



DEVON HISTORY NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY

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EDITORIAL

It is difficult to deny that there has been an awful lot of history going on in 2016. A summary list would have to include the new chapter opening in our relationship with the rest of the European continent, a selection of contests for pre-eminence among the Westminster tribes; the movements of people on a truly biblical scale to avoid conflict in their home territories and the seeming increase in violent intrusions into what we hold as a settled and civilised way of life – these issues will occupy the pages of histories yet to be written.

Without denying the shock that these events initially have on us all, they most often play out at a large scale and at a distance, and thus we have no direct personal connection with the process. Just occasionally we are in the right (or the wrong) place at a seminal moment in time as eye witnesses, but even then, it is easy to miss the significance of what's in front of us.

I'm sure everyone reading the News will have had one or two of those moments – the "I Was There" moment. Why not share those moments with other DHS members? a short note about your 'eye-witness' experience to dhsnewsed@gmail.com is all that's required. You can write anonymously as long as you provide a functioning email address.

I've got one of my own – which I've included in the Historical Footnote spot. It's typical of what most of us will have been through at some point in our lives – often when we were children, unaware of its broader historical significance. So let's hear it – it may be that someone else wants to know what you know.

Chris Wakefield

Cover: Dawn in the Valleys of Devon - National Galleries of Washington. (Open access image from the National Gallery of Art).

CHAIRMAN'S WORD



My thanks to Lympstone and to Holsworthy societies for hosting successful Spring and Summer meetings for the DHS. A lot of work goes into organising these, and it is much appreciated. I

was struck at Holsworthy by the similarities between that town and South Molton (where I now live). Both are (still) relatively isolated, distant from the nearest towns – Launceston and Okehampton on the one hand, Tiverton and Barnstaple on the other. This has given to both a large agricultural hinterland. Both have important markets for livestock and, in South Molton's case, a thriving pannier market in its superb, 1863 building erected at the height of 'high farming' when many such towns were investing in new corn exchanges, new town halls and similar examples of civic pride). It would make an interesting and useful project to examine the history of such market towns (rather along the lines of the Early Victorian Schools project); and to do so very much in a comparative historical setting so that we could see – through a series of 'archaeological trenches' as it were – differences in governance (not all market towns were ancient boroughs), the way in which the towns have grown, similarities and differences in street lay-out and in street nomenclature, the growth of shops and trades, the impact of canals and railways

– or the impact of their absence. Perhaps some local societies would think of taking up such a challenge.

As part of my study of the diocese of Exeter (which then included Cornwall) in the first half of the nineteenth century, I have been building up an index of the clergy who were active in the diocese up to mid-century. Thus far, I have a record of over 3000 names. Some are very fleeting and impossible to identify further; many come from established county and/or clerical families. What is particularly striking is the naming of children – Edwards, Johns, Thomases, Williams are everywhere. There was a parallel: lots of people were given a surname or a family name as a Christian name (the front-runner has to be Cloberry Silly Wilcock – you would not wish to be in today's playground with such a name).

The conservatism of naming hits you constantly. And, within my given time-span, I am not aware of fashions emerging (perhaps they did more so with girls). The study of names does not feature large in local history but I suspect that it is a subject well worth pursuing. Many county record societies have published volumes of wills or tax returns covering the period 1400-1550, just when names were solidifying into their familiar shape. There is a much scope for a study of how local nomenclature developed. And then there is the twentieth century with all the vogues we are used to from TV or films...

Andrew Jones

‘Welcome to our new Affiliated Societies

Devon History Society is delighted to welcome societies who've affiliated to DHS since our last DHS News. They are: East Dartmoor History Association, Moretonhampstead Local History Society, Newton Poppleford Local History Group, and Topsham Museum Society. See their entries on the local groups tab of the DHS website for more information about them, http://www.devonhistorysociety.org.uk/2000/01/local-groups-listing_01.html. Farewell, sadly, to Kingswear Historians, who have ceased to meet and, probably, to Carswella, the Kingskerswell History Society, with whom we have been unable to make contact since the death of Gerald Quinn. If anyone does have any contact details for other members of this group, please let the Membership Secretary know.'

If you have a short article of local interest (or would like to write one) please either mail it to dhsnewsd@gmail.com, or contact the DHS liaison officer Julia Neville on j.f.neville@btinternet.com

Not yet a member of DHS?

If you are someone who stops to think about the **times** in which we live and the **places** and **people** around you every day, and then wonder what on earth it all **means... we don't have all the answers. But we do have some of them** - (probably the most interesting ones). So stop wondering and start finding out. Visit our website, <http://www.devonhistorysociety.org.uk/> and click 'Membership'.

A new president for DHS

I am very pleased to tell you that Dr. Mark Brayshay has accepted the Council's invitation to succeed Professor Bruce Coleman as president of the Society. Mark is emeritus professor of human (mainly historical) geography at the university of Plymouth where he has taught for many years. A particular theme running through his many publications is travel and communication in the early modern period. Mark will be able to foster and strengthen the links between DHS (largely Exeter-based) and Plymouth (inevitably on the margins of Devon). We shall have the chance to bid farewell to Bruce and to welcome Mark at the society's AGM on 8 October.

Andrew Jones

A benefit lecture in aid of rebuilding Pinhoe Library

Strumpets, Drinking and Swearing in Puritan Exeter

*Dr Todd Gray, 2pm, 21st September
2016, Exeter Guildhall. Tickets: £10,
available from the Guildhall.*



Appeal for Volunteers

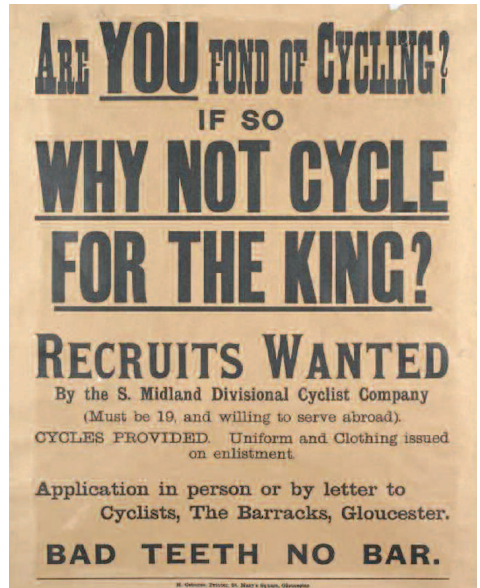
Can you spare some time for Devon History Society?

If an army marches on its stomach (a quotation attributed variously to Galen, Frederick of Prussia and Napoleon Bonaparte), then a voluntary organisation marches on the time of its volunteers.

With this edition of DHS News comes the nomination form for vacancies for Council members (trustees) and officers, to be elected at the Annual General Meeting in October. We hope that, if you are interested in serving in this way, or know someone who is, you will take the necessary steps to complete and send in a nomination. But if you would like to help your society and don't feel you could commit yourself to this level of commitment, we have an alternative suggestion.

As our long-standing members will appreciate, over the past few years the Council has been making strenuous efforts to improve our annual programme and the way in which we can support members in producing Devon history rather than just consuming it. There are more events and more opportunities to contribute to our publications or undertake research. The feedback we receive generally about our changes is positive.

What this means, however, is that overall there is more work to do than was the case a few years ago, but the numbers of members on the Council is fixed so the extra work falls to



Recruitment poster 1918. The DHS is equally unconcerned about the dental health of volunteers. Photo: Imperial War Museum Art.IWM PST 4893.

those who are already committed. To increase our capacity would really help us maintain what we do. We are therefore appealing to all our members, hoping to find some of you who could lend a hand from time to time. There are quite straightforward tasks where offers of assistance would be appreciated – for example, if you are attending an event you could volunteer to come early and check members off on the attendance register. Or you may have other skills you could put at the Society's disposal on an ad hoc basis, for example helping the Secretary with responses to the queries on historical research that we receive.

If you think that you might be able to spare some time to help the Society, then please get in touch in the first instance with **Viv Styles, our Secretary, to make an offer ... secretary@devonhistorysociety.org.uk or telephone 07716 224079**

New Axminster Heritage Centre opens its doors



The new Axminster Heritage Centre has opened to the public for the first time. Christine Channon, Chair of Devon County Council, cut the ribbon and declared the centre open. Christine commented “It is lovely to see the new Centre in the home of the carpet industry, which has put Axminster on the map, together with so many artefacts

Above: Thomas Whitty House, Axminster showing that Axminster was so full of heritage.”

It was over ten years ago that local doctor John Church had the idea to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the making of the first Axminster carpet in a series of events known as ‘The Weavers Tales’. From the success of these events came the idea of a more permanent facility and the concept soon expanded to embrace the whole history of the town.

The obvious site for the new Axminster Heritage Centre was the tired and rather tatty former carpet factory, Thomas Whitty House, left unoccupied for many years. The Grade II

Left: Phase One of the New Centre is opened by Christine Channon, Chair of Devon County Council, accompanied by John Church, Chairman of the Trustees.



listed building, opposite the Minster Church and right in the centre of Axminster's conservation area, was acquired by Axminster Heritage Ltd in 2012 with the help of a grant of £200,000 from Devon County Council. With grants from Making It Local and the Axe Vale Festival, the upper floors were renovated in 2013 to provide a Community Room available for hire by local clubs and five offices for letting to local start-up businesses. This rental income now covers outgoings and helps to ensure the financial sustainability of the whole Centre.

The next stage of the project was to renovate the ground floor so the town museum collection could then be installed. At the rear of Thomas Whitty House is a Drill Hall, which was the headquarters of the Axminster Territorial Battalion of the Devonshire Regiment, this has been temporarily partitioned off to increase the size of the exhibition area. To the side is the original entrance carriageway to the factory which now forms the entrance to the museum. This work was funded by a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and a number of other grants and donations. A lift has also been installed providing disabled access to the first floor community and meeting room which will also be used for visiting exhibitions.

Establishing The Axminster Heritage Centre has immediately safeguarded the museum collection by moving it to more suitable premises with the space needed to properly document, store and care for it. In addition a volunteer recruitment and training programme is now in place to manage and operate the museum and enable its future expansion to develop physically and operationally. The larger exhibition space has also enabled the inclusion of a "taster" of Axminster's carpet making heritage to be incorporated.

Development continues and the next and final phase will involve the Drill Hall, the original Dye House built by Thomas Whitty in 1755 and a courtyard, all at the rear of the main building. These buildings will be renovated, a mezzanine floor added over part of the Drill Hall for storage and conservation work together with an office and new toilet facilities. A small shop and café will be included together with the overall final design and fit out of the complete Heritage Centre. As substantial funds in the region of £900,000 are needed, fundraising continues and an application to The Heritage Lottery Fund has already been made for a grant of £583,000, the result of which should be announced around the end of June. Generous grants and donations have already been received from other sources and funds will continue to be sought to raise the money to ensure that the aims and aspirations for the Axminster Heritage Centre can be fully realised.

The first phase of the renovation of the new Axminster Heritage Centre is open to the public Tuesday to Friday 10am-4pm and Saturday 10am-1pm.

Admission is free and it will remain open until October.

See www.axminsterheritage.org.uk for details.

below: The future development of the centre will focus on interactive displays, a shop and a cafe.





On the Trail of 19th Century Paintings of Devon

Over the last few years I have been doing research on the portrayal of Dartmoor by artists. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries artists sought out scenes around the country that epitomised the ‘picturesque’ and many places on the fringes of Dartmoor fitted these criteria, including Lydford Gorge, Okehampton Castle, Ivybridge and to a lesser extent, Lustleigh Cleave.

Artists with national reputations that came to Devon at the time included William Girtin, Richard Wilson and J.M.W. Turner. Research on this subject has been hugely rewarding but there have been a few frustrating moments. Two of these have concerned paintings of Lustleigh Cleave.

When I was doing some earlier research on the history of tourism in Lustleigh I came across a reference in two books to a painting of Lustleigh Cleave by J.M.W. Turner. After getting nowhere following leads up blind alleys – including a visit to Tate Britain to look at Turner’s sketchbooks – I contacted Sam Smiles, the leading expert on Turner in the South West. He immediately told me that J.M.W. Turner had never painted Lustleigh Cleave. He said ‘try William Turner of Oxford’!

This led me to a reference in the archive of the Royal Watercolour Society in London and the catalogue of an exhibition by the London Society of Painters in Watercolours in 1832 where William Turner of Oxford exhibited a

watercolour entitled, Near Lustleigh Cleave, on the River Teign, Devonshire, Dartmoor in the distance – the River Bovey was sometimes referred to as the West Teign at this date. This painting was sold to Lord Rolle for 4gns. It was at this stage that the trail went cold. Despite all my efforts I couldn't find the painting in any possible location related to Lord Rolle in Devon.

At the time I wondered whether this lithograph published around 1835 could have been made from William Turner's painting.

"Lustleigh Cleave from Trendlebeare Down – Sunset" (courtesy Devon Archives & Local Studies Service)

left: The painting described in the Devon Archive as 'Lustleigh Cleave from Trendlebeare Down – Sunset' (courtesy Devon Archives & Local Studies Service). Below: Dawn in the Valleys of Devon, by William Turner of Oxford, 1832.

However recently another painting has come up as a possible...

Currently entitled Dawn in the Valleys of Devon, this painting by William Turner of Oxford resides in the National Gallery of Washington.

The provenance we have from the gallery that handled the sale is that it is possibly the painting that was sold to Lord Rolle in 1832. When they handled the sale it was known as A View in Devon from Mannerton.

However, since receiving this information I have been trying unsuccessfully to relate the viewpoint to the location where it was painted, or at least where the sketches on which it was based were made. If the painting is the one sold to Lord Rolle in 1832 and the hills in the distance are those of Dartmoor, then it must portray a sunset – not the dawn! So, although it is certainly a painting by William Turner I still have my doubts about



whether it is the one that was exhibited in 1832.

Any information about its location or the possible location of another work by William Turner of Oxford with a similar subject would be welcome.

Whilst we are on the subject of paintings of scenes near Lustleigh, I am also looking for a work by William Traies. Born in Crediton in 1789 Traies moved to Exeter in order to pursue a career as a painter. He spent a lot of time staying with the Rector of Bridford, Palk Carrington. Most of the scenes he chose to paint were on the eastern side of the moor. Among the works he exhibited at the Royal Academy was one entitled "Waterfall on the Teign, near Lustleigh, Devon." I haven't been able to trace an image of this so far so any information about this painting would also be welcome.

Peter F. Mason

Lustleigh Community Archive wins award!

The Lustleigh Community Archive which is managed by the Lustleigh Society, has been given a Sustained Achievement Award by the Community Archives and Heritage Group.

The Community Archives and Heritage Group is a national organisation which aims to support and promote community archives in the UK. This new Award celebrates sustainability and excellence in the community archive and heritage sectors. The Award is for groups that have been working hard, and consistently achieving high standards over at least a ten year period. The Award also aims to inspire others and showcase good practice in community archiving.

Lustleigh Community Archive has been in existence now since the 1970s – the Lustleigh Society will be celebrating its fortieth anniversary in 2018. In the years following the founding of the Society, a lot of material relating to the history of the village was donated to the Society and stored in a room in the Church House. In the mid-1980s the collection relocated to a small room in the Old Vestry until 2006, when a larger room within the same building became available. There followed an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund – and other funding bodies – to completely renovate the room to archival storage standards. The archive re-opened in April 2009 in its present location having been reorganised and re-catalogued.

Lustleigh Community Archive consists of Parish records (baptisms/marriages/deaths), registers and census data; Maps including the 1837 Tithe Map with Schedule of Apportionments; Parish Magazines dating from 1889; Minutes of village organisations; Press-cuttings; Over 3500 photographs and postcards; Paintings, books, oral history recordings and many other documents of historic interest. The Archive continues to collect photographs, press cuttings and other printed material about Lustleigh and to catalogue and conserve this material.

The receipt of this Award is a recognition of the professionalism and hard work that has gone into the running of the Archive by all the volunteers over many years.

Further information from: **Peter F. Mason**, Chairman, The Lustleigh Society

T: 01647 277498

M: 07816 833496

E: peter@moormasons.plus.com

Lustleigh Community Archive is open: Mondays 2pm – 4pm (except Bank holidays) and Thursdays 10am – 12 noon.

ADLH Course experience

I have just clicked on the send button for my final assignment in the Advanced Diploma in Local History on-line from Oxford— a mixture of satisfaction and relief!

I found the course on the net. I was wanting to learn how to better my research skills when collecting data in my research of Christow and the Teign Valley. I experienced some trepidation as I had not entertained formal education for over 40 years but that trepidation was unnecessary as the tutors introduce things slowly so it is possible to keep up.

The Course started in October last year and was entirely on-line. It comprised 2 modules with 9 and 6 units. There were 6 assignments or essays of varying lengths over 9 months. The cost, which could be paid in installments, was £2400. The tutors recommend 20 hours a week study. The course was peopled by all sorts ranging from a retired QC to those who want to make a career of it. This was not threatening in any way as we all learnt from each other. The on-line nature of the course was a bit strange as even with the chat sessions the arm's lengths of the contacts was somewhat impersonal.

Each participant is allotted to a tutor group and 'chat sessions' are arranged at approximately 10 day intervals to allow discussion amongst the group. There is also a group forum in which students can ask the group for advice on how to proceed or to vent frustrations. The tutor is also available confidentially to give added help.

Each unit is divided into sessions in which a particular subject is explained and suggested reading sources are given.

At first the nature of historical evidence was explored followed by the recording of

personal experience in diaries etc. Later the use of statistics was covered. Normally statistics send me to sleep but they are essential in analysing data. The sessions on this were well explained and I now understand much more than I used to. Increasingly Microsoft Excel and Access are being used to explore the meaning of data. Although daunting at first it soon became comprehensible and I will use this in my own research.

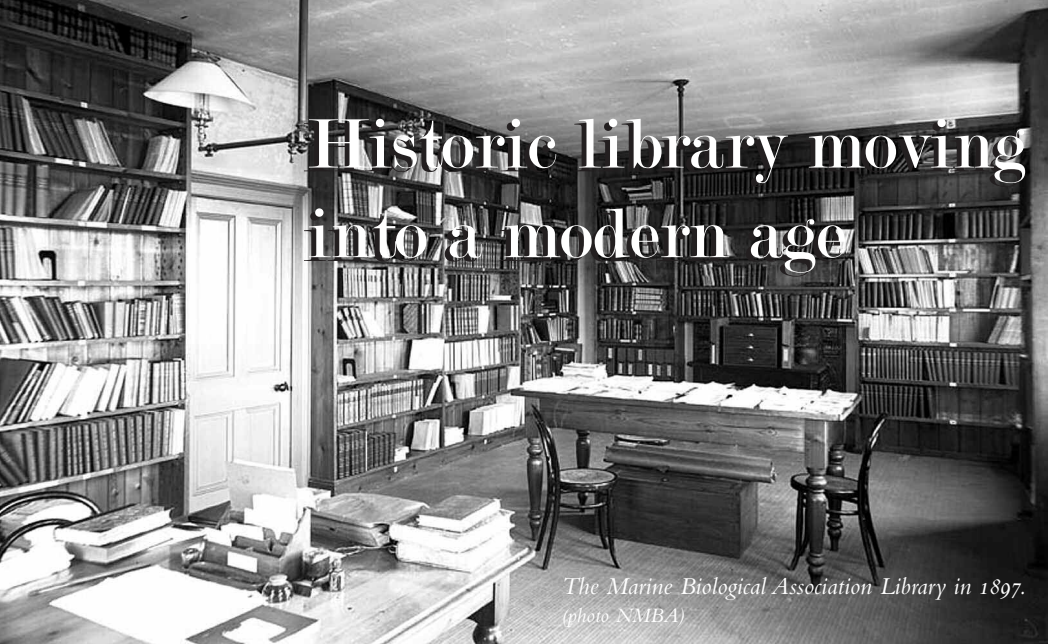
The course was tough which is to be expected if the qualification was to be worthwhile. I would start writing an assignment wondering how I would get anywhere near the word limit but after extensive reading, I had to severely edit it to squeeze it all in. The assignments were marked and returned by the tutor with comments on how to improve presentation. This could lead to frustration as it was often negative but historians always gripe at their colleague's papers so it is something to take on the chin and take on board for next time. Despite this it was a positive experience and I certainly learnt a great deal. I hope this will now improve my research and presentation in future. My next decision is whether to go on to study for a higher qualification or whether to take a year off to consolidate what I learned.

And Assignment 6? I asked the question: 'How did population movement affect the economy of Nineteenth Century Christow?' The short answer was 'a lot' but I will have to wait till late July for the tutor's comments. Meanwhile I'll enjoy the sunshine!

Graham Thompson

Teign Valley History Group

Historic library moving into a modern age



*The Marine Biological Association Library in 1897.
(photo NMBL)*

It has been a monumental few years for the Marine Biological Association (MBA). In 2013 the MBA received a Royal Charter from the Privy Council, in 2015, a blue plaque recognising the Nobel Prize winning research carried out by Hodgkin and Huxley within the building and, most recently, the Association became Guinness World Record holders for the oldest message in a bottle at sea. These achievements, as well as the completion of a large-scale redevelopment in the National Marine Biological Library (NMBL) also located at the Citadel Hill site of the MBA and SAHFOS, were celebrated recently with a VIP event in the library itself.

The MBA's Citadel Hill Laboratory sits proudly on Plymouth Hoe with inspiring views of Plymouth Sound. The building, which opened on 30th June 1888, secured its location thanks to the enthusiasm, funding and offer of land from Plymouth Town Council as well as the proximity of the site to the sea (seawater from the Sound can be pumped directly into aquaria tanks). Unfortunately, however, the spectacular location also came with a price; during the

Second World War the building became an unintended target adjacent to the Royal Citadel military base and suffered severe bomb damage. Fortunately for the library, it was the Director's living quarters that were badly hit rather than the library offering time to move the library stock to a safer location near Tavistock for the remainder of the War and back again once rebuilding had taken place. Amazingly no books were hurt during the war!

The library has been an integral part of the MBA since its founding; it was the place to exchange knowledge via the latest journals, and after putting a plea out to the general public for book donations to kick start the collection, the library became a thriving epicentre of marine research. With the advancement of technology and knowledge, three extensions of the original building were added to house the ever growing collection and the library secured national status in 1996 in recognition of its role as a very specialised national resource. With the continued advancement of technology in to the current digital age, however, the reverse process is

being seen with publishers preferring to issue online only journals making an increasing amount of information available at a researcher's fingertips i.e. at their desks and not in a print library. The library, therefore, expanded their services into the digital sphere ensuring electronic access to this information and at the same time contracted its physical stock. In turn this allowed it be more creative in the use of its internal space as the recent redevelopments at NMBL demonstrate; the new high-tech Wolfson Training Suite, the quiet and cosy Southward Reading Room, display areas and rolling stacks have reinvented the existing space to maximise interaction with visitors and resources available. It is also proudly home to the MBA's Royal Charter and Coat of Arms (aptly depicting a plethora of marine species).

NMBL has one of the best collections of printed marine material in Europe (and surely the best views of any library!). As a reference library, access to NMBL is restricted to MBA members, staff at Citadel Hill and students partaking on their joint MRes course with Plymouth University. Since NMBL's catalogue went online in 2013 there has been an increase in day visitors wishing to access the unique collection of rare books (dating back to 1714), use the collection of expedition reports from around the world or search for references in the archives of prominent early scientists in the field.

The MBA's Historical Collections comprising the archives, object collection and herbarium, are also housed on site and will be going on rotating display within the library. Of particular note is the "Bidder's Bottom Bottles" experiment. G P Bidder was president of the association between 1939-1945 and had a particular interest in ocean currents and the movement of plaice. He released hundreds of glass bottles into the North Sea that would be caught by

fishermen, returned with co-ordinates and illustrate the movement of currents and benthic fish. These were released in 1907 and the finding of a bottle in 2015 on a beach in Germany led the MBA to successfully prove that it is the longest message in a bottle at sea and has been awarded a Guinness World Record!

The MBA and NMBL have a duty to preserve the history of the organisation and the legacy of its achievements. With the 130th anniversary drawing near, we are celebrating being a world leader in the field of marine biology for both research and the provision of facilities and will continue to do so for years to come.

For more information about the National Marine Biological Library, please visit www.nmbl.org or call 01752 633266 to arrange a visit (MBA members only). Membership supports the work of the MBA and all of its facilities, for more information visit www.mba.ac.uk.

Emily Miles

Library Assistant at the National Marine Biological Library



The Marine Biological Laboratory from Smeaton's Tower. Photographed in about 1900. (photo NMBA)

Bringing Killerton Park to life

The chairman has received the following information about a community involvement project at Killerton in east Devon.

A small project team is collecting past and present stories/anecdotes about Killerton for an ongoing project '*Bringing Killerton park to life*'.

Our aim is to look at opportunities for innovative interpretation materials and events to be set in the Park and Gardens at Killerton. We hope to involve all of our tenants, volunteers/staff and local parishes in

Below: Crocuses at Killerton. Photo: Derek Harper [CC BY-SA 2.0] via Wikimedia Commons



generating and developing these new resources. Two drop in sessions have been organised to ask local residents and interested parties 'What do you think is interesting or special about Killerton's parkland and gardens?' The drop in sessions will be an opportunity to share your stories of Killerton past and present.

How can you help?

The project team will work with your ideas to tease out the stories and themes most relevant to visitors and valuable to the local community.

These can be about places, people, events, objects; - we're interested in all things Killerton. We will have books, photos and maps available on the day for reference but any props/objects that accompany your tales will also be very welcome.

The project also aims to restore the lost habitats, historic designs and scheduled monuments of Killerton's parkland landscape and improve accessibility.

With the help of specialists your input to the project will be fashioned into new ways to experience the outdoors at Killerton.

We very much hope you can be part of this exciting journey

Bringing Killerton park to life Project Team

Drop in sessions

**Monday 1st August or Wednesday
10th August. Between 10am – 4pm
@ Discovery Centre, Killerton car
park**

(or contact the team as near these dates as possible at the Office: 01392 883138 or on Mobile: 07590200498.

More about ... Caring for the Sick and Wounded during the First World War

After my notes in the last Devon History News about the large numbers of hospitals Devon provided for the wounded and sick during the First World War I had several contacts from people who have researched, or are thinking of researching First World War Hospitals in their local areas. Thank you all for getting in touch ... members (and others) in Newton Abbot, Plymouth, Paignton, Budleigh Salterton, Buckfastleigh, Topsham, Ivybridge, and some from further afield.

I have talked to Katie Findlay from the Devon Remembers Heritage Project and we are thinking of holding a workshop next year where people who've been doing research can share what they've found and raise further questions, and people who are at the beginning of their researches can pick up tips. We can discuss anything from the nature of

the treatments available at the time to what the soldiers, the nurses and the cooks wore. If you haven't been in touch but think you might be interested, and might even be motivated with a bit of help to find out more about the initiatives in your area, then let me know.

One of the results of last time's article was a picture (below) sent me by the granddaughter of Red Cross nurse Agnes Wreford Maud Lewis who features in this photograph (centre, with a Red Cross on her apron). But where is it? Agnes's family had connections in Plymouth and in Nymet Rowland, but in fact, as we know from other investigations, she need not have done her nursing locally, although her family think that she stayed in Devon. Her name is not (at least not yet) on the Red Cross database of nurses. This photo, probably of all the staff and patients in the hospital, looks like the driveway of a large private house. Do you recognise it? If so, please get in touch with me, as usual at j.f.neville@btinternet.com

Julia Neville





A destroyed T-34-85 tank at the Móricz Zsigmond Square, Budapest 1956. Photo wikimedia Commons

The Hungarian Revolution came to my village.

When I was nine years old, my journey to school was a half mile walk from my house in Upper Westwood (a tiny village in west Wilts) to the school in Lower Westwood. The route passed a large area of temporary accommodation - long, single storey huts owned by the Ministry of Defence which had been erected during the war to house immigrant workers from the Royal Enfield factory in Redditch, who had been sent down for war work in an engineering factory built underground in the old Upper Westwood quarry workings. The huts had been empty as long as any child could remember and formed a vital part of our extensive adventure playground.

Then in November 1956, the huts were suddenly the centre of attention by workmen, and before we knew it, they were fully occupied - faces peered from every window as we passed a dozen yards distant, down the perimeter road. It was unsettling, to say the least. After a day or so, some of the young men called us kids over to

the windows. They asked us to say the words on their typescript vocab lists. They seemed OK. Another shock awaited us at the school itself - where a half dozen Hungarian children had appeared and were placed in the upper classes at the school. The gulf of misunderstanding between the two sets of kids couldn't be wider, and in almost no time, the top Hungarian boy had to face the champion of us British kids, to see who would come out best in a fight. Given the absence of any attempt to integrate scared and traumatised Hungarians with rural Westcountry villagers, friction was inevitable. I think they were there for a couple of weeks, then they disappeared. I keep meaning to follow up this event to see if I can find anyone on the Hungarian side who can recall events from their perspective. If I get round it, I'll let you know how it turns out.

Chris Wakefield

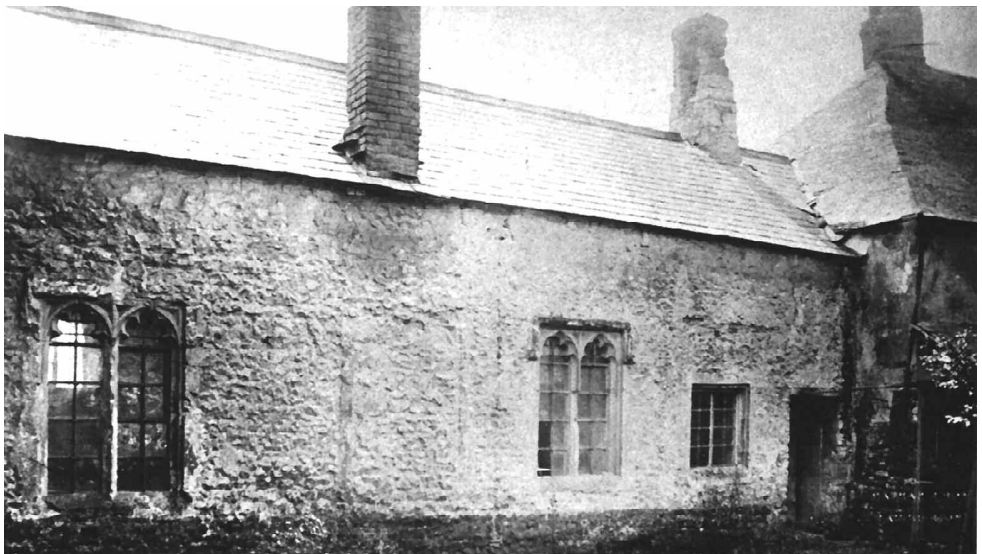
Early Victorian Schools - Report from the Research Group February 2016

The day commenced with a lively forum where members discussed the various aspects of their particular case studies. Collectively, this produced a rich tapestry with many similarities yet many differences throughout Devon. These depended upon factors such as community, class, religious beliefs, and patronage. The diverse thematic approach which emerged from discussion ranged from a classical education to preparation for future occupations. As to the latter, Gail Ham gave us a very enlightening presentation on the development of training within the Navy to meet changing demands. The provision of schools for the middle classes appeared to be slipping behind that of schools for the gentry and those for the poor. Julia Neville illustrated how three men, Joseph Brereton, Lord Fortescue and Thomas Dyke Acland became pioneers of middle class education,

*Old Kings School, Ottery St Mary. Demolished
1884. Photo OSM Heritage Society*

with the foundation of the West Buckland Farm and County School particularly aimed at the sons of farmers; the first of its kind. Acland's vision for a national school leaving examination was perhaps his lasting legacy. Schools for the poor in Devon were covered by Helen Turnbull whose study of local newspaper reports demonstrated how the contemporary beliefs and attitudes of the Victorians shaped the development of voluntary elementary schools. Finally the DHS chairman, Andrew Jones gave a very informative talk on the involvement of the Church of England in education in the early part of the nineteenth century. He also advised the group of a number of useful local and national sources for future reference. The session was completed with reflections on the various studies and a discussion regarding the next phase of the research leading towards the final product. Julia informed the group of plans for the next meeting on September 10th when Dr Bruce Coleman (DHS President) and Dr Rob Freathy, the University of Exeter's specialist in the history of education will attend as 'critical friends' to advise us on how best to publicise the results of our research.

Helen Turnbull





Devon on the Farm

The Devon History Society AGM and Conference 2016

Tony Ponsford feeds the pigs at Dartington School Farm, Totnes, Devon. Tony was evacuated to Devon with Southwark Central School from his home in Lambeth in London. Photo: Imperial War Museum © IWM (D 2472)

As described on page 18, our Annual Conference this year has the theme of 'Farming in Devon'. Farming has always been such an important topic in Devon that it is not surprising that doyens of DHS such as Joyce Youings and Robin Stanes grounded their research in farming records. This year's programme, though, has a relatively modern twist, and features, amongst contributions from the mid-nineteenth to the twenty-first century, some of the fruits of the collaborative research venture between the University of Exeter and Devon History Society on farming during the First World War.

This project is now in its final stages – although like most research, one thing leads to another, and there are many other avenues that could be explored. One group has taken the slightly 'dry' resource of the agricultural statistics for Devon, and used local knowledge to demonstrate how local farmers responded to the national call for greater productivity. Another group has looked at the big expansion in home grown produce: the

expansion of allotment movements and how people were helped to 'grow their own'. Members have also written about changes in everyday life: on market gardeners, on women, and in the decline of a great estate.

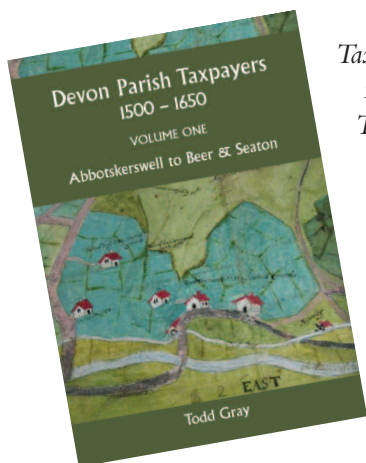
In addition to the panel of speakers during the conference sessions, the research will be featured in our usual 'corridor' of exhibitions, which will also feature research from the Blackawton and Strete History Society, with particular reference to the Second World War, and from the Friends of Hoar Oak Cottage, with the story of the nineteenth century Scottish shepherds brought down to Devon to try their traditional farming methods on Exmoor.

JN

If you have a short article of local interest (or would like to write one) please either mail it to dhsnewsed@gmail.com, or contact the DHS liaison officer Julia Neville on j.f.neville@btinternet.com

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Devon is fortunate is having so many specialised societies dedicated to its history. One of these is the Devon & Cornwall Record Society which this year is bringing out two volumes of parish rates for the years 1500 to 1650. Many members are already aware that it has been in existence for more than a century and its remit is to produce scholarly editions of local documents. This year the volume will be a landmark in Devon's history. Taxation history is probably considered exciting by very few Devonians but this volume will include the most salacious quote yet to appear in a Devon history book. In the early 1600s one East Devon woman objected to her neighbour's rate having been readjusted. She complained that this was because of an affair with the tax collector and said 'if that my **** had been as good as Joan Dodge's I had not paid so much to the rate'. The quote is an important one in understanding the subject, but the language has presented difficulties for the editor - should the word be presented in full or in part? And if the latter, which letters should appear and how many? The word might offend some readers but the aim of the edition is to make the text as clearly understood as possible. Only a few years ago it would have been unimaginable to reproduce the word as written, but now is it unthinkable not to?



Devon Parish Taxpayers, 1500 - 1650, edited by Todd Gray, will be launched at Awliscombe Church on 12 August at 2.30 pm.



Book Reviews for The Devon Historian

The following books have been received for review in the 2016 (will now be 2017) edition of The Devon Historian, but they need to be allocated a reviewer. If anyone would like to offer to review one of them (it helps if you have some knowledge of the subject or related topics) please contact me by e-mail or post at the following address: 41, Broadway, Exeter, Devon, EX2 9LU. My e-mail is m.m.auchterlonie@exeter.ac.uk. Remember to give me your postal address. Here is the list:

- **Heavenly Harmony: organs and organists of Exeter Cathedral**, by Malcolm Walker and David Davies, Impress.
- **A Visionary Friend: Exeter's School for the Blind 1838-1965** by Bill Pratt, WESA.
- **Heart of Oak: Letters from Admiral Gardner (1742-1809)** edited by Francis Davey, Azure Publications.
- **Called Home: The Dartmoor Tin Miner 1860-1940** by Tom Greeves, Twelveheads Press.

Dr M. M. Auchterlonie

Please email items of interest to
dhsnewsed@gmail.com

The Autumn Programme

The first event in our autumn programme is the **Third Study Day of the Research Group on Devon Schools** in the Mid-19th Century, which takes place **in Exeter on Saturday, September 10th**. Those interested in education in Devon will find an article by Helen Turnbull on the work of the Research Group elsewhere in this issue.

The **AGM and Conference will be held at the University of Exeter on Saturday 8th October on the theme of Farming in Devon**. The conference focuses on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and among the speakers are Professor Michael Winter of the University of Exeter, Dr. Janet Tall of the Devon Heritage Centre, Dr. Bette Baldwin of the Friends of Hoar Oak Cottage, and Josh Rhodes of the University of Exeter. Julia Neville discusses the project on Farming in Devon during the First World War, which features as an integral part of the Conference, elsewhere in this issue.

The third event is a study day on **'Putting our ancestors into their place: a guide to 19th and 20th century one-place studies'**, which will be led by Dr. Janet Few, Chair of the Society for One-Place Studies, and a specialist on North Devon history. It will be held at **Great Torrington on Tuesday, October 18th**. Dr. Few writes, 'Our ancestors did not live in isolation. Family historians often focus on the nuclear family. Local historians concern themselves with events, buildings and famous residents. To understand our ancestors, they need to be 'put in their place' by investigating the community of which they were a part. To bring the history of a locality to life, it should be populated with ordinary people. A One Place Study brings family and local history together,

to the benefit of both fields. A One Place Study involves dissecting a small, definable, geographical area, to examine the individuals, buildings and processes of the past, in as much detail as possible. This study day is suitable for those who are just starting to think about undertaking a One Place Study, as well as those who have been studying the people and places of the past for some time. We shall consider sources and methods that will help to reconstruct the physical place, before moving on to populating the place and then making connections. These might be connections between people, or between people and places, institutions or events. A significant part of the day will be spent looking at various projects that might be undertaken, in order to put the techniques into practice'.

The final event of the year will be held on **Thursday, November 10th in Exeter**, when Dr. Richard Crangle of the University of Exeter will speak on **'Forgotten Delights: Lantern Slides from the Royal Albert Memorial Museum Collection'**. He will report on a fascinating project to research and digitise the lantern slide collection of the Royal Albert Memorial Museum. This little-known but wonderfully rich resource contains around 5,000 images originally used for public lectures and general entertainment, including several large collections of photos by local naturalists and historians of a century ago. Highly illustrated with digital copies of the original slide images, the talk will highlight the work of some of these photographers, featuring views of Exeter and Devon as well as further afield.

Paul Auchterlonie

Programme Secretary