

DEVON HISTORY NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE DEVON HISTORY SOCIETY

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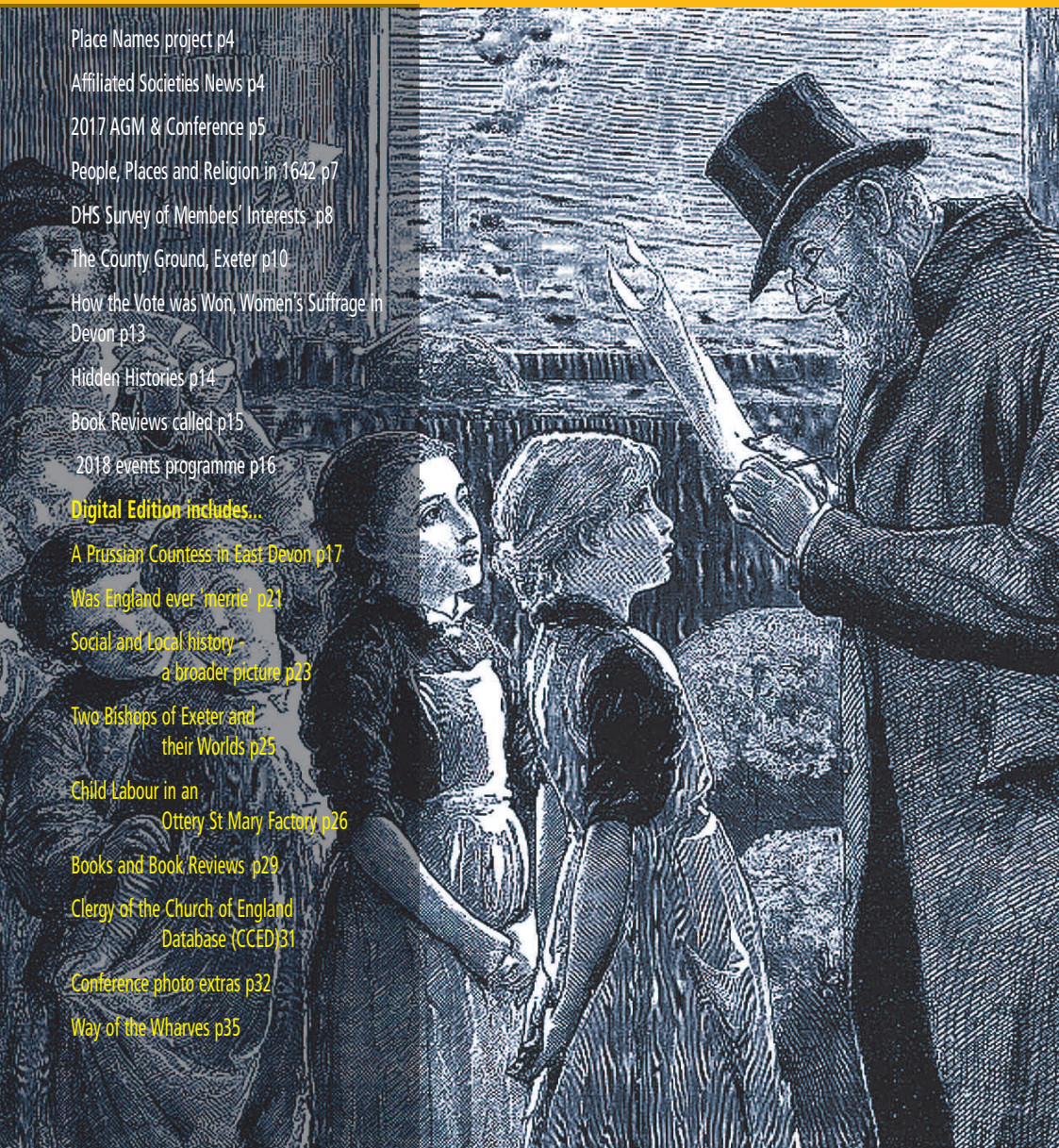
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Cover: An Inspector calls...Government inspector visiting a factory
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EDITORIAL

I've changed the colour theme for this edition. It was on a whim, but I felt I might need to acquit myself for it, so I settled on Brexit as the cause (doesn't everyone these days?). It took a considerable while to find an alternative to what is plausibly a European-style blue that adorned many earlier editions of the News – a delay mainly down to the complex history and politics of colour. No matter where you pitch up on the visible spectrum, there is something that will potentially offend or delight, if you are so disposed to think hard enough about it. This is not just a problem for newsletter editors – it has deep historical roots – from the Romans onwards (and probably earlier) any attempt at sartorial panache in the 'wrong' colour or material could be serious... Theodosius II proclaimed in 424 AD: “*We do not permit wool to be dyed with any color resembling the Imperial purple, nor do we permit silk to be dyed rose-color, and afterwards with another tint . . . Those who violate this law shall suffer the punishment of death.*” –which seems a bit OTT, but it probably made the point.

Across Europe similar provisions were all the rage and 'royal' purple was frequently mentioned as a colour reserved to exclusive use of the social elite. I thought I might use it here, but my opening remarks above would have been misinterpreted, and letters might have followed.

These rules survived until the means of cheaply producing almost any material in many colours made it impossible to prevent the spread of fashionable clothes downwards to the bourgeoisie and lower.

So I settled on 'reef green', which is how this colour is described in the British Standard Colour Chart BS5252 listings. A politically neutral colour if ever there was, (unless you can tell me otherwise).

Chris Wakefield

**NB Subscriptions due
1st May**

CHAIRMAN'S WORD



The Council of the Society is very grateful to all members who responded last autumn to our request for a register of members' interests. These make

fascinating reading. We hope they will play a large part in informing the development of the Society over the next three-to-five years.

Alongside this, the Council has been reviewing its strategy (how we try to meet our overall aim of promoting the study of the county's history). We recognise that we need to give more attention to publicity – in all sorts of ways. And we are anxious, too, to strengthen our links to our many affiliated societies. Please tell us – whether you speak as an individual or on behalf of a local society – how the Council can help you.

Over the next three years or so, the Council is likely to lose several existing members. (Members are elected for a three-year term of office, which is renewable. Many feel that after two or sometimes three terms on Council, it is time to stand down.) So, we are keen to recruit new Council members. Do please get in touch if you would like to be

involved – or if you would like to attend a meeting just to get a feel of what goes on, before committing yourself further.

I realise that (any) Council can appear intimidatingly high-powered and stratospheric but the reality is that we depend upon enthusiasm far more than (say) academic achievement; and it is so useful for Council to have people who are also members of affiliated societies and so in touch with our general membership.

The Council meets four times a year (plus the AGM in October), in Exeter (a venue with its own parking), on a Saturday morning. Our November meeting lasted less than an hour and a half; we very rarely now go over two hours (by which time you lose the will to live). This is your Society – please have your say in its future.

Andrew Jones (Chairman)

Devon Dialect

Kerstin Richter, a PhD student at the university of Regensburg, Bavaria has contacted DHS to ask if members with an interest in Devon dialect might be able to complete a short on-line survey. This is about birds and their dialect names. If this interests you, please e-mail Andrew Jones (acjthrectory@btinternet.com) and he will forward the PDF attachment to you.

Ed.

Affiliated Societies

Ave atque Vale

Since our August newsletter, we have lost three affiliated societies - Newton and Noss Local History Group through disbandment and the Ugborough Local History Group and Old Plymouth Society, who have decided that affiliation is no longer a priority in their expenditure.

On the credit side we welcome the 'Way of the Wharves' project from East-the-Water, Bideford, about which you will find more details elsewhere in DHS News (page 35). We also welcome the Newton St Cyres History Group and Hemyock History and Archive Association, <http://blackdownarchives.org.uk/> . Both groups are already known to Devon History Society as some of their members joined in our First World War Food, Farming and Fishing in Devon research project, so we feel they are already friends and look forward to seeing more of them at our events.

Our Survey of Members' Interests tells us that people would be interested in hearing more about what local groups are doing in DHS News. If your group has completed some research, held a particularly interesting event, or had a significant anniversary, then please write it up and send it to dhsnewsed@gmail.com .

Julia Neville

Newton St. Cyres showing Newton House and the Church. Sketched by Rev. John Swete 1797.

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PLACE-NAMES

I'm sorry that the place-name project has gone rather quiet. This is solely because I have been focusing upon the best means of storing and retrieving what will be a massive amount of data. Inevitably, this means either a new web-site or an adjunct to our main web-site. And such things are expensive. However, we have reached a point where I hope that the society's Council will support an approach to the Heritage Lottery Fund for (by their standards) a small grant to take us forward.

In the meantime...I encourage all those interested in recording name-evidence to do so, and to do so in your own way. In time, we can begin to pool all our research into a standard form. If you'd like to be involved, please e-mail me.

Our particular interest lies in the minor names of the county: field names, names of mills, names of streams, names of districts within a parish, farm names.

Collecting these, and especially in source material that antedates the tithe surveys, is going to be a massive, long-term project but one I hope we can keep going. I shall be long dead before it comes to fruition. Perhaps you too!

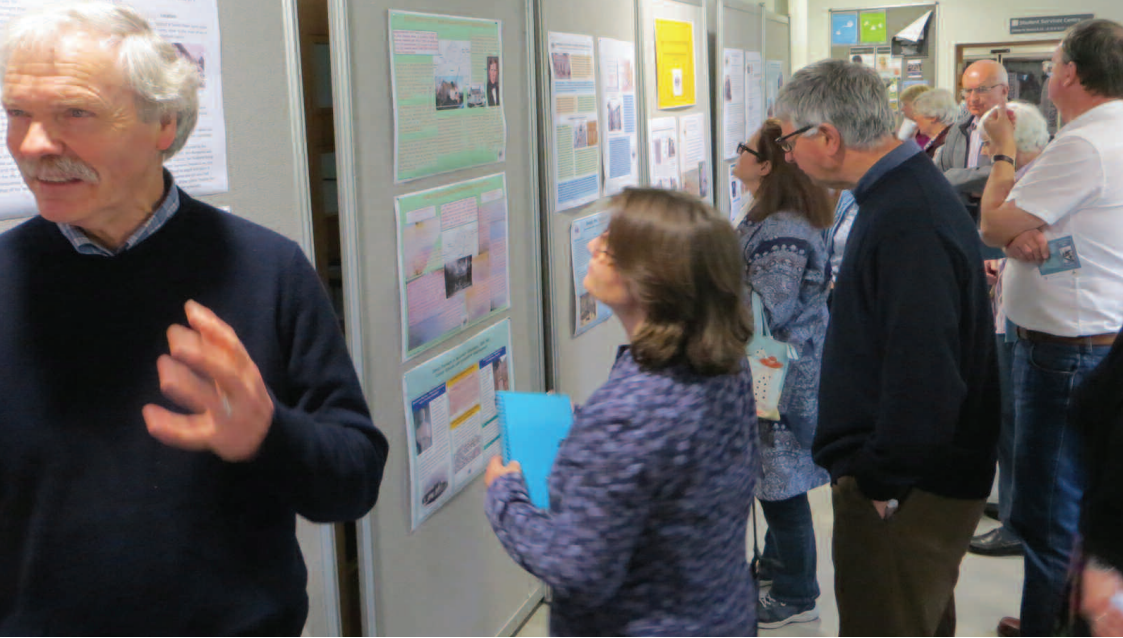
Andrew Jones

Classic returns

For those whose historical interests stray across other disciplines, John Allan's classic report on medieval and post medieval finds from Exeter's city centre rebuilds 1971-1984 is now available online at

https://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/archaeology/research/projects/place_in_time/resources/reports/ or if you have the digital News [click here](#).

AGM & Conference 2017



The editor's summary of the AGM and conference 2017. More photos in the digital edition, pages 32-34.

A packed agenda, healthy representation from all parts of the county and a raft of interesting speakers ensured a rewarding day for members at the October AGM and Conference held at Exeter University. Following the Chairman's welcome, the routine business of the Society was dispatched with little drama, except to applaud the unstinting services of Jane Bliss, who stood down at the AGM, having edited *The Devon Historian* with great distinction for the last six years.

Apart from Jane's departure the Council looks much as it did last year.

The main event before lunch was the presentation of this year's book prizes, which saw the Book of the Year awarded to Tom Greeves for his beautiful book on the tin mining industry on Dartmoor - '*Called Home: The Dartmoor Tin Miner 1860-1940, Photographs and Memory*'. There was no chance I would leave the conference without a copy - it was, after all, the many youthful hours spent poking around derelict and abandoned (and often easily accessible) factories and mills that first attracted me to industrial archaeology, the earliest of my historical interests. Tom Greeves spoke about his book while nursing a copy in his hands - he told us how long it had been in gestation (most of his life) and the pleasure he has had in bringing it into the world. The result is almost certainly the best social history you

will ever find on the last years of active tin mining on Dartmoor.

Joint winner and equally deserving of the finest plaudits is Jannine Crocker's monumental 2 volume edition of *Elizabethan Inventories and Wills of the Exeter Orphans' Court* published by the Devon and Cornwall Record Society. Although the author may not have had as much fresh air and exercise as did Tom Greeves in pursuit of his tin miners, there is little doubt that the calls upon commitment and scholarly effort are easily comparable, and have given us a publication of unique and enduring utility.

The W.G.Hoskins prize was awarded to Pamela Vass for 'Power of Three' the fascinating story of Thomas Fowler - a polymath genius born in Great Torrington, whose work on a base 3 calculating machine put him among the pioneers of computing technology, preceeding Charles Babbage in this respect.

Highly commended in the same category were Elly Babbage's intimate portrait of the village community in Victorian Cheriton Fitzpaine and Freddie Huxtable's detailed history of the Devon and Somerset Railway - the first of two volumes.

The dissertation prize went to Lee-Jane Giles from the University of Plymouth for her work "*All that you refuse to do is mutiny: Contextualising the marine mutiny at Plymouth, 1797*".

Broadclyst Community School won the Primary School History Prize. The word around Council is that another Schools prize will be offered for 2018, and members are invited to make sure local schools are aware of the opportunity.

A swift coffee followed and by 11.15am members were primed for conference, which this year was themed around Education in Devon. After an introduction from the

Chairman, Bruce Coleman, our former President, paid tribute to Dr. Roger Sellman, author of *Devon Village Schools in the 19th Century* (1967)*, and a former member of the DHS Council, who was a historian and schools inspector who lived in Exeter.

Jonathan Doney offered us 'The Babbacombe Crisis' as an illustration of the way the 1944 Education Act tackled the implications of religious affiliations in church schools. The concluding pre-lunch session was illuminated by DHS Council members Judy Moss, Julia Neville and Jan Wood setting out the scope and approach of the recent DHS Victorian Schools Project. Then lunch (the route to which required filing past the bookstalls).

As usual I went out to stretch my legs and down my sarnies, trying to avoid any greasy finger marks on the pristine dustcover of my newly acquired Greeves.

The post lunch presentations involved the Victorian Schools project leaders and affiliates. There was a gratifying spread of topics from Frances Billinge (Bovey Tracey town school); Jackie Bryon (Exmouth lace school); Helen Turnbull (Tiverton factory school) and Mike Sampson (Blundell's School), all of them with very different stories to tell.

In spite of the slightly breathless account here, there was plenty of time for members to catch up with one another and share ideas. There are more pictures and information on the conference in the digital pages...

Chris Wakefield

* I have a copy of this book although I have no idea how I came by it. The outer cut edge of the pages are stamped 'Department of Education and Science', which was in existence from 1964-1992. Maybe it once belonged to Sellman!!



People, Places and Religion in 1642

Protestation Returns workshop offered by the Parliamentary Archives

On the 26th March the Parliamentary Archives is visiting Devon to give a workshop to the Devon History Society. The Protestation Returns are the closest record we have to a census from 1642. The Returns were created in response to an order of the House of Commons, in which all adult men were asked to swear an oath of allegiance to the Protestant religion. Their names were duly inscribed in a list in each parish, and the list sent back to Parliament.

These records have now been digitised. They have been plotted on our prototype map and can be searched by location here, <http://archivesmapsearch.labs.parliament.uk/>

The workshop will include a presentation highlighting some of the treasures that the Parliamentary Archives holds, before summarising the history surrounding the Protestation Returns and the process of digitisation. There will be a step by step guide on how to use the map and an opportunity to get hands on experience of searching the resource.

The Protestation Returns survive for about a third of English counties. We have almost a complete set of records for Devon, the areas missing are the Hundreds of Axminster, East Budleigh and Ottery St. Mary.

In some areas people wrote their own names or mark, but usually a local official wrote out all the names. The names of those that refused or were unable to sign the oath were often recorded, along with the reason why they didn't sign. The records, very occasionally, include the names of women as well as men.

Participants are encouraged to bring their own laptop or tablet, but six tablets (one to be shared between two) will be available for those unable to bring their own mobile devices.

Thanks to the generosity of Parliamentary Archives, there will be no charge for this event which will be held on the afternoon of **March 26th at Devon Heritage Centre**. Bookings for the event can be made through Eventbrite ([click here](#)) or through the Devon History Society Booking Form which is downloadable from the DHS website (<http://www.devonhistorysociety.org.uk/>).

Penny McMahon / Paul Auchterlonie

DHS Survey of Members' Interests

Devon History Society's Council would like to say a big 'Thank You!' to all our members and affiliated society members who took part in the September 2017 survey of members' interests. The Council had the results available for discussion at its last meeting and intends to use the information to help set the Society's plans for the next few years.

Generally ...

We were pleased that so many of you fed back appreciatively about what the Society does at the moment, about our events and our publications, the value for money you felt you got from your subscription, and

about the help received from officers. We noted the comments about the difficulties that the county's geography presents in allowing you to actually get to events, and the travel time required – perhaps we should turn our attention to modern technologies that might provide access at a distance. Or should we go back to the pattern of our predecessors and do something to arrange shared transport?

On Research

We had responses from over 30% of our members which allows us to draw some robust conclusions from the answers supplied. Almost all of those who replied said they considered there was scope for further research in their own areas of



interest and that they were interested (and often experienced) in research. We were hugely impressed by the great diversity of topics in which members were interested and where they had undertaken research. The topics that came up most frequently could be classified under the following headings:

Landscape history

How landscape has shaped communities; prehistory; maps and the evidence they contain; folklore; history of buildings, sacred and secular.

Pre-industrial and industrial history

Milling, wool-trade, textiles; mills, tanneries, inclined planes; mining and quarrying; pottery; salt-making; trades associated with agriculture e.g. smithing.

Farming and rural life

Farming and changes in farming practice; history of land ownership, families and the associated records.

Maritime History

In the broadest sense; including the history of merchant venturers and explorers, sailors, slaves, port life and tourism

Social Change from the 18th to the 20th century

This included the history of transport & roads, medicine, women's history, poverty and the poor law, the church, war and migration. It overlaps with the earlier category of farming and rural life.

Research projects in these areas could attract a spread of members to participate, and, from the responses, we know that

many members have a particular interest in the history of a specific local area. The opportunity for further research projects, like those we've undertaken on First World War farming or Early Victorian Schools, with significant scope for participants to look in depth at particular communities, should now be considered.

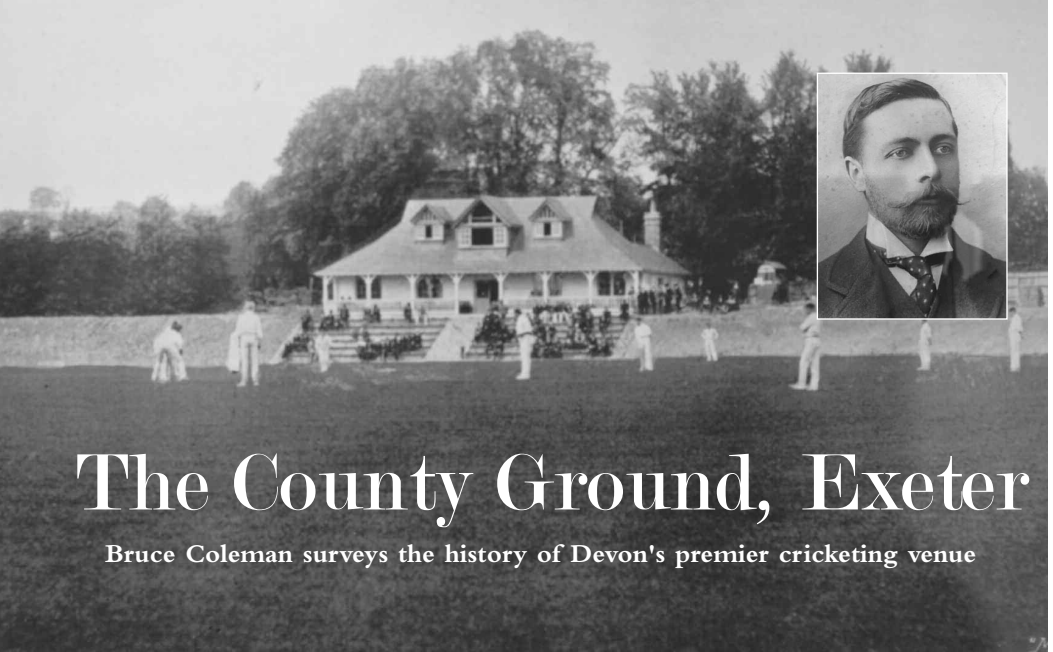
Other suggestions

A high proportion of respondents said they would be interested if the society could obtain on-line access to history journals for them, in further study (though only a few indicated an interest in formal courses), and in collaboration with our local universities. Some specific suggestions were made – more outreach to younger age groups (only 8% of respondents were under 55); work to develop local groups in areas where none exists; and developing clearer identities for the number of societies in the county with historical interests. We will think about all these and identify how we might realistically respond.

Next Steps

Once again, thank you to all those who responded. Your Council are now deliberating how to use the findings to best effect in setting plans for the Society's development over the next few years. If this brief summary has prompted any questions, or further suggestions, perhaps for a research project, then please get in touch with Julia Neville, j.f.neville@btinternet.com and make your point of view known.

Julia Neville



The County Ground, Exeter

Bruce Coleman surveys the history of Devon's premier cricketing venue

Followers of cricket have probably already noticed or heard of the recent redevelopment and transformation of the old County Ground in Prince of Wales Road, Exeter. The ground was created under trust for Devon County Cricket Club out of their Streatham estate by the Thornton West family as a memorial to the recently deceased Richard Bowerman West, Sheriff of the County, a great cricket enthusiast, the effective refounder and then President of the County Club. The site was impressive - overlooking the city and the Exe valley from what was then a largely rural setting. The playing area itself formed one of the ten largest cricket grounds in England. The pavilion, dramatically raised within a steeply terraced enclosure, was erected by voluntary subscription. What was sometimes called 'the Pennsylvania ground' was formally opened in May 1902 with a two-day match between Devon and a London County side raised by the legendary W.G. Grace, who played himself, and it went on to stage many notable matches, for example against the first New Zealand touring team in 1927 and the Pakistan Eagles

Above: Photograph of play during the inaugural match in July 1902, the bulky figure of W.G. Grace can be seen fielding at point. The then-new pavilion stands in the background, though it was not completed until 1903.

Inset: Richard B. West, Sheriff of Devon and refounder (later President) of the County Club. All pictures Courtesy of Stephen Green

in the 1950s, as well as serving as the main ground for Devon CCC. Between the wars the quality of the ground was commended by luminaries including A.P.F. Chapman and E.W. Swanton and after the war the players appearing there included Richie Benaud and Viv Richards. Until the 1960s the Devonshire Regiment would hold well-attended regimental occasions on the ground each year. During the Second World War the ground had been requisitioned for military purposes and it perhaps never fully recovered from that experience. The costs now became too much for the County Club and in 1964 it handed the ground and its management under the trust over to Exeter Cricket Club (who had previously played there as tenants) with

several days' play each year reserved to the County. Exeter CC struggled financially too but were saved by the building of the Devon & Exeter Squash Club in one corner of the ground (as sub-tenants they paid rent to the Cricket Club) in the 1970s and a ground-sharing deal with Isca Hockey Club a few years later.

The trust expired in time and was replaced in 1989 by a lease at peppercorn rent by the descendants of the Thornton Wests. (Ironically the ground, because held under legal trust, was the sole remaining part of the Streatham Estate, now the main campus of the University of Exeter, not to have been sold off around the end of the Great War.) By the time that lease expired in 2014 the old pavilion, though adapted and modernised in several points, was in a poor and expensive state of repair and, not constructed with such longevity in mind, probably would not have

stood much longer. Many felt great attachment to it and it remained to the end a dramatic sight across the ground, raised on its mound, a great presence dominating play, but attempts to have it listed by English Heritage failed and demolition took place in April 2015. The freeholders, now a new generation, had sold off that corner of the ground, where resident blocks for University students were now erected, while Exeter CC received some compensation to go towards the building of a new pavilion in a different corner. With the practical and financial help of the developers, Yelverton Properties, a new and fully modern two-storey pavilion was built adjacent to the Squash Club and was handed over to the Cricket Club in December 2015 with a

The modern pavilion, with changing facilities at ground level and social space behind the first-floor balcony, still displays the plaque commemorating the original donation of the ground by the Thornton Wests.



formal inauguration in early May 2016. It has been nominated for awards and is generally regarded as one of the best modern cricket pavilions at club level.

The County Ground is now the only county-class cricket ground in or near Exeter (Exmouth's Maer Field is the nearest one comparable) and so stands of immense value to a large and growing city of some sporting note, as Exeter City Council have recognized with their support of the Club during the redevelopment phase. Now equipped with new nets, an electronic scoreboard and other modern facilities, the ground has staged many Devon games at all levels since the new pavilion opened. The development is an example of successful adaptation and modernisation in an established and still largely unspoilt setting. The sense of the

County Ground as one of the South West's historic cricket grounds survives. The latest lease will expire in 2044, but, meanwhile, perhaps this notice in Devon History News will attract more visitors to the ground on sunny summer afternoons, though an appearance by W.G. can no longer be promised.

Bruce Coleman

Note: additional detail can be found in Jeffrey Stanyer, *A Great Survivor. The History of The Exeter Cricket Club in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, St. Leonard's Press, Exeter, 2000.

Team photo 1902. W.G. Grace seated 2nd from right.



A 'Votes for Women rally' organised by the Exeter Branch of the National Union of Suffrage Societies, The Triangle, Exeter, in 1913.
© Mary Evans Picture Library



How the Vote was Won:

Women's Suffrage, Devon and the Representation of the People Act 1918 – the Devon History Society Spring Conference, Plymouth University, April 21 2018.

On 6 February 1918 the Representation of the People Act received Royal Assent and passed into law. Henceforth women – though not yet all women – would be entitled to vote in parliamentary elections. It was a milestone in the fight for women to be treated as citizens on an equal footing with men, and the Devon History Society Spring Conference (held in conjunction with the University of Plymouth) celebrates the centenary of the event.

By 1918 there had been concerted efforts for more than half a century to persuade Parliament to award women the vote. During the period of Liberal Government in the eight years before the First World War, the movement, though composed of different strands, militant and non-militant, party political, professional, church-based, had grown nationally and internationally. Many women who had not held office or spoken in public before found the courage and the passion to defy convention and argue, demonstrate and lobby in support of their convictions. The 'How the Vote was Won'

conference considers the contribution made to the movement not only by national activists but by many who would only have been known in their own communities.

Our keynote speaker is Professor June Hannam of the University of the West of England, who has researched and written a range of publications on women's history and has a strong interest in local activism and regional variations. Plymouth University's own Professor Angela Smith will contribute a paper on the effect of the First World War on the movement, and local researchers will speak and show posters about the work of some of Devon's unsung heroines, and indeed heroes, since men too were active in the movement.

The Society will be offering a number of free places at the event to young people from around the county with an interest in politics and history. We're also offering members an Early Bird discount on booking, so don't delay – book your place straight away. ([Eventbrite link here](#)).

Julia Neville

Hidden Histories

The iconic black and white photographs of north Devon taken by James Ravilious are familiar to many of us due to their stunning portrayals of a time gone by. Over the past year Beaford Arts has been delving into the Beaford Archive, started by Roger Deakins (now a world-famous cinematographer) in 1971 and continued by Ravilious from 1972. By the end of his 17 year tenure Ravilious had amassed almost 80,000 images – most of which have never been seen by the public or, for that matter, by the photographer himself in such detail.

Ravilious was commissioned to “show the people of north Devon to themselves” and became a familiar sight in the rural communities he photographed. His awareness of the long term impact of his work comes across in his devotion to the documenting of social history: the team is incredibly fortunate to be custodians of such an extensive collection, carefully annotated and categorized by Ravilious himself, before his death in 1999.

Through their Heritage Lottery Funded project Hidden Histories, Beaford Arts have had the opportunity to, literally, dust off the negatives and find the treasures which are still hidden within the archive. The first step was to bring in a curator, Kate Isherwood, who viewed all 80,000 images and had the mammoth task of carefully selecting the 10,000 which will ultimately be made available through the archive’s new website. This was not only the beginning of the unveiling of these new finds from archive, but also the beginning of the team’s relationship with these unseen images and with the photographers behind them whose squiggles and notes accompanied them along the way.

Now at the halfway point the project has digitised all 2306 of James Ravilious’ contact sheets, showing every single image he took for the Beaford Archive and can now be found online at www.beaford.org. Meticulously catalogued, the images can be searched by location, events, dates and even family names,

Farmers setting up stooks, Riddlecombe, East Westacott, August 1982
Documentary photograph by James Ravilious for the Beaford Archive © Beaford Arts



offering a wealth of stories and history at the click of a button.

Throughout 2018 more additions to the online archive will include the 10,000 full, beautifully realised images from both James Ravilious and Roger Deakins as selected by the curator, as well as community trails created in partnership with 6 primary schools and inspired by the photographs.

An exciting addition to the Archive will be 80 newly recorded oral histories from the characters who populate these outstanding photos. A team of volunteers have been trained to research and interview local people with special connections and insights into the photographs, and have begun to unearth memories and stories about life in north Devon which would otherwise have been lost in time.

Robin Ravilious says of her late husband that the only time he didn't have the camera with him was when they went on holiday. In contrast to the rest of us, Ravilious was meticulously documenting the simple things, the every day life of North Devon and illustrating the land and the people on it. The Hidden Histories project is working tirelessly to properly conserve and enrich his life's work to make it more accessible than ever; for all to enjoy and learn from this unique collection.

If you'd like to keep up to date with the project, please sign up to our mailing list at www.beaford.org or get in touch if you would like to get involved archive@beaford-arts.org.uk

An event open to Devon History Society members will be hosted in partnership with **Beaford Arts** exploring the themes around the Archive, discussing how volunteers have played a key role in the project delivery and will include talks and workshops from key members of the Hidden Histories team: Dave Green (Digitiser), Emma Down (Cataloguer) and Sophie McCormack (Project Coordinator).

This event is free and will take place at **South Molton Town Hall on Thursday 10th May, 2pm-4:30pm**, with free refreshments. Materials and prints from the Archive will also be on display. ([Book Here](#))

Sophie McCormack

Book Reviews for The Devon Historian

The following books have been received for review in the 2018 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:

Elly Babbedge. *The Bidlakes of Bridestowe.* 2018. Templar Research, 2018.

Samantha Little. *Writing home to Brixham: lives across a century: letters from Brixham men and women serving in the Great War, 1914-1918.* Brixham Heritage Museum, 2017.

Peter Mason. *Dartmoor, a wild and wondrous region: the portrayal of Dartmoor in art, 1750-1920.* Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter, 2017.

Phil Newman, ed. *The tinworking landscape of Dartmoor in a European context: prehistory to 20th century: conference papers.* Dartmoor Tinworking Research Group, 2017.

Dr M. M. Auchterlonie,
(Reviews Editor)

If you have a short article about how your group deals with the pleasures and/or pains of running a history or heritage society, please get in touch. The spread of good ideas is a vital part of DHS's job. Write to dhsnewsed@gmail.com, or contact the DHS liaison officer Julia Neville on j.f.neville@btinternet.com

THE PROGRAMME FOR

2018

SPRING-SUMMER

Two major changes to our programme have been introduced this year. Firstly, booking for most events can be done online through Eventbrite, accessed from the DHS website (www.devonhistorysociety.org.uk/events/) although, for this year, we will still be posting out the programme and booking forms to all our members, as well as making both available for download from the DHS website. Secondly, we have reached an agreement with the Friends of Devon Archives (FODA), whereby full members of the DHS can attend FODA events for same costs as full FODA members. For this reason, the programme includes brief details of the Spring Meeting of FODA on April 28th at Torquay Museum and also of the Autumn Meeting and AGM of FODA which will be held at Polsloe Priory on September 29th, although members will have to refer to the FODA website for details of the programme for both events as well as how to book.

The first three events in our own programme – the **Workshop on the Protestation Returns (p7)**, the **Conference on Women's Suffrage in Devon (p13)** and the **Workshop on the Beaford Archive / Ravilious and**

Deakins photographs (p14) are all described elsewhere in Devon History News. Our **summer meeting** will be held at **East the Water**, on the opposite bank of the River Torridge to Bideford, hosted by the organisation, the **Way of the Wharves**. Bideford Bay is particularly rich in history, so I am sure that the meeting will be of great interest to all Devon local historians. To follow up last year's visit to Exeter Cathedral Library, there will be a visit to the **Devon and Exeter Institution on May 22nd**, led by the DEI Librarian Anne Howard. The DEI is not only a lovely building containing an outstanding heritage collection, but also houses one of the most important local history collections in Devon. Highly recommended, particularly if you have not visited the collection before, but numbers are limited. Finally, we are continuing our collaboration with the **Devon Rural Archive** at Shilstone near Modbury, and on **June 7th**, **Paul Auchterlonie** will give a talk about his **book on Joseph Pitts**, an Exeter man, who was captured by Barbary pirates at the age of fifteen, sold as a slave in Algiers, and went on the pilgrimage to Mecca with his Muslim master in the mid-1680s, before undertaking a daring escape from the Turks in 1694, and publishing an account of his adventures in Exeter in 1703.

Paul Auchterlonie
Programme Secretary

The spread of good ideas is a vital part of DHS's job. Write to dhsnewsed@gmail.com, or contact the DHS liaison officer Julia Neville on j.f.neville@btinternet.com



A Prussian Countess in East Devon

Phil Planel rediscovers an exotic foreign visitor to East Devon

Readers of the Times on 29 June 1910 were pleased to read there was much to like in a new play at the Haymarket theatre: 'Princess Priscilla runs away'.

"They will like Princess Priscilla, who innocently asks, "What is a bun?" and looks in the cupboard for the 'hob' of the fireplace. The princess has run away from the pompous court life of Luthen-Kunitz to live the simple life in the little village of Symford. In less than a week she turns the village upside down"

Since art so often imitates life we should not be surprised to discover that a countess (not a princess) had indeed run away (mainly from her marital obligations) to a Devon Village not called Symford (Sidford?) but Broadclyst.

The countess was Countess Elizabeth Von Arnim, author of the best-selling novel 'Elizabeth and her German Garden' (1898). Born Mary Annette Beauchamp, in Australia, Elizabeth was a cousin of the writer Katherine Mansfield. She married Count

Henning August von Arnim and spent 20 years on one of his more neglected Pomeranian estates (East Prussian) at Nassenheide which had been untenanted for 25 years and Nassenheide episodes are to be found in a number of accounts left by literary visitors, including a youthful E. M. Forster who was engaged as a tutor there. Forster's biographer records his arrival there:

"His arrival at Nassenheide was disconcerting. The train dropped him out ... in the middle of a farmyard, in the pitch dark; there was no one to meet him, and he hadn't the faintest idea where the Schloss lay. Fortunately, the guard was helpful and found him a farm labourer willing to act as guide. Splashing across the fields, the two finally arrived at the house, which was in darkness, and Forster rang. The bell pealed, a hound bayed, and by this time he was beginning to giggle At last a dishevelled boy opened the door, and he was grudgingly admitted, to a vast vaulted hall hung with the heads of small animals ... the German tutor, who had been in bed, came down to greet him, telling him that he had not been expected till tomorrow and that the departing tutor was in the bed which should have been his. Eventually a sleepy maid made up a bed for him in the state wing; the cold was appalling, and he lay awake all night shivering

E M Forster. An early visitor to Elizabeth's Prussian home. Picture: Wikimedia CC 4.0



and listening to the ghostly clanking of a pump. Elizabeth, when he met her after breakfast next day, was very cool about his misfortunes. Such things lowered people in her esteem." (Furbank 1. 126)

Forster's stock rose a good deal with Elizabeth when she read the proofs of '*Where Angels Fear to Tread*'. As for the Count, who Elizabeth famously called 'The Man of Wrath'. Forster gives us an interesting insight into this amateur agronomist and plant breeder:

"The ends of dinners were always agony for Forster, for the Count had a habit of sucking up water out of his finger-bowl and, after an awful moment, spewing it out again. This made Forster either wince or giggle, and, whichever he did, Elizabeth spotted it". (Furbank 1 129)

Financial and other worries resulted in the sale in 1908 of all the Arnim estates that were not entailed to the children. Elizabeth used this opportunity to move back to England, to Blue Hayes, Broadclyst, in East Devon.

Elizabeth Arnim's principal biographer, Leslie de Charms, turns out to be a pen name for Elizabeth's own daughter, also called Elizabeth. We should not expect to know the full unvarnished story from these pages, but there is no reason to doubt the facts concerning the move:

"The house was modest but charming, the countryside lovely and inconspicuously populated, the school at Exeter up to standard, and the weather, during the few days she [her mother] spent in her investigations, deliciously mild. When she returned to Nassenheide she had completed all necessary arrangements." (Charms 130)

The family lodged at 27 West Southernhay until the house was ready. Elizabeth is quoted in a letter of 18 May 1908 that: "*The children*

love going to school ... I suppose H. B. [Hennig] will learn English now.... Tit [sister] came down on Saturday and yesterday I took her out to look at the house – it was heavenly in the garden – the fields all round so yellow with buttercups – we sat under an oak-tree and meditated. We shall probably begin to move in a fortnight.” (Charms 131)

However, this was not a good year for the family and the younger Elizabeth did not perhaps look back on the Blue Hayes episode as a particularly happy one:

“In spite of the ministrations of Teppi and Herman Sambale, his butler-valet, H [Count Hennig] was deeply unhappy after his family’s departure. He paid a first visit to the establishment in Devonshire in July – bringing Evi with him from London. The three younger children went back to Nasserheide with him for the summer. He felt the more forsaken when they returned to school, and the tone of his letters from now on is one of black despair.

Things were hardly better at Blue Hayes, where early in 1909, the family was laid low with influenza, the older girls [of whom Elizabeth was one] being seriously ill satisfactory holidays for the older children were almost as hard to manage as for the little ones. There was little for them to do at Blue Hayes and few congenial neighbours. Worst of all, Elisabeth, the originator of happy enterprises, was almost as unavailable to them as she was to H. in his bitter loneliness.

For, while Nassenheide remained unsold, it was more than ever urgent that she should work, and, closeted in the current version of the Treihaus, a studio, separated from the main building by a courtyard, she did little else. H. complained that she inadequately answered his letters, the children were left to themselves, the household was in a constant state of disaffection, receiving only vaguely conciliatory messages in broken English by the German maid who alone seemed able, during her intimate ministrations, to get the ear of their

mistress... Later that year she had to be often in London. Her journeys there seemed as wearisome to her as any she had made from Pomerania.

But everything she did at this time in fact induced a fatigue she was quite unable to shake off. And she thought she detected a growing slackness in the children. At first she blamed it on their immoderate enthusiasm for Devonshire junkets and clotted cream – they had all rather startlingly gained weight – but decided later that their lack of restraint was only one of the enervating effects of the vaunted Devonshire climate on hardy Pomeranian constitutions.” (Charms 132-133).

Spoken one feels with feeling, by a neglected child. The presence of the Aclands at Broadclyst could hardly be described as ‘uncongenial neighbours’. And we know from a less biased source that the Countess actually seems to have enjoyed a feeling of release at this time and was exploring new possibilities in her relationships. Christopher Scoble’s magisterial biography of Stephen Reynolds, that unlikely Sidmouth fisherman, takes up the story:

“Elizabeth ... was in the habit of adopting young, and not so young, authors for her sexual and other purposes. In the previous five years both E.M. Forster and Hugh Walpole had worked at Nassenheide as tutor to her children. She seems to have been adept at spotting homosexuals, and had teased the latter unmercifully during his stay there. It is not clear if she had divined Reynolds’ sexual affiliations; despite puzzlement at his reticence with women, she seems to have fallen unequivocally under his spell.” (Scoble 289)

We now fast forward to East Devon:

Elizabeth had been overwhelmed by the serialisation of *The Holy Mountain* and at the beginning of August 1909 had descended on Sidmouth in search of the author [Reynolds]. By chance she went out to sea with Bob, discovered

Reynolds was his mate and “has been out to sea with us every day and pretty well all day since, to the considerable profit of our boats” [Reynolds to his agent Pinker: 8.8.1909]. He used her enthusiasm to try and stir Lane [publisher] to more activity on behalf of the book. “I have been taking out a good deal in one of our boats Countess Von Arnim ... and she is tremendously keen on the mountain – and goodness knows how many people she has caused to go to the local bookshop asking for it, in vain yet [Reynolds to Lane 8.8.09] Reynolds did not take easily to women with bubbling, volatile personalities, and his initial reaction to all her exuberance was somewhat withdrawn. Back in her Devon home there was a tentative note in her follow- up letter: “it was a real pleasure making friends with you. I hope it was friends we made, and not just that vague cool thing acquaintance?” She was, however, determined to cement the relationship: “Perhaps, some afternoon you’ll walk or bicycle over here – it’s only about 9 miles I think – well within the powers of a sturdy young man ... Anyhow, bless you, boy of hope and glory! [Elizabeth to Reynolds 9.08.1909]” (Scoble 209).

Unfortunately neither Reynolds’ footsteps or bicycle wheels were ever heard on the gravel of Blue Hayes, and not because it was too far. Reynolds though nothing of walking, with his dog, from his native Devizes to Sidmouth.

Elizabeth was soon to receive a review copy of *The Holy Mountain*, not one of Reynolds’ best efforts, and this gave her a chance to write a glowing letter to the author;

“It is a glorious book and you are a youth of the greatest promise ... Do not, I beg of you, waste your strength describing meritorious fishermen. They, on your showing, are already in a state of grace, compared to which we others are the merest vulgar seethers in sin ... [Elizabeth to Reynolds 18.09.1909]”. (Scoble 290)

Scoble comments that this is as far as things went, Elizabeth losing interest in Reynolds:

“A year later she had batted H.G. Wells and was writing to him in identical terms about *The New Machiavelli*, the prelude to a much more sexually promising liaison.” (Scoble 290).

This is hardly fair. Elizabeth had already left Devon by December, her husband died in the intervening period, before she met Wells, and there is no evidence Elizabeth had any sexual liaisons before her husband died. Elizabeth had indeed never lost her affection for the count – she reproached him for two main things: making her agree to have child after child until a son was born and expecting her to run a huge household in Pomerania, neither of which allowed her any time for writing. Elizabeth’s further adventures were legion, but alas took place far from the junkets and clotted cream of East Devon. She was a mistress to H. G. Wells and wife to John Francis, 2nd Earl Russell (elder brother of Bertrand Russell) – a disastrous marriage and subject of one of her novels, *Vera*. Her chalet *Soleil* in Switzerland became something of a literary centre, but the rise of fascism, her growing opposition to it and the delicate position this left some of her children in Nazi Germany, set the scene for a rather unsatisfactory and drifting later life. She died in the USA in 1941, aged 74. Von Arnim is appropriately remembered for her best-selling lighter work: *An enchanted April* and its film, radio and musical versions.

Charms, L. *Elizabeth of the German Garden* Heinemann 1959

Furbank, P.N. *E.M. Forster; A life* Mariner Books 1974

Scoble, C. *Fisherman’s Friend: A life of Stephen Reynolds 1881-1919* Devon Books 2000
Phillipe Planel

English local history - not always 'merrie'.



*John Constable 'Flatford Mill' 1816.
courtesy wikimedia commons*

"History, while predicting nothing, at least affords a means of understanding and negotiating with the present. What goes around comes around in human affairs and understanding how we arrived at any particular moment is always a salutary experience which might at least suggest what happens next. It also expands a capacity for empathy – and with an effort it can show us what we are with more brutal clarity than any therapeutic or religious system you care to name".

This is me arguing with an old school friend about the value of learning history. Or at least this is what I imagine I said.

His reply was that watching David Starkey or any other TV historian had never illuminated any part of his life as a pig farmer cum teacher of English literature; that Shakespeare got better results on empathy (and probably

history too), and that it was no great news that 'plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose' in human affairs.

I countered (I rather hope) that the stuff we learned at school wasn't very helpful in understanding the political and social issues we face today because it was only half the story.

Well, we harumphed a bit, then parked the matter. I didn't really get to set out my stall properly – you never can in the moment – all the slam-dunk lines of argument come to mind later. So I thought, begging your forgiveness, I could indulge that whim here.

The bit that was missing from what I learned at school was the story from the other end of the socio-economic spectrum – the large numbers of people who set the agendas of those in power. For reasons I'm still not clear

about, this branch of history is called social history and attempts to reconstruct the lives of those largely invisible in what was considered of interest when history began to be written. The greater ease of publishing books from the 17th century onwards spurred a wider interest in 'historical' writing and produced the first 'celebrity' historians. Thomas Macaulay for example (1800-1859) notes the lack of attention to the lower orders, but quickly forgives it...

'Nothing has yet been said of the great body of the people, of those who held the ploughs, who tended the oxen, who toiled at the looms of Norwich, and squared the Portland stone for Saint Paul's. Nor can very much be said. The most numerous class is precisely the class respecting which we have the most meagre information. In those times philanthropists did not yet regard it as a sacred duty, nor had demagogues yet found it a lucrative trade, to talk and write about the distress of the labourer. History was too much occupied with courts and camps to spare a line for the hut of the peasant or the garret of the mechanic. The press now often sends forth in a day a greater quantity of discussion and declamation about the condition of the working man than was published during the twenty-eight years which elapsed between the Restoration and the Revolution. But it would be a great error to infer from the increase of complaint that there has been any increase of misery.

(From 'The History of England from the Accession of James II' Thomas Macaulay 1848).

He did make notes about comparative wages, working conditions and death rates in the expanding cities, mostly from secondary sources, with an occasional look at parliamentary papers. In the end though, Macaulay concludes it is simply the fabulous

luck to be British that sustains the poor in contentment...

'Still more important is the benefit which all orders of society, and especially the lower orders, have derived from the mollifying influence of civilisation on the national character'. (*ibid*)

Macaulay's targets were the political writers like Cobbett, whose first-hand research highlighted the plight of the poor in his *Rural Rides*, published in 1830. The style of his work set the tone and methods for more scrupulous research later on. The documentary evidence that was required to make a decent history for those with little or no political profile was almost always to be found when they fell foul of the 'authorities'. The opportunities to find yourself in court increased dramatically in the 18th and early 19th centuries, so it was here that much more carefully documented social history of the Victorian working population began with people like the Hammonds' 'Village Labourer 1760-1832' first published in 1911, which charts the lives of agricultural workers through the peak period of the enclosure movement in agriculture and is not slow in criticising those in power pursuing self interest to the detriment of the lower orders; or G. M. Trevelyan's 'Social history of England' (1942-1944) which covers six centuries in 4 volumes.

Most rewarding among later social historians of industrialisation (for my money anyway) is E.P Thompson, whose work includes the landmark 'Making of the English Working Class' (1963) and a collection of excoriating critiques of those in positions of power through the transformative period (and extinction) of English plebeian culture between 1700 - 1850 as well as much else including essays on William Blake, peace studies and current affairs. The affliction of

being labelled a 'Marxist' historian may lead the unwary to pass over his work, but social theory is not social history and although Thompson was both theorist and historian, no self respecting local historian can afford to disregard what he has to say about what happened to the plebeian masses in the crucible of industrialisation.

So it is then, that local history – a close cousin of social history – is inevitably about less exalted figures in the past, and will depict communities regulated by the needs of a distant and often unsympathetic elite, and who were thus often hard pressed to exert influence over their own destinies. They appear as a naturally belligerent and unruly bunch. They were most certainly that on occasion and with good cause, for they had much to lose and among those losses is much that was specifically local in character – customs and folklore prominent among them. That story is as important as tracing manoeuvres at the top end of politics. The DHS has inherited a duty to pursue these lost manners and secure them for future generations. This is not driven by sentimentality or nostalgia – it is a cultural imperative in societies where social change is rapid, and social mores difficult to hold on to from generation to generation.

Chris Wakefield

Note: An awareness of substantial gaps in my understanding of the period of the industrial revolution led me to ask Professor Henry French to sketch the territory in which I was loitering with intent. His reply was swift and fulsome, and offers a valuable map for the social historical explorer. I found it useful and I think many of you will too. See Next column...

Social and Local history - a broader picture

I see the origins of social history (which is not the same as local history – it's risky conflating the two) in the late 19th century. After Macaulay's generation, the study of history began to be professionalised within universities. Oxford & Cambridge tended to focus on political & constitutional history (Macaulay's 'courts and camps') with historians such as J. A. Froude or Lord Acton, although Arnold Toynbee and James Thorold Rogers at Oxford researched economic and social history, while the emergent London School of Economics and University of Manchester started research into economic history, including subjects like the history of poverty.

To some extent, economic history overlapped with the Fabians, such as the Hammonds, Beatrice & Sidney Webb, and R. H. Tawney. They produced a lot of research into poverty, labouring poor and the emergence of capitalism before and after WWI, with an early flourishing of women's history under the influence of the suffragist movement with historians such as Alice Clark and Ivy Pinchbeck.

E. P. Thompson represents the next generation, sometimes dismissed (by J. C. D. Clark) as the 'class of 1917' – historians such as Christopher Hill, Eric Hobsbawm and Thompson, who came out of the historians' group of the Communist Party of Great Britain after WW2, and who were born around 1917. They helped inspire both the emergence of Labour History (particularly the history of the working class and early trade unionism) and what came to be termed the 'New' Social History of the 1960s, that took up Christopher Hill's idea of researching 'the world turned upside down'.

This 'New' Social history was also expanded by scholars wanting to copy the demographic history of the post-WW2 French Annales School (notably through Peter Laslett & Tony Wrigley's researches on Colyton), and then a generation of scholars who came to university in the late 1960s who wanted to research 'history from below' in all kinds of different ways – the histories of crime, religion, dissent, marriage & the family, illegitimacy, social conflict etc etc. Many of these did so through detailed local case studies, but this is what J. D. Marshall described as 'national history localised' rather than local history per se.

I see the origins of local history in historians' efforts to try to uncover not just the history of a particular social phenomenon, but also to set it in the rather elusive historical 'sense of place', by discovering what was particular about historical experience in a particular location, as it was influenced by the things that rendered that place distinctive (landscape, settlement patterns, manorialism, local religious affiliations, customs etc). Obviously, one of the fathers of this approach was

W. G. Hoskins, and this school flourished at University of Leicester during Hoskins' time in the 1950s and 1960s, along with the other historian of Devon, H. P. R. Finberg. Although Joyce Youings' interests were primarily in political & religious history, one could see her in the same light in relation to Elizabethan Devon.

These days this kind of academic local history has largely merged into social history, and historians have become slightly wary of Hoskins' style of 'sense of place' because it can involve a search for slightly nostalgic/sentimental echoes of a 'merry England'-style past (for example, see Matthew Johnson's criticism of Hoskins), and because the efforts to define localities or regions tended to produce no clear patterns, or contradictory results. The search for local regions continues most strongly in the study of landscape history and vernacular architecture, where identifying regional patterns remains very important.

Henry French



Thomas Macaulay (1800-1859) historian.



W.G.Hoskins (1908-1992) Local historian

Two Bishops of Exeter and their Worlds: Leofric and John Grandisson

**Catherine Rider and Sarah
Hamilton, University of Exeter,
Centre for Medieval Studies**

We are in the early stages of putting together a project which studies two bishops of Exeter, Leofric (d. 1072) and John Grandisson (d. 1369) and the social, cultural and religious context in which they operated. As part of this we are interested in examining Exeter Cathedral's impact on the local area as well as drawing comparisons with other cathedrals and bishops (for example, Wells) and exploring the ways in which cathedrals could act as focuses for intellectual, devotional and creative innovation in their areas.

Leofric and Grandisson are significant figures in the history of Exeter Cathedral and of the local area. Both left significant libraries, remnants of which can still be seen today in the Cathedral's library (as well as in other British libraries), as did other individuals in their chapters; these have potential for digitisation. Grandisson also began a major building project in the Cathedral, as well as rebuilding much of the church at Ottery St Mary (which included its own school and

library). These two bishops were also active at the beginning, and the end, of an important period in English religious history, in which the roles of the bishop and chapter changed significantly. They would therefore allow us to explore issues of continuity and change in the social history of south west across a period of some three centuries, as well as explore the roles of medieval cathedrals as centres of culture and devotion.

The aim is ultimately to put together an application for an AHRC Research Project Grant focusing on Exeter Cathedral (and perhaps others such as Wells) and its impact on the locality.

As part of the planning we would like to talk to local heritage organisations, in order to scope out how our research could help them to develop the heritage potential of Exeter and the surrounding area. We will be holding a workshop in January/February 2018 (date tbc) to discuss this, and we have funding to pay for travel expenses for participants based outside Exeter. At this stage we're seeking expressions of interest from any local organisation which would like to send a representative to the workshop. For this and for any other queries/comments, please contact Catherine Rider: c.r.rider@exeter.ac.uk

Child Labour in an Ottery St Mary Factory in Victorian Times

Whilst researching education in Ottery St Mary between 1830 and 1870 as part of the recent Devon History Society project, I came across an illuminating article in a newspaper. Whilst just outside the period of our study I felt it was worth including.

Children as wage earners

Whilst lacemaking at home was an important source of income for women and girls in the town and outlying villages, it was not the only source of income for children. Ottery had a large silk mill which employed both boys and girls. The National Gazetteer of Great Britain and Ireland (1868) comments that, 'there is an extensive silk factory, chiefly for the manufacture of shoe ribbons and handkerchiefs of excellent quality – employs about 400 hands.'

Finding out how many children were amongst the workers at the Ottery silk mill was tricky. Searching the town's census figures each ten years reveals workers, but possibly not all the workforce. Nevertheless the 1841 census return for Ottery shows 186 silk workers altogether, 34 of them children (boys and girls), the youngest aged six. The 1861 census has 151 workers with thirteen children aged thirteen and under. A newspaper article in the Western Times, 23 February 1850, mentions forty or fifty boys and girls employed in the factory.

Children in factories worked very long hours, and in 1833, 1844 and 1847, Factory Acts cut hours of employment and increased hours of education given. Some evidence indicates silk mills skirted round some of the laws brought in to protect children by claiming that silk mills were less injurious to health than cotton mills. Cynically it might be said that this was more to protect the parlous state of the silk industry than children's health. It does not appear that the Ottery factory had any provision for learning, such as a school room.

It was common practice to employ poor children to work in factories. Working class families would welcome the income. This was actually an improvement on the apprentice system of the late 1700s when pauper children from workhouses and orphanages provided much of the workforce in factories, more or less for the cost of their keep; no wages being paid.

Whilst the silk industry declined from 1860 with cheaper imports, this was not the end of the industry as a newspaper article from 1873 shows:

At a meeting of the Lambeth guardians a letter was read from a firm of silk and lace weavers at Ottery St Mary, stating they were in want of 300 hands, and if the guardians had any spare available labour they would be glad of a reply. The letter went on to state that there were cottages in the village where the children could be lodged and looked after by the superintendents of the mills. Girls were required between the ages of 11 and 16, the wages to commence at 4s per week with a prospective increase with age and ability. It was resolved that the letter should be referred to the superintendent of the parish schools, who might prepare a report stating the number of children who were fit and willing to go as an experiment.

24 January 1873 – Western Daily Press, (Bristol)

Compulsory Education

Matters began to move forward however, in 1869, when the recently formed National Education League began its campaign for free, compulsory and non-religious education for all children.

The issue of making education compulsory for children had not been settled by the Act. The 1876 Royal Commission on the Factory Acts recommended that education be made compulsory in order to stop child labour. In 1880 a further Education Act finally made



Ottery St Mary factory c.1900 C. Saunders Collection

school attendance compulsory between the ages of five and ten, though by the early 1890s attendance within this age group was only 82 per cent.

Many children worked outside school hours - in 1901 the figure was put at 300,000 - and truancy was a major problem due to the fact that parents could not afford to give up income earned by their children.

The Education Act of 1870 was the first of a number of acts of parliament passed between 1870 and 1893 to create compulsory education in England and Wales for children aged between five and 13. It was known as The Forster Act after its sponsor William Forster.

Further research is needed to find out if the plan to import child labour into Ottery came to pass, but it surely comments on how children were viewed at this time, that they would be brought in from poorer districts and presumably forgo an education that their new contemporaries would be getting.

How local schools viewed working children

Relying on the Ottery School Log Books for information means relying on a particular head

teacher or their stand in. Some teachers give more mention to individuals than others. Lacemakers are only detailed by a few and no record at all is made of silk workers. A head teacher from time to time agrees to part time schooling for girl lace makers, no comment on silk factory workers is evident.

It seems that there was some sympathy for families that needed their children to bring money into the home.

Fate of the Ottery silk mill

By 1885 the silk mill contents were up for sale and the factory was for let. By the 1891 census the factory is working again, manufacturing brushes. Children of thirteen years upwards are employed.

Sources

Census returns from <https://www.freecen.org.uk> and <https://www.ancestry.co.uk> The National Gazetteer of Great Britain and Ireland (1868) from <http://www.genuki.org.uk> Factory Acts information from <http://www.parliament.uk> Regulation and the Health of Child Workers in the Mid-Victorian Silk Industry, Tom McCunnie, available online at: http://www.localpopulationstudies.org.uk/PDF/LPS74/Article_3_McCunnie_pp54-74.pdf or click [here](#).

Sue Dymond

New book portrays 'wild and wondrous'

Dartmoor through art

A book that tells the story of Dartmoor, as seen through the eyes of eighteenth and nineteenth century artists, has recently been published. Researched and written by Peter F. Mason, *Dartmoor, a wild and wondrous region – the portrayal of Dartmoor in art, 1750 - 1920*, accompanies the eponymous exhibition running at RAMM until 1st April 2018.

The largest of its kind in a generation, the exhibition includes oil paintings, watercolours, early photographs and postcards from RAMM's own collection as well as loans from British museums and private collections, many of which have rarely been seen in public before. Illustrating the book, and bringing Peter F. Mason's research to life, are a number of colour images from the exhibition.

The exhibition and book tell the story of how Dartmoor was perceived through the eyes of artists. Described as 'squalida Montana Dertmore' by William Camden in

the sixteenth century and as a 'dreary mountainous tract' by Richard Gough in the eighteenth century, the moor eventually became the epitome of the 'picturesque' and the public's view was forever transformed. From the arrival of the railway and resultant influx of tourists to the sublime landscapes and depictions of Dartmoor life, these aspects were captured by artists such as JMW Turner, Samuel Palmer and William and EJ Widgery, the latter catering specifically for visitors arriving by rail to Newton Abbot, Bovey Tracey, Lustleigh and Moretonhampstead.

The book and exhibition are part of the In the footsteps of the Victorians project – one of twenty-eight heritage projects under the aegis of the Heritage Lottery Fund-supported Moor than meets the eye Landscape Partnership Scheme.

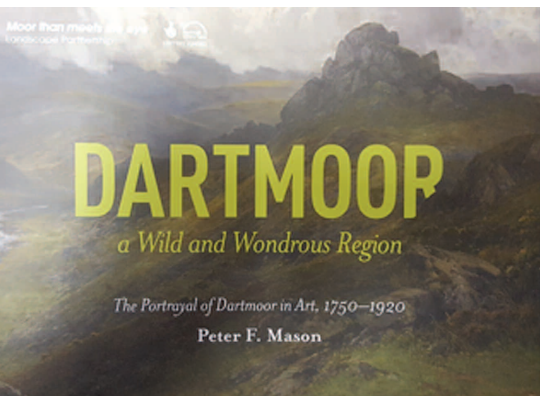
The book, *Dartmoor, a Wild and Wondrous Region* is available to buy from Dartmoor National Park Visitor Centres, priced at £9.95.

For more information, please visit www.moorthanmeetstheeye.org

The Moor than meets the eye Landscape Partnership

is helping people to discover the Dartmoor Story; a landscape forged by nature and shaped by people from prehistoric times to today. It is bringing people together to explore Dartmoor's past, conserve its wildlife and archaeology, improve understanding of the landscape and share and develop the skills to look after it for generations to come.

The Moor than meets the eye Landscape Partnership Scheme has received funding of



£1.9 million from the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and is now in the 4th of 5 years.

The organisations that form the partnership are: Dartmoor National Park, Dartmoor Farmers' Association, Dartmoor Preservation Association, Dartmoor Commoners' Council, Devon County Council, Duchy of Cornwall, Historic England, Forestry Commission, Natural England, South West Lakes Trust, RSPB, Visit Dartmoor and the Woodland Trust.

The Moor than meets the eye Landscape Partnership area covers 280 sq km of central and south east Dartmoor and is one of the UK's finest examples of a palimpsest – a landscape on which layer upon layer of human activity has left a mark. Its unique character has been shaped over millennia ensuring that people and place are intrinsically linked.

More information about the general scheme and other projects is available from Andy Bailey Community Officer 01822 890903 / andy@moorthanmeetstheeye.org or visit the website www.moorthanmeetstheeye.org

The old Duchy Hotel in Princetown. Now the High Moorland Visitor Centre and home of the Moor than meets the eye Landscape Partnership exhibition. Pic: Google Streetview



IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE VICTORIANS

Aspects of change in the Wrey Valley and surrounding area, 1837 – 1901

In the footsteps of the Victorians has seen volunteers from communities across Dartmoor, research the history of the Wrey Valley and surrounding area on the eastern edge of Dartmoor during the nineteenth and early twentieth century, with a particular focus on the social and economic changes brought about by the arrival of the railway in the 1860s.

The book contains essays on subjects including, 'The Coming of the railway', 'Eastern Dartmoor in the Victorian guidebook & newspaper', 'Population changes in the Wrey Valley', 'Occupational Survey of Chagford, 1851 – 1901', 'The Victorian High Street', 'Social Life, Celebrations, and Leisure Activities in the Wrey Valley', 'Mining and Quarrying in the Wrey Valley', 'Changes in the built environment and landscape of the Parish of Lustleigh', 'Lustleigh schools and schoolchildren in the reign of Victoria' and 'The contribution of the Divett family to the growth of Victorian Bovey.'

In the footsteps of the Victorians will be published in May. Further details from Peter F. Mason, Chairman, the Lustleigh Society: peter@moormasons.plus.com

Peter Mason

Book Reviews



Nigel Hyman, (2017)

Richmond House to Sidholme

Sidmouth Museum and Sid Vale Association, 54pp., 75

colour photos/illustrations

Softback; ISBN 978-0-9934814-3-7, £4.00

There is no doubting Sidmouth Residents' affection for their built environment. The history of the town as a tourist destination has bequeathed them a housing stock seldom older than late 18th century, which are often large and unusual, courtesy of the early touristic visitors, often very well-heeled, who wished to stay by the sea for a season as opposed to a weekend. Blue plaques abound in the town and the booklet here reviewed is by no means alone in offering a dedicated and detailed examination of one of Sidmouth's heritage treasures.

Sidholme is new to me. I know Sidmouth reasonably well, but I was in trouble placing this particular edifice, and there's little help in the booklet itself. The maps that do appear assume the location is well known enough to forgo a location plan. Doubtless most readers of this booklet will not consider one necessary, but for the sake of completeness – which is much in evidence in every other aspect of the publication – it would have been useful.

Putting that minor difficulty aside, the book is comprehensive in scope, and Nigel Hyman has done well to produce it in the two years he mentions in the introductory notes. It is printed in full colour throughout its fifty-two pages plus covers, with copious amounts of photographic and other illustrative material to complement the close set text. Its design might thereby suggest some confusion about

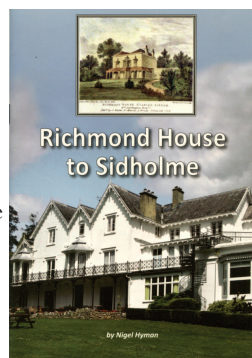
its purpose. The contents, in my view, merit a more opulent production – it is in essence (and I apologise for an overworked metaphor) a coffee-table book, but at present it is hiding as a guidebook.

The form may be open to question but the contents not so. The author has offered a fulsome historical account of the structure and development of the house and its occupants from the moment it was built by William Barrett in the early 1800s, through its many adaptations and extensions, each described in detail, to the present day, set in the context of work still in progress for its continuing restoration and utility. These changes were made by a raft of aristocratic and genteel families during the 19th and early 20th century, and later (from 1930 onward) by Wesley Guild Holidays, who converted Sidholme to a faith-based holiday venue for young Methodists, the third centre of its kind to be established in the British Isles.

It survived military requisitioning during the second world war and returned to its former use in the post-war period. All the people involved in the many changes, together with their friends and families, are also recorded in detail enough to paint a fairly decent social history of Sidmouth over an extended period.

Any history of a single local building will necessarily appeal to a limited audience, but Nigel Hyman's careful attention to the social and historical context of Sidholme's presence in Sidmouth offers a wider interest which distinguishes it in the genre.

Chris Wakefield





Clergy of the Church of England Database (CCED)

You may well know of the existence of this web-site. It is a project to record all the known Anglican clergy (CoE and CoE in Wales) between 1541 and 1835. It is an impressive work-in-progress. You can search the site in two principal ways – by surname and by place. The Exeter detail is pretty complete for the period 1800-1835; that for the eighteenth century and earlier is patchy, and much more work needs to be done on listing and identifying individual clergy.

I have built up my own data-base of clergy in the diocese 1800-51 and have well over three thousand names of men who worked in the diocese in one capacity or another. One of the interesting things is the numbers of clergy from elsewhere who clearly holidayed in the county – the sea air and sea-bathing were considered therapeutic – and then found themselves used by the local parish priests for baptisms and funerals. The south coast was particularly attractive, and there was also a

little cluster at Ilfracombe, where the tunnel beaches were developed in the 1820s.

I am now turning my attention to the eighteenth-century clergy in the diocese. Having tackled a bare minimum of sources (and not yet having used the obvious ones – the bishops' registers and the ordination books) I have already indentified dozens of clergy who have yet to find their way in the CCED.

Local research is especially helpful here in distinguishing between the two Bickleighs in Devon, between Whitstone (Cornwall) and Whitstone (Devon), the two Poughills (one in each county, and between Tavistock and Tawstock (which when hand-written can easily be misread).

Have a look at the data yourself and if you have any queries about individual clergy, especially in the years between 1750 and 1850, do please feel you can e-mail me at acjtherectory@btinternet.com

<http://theclergydatabase.org.uk/>

Andrew Jones

Conference extras

Broadclyst Schools wins first ever Devon History Society Primary School History Prize

Children from Broadclyst Community Primary School were awarded the Society's first Primary School History prize in November. Chairman Andrew Jones and Secretary Viv Styles made the presentation during the school's remembrance Day assembly on 10 November.

The children impressed the judges with their scrapbook on the history of Broadclyst. Year 2 children investigated old school records and photographs from the 1950s to research what it would have been like to be a pupil at the school at that time. They also interviewed a local resident who had attended the school in the 1950s. They then used their research to

create their own diary entries imagining themselves as pupils of the time.

Year 4 pupils looked at what life would have been like in Broadclyst itself when the school was first opened in the early 1800s. They went on a historical walk around the village, took pictures, and wrote descriptions about Clyston Mill, St John the Baptist Church, Marker's Cottage, and the parish's rural farmland.

Secretary Viv Styles commented "We were very impressed by the standard of work overall and by the emphasis on the history of the village, as well as the diary entries of school life in the 1950s. The illustrations were delightful, too."

Headteacher, Jonathan Bishop, added "We are very proud of the children, who have been able to learn and understand real history through this project-based approach to learning."

Information about this year's Primary School Prize is currently being circulated to schools across the county.

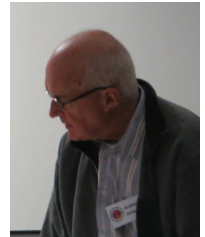
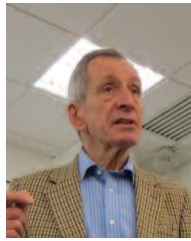
Ann Bond

Left: DHS chairman Andrew Jones with Viv Styles (DHS Secretary - centre) and Victoria Hill, the teacher in charge of the project at the school.





Top: the history group who did the work and below some pages from their report.



Speakers in action (passport photos l to r): Bruce Coleman, Jonathan Doney, Julia Neville, Jan Wood, Judy Moss, Jackie Bryon, Helen Turnbull, Mike Sampson, Andrew Jones. Below: Jane Bliss, Frances Billinge.

Top left: Book of the year joint winner Tom Greeves. (joint winner Jannine Crocker was unable to attend the AGM) Above: W.G.Hoskins Prize winner Pauline Vass. Far right: W.G.Hoskins Prize highly commended - Elly Babbedge. (Also highly commended was Freddy Huxtable who was unable to attend the AGM).





Way of the Wharves

This is a new and exciting project from Bideford Bay Creatives, running until November 2018. Funded by The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), it is run by a group of volunteers from both sides of the river. We are discovering and celebrating local and historical connections to Brunswick Wharf and the Port of Bideford from early maritime history through to the present day. This could include fishing, shipbuilding and pottery and the connections to Newfoundland, America and other overseas trade.

The group meet regularly to research, devise, plan and put in place a programme of activities for 2018. We welcome and encourage new people to join us and add your knowledge, stories, time or help. Training is available with plenty of tea and cake!

If you are interested and would like to know more, message us, visit the website at www.bbcdevon.org , email project@bbcdevon.org or telephone Anthony on 07870 631358.

Anthony Burt, Project Co-ordinator

Way of the Wharves is affiliated to the DHS

**Stories of
Exeter's
War Hospitals
1914-1919**

Nurses of Passchendaele:

a public history project

Talk by Professor Christine Hallett, Chair of the UK
Association of the History of Nursing

Thursday April 26 at 5.30 pm at Reed Hall,
University of Exeter



Official war artist Paul Nash. Image courtesy of Manchester Art Galleries

'Wounded of Passchendaele' by

Image from stereocard of Passchendaele
courtesy of the **Bill Douglas Centre, University of Exeter**

Christine Hallett will talk about her recent public engagement project raising questions about the purpose and methods of the co-creation of history using partnerships between professional historians, archivists and the public. If you're interested in public history or the history of nursing and would like to come to the lecture, please get in touch with Julia Neville, j.f.neville@btinternet.com for further information.