

# The Devon Historian

2011

80



Journal of the Devon History Society



# THE DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY

## Past Presidents

Professor W.G. Hoskins (1969-73); Lady Aileen Fox (1973-5);  
Dr C.A. Raleigh Radford (1975-7); W. Best Harris (1977-81);  
Frank Booker (1981-2); Professor Joyce Youings (1982-6); Crispin Gill (1986-9);  
Professor Ivan Roots (1989-93); Dr Basil Greenhill (1993-6);  
Professor Harold Fox (1996-9); Dr W.B. Stephens (1999-2003);  
Professor Nicholas Orme (2003-6); Professor Malcolm Todd (2006-9)

## Officers

President	Prof. Christopher Holdsworth
Chairman	Shirley Purves
Vice-Chairman	Philippe Planel
Hon. Secretary	Helen Turnbull
Hon. Treasurer	Dr Graham Bliss
Hon. Editor	Dr Andrew Jackson
Council	Sadru Bhanji, Jane Bliss, Ann Bond, Dr Todd Gray, Anne Howard, Christopher Jago, Gerald Quinn, Tony Collings.

## Membership

All correspondence relating to membership, personal local history interests and offers of work or assistance should be sent to Mr Gerald Quinn, 6 Old Paignton Road, Torquay, TQ2 6UY.

## Subscriptions

*The Devon Historian* is available free to all members of The Devon History Society. Membership subscriptions run annually from 1 May to 30 April and for the current year are as follows: Individual: £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 Hon. Treasurer, Dr Graham Bliss, Wavecrest, Sunnyside Road, Woolacombe, EX34 7DG; email: [grhmbless@aol.com](mailto:grhmbless@aol.com).

## The Devon History Society conferences and meetings

An AGM and conference is held annually in October. Meetings and conferences of the Society take place at other times of the year. For details see The Society's newsletter, *Devon History News*, or the Society's website at: [www.devonhistorysociety.org.uk](http://www.devonhistorysociety.org.uk).

*The Devon Historian* is typeset and printed by **Bartlett Printing**, Exeter.



# DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY CONFERENCE

## The Reformation in Devon

The first in a series of three annual one day conferences on religion in Devon.



The Boniface Centre, Church Lane,  
Crediton, Devon, EX17 2AH.

(Car park in Church Lane.)

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2012, 10am–4pm

Coffee and registration 10am -10.30am

Professor Alexandra Walsham: Professor of Modern History, University of Cambridge:  
**'The Reformation and the English People Re-visited'**

Canon Professor Nicholas Orme: **'From the Middle Ages to the Reformation'**

Dr Elizabeth Tingle: University of Plymouth: **'God's Chosen People: Protestant Reformations in Brittany and Devon Compared'**

Mr John Allan: Exeter Archaeology: **'The Archaeology of the Reformation in Devon'**

Conference convenors: Dr Todd Gray, and Mrs Jane Bliss, B.A., M.Res.

The conference fee includes morning and afternoon refreshments and a **substantial buffet lunch**. Total cost is £20 for DHS members and £24 for non-members.

Please complete booking form (cheques to **Devon History Society**) and return to Mrs Jane Bliss, Honorary Programme Secretary, The Devon History Society, Wavecrest, Sunnyside Road, Woolacombe, Devon, EX34 7DG.

**Email:** [jbhistory@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jbhistory@hotmail.co.uk)

Name(s).....

Address.....

Telephone:.....Email:.....

Please book.....places @ £20 (members).....places @ £24 (non members)

PHILOSOPHY 301: THE PHILosophY OF LANGUAGE

1. The first part of the course will focus on the philosophy of language, and in particular on the philosophy of the proposition. We will discuss the work of Frege, Russell, and Strawson, and we will explore the relationship between language and reality.

2. The second part of the course will focus on the philosophy of the proposition, and in particular on the philosophy of the sense and reference of proper names. We will discuss the work of Frege, Russell, and Strawson, and we will explore the relationship between language and reality.

3. The third part of the course will focus on the philosophy of the proposition, and in particular on the philosophy of the sense and reference of proper names. We will discuss the work of Frege, Russell, and Strawson, and we will explore the relationship between language and reality.

4. The fourth part of the course will focus on the philosophy of the proposition, and in particular on the philosophy of the sense and reference of proper names. We will discuss the work of Frege, Russell, and Strawson, and we will explore the relationship between language and reality.

5. The fifth part of the course will focus on the philosophy of the proposition, and in particular on the philosophy of the sense and reference of proper names. We will discuss the work of Frege, Russell, and Strawson, and we will explore the relationship between language and reality.

6. The sixth part of the course will focus on the philosophy of the proposition, and in particular on the philosophy of the sense and reference of proper names. We will discuss the work of Frege, Russell, and Strawson, and we will explore the relationship between language and reality.

7. The seventh part of the course will focus on the philosophy of the proposition, and in particular on the philosophy of the sense and reference of proper names. We will discuss the work of Frege, Russell, and Strawson, and we will explore the relationship between language and reality.

8. The eighth part of the course will focus on the philosophy of the proposition, and in particular on the philosophy of the sense and reference of proper names. We will discuss the work of Frege, Russell, and Strawson, and we will explore the relationship between language and reality.

9. The ninth part of the course will focus on the philosophy of the proposition, and in particular on the philosophy of the sense and reference of proper names. We will discuss the work of Frege, Russell, and Strawson, and we will explore the relationship between language and reality.

## Contents

### Articles

'Some itinerant preachers have attempted to form a congregation but have not succeeded'	Graham Hendy	3
The establishment of the New Zealand branch of the Acland family	Peter M Acland and Keith G Orrell	17
William Rayer: Rector of Tidcombe, Tiverton philanthropist and saviour of Holcombe Court	Charles Scott-Fox	31
Drapers extraordinary, part 1	Gillian Selley	43
Charles, 6 <sup>th</sup> Lord Clifford of Chudleigh: the life and times of a recusant Catholic	Helen Turnbull	55
The contentious issue of Church Rates: some examples from the county of Devon	Michael Weller	63
John Whiddon, Master Gunner	Lou Whiddon	73

### Reviews

Fardell, Michael (2010) <i>John Lethbridge: The Most Successful Treasure Diver of the Eighteenth Century</i>	Anthony Balfour	79
Folkes, John (ed.) (2010) <i>Dogs, Goats, Bulbs and Bombs: Esther Rowley's Wartime Diaries of Exmouth and Exeter</i>	Ann Bond	80
Pugh, B, Spiring, P and Bhanji, S (2010) <i>Arthur Conan Doyle, Sherlock Holmes and Devon: A Complete Tour Guide and Companion</i>	Brian Le Messurier	81
Ravenhill, Mary R and Rowe, Margery M (2010) <i>Devon Maps and Map-Makers: Manuscript Maps before 1840: Supplement</i>	Nat Alcock	82

Scott-Fox, Charles (2009) <i>Moorstone Barton. A Mediaeval Manor</i>	Greg Finch	83
Shakespeare, Liz (2010) <i>The Turning of the Tide</i>	Julia Neville	84
Wawman, Ron (2009) <i>Never Completely Submerged: The Story of the Squarson of Lew Trenchard as Revealed in The Diary of Sabine Baring-Gould</i>	Bob Patten and Jacqueline Patten	85
Webb, Nigel (ed.) (undated [2010]) <i>The Journals of Mr Sugar Face and Mr Gastric Juice</i>	Sadru Bhanji	86
Woodcock, Gerry (2011) <i>Tavistock's yesterdays 20</i>	Helen Harris	87
<b>Correspondence from members and other information</b>		<b>89</b>
Professor Joyce Youings (1922-2011)		90

Cover illustration: unidentified photograph (slightly cropped) (P&D49332; reproduced with kind permission of Devon Library and Information Services from the collections held in the Westcountry Studies Library, Exeter). See correspondence from members, pp. 89-90.

## **‘Some itinerant preachers have attempted to form a congregation but have not succeeded’**

**Graham Hendy**

### **Introduction**

This response by the incumbent of Braunton to one of the questions in the 1821 visitation returns neatly summarised a rather self-assured reaction to the Wesleyan revival.<sup>1</sup> In this article we will examine the growing spread of Methodism in the three archdeaconries of Devon during the period 1744-1821 using the visitation returns of the Bishops of Exeter for 1744/5, 1764/5, 1779, 1798 and 1821.<sup>2</sup> Careful analysis will determine the statistical rise or decline of the movement, and, through comments by individual incumbents, we will judge the effect of Methodism on the established Church, and on older dissenting bodies.

### **Bishops’ Visitation Returns**

Gregory and Chamberlain have noted:

In supervising their diocese, bishops relied heavily on the visitation system. Triennial visitations were the canonical norm, and many dioceses (such as Chichester, Hereford and Oxford) held fast to this rule. But there were other patterns as well. In Winchester there was a tradition of annual visitations, whereas in Canterbury the custom was to visit every four years, and in Norwich visitations only occurred on a septennial basis.<sup>3</sup>

Visitations were an important means whereby the bishops gathered information and exercised some control of their clergy, examined churchwardens and performed pastoral responsibilities like confirmation. A visitation could take place over two years if the area was large and this sometimes happened in Exeter diocese. In June and July 1744 Bishop Claget visited seven centres in Devon, and the following year in July he went to four centres in Cornwall.<sup>4</sup>

Jacob has argued Bishop Wake took, at Lincoln in 1705, one of the most important administrative initiatives of the eighteenth century, especially for twenty-first century researchers, in issuing a questionnaire to incumbents to be completed and returned before the visitation, the better to inform himself about the diocese. He sought information about the benefice, its extent, and number of families, the patron, the number of dissenters, the value of the living, schools; while Gibson added questions in 1718, about residence, curates, and frequency of church services.<sup>5</sup>

From this material, bishops compiled *specula* recording and analysing information gathered at the visitations. Extant returns and *specula* have provided revisionist scholars with a primary analysis of the Georgian Church demonstrating that it was far removed from the desultory picture painted by subsequent commentators.<sup>6</sup> Sykes described the visitation as 'the keystone of the arch of ecclesiastical administration... upon which to a considerable degree the good estate of the church depended'.<sup>7</sup>

What is the value of these primary sources in the diocese of Exeter and how reliable are they? They were comprehensive, so, unlike many dioceses, there is a near complete view of both counties. But, as the questionnaires were not developed as modern sociologists would require, it is necessary to read the evidence with broad brush strokes and regard the statistical information as 'soft-edged'. Returns were made for the vast majority of parishes including many peculiars, though each visitation has a small number of gaps. This does not preclude making good statistical assumptions, but the lack of consistency in reporting is an issue. It is to some of these limitations that we now turn for an assessment.

In the first place, because the questions related in general to the condition of the parish, there are few references to any individuals except the incumbent, the curate and sometimes benefactors. We get few of the insights which might determine what was going on in the lives of ordinary individuals. In the second place, the respondents were all incumbents, or meant to be according to the bishops' demands. It is true that occasionally curates replied as well as the parish priest, and sometimes in the case of an absentee rector living miles away, the curate's answers were received instead. Either way it is a narrow viewpoint. While informative to the bishops of the day and their senior staff (registrar and archdeacons) and a treasury for the researcher, the fact remains that these replies were internal correspondence between bishop and clergy. But responses are still a good source, giving a standard of return which is most satisfactory, though we should be aware that most clergy might be expected to present their own activities in a favourable light. Finally while the questions asked were standard, responses varied widely in detail provided. Some clergy simply provided the minimum amount of information requested. Others took the opportunity to get other issues off their chest or to ingratiate themselves with their diocesan. So while the questions were standard and the respondents of the same standing, there were variations.

While this illustrates the limitations of relying solely on the returns, it is only possible within the space of this article to hold them up to the light and see what nuggets of information they provide.

### **Visitation Returns for Exeter Diocese**

As far as the diocese of Exeter is concerned there is evidence that during the period of study most of the bishops carried out visitations on a regular basis. Evidence in



diocesan archives indicates that there were visitations in the following years: 1744/5 (Nicholas Claget); 1748/9, 1753/4, 1757 (George Lavington); 1764/5, 1768, 1771, 1774 (Frederick Keppel); 1779, 1782, 1785/6 (John Ross); 1793/4 (William Buller); 1798/ (Henry Reginald Courtenay); 1804 (John Fisher); 1807, 1812, 1816 (George Pelham); 1821, 1825, 1828/9 (William Carey).<sup>8</sup>

Four near-complete sets survive for the whole diocese from 1744/5, 1764/5, 1779 and 1821. Another near-complete set for 1798 is also extant for the Devon archdeaconries. These are the five returns which form the bedrock of this paper. In the analysis which follows the total number of parishes and chapelries in the archdeaconries in Devon is taken as 474. Of these only Templeton, a lay peculiar, Wolborough, a donative, Petton, a chapelry of Bampton, and Uffculme, a prebend of Sarum, failed to submit any returns.<sup>9</sup>

**Table 1: Parishes and Chapelries in Devon making Returns**

Archdeaconry	1744/5	1764/5	1779	1798	1821
Barnstaple (131)	128 [98%]	121 [92%]	125 [95%]	123 [94%]	118 [90%]
Totnes (167)	157 [94%]	151 [90%]	159 [95%]	143 [86%]	138 [83%]
Exeter (176)	159 [90%]	142 [81%]	161 [91%]	154 [87%]	160 [91%]
Total 474	444 [94%]	414 [87%]	445 [94%]	420 [89%]	416 [88%]

The relevant questions for this review of papists, dissenters and Methodists varied from visitation to visitation, and after 1744/5 the details required were not so exact which makes comparisons less certain than if they had remained identical.<sup>10</sup>

### Observations about papists

Generally speaking in the diocese during the Georgian period the Roman Catholics were residual adherents from a few influential recusant families or their dependents. Others are more or less accounted for by émigrés and those who had business within the few large towns or busy seaports. The Jesuit mission priests who came to Devon and Cornwall in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were domestic chaplains of the recusant gentry and so generally left to their own devices.

But the presence of Roman Catholics in the diocese is of far less significance than that of other protestant dissenters when examining the impact of the growth of Methodism, in spite of the rather curious answer of the incumbent of Whitstone who wrote in 1812: 'There have been some disguised Papists (as I am told) who call themselves Methodists'.<sup>11</sup>

### Observations about dissenters

Peskett, noting the relaxation of attitudes after the Toleration Act of 1689 towards protestant dissenters, goes on to assert that in the diocese of Exeter:

local dissent was too strong for there to be much persecution: it has been estimated that one third of the population of Exeter were members of the Three Denominations in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, and local toleration in Plymouth was such that Presbyterian ministers openly set up congregations, solemnized marriages, and began to keep registers within three months of ejection in 1662.<sup>12</sup>

But things began to change in the eighteenth century as the visitation returns clearly demonstrate. Dixon, noting the work already done on the state of religious dissent in eighteenth-century Devon and Cornwall, has suggested:

An overall picture has emerged from the visitations and other evidence that from 1715 onwards nonconformity was declining in numbers, and becoming a largely urban movement.<sup>13</sup>

Warne contended that the number of parishes reporting dissenters in 1744 was 175, with 80 registered meeting houses. By 1764 the number of meeting houses had dropped to 57; and the parishes reporting dissenters was only 60, though he thought this figure was too low, since clergy were no longer obliged to make such detailed returns.<sup>14</sup> However, as will be seen below, the figures for parishes reporting dissenters and meeting houses are rather different.

**Table 3: Parishes recording dissenters in Devon**

Archdeaconry	1744/5	1764/5	1779	1798	1821
Barnstaple	38	11	14	10	32
Exeter	101	29	28	27	65
Totnes	59	16	20	10	56

This gives a clear indication of a very rapid decline in the middle of the eighteenth century and significant rise at the beginning of the nineteenth. While the differences in questions posed makes it difficult to be certain of actual numbers it is clear from the more precise 1744 questionnaire that many of the parishes returning dissenters have only one or two families or a few individuals. It is not difficult to see how these could quickly diminish. However, unlike Cornwall, there are some parishes assessing huge numbers of dissenters, mainly Presbyterians: Barnstaple and Bideford 150 families each, Crediton 200, Cullompton 508 (as well as 133 Anabaptists and 87 Quakers), Exeter parishes together 360, Plymouth St Andrew's over 250 and Charles over 200, and finally Totness also 200. Smaller parishes also record significant numbers: Chumleigh 40, Pilton 80, South Molton 70, Axminster 60, Bampton 40, and Ottery St Mary 71. Most of these are also Presbyterians, but like Cornwall most had evaporated twenty years later.

Differences between the three archdeaconries are pronounced with Exeter reporting most dissenters and Barnstaple least, and this is true throughout the period.

**Table 4: Breakdown of dissenters in Barnstaple Archdeaconry**

	1744	1764	1779	1998	1821
Presbyterian	33	7	8	3	11
Independent	1	1	0	1	6
Baptist/Anabaptist	1	0	0	0	10
Quaker	4	0	2	2	0
Calvinist	0	0	0	1	4
Others	2	3	4	3	4

**Table 5: Breakdown of dissenters in Exeter Archdeaconry**

	1744	1764	1779	1998	1821
Presbyterian	82	23	18	8	3
Independent	3	2	1	2	14
Baptist/Anabaptist	43	6	9	10	23
Quaker	27	6	3	2	3
Calvinist	0	0	0	1	12
Others	11	3	6	8	27

**Table 6: Breakdown of dissenters in Totnes Archdeaconry**

	1744	1764	1779	1998	1821
Presbyterian	50	12	15	5	1
Independent	2	1	2	1	11
Baptist/Anabaptist	17	3	4	3	14
Quaker	14	2	4	1	1
Calvinist	0	0	0	1	19
Others	10	4	3	7	25

In these last two archdeaconries the 1821 figures for others include 19 parishes reporting Unitarians or Socinians, with congregations at Exeter, Broadhembury, Kingsbridge, Crediton, Cullompton and Sidmouth. Michael Cook again highlights parishes of significance but his choices are not always the most obvious.<sup>15</sup> Anabaptists or Baptists appear in many places but there were 100 in Barnstaple and 'a great many' in Bampton. They are also found in other places including Crediton, Cullompton, Modbury and Stoke Rivers where the incumbent records how the son in one family 'has been in Cornwall for five or six weeks preaching, and also that he has done so here in an House – not licensed, neither is he licensed himself'. Presbyterians or Independents were widespread but note there were 400 Presbyterians in Barnstaple as well as others in Kingsbridge and many in Plymouth. Calvinists are found in Crediton, Ottery St Mary and 120 in Ilfracombe. The Quakers were less numerous than in Cornwall and only had meeting-houses at Exeter and Culmstock. Finally Devon is the birthplace of an apocalyptic movement

begun in 1792 by Joanna Southcott who was herself born in Gittisham. Originally a Methodist she began to utter prophecies based on the book of Revelation. Adherents are recorded in Bigbury, Brixham, Dartington and Kingsbridge.

**Table 7: Numbers of dissenting meeting houses in Barnstaple Archdeaconry<sup>16</sup>**

	1744	1764	1779	1798	1821
Presbyterian	11 [14]	7 [7]	8 [9]	3 [4]	8 [8]
Independent	0	1 [2]	0	1 [1]	7 [7]
Baptist/Anabaptist	1 [1]	0	0	0	8 [8]
Quaker	0	0	0	0	0
Calvinist	0	0	0	0	4 [4]
Others	0	1 [1]	1 [1]	3 [3]	3 [3]

**Table 8: Dissenting meeting houses in Exeter Archdeaconry**

	1744	1764	1779	1798	1821
Presbyterian	18 [18]	12 [13]	17 [19]	9 [10]	2 [2]
Independent	2 [2]	0	1 [1]	1 [1]	7 [8]
Baptist/Anabaptist	6 [6]	6 [6]	7 [7]	8 [8]	15 [15]
Quaker	5 [5]	1 [1]	3 [3]	1 [1]	2 [2]
Calvinist	0	0	1 [1]	1 [1]	8 [8]
Others	3 [5]	2 [2]	5 (8)	5 [6]	12 [12]

**Table 9: Dissenting meeting houses in Totnes Archdeaconry**

	1744	1764	1779	1798	1821
Presbyterian	15 [15]	10 [10]	14 [14]	5 [5]	1 [1]
Independent	0	0	0	0	10 [14]
Baptist/Anabaptist	5 [5]	3 [3]	4 [4]	4 [4]	9 [9]
Quaker	4 [5]	3 [3]	3 [3]	1 [1]	0
Calvinist	0	0	0	1 [1]	11 [11]
Others	5 [7]	2 [2]	0	8 [10]	12 [12]

As a matter of interest the 1744 return included two French Calvinist and one French Episcopal chapel, while the 1821 return included two meeting houses of the followers of Joanna Southcott.

### **The spread of Methodism**

Peskett concludes that the fate of the established Church and old dissent was sealed in the face of the Wesleyan revival:

Methodism... became strong in Devon and particularly in Cornwall, which was in 1851 and still is the most strongly Methodist county in Great Britain. To a large extent this can be seen as filling a vacuum left by the inadequacies of the contemporary Anglican church.<sup>17</sup>



Warne has suggested:

The Established Church, complacently convinced of its own immutability, looked upon Methodism as yet another transient form of religious rebellion. This ...accounts for the national Church's strange inability to see in Methodism a religious power completely unlike the old Dissent, a power which was to withdraw many from the Anglican Church, and to reinvigorate the old orthodox Dissent.<sup>18</sup>

But we should not forget that the Wesleys and Whitefield were not alone, for there were a number of significant and well-known sympathisers within the established Church. John Berridge (1716-1793) was commended by Wesley as one of the most simple as well as most sensible of all whom it pleased God to employ in reviving primitive Christianity. Henry Venn (1725-1797) was one of the founders of the Clapham Sect. As a curate in Surrey, he was regarded by local clergy as a Methodist since he taught scripture in his home and increased the numbers of communicants in his parish. He was vicar of Huddersfield from 1759 to 1771 but remained an evangelical within the Church of England. John Fletcher (1729-1785) was one of the first great Methodist theologians. He was born in Switzerland of Huguenot stock but came to England and was ordained in 1757. He himself often preached with Wesley. As incumbent of the poor living of Madeley for twenty-five years, he was one of the few parish clergy who understood Wesley and his work, yet he never wrote or said anything inconsistent with his own Anglican position. William Grimshaw (1708-1763) vicar of Haworth from 1742 until his death was strongly imbued with Wesleyan principles, even building a chapel for Methodists in the village. Both Charles and John Wesley preached in Haworth, the former claiming to have had a congregation of three to four thousand in the churchyard in the morning, and more than double that in the afternoon.

Some five or six years before Wesley's conversion, George Thomson, vicar of St Gennys in north Cornwall, was convicted of salvation by faith through reading the third chapter of Romans. The events were recorded over one hundred years ago.<sup>19</sup> In 1742 John Bennet, incumbent of Laneast, Tresmeer, and North Tamerton on the Devon side of the Tamar, already more than seventy years old, was converted by the preaching of Thomson and joined him in evangelising the neighbourhood. Another convert was John Turner, incumbent of Week St Mary, who invited Wesley to preach in his church in June 1745. Wesley later recorded, 'I have not seen in these parts of Cornwall either so large a church or so large a congregation'. He was to preach there on six more occasions.<sup>20</sup> In the 1744 return the incumbent of Bideford noted: 'some few Church-Methodists; the Teacher or Monthly Expounder is the Revnd. Mr Thomson Vic. of St. Gennys in Cornwall'.<sup>21</sup>

Warne pointed out there was confusion in the minds of many clergy as to whether Methodism counted as dissent, and Wesley constantly claimed to be part of

the Church of England. In 1758 he published twelve *Reasons against a Separation from the Church of England* and resisted calls from Conference on a number of occasions. Even in 1786 he wrote:

I still think that when the Methodists leave the Church, God will leave them. Every year more and more of the clergy are convinced of the truth and grow well affected towards us. It would be contrary to all common sense as well as to good conscience to make a separation now.<sup>22</sup>

This is born out in the visitation returns. But whereas nine clergymen in Cornwall questioned whether Methodists should be described as dissenters, there was only one in Devon, the incumbent of North Molton in 1764.

An even greater number recorded that Wesleyan (and even Brianite) Methodists still attended Church occasionally or regularly, and who had their own meetings at times which did not clash with one or both Sunday services in the parish church. In 1764 the incumbent of Thurlestone wrote 'a few who are fond of hearing any Methodist Teacher in his Circular Rambles & yet do mostly continue afterwards regular Conformers'. In 1821 the incumbents of Awliscombe, Bradstone, Broadclyst, Kenton, Pyworthy and Winkleigh suggested both groups were regular or occasional conformers. Bridgerule even went as far as to affirm: 'They all attend the church as the house of God and some of them more regularly than those who have no such meeting'. Ashton and Morchard Bishop hint some conformity by noting the Methodist meetings were at times other than divine service. But this contrasts with some 26 incumbents in Cornwall who record ongoing Methodist links with the established Church. So what do the returns tell us?

**Table 10: Parishes recording Wesleyan Methodists in Devon**

	1744/5	1764/5	1779	1798	1821
Barnstaple	1	1	0	2	43
Exeter	0	4	10	10	38
Tonnes	0	3	9	11	57

Cook has suggested the Methodists were profoundly helped by their circuit system, reserve of local preachers and willingness to use ordinary buildings for services, and at Exminster in 1779 we find 'There are a sect, called Methodists, who meet every other Wednesday in a farm house'. Venues in 1821 included a farm house (Awliscombe), a 'small shoemaker's cottage' (Milton Abbot), a cottage (Pyworthy) and stables (Winkleigh).<sup>23</sup> So what do the returns tell us about Methodist meeting houses?

**Table 11: Wesleyan Methodist meeting houses in Devon<sup>24</sup>**

Archdeaconry	1744/5	1764/5	1779	1812	1821
Barnstaple	1 [3]	0	0	2 [2]	31 [38]
Exeter	0	3 [3]	8 [8]	8 [8]	28 [30]
Totnes	0	1 [1]	6 [7]	10 [11]	49 [55]

Whereas at least twelve Cornish parishes use phrases like ‘numerous’ or ‘considerable numbers’ to describe the Methodists in their parishes in 1821, this is only true of Axminster and Buckfastleigh in 1779, and in 1821 Bere Ferrers asserted: ‘From the Mining Works in the Parish one third of the Population are Methodists – Miners being mostly Methodist’. There is nothing like St Phillack in 1812, ‘Of Westleian Methodists there are multitudes – this indeed is the predominating sect throughout the West of Cornwall which has nearly swallowed up all the others’.

On the contrary in 1798 Littleham-by-Exmouth noted: ‘there was a congregation of Methodists but I hear they are dwindled and have now no constant place of worship. In 1821 there are indications of regression or insignificance in Ashton, Barnstaple, Bishop’s Tawton, Braunton, Chittlehampton, Colaton Raleigh, Cornwood, Goodleigh, Knowstone, Lapford, Milton Damarel, Molland, Morchard Bishop, Parkham, Thorverton, Ugborough, Uplyme and Wembury. There was also the case of St Olave, but this is relative: ‘one Dissenting Meeting House in the Parish of the Westlyan Sect, wch may contain about one thousand People, but upon enquiry I find that it is not so well attended as it has hitherto been’.

Nevertheless Cook pointed out that the Methodists were firmly entrenched in remoter areas away from their parish churches, as with Chittlehampton, East Teignmouth, Plymstock and Wembury; and he noted that labourers and migrant workers would not be able to afford pew rents: the case of Bere Ferrers has already been noted. But the movement was definitely supported by farmers, the wealthiest and most influential parishioners, as in Exminster, Georgeham, Instow, Nymet Rowland and Sandford.<sup>25</sup>

But, perhaps because there was less perceived threat, few incumbents make vituperative remarks. Exeter Holy Trinity in 1744 wrote: ‘I know of no unlicenc’d Place of Meeting except Mr Kennedy’s House, where Mr Whitefield & his Brethren assemble ye Mob. & pretend to expound ye scriptures’. In 1779 the incumbent of Moretonhampstead declared the Methodist meeting house was served ‘by any Vagabond that pleases’, while at Tavistock the Methodists were served by ‘some mean person of the Congregation’. Chivelstone noted: ‘There is also in the same Parish one Wm Eales a Blacksmith who pretends to instruct a very small Congregation [of Methodists] in his own House’. In 1821 Ashwater and Clawton described Methodists as coming from the lowest orders of society, and of the Bible

Christians Langtree recorded: 'Disciples of a man named Bryant, violent Enthusiasts, but what their Tenets are it is impossible to say'.

The returns show little evidence of Calvinistic Methodists. There are none in Barnstaple archdeaconry, but Sandford had a small group in 1798 who met in a tailor's shop and a few were recorded in Exeter St John. In 1798 two groups each with a meeting house are mentioned, at Buckfastleigh (not recorded in 1821) and Stoke Damarel (which has no return for 1821). In that year, there was a group at St Marychurch with a meeting house, but at Ashprington individuals had switched to the Wesleyans. Peskett has pointed out that Whitefield first preached in Plymouth 1746. His follower Andrew Kinsman was ordained by Baptist and Independent ministers in 1763 and the two congregations in Devonport and Plymouth became Independent.<sup>26</sup>

Of the Bible Christians there are, of course, only references in 1821 and mainly in north-west Devon. Barnstaple archdeaconry had them in six parishes, Ashreigney, Sheepwash, Wemworthy, Langtree, Shebbear and Warkleigh, of which the last three had meeting houses, all domestic. Totnes archdeaconry recorded five parishes, Beaworthy and four more with meeting houses, Abbotskerswell, Bridgerule, Plymstock and Pyworthy, but it is interesting that Bridgerule shared with the Wesleyans. Only Morchard Bishop in Exeter archdeaconry had a group with a meeting house.

Warne argued that the returns did not give much help in assessing the progress of Methodism because the clergy remained uncertain whether they were dissenters and he quoted the figures referred to above. Instead he quoted the evidence of Methodist Conference minutes. In 1789 Plymouth circuit had 805 members, Tiverton 420 and Bideford 83, though these 1,308 included some living on the Cornish side of the Tamar. In Cornwall there were 3,964 members. In 1795 this had dropped to 1,006, whereas the total in Cornwall had risen to 4,470. In 1803 the Devon members numbered 1,385 but a year later were only 1,296.<sup>27</sup>

It is clear that Methodism did not have such a profound effect on Devon as on the people of Cornwall, but it would seem that the returns, while perhaps not as exact, certainly confirm the vicissitudes of dissent and Methodism in this period. Certainly the former might have withered away completely except in centres of population, and where the clergy were challenged. But as Warne concluded the meteoric rise of Methodism 'cannot be accounted for by an allegedly "dead" church, for the evidence goes to show a Church which was far from religious stagnation'.<sup>28</sup>

### Notes and references

1. 'Have you any Papists or Dissenters? if the latter, of what Kind or Denomination? What Teachers of each are there resident in your Parish, or occasionally visiting it? Are they licensed? What places have they of public Meeting, licensed, or others?', in Cook 1960, pp. 2, 30.



2. Throughout the article the following sources for the Visitation Returns are: DRO (Devon Record Office) Chanter 225 a-c (1744-5); 228 a-c (1764-5); 232 a-b (1779); 235 a-b (1798); 242 a-c (1821). Those for 1821 have been published as Cook 1960.
3. Gregory and Chamberlain 2003, pp. 17-8.
4. DRO Chanter 225, Visitation Call Book, 1744-45.
5. Jacob 2007, p. 273. He suggests that Winchester bishops only visited once during their episcopate.
6. For example: Butler 1990, Cole 1913, Gregory 1996, Jago 1997, McClatchey 1969, Smith 2004, Ward 1995, Warne 1969.
7. Sykes 1959, p. 15.
8. DRO Chanter 225-245. The bishops' names are given in brackets.
9. List as per Peskett 1979. Exeter Cathedral and Castle, Bedford and Bradford Precinct and Dotton, all extra parochial, Princetown which only became a chapelry of Lydford from 1807 and Lundy Island, status uncertain, have been excluded from this survey. Tiverton has been counted as the two churches rather than the four portions.
10. 1744: Q. I. What Number of Families have you in your Parish? Of these how many are Dissenters? And of what Sort or Denomination are they? Is there any licenced or other Meeting-House of Dissenters in your Parish? Who teaches in such Meeting-House?  
1765, 1779. 1798: Q. XI. Have you any reputed Papists in your Parish, and how many? Have you any Meeting-Houses for Dissenting Congregations? How many? And of what Denomination? Who are their Teachers?  
1821: Q. II. Have you any Papists or Dissenters? if the latter, of what Kind or Denomination? What Teachers of each are there resident in your Parish, or occasionally visiting it? Are they licensed? What places have they of public Meeting, licensed, or others?
11. Cornwall Record Office AD59/75 (1812 Visitation Returns).
12. Peskett 1979, p. lvi cf. Brockett 1962, pp. 25-34 (Public Record Office RG4/4091). The three denominations were the old puritans, Presbyterians, Anabaptists otherwise Baptists, and Independents.
13. Dixon 2007; cf. Barry 2000, p. 226; Warne, pp. 99-100. On dissent in eighteenth-century Devon see also Barry 1991, pp. 81-108; Brockett 1962 and 1963.
14. Warne, pp. 99, 100.
15. Cook 1960, p. xvii f.
16. Numbers in brackets in these three tables are the actually number of buildings, often more than one in a parish.
17. Peskett, pp. lxxvii-lxxviii.

18. Warne, p. 106.
19. Pearse 1899, pp. 67-75.
20. Warne, p. 107; cf. Davies 1951, p. 39.
21. DRO Chanter 225b 826-7.
22. Warne, p. 106; Telford 1931, VII, 377.
23. Cook 1958, p. xxi.
24. Numbers in brackets are the actual number of buildings, often more than one in a parish.
25. Cook 1960, pp. xvi-ii.
26. Peskett, p. lvii.
27. Warne, p. 126.
28. Warne, p. 126

### **Bibliography**

- Barry, J (1991) 'The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries', in N Orme (ed.), *Unity and Variety: A History of the Church in Devon and Cornwall*, Exeter: University of Exeter Press.
- Barry, J (2000) 'Religion and the spread of nonconformity before 1800', in Kain, R and Ravenhill, W (eds) *Historical Atlas of South West England*, Exeter: University of Exeter Press.
- Brockett, A (1962) *Nonconformity in Exeter 1650-1875*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Brockett, A (ed.) (1963) *The Exeter Assembly: The Minutes of the Assemblies of the United Brethren of Devon and Cornwall, 1691-171. As Transcribed by the Reverend Isaac Gilling*, Torquay: Devon and Cornwall Record Society, New Series vol. 6.
- Butler, LAS (ed.) (1990) *The Archdeaconry of Richmond in the Eighteenth Century: Bishop Gastrell's 'Notitia' The Yorkshire Parishes*, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series 146.
- Cole, REG (ed.) (1913) *Speculum Dioeceseos Lincolnenses sub episcopis Gul. Wake et Edm. Gibson, 1705-23*, Lincoln Record Society IV.
- Cook, M (ed.) (1958) *The Diocese of Exeter in 1821: Bishop Carey's Replies to Queries before Visitation, Volume I: Cornwall*, Torquay: Devon and Cornwall Record Society, New Series 3.
- Cook, M (ed.) (1960) *The Diocese of Exeter in 1821: Bishop Carey's Replies to Queries before Visitation, Volume II: Devon*, Torquay: Devon and Cornwall Record Society, New Series 4.
- Davies, GCB (1951) *Early Cornish Evangelicals*, London: SPCK.
- Dixon, S (2007) 'Introduction', in Friends of Devon Archives, *Episcopal Visitation Returns, 1744 and 1779*, at: [www.foda.org.uk/visitations/intro](http://www.foda.org.uk/visitations/intro).

- Gregory, J (ed.) (1997) *The Speculum of Archbishop Thomas Secker*, Woodbridge: Boydell.
- Gregory, J and Chamberlain, JS (2003) 'National and local perspectives on the Church of England in the long eighteenth century'. in Gregory and Chamberlain (eds), (2003) *The National Church in Local Perspective: The Church of England and the Regions, 1660-1800*, Woodbridge: Boydell.
- Jacob, WM (2007) *The Clerical Profession in the Long Eighteenth Century, 1680-1840*, Oxford: OUP.
- Jago, J (1997) *Aspects of the Georgian Church: Visitation Studies of the Diocese of York 1761-1776*, London: Associated University Presses.
- McClatchey, D (1969) *Oxfordshire Clergy, 1777-1869. A study of the Established Church and of the role of the Clergy in local society*, Oxford: OUP.
- Pearse, MG (1899) 'The First Cornish Methodists'. *The Cornish Magazine*, vol. II January.
- Peskett, H (1979) *Guide to the Parish and Non-Parochial Registers of Devon and Cornwall 1538-1837*, Torquay: Devon & Cornwall Record Society Extra Series, vol. II.
- Smith, M (ed.) (2004) 'Doing the duty of the parish: surveys of the church in Hampshire 1810', *Hampshire Record Series vol. XIII*, Winchester: Hampshire County Council.
- Sykes, N (1959) *From Sheldon to Secker. Aspects of English Church History, 1660-1768*, Cambridge: CUP.
- Telford, J (ed.) (1931) *The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley*, 8 vols, London: Epworth Press.
- Ward, WR (ed.) (1995) *Parson and Parish in Eighteenth-Century Hampshire: Replies to Bishops' Visitations*, Winchester: Hampshire County Council.
- Warne, A (1969) *Church and Society in Eighteenth Century Devon*, Newton Abbot: David & Charles.

Graham Hendy is a recently retired priest of the Church of England and a research historian with particular interest in the established church during the 'long eighteenth century'. In the last decade he has been awarded a MTh and MPhil from the University of Wales, Lampeter. Further information on his work will be found on [www.grahamhendy.org.uk](http://www.grahamhendy.org.uk).





## **The establishment of the New Zealand branch of the Acland family**

**Peter M Acland and Keith G Orrell**

### **Introduction**

The Acland family has a remarkably long pedigree in the south west of England. It can claim descent through the male line extending back to the twelfth century when Hugh de Accalen is recorded as owning land. The family can boast of many notable servants of public life, no more so than the 10<sup>th</sup> Baronet, Sir Thomas Dyke Acland (1787–1871), who well deserved the soubriquet 'The Great Sir Thomas'. The 10<sup>th</sup> Baronet and his wife, Lydia, were inveterate travellers as was described in two earlier articles.<sup>1</sup>

Their regular 'peregrinations'<sup>2</sup> did not appear to restrict their family life as they produced nine surviving children, with Lydia able to accompany her husband on the majority of his travels. Their children in chronological order of birth were: Thomas Dyke, Arthur Henry Dyke, Charles Baldwin, Lydia Dorothea, Henry Wentworth, Leopold Dyke, Agnes, John Barton Arundel Dyke, and Reginald, with another child, Harriet, not outliving childhood.

They were a close and affectionate Victorian family, keeping in regular communication with each other throughout their lives, although the lives of Charles Baldwin and Reginald were tragically cut short by illnesses, at ages 25 and 10 respectively.

This article now concentrates on the remarkable life of John Barton Arundel Dyke Acland.

### **John Barton Arundel Dyke Acland**

The sixth son of Sir Thomas and Lady Lydia was born at Killerton in 1823. His Christian names reflect the rich and diverse history of the Aclands. They relate to the original property of the family at Acland Barton, near Landkey in North Devon, to the fact that Margaret, a daughter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Baronet had married the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Arundel of Trerice in Cornwall, and to the 7<sup>th</sup> Baronet marrying into the immensely rich Dyke family of Tetton, Somerset.<sup>3</sup>

John Barton Arundel Dyke Acland (or JBA as he became known) was educated at Harrow and Christ Church, Oxford, following in his father's footsteps. After graduating in mathematics he studied law and was called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1849. He then practised in London, but, unlike his father, did not care for London life. However, he did inherit from his father the strong urge to travel, and in the next few years journeyed widely in Switzerland, Norway, the Orkneys and the Shetland Isles. His closest friend was Charles George Tripp, son of the Rev. Charles Tripp of Silverton,<sup>4</sup> a village neighbouring the Killerton estate. Charles had had a similar educational upbringing to JBA,

having also graduated in law and becoming a barrister. He too shared JBA's great enthusiasm for travel and adventure.

JBA was planning to set off to the Faroe Islands when he and Charles became interested in the Canterbury Association, an organisation formed to establish a colony in New Zealand sponsored by the Church of England.<sup>5</sup> After meeting leading supporters of the Association including John Robert Godley, an Irish statesman and bureaucrat, and Sir George Grey, the British explorer who was Lieutenant-Governor of New Zealand during the periods 1845-53 and 1861-68, they decided to visit this new country to see if they might settle there.

The Canterbury Association had been founded in London in 1848 with the primary aim of providing funds for assisted passages to members of the working classes with desirable skills for the new colony. A poster advertising the assisted passages specifically mentions 'Gardeners, Shep[herd]s, Farm Servants, Labourers and Country Mechanics'.<sup>6</sup> Evidence for the intended religious nature of the colony can be seen in the same poster's requirement that applicants should be vouched for by the clergyman of their parish, and in the fact that some of the proceeds from land sales were specifically earmarked for church endowments. Whilst JBA and Tripp would have fully satisfied the religious requirements of the Association (they were both devout Anglicans) they could certainly not have been described as 'members of the working classes' and therefore would not have qualified for financial assistance with their travel costs! However, the founders of the Association clearly felt they were suitable emigrants.

JBA was now aged 31 but his plan to move to New Zealand met with considerable opposition from his family. There are some interesting anecdotes concerning his departure which became delayed somewhat from its original date. Shortly before he left JBA was staying with his sister Agnes and husband Arthur Mills in Teignmouth. In a letter to his father dated 26 September 1854 he informed him that he was taking with him 10 bottles of port, 12 of sherry and 2 of brandy labelled 'For the hold wanted on the voyage'.<sup>7</sup> In another letter to his father (Teignmouth, 3 October 1854) he mentions a further delay in departure as 'the ship ran aground on Sunday but was got off yesterday'.<sup>8</sup> He mentions that Arthur Mills and Agnes (and perhaps Tom) will see him off, and then lists some of the fellow passengers he knew personally including, of course, Charles Tripp. He then lists the books he is taking with him. Around 50 books and articles are listed. These are categorised into religious texts (bible, prayer book, Cruden's concordance, books of sermons, saints and the creed, etc.), legal books (texts on laws of real property and personal property, contracts, law dictionary, Standing Orders of the House of Commons, etc.), farming (including *The Farming of Somersetshire*, written by his father, breeding of livestock, sheep and shepherding, etc.), academic texts (covering algebra, differential calculus, trigonometry, geometry and mechanics) and numerous miscellaneous books ranging from atlases, texts on surveying and geology to collections of poems. Books on general health and medicine are notably absent!

Eventually on 9 October 1854 he and Charles sailed from Plymouth on the *Royal Stuart*, a boat of 837 tons, and arrived in Lyttelton Harbour near

Christchurch on 4 January 1855. This was four years after the first four boats of settlers (dubbed the Canterbury Pilgrims by the British press) had arrived. A further 24 shiploads of Canterbury Association settlers, making a total of approximately 3,500, subsequently arrived over the next two and a half years.

Their particular voyage on the *Royal Stuart* was not without incident. The ship carried 29 first class, 37 second class and 37 steerage passengers plus cargo. On 11 November there was an incident of drunkenness and near-mutiny of a number of the crew, which led to the captain and chief mate being physically struck and three of the revellers being put in irons! The other incident involved the ship's surgeon who himself suffered ill health for most of the journey and actually died when the ship entered harbour at Lyttelton! The events of the voyage were recorded in diaries by JBA and by a fellow passenger, Samuel Shrimpton.<sup>9</sup>

### **Arrival in Canterbury and their first land purchases**

On arrival in Christchurch JBA and Tripp immediately set about exploring the land and worked on farms in the Canterbury area to gain knowledge and experience in sheep farming on established runs. The pair must have raised eyebrows amongst established sheep farmers at what they were planning to undertake. By early 1855 all the country in the Canterbury Plains had been taken up by settlers so the two Devonians turned to the Hill Country south of the Plains. They each applied for 57,500 acres of leasehold land on the south bank of the Rangitata River. Their choice was bold as the region was unexplored and unsurveyed! On their first exploring trip in 1856 they rode down to a point called Mt Peel and burned many miles of land to clear it of the two metre high snow grass<sup>10</sup> and scrub so as to promote grass growth. They were the first white men to set foot in the Rangitata gorge. The Maori had explored the Rangitata river some 300-400 years before but had never settled there.

In April 1856 JBA and Charles Tripp entered into partnership and toward the end of that month they set off for Mt Peel with a dray pulled by eight bullocks carrying a farm worker, Robert Smith, his wife and their three young children, plus stores to build a homestead. They reached Mt Peel on 10 May 1856 and established Mt Peel Station having been joined by five men to work on the property.

### **Early years in Mount Peel**

They first built a cottage for the Smith family using cabbage trees for walls, cracks being plastered with clay and the roof thatched with snow grass. The rest of the settlers slept in tents. Later that year they built another cottage together with stockyards, and in January 1857 they had stocked up with 3500 sheep and 24 cows. Their main diet was wild pigs and weka (woodhens).

In March 1857 JBA revisited England as he had earlier planned and while there entertained his brother's children, Charles Thomas, Francis Gilbert and Arthur Herbert. They loved their 'colonial uncle' who gave them rides on his saddle and taught them how to make damper-bread on picnic camp fires 'New

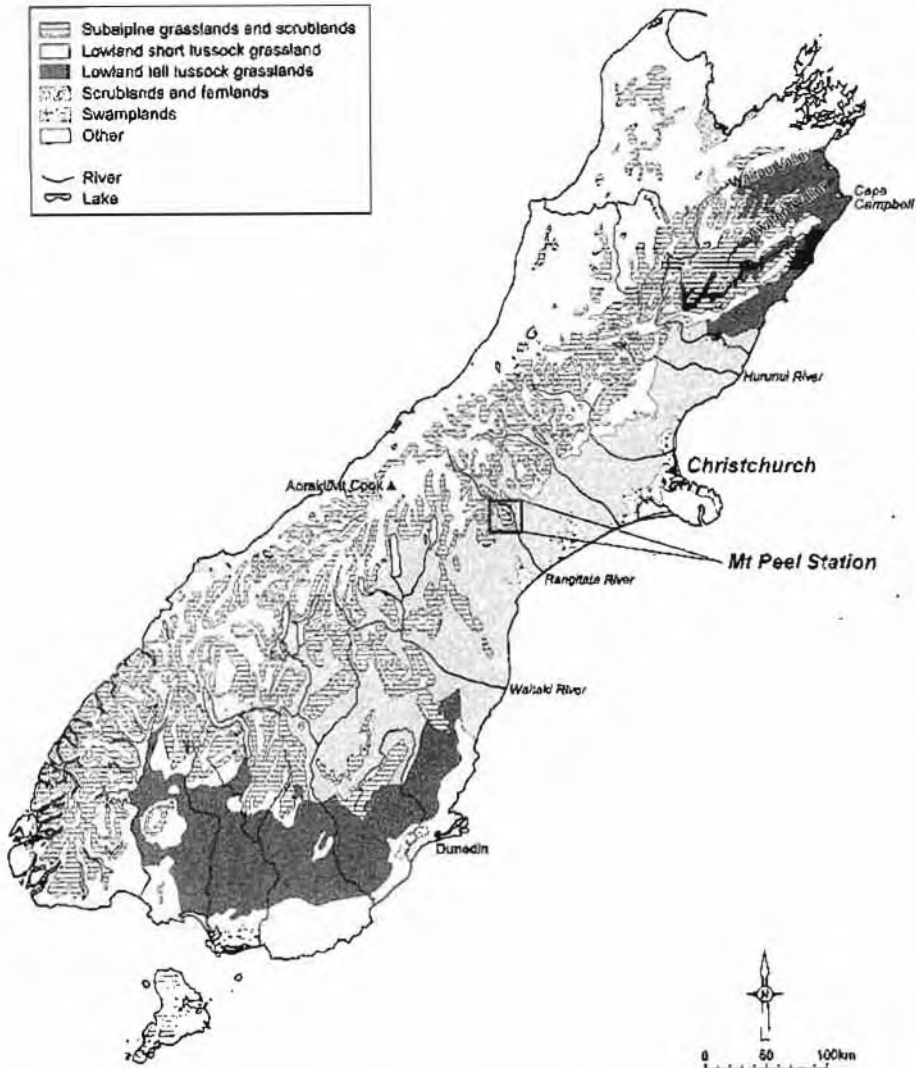


Figure 1: Map of South Island showing the tussock grasslands of the country around 1840 and identifying the location of the Mt Peel Station (reproduced with kind permission from Peden 2011).

While JBA was in England Charles Tripp married Ellen Harper. Ellen was the third daughter of Bishop Henry John Chitty Harper, first Bishop of Christchurch who had arrived in Canterbury from England in 1856.<sup>12</sup> After honeymooning in Akaroa the couple returned to Mt Peel on horseback where they found a newly built cottage for them, comprising a small sitting room, a



bedroom, a lean-to behind, that was divided into a kitchen and servant's room, and two small verandah rooms. They had brought six chairs with them that were most precious as most people had to be content with boxes to sleep on. They also brought a piano which had a hazardous journey when the dray broke down and the instrument had to be left covered on the river bank for some weeks before it could be brought across!

The early years of marriage were rather lonely for Ellen as her new husband was away all day on their property. She was fearful of walking far from the cottage because of the wild pigs, so she contented herself by reading the few books she had. However, she did have occasional visits from her sisters and one brother. Another neighbour was Dr Ben Moorhouse, who, with his wife, lived across the Rangitata River, where they had established Shepherd's Bush Station in 1855. Ellen was particularly stimulated by visits from another neighbour, the writer Samuel Butler,<sup>13</sup> who owned and resided at Mesopotamia Station, further up the Rangitata gorge from Mt Peel. As well as having great literary gifts Butler was a talented pianist and he entertained Ellen for hours at a time. Samuel Butler had had a very difficult relationship with his parents, particularly his father, and after graduating from Cambridge, decided to put as much distance as possible between himself and his family and emigrated, like JBA, to become a sheep farmer. However, unlike JBA his stay in New Zealand was short lived (he returned to England in 1864), but during his time in Mesopotamia he wrote a book *A First Year in Canterbury Settlement*,<sup>14</sup> and produced the drafts and source material for his future masterpiece *Erewhon*.

JBA arrived back from England in January 1859. A photo of JBA taken some years later (Fig. 2).



HOB. J. B. A. ACLAND.

Figure 2: Photograph of J.B. Acland, circa 1870 (reproduced with kind permission from the New Zealand Electronic Text Centre, at: <http://www.nzetc.org/tm/scholarly/tei-NZETC-Help.html#licensing>).

In January 1860 he married Emily Harper an elder sister of Ellen in Christchurch, the service doubtless being officiated by Ellen's father, Bishop Henry Harper. JBA and Emily spent their honeymoon exploring the upper reaches of the Rangitata Gorge. They then occupied the small cottage behind the Tripp's cottage, and had meals together. It was a close-knit community at this stage, but this did not last as in 1861 Charles and Ellen moved to Mt Somers, some 20 miles north east of Mt Peel in a somewhat less remote area. Just prior to them moving they decided to say goodbye to the Moorhouse family, but the river was in flood and the crossing in a small boat was hazardous. However, they reached the far bank and the men clambered ashore only to see the rope slip out of their hands and Ellen was carried downstream. Charles called out frantically 'Goodbye Ellen, goodbye – meet you in Heaven', but some hours later Ellen was rescued after managing to scramble to a small island in the river!

The Tripps lived at Mt Somers for 11 months before selling up. Mt Somers is now owned by a great-grandson of JBA, Mark Acland, and currently farmed by a son, David.

Around that time JBA and Charles increased their holdings of land to about 250,000 acres including Mt Peel, Mt Somers, Orari Gorge and Mt Possession. However, in 1862 they decided to dissolve their partnership with Tripp, dividing the land and JBA choosing his portion. JBA chose Mt Peel and Charles Tripp chose Orari Gorge and Mt Somers. Mt Possession by then having been sold.

In 1866 the Tripp family went to live at Orari Gorge, having had a manager in charge until then. They built a large house there where descendants of the family still live today. Tripp and JBA formed a strong team, Tripp being the more pioneering type of person and JBA the more steady influence. Both were intensely religious and had great faith in their future venture and in the future of their newly adopted country.

In 1865 JBA built a substantial house at Mt Peel and named it 'Holnicote' after the Acland family home in north Somerset, England, with the intention of developing the homestead block into an English-type village community. The house was built from bricks burned in a kiln near the entrance gates. Timber was pit-sawn from trees on the estate, and roof slates were imported from Wales as ballast in a sailing ship. An octagonal greenhouse was built adjacent to the house, but this was destroyed in a gale in the late 1920s. From the rubble, bulbs of *lilium gigantum* grew. These were subsequently taken from the rubble and scattered under the trees near the entrance to Mt Peel where they have proliferated over the years and are a beautiful sight when in bloom. Figure 3 depicts a photo of Holnicote taken in 1907.

### **Church of the Holy Innocents**

In 1868 JBA then decided to follow his father's achievement and built a family church near to the homestead.<sup>15</sup> It was constructed of white stone brought from Mt Somers by bullock drays, boulders brought from the Rangitata River and a variety of wood (white and black pine, and totara)<sup>16</sup> taken from the Peel Forest bush, and cut and milled on the estate. The stonemason was William Brassington

who was well known locally for the Canterbury Provincial Council Chambers building.



Figure 3: Photograph of Holnicote, 1907 (reproduced with kind permission, from the Acland private collection).

The interior of the church was of native wood and the altar rails of knotted totara and black pine. Over the years several beautiful memorial windows have been installed including one in memory of one of JBA's sons, Henry Dyke Acland (see below), entitled *The Light of the World/The Good Shepherd*, based on the work of William Holman Hunt, donated by members of the NZ Sheep Owners Federation. Round both church and homestead many trees were planted which over the years have matured splendidly.

The building was named the Church of the Holy Innocents,<sup>17</sup> in memory of some young children buried there, including a daughter of JBA and Emily's own family. The church was consecrated by JBA's father-in-law, Bishop Harper, in 1869. The first child christened there was Lucy Acland, the eighth of their eleven children.

The church has acted as a focal point for the Aclands over subsequent years and remains so today.<sup>18</sup> A more recent photo of the church is shown in Figure 4. Since 1882 it became a tradition to ring the church bell to send out the old year and ring in the New Year, and those attending the service to sign a book kept in the church for that purpose.

### **JBA's family**

JBA and Emily had 11 children with two dying in infancy as mentioned above. Of their nine surviving children there were three boys and six girls, somewhat atypical of the Acland lineage which over the centuries has strongly favoured the

male side. The boys of JBA and Emily were christened John Dyke (1863-1944), Henry Dyke (1867-1942) and Hugh Thomas Dyke (1874-1956), and brief biographies of them are included below. The girls were Agnes Dyke (1861-1945), Mary Dyke (1865-1916), Harriet Dyke (1866-1948), Lucy Dyke (1869-1903), Elizabeth Dyke (1870- ?) and Emily Rosa Dyke (1873-1950). Figure 5 depicts JBA, his wife and family in 1878.



**Figure 4: Photo of the Church of the Holy Innocents, November 2004 (reproduced from <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nzlscant/images/mtpeelch3.JPG> and with permission of Winsome Griffin).**

All his children later married and had families of their own except Mary who married later in life. Agnes and her husband eventually settled in England, Elizabeth and husband moved to America via England, whilst the other sisters and their families remained in New Zealand.

JBA was a keen explorer and made many trips to the Upper Rangitata gorge. On one trip in 1871 he and friends climbed up to 6,100 feet on the ice. On another trip he and Emily, their eldest daughter Agnes, Frances Tripp and Miss Moorhouse camped for two or three days at 'Bay of Plenty' and on the Sir Colin Campbell glacier, lunching on top of a moraine 4,000 feet above sea level and observing significant avalanches! Detailed reports of these trips were relayed by JBA to his father in the UK. The 10<sup>th</sup> Baronet, approaching the end of his very full life, must have marvelled at these exploits of his family on the other side of the world.



Figure 5: JBA, his wife and family 1878 (left to right, top row, Henry, 11 years, John, 15; middle row, Harriet, 12, JBA, 55, Bessie, 6, Emily, 47, Agnes, 17; bottom row, Rosa, 5, Mary, 13, Hugh, 4, Lucy, 9) (reproduced with kind permission from the unpublished Acland private collection, S. Acland, 1987).

### JBA's public service in and around Christchurch

In later years JBA became increasingly involved in public duties in the Christchurch area, and he employed overseers at Mt Peel to relieve him of day-to-day duties at home. He bought a house in the Heathcote area of Christchurch that served as a base when he was away from home.

He was appointed the representative for South Canterbury on the Legislative Council in 1863 and served in this capacity for 34 years. His other duties included being a Fellow of Christ's College (1873-1878), a member of the Board of Governors of Canterbury College (1873-1878), an original member of the Senate of the University of New Zealand, (now the University of Canterbury in Christchurch), and a founder of the Christchurch Club. He was also Chairman of the Mount Peel Road Board (1870-1900). He was much involved in church building and funded one of the Peel Forest Churches where he was a representative of both the Diocesan and General Synod of that church. Being a licensed lay-reader he preached regularly at the Mt Peel and Peel Forest churches.

During the period 1880-1894 JBA corresponded regularly with his brother, Tom, the 11<sup>th</sup> Baronet (Fig. 6).



**Figure 6: JBA at his desk, 1893 (reproduced by kind permission of the University of Canterbury, Macmillan Brown Library Photograph Collection).**

These numerous letters deal mainly with family matters such as legacies, New Zealand and English politics, and reminiscences of Killerton and early life at Mount Peel.<sup>19</sup> Other topics include the scourge of rabbits in New Zealand, a major problem for land owners such as JBA. One letter refers to the delivery of 120 tons of netting for building a rabbit-proof fence and the importing of stoats, weasels and ferrets for controlling rabbits in the mountain areas!<sup>20</sup>

JBA died on 18 May 1904 and is buried in the Mount Peel churchyard. His wife, Emily, died a year later and is buried beside him. JBA left assets valued at around £40,000. Financial crises of the 1890s due to steep falls in sale prices of sheep and of wool, and severe winter snow storms and floods, had caused JBA much anguish. He had spent the last 15 years of his life living frugally and from the 1870s onwards had suffered some emotional breakdowns.<sup>21</sup> Despite these personal difficulties JBA was a very public-spirited man, cautious and prudent, with a dedicated sense of duty to his employees and to the community in which he lived.<sup>22</sup> He clearly inherited these admirable traits from his father, the 10<sup>th</sup> Baronet.

He and Charles Tripp were devout Anglicans and during exploring trips would read appropriate passages from the Bible, and both observed daily prayers in their homes. They were prototypes of the type of persons encouraged by the Canterbury Association to colonise New Zealand in the 1850s.

In 1912 Mount Peel Station was subdivided, the Aclands retaining 20,000 sheep. The Station still remains in the Acland family 150 years after JBA and



Tripp first took it up. It now exists in a very modified environment but is a very successful business enterprise.<sup>23</sup>

### **Second generation of New Zealand Aclands**

The Acland family has undoubtedly made a strong impact on the Canterbury community over the years. JBA and Emily had nine surviving children, three sons and six daughters. Very brief biographies of the three sons will now be provided.

John Dyke Acland attended Christ's College, Christchurch, then went to Oxford, returning to Mt Peel in 1888 when the current manager died.<sup>24</sup> He managed the estate until 1893 when, following some disagreement, he left and went to Rhodesia, but returned later to take a degree in mechanical engineering at Canterbury College. He subsequently visited England where he married a New Zealander, Mary St Hill, who happened to be also visiting England at the time. She had suffered very severe sea sickness and had been advised not to travel again! So they both settled in England and John became a tenant of one of the farms on the Holnicote estate in North Somerset, owned by the 12<sup>th</sup> Baronet, Sir Charles Thomas Dyke Acland. JBA's other sons, Henry, and Hugh, remained in New Zealand and had considerable impact on the Canterbury community.

Henry Dyke Acland, like his elder brother, qualified in law at Christ Church, Oxford, and became a barrister of the Inner Temple in London.<sup>25</sup> He then went to Australia, being admitted to the Bar in New South Wales, but returned to New Zealand in 1902. He was a man of many interests, being a Member of the Meat Producers Board, President of the New Zealand Sheep Owners and Farmers Federation, Chairman of the Canterbury College Board of Governors for 11 years, and President of the Dominion Council. He was particularly involved in education and was one of the earliest supporters of the Workers Educational Association (WEA) being its President from 1917 until his death in 1942. He was also a member of the Senate of the University of New Zealand. Henry was principally responsible for extricating Mt Peel Station from financial stress during the 1900s following periods of recession after JBA's death.

Hugh Thomas Dyke Acland, the youngest son, became a distinguished and much-loved surgeon.<sup>26</sup> He began his medical education at Otago University followed by St Thomas's Hospital, London, where he was awarded the Cheselden Medal for the best student of surgery of the year. In 1900-1 he served as a civil surgeon during the Boer War in South Africa and then returned to England where he was appointed obstetrical physician and resident medical officer at St Thomas's Hospital, becoming an FRCS and LRCP, and carrying out notable cancer research. He married a medical sister, Evelyn Ovans, in London, and they returned to New Zealand, Hugh establishing a medical practice in Christchurch. He was appointed Hon. Surgeon at the Christchurch hospital, a post he held for 25 years, and was the first doctor in New Zealand to specialise in surgery. During the First World War he served with the New Zealand Medical Corps in Egypt, France and England, dealing with many casualties, particularly

associated with the Battle of the Somme, performing some 4,000 operations in all. He was on HMTS Marquette when it was torpedoed in the Mediterranean and survived spending 11 hours in the water! He was one of the founders of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, and in 1933 was knighted for services to medicine. In 1936 he won a seat on the Christchurch City Council and served in this capacity for several years. He and his wife, Evelyn, lived in St Albans, Christchurch for 37 years. He died in 1956, at the time of the Mt Peel Centenary celebrations, and was buried at Mt Peel. Evelyn survived him for many years, living until 1964 when she died aged 92 years.

### **The Aclands and Mt Peel**

Mt Peel still remains in the Acland family, and the Church of the Holy Innocents serves as a focal point for many family occasions, with many antecedents being buried in its graveyard. The graveyard also contains gravestones of numerous other notable persons, no one more so than the eminent theatrical stage director and famous detective crime writer, Dame Ngaio Marsh.<sup>27</sup> Her connection with the Aclands came about through Sir Hugh who was one of her specialists when she was in hospital, and to whom she consulted on certain medical matters for at least one of her crime novels. She later became a close friend of Sir Hugh's eldest son, Jack, and his wife, Kit, who were living at Mt Peel at the time. Jack, JBA's grandson, died in 1981, just one year before the death of Ngaio Marsh.

The Aclands continue to be a family of most influential lineage with a high reputation for public service in the South Island, New Zealand. The family line now extends to the fifth generation, but this is dwarfed by the 37 generations of Aclands in the UK!

### **Acknowledgements**

Our starting reference for this research was Anne Acland's book on the history of her family, particularly chapters 6 and 8. The main source of genealogical research was that carried out by Susan Acland, latterly of Waikanae, north of Wellington, and collected together in 1987. We have also made much use of the Acland archive in the Devon Record Office, Exeter, and the Acland papers in the Macmillan Brown Library, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand.

The authors wish to thank John Acland of Mount Peel for his careful reading and corrections to the manuscript.

Finally, we are most grateful to Sally Percival, (latterly of Exeter and formerly of New Zealand) who first initiated the link between the two authors of this article.

### **Notes and references**

1. Orrell 2005 and 2006.
2. Acland 1981, p. 48.
3. Acland 1981, ch. 1; ch. 2, p. 11; ch. 3, p. 15.
4. Vicar of the church of St Mary the Virgin, Silverton, Devon, 1839–1865.



5. Wikipedia 2011. 'Canterbury Association'. at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canterbury\\_Association](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canterbury_Association).
6. Hearn. Te Ara 2009. *The Encyclopedia of New Zealand*. at: <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/english/2/2>.
7. Devon Record Office (DRO), Acland archive. Letter 51/12/4/64.
8. DRO, Acland archive. Letter 51/12/4/116a.
9. Rootsweb 2011 'The Shrimpton Diary'. at: <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nzlscant/royalstuardiary.htm>.
10. Chionochloa, a genus of tussock grass endemic to New Zealand.
11. Bread baked in the coals of a camp fire, particularly by travellers in Australia and New Zealand.
12. Purchas 1909.
13. Shaffer. E. 2010. 'Butler, Samuel (1835–1902)'. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004. at: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/32217> [accessed 12 November 2010].
14. Butler 1863.
15. The 10<sup>th</sup> Baronet built the chapel on the Killerton estate in 1841: see Acland 1981, p. 66.
16. Podocarpus totara, a coniferous tree endemic in New Zealand.
17. Rootsweb 2011. at: <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nzlscant/peel.htm>. This site includes seven chapters of a book written to commemorate the centenary of the establishment of Mount Peel Station. See Harte 1956.
18. Following the earthquake centred at 40 km west of Christchurch on 4 September 2010, the church was damaged, the wall behind the altar collapsing and some falling masonry smashing the solid wooden altar and completely destroying the beautiful stained-glass window funded in memory of JBA and Emily by their children following their deaths in the 1900s. *The Geraldine News* 2010, at: <http://geraldinenews.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/geraldinenewsseptember091.pdf>
19. DRO, Acland archive. Letters 51/12/4/58-96.
20. Letter 51/12/4/70.
21. Peden 2011, p. 236.
22. Te Ara 2011, at: <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/1966/acland-john-barton-arunde/1>.
23. Peden, p. 245.
24. Acland 1987, p. 6.
25. Acland, p. 9.
26. Acland, p. 14.
27. Wikipedia 2011. 'Ngaio Marsh'. at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ngaio\\_Marsh](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ngaio_Marsh).

## **Bibliography**

- Acland, A (1981) *A Devon Family: the story of the Aclands*. Chichester: Phillimore.
- Acland, S (1987) *John Barton Arundel Acland. Mount Peel*, unpublished family record.
- Butler, S (1863) *A First Year in Canterbury Settlement*, London: Longman, Green.
- Harte, GW (1956) *Mount Peel is a Hundred. the Story of the First High Country Sheep Station in Canterbury*; Timaru, New Zealand: Herald Printing Works.
- Orrell, KG (2005) 'The Great Sir Thomas' Acland and his Norwegian namesake: Part 1: the establishment of the Acland-Tellefsen connection', *The Devon Historian*, vol. 71, pp. 25-34.
- Orrell, KG (2006) 'The Great Sir Thomas' Acland and his Norwegian namesake: Part 2: Sir Thomas meets his namesake'. *The Devon Historian*, vol. 72, pp. 15-23.
- Peden, R (2011) *Making Sheep Country*, Auckland: Auckland University Press.
- Purchas. HT (1909) *Bishop Harper and the Canterbury Settlement*. Christchurch, Wellington and Dunedin, New Zealand: Whitcombe & Tombs Ltd.

Peter Acland of Wellington, New Zealand, is a great, great-grandson of Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, 10<sup>th</sup> Baronet of Killerton, and grandson of Sir Hugh Thomas Dyke Acland. He can be contacted at [pmacland@xtra.co.nz](mailto:pmacland@xtra.co.nz). Dr Keith Orrell is a retired Reader in Chemistry of the University of Exeter, who has made a study of the life and times of Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, 10<sup>th</sup> Baronet. He can be contacted at [korrell@uk2.net](mailto:korrell@uk2.net).

## **William Rayer: Rector of Tidcombe, Tiverton philanthropist and saviour of Holcombe Court**

**Charles Scott-Fox**

William Rayer was Rector of the Tidcombe portion of St Paul's parish for 55 years (see fig. 1). He was married to a daughter of Sir Thomas Carew, Bart. of Tiverton Castle, a caring priest, Tiverton magistrate, active supporter of the local hunt and, above all, a generous contributor to a wide range of projects within his parish. In January 1858, he purchased the decaying mansion of Holcombe Court and, over the succeeding five years, spent a small fortune on its complete restoration, thereby ensuring the survival of this historic Tudor house for future generations to enjoy. Yet, curiously, little is known of his origins or the source of his wealth, beyond an oft-quoted understanding that he was the son of the Lord of the Manor of St Athan in Glamorgan. Stranger still, when seeking information on his 'St Athan' forbears, there are no records in any of the Glamorgan archives of a 'Rayer' family living in the county. However, from papers donated to the Glamorgan Record Office by a Cardiff group of solicitors, and a terrier held by the Cardiff Local Studies library, clues emerged to the origins of this family and to their wealth: it would be from the archives in Gloucestershire and London that the answers could be found.

According to a Knight Frank sale brochure, the Rayers were descended from 'Old Prior Rahere, who founded St. Bartholomew's Hospital':<sup>1</sup> this cannot be substantiated, and it is only from the early eighteenth century that William Rayer's family can be traced. From parish records in Gloucester,<sup>2</sup> it is known that William Rayer senior was born in 1749, the son of an innkeeper of the same name: following his father's trade, William Rayer senior completed his apprenticeship as a cooper in 1772. The onset of the Industrial Revolution in Britain, in the second half of the eighteenth century, created a society that encouraged entrepreneurship, invention and trade. The young William Rayer took full advantage of his opportunities and training, for within ten years he had established himself as a successful wine and spirit merchant, based in Gloucester. In 1783, he married Mary Harmar, daughter of Richard Harmar, a wealthy London brandy merchant and investor in property, with houses in London and Alciston, Sussex. Their marriage settlement provided William Rayer with a capital sum of £2,000 [£126,000],<sup>3</sup> and his wife with an annuity of £45 [£2,800] a year, from a further investment of £1,500 at 3%.<sup>4</sup> He moved to London, where his business thrived, and he followed his father-in-law by investing in property, including a house in Bedford Place, Bloomsbury, where he lived for most of the early years of the nineteenth century.



**Figure 1: William Rayer (reproduced with kind permission of the Collection of Mr Graham G. Robinson, Berkshire, UK.**

Either through business contacts, or friendship with one of his near neighbours, Miss Mary Jones an elderly spinster, it appears that Rayer was able to take advantage of a decline in her brother's family fortunes, probably through gambling, to obtain some London properties and part of the Fonmon Castle estate in West Glamorgan, near the village of St Athan, including the Lordship of the manor. This consisted of six farms surrounding East Orchard Farm (and its former castle), an area to the west described as the Penmark estate, and two other farms in the Aberthaw area, which together came to over 1,700 acres. An exquisitely produced and bound copy of the terrier,<sup>5</sup> relating to this sale in 1810, is held by the Local Studies department of Cardiff's central library.<sup>6</sup> Other documents, relating to the lease and rent of several London properties, including one in Hanover Square, which is known to have been the London residence of the Jones family for several generations,<sup>7</sup> can be seen in the archives of both Devon and Glamorgan Record Offices.

As previously noted, there is no mention of William Rayer in any Glamorgan county records for the period; therefore, it must be concluded, that he had no association with the county, that this was purely an investment, and probably a kudos symbol to add a title to his name, and that he continued to run his wine merchant's business in London. No records of a sale of this business have been located, but it may have been acquired by his nephew, William Harmar, or sold, probably in the early 1820s, as he had sufficient funds for further investments in property at this time. In May 1823, he provided additional funds for Henry Evans of Henblas in Anglesey, increasing his mortgage to £16,000 [£670,000], and a year later took on the lease of 16 Bolton Street, Piccadilly. In about 1828, he retired to Bath, acquiring a house in Brock Street, Walcot, a prestigious address between the Royal Crescent and the Circus, where he died in 1829. It would seem that his son made arrangements for his father's body to be transported by carriage to Tiverton, a journey that would have taken

at least two days, where his funeral service and burial took place on 13 September at St Peter's. After her husband's death, Mary Rayer lived on in Bath for a further five years. In 1831, she signed a disclaimer for the annuity that she had received since her marriage, stating that she had no need of it, as 'her husband had provided her with an ample fortune', and that the investment was to pass to her son.<sup>8</sup>

William and Mary Rayer had two sons, though only one survived: the future Reverend William Rayer's younger brother, Henry, dying shortly after he was born. Although some records indicate that William was born in 1789, the London birth register gives the year as 1785. This is almost certainly correct, as the Oxford Register of alumni gives his age as 18 in 1803, when he entered Trinity College as an under-graduate. He obtained his BA in Theology in 1807, and his MA in 1810.<sup>9</sup> Having the same name, it cannot be determined whether it was father or son who acted to secure the young William's future, but a year earlier, on 9 December, William Rayer paid John Woodhouse of Kimberley, Norfolk, £5,125 [£175,000] to acquire three-quarters of the advowson<sup>10</sup> of the Tidcombe portion of the Tiverton parish, thereby enabling him to nominate himself as Rector, as soon as Henry Vivyan, the then incumbent, retired.<sup>11</sup>

The parish of Tiverton had been divided into four portions by Hugh Courtenay, Earl of Devon, at the end of the thirteenth century. Covering a radius of between three and five miles from the centre of Tiverton, these portions were named Clare, Pitt, Tidcombe and Priors, each having their own rector. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries St Peter's had been a fifth portion, known as All Fours, but this nomenclature had long since fallen into abeyance. The portion was a device used for a few large parishes, nearly all of which had either a minster or abbey church; their rectors, in addition to parish duties within their portion, were responsible for an equivalent ratio of the main parish church services. The Tidcombe portion was to the east of the town; it included the hamlets of Chevithorne, West and East Mere, Craze Lowman and Manley. Originally based on a chapel, dedicated to St Leonard, there was a large rectory, Tidcombe House, that at one time had been partially moated. The rectory had an extensive garden and glebe, which early records show as 25 acres, but by 1850 was given as 90 acres, with tithes of £757 [£44,000] per annum.<sup>12</sup> Until 1795, it was the private residence of the Newte family, who had provided a succession of four rectors of the portion, covering most of the eighteenth century. When the Reverend Samuel Newte died in 1795, the house was given to the parish as their parsonage or rectory.

No family records have been found to explain their reason for choosing to purchase the advowson for this portion of the Tiverton parish, though there is evidence of a William Rayer, clerk, who died in Tiverton in 1730; he could have been related, being of his great-grandfather's generation, but no connection has been found.<sup>13</sup> Whatever the reasons, the Reverend William Rayer was soon established as a highly eligible and wealthy bachelor, with a love of country pursuits that endeared him to his country parishioners. Within five years he had courted and married Jane Palk Carew, the youngest daughter of Sir Thomas

Carew of Tiverton Castle, 6<sup>th</sup> Baronet of Haccombe, and head of one of Devon's old established families. Rayer would have been well known to Sir Thomas Carew, since his first visit to Tiverton in the spring of 1811, when he was seeking confirmation for his appointment as rector, as Sir Thomas was the owner of the remaining quarter share of the Tidcombe advowson. This share was inherited by his son, Sir William Carew, and sold to the Reverend William Rayer in 1848 for £3,800 [£200,000].<sup>14</sup>

In his marriage settlement, William Rayer, and his future father-in-law, each put up the sum of £4,000 [£167,500] as surety for his future wife, and William Rayer placed an additional £10,000 [£419,000] in trust for any issue of this marriage. In a separate addendum to the settlement, William Rayer also guaranteed, in the event of his pre-deceasing his wife, that her income would be made up to a minimum of £500 [£21,000] per annum, with up to £100 from his estate.<sup>15</sup> Though not as spacious as Tiverton Castle, Tidcombe's rectory was a large and comfortable home, with rather more servants than most country rectories. The earliest detailed record is the 1841 census that includes eight resident members of staff, a housekeeper, cook and two housemaids, butler, footman, groom and a lad! In addition there would have been gardeners and stable lads, who lived in the district. Subsequent census returns show that this level of support for his family was typical and little changed over the years.

Shortly after his arrival at Tidcombe House, the Cardiff terrier shows that the Reverend William Rayer was adding to the 25 acres of glebe attached to the rectory, by buying 29 acres at Newtes Down, Little Tidcombe, and 170 acres at Tidcombe for £1,067 [£36,450].<sup>16</sup> After his father's death, he continued to expand his land holdings in Tiverton, and added to those he had inherited at St Athan. A rent receipts and outgoings register, for 1820, shows that his father had also acquired the small Wortham Manor estate, near Lifton, on the Devon-Cornwall border,<sup>17</sup> and in 1839 he added a further 480 acres, with the purchase of four adjacent farms, Smalcombe, Tinney, Colmans and Whiteley. All of these properties were leased back or rented out, with hunting rights retained. He also took over his father's mortgage for the Penblas estate in Anglesey, which was increased to £20,000 in 1839 and to £23,000 [£1,346,000] in 1852.

The Reverend William and Jane Rayer had lost their first child, a son named William, who was only three months old when he died in August 1817; but between 1820 and 1834 they had another six children, two sons and four daughters, all of whom survived into adulthood. Both their sons went to Blundell's,<sup>18</sup> Eton and Oxford, William Carew going up to Christchurch in 1839, and his younger brother, Henry, following his father to Trinity two years later. William Carew must have preferred the life of a country squire to academe, for the Oxford register of alumni shows that he never completed his studies. His brother Henry persevered, though he may have changed his subject to theology, or taken a break, as he did not graduate until 1847, and then stayed on at Oxford for another year to obtain his MA.<sup>19</sup> Having purchased the advowson of St Athan some thirty years earlier, the Reverend William Rayer was able to nominate his son, when the living became vacant in 1849. In the latter years of the 1840s,

Henry had been visiting the St Athan and Penmark properties, writing letters to his father to explain their problems and his plans.<sup>20</sup> so it is reasonable to assume it was his father's intention that he should inherit these Glamorgan estates.

Despite his wealth, it is evident that the Reverend William Rayer was a dedicated and compassionate parish priest, who served all parishioners of the Tidcombe portion well. A survey of 1821 remarked that two of the Tiverton Rectors were very lax. They took the income in full, but lived elsewhere; paying small sums to a curate to do their duty. However, William Rayer... was very different. He lived locally, attended to his duties personally and was a chief mover and liberal contributor to the founding of the Tiverton Infirmary'.<sup>21</sup> He also served as a magistrate on the Tiverton bench. In the 1840s, it was proposed to build a chapel at Chevithorne, a small community on the northern edge of his parish. Designed by Benjamin Ferrey, a former student of Pugin, it was completed in 1843 at a cost of over £2,000 [£90,000], of which Rayer contributed £1,500 [£67,500]. His generosity did not end there, for he also provided the church plate and in 1850 made 'substantial provisions for the curate, organist, clerk, sexton, as well as for the maintenance of the building'.<sup>22</sup>

Chevithorne was obviously a community dear to his heart, for in 1857 he was the principal contributor to the new school, providing £200 [£8,600] of the £500 [£18,500] required.<sup>23</sup> In 1854, when St Peter's was undergoing a major restoration, he intervened to save as much of the furnishings as he could.

Under some extraordinary delusion the restorers, who were othertimes men of taste and enlightenment, suffered the priceless remains of the screen to be removed... The part of the screen between the panels and the fan tracery was [subsequently] removed to Holcombe Rogus Church. It has suffered considerably and is now to be seen converted into a second parclose for the Rayer family.<sup>24</sup>

However, there were also matters of principle that made Rayer stand out amongst his fellow clergy. In August 1821, following the death of Queen Caroline, King George IV's estranged wife, whose life had been the subject of rumours of affairs and who had been banned from his coronation, it had been intended to hold a service of commemoration in St Peter's. It seems highly likely that Rayer was the officiating Anglican clergyman, who not only refused to preach, but also banned anyone else from doing so 'leaving the Nonconformist chapels alone to serve the [Tiverton] community on that day'.<sup>25</sup>

William and Jane Rayer must have made quite frequent journeys from Tiverton to London, for many of the lease and rental agreements that were signed in the 1840s and 1850s give Hanover Square as their address. This would also have provided them with the opportunity to introduce their four daughters to London society, where perhaps they would meet suitable young bachelors, though in the event, it would be from local Tiverton and family connections that marriages for two of their children would be arranged. To help them with their extensive parochial duties, and cover any absence from the parish, the Tiverton rectors engaged a succession of young curates to undertake the regular services,

and routine parish activities that were required. One of the curates attached to St Peter's was the Hereford trained Reverend Hanmer Stratford Morgan, who attracted the attention of their eldest daughter Mary: in the spring of 1851, the Reverend William Rayer conducted their wedding in St Peter's. Within six months the happiness created by this event was rapidly turned to sorrow, when he took the funeral service of his beloved wife Jane, shortly after her 58<sup>th</sup> birthday. It would seem that this was not totally unexpected, for her will was written shortly before her death.<sup>26</sup> In 1856, William Rayer paid for a new east window in the chancel of St Peter's, which was dedicated to the memory of his parents and his wife. A small ledger stone, with the initials W.R. and the year 1817, to record the death of his first born, can be seen beneath the window. Two years after the death of his wife, on 22 December 1853, tragedy struck again, when his younger surviving son Henry, who had never married, died suddenly: a tomb to his memory, erected by his father, can be seen in the churchyard of Saint Tathan's church in St Athan. Almost immediately, Rayer offered the living to his son-in-law, who was instituted as rector by Alfred Ollivant, Bishop of Llandaff, in May 1854. The Reverend Hanmer Morgan would remain as their rector for the next 48 years.<sup>27</sup>

The death of his wife does not appear to have changed William Rayer's interest in acquiring property, leasing 4 Lower Grosvenor Place, Eaton Square in London and, on 9 May 1855, buying Lancade Farm, Aberthaw, for £15,300 [£648,500].<sup>28</sup> In July 1857, he agreed with Peter Frederick Bluett to purchase Holcombe Court for £57,000 [£3,335,750]. Together with an estate of over 2,000 acres that included most of the village of Holcombe Rogus, this was a major investment that was temporarily funded by a short-term loan of £30,000, from P.F. Bluett, which was cleared in January 1858. A letter, written in September 1857 by Messrs Parker, Hayes, Barnewell & Twiston of 60 Russell Square, London, to Mr Fred Patch in Tiverton (assumed to be Rayer's Agent), notes that 'Mr Rayer required payment of his mortgage and was assured that a sale of the property [Henblas] will provide the money well before December'.<sup>29</sup> In 1859, further sums were raised for the work on Holcombe Court, by the sale of the Penmark estate.<sup>30</sup> At this time, his son and heir, William Carew Rayer, and his three younger daughters, who were still unmarried, were all living in the Tidcombe family home. His middle daughter Jane, and her youngest sister Helen, had taken on their mother's role of chatelaine, neither would ever marry; but his third daughter, Frances, was being courted by her cousin, William Pycroft Harmar. Through the years the two families had remained close, Rayer's first cousin, Richard Harmar, being appointed as trustee for his wife's marriage settlement in 1816: Richard Harmar was succeeded in that role by his son, William, in 1819.<sup>31</sup> This eminently suitable marriage, between William Harmar's son and Frances Rayer was conducted by her father in St Peter's, Tiverton in 1860.

In twenty-first century terms, it might be thought, having reached the age of 75, that William Rayer would have considered retirement, but despite his wealth, it probably never entered his mind, and he was determined to die in harness.



Although by 1860 he had owned the Court for over two years, his dedication to his parish, and evident attachment to Tidcombe House, combined with the extensive nature of work being undertaken, meant that most of the supervision was undertaken by his son, for whom the property was ultimately intended, and by his architect John Hayward. His proposals, for modernising and restoring this decaying Tudor property, required almost total demolition and reconstruction of the north wing at the back of the house, together with much of the northern sections of the east and west blocks, reinforcement and reslating of the south wing roof structure, and extensive modernisation of the south and west-facing rooms in the front, all to be in a typical Victorian Gothic style. Unfortunately, there is only a ground floor plan of the old north wing, the west wing had been destroyed in 1845, and one written record of the house before it was 'modernised', which includes a fleeting reference to the north wing. Edward Ashworth, in a lecture given in November 1859 to the Exeter Diocesan Society describing his recent visit to Holcombe Court, said that:

one of the chambers on the north side of the court has a rich ceiling, marked into compartments by ribs of old English character, and appropriate bosses, the ribs are partly of wood and part plaster. The kitchen and offices, which are ranged round a court in the rear of the hall have not many marks of antiquity, and some cellars 'steeped in subterranean damp' we did not explore.<sup>32</sup>

The extent of Hayward's reconstruction of the old Tudor manor house, over the succeeding three years, meant that it was only partially habitable: in the 1861 census, it is recorded that caretakers, Mr William Langworthy and his wife Mary, were looking after the building. They remained in residence for another two years, when most of the rebuilding work and renovations to the south wing were completed. In 1861, the census confirms that William Carew Rayer was still living with his father and his two unmarried sisters at the Tidcombe Rectory: he was finally able to move to Holcombe Rogus, with his own household staff, in the autumn of 1863. Three years later some further alterations were undertaken, when the 5 foot model of the Universal Cooker was installed by Garton & King in the new north wing kitchen; this cost £13 [£595] when it was purchased, extremely cheap by modern standards, and it is still there today. Now a showpiece, rather than an operational part of the kitchen, it was featured in a Garton & King website that recorded the 150 year history of the firm.<sup>33</sup>

Hayward was also responsible for the major changes to the garden, creating a sweeping drive in front of the main entrance to the house and 'building a balustraded terraced forecourt and garden introducing a sense of formality, which would have been considered appropriate by the Victorians for a Tudor building'.<sup>34</sup> However, as a nephew and pupil of Charles Barry, Hayward was familiar with historic landscape designs, and for the need to retain the basic structure of the environment that had been evolved over the years.



Figure 2: Holcombe Court (source: Ashworth: 1860).

Though Rayer made changes to the immediate surroundings of the house, with mown lawns, gravel walks and shrubberies:

Hayward's sensitive and conservative work at Holcombe did not have an overwhelming impact on the historic landscape, as the pre-existing Bluett structure (in plan form at least) seems to have been retained,... building historians now expressing difficulty in distinguishing between the original and re-located fabric in the Rayer's improvements.<sup>35</sup>

At the same time the Reverend William Rayer asked Hayward to oversee the restoration of the nave of Holcombe Church, after the arcades had been cleared of plaster; Brooke-Webb noting that no diocesan record exists for this work and it is for consideration that Rayer just told him to 'get on with it'. As 'it was probably during this restoration that the Court Pew was formed, using the carved screen previously located elsewhere in the church that might have incurred strong opposition',<sup>36</sup> this seems to be a likely conclusion. In 1862, Hayward was asked by William Carew Rayer to look at the church again, but apart from a recommendation to replace some of the Ham stone facing, little was required. It is assumed that Holcombe estate staff undertook the work, for the only account to survive is for £14 6s 0d [£650], settled by WC Rayer.<sup>37</sup>

The Reverend William Rayer died at Tidcombe Rectory on 3 December 1866, at the age of 81. He was buried at Chevithorne, in a family vault, where it is recorded 'By his exertions in obtaining subscriptions and by his pecuniary aid this chapel at Chevithorne was built and by him it was endowed'. He had

prudently made provision for all of his children; when probate was granted in the following May, his total assets amounted to less than £16,000 [£730,000]. Holcombe Court had been given to his son, St Athan to his eldest daughter Mary, and for his two unmarried daughters, Jane and Helen, he had acquired a nearby Tiverton property, Bingwell, off Canal Hill, where they set up home and lived together for nearly 50 years. Jane died in 1912, and her sister five years later; they, and their sister Frances Harmar, who had died in 1900, were all buried beside their father in the family vault in Chevithorne. After William Rayer's death, the living of the Tidcombe portion had been acquired by the Reverend George Hadow; when the portions were combined in 1889, he became Rector of Tiverton. As it was no longer required, in 1892 Tidcombe Rectory was placed on the market for £4,600 [£275,500].<sup>38</sup> It was bought by William Rayer's eldest daughter, Mary, though unfortunately she died, aged 69, in the following year, and was never able to return; she was buried at St Athan.

William Carew Rayer was still a bachelor when his father died, but in 1869 he met Charlotte Dashwood, daughter of the late Admiral William Dashwood, who after service in the Royal Navy had retired to live in France. They were married at Holcombe, when he was 49, and she was 17 years his junior. When he made out his will, he knew that his father would have been determined to ensure that a member of his Rayer family inherited his principal property, the Holcombe Court estate. As he was the only surviving son, and he and Charlotte had no children of their own, it was clear that he would have to find his successor from his sister's children and grandchildren. In nominating his nephew, Frances Harmar's son William, as the tenant for life of the estate, providing for his wife Charlotte to remain in residence for as long as she wished, he also stipulated that he, and any other family members, who wished to inherit the Court, should adopt his name. After his death in 1892, Charlotte continued to live there until her death in 1923. She was succeeded by William Harmar, who earlier that year had changed his name to Rayer by Royal Licence, and after his death in 1936, by a distant cousin, the Reverend Morganwg Thomas, who had also changed his name by Royal Licence to Rayer in 1934. Death duties, and the burden of maintaining the property, took their toll, and the Holcombe Court estate was broken up: the Rayer connection with Holcombe Court was finally lost in 1939, when the house with, 201 acres, was sold to Major Charles Fleetwood-Hesketh.

### **Acknowledgements**

The assistance of Bonhams in obtaining a copy of the only known portrait of the Reverend William Rayer is gratefully acknowledged.

### **Notes and references**

1. Knight Frank, brochure for the sale of the property with 99 acres in June 2000.
2. See Ancestry for census and parish records, at [www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk).

3. For this and subsequent sterling conversions The National Archives currency convertor has been used. The convertor, which calculates the equivalent value of sterling from 1270 to the present day, can be found at [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency).
4. Devon Record Office (DRO) 1936/M/FS 11-13.
5. Register of landed property, including tenants and their holdings, and rents, *Oxford English Dictionary*: (OED).
6. Cardiff Library MSS 2.318.
7. DRO 1936/M/FS 11 records this in 1736 as being the property of Robert and Mary Jones of Fonmon Castle, which was inherited by their only son Robert. Their two daughters were never married and were given or inherited separate London properties, Hanover Square becoming Mary's residence.
8. DRO 1936/M/FS 13.
9. Ancestry, Oxford University alumni database 1500-1886.
10. The patronage of an ecclesiastical house or office, the right of presentation to a benefice or living [OED]. The holder of the advowson was entitled to the tithes that could sometimes provide an income of up to 10% of the purchase price.
11. Glamorgan Record Office (GRO) CL/RJ 39/40.
12. William White (1850) *History, Gazetteer and Directory of Devonshire*, Sheffield: Robert Leader.
13. Public Record Office BK/490.
14. Knightshayes Estate Office (KEO) Box 8. The Reverend William Rayer sold it by auction at the Royal Clarence Hotel in Exeter on 15 February 1854, purchased by Ambrose Brewin for £5,000 [£250,000].
15. DRO 1936/M/FS 4.
16. DRO 1936/M/T 127.
17. GRO CL/RJ E/220. Wortham Manor is now owned by the Landmark Trust.
18. William Carew Rayer attended Blundell's School 1829-34, and Henry Rayer 1833-38.
19. Oxford University alumni database 1500-1886. Some records give William Carew Rayer an MA, but this is not included in the Oxford list and may be the degree awarded to his father.
20. GRO CL/RJ C/83.
21. Chevithorne Village Hall Committee 2000, p. 64.
22. Sampson 2004, p. 236, and DRO 2986A/PF1.
23. Sampson, p. 247.
24. Chalk 1905, p. 55.
25. Chalk, pp. 211-2.
26. DRO 1936/M/FW 43.
27. His name is recorded as Hanmer Morgan-Stratford on the parish church board of rectors, but is given as Morgan in Crockford's register.

28. GRO CL/RJ E/82.
29. GRO CL/RJ C/11.
30. DRO 1936/M/E/N 5.
31. DRO 1936/M/FS 14.
32. Ashworth 1860, p. 247.
33. See Garton & King's website at: [www.exeterfoundry.org.uk/stoves/php](http://www.exeterfoundry.org.uk/stoves/php).
34. Nicholas Pearson Associates (NPA) 2005, p. 29.
35. NPA, p. 30.
36. Brooke-Webb 2006, p. 11. This screen was saved by the Reverend Raycr from the Walford Chapel in St Peter's Church, Tiverton; see earlier text and footnote 25.
37. GRO CL/RJ E/149.
38. *Exeter Flying Post*, 20 January 1896.

### **Bibliography**

- Ashworth, E (1860) 'A lecture on "The manor house of Holcombe Court and the church of Holcombe Rogus, Devon" on 25<sup>th</sup> November 1859', in *Transactions of the Exeter Diocesan and Archaeological Society*, vol. 6, pp. 235-49.
- Brooke-Webb, M (2006) *Holcombe Rogus – A Short Parish History from 958 AD*, privately printed.
- Chalk, ESC (1905) *A History of St. Peter's Church, Tiverton*. Tiverton: Gregory & Sons.
- Chevithorne Village Hall Committee (ed.) (2000) *Chevithorne 2000 – Memories of the Village and Community*, privately printed.
- Nicholas Pearson Associates (2005), *Holcombe Court – Landscape Survey and Restoration Plan HOL017*, NPA.
- Sampson, MA (2004) *A History of Tiverton*, Tiverton: Tiverton War Memorial Trust.

Charles Scott-Fox is the eldest son of the eminent archaeologists Sir Cyril Fox, and Lady Aileen Fox. He served in the Royal Navy 1952-85 and for 13 years was a partner in a family business that ran the Hell Bay Hotel in the Isles of Scilly. An author, who focuses on the history of old Devon family houses, he is currently engaged on the history of Holcombe Court and the Bluett family.



## Drapers extraordinary, part 1

Gillian Selley

### Prologue

On 10 January 1870, James Carroll Wilcocks (aged 73) married his mistress, Celia Larcombe (aged 52), and on the same day signed a long and complicated will (including four codicils) in which he left his fortune and properties to Celia in trust for the seven illegitimate children she had borne him. This marriage took place at St David's church one week after the death of his former wife, Hannah, at Budleigh Salterton. The list of properties in several parishes in Exeter, from which the income would have been considerable, comprised the following:

Five properties in St Sidwell; eight properties in St David, including Duryard Park House and two large parcels of land; a house, market garden and brickfield in Heavitree; one house in St John's and another in St Leonards; four warehouses, workshops, four shops and premises, eight dwelling houses and The Golden Ball Inn in St Mary Arches; dwelling house, stores and premises in St Mary Steps; shed and premises in St Paul; two dwelling houses, shop and premises in St Stephen; two dwelling house and premises in St Mary Major; five dwelling houses and premises in St Thomas; no. 1 Colleton Crescent in Holy Trinity; and finally a dwelling house and premises in the parish of Lapford.<sup>1</sup>

Who was this man James Carrall Wilcocks, who described himself as a gentleman in his will, whose private life was at such variance with his early religious persuasions? Had he inherited his estates or acquired them through marriage, or had he obtained them by his own endeavours? In the following pages I will attempt to answer these questions by examining his private and personal life and revealing, too, the successes and failures of the drapery trade in nineteenth-century Exeter.

### The origins of the Wilcocks family of drapers

The Wilcocks family is fairly well documented from the middle of the eighteenth century, but before that, due to the absence of personal records, the early history can only be surmised. A reference in *The Exeter Postmaster* in 1724 records a Humphrey Wilcocks, an upholsterer who took over the business of Mrs Alden, with whom he had been apprenticed, just below the Conduit in Fore Street, selling:

all sorts of upholstery wares, as standing beds, common curtains and valances, harratines [*sic*], Chiney [*sic*] (watered and damask), striped stuffs, printed stuffs, bed-laces of all prices, quilts, blankets, rugs of all sorts (dyed or spotted), bed ticks (made or

unmade), feathers, gilt leather for hanging or chairs, Russia-leather chairs, painted linen for hangings, fine flowered mats of all sorts, speckled or plain mats, coach-glasses, picr-glasses, hanging or dressing glasses, glass sconces, salvers, corner cupboards, close-stools etc.... the goods are fresh and new, just brought from London.<sup>2</sup>

Is it possible to link this Humphrey with James Carrall Wilcocks? Due to records being lost over time, especially of the parish of Pinhoe where it is thought the family may have originated, and to the fact that many of the Wilcocks family members were non-conformists, it has been very difficult to explain how the wealth of the family originated. Was it from the acquisition of land and property, prosperous marriages, or through hard work and business acumen? A William Wilcocks, who was possibly an apprentice in Axminster, married in 1700 in the parish of St Sidwell, where the family remained until the 1750s. William had a son John, born in 1712, who was apprenticed as a serge weaver to William Rumpson and was recorded as a freeman in 1735.<sup>3</sup> He married Thomasine May, the only surviving child of Samuel May, a serge weaver of St Sidwell, in 1730/1; she was 11 years his senior. He must have had permission to marry whilst still an apprentice and under age. John and Thomasine had eight children, including John, who was born in 1733.<sup>4</sup> This John, now living in All Hallows, married Sarah Elizabeth Carrall in 1755 at St Georges, Exeter, and they produced eight children, all of whom were baptised at the Presbyterian Meeting House in Exeter between 1756 and 1774. Their fifth child and third son was James, father of the James Carrall Wilcocks who died in 1874. There is no record of John's apprenticeship as a serge weaver, but he did become a freeman in succession to his father who died in 1786.<sup>5</sup>

In 1765 John Wilcocks, described as a weaver, leased a property from the Dean and Chapter of the Cathedral of Exeter. The property consisted of two shops with one entry between them, a kitchen and low room in the first story, and four chambers on the second story with a malt house in the courtlage and a little garden beyond, all of which was recorded as being in his possession and that of other occupiers. The lease was renewed ten years later when John was recorded as a weaver and shopkeeper, and the leases were regularly renewed until in 1797 when John was described as a linen draper.<sup>6</sup> The demise of the cloth trade in Devon had caused many bankruptcies – between 1728 and 1780 there were 36 bankruptcies of sergemakers, clothiers, weavers, fullers and dyers (10 in Exeter); 66 merchants (41 in Exeter), many of whom would have been involved in the cloth trade; and 32 linen drapers (six in Exeter). Included in these bankruptcies was Humphrey Wilcocks in 1731.<sup>7</sup> Many of the woollen and linen drapers in Exeter at the end of the eighteenth century came from a background of manufacture. At this period and well into the early nineteenth century, linen drapers were also grocers, and many shops included a wide variety of goods apart from the drapery ones.



John, William, James and David, the sons of John and Elizabeth, were all involved in business in Exeter, starting their careers in branches of the drapery trade. In 1791 John (junior), the eldest son, was running a business as a mercer in Fore Street. William and David were linen drapers in Fore Street Hill, and James was in business with his father as a wholesale and retail linen draper in Fore Street. By the turn of the century James had taken over the business from his father, whilst his elder brother, John (junior), was describing himself as a grocer and linen draper.<sup>8</sup> Until 1797 James was recorded as James Wilcocks, but after that date he was always referred to in documents as James Carrall Wilcocks, keeping that nomenclature until his death. The insertion of Carrall in his name was possibly to distinguish him from his nephew James, son of John (junior), who was known James Madgwick Wilcocks, in his rival business.

John (senior) died in 1803 and in his will, dated 21 January 1800, left his dwelling houses in the parish of All Hallows on the Walls to his sons John, William and James after the death of his wife. A property he held in the parish of East Budleigh was left to his son David. All these houses were premises rented out to small shopkeepers as well as being private dwelling houses. The incomes from the properties he owned in the City of Exeter, Heavitree and Alphington were to be given in trust for his wife and daughters. Presumably he had already established his sons in shops in the city, and additionally in his will he left them various investments. The fact that they were able to run businesses and acquire more property implies that John himself must have been a very successful businessman as well as possibly inheriting property and money from his own father. There is no record of the financial state of his wife's family or what property or money she brought to the marriage. A marriage between a John Carrill (*sic*), widower, of all Hallows on the Walls to a widow called Elizabeth Phillips in 1754 shows him to have been a plush weaver. Elizabeth Wilcocks is possibly his daughter – the two families would have been acquainted, sharing a similar occupation and living in the same small parish. John Wilcocks and John Carrill were both master weavers employing men in their workshops and able to earn a good living.

John, the oldest son of John and Elizabeth, married Mary Madgwick in 1777 and had a family of five sons, of whom four survived and established themselves in business. John (the younger) and his brother, Edward, had set up as bankers with a man called Alexander Frazer in the early 1800s, but by 1810, when there was a crisis in the industry, the bank had collapsed and the partners were made bankrupt. They had signed articles of agreement in 1807 as co-partners, with Frazer taking one eighth of the profits, John three-quarters and Edward the remaining eighth. Edward and Frazer did not have sufficient property to pay their respective proportions of the joint debts of over £10,000, though John, having much more capital at his disposal remained solvent.<sup>9</sup> John the younger's sons, James Madgwick and Ebenezer, took over the mercery business from their father in the same year, possibly as a result of

the bankruptcy. One wonders why, with such success in the drapery business they were prepared to risk their money by going into banking. According to Hoskins all the banks established in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century had been founded by men who had made a modest fortune in the wool trade – the majority of whom were non-conformists.<sup>10</sup> The Wilcocks father and son fitted into this description exactly. These early banks were serving their own district and could be set up by anyone who had managed to build up some capital in business.

After this setback Edward joined with his brother James Madgwick Wilcocks in Fore Street where they traded as linen drapers. James Madgwick also had a separate business as a hatter and mercer and it appears that his association with Edward was not wholly satisfactory. Edward retired from the business in 1819 and all the old stock was sold off. Their uncle, David Wilcocks, kept a shop at 126 Fore Street in which he dealt in linen-drapery and grocery goods, a common combination of merchandise, and he, too, retired from business in the same year and settled in his house in Bartholomew Yard. James Madgwick restocked his shop at 104 Fore Street where he advertised himself as a wholesale and retail linen-draper, retaining his other shop in the High Street where he sold his mercery goods and hats, but four years later he decided to sell his stock of linen drapery to his brother Edward, and the name of the business was changed to E Wilcocks & Co. Within two year James Madgwick Wilcocks & Co., linen and woollen drapers, hosiers, silk mercers and lacemen opened a shop in new premises at 83-85 Fore Street (described as seven doors below South Street). In announcing the new business Wilcocks stated that 'no other house has, nor will have, the least connection with this establishment'. Was he worried about being linked with his brother Edward? Or was it the threat of his successful uncle, James Carrall Wilcocks? It is hard to understand all these shifts in associations and partnerships, unless James Madgwick was not wholly confident in Edward's ability to run a business. Anyway two months later he relinquished the business altogether and sold all the stock, which had been purchased by him two or three months previously, to Messrs Colson & Spark, at about half the original price. From the advertisements in the local newspapers the trading in drapery of all kinds appeared to be a very crowded profession in the city of Exeter, so perhaps James Madgwick decided to move his capital and ability elsewhere. Edward followed suit and announced that he would sell off all his stock (about £20,000 worth) cheaply, and retire from business. He was unwisely persuaded to stay on and offered his brother's old unsold stock, together with a large assortment of furs, at cost price to his customers. His ideas were again larger than his bank balance and he bought the shop at 228 High Street, at the same time holding a grand sale at his own shop at 104 Fore Street, before moving to the new premises. He renamed his new business, which stood at the corner of Gandy Street, the Exeter General Furnishing Warehouse, and stocked it with carpets and a variety of drapery goods, which he had brought back from London. In 1829 he took on a partner called Thomas Varty.

changing the name of the business to Wilcocks & Varty, and announced that the changes in the firm would make it the Emporium of the West of England. The following year the partnership was dissolved and Edward was once more declared bankrupt.<sup>11</sup>

In 1832 James Carrall Wilcocks (1) went into partnership with his nephew, James Madgwick, and John Dinham (a tea dealer) for a 14 year term, and purchased the whole premises of the tea dealers, Messrs Gye and Hughes, at 104 Fore Street. The Wilcocks pair invested £2,250 each into the business and the management of the shop was left to John Dinham.<sup>12</sup> James Carrall died in 1842 but his nephew continued the partnership with Dinham until at least 1846. James Madgwick is recorded as a tea dealer (aged 60) in the census of 1841. By 1851 he was living with his second wife, 34 years his junior, and appears to have retired from all business. Of the four sons of John Wilcocks the younger, Ebenezer lived the life of a gentleman of leisure at Rose Villa House in Alphington until his death in 1852. James Madgwick remained in his house in Bartholomew Street where he died in 1872. John lived as a gentleman at Spurburn House in Magdalen Road, and Edward had disappeared from Exeter having married into the ancient Treffry family of Cornwall.

### **Wilcocks & Co. Linen Drapers**

The most successful branch of the family in the linen trade was that headed by James Carrall Wilcocks (fig. 1), the third son of John senior. It is strange that his mother's maiden name, Carrall, was added to James's name since he was not the oldest son, nor does it appear on his baptismal record. Because the first son of James Carrall Wilcocks and his descendants were all called James Carrall, it will make it simpler to add the number of seniority in their descent from the first James. So John's son from now onwards will be James Carrall (1) and his son James Carrall (2), (fig. 2), and so on, whenever it is necessary to distinguish them.

In 1791 James worked with his father John as a linen draper, eventually taking over from him and continuing to do so after his father's death in 1803. In 1793 he put a notice in the local newspapers stating that:

it has been industriously reported by an ill-designing and malicious person that James Wilcocks is about to decline the linen drapery business which he carries on two doors above the Guildhall in Fore Street – he begs to inform that the report is intended to injure his business and is without the least foundations, he not having the smallest intention to do so.<sup>13</sup>

One is left wondering whether this rumour was an attack on his business or on him personally.



Figure 1: James Carrall Wilcocks



Figure 2: James Carrall (2)

In 1794 James Carrall (1) married Catherine Pope, the daughter of a respectable wholesale linen draper of Exeter, bringing one assumes a reasonable financial dowry to the marriage.<sup>14</sup> The following year a daughter, Catherine, was born, and in 1797 baptised in the Baptist Church in Exeter; their only son James Carrall (2) was baptised in 1797 in St Mary Arches.

James's premises were described in 1795 as being opposite the Corn Market, the profits from which, together with what his father had left him in his will of 1803, enabled him to buy further properties. In 1805 he purchased two messuages and tenements (or dwelling houses), fronting the High Street in the parish of St Stephens, and announced in the newspapers that he had removed to a spacious shop and ware rooms at 178 Fore Street, seven doors below North Street.<sup>15</sup> These were the premises in which the family business continued for many years with great success. Two years later he was granted a 31-year lease on the property which had been leased to his father by the Dean and Chapter – he assigned the lease of the premises, which included *The Blackamoor's Head* brew house to Joseph Brutton, a maltster, in 1825. He added to his property empire in 1810 by purchasing for £1,230 from the Luke family *The Golden Ball* public house as well as the adjoining premises, 167/8 Fore Street, which was then occupied by the silversmith Moses Mordecai, which gave sole and exclusive use of the passage leading from St Mary

Arches Lane, in the parish of St Mary Arches. His son James Carrall (2) sold 167 Fore Street to Samuel Loram in 1864.<sup>16</sup>

In 1818, James Carrall (1) took his 22-year old son James Carrall, who had probably been apprenticed to his father or to one of his uncles, as a partner into the firm which was now to be called James Carrall Wilcocks & Son, linen drapers, haberdashers, mercers and hosiers. From this date the younger James Carrall was making regular trips to London to buy all types of materials and drapery goods for the business.<sup>17</sup>

All shopkeepers were now beginning to advertise weekly in the local newspapers, some at great length, describing the materials and clothing they had for sale and the prices they were charging. Twice a year, at least, drapers would go to London and order the latest fashions and sell off the old stock cheaply at the end of the winter and summer seasons. The Wilcocks father and son were very aware of how to tempt customers into their shop by adventurous, but sensible, buying, and by having enough capital to buy in bulk and act as wholesale drapers to the smaller establishments.

The death of George IV in 1820 was a cause of rejoicing for the drapers and tailors of Exeter, with many of the loyal inhabitants eager to buy mourning clothes. The firm of James Carrall Wilcocks & Son announced that mourning for the late King could be bought at 178 Fore Street. The newspaper published a full description of all the types of fabrics available including several qualities of black stuff, black bombazine, crepes, sarsnets (*sic*), black broadcloths, Cassimeres and Florentines etc., ending with a note that the 'country shopkeepers, whose stock might be exhausted by the present immense demand, will be replenished on liberal terms'.<sup>18</sup>

A typical advertisement for James Wilcocks and Son in 1823 described the goods bought from London:

rich plain silks of lavender, emerald or French plum @ 2s 6d per yard: figured and plain gros de Naples (every colour) @ 3s to 5s 6d per yard: Norwich crepes @ 1s upwards: Canton crepe shawls of every shade: 300 Waterloo, green scarlet and white Scotch filled and plain scarves and shawls @ 18s to 30s: extra rich outlined shawls (fully equal to India) @ 4 to 5 guineas: the best 5 yard length of India nankeens @ 3s 3d, 3s 6d and 3s 9d per piece: ditto 7 yards @ 4s 6d to 7s 6d: muslin dresses and best Cyprus crepe dresses: handsome ostrich plumes and parasols: the usual approved makers in Colerain linens which need only a trial: carpeting: linen and wool drapery etc for furnishing drapery or personal attire.<sup>19</sup>

From the descriptions of the materials being sold it was obvious that they were buying imported goods from many places and offering the residents of Exeter and its neighbouring parishes a taste of the fashionable life of London.

### **James Carrall Wilcocks (junior) & Co**

On 1 December 1825 James Carrall Wilcocks (1) retired from the business and settled into his house, 31 Southernhay Place, and the partnership with his son was dissolved.<sup>20</sup> By this time a third illegitimate child had been born to an Anna Sesse of Mortonhampstead, the father being James Carrall Wilcocks, linen draper of Exeter. Anna Sesse and her children were indentified in London by 1841, but it has been impossible to establish whether the named father was James Carrall the elder or his son. James may have chosen to retire at this point in order to give the business to his son, as a wedding present, when he married Hannah Good on 21 February 1826 in London. He probably imagined that a young wife and a family would keep him on the straight and narrow, help him gain the respect of fellow traders and encourage him to use his energy in managing the business. The new owner certainly ran the business with great determination and success, and settled down to a loving domestic life with his wife and son James Carrall Wilcocks (3), born in 1827, the only child of the marriage.

The first action taken by James Carrall (2) on 1 December 1825 was to advertise that he would sell off cheaply the newly acquired winter stock which was held by the firm and described as 'valuable and extensive' – it was to be sold at under prime cost to cash buyers only. This was an excellent time to hold a sale, just before Christmas shopping had commenced, and when customers would be eager to see the changes in the business. This sale was probably a forerunner of one which he held two months later, in February 1826, when he announced in the paper that the price of manufactured goods had been materially reduced owing to 'the late panic'. In December 1825 money was reported to be in short supply which caused a run on banks in London, many of which had not provided for so sudden an occurrence. Many failed or suspended payment and 'panic' spread from London to the provinces. Exeter banks managed to continue reasonably untroubled, but there was anxiety in some of those in Plymouth who were obliged also to suspend payments. In 1823 the *Reciprocity of Duties Act* was passed which gave freedom of trading overseas by removing import duties, with a view to stimulating manufacture in Britain. This it did, and there was a period of prosperity until in late 1825 overproduction, causing a drop in prices. Financial speculation in wild schemes ended in disaster, and so 'panic' ensued. The difficulties continued for a few months, with thousands of workers in the silk trade in Spitalfields being thrown out of work – dissatisfaction spreading to the north, machinery was destroyed and troops were called in to keep order.<sup>21</sup> As with other drapers in Exeter, James Carrall (2) was responding to the current situation.

The next decade was a difficult one in the wool and cotton industries and a period when only the shrewd draper was able to manipulate the market and survive. Due to the terrible distress in the cotton towns of Lancashire many mills were put out of business. Linen drapers, who had ready money, travelled up to the north of

England where they bought large quantities of goods very cheaply. These tended to be the basic and everyday goods, so it was necessary also to go to London to buy all the latest fashions from the city and the continent. In 1832 James Carrall (2) announced to the people of Exeter that over the next two weeks large stocks of furs, merinos, rich silk and plushes etc., which he had just purchased in London, would arrive in Exeter by coaches, wagons, steam packets and sailing vessels.<sup>22</sup> His premises were large, both the shop and warehouses, and the advertisements show what a huge stock of materials and ready-made goods he held. He had also expanded the business not only by increasing the variety of drapery goods on offer, but also by stocking, carpeting, paper hangings (wallpaper) and cabinet furniture of all kinds. It is interesting that he names the types of conveyance of his goods from London, giving the impression that an enormous quantity of merchandise had been bought by him.

At this period many drapers in Devon, as in other parts of the country, were becoming too ambitious in business and were finding themselves insolvent and often declared bankrupt. The stock-in-trade of the bankrupt was assigned to another businessman to sell off as soon as possible in order to pay the creditors, as a result of which the larger linen drapers were able to buy up the bankrupt stock cheaply and offer it to their customers at reduced prices (still making a useful profit for themselves). James Carrall (2) had done this in 1828 when he purchased the bankrupt stock of W & J Hayes, Exeter linen drapers, and was to do so several times in the future.

Evidently James Carrall (2) was also in partnership in a drapery in north Devon, since in 1834 he advertised for 'a partner (with £1,000-£1,500 capital) to join one of the best retail trades in the North of Devon, his late partner having died. He stated that trade was bringing in £11,000 per annum at a yearly expense of less than £500'.<sup>23</sup> One month later he was looking for a buyer for the north Devon business with £1,500-£2,000 capital. It has not yet been established where this business was – his name does not appear in any directory. He also had a business in Dawlish, but again it has not yet been identified where, or with whom he was in partnership.

In 1836 the nobility, clergy, gentry and the public were:

most respectably informed of every novel article in general drapery, silk mercery etc which will be produced for their inspection on Monday next by James Carrall Wilcocks (jun) & Co. at 178 Fore Street, when the fancy showroom and the whole piece linen warehouse will be opened.

Again novelty was one of the trademarks of the firm as well as goods appealing to the higher echelons of society. Concessions were made to families who bought by the whole piece Irish, Scotch and Yorkshire linens by selling to them at wholesale prices.<sup>24</sup> The following year the firm advertised not only the usual personal drapery,

but also its extensive stock of cabinet furniture 'the best manufactured in the West of England, with good terms for ready cash'. There was a new upholstery department at 2 Gandy Street and the wide range of carpeting, of all types, was being extended. It is not known who the cabinet-makers were who worked for the firm, but the furniture they produced appears to have been of a high standard. As each year passed a wider variety of quality goods were on offer to the public, and James's shop was becoming the forerunner of the large department store.

The following year James suggested that the trade would benefit from a visit to his warehouses as the company had made 'the most extraordinary purchases *with cash* including cloaks, furs, shawls etc., in consequence of the great pressure on the Commercial World arising from the unsettled state of the American Trade'.<sup>25</sup>

Meanwhile James Carrall Wilcocks (2) had bought the entire bankrupt stock of John Vesey, hatter, hosiery and glover of 169 Fore Street, as well as the stock of an Axminster firm of wholesale manufacturing haberdashers who were retiring from business. This stock he intended selling off to the trade only, at a discount, on Vesey's premises.<sup>26</sup>

### Acknowledgments

The portraits of James Carrall Wilcocks and his son James are reproduced by kind permission of Paul Wilcocks (descendant of James Madgwick Wilcocks).

### Notes and references

1. James Carrall Wilcocks's will (26 pages) was proved at Exeter on 8 September 1875.
2. *Exeter Postmaster*, 23 October 1724, 8 January 1724/5.
3. Rowe and Jackson 1973.
4. DRO (Devon Record Office) 3429a add 99, St Sidwell parish registers.
3. Rowe and Jackson.
6. DRO D7 288/2. 6. 7a, 8, 11, 12.
7. *Brice's Weekly Journal*, 1728-31; *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1732-80.
8. Exeter Pocket Journals 1791 and 1796.
9. DRO 53/6 box 79.
10. Hoskins 1960, p. 91.
11. *Exeter Flying Post (EFP)* 1819-29.
12. Plymouth Record Office (PRO) 324/8 (Wilcocks papers).
13. PRO 324/8, 24 Jan 1793.
14. They were married in St Pancras church. Both James and Catherine were Presbyterians, but their daughter was baptised in the Baptist church whereas James was baptised at St Mary Arches.
15. DRO D7 212/3-5. 7a, 8a & b.
16. DRO D7/283/16a; D7/364/11a & b; D7/6/12b & 14; D7/144/2b-5; D7/212/7a.



17. *EFP*, 28 May 1818.
18. *EFP*, 3 February 1820
19. *EFP*, 8 May 1823
20. *EFP*, 1 December 1825
21. *Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, throughout the first six months of 1826, reported the money troubles in the country and commented in its editorials.
22. *EFP*, 11 October 1832.
23. *EFP*, 20 February and 3 April 1834. The cousin of James Carrall (2) had married a draper, Anthony Copp, in Braunton and his uncle David died in 1832 in his son-in-law's house. It is possible that this was the business in north Devon.
24. *EFP*, 21 April 1836.
25. *EFP*, 12 October 1837. The United States was the largest market outside taking up to a quarter of all British exports - about 80% of Lancashire's raw cotton came from the Southern States at this period.
26. *EFP*, 12 October 1837.

### **Bibliography**

- Hoskins, WG (1960) *Two Thousand Years in Exeter*, Exeter: Townsend.
- Rowe, MM and Jackson, AM (eds.) (1973) *Exeter Freeman 1266-1967*, Exeter: Devon and Cornwall Record Society.

Gillian Selley is an amateur local historian who has lived in Woodbury since 1991. In 1994 she founded the Woodbury Local History Society, which is now thriving and has over 50 members. The same year she attended a two-year Local History Certificate Course run by the University of Exeter. Most of her research is about the parish of Woodbury and she has accumulated a great deal of information about the properties and estates dating from the fifteenth century; but her particular interest is in the criminal system in relation to Woodbury.



## **Charles, 6<sup>th</sup> Lord Clifford of Chudleigh: the life and times of a recusant Catholic**

**Helen Turnbull**

Charles, 6<sup>th</sup> Lord Clifford, is described as a man who spent his whole life working for his village, his county and his country.<sup>1</sup> That he did so is to his credit, despite the prejudice he experienced as a recusant Catholic. This article attempts to illustrate his life, principally with the use of letters and documents held in the archives at Ugbrooke. Since 1604, Ugbrooke has been the Clifford family seat.

The Clifford family became recusants when Thomas, 1<sup>st</sup> Lord Clifford of Chudleigh, refused to resort to divine worship in a Protestant church on the passing of the Test Act in 1673. By stringent penal laws, recusants were not permitted to practice their religion: they were denied entry into government office or military service, even to attend a Catholic school or college.

Charles was born in London in 1759. He grew up aware of the hostility of the population towards those who professed themselves Catholics. His religious beliefs were to have a major impact on his life. Since Catholics were subject to heavy punishments when sending their children abroad to be educated, the young Charles crossed the channel to study at the English Catholic colleges of Douai, St Omers, Bruges and Liege, frequently under the alias of Blount, his grandmother's maiden name, to avoid detection.

The eighteenth century witnessed a relaxation of the crushing restrictions imposed by the penal laws. Generations of Catholics prior to the Catholic Relief Act of 1778 had felt vulnerable and fearful of sequestration of land. Catholics lived under a certain scrutiny. In a report by Rev. Burrington, Vicar of Chudleigh, dated 1767, all the people living in the mansion at Ugbrooke are listed with age, occupation and length of residency. In addition, Burrington compiled a list of other Catholics resident in the parish, of which most were either employees of Lord Clifford or tenant farmers. It is said that Elizabeth, 1st Lady Clifford, had 'forced some (of the tenants) to turn papists or apostates'.<sup>2</sup>

The leading Catholics such as the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Shrewsbury, Lord Petre and Lord Stourton, had held their land for centuries, and Charles Clifford could trace his antiquity to the Norman Conquest. The Kingsteignton estate had been in the family since 1483, although Ugbrooke was acquired later through marriage. Catholics were subject to a double land tax and consequently only the large land owners were able to withstand these encumbrances and remain wealthy. Bence-Jones suggests that since they were denied a role in politics, the positive effect of which was that they saved large amounts of money which electioneering would have otherwise necessitated.<sup>3</sup>

Following the 1778 Relief Act, Charles' elder brother Hugh immediately entered into an oath which in effect enabled him to inherit and purchase land legally. But life for Catholics was still rather precarious and they faced prejudice and suspicion. The relaxation of the restrictions over land transfer and repeal of the Act of William III, rewarding the conviction of priests, prompted violent opposition which manifested itself in the Gordon Riots of 1780. These were frightening times. A letter written to Lord Arundell (later to become Charles' father-in-law) in June 1780 describes the scene in London thus:

I think the Wednesday after you left us was the most shocking night I ever beheld... a mob having collected about Clerkenwell Prison, in order as they said, to release the prisoners there.<sup>4</sup>

Religious intolerance did not end there. In fact some members of the Protestant English aristocracy, such as the Dukes of Devonshire, were anti-Papist up to the Second World War.<sup>5</sup>

Catholic aristocratic families intermarried because of their religion. Charles married Eleanor Mary Arundell, daughter of the 8<sup>th</sup> Lord Arundell of Wardour, in 1786. The family were staunch Catholics (although in the reign of Henry VIII, Sir Thomas Arundell was one of the royal commissioners for the suppression of the religious houses and his monetary rewards enabled him to purchase Wardour).<sup>6</sup> Although barred from political life, the Cliffords were well travelled and cultured. They enjoyed a busy social life. Their London visiting book of 1788 contains a long list of names and addresses of friends and acquaintances. Many, but not all, were Catholics. A typical morning shows:

March 24<sup>th</sup> Mr and Mrs Keppel and Miss Keppel called. Lady Betty Mackenzie called. Sir George Howard called.<sup>7</sup>

An equal number of calling cards were dispatched that day. Later in their married life, Lord and Lady Clifford (as they became) entertained royalty. Following a visit to Ugbrooke by the Princess of Wales, a letter reads that 'the Princess was delighted with the beautiful scenery at Ugbrooke'.<sup>8</sup>

On the death of his brother Hugh, Charles succeeded as 6<sup>th</sup> Lord Clifford of Chudleigh. Shortly after taking up residency at Ugbrooke in 1793, he became involved with the security of Devon. News of the French Revolution brought about an uneasy calm with the threat of civil reform in England and invasion by the French, who had declared war on England and Holland in 1793. A meeting was called by Lord Fortescue, the Lord Lieutenant of Devon, and it was decided to enhance the existing militia by volunteers. A county defence committee was formed called the Internal Defence Committee and it was resolved that 'the Rt. Hon. Lord Clifford be Chairman'.<sup>9</sup> For his services, he was presented with a silver vase, and a salver which was engraved with the words: 'This piece of plate was presented to the Rt. Honourable Charles Lord Clifford by the subscribers

towards the internal defence of the County of Devon and City of Exeter in testimony 1802'.<sup>10</sup>

Charles raised the Teignmouth Yeomanry. Since he had been debarred from command in the regular army, initially he acted in the capacity of Superintendent. He was hugely patriotic irrespective of a belief that 'it has been strongly insisted on to his Majesty, that he cannot consistently with the oath he took at his Coronation grant a commission to a Roman Catholic'.<sup>11</sup> However, in 1803, after further relaxation of restrictions, he was made Major of the Teignbridge Hundred Cavalry, 'but not to take Rank in the Army, except during the Time of the said Corps being called out into actual service'.<sup>12</sup>

The uneasy calm of coastal Devon in the year 1794 paled into insignificance in comparison with life in Robespierre's France. The religious orders fleeing from the French forces sought refuge in England, followed by the nuns in the Netherlands who were forced to quit Liege. Lord Clifford put his London House in Bruton Street at their disposal.<sup>13</sup> He also installed the Sion Abbey nuns in Chudleigh.

In 1798, elaborate plans were made by the French Directory to land an army on our shores. Devon and Cornwall were to be the first counties to be subjugated. As tension mounted, Devonians braced themselves in readiness for an invasion. Charles received explicit instructions from Major General Simcoe. Observations on the plan of the parish of Chudleigh reveal:

The two military roads will pass thro' Chudleigh... The other Roads... In summer most of the Roads are tolerably good but in winter and in wet weather they are deep and miry... Chudleigh is bounded on the west by the River Teing... The River itself in summer is fordable in two or three places between Chudleigh bridge and crocombe bridge for the Bullocks and other large cattle but the best informed people of the psh say that there will be some difficulty in getting over sheep. In winter and during great rains the Teing cannot be forded.<sup>14</sup>

Between 1795 and 1831 there were sporadic demonstrations, riots, machine-breakings and arson attempts throughout the country. Unemployment, high food prices, matched with miserably low wages brought widespread disturbances. People became desperate. Notices were placed throughout the Chudleigh/Newton Abbot area calling for people to join 'Captain Swing'. They read:

To have only one peck of corn in a whole weck. Ye who have families come forward, Act like men, no potatoes or butter in the market, the Millers must be made to sell.<sup>15</sup>

In 1795 new machinery had been installed at Bellamarsh Mill near Chudleigh Bridge and this was destroyed by an angry mob. Charles instructed the local cavalry to defuse the situation and the alleged ring leader, Thomas Campion, was ordered to be hanged at Bovey Heathfield.<sup>16</sup>

In 1831 Charles received personal threats of arson. He was now a Justice of the Peace, and as such had a duty to keep the peace. Consequently, he received a number of letters making him aware of the problems in the locality. A typical letter sent in December of that year includes the sentence: 'The boy was asked whether his master had a threshing machine'.<sup>17</sup> Another letter, received from Rev. Burrington, JP, remarks:

I think it my duty to acquaint you that... Lord Ebrington had sent a Company of Soldiers from Exeter to quell a riot (as it is said) at South Molton... and as your Lordship may join with me in thinking that some immediate steps should be taken to swear in some special constables in Chudleigh.<sup>18</sup>

The following year, with threats of arson still persisting, Thomas Rose wrote from Newton Bushel with the description of two persons who had been making inquiries about the farms in the neighbourhood. They had also been seen in Chudleigh and Ilington.

Charles was conscious of the need to protect property but was concerned with the plight of the poor. He corresponded with the local vicar, Rev. Burrington, who in reply stated:

I purchased one hundred bushels of excellent barley. I believe the Generality of the poor in our parish are persuaded that every exertion has been made to supply their needs.<sup>19</sup>

Following in the footsteps of Thomas, 1<sup>st</sup> Lord Clifford, Charles believed strongly in religious toleration. Charles' older brother Hugh, 5<sup>th</sup> Lord Clifford, had been a member of a committee of prominent Catholic laymen who worked together to procure the passage of the 1778 Catholic Relief Act. His involvement was inhibited by ill health and, after his death in 1793, Charles took up the cause. He wrote to like-minded people such as Lord Stourton who were fervent in the belief that the total repeal of the penal laws was in sight. He attended meetings in London and drafted numerous petitions, claims and memorials before procuring the opinion of Mr Charles Butler, KC, the first Catholic to be called to the Bar after the Relief Act of 1791, which entitled Catholics to act as counsellors and attorneys.

The greater freedom established under the 1791 Act, which enabled mass to be celebrated openly and Catholic churches to be built, resulted in the need to construct chapels and to provide funding for resident chaplains. This became the preoccupation of the time for the Catholic peers. In Plymouth, during the war with Napoleon, it was recognised that:

the town contains a Naval and a Military Hospital and it appears, that out of the vast number of sick and wounded Seamen and Soldiers who have been brought unto them three fourths, on an average, are Roman Catholics, who depend on the charity of their brethren for the comfort of spiritual assistance in their last moments.<sup>20</sup>

Consequently, Lord Clifford, George Cary of Tor Abbey and Edward Cary of Follaton consented to act as Trustees for the establishment of a Catholic Chapel at Plymouth. Since Catholics were no longer educated abroad, and Catholic schools could be established, Charles and other leading Catholics concerned themselves in setting up schools and colleges in England.

Catholic emancipation continued to take up much of Charles' time. He canvassed friends like John Pike Jones, Clerk of North Bovey, whose petition to the House of Lords drafted in 1824 read:

The Roman Catholic Peers... the Howards, the Talbots, the Cliffords and the Arundells, names great and honourable in the history of this Country... and their loyalty to their Sovereign has never been doubted. Yet in consequence of being denied their seats in your Rt. Honble House, they exist as a degraded race... Your Petitioner humbly press that your Rt Honble House will immediately institute some measure... and that by all speedy restoration to their seat in your Rt Honble House they may assume that rank and importance which... their loyalty so imperatively demand.<sup>21</sup>

Charles even called on the tenantry at the Grand Audit Day in 1828 held at the Clifford Arms in Chudleigh:

to be personally present, each one at the County Meeting... And to testify to the World at large by your conduct there on that day, that your own practical experience... teaches you to treat with sovereign contempt, the slanderous imputations against religion, Persons and Characters, with which it is attempted at this day, to revive the dying Embers of a baneful intolerance.<sup>22</sup>

The Catholic grandees held Charles in high esteem and recognised the fact that his influence was considerable, not least because he had the ear of his friend the Duke of Wellington. But this was not all, for in a letter from Thomas Weld (later to become Cardinal Weld) he urged Charles to attend a meeting of a Catholic association in 1828 concerned with emancipation, since it was considered:

that your Lordship's presence is of more weight in the Catholic body than that of any other individual in it, long experience and steady virtue having given you an influence which could not be possessed by any of your peers.<sup>23</sup>

The Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 was a great triumph for the many men who had laboured strenuously for its passage. It meant that Catholics could take a seat in both the upper and lower Houses. They could at last hold civil or military offices and this enabled Charles' son Robert to become an officer in the 83<sup>rd</sup> regiment. Charles himself became a Justice of the Peace and he took up his seat in the House of Lords on 28 April 1829, a seat which had remained vacant for more than one hundred and fifty years. In a letter to his son Hugh, he described his welcome on his return from London:

I was surprised by the appearance on Haldon of a large body of horsemen and footmen consisting of my tenants and there in the neighbourhood with the Chudleigh Band all in new uniforms, Blue and red with six young girls in White, ornamented with sashes of laurel.<sup>24</sup>

The crowd numbered in the region of one thousand persons.

Charles was benevolent throughout his life. In 1807 after a massive fire in Chudleigh. Charles:

threw open his house for the sufferers and ordered, on Saturday, several sheep to be dressed and sent to those who could not leave the ruins. Fifty tents were also sent from Exeter as a temporary covering for those who are obliged to lie in the fields'.<sup>25</sup>

He chaired the relief committee and his influence in raising funds for rebuilding was fruitful, receiving money from contacts around the globe. Following this fateful event, he founded the first fire insurance company in the south west.<sup>26</sup>

Newspapers reports reveal that he travelled regularly to his London house where he would attend charity balls and dinners held to raise subscriptions for Catholic institutions such as St Patrick's Charity School of which he was President.<sup>27</sup> He chaired many committees, not solely Catholic ones. He was involved with the Devon and Exeter Hospital, the Lunatic Asylum in St Thomas, Exeter, the Chudleigh Workhouse, the Grammar school in Chudleigh, the establishment of a new Lancastrian School for dissenters in Exeter and even his support in the election of the (Anglican) vicar of the parish of Chudleigh was solicited.

As a recusant, Charles had been unable to take a civil or military position. Consequently, he took a keen interest in the affairs of his property in Devon, Somerset, Warwickshire and Lincolnshire. The income from the estates was not confined to house and farm rents, but included royalties from mills, fisheries and clay pits. His interests were not confined to business. He had other interests. He was a talented artist and a patron of the arts. He sponsored works by Francis Towne, Varley, Prout, Bamfylde, Green and others. He was always deeply concerned with the physical and spiritual wellbeing of his family and also his workforce which he considered to be his extended family.

In 1831 he employed a large number of staff at Ugbrooke. Most of the servants were the offspring of former servants or tenants, but the senior servants were hired on the recommendation of friends and family. The Knights, an old Catholic family from Axminster, supplied the Cliffords with an agent for several generations. Charles had fifteen children. He was particularly keen that they should hold his values. He wrote copious letters to them, sometimes showing his tender side and at others that of an authoritarian father. Whilst staying at Wardour Castle, he wrote to his eight year old son and heir, Hugh, who was attending Stoneyhurst College:



I expect that you study hard in times of study, and play with all your heart in time of play, by these means you will become a learned and a strong man which will one day enable you to serve your country with credit.<sup>25</sup>

Hugh became the 7<sup>th</sup> Baron, two of his brothers became missionaries, and two of his sisters, nuns.

Charles worked tirelessly for the rights of fellow Catholics, for the needy, and for the Volunteers. By the time he took up his seat in the House of Lords, he was an old man. He supported the Reform Bill of 1831 and was entrusted with a petition from the people of Teignmouth on the abolition of slavery. During his lifetime, he had enjoyed boundless energy, but just a month before his death, he wrote a number of letters which appeared to reflect his frailty as his health was failing. With continuing unrest throughout the country, he wrote to Lord Stourton stating with relief that: 'We are all quiet here and I hope I shall escape raising the Yeomanry, at all events I shall wait for my son's arrival'.<sup>26</sup> At the same time, he wrote to his son Hugh saying that he felt it was time to pass on the baton.

On 19 April 1831 Charles, 6<sup>th</sup> Lord, of Chudleigh died. Perhaps the most befitting epitaph was given by his friend, Dr George Oliver, who, in his address at the funeral, said:

No man had less of self in his composition... Surely no one was more interested in the ease and comfort of those around him: no one has left a character of more active Benevolence, or more unsullied Integrity.<sup>26</sup>

## Acknowledgement

I am extremely grateful to Lord Clifford of Chudleigh who has so kindly given me access to papers and allowed me to quote them.

## Notes and references

1. Clifford 1987.
2. G. Oliver 1857, *Collections Illustrating the History of the Catholic Religion, in the Counties of Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Wiltshire*, Dolman, p. 23.
3. Bence-Jones 1992.
4. Ugbrooke Archives.
5. Bailey 2007.
6. Ugbrooke Archives
7. Ugbrooke Archives.
8. Ugbrooke Archives.
9. Ugbrooke Archives.
10. G. Oliver 1831, *Cliffordania (Notes of the History of the Clifford Family)*, T. Howe, p. 63
11. Ugbrooke Archives.

12. Ugbrooke Archives.
13. Ward 1909, p. 126.
14. Ugbrooke Archives.
15. Ugbrooke Archives.
16. *Exeter Flying Post*, 6 August 1795.
17. Ugbrooke Archives
18. Ugbrooke Archives.
19. Ugbrooke Archives.
20. Ugbrooke Archives.
21. Ugbrooke Archives.
22. Ugbrooke Archives.
23. Ugbrooke Archives.
24. Ugbrooke Archives.
25. *Bury and Norwich Post*, 3 June 1807.
26. Commercial Union, not dated, brochure.
27. *The Morning Chronicle* (London), 20 May 1817 and 31 May 1825; *The Bristol Mercury*, 19 April 1819
28. Ugbrooke Archives.
29. Ugbrooke Archives.
30. Oliver 1831, p.4.

### **Bibliography**

- Bailey, C (2007) *Black Diamonds: The Rise and Fall of an English Dynasty*, London: Viking.
- Bence-Jones, M (1992) *The Catholic Families*. London: Constable.
- Clifford, H (1987) *The House of Clifford*, Chichester: Phillimore.
- Ward, B (1909) *Dawn of the Catholic Revival in England 1781-1803*, London: Longmans.

Helen Turnbull is archivist to Lord Clifford of Chudleigh and holds a BA. She has had a number of articles published on social history.

## **The contentious issue of Church Rates: some examples from the county of Devon**

**Michael Weller**

The Compulsory Church Rate Abolition Act (31-32 Vict., c.109) of 1868 finally brought to a close more than three decades of litigation and ill-feeling between dissenters and those of the established Church of England who had attempted to maintain both income for church maintenance and the *status quo*.

The immediate catalyst for agitation on a national level was the refusal of the vestry at St Martin Birmingham to agree on the Church Rate, although this was not the very first such instance. In the fall-out from the eventual passing of the great Reform Act (1832) the Whigs and their radical wing put the reform of the established Church into their election speeches as they campaigned to be elected to the first parliament with the widened electorate.<sup>1</sup> Their speeches called for the end of tithes, of pluralities, and the church rate, as well as that 'old chestnut', repeal of the Corn Laws! Polarisation followed, staunch supporters of the Church of England, including (obviously) the clergy, supported the Tories, whereas dissenters and those who otherwise resented the rate were likely to side with the Whigs.

The Church Rate, nowadays largely forgotten, like other nineteenth-century local taxation, was levied on the occupiers of land (regardless of religious allegiance) and of houses in each parish,<sup>2</sup> and was intended to defray the expenses of carrying on Divine Service, keeping in repair the fabric of the church (saving the chancel, which was the responsibility of the incumbent) and paying any salaries due to church officials. However by the 1830s the growth of non-conformity in the form of Methodism, the Congregationalists, the Baptists and a plethora of other protestant denominations, as well as the recent emancipation of the Roman Catholics, meant that the Church of England was no longer *the* church. It is not surprising therefore that those who did not attend its services (and even some who did) declined to pay this tax, which despite (theoretical) legal backing proved hard to collect and was the cause of much argument when it came to 'making the rate': that being the expression often employed to describe the process of deciding at the Easter Vestry (or other time of year) to raise a rate, be it for annual expenses or for some special purpose.

The abolition of the Church Rate in Ireland in 1833 did much to encourage belief that it would be possible to do the same thing in England.<sup>3</sup> Added incentives to refuse or agitate against the tax came from various bills proposed by the Whig government between 1834 and the spring of 1837. These all attacked the contentious

fact that the fabric of the Church of England was financed by a *national* tax. All of these bills failed. Thus it was that at Tiverton a phenomenal attendance at a vestry meeting at Michaelmas 1836 saw the raising of the Church Rate defeated by 607 votes to 556. Understandably those who were for the rate asked for a 'scrutiny' or recount, but a week later the 'scrutineers had no report to make' and the whole matter was 'adjourned to that day ninemonth [*sic*]',<sup>4</sup> no rate having been raised. A meeting of 'Congregational Dissenters' was held at Exeter on 30 November of the same year which included Independents and Baptists calling for the 'total extinction' of the Church Rate, to which end, 'On the motion of the Reverend J. Anstie' a committee was formed and the dissenting churches of East Devon were 'earnestly requested to prepare petitions to Parliament on the subject of Church Rates'.<sup>5</sup> Likewise at Plymouth, a few weeks later, a public meeting presided over by the mayor and addressed by the ministers of the Howe Street and Norely Street chapels took place.<sup>6</sup> However 'attendance was respectable, but small, there not being above one hundred and fifty persons present' most of whom were dissenters. Two local MPs, Messrs Collier and Hewes, also addressed the meeting and 'perfectly agreed with the sentiments of the petition' in calling for abolition, which the two gentlemen were asked by the meeting to present to the Commons. Such sentiments were not confined to the Diocese of Exeter; for example, at St Thomas in Salisbury there was felt to be a need 'to call the police to keep order at the making of the Rate for the Annual expenses' in 1838.<sup>7</sup>

It is perhaps small wonder that many rate payers should object to the tax in the early decades of the nineteenth century, since many were no longer members of the Church of England with its often dreary and long services, but had turned to Methodism or other nonconformist churches and chapels:<sup>8</sup> and thus saw no reason why they should stump up for the fabric of the Anglican church. The problem countrywide was exacerbated by the high level of the other resented local taxes, the Poor Rates,<sup>9</sup> the Highways Rate and the, gradually from 1836, commuted Tithe payments to the rector.<sup>10</sup> It follows that, especially for those who did not attend the Anglican Church, taxes in the form of Tithe (which could be a considerable sum for larger landowners) and the Church Rate must have been greatly resented.

What was the origin of this offending tax and its standing in law? Unlike the Poor and Highways rates with their Tudor origins and codification, these payments were, it seems, as old as the tithe itself. In a series of correspondence published in *The Edinburgh Review* during 1839 the Reverend William Goode of Trinity College Cambridge, an avid supporter of the established Church, joined the debate stating that:

the payment of church-rates by the people of this country for the support of the fabric of the *body of the church* and the expenses attending divine worship therein, has been

the custom of the land from time immemorial, i.e. from a period previous to the time of Richard I; and is therefore a common law liability.<sup>11</sup>

Nevertheless the Reverend Mr Goode allowed that 'a portion' of the burden of church repair had also fallen upon the tithes, but maintained that there was no evidence that such expenses had ever 'rested upon the tithes' as one Sir John Campbell, an opponent of church rates, had suggested. In further appealing to history to defend the *status quo* Goode stated that parishioners had assisted with church expenses even during the reign of King Canute! He further cited as evidence that Ina, King of the West Saxons, had enforced the payment of church expenses by parishioners in the year 693! As far as the Diocese of Exeter was concerned Goode states that in the Canons of 1287, promulgated under Bishop Peter Quivil, it was clear that the rector paid for the repairs to the chancel and that the parishioners paid for the 'body (navis) of the church'. Another writer the Reverend William Hale MA contended that parishioners in the Diocese of Exeter had *not* paid towards the repair of their churches *during* the year 1222!<sup>12</sup>

However, appeal to medieval history did not concern the majority of churchmen. In many parts of the countryside there was little change and the rate was easily collected. In the early years of agitation against the rate not all parishes proved reluctant. At Whimble, a little to the east of Exeter, it seems that the churchwardens felt sufficiently confident of obtaining payment of the next rate that they proposed to borrow the sum of £300 'upon the credit of the Church Rates' when the repairs, reseating and the addition of a south aisle were envisaged in 1844.<sup>13</sup> At Ide, on the other side of Exeter, where the church was rebuilt due to being 'in a dangerous state' in 1833, partly by 'a very liberal donation' from the incumbent the Reverend J.H. Earle and from subscriptions, it was also proposed 'to borrow money on the Security of the Rates'.<sup>14</sup> At Bishops Tawton near Barnstaple a charge on the rates had been made to partly finance 'an additional church' at nearby Newport,<sup>15</sup> however, this was completed in 1829 before serious agitation for rate reform began.

At Northlew, a few miles to the north of Okehampton, a rate of 3d in the pound had been agreed for the year 1847/48,<sup>16</sup> but the new rector, Thomas England, heard from the curate in July 1848 that he feared that the 'next Church Rate would be refused by the Vestry'.<sup>17</sup> At a national level too this was by no means unusual; at Shoreditch in the East End of London the rate was 'refused' by the vestry in July 1845,<sup>18</sup> at Northfleet (Kent) the rate was also 'refused' the following April.<sup>19</sup> In 1854 a Church rate of a 2d in the pound was agreed by the Northlew ratepayers, which was clearly a reduction on former years and a threat to the maintenance of the fabric; as the Reverend Thomas England's note penned beneath the minutes of the vestry meeting show:

Memo. The Rector is pained to see the Church rate (which used to be 6d. 5d. 4d. or 3d in the pound) now reduced to the above figure – knowing that it is not nearly sufficient for the repairs pressing, & indeed ordered by the Rural Dean. Dilapidations must therefore increase: as it is hardly sufficient to keep the Roof dry – the walls and windows are worsening, particularly at the West end from the neglect of the orders of the Archdeacon... the walls very unsightly from damp, uncomfortable to the Congregation. Complaints from the villagers are increasing as to the draughts, & chills [*sic*].<sup>20</sup>

He further noted that the lack of a significant rate to make repairs gave rise to 'draft so great as to tempt an increasing number to go to the Chapel with the plea that their comfort is considered' adding that the difficulty in obtaining the rate was due to 'all expecting the approach of abolition [*sic*]'.<sup>21</sup>

But it was not to be so: in the early summer of 1851, a Commons Select Committee had heard evidence on the subject and although a number of bills to abolish Church Rates were introduced into Parliament from 1853 onwards none completed its passage. One bill was lost on the third reading by the Speaker's vote in 1861, a further one defeated in 1864 and another rejected by the Lords in 1867!

At Northlew resentment against the Church rate thus continued unabated, being further reduced by the vestry to 1d in the pound for the year 1855/56 'against all the remonstrances of the Rector, & his warnings of what might inevitably be expected in the dilapidations... & the increasing rot in the floors, & sittings [*sic*]'. Furthermore the reverend gentleman lamented that: 'the Congregation is diminishing from the state of discomfort in which church attendance is carried on'.<sup>22</sup> On 7 July 1860 the Reverend Thomas England continued to bewail the leaching of his congregation to the local dissenters, both Bible Christians and Methodists. Again referring to the Church Rates he commented that 'Political nonconformity is very much on the increase & many farmers & others now systematically absent from Church on the score of the unfortunate controversy as to the support of the fabric'.<sup>23</sup> The level of 1d in the pound was to remain the *status quo* at Northlew up until abolition (1868); where the last rate was raised on 16 December 1867,<sup>24</sup> although the actual payment had been proving hard to collect.<sup>25</sup>

At Bridestowe, near Okehampton, Charles Clarke the rector had written to the Incorporated Church Building Society in 1859, when requesting a grant for restoration work to his rather damp church, remarking that he had thought of trying to raise a rate to augment a large donation, but he sadly noted 'I fear there is little chance of obtaining it'.<sup>26</sup> Eventually, in 1865/66, the frustrated cleric paid for the restoration of the chancel and for the building of a vestry out of his own pocket.<sup>27</sup>

At Monkton, near Honiton, the vestry meeting on the 5 January 1863 seems to have readily agreed to raise a rate of '6d in the pound for to help defray the expenses of rebuilding the Church' which had both been dilapidated and had suffered a fire.

In the case of Monkton, where the nave and chancel were demolished leaving the tower as the only original structure, very low rates (1d in the pound in 1860 and 1 1/2d in the pound in 1861) had been asked for many years past, although this may have been because the incumbent and churchwardens stuck only to the most essential repairs, perhaps already anticipating restoration? However, Creswell had noted of the building that by 1848 there was a hole in the chancel wall which was 'damp & wretched' and that the plaster had fallen away in the porch thereby exposing the beams and laths.<sup>28</sup> Certainly the relationship between church and ratepayers seems to have remained relatively cordial since an albeit minimal rate was raised right up to the repeal of the *compulsory* rate in 1868.<sup>29</sup> Indeed in the summer of 1865 when the ratepayers met to discuss aspects of the rebuilding work, which had clearly run over budget, it appears that they intended to propose an extraordinary Church Rate 'for the payment of the sum due to Mr Hayward', who had written 'stating his intention of taking legal proceedings for the recovery of the amount due to him'. In fact no resolution was made and no rate raised at that time, and it seems that a writ for £42.5.0d was issued the next month. By late October the Exeter based architect John Haywood seemed likely to sue and £30 of the monies owed were paid over.<sup>30</sup> Bovey Tracey parishioners were still forthcoming in agreeing a rate specifically to finance the building of the new north aisle, which was added as part of the *restoration* project.

Although a *voluntary* rate could, and technically *still can*, be collected; the usual effect of the 1868 Act was for churches to move to other kinds of funding. This was in the form of *collections* taken in much the same way as modern congregations would recognise, or, if for the ubiquitous *restoration* project, by making a public appeal by opening a *subscription list*. One imagines there would be no small social pressure to have one's name down for a donation! This practice was adopted by the churchwardens and incumbent at Coryton near Tavistock. In this instance the squire paid for a new north aisle for this small rural church. The rector, the Reverend G Davey Symonds, in addition to opening a subscription, and wanting to restore the *entire* church, resorted to raising funds by holding a bazaar, a village concert and a public appeal; fund-raising methods that modern churches still employ. The Monkton parishioners continued to contribute to a voluntary Church Rate into the twentieth century (1d in pound in 1900). It was only at Easter 1902 that 'It was agreed that for the ensuing year the Church Rate be given up, and instead thereof the Churchwardens ask for Voluntary Subscriptions towards the maintenance of the Church'.<sup>31</sup> The nearby parish of Whimple also continued for a while after abolition to raise a small *voluntary* rate varying between 1d in the pound and 3:4d which the vestry minutes always record as 'unanimously granted'.<sup>32</sup> The last rate was raised on 24 February 1887 after which at the Easter Vestry 'a scheme for raising the money necessary for carrying on the services of the Church (was)... brought forward... and unanimously adopted'.<sup>33</sup> Frustratingly details of the scheme

were not recorded; presumably 'contributions' were to be made by passing the plate at services?

The effect of the 1868 Act was to forever change the way in which churches were financially supported. During the nineteenth century it remained not entirely unusual for incumbents to finance repairs and restorations, *especially* where chancels were concerned, out of their own pockets.<sup>34</sup> This happened at Northlew in 1859 where the rector had fought a long and losing battle to encourage the parishioners to care for their church!<sup>35</sup>

Shortly after the end of the Great War more democracy in church government at a local level in the form of the Parochial Church Councils (1919) began to show itself. This gradually modified the influence of the clergy where decision making was concerned. Already with pressure from the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, stricter control in the issue of faculties, the formation of Diocesan Advisory Committees in each Anglican diocese (in 1913)<sup>36</sup> and pressures from other quarters, the fashion for the Victorian restoration project (which was normally a Gothicising exercise) was already but a memory. With these changes to some extent disappeared the need to raise grand sums of money by the making of a contentious Church Rate. Churches still needed to *maintain* themselves, not however by a rate. By the 1920s the bazaar, the parish concert, the 'bring and buy' sale, passing the plate and the summer fete had all become the norm. It might be said that the flower festival and the classical music concert in churches are the modern replacement for the Church Rate!

### Notes and references

1. In reality relatively few voters were added by the Act and fears of the abolition of the monarchy and of the aristocracy, as well as the possible disestablishment of the Church of England, by a radical government were greatly overstated.
2. It should be noted that this was *not* the owners. It was possible, therefore, that if an individual rented land in more than one parish then that individual would be liable for the Church Rate in every parish in which he or she rented. It also follows that if an owner *owned* land in a number of parishes but only occupied land in *one* of them, then the rate was paid in only the one parish.
3. The Irish Church Temporalities Act 1833 (3-4 Will. IVc. 37).
4. *Exeter Flying Post (EFP)*, 29 September and 6 October 1836.
5. *EFP*, 8 December 1836.
6. *EFP*, 26 January 1837.
7. Lambeth Palace Library, Letter to the Incorporated Church Building Society (ICBS) dated 13 June 1838.
8. Other reasons were no doubt in many cases apostasy or indifference. It is of course well known that the census of attendance of public places of worship



- taken with the census of 1851 showed that only around half of the population attended any kind of church at all, and of those that did a great many did not go to the Anglican church.
9. The *raison d'être* of the Poor Law (Amendment) Act of 1834, which obliged parishes to join together in *unions* with one workhouse, was to try to reduce this tax by theoretically consigning all applicants for parish relief to the workhouse, this being cheaper than paying *outdoor* relief. In practice this did not always happen.
  10. The Tithe Commutation Act 6-7 Will.IV. c.71. The act made it obligatory, where tithes had not already been commuted to a cash payment (rather than being paid in kind), for this to take place. It did not of course banish resentment at having to pay the tithe; this resentment being especially felt by dissenters. The fact was that radicals and others who objected to the Church Rate equally objected to the Poor Rate and the Tithe, but saw no chance of the abolition of those taxes; whereas with the Church Rate there was felt to be a real chance of abolition, especially as it was not at all clear how the collection of Church rates could be enforced by law. It was clear that collection of the Poor rates was enforceable under common law in a secular court. The Church Rate was a matter for an ecclesiastical court however.
  11. Cathedral Library, Exeter, 'A Final Reply to the Answer of the Author of the Articles on Church Rates in the Edinburgh Review in a letter to the Editor'. The Rev. William Goode MA of Trinity College Cambridge. Rector of St Antholin. London. J. Hatchard and Son, London. 1840.
  12. Cathedral Library, Exeter, 'The Antiquity of the Church Rate System', The Rev. William Hale MA, London, 1837.
  13. Devon Record Office (DRO) 1418A/add2/PV1 Whimple vestry Minutes 1843-1972.
  14. DRO 1857A/PV1 Ide Vestry Minutes 1826-1850.
  15. North Devon Record Office 1469A/PW70, Bishops Tawton.
  16. DRO 2895A/PO2 Northlew Vestry Book. The former and by then deceased rector of Northlew had been an absentee, and the services had been being conducted by a curate employed by him. It seems that although this curate was offered the chair at parish meetings held to decide on 'the question of Church rates', himself being neither rector nor being a landowner, that 'he could not lead or exercise sufficient influence', and thus 'it became increasingly disagreeable' (and no doubt frustrating) 'for the curate to attend'.
  17. DRO 2895A/PS1 Northlew Vestry Book. This appears to show that non-payment was not just some resentment at paying for the maintenance of the fabric of the parish church. A minute of 27 September 1850 referring to non-

attendance of ratepayers at a meeting where the building of a new road bridge was to be discussed, states: 'the reason for the adjournment is that the farmers complain that the Times is so bad that they Cannot Raise the Money for Doing the above job [*sic*]'. It should be noted that the Northlew Vestry Books were used as the rector's diary as well as for their correct purpose.

18. *The Times*, 4 July 1845.
19. *The Times*, 1845 and 1846.
20. England 14 July 1854.
21. England, 6 July 1854
22. England, Lady Day 1855.
23. England, 6 July 1860.
24. England, 16 December 1867.
25. The rector's comments must be relied upon for this since little in the way of statistics for rates actually collected (rather than the vestry actually just agreeing to a rate) survive for the post 1836 period.
26. Lambeth Palace Library, ICBS 5459, 8 June 1859.
27. ICBS, 8 June 1859; the reseating and other work on the nave were financed by a large donation, subscriptions and an I.C.B.S. grant.
28. Westcountry Studies Library, Beatrice Creswell, parish notes.
29. However, when an extraordinary Church Rate was proposed on 17 August 1865 to pay overdue monies to the Exeter Architect Mr Hayward, who had worked on the rebuilding of the church and who was threatening to sue the incumbent and Churchwardens, the vestrymen could not reach a decision.
30. John Haywood (1808-1891) worked on restoration and 'new builds' at around forty churches, chiefly in Devon and Cornwall, but also in the Channel Islands and the Midlands.
31. DRO 2892/A add 3/ PW2, Monkton Vestry Minutes.
32. Whimple Vestry Minutes.
33. It seems that Church Rates were in the majority of parishes in these later years raised *retrospectively* to cover monies already paid out.
34. Generally speaking the Ecclesiastical Commissioners were actually responsible for the structure of the chancel, although, from a structural standpoint, they were in theory at least the responsibility of the Commissioners.
35. Weller 2003, pp. 14-16.
36. The Society was formed by William Morris and others of the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood in 1877, and its pressure contributed to the formation of the Diocesan Advisory Committees.

### **Bibliography**

- Chadwick, O (1987) *The Victorian Church, Part One, 1829-1859*, London: SCM Press Ltd.
- Flindall, RP (ed.) (1972) *The Church of England 1815-1948: A Documentary History*, London: SPCK.
- Weller, M (2003) 'The Gothic Revival in Devon', *The Devon Historian*, vol. 67, pp. 14-6.

Originally from Kent, Michael Weller is a retired teacher of history and religion: his articles, in addition to those in *The Devon Historian*, have appeared in *Family Tree Magazine*, *The Regional Historian* and *Bygone Kent*. His first book, *Devon Epitaphs*, was published in 2010, and a second on the subject of accidental death in nineteenth-century Cornwall is expected in early 2012.



## **John Whiddon, Master Gunner**

**Lou Whiddon**

Plymouth holds a unique place in the maritime history of England. Its mention arouses memories of many intrepid Devon naval heroes. Men like Francis Drake, Richard Grenville and Walter Raleigh sailed from Plymouth on their well-known and not so well-known voyages. Charles Kingsley, the nineteenth-century writer, dubbed these men 'old sea-heroes'.<sup>1</sup> The stories of courageous Devon mariners did not end with the close of the Elizabethan age. Their great tradition was continued by later generations of seamen who exhibited the same strong will and independent spirit. The story of John Whiddon, of Plymouth, typifies this tradition.

Plymouth was the port of embarkation for much of the commerce with the American colonies and home to a large part of the fleet that fished the North Atlantic. Much of the fishing centered around Monhegan Island, off the Maine coast. Among the leading merchants of Plymouth was Abraham Jennings. He owned a plantation on Monhegan Island and used it as a base for trading and fishing for his ships.<sup>2</sup> Jennings had interest in the New World as early as 1610 when he was among the patentees, named by King James, for the founding of a colony on Newfoundland.<sup>3</sup> In 1622 he was invited to join the council providing governance for New England.<sup>4</sup>

Plymouth also served as a base for many English privateers. Abraham Jennings was a privateer as well as a merchant. He often found it more profitable to send his ships out on privateering missions in lieu of legitimate commerce. When his vessels were engaged in privateering they would forego normal mercantile activities. Jennings received a letter of marque, from Charles I, giving official sanction to his privateering voyages.<sup>5</sup> No doubt these voyages allowed John Whiddon to hone his skills as a cannoneer.

The seventeenth century was a time of widespread pirate/privateering activity. Many nations were involved in these activities. But, the most dreaded of all, were the Muslim corsairs from North Africa. Barbary Pirates operated from bases in North Africa, from before the time of the crusades in the eleventh century. These Muslim pirates continued to raid and demand tribute until early in the nineteenth century, when their atrocities were finally brought to an end by combined action of European and American navies. The range of these cruel predators extended from the Mediterranean into the Atlantic, as far as Iceland. They captured ships at sea and raided European coastal areas to kidnap the inhabitants. Those captured would either be ransomed or sold in North African slave markets. During their centuries long

reign of terror, the Barbary pirates seized thousands of English, Spanish and French ships and took more than a million Europeans as slaves. A ship dared not leave port without the ability to defend itself.

Among the problems encountered by Charles I, when he assumed the throne of England in 1625, were these pirates. He was confronted by merchants, mariners and the inhabitants of coastal areas because so many Englishmen were being taken captive by the Barbary pirates. Ship owners were angry at Charles for his failure to put sufficient resources toward combating the Muslim corsairs. Residents of coastal areas lived in constant fear of pirate raids that abducted them into slavery. Between Charles' reluctance to act and governmental corruption, little was done to ensure the pirates were held in check and shipping and coastal areas were secure. In 1640, thousands of English slaves were being held in North Africa. King Charles I was extremely unpopular along the English coast and his failure to adequately address this problem was an underlying factor leading to the English Civil War in 1642, and ultimately his downfall.

A story of enormous courage and skill was chronicled by John Taylor. Taylor was called the 'water poet' because he spent much of his life as a waterman, ferrying passengers across the Thames River in London. He was also a prolific author, publishing more than 150 books and pamphlets. In this story he describes an encounter of the ship *Elizabeth* of Plymouth, owned by Abraham Jennings, with three 'Turkish' ships. His story of this sea battle, with Barbary pirates, is entitled *A Valorous and Perillous Sea-fight*. This is the story of John Whiddon, master gunner.

As master gunner, Whiddon was responsible for the readiness and operation of the ship's guns and ammunition. A master gunner, through experience and training, was able to overcome the inherent inaccuracies of his guns. Standardization was not part of seventeenth-century gun manufacturing; no two canons or canon balls were identical. Because the balls fitted loosely in the barrel they did not issue from the center of the barrel. Canons were without sights and the charging characteristic of gunpowder was unreliable. A proficient gunner had to overcome all these variables to hit his target.

The story recounted by John Taylor takes place in 1640. The ship *Elizabeth* of Plymouth was returning from a 12-month voyage to the American colonies. She was heavily laden with cargo. The *Elizabeth* had made stops in New England for manufactured goods and in Virginia for tobacco.<sup>6</sup> About 2.00 o'clock in the morning of 17 June she was making good speed, with the passengers and crew anxious to return home. Nearing the coast of Cornwall she was suddenly attacked by three pirate ships.

The *Elizabeth*, a ship of 200 tons was set upon by three Barbary pirate vessels, all of equal or greater size. A bloody and cruel fight ensued. The three pirate vessels contained a total of 56 pieces of ordnance and about 500 men. The *Elizabeth* was

armed with only 10 guns and 5 of them were not accessible because crates and other cargo filled her decks. She carried a crew of only 27, along with 3 passengers.

Captain Dove, a man of tremendous courage, led the crew and passengers in the fight of their lives. The passengers bravely joined in the struggle. After battling for a time, the *Elizabeth* was down to only three useable guns. However, John Whiddon, the ship's gunner, was so skillful that great damage was done to the pirate ships and they were held at bay.

The pirates boarded the *Elizabeth* three times, only to be fought off each time. She was set ablaze, her round house was burned and her main sail was consumed in flames. Her rigging was cut down and no longer usable.

Captain Dove lead by valorous example. He told those aboard that 'by God's Grace he would not give away his ship and himself to those accursed mis-believers, but that he was resolved with Christian courage to fight it out so long as his life lasted'.<sup>7</sup> He was true to his word for he was killed in the fight along with the first mate, pilot and quartermaster. These men died bravely, during the struggle to save their ship.

John Whiddon became the highest ranking member of the crew and assumed command of the ship. Under his leadership the *Elizabeth*, a ship undermanned and out gunned, continued the fight for eight hours killing many of the enemy. The number of pirates killed is not known, but was surely a great number. John Whiddon was so diligent and expert in his duties, it was reported that no shot was lost or spent in vain. It was said that he had few equals as a cannoneer in all of the west of England.

As the fighting continued, two of the pirates climbed to the top of the mast of the *Elizabeth*. One of the passengers took a musket and killed both of them. Three other pirates were also killed on the decks of the *Elizabeth*. One of the slain pirates was a man of unusually large size. The English cut off his head and showed it to the pirates. Whiddon, now being in command of the ship, hailed the enemy and said 'come aboard you dogs if you dare, and fetch your countryman'.<sup>8</sup> But the pirates perceived the resoluteness of Whiddon and realized victory was not to be obtained over the *Elizabeth*. The head and body of the pirate were then cast off on opposite sides of the ship.

The cargo of the *Elizabeth* included hogs and poultry. During the fight many of the animals were killed by either bullets or splinters shattered from the ship's timbers. The English, knowing of the Muslim abhorrence of swine, held up the hogs and mockingly invited the pirates aboard to dine on pork. The pirates had no stomach for pork or for further fighting and they broke off the assault.

The Englishmen were obviously determined men of unwavering valor. The pirates received sufficient proof of the courage and skill of Whiddon along with the crew and passengers of the *Elizabeth*. They no longer conceived of taking the *Elizabeth* as a prize and they made sail and departed the area. This valorous sea-

fight, against overwhelming odds, resulted in a miraculous triumph for the *Elizabeth*.

The casualties on the *Elizabeth* consisted of the four dead, previously mentioned, and eight wounded. One of the wounded died after they reached Plymouth, but the other seven all recovered fully.

After the pirates departed, the passengers and crew turned to the tasks at hand. All worked hard to ready the ship to reach safe harbor at Plymouth. Some laid out the dead in a manner to respectfully bring them home. Others treated and comforted their wounded mates. The remainder began to mend the riggings and sails which were destroyed during the fight. No one was idle, all were employed in tasks necessary to reach their home port. They sailed into Plymouth harbor the next morning, the 18 of June 1640.

The bodies of the men killed during the fight were brought ashore and honorably buried. Captain Dove's funeral was preached by Aaron Wilson who was Archdeacon of Exeter and Vicar of Plymouth. The first mate's funeral was preached by Master Thomas Bedford, Bachelor of Divinity and Lecturer of Plymouth. Those slain in the sea battle were honoured in death.

John Taylor writing, concerning Whiddon, called him a valiant and well-deserving gunner, whom his pen could not praise enough. The examination of John Whiddon conducted by Robert Gubbcs, Mayor of Plymouth, leaves no doubt of the courage and honour displayed aboard the *Elizabeth*. During his testimony, given on 19 June 1640, Whiddon detailed the events of the encounter with the Barbary pirates. Gubbcs forwarded the examination to London, to the King's Privy Council. It served as evidence of the dangers posed by these pirates to English shipping. The Privy Council could use it to advise Charles I regarding any required action against these pirates. Whiddon's examination (with spelling updated) reads as follows:

The said Examinant saith, that on Wednesday last about two of the clock in the morning, being the 17 of this instant June, he being Gunner of a Ship called the *Elizabeth* of Plymouth, of two hundred tons burden, or thereabouts, having ten pieces of Ordnance aboard her, and coming from Virginia, bound for Plymouth, two leagues off of the Lizard, they met three Turkish Men of War, who weathered and kept the said *Elizabeth* from the shore, and gave her chase, and saith, that the Admiral was a ship of 250 Tons burden or thereabouts: and had 22 pieces of Ordnance aboard her, and the Vice-Admiral was a ship of 300 tons, and 26 pieces of ordnance: and the Rear-Admiral was a ship of 200 tons, and had eight pieces of Ordnance aboard her, and believed they all showed both Dutch and English colors, and had at least 500 men aboard them, who between three and four of the clock in the morning, came up with them and boarded them, and continued fight with them, until eleven or twelve of the clock that day: during which time, the company of each of the said Turkish Men of War, boarded them three times, and fired their round house, killed their Master, Masters-Mate, the Pilot, and Quartermaster, and hurt eight other of their company, fired their mainsail, cut down



all their rigging, and with their great shot did them and their ship a great deal of hurt and damage, and afterwards did leave them: presently after within two leagues, or thereabouts off of the shore, this Examinant, and the Company of the said Elizabeth, discovered eleven small vessels floating on the stream, without sails, or any men in them at all, which this Examinant, the Gunner of the ship, doth very certainly believe were taken by the said Turkish Men of War, and their Company carried away by them, and doth say, that upon the eighteenth of this instant month of June, about four of the clock in the morning, they came into the harbor of Plymouth."

This story of the *Elizabeth's* fight for her life vividly depicts the dangers presented by pirates during the seventeenth century. Every voyage was attended with the possibility of a perilous encounter that would be life or freedom threatening. John Whiddon's skill with shipboard cannons and his determination to never yield his ship exemplified the courageous nature of the mariners of Plymouth. A nature that was essential for survival during this time. The 'old sea-hero', Captain Jacob Whiddon, Sir Walter Raleigh's trusted servant, established a reputation for courage and skill in the sixteenth century and John Whiddon powerfully added to the Whiddon maritime legacy.

#### Notes and references

1. Kingsley 1905, p. 4.
2. American Antiquarian society (AAS) 1922, p. 314.
3. AAS, p. 311.
4. AAS, p. 311.
5. Bruce 1859, p. 291.
6. Virginia State Archives, Survey Report No. 5764, 1640, p. 2.
7. Taylor 1877, *A Valorous and Perillous Sea-fight*, p. 8.
8. Taylor, p. 9.
9. Hamilton 1880, p. 321.

#### Bibliography

- American Antiquarian Society (1922) *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society: New Series Vol. 31*, Worcester: AAS.
- Bruce, J (1859) *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the Reign of Charles I, 1628-1629*, London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longman & Roberts.
- Hamilton, WD (1880) *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the Reign of Charles I, 1640*, London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office.
- Kingsley, C (1905) *At Last, A Christmas in the West Indies*, London: Macmillan & Co.
- Norway, AH (1904) *Highways and Byways in Devon and Cornwall*, London: Macmillan & Co.

Plymouth Institution and Devon and Cornwall Natural History Society (1878) *Annual Reports and Transactions of the Plymouth Institution and Devon and Cornwall Natural History Society: Vol. VI*. Plymouth: William Brendon and Son.

Spencer Society (1877) *Works of John Taylor, The Water Poet, Fourth Collection*. Manchester: Spencer Society.

Worth, RN (1890) *History of Plymouth: From the Earliest Period to the Present*. Plymouth: William Brendon and Son.

Lou Whiddon is a retired Naval Logistics Engineer who worked as a civilian for the United States Navy for thirty nine years. His home in Virginia is only a few miles from where the first Whiddon landed in America in 1635. Lou previously contributed an article on Captain Jacob Whiddon to *The Devon Historian* (vol. 75, 2005) and authored a book on the Whiddon Family in America titled *The Whiddon Heritage*. He is currently researching the Whiddon family of Chagford.

## Book reviews

**Michael Fardell (2010) *John Lethbridge: The Most Successful Treasure Diver of the Eighteenth Century*, London: The Historical Diving Society; 101 pp., including 9 appendices, bibliography, notes and indexes; ISBN 9780954383442. £24.00 + £3.00 p&p.**

Facing the predominantly south westerly winds, and near the entrance to the English and Bristol channels, Devon's coasts are well known for shipwrecks. Many books have examined these shipwrecks and the subsequent sacking of the stricken wreck which supplemented the income of coastal villagers. Less well known has been the attempts of divers, official and unofficial, to salvage the contents of wrecked vessels.

This book describes the work of one man who dived down to wrecks in the eighteenth century in order to recover the valuable items of cargo still on board. John Lethbridge was a respected member of the community of Wolborough, near Newton Abbot, where his name can still be seen on a board in the church porch listing village benefactors. He is thought to have been a cloth merchant, but by 1715 his business was failing and he was finding it hard to support his family of five children. Searching for new employment he set out to promote a method of diving to wrecks with a new 'diving engine'.

Lethbridge believed that he could improve on the diving bell in use at that time by entering a tightly sealed hogshead fitted with a small window and two holes through which he could use his arms. By lying on his stomach he claimed that he could work up to ten fathoms (sixty feet) below the surface for six hours, being brought to the surface to replenish his air supply after three to four minutes working.

For four years he tried to interest backers to finance his invention with limited success, but nevertheless managed to dive on wrecks at Plymouth and southern Ireland. In May 1721 another Devon man, Jacob Rowe, led an expedition which dived on the *Vansittart* which had been wrecked off the Cape Verde Islands containing treasure chests of silver. In the subsequent sharing of the profits Lethbridge's name appears, making it likely that he was one of those who dived on the wreck.

In 1725 Lethbridge worked for the Dutch East India Company (the VOC) recovering 349 silver bars and two cannon from the wreck of the *Slot ter Hoge*, wrecked on the coast of Porto Santo Island in the Canaries. East India ships usually carried a large amount of silver with which to purchase goods which they traded for spices, tea and silks, making the salvage of outward bound vessels especially valuable. Lethbridge was so successful that he was contracted to dive the following year, being well paid and supplied with all the equipment he needed. In 1727 the VOC again contracted him to dive on wrecked vessels in South Africa, although he had less success.

In 1735 he again dived on the *Vansittart* for the English East India Company, recovering over one hundred thousand coins. Encouraged by his success, Lethbridge financed two further expeditions to dive on the same wreck, with smaller, though valuable, results. Out of his profits Lethbridge purchased the manor of Odicknoll, south of Kingkerswell.

For a time he seems to have been content to farm his new property, until in 1743 he was contracted by the VOC to search for the riches on a wreck on the Isles of Scilly but without success. By 1755 Lethbridge was again applying to the East India Company for permission to dive on wrecks in the Cape Verde Islands even though he was now aged 79. It is likely that his son, also John, was the one who carried out the dives. He may not have been as successful as his father, for he was summoned for bankruptcy in 1758.

John Lethbridge (Senior) lived to be 83 before he died in 1759. The parish records of St Mary's, Wolborough, record: 'Buried Mr John Lethbridge, inventor of the famous diving engine, by which he recovered from the bottom of the sea, in different parts of the globe, almost £100,000 for the English and Dutch merchants which had been lost by shipwreck'.

Within twenty years improved air pumps enabled divers to stay in a diving bell for longer, and by the 1830s diving suits with copper helmets had taken over underwater salvage. Nevertheless Lethbridge's engine was a distinct technological improvement in its time, and the Devon man should be applauded for his pioneering invention, persistence in seeking to utilise it, stamina, and courage to persevere despite five near drownings.

Lethbridge's contribution to diving deserves the close study which this book provides, with its descriptions of how each vessel was wrecked, helpful illustrations and lengthy quotations from documents of the time. For anyone interested in the early days of diving it is an essential read, although the only regret is that Lethbridge did not find more treasure from ships wrecked along Devon's coasts.

*Anthony Balfour*

**John Folkes (ed.) (2010) *Dogs, Goats, Bulbs and Bombs: Esther Rowley's Wartime Diaries of Exmouth and Exeter*, Stroud: The History Press; 222 pages, 12 illustrations, softback; ISBN 9780752448831; £14.99.**

It was a stroke of serendipity that led the editor of this volume to notice a collection of four handwritten diaries for sale in a local auction house. The diaries were written by Esther Rowley, who lived in Exmouth for most of the war. The edited extracts published here cover the period from Christmas 1940 until her move to Drewsteignton in April 1945.

Other reviews of this volume have highlighted how well the diarist writes and her talent for almost lyrical prose when describing the natural world, the weather, and the changing seasons. Perhaps, therefore, in a review intended for historians it is worth considering other aspects of the value of the diaries. References to wartime events such as the blitz on Plymouth, longer descriptions giving an eye-witness account of air raids on Exmouth and the effects of the

Exeter blitz, and preparations for the D-Day landings at Exmouth Docks all provide useful contemporaneous source material for those researching the war as experienced by people on the home front.

Here are the accounts of everyday, middle-class life during World War II with all its challenges, but relieved with shopping trips to Exeter, lunches and parties, playing tennis, gardening, and trips to the cinema. But Miss Rowley recounts, too, a middle class life and attitudes that are not entirely in accord with those depicted in propaganda films of the time such as *Mrs Miniver*. Perhaps, then, it is more realistic in its portrayal of the general attitudes of a single, middle-class countrywoman of the period. Her attitude to evacuees, those billeted in her home and more generally, blaming them for contaminating cinemas and other similar offences, referring to them as 'the masses' who can now afford to buy her favourite oatmeal, and abusing 'an old bitch and a bloody female with her' who remonstrated with Rowley and her mother for queue-jumping at the cinema, are all indicative of the views of many of her class at that time.

There is much of value here, both to those interested in the specific location of the narrative and to those who want to know more about the social conditions, attitudes and mores of the time.

John Folkes has undoubtedly done a great service by rescuing the diaries from obscurity (or worse) and bringing them to our attention. The introduction provides a valuable addition to the diaries themselves, giving well considered contextual material and carefully conducted research into the background of the diarist herself. In his introduction, Mr Folkes has also given an account of the criteria he used in editing the material. Whilst one would not wish to quibble with his reasoning when preparing material for a general readership, it is to be hoped that at some time in the future the originals will be deposited in the Devon Record Office where they will be accessible in their unedited form for historians of this crucial period to consult.

*Ann Bond*

**Pugh, B., Spiring, P and Bhanji, S (2010) *Arthur Conan Doyle, Sherlock Holmes and Devon: A Complete Tour Guide and Companion*, London: MX Publishing; 269 pp., 102 illustrations and 30 maps, softback; ISBN 9781904312864; £12.99.**

This is an odd book. It purports to tell you all you need to know if you are thinking of coming to Devon to research and learn about Arthur Conan Doyle, his character Sherlock Holmes, and other connections with the author and the county. However, these connections can be somewhat remote, such as, for example, his visit in 1897 when he came to Devon to meet the family of a woman his brother Innes had formed an attachment to.

In so far as it adds to our picture of Conan Doyle and his research into the background of what became *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, it is useful, but it is rather diluted by the inclusion of what seem to be irrelevancies, like George Newnes' connections with Devon. He was the publisher of *The Strand Magazine*

(which Doyle wrote for), but learning about Newnes' residence in Lynton and Torquay hardly helps the reader.

What I have not yet mentioned is that the book locates every site so accurately that latitude and longitude are given at the head of each section, together with the distance from the previous site, very precise details how to find it and up to date annotated maps. It is simply crammed with facts, illustrations, maps and nineteen pages of 'Selected Bibliography'.

This book is of particular interest where it touches on Conan Doyle's relationships with Dr George Budd and Bertram Fletcher Robinson. A letter Conan Doyle wrote to his mother in 1901 stated, *inter alia*, that in the book he was writing 'Holmes is at his very best, and it is a highly dramatic idea which I owe to Robinson'. This must settle, once and for all, the part played by Robinson in the inspiration for the story.

*Brian Le Messurier*

**Mary R Ravenhill and Margery M Rowe, eds. (2010) *Devon Maps and Map-Makers: Manuscript Maps before 1840: Supplement, Devon and Cornwall Record Society, Extra Series, vol. 3; viii + 32 pp; 3 illustrations; ISBN 9780901853998; £8.00 or free with main volumes (£30.00).***

This slim volume provides an update to the original two-volume cartobibliography of Devon maps published in 2000-2002 (reviewed in *The Devon Historian* October 2003). The latter listed some 1,500 maps to which the present volume adds 49 newly discovered examples, described using the same format. These maps relate to 60 parishes, of which 11 previously lacked any mapping, although for five of these, only small parts appear on a map of the 1817 proposed Bude Canal. The maps are listed by principal parish with cross-references where needed. A simple consecutive numbering is used, rather than the numbering by parish of the original volumes. Unfortunately, therefore, annotating the original volumes with references to the new one is made more difficult. This perhaps reflects more on the main volume than this one, since there only parishes with maps were numbered, rather than a complete sequence being given which would have allowed easier updating. Furthermore, both here and in the previous volumes, occasional cross-references have been overlooked: no parishes from 47, though the maps claim to include Devon as well as Cornish properties: Kenton and Lympstone from 48 (and Budleigh Salterton from 2/50/1).

These are minor criticisms. More important is to welcome this addition to the resources available to Devon's historians, and to mention a few of the new discoveries. No less than four additional maps of Ottery St Mary have come to light, including one with sketches of cheerful anglers. A further section of a large map of Crediton of 1743 has allowed the previously known parts of the map to be re-dated and given context (though two more sections still remain to be found). Most interesting is no. 45, covering a large area of east Devon around Colaton Raleigh and Otterton, relating to the Rolle estate. This is drawn on no

less than 49 sheets, most of which have surprisingly been torn in four. A fuller study of this notable map is awaited.

In all, this is an essential supplement to an essential work for all those interested in Devon's history in the early modern period.

*Nat Alcock*

**Charles Scott-Fox (2009) *Moorstone Barton. A Mediaeval Manor*, published by the author; viii + 56 pp., 45 figs., softback, ISBN 9780954701369; £10.**

Moorstone Barton is in Halberton parish in East Devon, two miles north of Cullompton. It is one of those farms much celebrated by Hoskins, descending through family links alone over many centuries rather than by sale. The core of the current building dates from the fourteenth century, and it was extended over the following century as a substantive residence by the rising Gambon family, and surrounded by a curtain wall. Inherited by the Wyndham family during the Tudor period, whose main residence was elsewhere, it was let to tenant farmers thereafter. This probably explains the limited extent of remodelling or rebuilding and the survival of so much of the medieval fabric. The author of this short but well-illustrated account has made extensive use of the rich archive concerning Moorstone, mostly in the Wyndham papers now held by the Somerset Record Office. The farm also features prominently on a wonderfully detailed early seventeenth century map of the area, reproduced both here and in Mary Ravenhill and Margery Rowe's *Early Devon Maps* (2000). The map accompanied a Chancery Court case regarding rights to a remarkable leat which ran for several miles to bring water to Moorstone's fields. We are fortunate that such a marvellous old Devon house, now Grade I listed, is so well supported by primary documents.

The book has two main parts: a history of the ownership of the property, followed by a description of the house and its outbuildings. The Gambon family's association with Moorstone is documented from the early thirteenth century, but the author also speculates on the post-Conquest period, relying heavily and without caveat on Pole's seventeenth-century history. A chronological survey of descent through generations of Gambons, Sydenhams and Wyndhams follows, accompanied by simplified family trees and subsequent sales from 1915 onwards. This might appeal to those with a specific interest in those genealogies but it is unclear, especially after ownership passed to the Wyndhams, how much this has to do with the history of Moorstone. It would be more instructive to learn more about the tenants who occupied and worked the farm. What little is included on the tenants suggests they were reasonably substantial farmers, occupying positions of parish responsibility, including the long standing Were family. The claim is made that accurate records of the occupants of Moorstone start with the 1841 census, but it would be helpful to have confirmation that the extensive Wyndham archive contains no Moorstone leases or rentals alongside its many deeds.

The description of the building itself is thorough but makes no concessions to those without a strong knowledge of the specialised terminology of vernacular

architecture. It is also quite difficult to follow in places, for while the orientation of the various rooms is generally stated for descriptive purposes, the accompanying plan does not include a compass. The outbuildings are similarly described with little interpretation, and no reference is made to a good survey and explanation of the early nineteenth-century two storey barn published a few years ago by the Devonshire Association (B. Rolf and J. Cann, (2005) '7<sup>th</sup> Report of the Recorders of Buildings: Moorstone Barton, Halberton', *Transactions of the Devonshire Association*, vol. 137, pp. 314-20).

Mr Scott-Fox has clearly undertaken a great deal of research but the resulting work does not give the impression of proceeding far beyond the presentation of the facts and descriptions thus gathered - it could have benefited from a considered and integrated interpretation of the building, its land and the history of its use and evolution. Many old maps are reproduced, but some are on rather a small scale, and a purpose drawn map of Moorstone, its land and its immediate area and neighbours would have been helpful. This book will appeal to those with a collector's interest in works on the Culm Valley or the families associated with this fine old property; however, the surviving fabric and available documentary material might have enabled greater light to be shed on the actual history of Moorstone.

*Greg Finch*

**Liz Shakespeare (2010) *The Turning of the Tide*, Bideford: Letterbox Books; 352 pp., b/w illustrations, softback; ISBN 9780951687925; £9.99.**

What is a volume of historical fiction doing in the review section of a serious historical journal, you may ask. Should historians read historical fiction? Can they read historical fiction without it setting their teeth on edge? And, more dubious still, is it 'proper' for a serious historian to indulge in romantic historical fiction, a story like this, based on the Cinderella plot, with Cinderella incarcerated in a Victorian workhouse, a local doctor as a fairy godfather and a twist in the tail?

*The Turning of the Tide* is set in and around Bideford in the 1870s. Its background is Victorian provincial life, with carefully detailed settings of two of the homes of Selina Burman: Bideford's workhouse on Higher Meddon Street, designed in 1837 by Scott and Moffatt, and Dr Ackland's fashionable house in Bridgeland Street. The story also moves between other settings such as her parents' Clovelly, the new Assembly Rooms visited by Dr Ackland and his wife, the Isolation Hospital he is determined to make a success of, the Earl of Portsmouth's great house at Eggesford and many of the his patients' homes. Its detail about daily routines and choices is convincing and the reader comes to empathise with Selina and with Sophia Ackland, the doctor's wife. Meanwhile the medical changes and challenges of the 1870s provide an absorbing counter-theme running alongside the Cinderella story.

Liz Shakespeare has used archival material such as census entries, birth and death certificates, newspaper extracts and family papers, all of which she inserts into her narrative to support the main lines of her plot and her creation of the



world of north Devon in the 1870s. Her undoubted skill as a writer pulls the reader on from page to page to finish the story of Selina. The detail and the evidence are well presented. Perhaps some of the attitudes described are overly self-conscious for the period. Selina, for example, back in Clovelly, encounters two tourists and reflects that '[i]t was strange that whereas in Bideford she was just an unimportant maid, here she was considered to be part of the attraction'. Because Shakespeare's story is about common human aspirations – to be happy and to do good – those false notes are fortunately rare.

It is a well-developed creation of a vanished world with compelling page-turning qualities. But is it 'history'? Reviewers had much the same problem with the Man Booker prize-winning novel, *Wolf Hall*. I can only say that my own love of history, and that of many others, was first awakened by reading well-crafted stories with powerful plots set in the past. For me, the authors were Kipling and Rosemary Sutcliff. Great imaginations get inside historical frameworks and illuminate motives and meanings. Sometimes their guesses are inspired: Kipling famously imagined a particular Roman legion present on Hadrian's Wall only for later archaeological evidence to reveal they had indeed been stationed there. This power of transporting us to a vanished world is in Liz Shakespeare's story too. Enjoy it as a story – and you will also find that you never think of workhouse life in quite the same way again.

*Julia Neville*

**Ron Wawman (2009) *Never Completely Submerged: The Story of the Squarson of Lew Trenchard as Revealed in The Diary of Sabine Baring-Gould*, Guildford: Grosvenor House; 315 pp., 10 maps plus pedigrees and 43 illustrations, softback; ISBN 9781907211034; £9.99, inc. p&p.**

'I am very much like a buoy. Every wave comes over me, and yet I am never completely submerged. The condition is not a happy one, but there are others that are worse'. That is how Sabine Baring-Gould (hereafter SBG) described his life in his diary entry for 1 April 1881. Ron Wawman has done a great service to local historians by transcribing, annotating and publishing SBG's diary for the years 1880 -1899, and thereby bringing one of the great Victorian gentleman-scholar-clergymen into sharp focus. SBG: squire, parson, hymn-writer, folk song collector, archaologist, inveterate traveller and writer of over 1,000 books and articles presents a problem to the biographer: how to explain to the modern reader the relevance of aspects of life that have been moribund for almost a century. Wawman tackles this by extensive annotation and indices. The actual diary transcription occupies 175 of the 315 pages and, to this reader, the services of an editor would have helped in this area.

SBG's life did not follow the trajectory planned by his domineering father and none of his family attended his wedding to a mill-girl half his age. It was a long, happy and fruitful marriage producing fifteen children. At this distance it is easy to assume that a scion of the Baring family of banking fame and a member of the landed gentry would be financially comfortable, but in the late nineteenth century, with a depression in agriculture, the rents from the farms barely covered

the costs of repairs. In addition SBG had made three vows as a young man – to reconstruct Lew House, to restore St Peter's Church at Lew Trenchard, and to improve the moral and spiritual life of the parishioners. The first of these absorbed vast sums of money and at times SBG was in debt.

Foreign travel eased the financial burden as it was cheaper to live abroad and let Lew House. Novels also helped. Novel writing was purely for an income stream, as the following reveals: 'And here I protest that I write novels with anger and heat because they take me off my proper course of study... I write only because I can not build and restore this house... without supplementing my income from my pen. When I have finished a novel, I regard it with loathing and bitterness against it... If the novel could do any good it would be other, but the novel is now read only to kill time... if I see a young lady reading one of them, I leave the room, the sight irritates me beyond endurance'.

This diary transcription covers only 19 years of SBG's long life, from 1834 to 1924, and becomes very cryptic in the later years but it forms the missing link in our understanding of a complex and multifaceted character. SBG left a vast archive, most of which is housed in Devon Record Office. It will occupy researchers for generations to come: a web search for 'Baring-Gould' produced 30,000 results at this stage.

*Never Completely Submerged* is available from the author and from Amazon, see also [www.nevercompletelysubmerged.co.uk](http://www.nevercompletelysubmerged.co.uk)

*Bob and Jacqueline Patten*

**Nigel Webb (ed.) (undated [2010]) *The Journals of Mr Sugar Face and Mr Gastric Juice*, Oakham: Legini Press; 83 pp., profusely illustrated, softback; ISBN 9780955331114; £9.95.**

As is revealed on the cover of this well-produced book, Mr Sugar Face and Mr Gastric Juice are pseudonyms for one and the same person, George Webb Medley (1826-98), a well-off middle class Victorian. The author is a great-great-grandson of Medley's sister, Amelia ('Minnie'), and the book derives from a personal journal recording Medley's impressions during tours with Minnie of the south coast in 1851 and of Wales a year earlier. Bearing in mind the likely readership of this review, it will concentrate on the places visited in Devon during the 1851 tour.

The account of the rail journey George and Minnie made from Bristol to Exeter highlights immediately the difference between Sugar Face and Gastric Juice. The former had no objection to the train's delayed departure, found the company congenial and tolerated the hustle and bustle on arrival. By contrast, Gastric Juice grumbled incessantly. On the other hand, unlike his modern counterparts, he does not appear to have considered having a trunk dropped on his toe as grounds for litigation. Sugar Face was impressed by Exeter Cathedral, but Gastric Juice found it rather over-rated. Their journey next took George and Minnie to Plymouth where the activities included a tour of Devonport dockyard. There, the items displayed included the capital of an Athenian temple column. Sugar Face thought it a beautiful marble, whereas to Gastric juice it was an ugly

bit of stone. At Totnes, Sugar Face and Gastric Juice were for once in agreement. Both praised the Sunday breakfast at the Seymour Hotel and the service in the parish church. Gastric Juice, however, found much to complain about on a boat trip on the Dart and neither was particularly impressed by Dartmouth ('a hole of a place' according to Gastric Juice, but with some redeeming features in Sugar Face's opinion). The couple then travelled to Torquay, where much time was spent to Gastric Juice's irritation in collecting Madrepore pebbles and arranging for them to be polished for Minnie. At Teignmouth, Medley and his sister witnessed a shipwreck. Sugar Face feared for the crew, but Gastric Juice was disappointed that it was not more spectacular. After reaching Starcross by rail, the pair crossed the Exe to Exmouth. Thence they travelled by road to Sidmouth via Budleigh Salterton and Otterton. Gastric Juice concluded that pigs were the main inhabitants of the last and that the place should be renamed Hogston. It was at Sidmouth that Medley and his sister left Devon, by sea for Lyme Regis. Sugar Face, who clearly had a taste for the picturesque, admired the views en route, including that of the landslip near Seaton. By contrast, Gastric Juice bemoaned the lack of any alternative mode of transport and provided a vivid account of the seasickness he and Minnie experienced during a squall. The account of the tour, which ended in Hampshire, is followed by one of the visit to Wales, in which Medley dispensed with the assistance of Messrs Sugar Face and Gastric Juice. In turn, this is followed by useful brief biographies of George and Amelia. There is also a psychological postscript, refreshingly free of coxsure psychobabble, on George Medley's use of two personae in describing his visit to the south coast.

The journal extracts appear well-chosen and Webb's annotations carry references to both primary and secondary sources. The illustrations accompanying the text are clear and relevant and consist largely of reproductions of engravings collected by Medley. The journal is a gem of Victorian observation and humour. Nigel Webb deserves credit for bringing into the public domain a family possession which throws much light on the attitudes of well-off Victorian Londoners to the people, places and facilities of the West Country.

*Sadru Bhanji*

**Gerry Woodcock (2011) *Tavistock's yesterdays 20*, privately published; 96 pp., 21 illustrations, softback, no ISBN; £4.95, obtainable locally.**

Gerry Woodcock has done it again! For many years he has produced a thoroughly readable edition comprising essays about past events and colourful personalities of Tavistock, and so far he has not run out of subjects. For some time the book would appear in good time for the Christmas market, but he has gradually brought the publication date forward so that those wishing for some gentle holiday reading have another title to select.

A professional historian, the author has presented us with thirteen chapters, of varying length. One of them relates to the association with Devon of the novelist Anthony Trollope, who considered that the county had 'the prettiest scenery in all England'. Carrying out an assignment for the Post Office in 1851 Trollope

rode over most of Devon and as a result wrote *The Three Cocks*, published in 1858. Although not always topographically correct the story conveys some of the atmosphere of that time.

Also of interest is an account of Tavistock's local newspapers from 1895 to the present day, with a fascinating account of their establishment, growth, premises, and editors. Gerry Woodcock has himself made much use of the local newspapers as a resource, which, considering their detail in early days, accounts for authenticity and richness in his writings. Another chapter that will surely generate interest and provide useful reference is a list of members of Tavistock Urban District Council during the 68 years of its existence, from 1898 to 1966. Listed alphabetically, each name is accompanied by a few lines of biographical detail. Obviously the result of sustained research the collection could suggest a useful project that local history societies might care to follow.

*Helen Harris*

### **Books received**

*Other books received for review:*

Barrett, R (2011) *Prawle Point and the Coast between Start Point and Salcombe Bar: An Illustrated History*, National Coastwatch Institution, Prawle Point; 96 pp., including index, over 150 illustrations; ISBN 9780956885401, £5.99.

Gray, T (2010) *Lest Devon Forgets*, Exeter: The Mint Press; 248 pp., illustrated; ISBN 9781903356562, £12.99.

Jones, A (2010) *Victorian North Devon: A Social History*, privately published; 529 pp., no ISBN, order from the author.

Ternstrom, M (2010) *The Lords of Lundy*, privately published; 235 pp., ISBN 0950617792, no price given.

Whitten, EHT (2009) *Bonehill – Evolution of a Dartmoor Hamlet*, Wellington: Ryelands; 128 pp., more than 50 figures and tables; ISBN 9781906551155, £19.99.

## Correspondence from members and other information

The Hon. Editor is pleased to receive correspondence on Devon history from members and non-members. Information relating to previous articles, research projects and other historical material is welcome. Where appropriate, notes, queries and notices received may be referred to the editor of the newsletter, *Devon History News*.

### Queries

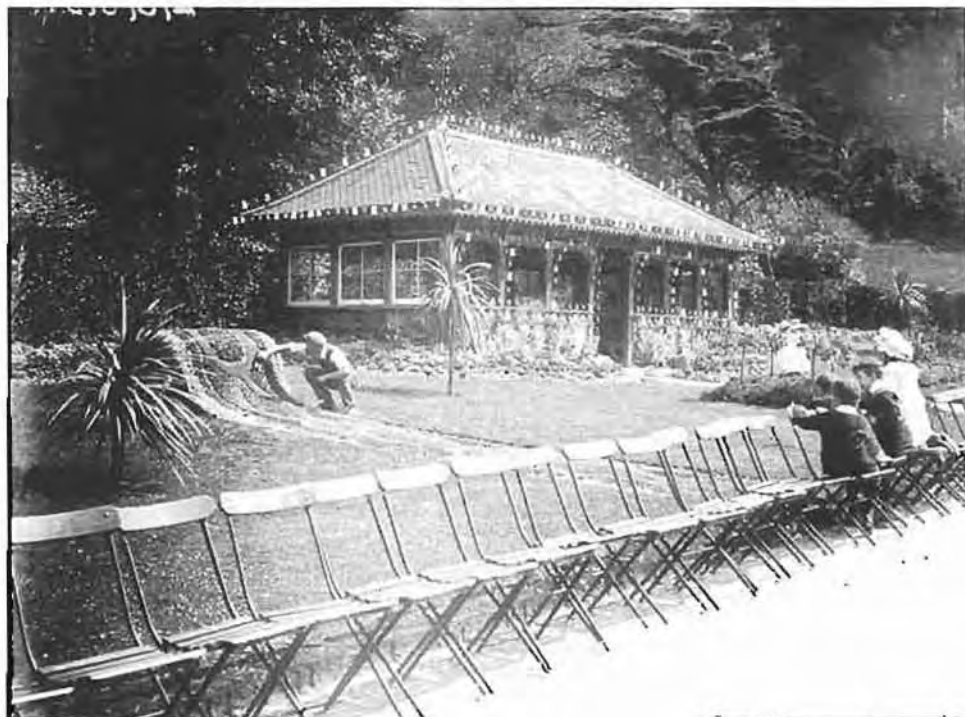
*Cristopher Nash writes:*

In 1935, the Devonshire Association published a major work, Hugh R. Watkin's magisterial 'Dartmouth - Vol. I. - Pre-Reformation' - a chronological transcription in précis form of the voluminous manor and borough records, the ecclesiastical records, and the naval and commercial records of Dartmouth from the earliest extant documents down to 1539. At the head of the Bibliography to his history, 'Dartmouth' (1950, 1982, soon to be reissued), Percy Russell wrote: 'N.B. - Mr. Watkin transcribed most of the borough records with a view to the publication of a second volume, but died in 1939'. Watkin's materials for this second volume, providing the essential documentary links between the medieval and the modern records of Dartmouth, would without doubt have been of extraordinary value for the history of Devon. There is no suggestion that Watkin or his heirs lost them or had them destroyed, but information as to their location appears to have been 'misaid'. An initial survey (1995) of archives in museums in Devon and Cornwall on behalf of the Museums and Galleries Commission\* disclosed that certain papers of Watkin's, written in preparation for other publications, had been deposited at the Torquay (Natural History Society) Museum, where Watkin was active by 1922. But these evidently antedate his work on Dartmouth, which began ca. 1925. Archivists of the Westcountry Local Studies Library, the Devon Record Office, and the Dartmouth Museum have not been able, as of this date, to discover the Watkin archive. If anyone has any knowledge, or any intuition, as to the present whereabouts of Hugh R(obert) Watkin's Dartmouth papers - or of anyone currently carrying on research in this subject area who might - I would be extremely grateful to have your thoughts in the matter. Many thanks in advance for any assistance! (Dr) Cristopher Nash (University of Warwick) [c@windsong.org.uk](mailto:c@windsong.org.uk).

*The Hon. Editor writes:*

The front cover features a cropped version of an unidentified image (P&D49332) from the 'Location, Location, Location' pages of the Westcountry Studies Library. Any information on the content of the image would be

gratefully received by staff of the library, via: [westcountry.library@devon.gov.uk](mailto:westcountry.library@devon.gov.uk). The uncropped image is below, and at: <http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/cultureheritage/libraries/localstudies/whereindevon.htm>.



### **Professor Joyce Youings (1922-2011)**

*Christopher Holdsworth writes:*

Joyce Youings was a Devonian through and through and had the good fortune to have been able to explore the history of the county and region which meant so much to her for most of her adult life. Because she was committed to that exploration she also had the ability to pass on her enthusiasm to undergraduates, and to attract research students to work under her supervision. After education in her birth-place, Barnstaple, she went to King's College in London to read history early in the war. After graduating in 1944 she spent a year studying for the Diploma in Education, and then began research under the direction of Professor C.H. Williams, and soon was awarded a tutorship at Royal Holloway College. In all she spent almost a decade in London, and the friends she made there remained significant for the rest of her life: Harry and Anne Cronne, Norah Carus-Wilson, Joan Thirsk, and David Quinn.

In 1950 she joined the history department in the then University College of the South West, where Professor William Medicott was head of department. There were nine members, some of them part-time, one of whom, Audrey

Woodcock, appointed soon after Joyce, combined work in the college with work as part-time archivist in the cathedral. They became close friends and it was Joyce who introduced Audrey to Reg Erskine, then a junior in the administrative staff, and she became godmother to their daughter. At that time nearly all the college worked in Gandy Street (where the Arts Centre now is), being usually housed in pairs, in corrugated iron huts. Exeter still bore the marks of the blitz, with much of the area near the college lying in ruins.

Medlicott instructed Joyce to become the link person between the department and local groups and individuals who had an interest in history. She threw herself into this role and soon became a leading member of the Devon and Cornwall Record Society, the Devonshire Association, and the Devon and Exeter Institution. She played a crucial part in the foundation and development of the Devon History Society. The list of offices she held in these local bodies reflects how well she had become the link which Medlicott had envisaged for her.

Life within the department was not always easy. When Joyce arrived there were three other women, of whom only one was full-time, and it was made clear to her at departmental meetings that she should fulfil the traditional role of coffee maker. When Frank Barlow became head of department in 1953 that tradition continued, and she found that when she was serving as departmental Martha, the most important business would be discussed.

However, her standing as scholar, and success as teacher and administrator was noticed so that in 1972 she became the first woman professor in the recently independent university. By that time she had also served the university for many years as a warden of two different halls of residence, leaving behind her stories of how she beat the shrubs around those female residences at night to flush out male visitors.

As a historian Joyce became a respected figure for her work on many aspects of Tudor history. She started with some of the effects of the Dissolution of the monasteries on the county, moved on to various sides of the life of Exeter, especially Tucker's Hall, then produced a general study of Sixteenth-Century England (1984), concentrating upon social and economic history, and then moved to Raleigh, editing his letters with Agnes Latham (1985). Not surprisingly she was presented with a Festschrift by colleagues in 1992.

By that time she knew that she was seriously ill, a situation which she faced with great courage. She was certainly a person of great determination, who won the respect and, indeed, affection of many who knew her well, appreciating how considerable her achievements had been and knowing that her published work would be useful for generations to come.

I am most grateful to Dr Todd Gray for allowing me to use material from the Eulogy which he wrote for Joyce's funeral in Thorverton on 12 July.





## *The Devon Historian*

Correspondence for the Hon. Editor and contributions for publication in the Society's journal should be sent to Dr Andrew Jackson, the Hon. Editor, at Bishop Grosseteste University College Lincoln, Lincoln, LN1 3DY, or via [andrew.jackson@bishopg.ac.uk](mailto:andrew.jackson@bishopg.ac.uk).

Books for review should be sent to Dr Mitzi Auchterlonie ([m.m.auchterlonie@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:m.m.auchterlonie@exeter.ac.uk)) at 17 Croft Chase, Exeter, Devon, EX4 1TB, who will invite the services of a reviewer. It is not the policy of the Society to receive unsolicited reviews.

The contents of articles and reviews reflect the views of their authors and not those of the Society.

### **Notes for contributors**

The Hon. Editor welcomes articles to be considered for publication in *The Devon Historian*. Normally, the length should be between 2,000 and 4,000 words (plus endnotes, references and bibliography), although much shorter pieces of suitable substance may also be acceptable. Pieces of more than 4,000 words can be reproduced in separate articles, or printed in full.

It is preferred that articles are word-processed using single line spacing and page margins of 2cm, and submitted electronically in Word format by email or disk, as typed hardcopy, or in clear handwriting. Authors should ensure that the journal's style is adhered to on such matters as the restrained use of capital letters, initial single inverted commas, and the writing of the dates thus: 1 July 2005. Endnote referencing should be used, and a corresponding list of notes and references at the end should give details of primary sources used, and indicate where books and other articles have been quoted, paraphrased or derived from. Bibliographies are required to list all books and journal articles that have been quoted, paraphrased, cited, or in some way have informed the content of the article. The format of references and bibliographies in this volume of the journal can be followed. Illustrative material can be submitted electronically in most formats, or as a good quality print or photocopy. Where relevant it is the responsibility of authors to ensure that copyright holders have granted formal permission for the reproduction of images. For further information on conventions see [www.devonhistorysociety.org.uk](http://www.devonhistorysociety.org.uk).

The final format of articles is at the discretion of the Editor.

### **Back issues**

Current and back issues of *The Devon Historian* are available from Mr Gerald Quinn, 6 Old Paignton Road, Torquay, TQ2 6UY. Members may purchase available back issues at £3 each including postage and, when ordering, should state the issue number(s) or publication date(s) of the journal(s) required. Mr Quinn is always glad to receive copies of earlier numbers of *The Devon Historian* in good condition.

**Articles:**

'Some itinerant preachers have attempted to form a congregation but have not succeeded'	Graham Hendy	3
The establishment of the New Zealand branch of the Acland family	Peter M Acland and Keith G Orrell	17
William Rayer: Rector of Tidcombe, Tiverton philanthropist and saviour of Holcombe Court	Charles Scott-Fox	31
Drapers extraordinary, part 1	Gillian Selley	43
Charles, 6 <sup>th</sup> Lord Clifford of Chudleigh: the life and times of a recusant Catholic	Helen Turnbull	55
The contentious issue of Church Rates: some examples from the county of Devon	Michael Weller	63
John Whiddon, Master Gunner	Lou Whiddon	73

**Reviews** 79

**Correspondence from members and other information** 89

Professor Joyce Youngs (1922-2011) 90

