Hele kindred, are from Tavistock in Devon and from Landrake and Boscastle in Cornwall.

Mr Alan Penner of Sidmouth, in his professional life as a solicitor, came across a letter written by Matthew Skinner from Broadwoodwidger to his son, 'Mr John Skinner Carpenter' in London in 1813. It is marked with the post-town 'Oakhampton 198' and has the postmark '8 Mar 1813' but it is the account of Matthew's circumstances at the time which renders the document worthy of wider attention. 'Oakhampton had good communications with Exeter from early times' and from 1760 was turpiked: 'How the letter reached there must be conjecture. From 1604 onwards all schoolmasters had to be licensed by the bishop (until then they were licensed by the church authorities) so that the earliest information is in the Diocesan Records; it has not been possible to check these for this parish but it is clear from Matthew's handwriting that he had been taught well and wrote with assurance and that his spelling and grammar was reasonable (it is transcribed here as written).

Dear Son /

I Should have write you before but have been expecting to see you. I had a letter from Thos from Powderham Castle before Christmas wherein he mention of a young man Shopmate of yours Calling on Mr Hall & told him that you intended Coming Down about Christmas you & a wife he expect,d would be before that time which if so I hope you have taken Care to make a good Choice which is a very Precarious [sic] Matter to Duc [do] at this time to git a Virtuous Woman, which if a man Does not it is better for him to be buri,d a life. I Rec^d a letter last week from Tho^r he is in good Health & like his situation thus far very well - but I will assure [he still uses the old style 'ss'] you that I am at a very great loss for want of him & what I shall Duc [do] for want of him I Cannot tell you for I assure you that I am so much of a Cripple with the Rumaties [sic] in my right Pinbow an across my Kidneys that sometimes I Cannot Stand upright & I Don't think that I shall ever git better, rather worse as I git older - Mr Halls wife is brought to bed of a Daughter about a fortnight agone & is in good Health & likewise Mr Hall & his little Boy. I Rec^d a letter last week from your brother Matth^s from Esq^r Stackhouses at Pendervas - he his wife & fittle boy are in good Health - he was home and Stay^d with [me] 10 Days after he left Esq^r Daniells Service. I think they use,d him ill after liveing with him for so many years, he never would let him go from him till such times as his Seat was Compleat,d which I always told him would be the Case when his turn was Serve. I dont think he likes his Situation very well he writes me that it is very Coarse Country and every thing very Dear owing to the miners, fuell very scarce - his master and mistress seems to behave very well thus far, they are large Gardens and rather out of Order they are going to Plant a Vast Quantity as much as will be Compleat,d in 3 or 4 years so if he Remaines there he is in the midst of it again - he says it is unpleasant the house he lives in is a Quarter of a mile from the Gardens - my old friend Mr Eastcott at Broadwoodtown is confin,d to his bed & I Dont think he will ever git out more he has

95
Broadwoodwidger Feb^{ry} 28th 1813

Dear Son /

I should have write you before but have been expecting to see you, I had a letter from Tho^s from Powderham Castle before Christmas wherein he mention of a young man shopmate of yours (calling on Mr Hall & told him that you intended coming down about ^{mid} Christ^{mas} you & a wife he expect, I would be before that time which if so I hope you have taken care to make a good choice which is a very Poccasionous matter to due at this time to get a sober Virtuous Woman, which if a man Does not it is better for him to be hired a life, I rec^d a letter last week from Tho^s he is in good Health & likes his Situation thus far very well - but I will assure you that I am at a very great loss for want of him & what I shall due for want of him I cannot tell for I assure you that I am so much a Cripple with the Pneumonia on my right Pintone on across my kidneys that sometimes I cannot stand upright & I dont think that I shall ever get better, rather worse as I get older - Mr Hall's wife is brought to bed of a Daughter about a fortnight agoe & is in good Health & likewise Mr Hall & his little boy

Facsimile of part of Matthew Skinner's letter.

lost the use of his Legs - Mr Rich^d Eastcott Buri^d his Eldest Child a bad fever that Raines [sic] in our Country & he has another very ill - everything is very dear in our Neighbourhood Wheat 16s. Winchester Bushell Barley 9s. 6d. D^o Oats 5s. D^o Best Cuts of Beef 10d per lb Mutton D^o 9d - Pork 8¹/₂ & 9d D^o Ducks 6s Couple fowls 5s. Geese 8s & 9s a piece & everything in Proportion.

Your Sister Mary & family ar in good Health one of Mary Da..ters are gone with Mrs Liscombe & one is with W^m Hall, John Halls wife is Brought to bed last week - but the Estate was full stock before - I saw Mr Short about fortnight agoe he is very unwell he has a very bad leg. he told me his wife was in good Health but I have not seen John Harper this twelvemonth they due [do] not work at Landew now, Masters works there, Mrs Cumbe Sister to Grace that lives with me was burd last Monday she [died] in the Dropsy, old Henry Shelley was Drown [?] somelme since under aldeford Down - Jonathan joynes

with love to you an I Remaine your affectionate Father Matth^o Skinner.

P.S. I hope you will let me know on your next letter when you intend Comeing Down as it is a long time since I Saw you. I will thank you to make an Enquiry of Mr Gardner the Price of Each Sort of Field Turnip per Bushell.

References

- 1 Hawkins, M. Devon Roads p. 13
- 2 Hosking, W G. Devon. p. 151

Perhaps a member closer to Broadwoodwidger may be able to make a more detailed account of Matthew Skinner's place in his community from documents available 'nearer home'.

GROWING UP IN PLYMOUTH BEFORE THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Audrey Deacon

On arriving at Plymouth by train one summer evening in 1927 my parents and I (aged ten years) loaded ourselves and our luggage into a decrepit horse drawn cab - surely the last of its kind - to go to a rented house where we were to live for the next two years or so. It would provide me with my first experience of electric light and of a bathroom built as an integral part of the structure.

Plymouth at that time, although a county borough, was still plainly based on the three towns - Plymouth, Stonehouse and Devonport (originally Dock) - and there were firms trading under such names as 'Three Towns Dairy'. Plymouth, which grew up around Sutton Pool, had a long and chequered history, including at least one devastating fire-raising raid from Brittany in the sixteenth century, Drake's famous game of bowls on the Hoe, and the final departure of the Pilgrim Fathers in the Mayflower. The centre was still a maze of narrow streets, largely destroyed in the bombing of 1941, but in the twenties and thirties subject to monumental traffic jams on Saturday mornings.

Devonport (the new name conferred on 'Dock' by George IV in 1824) was predominantly naval, with the Dockyard as its main source of employment. Some of the older streets, dating from the eighteenth or early nineteenth century, had wide roadways between dignified houses faced with small square or lozenge-shaped slates, sometimes in patterns of varying colours. Stonehouse, built by the creek of that name, in its time had had a certain style, with substantial Regency and William IV houses. Benjamin Robert Haydon, the painter, describes how in 1798 he and a fellow schoolboy took off their hats to Nelson, who returned their greeting. But by the 1920s the main thoroughfare, Union Street, had innumerable public houses and a few rather dim little cinemas and theatres, plus tattooing parlours, greasy-smelling cooked-meat shops and so on. All Three Towns were severely damaged by the 1941 bombing.

I was enrolled as a day-pupil at a school (for girls only) run by French nuns of the Ursuline Order, who had been obliged to leave France in the early years of the century, since they were no longer allowed to teach - their prime function. The lessons were all in English, with English mistresses brought in to teach mathematics and dancing. Most of the two hundred girls were not Roman Catholic, but this presented no problems, since religious instruction was limited to study of the New Testament, Catholic girls having additional lessons separately. There were a few boarders, including from time to time French girls sent to improve their English, and for a longer time two Russian girls whose parents had fled with them from the Revolution - then only about ten years ago. As in other schools we were required to wear the standard blue serge gym tunic - and in our case could be required to kneel down to make sure that it reached the knee. Black stockings, felt hats in winter and straw hats in summer were all part of the uniform.

Among special features were the entertainments provided on 'Open Days' for the delectation of parents. The main item would consist of a narrative dance, to the accompaniment of French lyrics sung by another group of girls. An example was one depicting scenes in the life of strange birds *Courlis Blancs*: for this we wore surplice-like muslin garments with muslin wings attached to shoulders and wrists, white stockings and a large bow of white crepe paper standing erect on our heads. It was a particular

joy at rehearsals to watch the headmistress in her black habit and starched wimple raising her skirts (showing her little black boots) to demonstrate the way in which we were to hop. The programme would also include some rather charming Breton folk-songs (St Ursula, the patroness of the Order, had been a Breton princess).

A very special occasion in 1931 was the quinqucentenary of the death of Joan of Arc. This might have been considered an embarrassing event, since she died, of course, at the hands of the wicked English. On the contrary - we all learned, and sang with gusto, the words of the *Marche Lorraine*, which recounts the story of *La Pucelle* (the maiden), referring to her as a white dove and to the French in terms of victory and glory. The climax was a tableau with a senior girl (actually from Chile) standing on a ladder holding aloft the French tricolour - regardless of the fact that it owed its existence to the French Revolution some five centuries later.

In the following year the school was closed, the reason being twofold: the buildings and playing-field were required by the then Roman Catholic bishop of Plymouth for a boys' school then housed in unsatisfactory accommodation in a run-down area; and the French government of the day relaxed the ban on the nuns to the extent of allowing them to teach provided they wore ordinary modern clothes (their habit could be worn at 'off-duty' times). I had of course to start at a different school, which as before involved a twenty-minute walk twice each way every day, since in those days everyone went home for lunch. On wet days one could take a tram - much larger and more comfortable (with upholstered seats) than any I had seen before. Schools, like everyone else, worked on Saturday mornings.

On Saturday afternoons in summer innumerable families set off for picnics, going by motor-boat across the Sound to such places as Bovisand on the Devon side and Cawsand on the Cornish side. Loaded with sandwiches, thermos flasks of tea, bathing suits and towels, in some places they faced a hilly walk of a mile or so, followed by descent of a steep cliff path, in order to reach a sandy beach. We used to go to the Cornish side, either by motor boat (subject quite frequently to breakdowns) or more prosaically by an elderly small steamboat, the *Armadillo*, from Admirals' Hard, Stonehouse, to Cremyll and then on by bus. (This was the crossing to 'Cribby' which Celia Fiennes, going by a ferry rowed by several men, described as alarming and dangerous.)

It was easier to get to Dartmoor, by bus or local train which went as far as Princetown, stopping at large villages and even 'halts' which put one down directly on the moorland.

The Hoe was of course within walking distance, and very agreeable, with views of Drake's Island, the Eddystone Lighthouse in the distance, and the Breakwater, constructed in the early nineteenth century. In earlier years storms could be disastrous - the worst being the terrible one of 1703, vividly described by DeFoe (*A Tour of the whole Island of Great Britain*). Transatlantic liners often anchored in Cawsand Bay, and tenders went out from Millbay Docks to take off mails and passengers wishing to complete their journey by rail.

Each January I was taken to the Barbican district to see the herring fishing fleet, moored double- or triple-banked along the quay at Sutton Pool - the original harbour of Plymouth, below the seventeenth century Citadel. At that time the fleet used to follow the shoals on their regular voyage round the coasts: among them might be a few French boats, which also came in summer, catching among other things spider-crabs - despised by the English but valued by the French.

For entertainment there were various cinemas, some large and considered luxurious,

The old Theatre Royal - dignified but shabby - was closed for much of the year, opening only for visits by touring companies such as Sir Frank Benson's specialising in Shakespeare (I went to see this once or twice in a school group), or an occasional ballet or opera. I remember looking down at rows of seats covered in faded gold-coloured plush, each with a central bald patch like a tonsure. Emergency lighting in the corridors was provided by flickering fishtail jets which must have dated from the earliest days of gas-lighting. We were also taken to the annual performances of a local amateur symphony orchestra: this was long before the present system of visits by touring orchestras. The Palace Theatre provided mostly 'variety' programmes, and pantomimes at Christmas. A theatre at Devonport was used by visiting variety solo performers and by the local Gilbert and Sullivan society. There was a small but thriving repertory theatre, whose premises were sometimes used by amateur dramatic societies - as was a small private theatre situated, rather oddly, in the Royal Marine Barracks. For winter afternoons there were country walks through such villages as Tamerton Foliot, and others from St Budeaux or Crownhill - a good prelude to going home to tea and crumpets by the fire.

RELIVING THE PAST

The Payhembury Millennium Community play 'Parson Terry's Dinner' and other stories

Robin Stanes

In the year 2000, on three June evenings in succession, this village was full of people wandering purposefully about. Some fairly odd and unusual things were going on, in seven different places. They formed part of the community play, based on the history of the village, in which about 120 villagers took part.

In Payhembury's fourteenth century church the pulpit was occupied by the vicar the Rev. Robert Terry, preaching a Christmas sermon. It was Christmas day 1654. He was dressed in appropriate seventeenth century parsons' bands' and black vestments, and was preaching to a good congregation, many of whom wore the traditional Puritan broad white collar. Towards the end of the sermon Robert Terry incautiously referred to King Charles's 'murder'. At that there were loud and increasing shouts of dissent from some of the congregation. These rose to a pitch and, in the end, the 'Puritans' in the congregation, led by Major Sanders who lived in the village, rose to their feet and pulled the parson out of the pulpit and manhandled him out of the church. Not content with that, they followed him next door to his vicarage and into his parlour. There, laid out on the table, was Rev Terry's Christmas dinner, food and drink in some abundance including 'plum pudding'. All this Major Sanders and his followers, broad white Puritan collars much in evidence, proceeded to eat with enthusiasm and acclamation, the rest of the congregation looking on with horror through the window.

(This 'true' story comes from the Rev. Walker's 'Sufferings of the Clergy', an account of persecutions and dispossessions of Anglican clergy in the Civil War period. The Rev. Robert Terry was the first of four Terry vicars of Payhembury. The last of them, the Rev. Messiter Terry also appears in one of these plays.)

Outside the church, in front of the WAR MEMORIAL, a fairly sombre scene was being enacted, the dedication of the memorial in 1922. Those who attended all wore black 'widows weeds'; the names of all those commemorated on the memorial were read out. 'Abide with me', 'Tipperary' and 'Pack up your troubles' were sung and 'The Last Post' was sounded. The National Anthem was sung. A telegraph boy on a bike, in post office uniform, arrived with the fearful and ominous yellow telegram. This he delivered to a mother with her two children, who burst into tears, and the church bell tolled a muffled peal

(Village memory in part)

Nearby, in an old-fashioned oil lamped farmhouse kitchen, World War Two EVACUEES from London were being introduced to their mostly unwilling hosts. They were interrupted by the wireless on which Mr Churchill could be heard. 'We shall fight on the beaches, we shall never surrender.' The evacuees were bemused and bewildered, the billeting officer was firm and, in a time shift, remembered her own experiences of billeting and separation from her family. The father of the house was persuading his

two unwilling children to share their rooms with the newcomers, that it was necessary for the war effort. His mother, a very grumpy granny, was laying it down that she would share her bedroom with nobody, but nobody!

(Evanees were billeted in the village in the war. There were tensions. The rest is imagination)

Rather more cheerfully, but painfully, another two village dramas were being acted out. One old villager, MR AYRES, is cutting sticks for kindling and cursing and moaning because of his agonising thumb, poisoned by a thorn that he could not remove, picked up while hedging. The doctor arrived and told him to grin and bear it, it would burst in the end. Whereupon the old hedger laid his thumb on a chopping block and cut it off with one blow of his billhook!!

A neighbour, a MR PHILLIPS, then appears, cursing a lot of children who run off. He has been driven from his house by children climbing on the low-slung thatched roof and dropping stones down his chimney on to his open fire where he is cooking his dinner!! His dinner splashed all over him and scalded him!! The thatch on his house came low down over the eaves so that children could easily get on to the roof.

(Village stories collected in 1977 for a Jubilee book)

Up at the Church of England village school, built in 1850, the schoolmaster is being put through his paces by a SCHOOL INSPECTOR: the very upper class Colonel Parkinson. This is the period of 'Payment by Results', when the teacher's work and his pay were assessed by inspections of the school and its children's performance. Here the teacher had a bad report the previous year, and lost some salary, and in this inspection he is plagued by one bad boy, who is sent out but returns wearing a fox's mask from a recent kill of the hunt. He gets a good thrashing. The colonel, aided and abetted by the vicar, the Rev. Messiter Terry, queries the children's work and attendance 'working on the farm all the time, that's all they're good for'. One girl has been kept down a year for poor work and her mother pleads for her. The vicar and the colonel then set off for lunch at the vicarage. The vicar has an excellent cook.

(There is some memory of the fox's mask. The Rev Messiter Terry, by reputation and from a surviving letter, ate enormously, liked his drink - he kept, so it is said, a bottle in the reading desk in the church, - and admired the girls.)

Opposite the school is Payhembury Garage. Once this was a carriage works where carts and wagons were made by the Peacey family. This is the scene for an argument about the merits of the CAR versus the HORSE AND TRAP. The butcher, 'Butcher Marker', had the first car in the village. Both horse and trap and an old touring car visit the garage, the drivers dressed for the period. There is an argument; the trap drives off, but the car won't start, to much amusement. This must have been the source of an immense number of pub arguments.

Lastly, at Cokesputt, just outside the village, CIDER is being made; the surviving cider press is extracting the last juice from the 'cheest' of apple pulp. This is a raucous drunken occasion, as the men seem to swing to and fro on the lever of the press. Cider

is still made here in the old way, and for the play there was a lot of it about!! A young woman, the wife of one of the workmen, appears, demanding his presence back at home as the baby is sick. He is reluctant, but after a lot of argument eventually goes. The farmer, his boss, had promised him the lease of an old tumble down cottage, so that he and his missus and child could leave the crowded cottage of his mother-in-law where they now live. The farmer is angry at his leaving work and tells him he can forget about the cottage, whereupon the young wife turns on the farmer and curses him for the way he treats his men.

(Imaginary, though the cider press is real and working still, and then there were no council houses.)

These were our seven plays, some not strictly historical, but likely enough. If they were not true they were good stories (*Si non e vero, e ben trovato!*)

Each play lasted ten minutes or so and had a cast of up to 20 people, (in the the church) so that in the end some 120 villagers, including a lot of children, took part in the plays. The oldest performer was 77, the youngest 5.

The plays were performed no less than seven times each evening, for three evenings, so there were twenty-one performances in all. Hard work!!

It never rained!!

Some 'high tech' was involved!! To get the church bell rung at the right point, an observer raised his hand at the critical moment; another observer in the church porch pulled a string attached to the leg of the ringer half way up the church tower!

There were no scripts for the plays. Everyone knew how the play was to go and what, roughly, needed to be said, so that we made up our own script, we knew the plot but the actual words differed on each occasion. Actors responded to the situation in different ways, the words they spoke were their own and reflected how they would have felt and thought in the imaginary circumstances.

The audience came from all around, all the 'actors' persuaded their relatives and friends to come and it was advertised. Tickets took the form of a programme describing each play and giving the cast. Roughly 100 were sold on the first two nights and 180 on the last night. The audience gathered on the green and were divided into seven parties, each with a 'leader' to guide them around and explain what was going on.

There were other things going on. A motorcyclist in 1950s gear wearing goggles rode through the village on an ancient motorbike asking the way. Other old cars were in evidence. Some stray sheep were being tended on the green by a farmer's wife. A small dance band, the Payhembury Stompers, played 1940s music and two local girls, the seams of their 'nylons' pencilled on their calves, longingly jived to the music, thinking of the American dances they had been to at the airfield nearby.

At the end of the seven performances each evening, all the cast and all the audience gathered on the village green where there was a dais and a backdrop showing all the stories. We all danced a circular dance singing with enthusiasm, to the music of the band, the song written for the occasion 'the Gift of Payhembury'. This was led by a fourteen-year-old girl with a startlingly powerful soprano voice. Then there were fireworks!

All this derived ultimately from one man's enthusiasm. This was John Somers, who is a lecturer in drama at Exeter University and lives in the parish. He had always wanted to do a 'community play' and this was really 'his baby'. He had contacts and resources that helped immensely, but it was his enthusiasm, vision, understanding and drive that made it all work.

The initial meetings to devise the plays were not well attended really, and no one knew who would come to see the plays. Some people were keen from the word go, some had to be dragged in, but as we became familiar with our fellow actors in rehearsals, and got to know what we had to do and say, enthusiasm grew.

In the event it was immensely enjoyable to do and, so we were told, good to watch. The grumpy old grandma was told in an Ottery shop later, by someone she didn't know at all 'Quite right, don't share your bedroom with any of those children'.

It is hard to describe the effect the play had on us. A video that was made of the whole thing does not do it justice. A questionnaire elicited some remarkable replies. 'I wanted to write and tell you how fantastic I, and everyone I have spoken to, thought the play was. I felt very moved by the whole play, and the finale evoked real emotion in me'. That was from a member of the audience. Cast members felt much the same, they met and worked with people they often had never, or barely, met before, to a common purpose. 'Participating was a real heart-warming experience. Friends who came to the play were very envious of us living in a community that could produce such quality, moving, drama pieces and that such talent should be in such a small place. I am proud to be part of a community that can arouse such passion. Curiously I was aware of a sort of love for all those who took part. Together we had made it all work.'

This is in fact a very ordinary village, the usual mixture, as in most Devon villages, old inhabitants mostly living in council houses, who have lived here all their lives and don't want any change, farmers, often on farms their families have owned for two or three generations, a few professional working people living in old houses, who have found a good place to live, and, more recently, newcomers from 'up country' in new houses with no roots in the place at all, often working miles away, some treating the place as a dormitory and taking no part in village life, some involved from the start.

The village is not particularly community minded, it has a well-used parish hall, a school, a shop, and two garages, and an ill attended church, with a vicar shared with two other parishes. There are dances, and whist drives, and an over-sixties club, and indoor bowls, and a good youth club and the like. There are also some low key but strong feuds and enmities.

Somehow the play 'struck a chord' that we could all respond to, and it made us, willy-nilly, rather more of a community than we had been. We had shared in and enjoyed the making of something very worthwhile.

(Robin Stanes does not reveal which part(s) he played in the production – Ed.)

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)

Lundy Packets by Mike Tedstone. Twelveheads Press. 2001. 104 pages. 100 illustrations. £21.00. ISBN 0 906294 47 9.

Essentially this is the story of the measures taken by successive owners of Lundy to obtain a regular service of mail and supplies for the island. It begins in the middle of the nineteenth century with the Heaven family followed, relatively briefly, by the Christies and then the Harmans and ends today with the Landmark Trust/National Trust. The vessels used in this service are described and are seen to change in type as their purposes alter. Surprisingly, the first regular 'packet' was a small cutter, the *Gannet*, which served the island under sail until 1911 when the owner, Captain Dark, put in a motor and asked for an increase in the Royal Mail subsidy. The contract, accordingly, was put out to tender and won by the owners of a steamer, the *Devonia*, active until 1916 when the Navy took over. After the war the converted motor fishing drifter *Lerina* served for thirty years until no longer seaworthy. There followed a five-year interval when the mail was carried by air until 1955 when another converted fishing boat, the *Lundy Gannet*, resumed a regular timetable of visits to the island. But the need for a larger vessel, with greater carrying capacity led in 1971 to the introduction of a former Greenland coaster, renamed *Polar Bear*, to be replaced in 1986 by the present packet, the *Oldenburg*.

The Heaven family seem to have been content with a mail service under sail but then there were other ways open to get letters to the mainland. From the beginning of the last century excursion steamers frequently came to the island, and shore visits from their passengers became acceptable. There were landing charges, paid by the companies, and no doubt good business was done in the food and drink trade. Firms such as P. and A. Campbell made attractive coastal voyages by paddle steamer and Lundy was a favourite destination. These cruises remained popular between the wars but were resumed on a much smaller scale after 1945. By the 1980s they were no longer of overall significance in Britain. There was a revival of interest in them in some localities in the middle of the decade, including the north Devon coast, inspired largely by the desire of enthusiasts to preserve some working paddle steamers. At that time the *Oldenburg* had come into service as a ship that could carry about 200 passengers and some arrangements on competition became necessary.

The Landmark Trust had, over the years, modernised or converted into holiday dwellings most of the suitable buildings on the island. To bring over their holiday tenants it required a regular timetable and a vessel able to carry more than the dozen passengers for which the earlier packets had been licensed. The *Oldenburg* met this need but it was not until 1999 that the Trust was able to construct a jetty, alongside which she could load and discharge. Previously landings had to be from small boats on the open beach; and this went for cattle and other livestock. There are some interesting photographs in the book showing this being done.

The author explains how the service originally operated from Instow, and at different times from Appledore, Bideford and Ilfracombe. He says something of the men

who worked these craft, especially the Dark family which commanded them over three generations and, of course, gives detailed descriptions of the vessels concerned. His incidental accounts of the many small steamship companies active in the area are interesting. The photographs and drawings in the book are well selected and reproduced and help the reader to enjoy this chronicle of a century and a half of one of the lesser known aspects of north Devon life.

Adrian Reed

William Wey: an English Pilgrim to Compostella in 1456. By Francis Davey. London: Confraternity of St James, First Floor, 1 Talbot Yard, Borough High Street, London, SE1 1YP. 2000. 99 pp. £5.50. ISBN 1 870585 56 9.

William Wey (1406/7-1476) was a fellow of Exeter College (Oxford) who graduated as an MA and B1), became one of the earliest fellows of Eton College, and ended his life in Edington Priory (Wiltshire). He is best known for having made three pilgrim voyages, one to Compostella and two to Jerusalem, of which he left records in Latin in a manuscript volume, now known as his *Itineraries* and housed in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. The manuscript contains a miscellaneous collection of documents, including narratives of his journeys, lists of sites one should visit, and data about languages and monetary exchange rates. An edition of the Latin text was privately published in 1857, but this has never been widely available nor wholly translated.

The core of Francis Davey's book consists of the Latin text relating to Wey's pilgrimage from Plymouth to Compostella in 1456, with an English translation. The text is only nine pages long in each language, and the rest of the book consists of an introductory chapter about Wey's life and times, together with a series of short studies, chiefly exploring topics that he mentions in his text. These include the identities of four English gentlemen whom he met at Compostella, four Cornish landmarks that he passed on his journey, a song sung by Spanish children to pilgrims, asking for money, and an enquiry into the relationship between Wey and one or more other men of the same name who occur in Devon in the fifteenth century.

The book is useful in these respects, and it is good to have the translation of the voyage. On page 20, the author rather avoids explaining two of the categories of clergy at Compostella: *porcionarii*, whom I would translate as 'portionaries' or 'portionists' (men having an equal share of an endowment), while *duplarii* are those who have a double share. On page 23, *rectores chori* are usually known as 'rectors of the choir', rather than 'rectors choral', and the objects that they held (*baculos*) were surely staves rather than croziers. The book is less successful as a piece of historical writing. References to original records are not consistently provided or set out in the form that historians follow: something easily ascertainable from good recent monographs. Using a book on the Wars of the Roses by a popular writer, rather than the many far sounder academic works available, will not instil good historical habits. A good deal more could have been said to place Wey's Compostella journey in context. We know of others who made the pilgrimage in the fifteenth century, and at least two have left some literary record of it: the mystic Margery Kempe and the Yorkist nobleman Anthony Lord Rivers.

The author believes that Wey was a Devonian – a reason, presumably, why his book

was sent to this journal for review. In favour of this assumption, there was at least one Wey family in Devon and William became a fellow of Exeter College, whose fellowships were confined by statute to men from Devon or Cornwall. A. B. Emden, on the other hand, who wrote the standard biographical dictionary of the known medieval students of Oxford University at a high standard of scholarship, preferred to locate Wey's origins further east in the diocese of Salisbury (Dorset and Wiltshire). Perhaps he recalled that it was not unusual in Oxford colleges to give fellowships to men who were not strictly qualified to hold them. More certainly, he would have attached significance (as I do) to the fact that Wey was ordained by the bishop of Salisbury, described as 'of Salisbury diocese', and credited with a 'title' from Shaftesbury Abbey in Dorset. A title was an insurance policy against unemployment, required of all ordines, and does not mean, as the author thinks, that Wey was employed at the abbey (at the time of his ordination he was a fellow of Exeter College). Most ordines seem to have arranged their titles with religious houses in their home districts. Wey's adult life was based in Oxford, Buckinghamshire, and Wiltshire, and his connection with Devon needs to be more firmly established than this book assumes.

Nicholas Orme

Exeter engraved: Volume II - The Cathedral, Churches, Chapels and Priors by Todd Gray. The Mint Press, 2001. xx + 207. Illustrated. £25.00. ISBN 1 903356 08 3.

This well-produced book is the second of a series, and lives up to the high standard set by the first. Although most of the pictures reproduced are housed in Exeter, few of the public are aware of their existence, and even fewer would have seen the originals. The author is to be commended for bringing them to wider attention in a way which does not risk their being damaged by excessive handling. Although the assiduous research worker may wish to inspect the primary source, the reproductions are of sufficient quality to satisfy others.

A foreword by the Dean of Exeter and an introduction by the author are followed by illustrations of Exeter's churches and chapels set out in alphabetical order. Next comes a section devoted to the city's two priories, of St Katherine and of St Nicholas. After pictures showing the Cathedral Close, the final and largest part of the book concerns the Cathedral itself. In keeping with the title, the vast majority of the illustrations are engravings of various types. The pendant may carp at the inclusion of some drawings and paintings. The reviewer has no quibble over this as they serve to fill in gaps where no engraving is known to exist, as for example in the case of Allhallows Church, Goldsmith Street. They fill in gaps also where, as with St David's Church, engravings do not fully document the history of a building.

In any single-author compilation the choice of pictures is inevitably idiosyncratic. Those presented reflect Todd Gray's background as a historian, rather than as an artist or architect. In particular, he demonstrates that Exeter is not a static city jolted into change from time to time by enemy action or bursts of redeveloping zeal. Where series of pictures are available they show that many of the buildings illustrated evolved gradually into their present or last known form.

It could be argued that because of the book's general layout and a comprehensive list of contents a full index is not necessary, and the reviewer has much sympathy

with this view. On the other hand, some readers might have liked an index to the artists and engravers, if not to the actual illustrations. This is a minor criticism, however, and the work can be thoroughly recommended. It should benefit all those interested in urban history and topography and deserves a readership beyond the city it describes. Anyone seeing it as merely an up-market picture-book for the more affluent tourist to take home would be seriously missing a number of points.

S. Bhanji

About Tavistock: a brief history of Tavistock and Seven Town Walks. Tavistock and District Local History Society. 2nd ed. 2001. 76p. illus. (some col.), map. £5.

The new edition of this little history has completely changed in appearance from the earlier volume. It now has an appealing cover and there are a number of new coloured photographs inside (some dated 2001). The number of 'Walks' has been increased from six to seven, the new one covering 'Communications'. This tells a little of the convoluted history of 'the railway' which involved both the Great Western and the Southern. Easy access to Plymouth ended in 1962.

When I reviewed the history in October 1995 (*Devon Historian* No. 51), I commented on its lack of both a bibliography and ISBN. An ancient west Devon town like Tavistock has had many books and articles written about all aspects of its past; it was therefore a disappointment to find that there are still no titles listed. However, more importantly, *About Tavistock* still has no ISBN. In this modern mechanical age many books can be ordered only by ISBN. This omission will reduce sales of what is a most important and useful addition to the 'story of Tavistock' which has been written totally by the people who live there!

John Pike

Tavistock's Yesterdays 11, by G. Woodcock. 2001. Pub. by author in Tavistock, obtainable locally, £4.95. A5 soft back. 96pp. incl. 21 illust. No ISBN.

After a break of seven years Gerry Woodcock has resumed his annual production of books in the series *Tavistock's Yesterdays*, each of which comprises a number of short essays on a subject of the town's history.

In the new issue the author embarks on a plan he proposes to continue in those following - reproduction of a chapter from a book he wrote as Head of History at Tavistock School on the school's first thousand years, which, published in 1978, is now out of print. In the first such chapter he examines a tradition that Tavistock had a Saxon school from the early (pre-Conquest) days of its abbey. More certain ground exists, he explains, for a later, monastic school, evidenced by frequent visits said to have been made in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries by the diocesan bishop whose role included school visiting and inspection.

By far the longest of the twelve chapters is 'A Victorian Magistrates' Court'. Here

the writer draws on the few surviving records of Tavistock's court, between May 1845 and May 1846 and from October 1859 to October 1860. The number of cases dealt with was higher in the second period, with likely reasons including the establishment of the new county constabulary and an energetic local chief. Other sections include studies of various local personalities from the past, and the succession of developments on different sites in the town between earlier dates and the present.

The stories are interestingly told and provide a 'good read'. Doubtless the work will follow previous issues in deservedly winning popular local appeal. Its use to future historians, however, is limited as, once again, Mr Woodcock has defied his academic disciplines by omitting - except in a general sense - his sources of information and more precise reference notes. There is no index, although the general index to articles in foregoing volumes, provided on an insert sheet, has been updated to include Number 11.

Helen Harris

Diary of a Wren 1940-1945, by Audrey Deacon. The Memoir Club, Whitworth Hall, Spennymoor, County Durham. 2001, Hardback. vi + 168 pp. incl. 6 b+w photographs. £14.95. ISBN 1 84104 032 0.

This book by Audrey Deacon, a previous and current contributor to this journal, provides firsthand insight to events in the heat of World War Two. Having spent her childhood in Plymouth, the author joined the Women's Royal Naval Service on the outbreak of the war in 1939 and worked initially as a Leading Wren (Writer) at the headquarters of the Commander in Chief at Mount Wise. From September 1940 Audrey Deacon kept a diary, the original of which is held in the archives of the Imperial War Museum, and it is this that provides the basis of the book. In October 1940 she went before an Officers' Selection Board, was accepted, and embarked on a cipher training course. During the subsequent years, which brought further promotion, her duties became increasingly demanding and responsible.

The fact that the account comprises diary material written at the time gives the work a freshness not always apparent in memoirs composed later. For readers who also grew up in that wartime, many domestic notes may ring long-forgotten bells. The mention of anti-blast cellophane and paper strapping and later adhesive net stuck to windows recaptures the atmosphere of air raid precautions, while the noting of food shortages, the introduction of clothing coupons and spending on items hard to find in shops recall the stringencies.

The expectations of imminent invasion and experiences of working through the worst of the Plymouth blitz are graphically dealt with. As operations proceeded towards preparing for the Second Front work intensified and great secrecy prevailed. For her 'good service in the planning and execution of the operation for the invasion of Normandy' Acting First Officer Audrey Dora Deacon WRNS received written commendation from the Admiralty.

Besides describing her service life the author writes of spare time activities, of her wartime wedding, and the walks she and her army officer husband enjoyed in familiar country around Plymouth, including Dartmoor. The unpretentious and natural style of the work is engaging, and so one may feel a true pang of sadness in the chap-

ter 'A tragic accident'.

In making her diary entries Audrey Deacon did not withhold occasional comments about events. Generally these reveal a 'no nonsense' but compassionate philosophy. Necessary, but not undue editing has been carried out, and in places explanations have been added in square brackets to aid understanding. Beautifully written, the work has an easy and natural style that carries the reader with it.

Helen Harris

The Kalmeter Journal, The Journal of a Visit to Cornwall, Devon and Somerset in 1724-25, translated and edited by Justin Brooke. Published by the Twelveheads Press, Truro. TR4 8SN. 2001. 80 pages and 19 illustrations. £19.50. ISBN 0 906294 45 2.

The Kalmeter Journal is a translation from the Swedish by Justin Brooke which gives an account of a south western journey from Bristol to St Just, made between 1724 and 1725 on the eve of the Industrial Revolution, by a Swede, Henric Kalmeter. He was to travel extensively in Europe on a stipend from the Swedish Department of Mines to report on and to learn something of the mining industry in different countries, although it seems unlikely that Kalmeter had any practical experience of mining, with a disliking to go underground. Nevertheless his account of mining in Cornwall in all its aspects, tin, copper, lead, slate is assiduously recorded and occupies the major part of the journal. The keynote is his conscientious attention to detail, which tends to become a technical treatise on the results of his investigations. The final part of the journal entitled 'On the working of tin mines and the smelting of tin in Cornwall' is so comprehensive that any student of mining should make it compulsory reading.

It is no wonder that Cornishmen are so proud of their heritage for at this time industry in Cornwall was thriving and important, although even in 1724 there is an indication that mining here would not prosper for ever. He records that on his travels 'numerous mines are idle now'.

The occasional glimpses of civic matters add interest, and Kalmeter seems fascinated to record the numbers of MPs returned to Parliament by the towns visited. Penzance being a notable exception ('I'm intrigued to know why, given that Penzance was important in the export of tin to France, Spain and the Mediterranean').

His visits to Exeter and Wells are summarily dealt with. The bishop's throne in the Cathedral is 'curiously worked'; the library was 'nothing special', but there is a 'remarkable clock'. And of Wells he says 'that inside the Cathedral there is a clock of remarkable build', but 'the library is nothing special'. He was again in his element when proceeding to Wookey Hole to give a statistical analysis of all he found there.

To return to Exeter for a moment, he does state that, although in his journal he intends to describe the working of tin mines, he is prepared to postpone that part 'until later on' to describe 'the woollen manufactures that I have seen'. In Exeter 'the clothiers, or weavers or tailors' had their own guild, and Kalmeter was informed that within ten English miles of the city 'there were no fewer than ten thousand looms'. He writes extensively of the many types of cloth manufactured there, and in towns north of Exeter, like Tiverton.

Kalmeter's main interest is in mining; after all this is what he was paid to report

on. This he does with great care and attention to detail. At times the reader may feel overwhelmed by this detail so minutely recorded, but there is much to interest a non-technical reader and one is rewarded by persevering. There is no doubt that at this time the Westcountry was a very busy place with thriving industries, full employment and prosperity for some, such as the mine owners.

Alec Robertson

Dartmoor Engraved, xx + 208 pp., ISBN 190 33 56067 and **Devon Country Houses and Gardens Vol 1: A-La-Ronde to Lifton Park**, xxii + 201 pp ISBN 190 33 56075. By Todd Gray. The Mint Press, 2001. £25.00 each.

The Mint Press has quickly followed *Exeter* (vol. 1) in its handsome *Devon Engraved* series (reviewed in *The Devon Historian* No 62) with *Dartmoor* and *Devon Country Houses and Gardens* (vol 1). Uniform in type-setting and design with *Exeter*, each runs to about 225 pages, *Dartmoor* with some 250 images, *Houses and Gardens* rather fewer. The former's end-papers come from Benjamin Donn's 1765 map of Devon, the latter's more prosaically locate the establishments portrayed.

Running chronologically from 1638 the bulk of *Dartmoor's* contents are in fact emphatically nineteenth-century. The first item is something of a sport - a 'cut' from an ephemeral tract awestruck at 'the dreadful tempest' blasting Widdecombe during the halcyon years of the personal rule of Charles I. For the next we leap to the late eighteenth century. That tells us something about areas like Dartmoor. It was not until the Romantic Revival that 'wildernesses' began to be appreciated. Nature tamed by art into a garden was preferred, epitomised in Andrew Marvell's *The Garden*. Stuck down on the edge of the moor at Dean Prior the clerical cavalier poet, Robert Herrick, had no desire to go up on to it. Like most of his contemporaries he counted the moorlanders as hardly more civilised than pagan Red Indians or papist Irish. Later a garden lay-out might include an artificial grotto and a cascade - a step toward the real thing. If *Dartmoor*, its broadly-defined engravings petering out with the rise in the 1880s of cheap photography, is somewhat of a disappointment, it is because of a certain monotony in the nature of the topographical material available to the compiler, who has nevertheless been assiduous in his hunt for variety.

More satisfying is *Houses and Gardens* where the images are well supported by textual information and comment. Gray cites Hoskins's observation that Devon's landscape was one 'dotted with small buildings'. Certainly there were great landowners but they chose to build their prime residences elsewhere. Endsleigh Cottage - some cottage! - is described on an 1880s print as 'the seat' of the Earl of Bedford, but that was, of course, actually way off at Woburn. One pervasive theme emerges - the diversity of the fates of the houses and grounds portrayed. A few had longevity in a single family (e.g Great Fulford). Others passed through many hands, sometimes appealingly transformed in the process. Some were demolished utterly. Fire was a hazard but could provide for enhanced rebuilding in a changed style. Many hung on as residential homes, schools, hotels, even golf club houses. Almost unnoticed by passers-by, rural homes - like Honeylands on the Pinhoe Road in Exeter - are oases in the urban sprawl. And, thankfully, that national treasure the National Trust has been a sensitive preservative.

Gray has drawn his material from a hotch-potch of sources - books, journals (notably the dependable *Illustrated London News*), architectural plans, even sale catalogues. But there are many one-off specimens issued as souvenirs of a humbler tourism than that of the aristocratic Grand Tour - 'been there, seen that, got the print'. Though reproductions on uniformly rather too white and too glossy paper can never convey the charm of originals, they can, and do here, set before us a sense of long years of change and continuity in style and taste.

Ivan Roots

The Warren House Inn by Tom Greeves and Elisabeth Stanbrook. Quay Publications (Brixham), 2001. 64pp.40 illustrations. £4.95. ISBN 1 870083 40 7.

A familiar landmark for local travellers on the Dartmoor road between two Bridges and Moretonhampstead, and a welcome refreshment point for many who come from far away, the Warren House Inn has a more interesting history than may be generally realised. In this book Tom Greeves and Elisabeth Stanbrook have provided a full and interesting account of the inn's development.

The existence of a shelter for travellers on this site may, we are told, date from as early as the twelfth century, and could even have links with King Arthur. Definite, however, is the knowledge of a public house existing at this location - although formerly on the other side of the road - from at least 1755. New House was the name of the earlier building, with the newly built Warren House Inn replacing it on the road's north side in 1845.

This, the third highest inn in England, has various associations that have become legend - the story of the salted corpse at New House, and the fire that has been burning continuously in the Warren House Inn since 1845, when smouldering peat was transferred from the New House hearth. These traditions are clearly told. However, there is far more, too, that makes the work a useful account of history. As might be expected from these writers, the subject has been ably researched and the connections with the farming of rabbits, and with the extensive nearby workings for tin, are brought into the picture. Tinniers in fact provided much of the pub's trade, sometimes leading to fights.

A particularly pleasant aspect of the historical account is the recording of so much about real people, from the authors' personal conversations and from the many photographs, including numerous old pictures. With full documentation of information sources, and a good index, the book will surely be appreciated by Devonians and holidaymakers alike.

Helen Harris

NOTICES

Devon book of the year 2000

A large number of publications were considered for The Devon History Society 2000 Book of the Year Award. This time the chronological limits were extended somewhat, so that the Awards Committee could consider as many community histories as possible which were published around the turn of the millennium, and more than fifty candidates were examined. Standards were high and a wide variety of publications were available, so that it was difficult for the committee to reach a decision. The certificates were presented during the Devon History Society's Annual General Meeting on 27 October 2001 at the University of Exeter's St Luke's Campus, Heavitree Road, Exeter.

Overall winner

The history of Instow: to mark the millennium. Author: Alison Grant assisted by members of the Instow Local History Group. Publisher: Honeytone Promotions.

Runners up

The chronicles of Dartmouth: an historical yearly log 1854-1954. Author: Don Collison. Publisher: Richard Webb

Gidleigh: a Dartmoor village, past and present. Authors: Tony Grumley-Grennan and Michael Hardy. Publisher: Glebe Publishing.

The book of Trusham: a parish patchwork. Author: Alick Cameron. Publisher: Halsgrove.

Commended

A history of the parish of Chardstock. Authors: P.J. Wood and R.W. Carter. Publisher: P.J. Wood

Cockington bygones. Author: Brian Reed. Publisher: Portcullis.

The way we lived then. Author: Jean Robin. Publisher: Ashgate. A study of Colyton.

The book of Meavy. Author: Pauline Hemery. Publisher: Halsgrove.

Bickleigh Bridge. Due to a printing error a complete sentence was unfortunately omitted from Brian George's article on the Exe valley road in Devon in *DH 63*. Describing Bickleigh Bridge, the following should have appeared on page 4, line 8: 'Its original width was about 11ft overall, and is now 16ft 7in overall and 14ft 3in between parapets'. This would have explained the difficulties for cars passing each other on the bridge.

Local Studies Resources Packs. DHS member Alan Rowe has drawn our attention to the usefulness of Local Studies Resources Packs, some of which he has obtained as a special offer from English Heritage. The packs give aerial photos and detailed information on the archaeology and other related matter of any area of the country. Forms have been issued by English Heritage National Monuments Record on which applications for packs can be made. Anyone wanting a form and having difficulty in obtaining one locally can contact Mr Rowe, who has a supply of them, on 08122 854650.

Totnes Museum Society. Edition No. 4 (October 2001) of *The Totnes Historian*, the annual publication of Totnes Museum Society, has recently been issued. Price £1 to non-members. Details about the society and officers' reports are followed by an article from Kristin Saunders, entitled 'An apron full of gold', concerning an election scandal in nineteenth century Totnes, and 'Is this our mast?', arising from research into the Kelland family by Ken Prout. Book reviews are also included. For further details

contact editor Bob Mann, 01803 863821.

Bovey Tracey Heritage Trust. This was set up in 1995 as a result of conversations between local people who were afraid of 'losing' the history of the town. The original idea was to record personal memories and perhaps collect a few photographs and artefacts. The proposal was received with great enthusiasm, and from a largely attended opening meeting a committee was formed and research plans made. Fundraising, and the offered use of an empty barn followed, and a little later the Heritage Centre was opened to the public. Besides wishing to preserve the town's past and so educate and entertain the inhabitants and visitors, the trust wants to forge links with other societies and museums leading to participation in the Devon Museums website. A move to the town's old railway station is planned. For further information contact Sherryl Healey on home tel: 01626 832255, or work tel: 01626 832026 or 01626 206422 on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Luppitt Local History Group. Grahame Smith, Treasurer of Luppitt Local History Group, sends news of the group's recent activities. He refers to John Sage's book *Luppitt parish, church and people* (previously noted in *DH 63*), which includes around 100 photographs. This has led to the setting up of a photo archive now numbering 270 items and the establishment of a web site: www.luppitt.net which includes snippets from the book and pictures. Mr Sage, who has been collecting material about Luppitt for many years, would like to see future establishment of a central point where the records could be viewed. Mr Smith has himself previously undertaken several local history projects. These include: transcription of parish records (census, marriages, baptisms) on to computer; monumental inscriptions from the churchyard; tithe map apportionments 1842; school enrolment records, etc. Most of these, together with a collection of family histories, can be viewed on the website. Email address for Grahame Smith: nicola.Cornish@ukgateway.net.

Wembury Local History Society. Mrs Eileen M. Arnold, chairman of Wembury Local History Society, has provided details of the society's forthcoming programme. The main spring 2002 event is to be an exhibition in Wembury War Memorial Hall on 6-7 April entitled 'Landlords to Labourers'. There will be displays relating to the Calmads and Corys of Langdon Court, the Lockyers of Plymouth and Wembury House, and others. Family artefacts, costumes and a 'Victorian' photographic studio (with photographer in attendance) and a family history workshop will also be featured. Admission is free but donations welcome. Subsequent meetings comprise: 18 April, the Cookworthy Museum (Mrs M.Lorenz); 16 May, the Eddystone Lighthouse (Mike Palmer); 19 September, English Heritage (Mr A.Endicott); 17 October, the history of Totnes (Mr R.B.Mann) and 21 November, Cob and other earth buildings (Mrs L.Watson). Mrs Arnold's tel: 01752 862367, and that of the secretary, Mr Fred Long: 01752 862164.

The Farmilo family. An enquiry has been received from Mr M.J.Beynon of Gloucestershire Family History Society, who is researching the Farmilo families of Exeter and Minchinhampton. Would anyone with information please contact him: mick@mj-ra-beynon.freemove.co.uk.

**ABRIDGED REPORT & MINUTES OF THE THIRTY FIRST ANNUAL
GENERAL MEETING OF THE DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY HELD AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF EXETER SCHOOL OF EDUCATION ON 27 OCTOBER 2001**

NB: the formal Report and Minutes containing transcripts of the Officers' annual reports will be available for inspection at the 2002 AGM or may be inspected at reasonable hours by appointment with the Honorary Secretary.

Present: the President, Dr W B Stephens, was in the Chair and there were 46 other members, as listed in the attendance register, present.

1. Apologies for absence: apologies for absence were reported from Mr J Dilley, Mrs Shirley Purves, Miss Lorna Smith and Professor Joyce Youngs.
2. Minutes of last Annual General Meeting: the full Report and Minutes of the thirtieth Annual General Meeting that had been printed in abbreviated form in *The Devon Historian* No 62 were approved by those present and signed by the President. There were no matters arising.
3. Honorary Secretary's Annual Report: the Secretary reported that a meeting of the Council of the Society had been held on three occasions during the year and two conferences had been held. Matters discussed at the Council meetings were listed in his report and the venue and speakers at each of the conferences mentioned. The Secretary said that the thanks of the Society were due to Miss Elizabeth Maycock for her considerable efforts in organising the events. Fifteen books had been reviewed in the two issues of *The Devon Historian* and approximately 410 copies of each of the issues of the journal had been despatched by post. The Secretary reported that he had received only 8 replies from affiliated local societies to his memorandum concerning societies' annual programmes. The Secretary expressed his thanks to Mr Tony Collings for his assistance in recording the minutes of meetings of the Society. The Secretary proposed that Mr A E W Gore of 11 Oaklee, Honiton should be appointed Auditor in accordance with item 7 of the Constitution. This was seconded by Mr Adrian Reed and adopted *nem con*.
4. Honorary Treasurer's Annual Report: the Treasurer reported that the number of honorary life members had reduced by one; life members remained the same; ordinary members had reduced by two; family increased by one; affiliated societies increased by four and corporate bodies reduced by one. Gross income for the financial year was £4,776.70 compared with £5,016.30 for the preceding year: gross expenditure, which included £150 for purchase of a projector, was £4,082.62 compared with £3,045.17, giving an excess of income over expenditure £693.92 compared with £1,971.13. Fall in gross income was due to royalties due not being paid during the 2001 period and a drop in interest rates. A number of members had agreed to join the Gift Aid scheme which means that the Society will benefit during the year ending 30 April 2002 to about £400. The Treasurer did not anticipate the need for any increase in subscription. A motion to accept the report of the Honorary Treasurer was carried *nem con*.

5. Honorary Editor's Annual Report: the Editor reported that issues 62 and 63 of *The Devon Historian* were published in April and October respectively. She expressed the thanks of the Society to the Honorary Secretary for sending copies to members. She thanked contributors to the journal but expressed concern in a slight fall in the number of articles submitted. The deadline for issue No 64 had been advanced this year to 15 November as she would be away on certain key dates.
6. Elections for the year 2001/2002: the President thanked the Officers and Council for their work over the past year and in particular Mr John Pike who had given service to the Society over a long period and had decided not to continue as Vice Chairman of Council. A motion that the following be elected was carried nem con. Miss Elizabeth Maycock as Vice Chairman
The four other officers of Council
The retiring Vice Chairman as Council member (Mr John Pike) A retiring Council member as Council member (Dr Todd Gray) Mrs Shirley Purves nominated as Council member
Mr Arnold Sayer nominated as Council member
The decision to co-opt Mrs Stirling and Professor Youngs was confirmed
7. Programme for 2002: the Joint Programme Secretary, Miss Elizabeth Maycock reported that the Spring meeting would be held at Ottery St Mary on Saturday 23 March in association with the Ottery St Mary Heritage Society and the Summer meeting on Saturday 6 July at Buckfastleigh. The Annual General Meeting would be held at St Luke's Campus on Saturday 26 October.
8. Consideration of memorandum entitled *Time for Reflection* by Chairman of Council: the Honorary Secretary reported that he had not received any written submissions in advance of the discussion. The discussion was opened by the Chairman of Council in which he referred to the precis of the memorandum issued with the October edition of *The Devon Historian*. Matters referred to by the floor included whether support would be given to the Centre for South West Historical Studies in its attempt to update its listing of research work currently in progress; trying to encourage less formal educational classes than the entirely certificate-related courses currently provided by the Department of Lifelong Learning; financial support for students; providing lists of speakers and whether they were available to speak locally or generally; historical workshops; advertising talks in local newspapers and free use of the Devon Record Office.
9. Any other business: Mr Stanes said that after having written on Ernest Bevin's life in Devon for *The Devon Historian* he had concluded that this should be commemorated in some way. At the last meeting of Council he had been authorised to expend up to £200 on a plaque which would be placed on the cottage at Copplestone, Lee Mount, where the former Labour Foreign Secretary had lived for seven years. It was intended that the unveiling should take place on Saturday 4 May 2002, this being the start of Local History Week organised on a national scale by the Historical Association.
Dr Bhanji appealed for more members to make use of the Society's web site, in particular to answer queries, many of them from overseas, appearing on the message board.

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