

DEVON HISTORY NEWS

Devon History Society Newsletter

February 2021. No. 27



Salmon fishing on the Exe

See **Devon in the 1920s** inside *(photo courtesy of Topsham Museum)*

From the Chairman

Changes afoot

The Council of the Society has agreed to some restructuring which should make the running of the Society leaner, meaner and fitter. A core of no more than six officers will undertake the day-to-day business of the Society and will have no specific meeting dates planned (other than having to meet quarterly). This means that the chairman can call meetings 'as and when' – all made possible, of course, by the ubiquitous Zoom which has transformed all our meetings.

The Council is especially keen to involve you, our members, in the work of the Society – this applies especially to our affiliated societies. We want this Newsletter to become *your* forum for sharing with us all what your society is doing. I do hope that you will respond positively: it would be good to know what research you are involved in, what projects you are undertaking. The Newsletter is available to you for short articles updating us all.

In due course, hopefully at our next AGM, we shall present a new constitution for your approval. Our present constitution was drawn up 50 years ago and has long ceased to reflect the age we now live in.

Covid 19

While I hope that all our members have managed to avoid the ravages of the virus, I can imagine that some of you will have had deeply distressing experiences. I send you my good wishes for a better year ahead.

Andrew Jones



News from the Reviews Editor

I have recently received two recent publications which might be of interest to DHS members. They are:

Buscombe or, A Michaelmas Goose, by R.D. Blackmore, edited by Douglas Rice. This is a new edition of a long-neglected poem by the author of **Lorna Doone**. It is on sale at the Tiverton Museum of Mid-Devon Life or by post, price £7, including post and packing. Cheques to be made payable to Douglas Rice, Lower Hazel Books, 40 Tidcombe Lane, Tiverton, EX16 4EQ.

A Lympstone Lad: the Life and Times of Jim Squire, Fisherman, by Tony Day. Lympstone History Society has published this story of a Devon estuary village after the War, and one of its great characters, Jim Squire. Obtainable from Lympstone History Society, Clays, The Strand, Lympstone, Exmouth, EX8 5JR, for £6.65 which includes post and packing. Cheques payable to the Lympstone History Society.

Mitzi Auchterlonie - Book Reviews Editor, *The Devon Historian*.

mitziauchterlonie@gmail.com

The Devon Historian

A Whole-Hogger in Honiton

Due to an unfortunate misunderstanding, the article, 'A Whole-Hogger in Honiton: How Clive Morrison-Bell became a Member of Parliament in 1910' by Paul Auchterlonie, published in The Devon Historian 90 (2020) 69–81, has six incorrect references, relating to the Morrison-Bell Scrapbooks held by the Devon and Exeter Institution. Readers who wish to have the correct references should make the following amendments to their copy:

Note 29 should read: DEI/MOR, I, 11.

Note 31 should read: DEI/MOR, I, 0. [the newspaper article is pasted onto the inside cover]

Note 45 should read: DEI/MOR, I, 26.

Note 59 should read: DEI/MOR, I, 169.

Note 60 should read: DEI/MOR, I, 169.

Note 62 should read: DEI/MOR, I, 132.

Paul Auchterlonie

Editorial

This column has been abandoned for quite a few editions now. Economy of space became essential in the late paper period of the Newsletter, to accommodate more important, useful and interesting things. I had already shrunk the text size in the News as far as I dared, increasingly anxious that some members would struggle to read it. Neither was there an option to expand the number of pages further – postage having almost reached parity with printing in per-unit cost of the mag even in its tightly compacted form. Now, with one almighty leap into fully digital publishing, I can cast away my blue pencil and Blitzkrieg over page after page with never the least concern over how much 'space' I have occupied.

You may think this not an entirely good thing. It may indeed encourage those (myself included) who can easily become one of Disraeli's exuberant inebriates. But on a practical level, there is now the huge benefit of space for affiliates to say their pieces and sport their wares to all of Devon and beyond, and this edition welcomes contributions from Teign Valley, Lustleigh, Sampford Peverell, Newton St Cyres, Way of the Wharves, Topsham, Widecombe, Woodbury, Harberton and Moretonhampstead. Thanks are due to Abi Gray for persuading you to send notes from the front during the pandemic. It is truly impressive to see how quickly and easily you have adapted to a new age of remote communications. I have already browsed the digital goods on display, and I hope that affiliates and members will make regular contact with the News in this way – you can bet that what you are doing in your neck of the woods is of wider interest – and cross fertilisation is as good for history as it is for botany.

Finally – a bit late maybe, but here's wishing you all a rewarding and healthy 2021.

Chris Wakefield

Devon in the 1920s Project Launch and Programme



Postponed from March last year when it was axed by lockdown, the launch of the Devon in the 1920s project will now take place (by Zoom) on **Saturday 24 April 2021, between 10.00 and 12.30.** (Details of booking arrangements are covered elsewhere.)

Our guest speaker at the launch will be **Dr Stefan Goebbel** of the University of Kent, who will set the scene for us with a talk on the **'Aftermath of the War'**, the long shadows cast by war time experiences over the early 1920s. **Professor Henry French, Penny Lawrence and Peter Mason** will introduce some of the questions we will be exploring during the research project: what happened on the big estates, what happened in farming communities, and how did Devon's tourist attractions develop in the 1920s. This event is open to everyone, whether or not they plan to contribute to the research project, but we will

provide a slot at the end specifically to discuss plans for taking forward the research.

The second 'Devon in the 1920s' event in the programme has a focus on the use of sources. **David Pinder** will address, again by Zoom, one of the key areas of 1920s development, the water supply, in a talk on **'Devon's rural water supplies in the 1920s: what can Wembury's experience tell us?'** This is an evening talk at **19.00 on Thursday 4 May.**

The third event in the first half-year of the DHS programme takes place by Zoom on the morning of **Saturday 5 June, 10.00 to 12.30.** This is an introduction to the research theme of **Tourism and Leisure.** **Peter Mason, Kevin Dixon and Paul Cleave** are the principal speakers, covering tourism and leisure on Dartmoor and in Torquay, together with a look at the provision and enjoyment of food.

Although we deferred the launch of the programme last year, research is already under way in some areas and we would be delighted if more people would volunteer to get involved. Do you have family who lived in Devon in the 1920s? If so, we would like to add their story – whether a full history or a few memories – to our collection. Are you interested in what life was like in your own community in the 1920s? Have you an interest in a particular aspect of 1920s history – anything from the arrival of the wireless to the history of new housing estates or the development of the golf club?

If you can help our researches, even in a small way, please get in touch with me for a (virtual!) discussion.

Julia Neville

j.f.neville@btinternet.com

How Much LOCAL HISTORY Do Children Know?

In many ways this is a stupid question because the answer is simply “it varies enormously” but at least school-age children do have the opportunity to learn about their locality. In many respects, one can thank the introduction of the National Curriculum for that some 30 years ago. Prior to that, even the teaching of history let alone local history was a hit and miss affair. Local history ranged from none to largely the pupils’ whole history experience.

The National Curriculum at least provided some requirement to cover history both in primary and secondary schools. Pupils were divided into what became known as key stages with Key Stage 1 covering those aged 5-7, Key Stage 2 ages 7-11, Key Stage 3 ages 11-14 and Key Stage 4 ages 14-16. Local history was specifically mentioned as a requirement in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 with guidance on what might form valid local history experiences. History was not compulsory in Key Stage 4 but a sizeable number chose history as an exam subject and some of these syllabuses had a local history element – most commonly the study of a local historical site. Those pursuing history into A-level post-16 were less likely to study much local history but again a largish number chose to do a personal study and many of these chose local themes.

So on the surface, a promising scene and there is no doubt there was some excellent local history going on in many schools. In many respects though it was a patchy situation. Firstly, it tended to suffer in an overcrowded curriculum. History itself suffered somewhat in being labelled a “foundation” (read secondary) subject rather than one of the “core” (English, Maths, Science).

Even within the history curriculum, many claimed there was too much to cover with national, European and global history listed as well as ancient, medieval, early modern and modern themes. Those of us devising the first history National Curriculum faced real dilemmas. It generated more strong views from the wider public than any other school subject. A common thread amongst many of those making suggestions was that there was too much in there but they immediately followed it up with “but you should also include.....”.

In short, local history was included but its position was precarious for a number of reasons. The National Curriculum statutory requirements never defined how much time should be devoted to teaching any subject and certainly not elements within a subject. Local history was often given tokenistic consideration compared with some elements. Also not every teacher felt confident about teaching local history. In fact, with the National Curriculum a novel experience for all, teachers unsurprisingly fell back on a raft of new textbooks specifically designed for local history. The problem is that local history books are not a commercial proposition for many publishers. There were huge sales of listed topics such as the Romans or Tudors (I know; I am fortunate to still be receiving royalties 30 years later) but this does not work for local history.

Another issue is teacher awareness. Fine if you as a teacher are in a part of the country that you are familiar with but many teachers found jobs far away from their home area. Surveys suggested that teaching history was one of their favourite subjects and

within this local history but for many getting to grips with local history was a big ask in a busy schedule.

As we moved into the 21st century, there was the added complication that the increasing number of academies that replaced local authority-run schools did not have to follow the National Curriculum at all. Admittedly many did so (partly because of resources and also exam syllabuses linked to these topics) but it was not mandatory. Coupled with the fact that the support infrastructure such as local authority advisers, local training courses, posts such as archive education officers and local study librarians were phased out and school visits becoming increasingly difficult for many all jeopardised local history in many schools.

And yet there is much to be cheerful about and the future looks promising.

- a) History as a whole remains one of the most popular subjects in the school curriculum amongst teachers and pupils. Although giving emphasis to core subjects, there is often keenness amongst school leaders to offer a broad and balanced curriculum and history is a prominent part of that.
- b) The large reduction in curriculum support has been replaced by alternatives. Not the least is digital support. Hard copy local history books may not have been popular but digital resources provide a plentiful supply not just of archival documents but also teaching ideas. Digital approaches also allow schools to more easily get together to share ideas and resources. Social media has allowed teaching communities to collaborate, share ideas and access resources that would not have been possible in the past.
- c) A glance at local history in schools a few years ago would have shown up some excellent work but a fairly narrow range. In many schools, it was often not an area in its own right but merely used to illustrate national events, eg. in the Civil War this is what happened locally. The range of sources used was restricted – the main ones being the census, old newspapers, school log books, directories and pictorial images including photographs. There was also some use of transcripts such as medieval court rolls. Many children saw local history sources only in the form of short gobbets. Now, thanks largely to technology, pupils can see a much wider range of sources and above all see what they looked like.
- d) One of the most exciting developments is the expansion of local history themes in schools. Partly as a result of the National Curriculum there has been more involvement with earlier topics including pre-Roman and medieval times. In line with the wider movement, schools are starting to address the more “hidden” aspects of the past including some of the more sensitive issues such as the role of the locality in the slave trade. Themes such as migration have become more mainstream and schools have often jumped at the opportunity to become involved in particular anniversaries such as the suffragette movement and the winning of the vote, World War I and VE day. There is an increasing emphasis on diversity in history.
- e) Despite the recent covid restrictions, schools are being encouraged to be more outward looking and involved in their communities. For example, pupils have been involved with oral history projects with elderly people in their

community. Schools sometimes form links with local history societies. Many schools invite people from the community to talk to the pupils such as about their reminiscences or their work as local archivist or community archaeologist. Strong links are encouraged with parents and this has often resulted in out-of-school activities such as family visits to local sites.

- f) Local and national organisations have been keen to be supportive of schools. Those such as the British Association of Local History and the Historical Association provide guidance and resources. This is reinforced by positive endorsement of good practice in local history such as by Ofsted and through the Historical Association's Quality Mark. A few societies award prizes for local history work in schools and organisations such as English Heritage offer competitions and free entry for children to help foster involvement in their local historical environment.

Tim Lomas

(Tim Lomas is secretary of the DHS and a former education inspector. He was also a member of the History Task Group which produced the first National Curriculum).

Archives During Lockdown *(Parts Two and Three)*

When I last wrote for the DHS newsletter in July 2020, the Devon Heritage Centre was preparing to reopen after being closed for several months. Between early August and November, when we were again forced to close, we felt that our more limited but 'Covid secure' service worked quite well, and we hope that anyone who used the Centre would agree. Now, after a brief further reopening before Christmas we are locked down again with no firm idea of when we will next be open.

However, as before, the periods of lockdown have not meant that staff have been inactive, although some have been furloughed for varying periods of time. At the moment staff are working from home nearly all the time, with a few members of staff who specialise in certain areas of work going in to keep up to date with orders for documentary research and digitisation and to check on the building's fabric and security. Irene Andrews, the Archives and Local Studies Manager has been working on updating our records of the locations of our documents, and Gary Knaggs has been doing similar work at the North Devon Record Office in Barnstaple. Other staff who are ordinarily based at the Heritage Centre but are now in locations as far apart as Kenn and Kidderminster, are keeping up to date with the large volume of remote enquiries that we are continuing to receive.

Other notable developments include the fact that we have taken on a new member of staff under the National Archives' Bridging the Digital Gap programme. Bridging the Digital Gap is designed to assist local archive services to tackle the critical issue of preserving and enabling access to all kinds of digital records, from cine film to DVDs and open reel tapes to floppy disks. An important element of the programme is that the staff who are recruited have no previous experience of working in archives, and, as you might imagine, tend to have a level of technological knowledge and expertise well beyond the scope of most archivists! Our trainee, who will be with us for the next year and a half, is Cade Simpson, a young man who lives in Barnstaple but who

will mainly work at the Heritage Centre in Exeter when the current lockdown ends. Much of Cade's work will be connected with another project we are involved with, which is the British Library's Unlocking Our Sound Heritage scheme, through which regional hubs are assisting with the digitisation of sound archives held in local archive offices.

An aspect of cultural life which has been revolutionised over the past year has been the way in which all kinds of meetings, presentations and performances have gone online, and more and more people are receptive to accessing them in this way. The South West Heritage Trust has already staged a number of successful online events, and a series of 'Lockdown Lectures' is taking place in February and March. Details of these are on the South West Heritage Trust website (<https://swheritage.org.uk/>), but I would particularly like to draw readers' attention to the talk on **18 March** by the well-known Devon historian and archivist Ian Mortimer, who will be talking about Regency Britain, the subject of his most recent book.

I hope that everyone is staying healthy and reasonably content during this exceptionally difficult time. We look forward to seeing some of you later this year when we are once again open to the public.

Brian Carpenter

Devon Archives and Local Studies Service

New Chair for DHS

I shall be standing down as chairman in Oct 2021, after six years in office. I am very pleased to let members know that our new chairperson from October will be Katherine Findlay. Many of you will have met or come across Katherine as the leader of the 'Devon Remembers' project, covering the county in the first World War. Katherine will bring to the Society a breath of fresh air, experience of running complex projects, many contacts, and a knowledge and understanding of Devon and its history. I'll ask Katherine to 'introduce' herself more fully in the Autumn Newsletter

Andrew Jones

Discovery of thousands of pieces of fabric gives historians a rare glimpse into fashions of the past

The discovery of thousands of pieces of 18th century fabric has given historians a rare glimpse into fashion hundreds of years ago.

Experts are analysing the most extensive surviving collection of Devon-made cloth, discovered in one of the largest London-based archives of its kind.

The sample book contains 2,475 pieces of fabric made in the county in the 1760s. It has been unused for hundreds of years, so the colours and patterns remain vibrant.

Cloth production was the single greatest industry in Devon from 1300 to 1800, with Exeter internationally renowned for its manufacture and trade. Until now there was little evidence of the quality, range and vibrancy of cloth made in the city at this time. Cloth books were common during the period but few survive.

The Pattern Book of a Wool Merchant with Connexions to Exeter was found by Dr Todd Gray, from the University of Exeter, while looking at other collections held by the City of London Corporation-owned London Metropolitan Archives. Experts from the archives have now conserved the book, and its pages have been digitised.

The book was made by Exeter merchant Claude Passavant. The fabric finished by his workforce in Exeter was exported to Italy, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands and Germany. The book was purchased by staff at the City of London Corporation in 1955 as it was believed to have belonged to a London merchant. Every sample, thought to be cloth for clothing, is dated and the cover is inscribed "Patterns from 25 March 1763 to 30 May 1764".

Claude Passavant was a Swiss Huguenot émigré who bought a London carpet workshop in 1755 and brought many of the weavers to Exeter, making the city briefly famous for carpet production, with designs influenced by those in France. Three Passavant carpets can be found in country houses across England.

Professor Catherine Rider, from the University of Exeter, has been working with Dr Gray to analyse the book. Professor Rider, who is honorary editor of the Devon & Cornwall Record Society, said: "This is perhaps the greatest archival discovery for Devon in a generation. Finally we know what Devon cloth looked like and why it was so highly prized across Europe. It is so incredible that the colours of the cloth are still so vivid. We are confident they look as they would have done a hundred years ago."

Dr Gray said: "The cloth trade was so important during this era, and Passavant would have used the book as he sold his products nationally and internationally. We don't know who later owned it, but luckily for historians it can't have been opened or used much.

"It is rare as a historian to find such a rare and well-preserved document, particularly by accident. I decided to examine other items with a Devon connection after looking at some Royal Clarence Hotel papers in the archives, and just couldn't believe it when this was among them."

Dr Gray hopes the book will be on public display in Exeter next year. It is reproduced in a new book, accompanied by analysis from expert on the fabric industry in Devon and other parts of England, which will be published next year.

Chair of the City of London Corporation's Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee, Wendy Hyde, said:

"My colleagues and I hope that this remarkable book, found in the extensive collections of our London Metropolitan Archives, will provide some valuable insights into fabric production over 250 years ago.

“Our conservators take great pride in how they protect and store the books, documents, photographs and other items in the archives and the condition in which this rare book was found certainly seems to bear this out.”

The cloth book has been published by the Devon & Cornwall Record Society with the generous financial assistance of the Exeter Canal & Quay Trust & the Aurelius Trust.

It is in hardback and available either through Boydell & Brewer at £35 or at a ‘launch price’ of £25 through Stevens Books ([www.stevensbooks](http://www.stevensbooks.com))



About the London Metropolitan Archives:

London Metropolitan Archives, which is owned and managed by the City of London Corporation, is a public research centre which specialises in the history of London. LMA cares for, and provides access to, the historical archives of businesses, schools, hospitals charities, and many other organisations in, and around, London. With over 100km of books, maps, photographs, films and documents dating back to 1067 in our strong rooms, it is proud to provide access to one of the finest city archives in the world. Its users have a wide range of research interests, including family, community and local history, and LMA also works with students, artists, producers, and architects. www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/lma London Metropolitan Archives, 40 Northampton Road, London EC1R 0HB

West of England and South Wales Women's History Network
and Devon History Society

A Symposium on Women in the 1920s

Saturday 18 September 2021, 10.30 -16.00

Exeter, venue to be confirmed

The event will take place by Zoom if restrictions on meetings are still in place

The 1920s were heavily overshadowed by the Great War. Women's experience of the war, in employment, in public and voluntary service, in bereavement and in the upheavals to family life meant that life would never be the same again. At the same time there was a positive sense of progress and change. Women had achieved – at least partially – the goal of parliamentary votes. They had begun to be active in local government. Legislation had opened up new opportunities – to be a member of parliament, a magistrate, a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons. Once-experimental technologies such as those concerned with electricity or the petrol engine came to be available to a wider group of the population. We'd like to explore the impact of these changes on women's lives in the West of England and South Wales.

Call for Expressions of Interest

The convenors would be interested in hearing from anyone undertaking research on aspects of women's lives – whether on an individual or a group of women – during the 1920s in the West of England or South Wales. We hope to create an event which will have a mix of presentations in different formats, including posters, readings and short papers.

If you are interested in participating, please email **Julia Neville**, j.neville@exeter.ac.uk by **28 February** with details about your work and the woman/women whom you could feature at this event.

Dr. W. B. Stephens

Older members of the Society will remember Dr W. B. (Bill) Stephens, a former president of the Society and a member of the faculty of history at Exeter in the 1950s and '60s.

He moved in 1967 to Leeds University Department of Education, having previously been Deputy Editor of the Victoria County Histories.

The following year, Bill founded the Journal of Educational Administration and History, together with his colleague and friend Professor Peter Gosden. He co-edited the journal until 1991. They were also joint curators of the University's Museum of the History of Education over a substantial period of time and together edited a series of education monographs.

Bill was a founder member of the Standing Committee of the School of Education which was created in 1976 from the Institute of Education and the Department of Education. He also researched and wrote about the historical aspects of literacy as part of the wider field of the history of education. He took a well-deserved early retirement in 1986.

Bill Stephens died in November last year at the advanced age of 95. He is survived by his wife to whom we send both greeting and condolence.

Andrew Jones

‘Helping with Enquiries’ – a true story

I'm sure many of you, like me, are or have been the contact point for a local history group or a project. Volunteering for this role means that you are likely receive all sorts



of questions, some appropriate, others less so. Lots come from people who want to find out information about the background to their ancestral homes, some are more arcane like the detailed location of a flying accident, or whether there is any information about the history of the bank in the High Street. Some come from students wanting help with projects or dissertations. Some are mis-targeted – I often seem to be passing people on to Devon Family History Society. Sometimes when you reply, you get thanked, sometimes silence ensues.

I want to share a story that shows why it's always worth offering contact details ... if you don't then you might miss an opportunity like this.

Bampfylde in America? Whatever next?

My name appears on the DHS website's list of local groups as the contact point for the Poltimore Estate Research Society. A few

days before Christmas I received an email from a man in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, with some photographs attached – see illustration. ‘Hello’, it began. ‘I’m attaching photos of a window pane I bought a few years ago at an antique shop here in the States...’ The writer, Ethan LaPlaca, who turned out to be a distinguished organist and music teacher, went on to say that he had finally got down to investigating what the inscription on the window pane was. The lettering referred in Latin to William and Walter Bamfylde. This had led him to investigate the Bamfylde family, whose coat of arms was featured. Google led him to Wikipedia which led him to Poltimore House which led him to me.

I promised him we would investigate, acknowledging the armorial glass looked right for our Bamfylde, and shared his pictures with colleagues. Initially I was sceptical that this could be a truly old piece of glass. It certainly didn’t look right for Poltimore House, a predominantly eighteenth century building, and my general impression was that it was a nineteenth-century mock-up created perhaps for someone who wanted to commemorate their distant Bamfylde ancestry.

How wrong I was. Whilst the appraisal Ethan sent me after Christmas showed that the surrounding glass was early twentieth century, the stained glass was indeed assessed as ‘late medieval’. Then my colleague Barbara Adams, using the resources of the internet, discovered illustrated articles in issues of the *Archaeological Journal* and *Devon and Cornwall Notes and Queries* which showed what looks very like the same window at Bamfylde House in Exeter. Bamfylde House, once described as ‘the finest sixteenth century house in existence west of Salisbury’, was one of Exeter’s treasures burned out in the Blitz in 1942. Could the windows have been removed and stored at the start of the war, like the cathedral’s Great East Window, and then, once the house was destroyed, sold on to someone in the United States?

Investigations continue. Fingers are crossed that the window passes all tests and that a permanent home for it can be found. The owner is keen that it goes ‘home’ to Exeter if possible, and is willing to make a gift of it. Watch this space for further news..

So the moral of this tale is ... be diligent in providing contact details and answering enquiries. No one would want to miss an opportunity like this!

Julia Neville

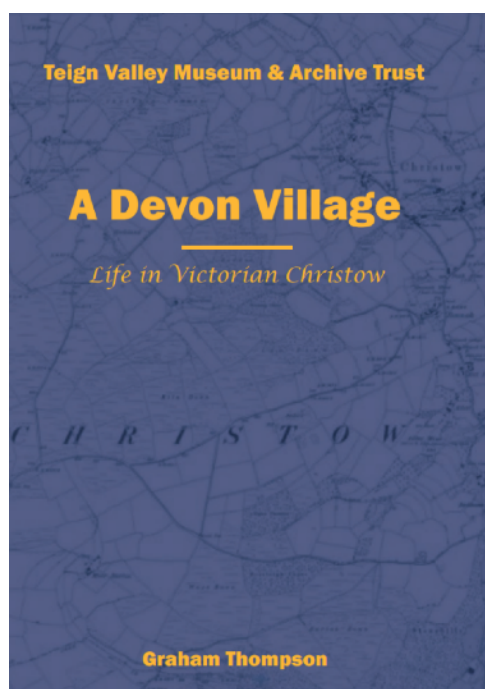
Poltimore Estate Research Society

Affiliates News

Teign Valley Museum – new publication

In the first comprehensive account of village life in Christow in the Victorian era, local author Graham Thompson has uncovered some remarkable facts.

The village contained a serial criminal who spent 17 years on and off in gaol but never seemed to learn his lesson – and a Victorian prison was no easy option. He’s also found out about the 15 year old kitchen maid who lifted herself up to become a nursing sister in Colchester, Essex at a time when such a feat was very rare, especially for a woman.



Graham has brought his forensic research skills to bear on education, entertainment, religion and crime. His latest book, *A Devon Village – Life in Victorian Christow*, explains how villagers coped with poverty and looks at the various statistics dealing with life, marriage and death.

All of this makes it an ideal companion for anyone researching their family history, but it adds much more to the life of the village, bringing to life just how people spent their time before there were phones, televisions, modern domestic appliances or cars.

All sales proceeds will go to **Teign Valley Museum & Archive Trust** operating as Teign Valley History Centre. The Trust is cataloguing and digitising its archive which has about 10,000 items and artefacts. It will run exhibitions on different subjects. When

digitising is complete anyone will be able to access our collection whilst we invite anyone to either give or loan items of interest. Our wish to create a permanent exhibition in a purpose-built building remains a key target.

Books are available from Graham Thompson,

grahamt@tvhistorycentre.org

plus Dunsford P.O. and Christow Stores. 180 pp, paperback

The Lustleigh Society

The Society has not been able to hold ‘live’ meetings since the first lockdown and the decision was taken to close the Lustleigh Community Archive. However, the AGM went on-line in January and we have arranged an online talk for February: *From Lustleigh to the World and Back Again*. Local film maker Steve Price presents a unique insight into the trials and tribulations of touring the world with classic rock group Queen over the last 6 years, playing over 200 shows to over 3.5 million people in 42 different countries. Steve takes us backstage and explains the enormous logistical endeavours and creative processes that make up one of the worlds’ biggest touring rock productions of the last decade, as well as outlining the wider ups and downs of touring life in general.

Members have also continued with research on a number of areas of local history including on what life was like in Lustleigh during the Second world War; possible connections between people memorialised in the church and slavery or colonialism; and the history of local tourism in the 1920s. The society have also been collecting material relating to how the pandemic has affected people locally.

Information on the Society can be found on the website:

<https://www.lustleigh-society.org.uk/>

Lustleigh PROGRAMME of EVENTS 2021

•Wednesday 27th January, 7.30 p.m. **Annual General Meeting**

•Wednesday 24th February, 7.30 p.m. **“From Lustleigh to the World and Back Again” Steve Price**

Local film maker Steve Price presents a unique insight into the trials and tribulations of touring the world with classic rock group Queen over the last 6 years, playing over 200 shows to over 3.5 million people in 42 different countries. Steve takes us backstage and explains the enormous logistical endeavours and creative processes that make up one of the worlds’ biggest touring rock productions of the last decade, as well as outlining the wider ups and downs of touring life in general.

The January and February events will be held on-line. Details of how to access these meetings will be circulated in advance.

After this a decision will be made on a month by month basis as to when we can return to holding meetings in the Village Hall. We will update members and villagers via email and the Parish Magazine nearer the time.

•Wednesday 24th March, 7.30 p.m. **Dartmoor Granite**

Stuart Drabble

Stuart will talk about his recently published book about the history of the Haytor granite industry on Dartmoor. He will also cover and identify some of the buildings and structures that were built using Haytor Granite.

•Wednesday 28th April, 7.30 p.m. **“The history of a Devon Town House: Mearsden Moretonhampstead, from the thirteenth century to the present day” Dr Ian Mortimer**

Dr Mortimer currently lives in Mearsden House in Cross Street Moretonhampstead. Looking into the history he found out more than he ever imagined was possible. Residents of the house ranged from a murderous medieval priest to an imprisoned Baptist clergyman plus many other interesting characters. The story of these people and the long history of the house itself will unfold as the stories are revealed.

•Wednesday 26th May, 7.30 p.m. **“The River Bovey from source to the Teign”**

John Risdon

Although one of the shortest rivers in Britain at around 13 miles, its variety and influence on its surrounding catchment and communities, is beyond measure. This illustrated talk is a journey of celebration across one of Devon’s most beautiful and fascinating areas, down the Bovey!

•Wednesday September 22nd, 7.30 p.m. **A Talk by Dr Todd Gray** Title to be confirmed

•Wednesday 20th October, 7.30 p.m. **“The story of the Eddystone Lighthouse”**

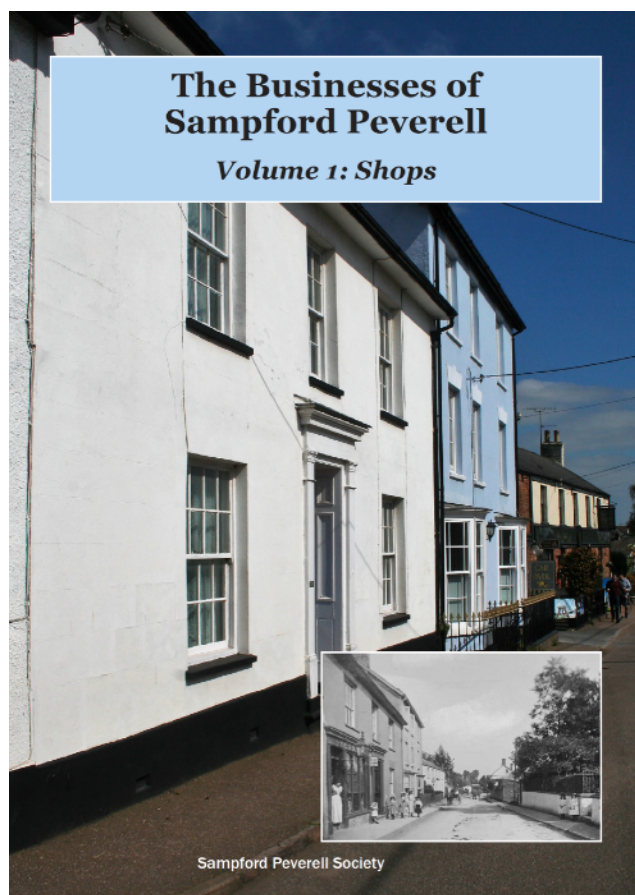
Nigel Overton

Eddystone lighthouses were great achievements. Was Smeaton's lighthouse only replaced because it was in danger of collapse? The talk will lay to rest a few established myths about Henry Winstanley, John Rudyard, Smeaton and others.

•Wednesday 1st December, 7.30 p.m. **Annual General Meeting**

The Committee hope to be able to organise outings in June and July. These will be planned in the Spring when the situation becomes clearer.

2020 in the Sampford Peverell Society



Like many other societies we had a full schedule of talks and visits arranged in 2020, but after the first talk in March we had to cancel everything. Over the summer we held a couple of committee meetings via Zoom, and then confident that they worked OK we held our AGM in October online. Thankfully enough members were able to join us to make it quorate, and it worked well. This encouraged us to try another meeting via Zoom in November. Michael Gee kindly gave us a very interesting presentation on the history of Devon orchards, and once we had overcome a few technical hiccups it went extremely well. We knew some of our members were unable or unwilling to use Zoom, but we invited members of neighbouring history societies to join us. It was lovely 'meeting' new people online and we had a good turnout. We also

realised that the Zoom meeting allowed some of our members, who live at a distance from the village, or who are unable to get out easily, to join us for a change, so we may make occasional online meetings a permanent fixture in our schedule, and hope to do more combined talks with neighbouring societies.

The lockdowns and restrictions have not stopped us from doing research either. We've been working on a series of books about different aspects of life in Sampford Peverell for a number of years, and with other activities restricted we managed to finish our book on the village shops and the history of retail here, which was published on 10th October. We weren't sure how sales would go in the current circumstances, but with doorstep selling, internet and Facebook publicity, and help from our village shop, we have now sold most of our first run. We are now working on some of the other books in the pipeline, such as local industries, pubs, and WW2. Perhaps the most exciting one will be on the Sampford Ghost, which we hope will make an appearance (!) later this year.

Heather Culpin

Chair of the Sampford Peverell Society www.sampevsoc.co.uk

www.sampevsoc.co.uk

Newton St. Cyres History Group

Our Group has been active during the last year despite the covid pandemic. Two booklets have been added to our list of publications and are available from Brian Please (01392 851507; brianvplease@hotmail.com)

- Newton St Cyres in the 1940s & 1950s (£6)
Originally written by Stella Cork, born in Newton St Cyres in 1934 and the daughter of the village postmaster. She gives a remarkable description of families in the village and an insight into village life.
- Newton St Cyres and The Civil War 1642-46 (£6)
The story of grief, hardship and a little excitement for those living in the village almost 400 years ago during the English Civil War, supported by coloured photos and maps. Would you have been a Roundhead or a Cavalier?

We are also cooperating with other groups in the Crediton Area in presenting monthly talks by zoom. The talks have been well supported and after presentation they are put on Youtube by the Crediton Library.

Dec 11	Mike Brett	The Sandford Woollen Industry
Jan 8	Elly Babbedge	Caring for the Poor in some Mid Devon Parishes
Feb 12	Mark Norman	The Folklore of Thomas Beckett
March 12	Ian Maxted	Thomas Bodley and Exeter Cathedral Library
April 9	Tony Gale	St Lawrence Chapel Crediton: Ancient and (Relatively) Modern

An update from Way of the Wharves

2020 was of course a very difficult year and most of our plans including WOTW guided walks and talks were disrupted and cancelled.

Despite those setbacks we did manage to get Way of the Wharves established as a charity and continue refining some of our research. The book on the history of East the Water and the wharves is well advanced. It is now being edited and we plan to publish in spring 2021.

We had a number of discussions with Red Earth regarding the plans for the re-development of the wharves site and the WOTW objective to ensure the history is recorded and represented in any new development. We are pleased to see that the plans submitted by Red Earth to Torridge District Council include interpretation

panels by the proposed quayside public space. If the plans are approved then we will start on content and design of interpretation panels.

More information at: www.thewharves.org

Mike Teare

Trustee Way of the Wharves

The Widecombe History Group

Digitising Project and ‘Welfare in Widecombe 1700-1900’

In 2011 Widecombe History Group (WHG), with the full support of the Parish Council, started the process of digitising the contents of the Widecombe Parish Chest, which was crammed full of local records, some dating back to the 1600s. In particular, there were numerous volumes of Churchwardens Accounts and Overseers Accounts and a collection of Apprenticeship Indentures, Examinations and Removal Orders. WHG decided they would carefully digitise each side of each page of each document and catalogue the items as they went along. This task was completed in 2014 after which the project moved on to digitise other archive material that was in WHG possession or had been loaned to the Group for that purpose.

The main reasons for initiating the project were as follows:

1. There were no copies of the documents, so a fire could have meant that they were lost to us forever.
2. The more fragile documents really needed to be in the care of the Devon Record Office and we wanted to make sure we had a copy for local use before handing them over.
3. As they stood the documents were difficult to access and certainly not available other than for in-person study
4. A digitised copy of the documents would mean that they could be studied without exposing the originals to handling

An important part of the project was to make the documents available online. This would open them up to people who could not visit Widecombe and greatly increase the usefulness of the archive. This was achieved in 2013 and since that date numerous further items have been added. In general, anything over 100 years old is considered for inclusion in the online archive, with the full archive being kept securely offline and available to WHG members and others by arrangement.

My wife, Ann, and I have been involved in the project since the beginning, with Ann being mainly responsible for organising everything, leaving me to focus on technical matters. At times we had around twenty regular volunteers helping with the scanning and cataloguing so there was quite a lot to sort out to make sure everyone had work to do. This close involvement in the project had the welcome side-effect of making me very familiar with the contents of the archive and the stories contained within them.

Perhaps not surprisingly, this involvement led to the book 'Welfare in Widecombe 1700-1900' which examines this local provision primarily through the documents as preserved in the parish chest. Wherever possible these original documents have been reproduced in the book with a transcript provided. This has resulted in 105 illustrations, the majority of which are taken from the archive. Many stories are told of individuals and what happened to them, such as Thomas Greep, who was found dead on the moor one day (dealing with such bodies being just one of the responsibilities of the local Overseers).

It was clear that there was a substantial local organisation in operation throughout the 18th and 19th centuries (and no doubt before) to ensure that the less fortunate members of the parish were looked after. This involved significant, regular (and sometimes unpredictable and substantial) rate-raising from local farmers and landowners and a well-administered and documented system for distributing these funds to those in need. Of course, this all functioned within the legal framework in operation at the time, and this changed quite a bit during those two-centuries, so viewing the local activities against the national rules was enlightening. For instance, we found a diet sheet detailing the required diet for male and female occupants of the poor house, and the changes that occurred after 1834 when the responsibility for provision was wrested away from local Overseers and integrated into a regional model clearly had a profound effect.

No doubt Widecombe was by no means unique in the way it went about this welfare provision. Study of the parish records of other Dartmoor and Devon parishes would I am sure yield similar evidence of comprehensive support of the health, clothing, housing, education and monetary payments for those unable to provide for themselves, from the very young to the very old.

All in all, a most enlightening project and one that, as it continues, will no doubt uncover further detail about life for the poor of Widecombe. More information can be found at www.widecombe-in-the-moor.com/welfare .

You can search the archive at www.widecombearchive.org.uk .

Roger Claxton,

Widecombe-in-the-Moor, November 2020

Topsham Museum

Topsham, like museums throughout the country, has been closed throughout 2020, and is starting 2021 with uncertainty.

Last March, we were wondering just what a museum actually is, when no one can come in to view the collection. It turns out that it is so much more than we thought, and that when one door closes, another opens. The last twelve months have offered all sorts of unexpected opportunities to 'keep the spark alive' and stay in touch with people, raise funds and interact with the public in new and different ways.

Topsham Museum is a charity, run entirely by volunteers. One volunteer looked out of his window at dusk during lockdown and saw an urban fox trotting down the

deserted street. He painted a picture of the fox standing in the road, and then another of the fox in Fore Street, and then another by the river, and before he knew it he had a picture book for children. The Museum published the book in September and by Christmas the entire print run had sold out, along with 8500 Christmas cards featuring the same 'Lockdown Fox'.

In December, other volunteers conjured up a magical grotto in the museum garden.

It came to life at dusk and delighted the children of the town. At Easter there will be more garden fun for children, with a Spring surprise in the planning.

A grant from SW Museums brought more opportunities. Working with a specialist company in Topsham, a virtual tour of the museum was written and photographed, and is on the Topsham Museum website, <https://topshammuseum.org.uk>. It means that now anyone can visit the museum at any time, and from anywhere in the world.

A brand-new, highly-illustrated guidebook was written and it tells the history of the town. All this activity meant the museum shop had to quickly mutate into an online version of itself.

To cap it all, research teams behind the scenes have been looking at aspects of local history, revealing forgotten links with the Caribbean sugar plantations, and peeling back the layers to reveal the old wharves, warehouses and quays of the port of Exeter.

While this has all been fun, we're looking forward to welcoming visitors back into the building some time soon!

Gill McLea, Secretary, Topsham Museum

Harberton and Harbertonford

2020 proved a year of mixed feelings and frustration for our Society. We were so disappointed to have had to cancel our meetings, but girded our loins and thanks to the technical expertise of one of our committee members we ran our first ever online talk in December. Dr Todd Gray spoke about Exeter and Devon's Cloth Trade in the Eighteenth Century. This was a great success, so much so that we now have an online programme of talks for 2021. As you will know, many other local history groups have started to do the same. We are encouraged by this unexpected opportunity to share our talks with other groups, to make new connections, and to expand our audience. We are currently running an oral history project about our local woollen mill and are planning a short film about this in collaboration with Dr Will Barrett. This is tremendously exciting for us and we are looking forward to the lifting of restrictions so that filming can commence!

Harberton Chairman: **Stanley Oldfield**

Harbertonford Chairman: **Derek Robinson**

www.Harbertonandharbertonfordhistorysociety.org

Moretonhampstead History Society

New programme. Following the success of 2 recent trials, we have organised our talks for the first half of 2021 to be delivered by Zoom. Further meetings and trips will depend on the health regulations in place next summer and autumn.

- Wednesday 20th January 7.15 pm: '*Moreton 1860-1910: the first 50 years on camera*'. For his chairman's talk, Bill Hardiman will take you on a visual tour of Moreton's places, people and events captured for us in our archives' collection of early photos & postcards.

- Wednesday 10th February 7.15 pm: '*The Burning Time: witchcraft in the seventeenth century*'. An informative & entertaining talk by Dr Janet Few about a time when "villagers were constantly engaged in contending with, or discussing, witches". (NB 2nd Wednesday in month)

- Wednesday 17th March 7.15 pm: '*Aethelred the Unready and the South West*'. Dr Levi Roach of Exeter University is the leading authority on this little known & much misunderstood king.

- Wednesday 14th April 7.15 pm: '*Eastern Dartmoor in the Age of the Black Death*'. Dr David Stone will examine life in our area before, during & after the great medieval pandemic.

- Wednesday 19th May 7.15 pm: '*Sittaford Stone Circle & my other Dartmoor Discoveries*'. Alan Endacott is a leading Dartmoor archaeologist & we hope to have a follow-up walk with him in June.

We will send the necessary Zoom details to members 2 weeks in advance of a meeting. Please contact me if you require any assistance with using Zoom or would like to join a practice meeting.

MHS membership is £15 per person for the year. You can post it or bring it by cash or cheque (payable to 'Moretonhampstead History Society') in an envelope with your details on to: 3 Courtenay Terrace, Station Road, Moretonhampstead TQ13 8NJ.

Or if you have an internet banking account you can pay it directly into our Moretonhampstead History Society bank account by BACS. Please contact me if you wish to do this.

Either way you will be sent confirmation when your subscription has been received.

For non-members attendance at each meeting costs £4. Please contact me to arrange this.

Bill Hardiman, MHS Chairman. My e-mail: billmgs2001@hotmail.com My tel/text: 01647441083 / 07508024882

Woodbury News

Apart from the meeting held in March last year all other meetings for the Society were cancelled. The committee of Woodbury History Society has been trying to keep our members' interest alive by sending an email every Monday to them all with an attachment of a 'snippet', written mainly by Roger Stokes and Gill Selley, on historical

subjects with a Woodbury connection. They all follow the same formula which explains their conciseness. Roger is responsible for compiling the snippets and sending them out – so far we are up to number 42. Shown below (*at the end of the News - Ed*) are four samples of these snippets.

Our programme for next year is a repeat of the lectures which we could not hold in 2020

4 Mar **‘The Ware Family of Woodbury’** (part 6) – a film produced and presented by the professional film maker, Julian Ware

6 May **‘A Short History of Tiverton’** – illustrated talk by Mike Sampson

2 Sep **‘The Origins of the Parish of Woodbury and its Manors’** – illustrated talk by Gill Selley

4 Nov **‘The Blackshirts of Devon’** – illustrated talk by Todd Gray

We hope that by May we shall be able to use our Village Hall again, otherwise the lectures will have to be on Zoom!

The name of the Society has now been changed to Woodbury History Society, omitting ‘Local’ from the title.

Sincerely,

Gill Selley

(Archivist of Woodbury History Society).

New Editor for Devon History News

I am delighted to be able to tell you that **Brian Carpenter** will be taking over the News from the Autumn of this year. Brian is already well known throughout Devon and a good way beyond for his work for Devon's local history.

After growing up in south-west London, he went to university in the Midlands and qualified as an archivist at University College London in 1990. He came to Devon to work at the Devon Record Office in January 1991 and has been there ever since. Since 2011 he has been responsible for the outreach work of the archive service, and was closely involved in the office's amalgamation with the Westcountry Studies Library to form the Devon Heritage Centre in 2012, and later the transfer of its funding and administration to the South West Heritage Trust in 2014.

In 1998 he wrote the constitution of the Friends of Devon's Archives, before serving as FODA's first Events Secretary, and is still a member of the committee. He has been a member of the Council of the Devon History Society since 2016.

Alongside his historical interests in rural social and landscape history, Brian is a keen walker and naturalist, frequently out and about in and around Newton Poppleford, where he lives. He is also a widely published writer on cricket and a keen supporter of the Exeter Chiefs throughout their rise from the lower echelons of English rugby union to European champions in 2020. What better qualified editor could you wish for?

Chris Wakefield



DHS provisional programme for 2021

All to be delivered by Zoom unless otherwise stated

- 10 February** Mike Sampson *The Eric Gill altar at Blundells School* (14.00)
- 20 March** Debbie Watson *Using catalogues and on-line resources for researching Plymouth and its locality, early 17th century* (14.00)
- 21 April** Mark Brayshay – *Finding answers using Tudor and early Stuart sources* (14.00)
- 24 April** Devon in the 1920s: Formal launch. Dr Stefan Goebel, University of Kent, and panel. *The Aftermath of the Great War – a “Devon in the 1920s” event* (10.00)
- 6 May** David Pinder – *Improving water supplies after the First World War: what can Wembury’s experience tell us?* (19.00). A “Devon in the 1920s” event
- 21 May** Chris Wakefield – *Place names – Ottery and Devon* (10.00)
- 5 June** Peter Mason, Paul Cleave, Kevin Dixon *Tourism and Leisure in 1920s Devon. A “Devon in the 1920s” event.* (10.00)
- 9 June** Mike Sampson – *The rotten boroughs of Devon and 1832 Reform Act* (14.00)
- 3 July** Andrew Jones – *The diocesan archive and the local historian* (10.00)
- 2 September** Joint FODA/DRA/DHS Ian Mortimer *The Chief Rents of Moretonhamstead 1639-1840. How to use a problematic source.* (19.00)
Devon Rural Archive
- 9 September** Chris Wakefield – *Is a lack of discipline essential for Local Historians?* (14.00)
- 18 September:** Joint with Women’s History Network (SW and Wales): “*Women in the 1920s*”. Either an Exeter venue or by Zoom
- 9 October** Exeter Rougement Room, Library. **AGM and Conference.** This may be transferred to a Zoom meeting depending on circumstances (11.00)
- 13 October** Mike Sampson – *Early Devon from Welsh history* (14.00)
- 20 November** Tim Lomas – *Running a successful local history society* (14.00)

Please look at the DHS website for further information. Depending on the situation, it may be possible to organise some additional events either face-to-face or by Zoom. This may include some joint events such as with FODA, the Historical Association and the British Association for Local History as well as part of the “Devon in the 1920s” project.



TELLING OUR STORY

The Royal British Legion
Centenary

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

The Royal British Legion Centenary

Can you help?

2021 is the centenary of the foundation of the Royal British Legion (initially the British Legion). It was inaugurated on 15 May 1921 following the amalgamation of four earlier societies formed for the support of ex-servicemen (and indeed women).

The RBL had great plans for centenary celebrations which, like so much else this year, have been rather knocked awry by the uncertainties of Covid-19. Nonetheless everyone is determined that the year will be commemorated, and one of the means of commemoration will be the collection of histories.

There's a national project called 'Telling our Story' which encourages volunteers to make contact with members of the Legion and to find out and record their stories for submission to the Royal British Legion archive. If you're a RBL member yourself, or know someone who is, could you undertake this? The current deadline for sending

material in is the end of February but in view of the present difficulties in actually going to interview people it will be possible to accept later submissions. You can find out more about this initiative at [Introducing the Royal British Legion Telling Your Story Project | Local History News | British Association For Local History \(balh.org.uk\)](#). Alternatively please contact Adrienne Long on along@britishlegion.org.uk or telephone 07918 562976.

The second opportunity is to support the RBL in Devon in their own centenary plans which will include an exhibition about their history. They have various minutes books and other materials held by their county organisation and by local branches, and they would welcome the assistance of historians in going through these. You'd be looking for stories they could tell in the exhibition, but also, more generally, assessing and summarising the content for future reference. Arrangements can be made to drop any items off on loan to volunteers' houses. So if you are looking for a small project that you can do from home at the moment, could you help?

If you would like to support this Devon initiative, please get in touch with Adrienne Long on along@britishlegion.org.uk or telephone 07918 562976

I'm delighted to say that the Royal British Legion are also working with Devon History Society over the early years of their history as part of the Devon in the 1920s project.

Julia Neville

DCRS remainder sales

Special Offer to current DHS members

You are invited to purchase remainder copies of a selection of the books published by the Devon and Cornwall Record Society at vastly reduced prices. Titles will be available to DHS members **at just £5 each plus postage and packing (list below)**. DCRS volumes are normally between £20 and £30 per copy to non members. Please email DCRS secretary with your request and you will be advised as to availability and total cost. elly.babbedge@hotmail.co.uk

Volumes will be dispatched to you as soon as Lockdown eases.

N.B. If you join the Devon and Cornwall Record Society for the year 2021 you will qualify to purchase each volume for only £1 per copy plus p&p

Titles available...

1957 *Exeter in the Seventeenth Century: Tax and Rate Assessments 1602-1699*, W.G.Hoskins

1963 *The Exeter Assembly: Minutes of the United Brethren of Devon and Cornwall 1691-1717*, Alan Brockett

1971 *The Register of Edmund Lacy, Bishop of Exeter 1420-1455 Vol 4*, GR Dunstan

1972 *The Register of Edmund Lacy, Bishop of Exeter 1420-1455 Vol 5*, GR Dunstan

1974 *John Lydford's Book: the 14th Century Formulary of the Archdeacon of Totnes*, Dorothy M Owen

- 1976 *A Calendar of Early Chancery Proceedings relating to West Country Shipping 1388-1493*, Dorothy A Gardiner
- 1977 *Tudor Exeter Tax Assessments 1489-1595*, Margery M Rowe
- 1981 *The Accounts of the Fabric of Exeter Cathedral 1279-1353 part 1*, Audrey M Erskine★
- 1982 *The Parliamentary Survey of the Duchy of Cornwall part 1*, Norman J G Pounds
- 1983 *The Accounts of the Fabric of Exeter Cathedral 1279-1353 part 2*, Audrey M Erskine
- 1984 *The Parliamentary Survey of the Duchy of Cornwall part 2*, Norman J G Pounds
- 1985 *Crown Pleas of the Devon Eyre 1238*, Henry Summerson
- 1986 *Georgian Tiverton, the Political Memoranda of Beavis Wood 1768-1798*, John Bourne
- 1987 *The Cartulary of Launceston Priory (Lambeth Palace MS 719) A Calendar*, P L Hull
- 1989 *The Receiver's Accounts of the City of Exeter 1304-1353*, Margery Rowe and John M Draisey
- 1990 *Early Stuart Mariners and Shipping: The Maritime Surveys of Devon and Cornwall 1619-1635*, Todd Gray
- 1991 *Joel Gascoyne's Map of Cornwall 1699*, W L D Ravenhill and OJ Padel
- 1993 *The Local Customs Accounts of the Port of Exeter 1266-1321*, Maryanne Kowaleski
- 1994 *Charters of the Redvers Family and the Earldom of Devon 1090-1217*, Robert Bearman
- 1996 *Devon Household Accounts 1627-1659 part 2, Henry, Earl of Bath and Rachel, Countess of Bath of Tawstock etc.*, Todd Gray
- 1997 *The Uffculme Wills and Inventories 16th to 18th Centuries*, Peter Wyatt with intro by Robin Stains
- 1999 *Liberalism in West Cornwall: the 1898 Election Papers of A. Pendarves Vivian M P*, Edwin Jaggard
- 2000 & 2002 *Devon Map and Map Makers: Manuscript Maps before 1840, vols 1 & 2*, with intro by Ravenhill and Rowe
- 2002 *The Havener's Accounts of the Earldom and Duchy of Cornwall, 1287-1356*, Maryanne Kowaleski ★
- 2004 *Richard Carew: The Survey of Cornwall*, John Chynoweth, Nicholas Orme, Alexandra Walsh ★
- 2005 *Killerton, Camborne and Westminster: The Political Correspondence of Sir Francis and Lady Acland 1910-1929*, Garry Tregidga ★
- 2008 *The Letter Book of Thomas Hill*, June Palmer ★
- 2013 *The Minor Clergy of Exeter Cathedral: Biographies, 1250-1548*, Nicholas Orme ★

★ = very limited stock available

A brief description of all titles can be found on our publisher's website at:

<https://boydellandbrewer.com/imprints-affiliates/devon-and-cornwall-record-society.html>

Devon in the 1920s

Bursaries available for British Newspaper Archive research

'History at Your Fingertips'

Members of the **Devon in the 1920s Steering Group**, drawn from DHS, the Devon Family History Society and the South West Heritage Trust, recognize that this is a frustrating time for researchers, with archives and libraries closed, and the likelihood that even when they re-open, access will be restricted in various ways.

If you're one of those frustrated researchers, you might like to apply for a Devon History Society bursary to enable you to access the British Newspaper Archive, see [Home | Search the archive | British Newspaper Archive](#), and start or further your 1920s researches.

The Society is offering a number of bursaries in the form of a three-month subscription to the Archive, either for individuals or for groups. Applicants, who need not be members of Devon History Society, should send their proposals to **Julia Neville, the Devon in the 1920s Project Manager**, as set out below. The application should be no longer than 1000 words. It should set out the area and aim of their proposed research, and how use of the British Newspaper Archive will further their project.

The successful applicants will be required to provide within three months of the end of the subscription a referenced report on their chosen topic for the Devon in the 1920s project library. If the research leads to a further publication, the applicant should acknowledge the grant and provide a copy of that publication.

Applications should be made by email to Julia Neville, j.f.neville@btinternet.com and be received no later than 28 February 2021. Any queries should also be raised with Julia Neville.

There's more than you think on the DHS website

The extent of digital resources online for historians is beyond the wildest dreams of archivists in past decades who tended their rare primary sources in records offices scattered across the country. In many ways there is something lost now from those times. I recall visits to the DRO and WCSL in the 1980s (next to Exeter Central Library) as entering a hallowed place of sorts (which it was), devoted to solitary study like all libraries, but full of exotic, ancient documents promising arcane pleasures of discovery, of wanderings in (quite literally) uncharted territory. There were doors through which only a select few passed, like clergy into the chancel, while novices like me, careful of the unspoken etiquette that acolytes must learn without instruction, tiptoed around fearful of toppling an invisible altar.

The digital revolution undoubtedly reduces the number of visits to the Records Offices and the benefits of contact with primary sources, but the gains to local historians are legion. In this vein, I wanted to bring to your attention, in case you haven't already noticed, the scanned and searchable editions of The Devon Historian from volume 1 (1970) to volume 87 (2018). This epic feat of data transfer was accomplished by two DHS Council members - Martin Smith and Mike Sampson to whom members and affiliates owe a huge round of applause. There is an index to take you to wherever your interest directs you, or you can just wander in a digital way through this cornucopia of Devon History. Have a look (and admire)...<https://www.devonhistorysociety.org.uk/journal/>

Chris Wakefield



Plymtree Church. Screen painting - Magus with censer?

and allow us to make comparisons with the churches today. In this way they shed light on these buildings' history from the Middle Ages onwards, and illustrate the ways in which changes in liturgy and fashion during the late nineteenth century transformed parish churches. Davidson's records of memorials and inscriptions in the churches also provide material for research into family history from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries, as well as into changing attitudes to death and commemoration.

The volume is included in membership of the Society for 2021. It will be published in the autumn and available with membership at £25 or after publication at £30. For more information please contact Devon & Cornwall Record Society by 31 December 2021 at Devon Heritage Centre, Great Moor House, Bittern Rd, Sowton, Exeter EX2 7NL or on

James Davidson's East Devon Church Notes

Edited by Jill Cobley

This volume contains the unpublished Church Notes for East Devon recorded by James Davidson (1793-1864). These notes are an eyewitness record of the fabric and fittings of East Devon's churches in the mid-nineteenth century, before Victorianisation brought about irreplaceable change in almost every parish church. Davidson's descriptions highlight what has been lost from the archaeological record,



St Andrew's church, Colyton - monument to Sir John Pole (1589-1658)

<http://www.devonandcornwallrecordsociety.co.uk/p/membership.html>

Devon History Society

Membership Renewal 1 May 2021

The time is approaching for members to renew subscriptions. This affects individuals and affiliated societies who pay by cheque. Please note our fees have not increased for 2021. We do not send out individual reminders. However, affiliated societies who require an invoice should contact the Membership Secretary membership@devonhistorysociety.org.uk

We would appreciate it if all members, including affiliated societies and corporate members notified us about changes of address and details.

A recent mailing of The Devon Historian revealed a number of changes we were unaware of. This came about because undelivered items were returned to the Editor

History in pictures



The role of art in history is a topic the News has highlighted before. How good were artists at history? Was it all about the picture or is the history sound too?

A taste of Woodbury snippets...

Woodbury History Society were kind enough to send us a selection of their 'Snippets' – a series of emailable (and printable) pages, each with a short account of a local historical event, person or location with an illustration. Can't help thinking what a great idea this is for making local history attractive and accessible to a very wide audience. I decided (given it costs the News nothing) to publish all four examples here for your information and appraisal. No better way to spend lockdown, I reckon.

For more information contact Gill Selley gselley100@gmail.com – (Ed)

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

18



'Underneath lies the dust of Mr Henry Pollexfen Knt and Chief Justice of y^e Common Pleas who for his exemplary justice, integrity and eminent knowledge in y^e learning of the law lived highly esteemed and dyd greatly lamented being a reall ornament to y^e court of wherein he sate to his Country and y^e age he lived in. He dep'ted this life y^e 15 day of June 1691 y^e 59th yeare of his dii Januarii A.D. Elizabeth MDCCCLXXXIII'

This is the memorial in Woodbury Church to Sir Henry Pollexfen, the Lord of the Manor of Nutwell, who lived at Nutwell Court from 1686 until his death in 1691. He was the son of Andrew Pollexfen of Sherford in Devon, was called to the bar at Inner Temple in 1658 and became a bencher of his Inn in 1674, becoming the leading practitioner on the Western Circuit. On the recommendation of Chief Justice Jeffreys he opened the case for the Crown in the prosecution of the Duke of Monmouth's followers at the Western Assizes (known as the Bloody Assizes as so many West Country men were ruthlessly tried and executed for their support of Monmouth in the uprising against King James II). In 1688 Henry vigorously supported William of Orange, who consulted him privately about the situation prevailing in the wake of James II's departure in December. He suggested that William would be justified in declaring himself King, a view most found extreme. The following year Henry was knighted and appointed Attorney General. When he died his son, Henry, succeeded him as Lord of the Manor. This son married Gertrude, a daughter from the first marriage of Sir Francis Drake of Buckland Abbey, and to add to the confusion Elizabeth Pollexfen, Sir Henry's sister, became the third wife of Sir Francis Drake. Henry and Gertrude had no children and the Lordship of Nutwell passed into the hands of the son of Sir Francis Drake and Elizabeth. Nutwell remained in the ownership of the Drake family for nearly 200 years.

Picture and text by Gillian Selley.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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When the bomb fell on Exton!

One night in the summer of 1942 an incendiary bomb was dropped on Exton and set fire to the roof of a cob and thatch cottage on the left of the entrance to the Avenue. The fire bowser from the Marine camp was called out. It weighed half a ton and was usually towed by a truck. On this occasion as they were leaving the camp, the engine of the truck failed and the crew were ordered to manhandle it down the hill to the fire. With 3 men on the tow bar and 3 more pushing they manoeuvred it on to the road, but they could not control it, and it ran away from them down the hill and landed in the hedge by the stream next to the cottage. The Marines found four or five people and two children passing buckets of water to a man on a ladder who was pouring it on the smoke coming from the thatch. As there was not enough water in the stream to operate their bowser, they were ordered to dam the stream, but before they could do so Topsham fire brigade arrived with their one thousand gallon tank, and put so much water on the cob that the next day the cottage collapsed. It has never been rebuilt.

Picture and text by *David Elphick*.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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Woodbury House is an attractive Georgian house built in 1781, the first house in the parish to be built of brick. Its origins are very interesting as it was built on land owned by Philippe Lempriere who had been the Attorney-General of Jersey, but was forced to flee the country in 1769 when there was a revolt against him and his elder brother Charles, who was the Lieutenant Bailiff of the Island. Philippe had many business interests in London and Southampton, and after having lost his wife and children to illness in Jersey, he married again, this time to Mary, the daughter of Charles Weekes who was the owner of Thorn Barton and its lands in Woodbury. Lempriere was a tough businessman, and on finding that Charles could not raise the money to pay the marriage settlement, called in his debt and claimed most of Weekes's lands including those in Woodbury. On part of land he had bought from another local man he built Woodbury House, or as it was known until the 19th century Axes after John Axe, the original owner of the land. Philippe died in 1787 leaving all his estate to his great-nephew apart from the contents of the house and a small annual sum to his wife. She had the choice of living in his house in Southampton or in the one in Woodbury – she chose the latter. She died in 1798 and the property went to the son of Philippe's nephew (after a codicil to the original will). The whole estate was sold to Lord Rolle, apart from Woodbury House and certain lands of Thorn Barton. All early reports of Lempriere show him to have been an unpleasant corrupt man whose main concern was his own power and acquisition of money. His legacy to the village, though, is one of its most attractive properties. Sadly, according to the present owner of Rozel Manor (still the home of the Lempriere family) a portrait of Philippe and other members of his family were put into storage during the WW2 and were destroyed in a fire.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*.

A BRIEF LOOK BACK AT TIMES GONE BY!

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The Skeleton Army confronting the Salvation Army

In 1881 'Skeleton Armies' were raised in Exeter and a few other places in the South of England to oppose and disrupt the Salvation Army's marches against alcohol in the late 19th century. Clashes between the two groups led to the deaths of several Salvationists and injuries to many others.

In 1883 a band of Salvationists, led by William Jewell, came from Exeter to Woodbury and conducted a service in the square in front of the post office (now the antique shop). Wyndham Potter, an 18 year old labourer of Woodbury, who was standing behind Jewell, kicked and assaulted him forcing the meeting to be abandoned. According to the local policeman Potter was a member of the 'Skeleton Army'. The following week the Salvationists again came to Woodbury where they were confronted by a crowd of the 'Skeleton Army', led by a William Vinnicombe. This 'army' had disrupted meetings in Exeter and, having heard about the religious meetings being held in Woodbury, came to do the same in the village. Vinnicombe being very drunk, and singing and swearing, marched in front of the Salvation Army members, and then led his 'army' to the Globe Inn. He was ejected by the police with his followers and about a crowd of 100 people and escorted along the road to Exeter. Vinnicombe was sent to prison for one month with hard labour, and Potter was fined 10s with 20s 6d costs.

Picture and text by *Gillian Selley*

Joining the DHS

In order to clarify details about joining the society please see the following step-by-step guide.

All the necessary information for joining the **Devon History Society** can be found on the website.

<https://www.devonhistorysociety.org.uk>

- On the main headings click on **About**
- On the dropdown menu click on **Join the DHS**
- Here you will find all the details about the different categories of membership, including costs.
- This is followed by an invitation to [click here](#) to download an application form.

This is intended to help people who are unsure who to contact/or what the correct procedure is.