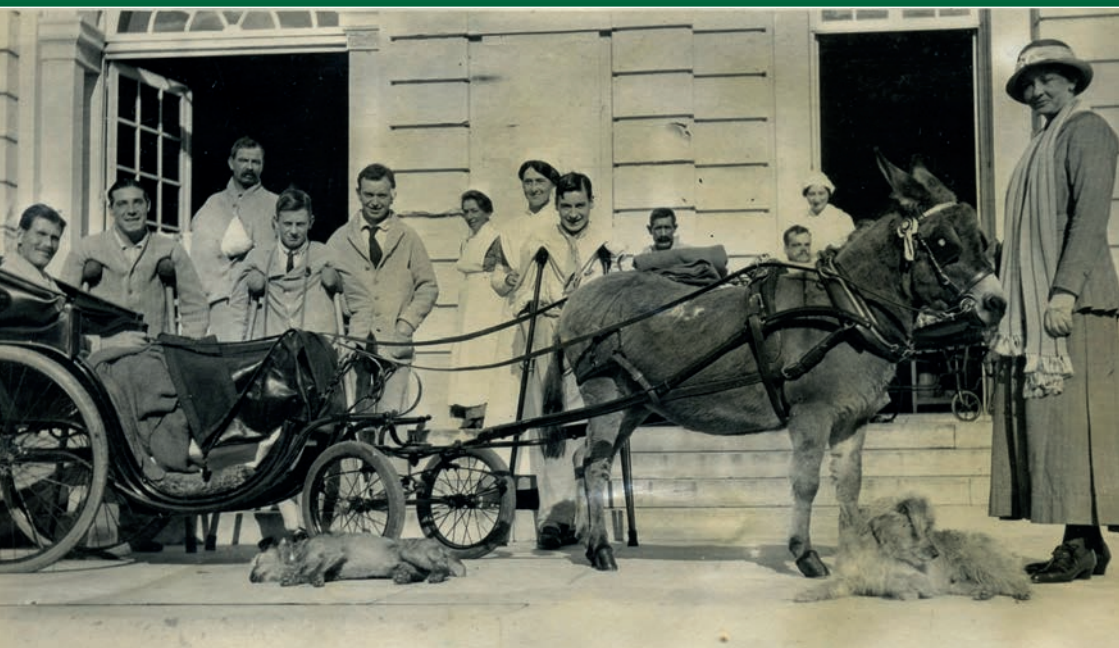
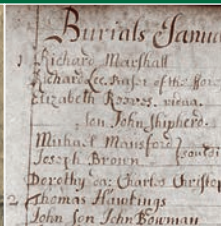


# The Devon Family Historian

February 2016

no.157



*“Devon Family History Society’s strength lies in its local and specialist knowledge”*

# Devon Family History Society Committee 2015-16

All contact details have been removed from this sample issue.  
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*Front cover: Patients on the South Terrace, Oldway, Paignton*

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## Editorial Did you ever send your wife to Dawlish?


New Year's Greetings to you all, in this my first editorial.

I've only lived in Devon for 32 years so still consider myself a newcomer, but I love my adopted county, it is truly a beautiful place to live. I'm actually a Brummie and most of my ancestors are from the Midlands, so I never expected to find any connection to Devon.

So I have been excited to discover some fascinating strays from my Peplow family tree, one of them was Actor/Manager, Joseph Francis Peplow aka Edmon(d)stone Francis who was arrested in Exeter in February 1873 and charged with being drunk and creating a disturbance in the Upper Circle of the theatre. He stayed in Exeter barely a year working on various theatrical events, all found through newspaper archives. The advertisement below is from the *Exeter & Plymouth Gazette* 28th March 1873.

I enjoy dancing and creating dance costumes for myself, and my study of costume history also helps me identify and date old family photographs (*see below*). I hope to introduce a regular piece on this subject in the magazine.

I joined the Devon FHS in the late 1980s with Dean, my husband who is the Society's Web Master, and have served on both the committee and working parties. As Events



**Amusements.**

**THEATRE ROYAL.**  
Lessee and Manager, Mr. NERRE.  
LAST TWO NIGHTS OF  
**MISS BERTRAND.**  
THIS EVENING FOR THE BENEFIT OF  
**MR. EDMONSTONE FRANCIS,**  
ACTING MANAGER.  
At 7. "PLOT AND PASSION."  
9.15. "DID YOU EVER SEND YOUR WIFE TO  
DAWLISH?"  
At 10. THE BURLESQUE OF THE  
"MAID & THE MAGPIE."  
MONDAY EVENING  
BENEFIT  
OF  
**MR. G. W. HARRIS.**  
Box Plan at Messrs. Roberts and Son's, High Street.

Coordinator I organised the AGM & Conference at St. Loyes, Exeter, for several years (1994 - 2006) and will be again later this year.

Since 1995 I have led the team manning the publications and advice tables at home and away events. I'm a graphic designer in my "day job", so I have experience in print, web and exhibition design, using my professional skills I've been involved in producing many of the Society's publications.

I look forward to hearing from you and receiving your articles, stories and Members' Queries this coming year.

Sally Skilton (3569)

## The Royal Photographic Society Journal Archive

A freely available, fully searchable, digital archive of the Royal Photographic Society Journal from 1853 to 2012. The Journal is the world's oldest photographic periodical and is a major resource for photo-historians and genealogists.

Through the generosity of a member and the support of the National Media Museum, Bradford, The Society has been able to digitise the entire run of the Journal, over 30,000 pages. The archive commemorates The Society's 160th anniversary.

<http://www.rps.org/rps-journals/about/journal-archive>

## Society News

I hope you all had a good Christmas, and may I wish you a belated Happy New Year. Please spare a thought for all those members who are suffering because of the weather, I hope you have all got your family history research backed up.

I'd like to extend a welcome to our new Editor, Sally Skilton, and hope you like the new look Historian.

As you will see further on in this edition the long awaited Parish Register images are now on the members' area. 49 parishes, 25,882 images.

We are getting close to *Who Do You Think You Are?- Live* at the NEC Birmingham. It runs from Thursday 7th to Saturday 9th April. If you live locally and could spare a few hours to help man the stand please get in touch.

Those of you who have Find My Past subscriptions will have been notified that the 1939 Register will become part of your subscription from 16th February. We have enquired and are waiting to see if it will become part of our subscription at Tree House.

This year's AGM and Conference will be on Saturday 1st October at a venue in Plymouth. The Society was formed 40 years ago in Plymouth, so we are "coming home" this year. On page 7 Sylvia Blott, one of our founder members shares her memories from 40 years ago. Another memory will appear in the May Devon Family Historian.

If you have any reminiscences, photographs of people, events or ephemera of the Society's early years please forward to [Chairman@devonfhs.org.uk](mailto:Chairman@devonfhs.org.uk) or send by post to PO Box 9, Exeter EX 2 6YP.

During March we are scheduled to attend the Federation of Family History Societies AGM in Manchester, an Advisory Forum meeting of South West Heritage Trust, and a planning meeting for the 2017 Devonshire Association's Devon-Newfoundland event. Plans are well advanced for Plymouth's History Festival in May with many events planned. Further on in the magazine you will find an update on the North Devon Record Office situation - it looks promising!

**Terry Leaman, Chairman (12303)**

## Future Products and Services from the General Register Office

In late November we received an invitation to attend a GRO a consultation meeting on the above title, in Southport or London, on 19th or 21st December. Not particularly convenient dates for travel, but fortunately I was in Kent for Christmas, so I attended the London meeting on behalf of Devon FHS.

For many years family historians have requested improved and cheaper access to civil registration records. We do not want expensive certified copies on watermarked paper; we just need the information. New provisions in the *Deregulation Act 2015* allow for an amendment to the various Registration Acts which will facilitate different ways of accessing civil registration information, particularly in older records.

Three consultation meetings gave family historians, professional genealogists, probate researchers and other organisations such as AGRA, FreeBMD, UKBMD, Lost Cousins and Ancestry to express their views and offer suggestions.

Andrew Dent (Deputy Registrar General) chaired the meeting I attended, assisted by three members of GRO staff. Seven family history societies were represented, plus Else Churchill (Society of Genealogists), Francis Howcutt (FFHS) and Baroness Scott, the enthusiastic genealogist, who had promoted the change in legislation, now made possible by the *Deregulation Act 2015*.

I mentioned the GRO *Dove (Digitisation of Vital Events)* and *Magpie (MultiAccess to GRO Public Index of Events)* projects, which aimed to digitise and make BMD certificates available. These were put on “hold” in 2010. An estimate to complete the projects: approx £25-£30 million. We were told that a total of 130 million Births to 1934 and Deaths to 1957 (approximately 50% of records), had been digitised and are available to assist staff at Southport to fulfil orders for certificates. Most of the information in the digitised registers has been transcribed. I asked if the information regarding age at death 1837-1866 and mother’s maiden name 1837-1911 would be made available, as this would surely increase certificate applications. We were asked if we were willing to pay for an improved index, as this would incur a cost. The GRO is not allowed to make either a profit or a loss and is self-funded from income received. 87% of applications are received online, 11% by telephone, 2% by post, so the preferred choice of future provision is obvious. We all agreed that one of the commercial companies would jump at the opportunity to complete the whole job and provide online access, similar to that provided by Scotland’s People. The response was that the changes to the law probably aren’t sufficient to enable the GRO to bring in a commercial organisation such as Ancestry, Findmypast, or The Genealogist to provide online access to historic registers. This was disputed by some of those present!

The majority of copy certificates are bought by family historians (£9.25), whilst urgent orders from probate researchers (heir hunters), professional genealogists, solicitors etc. cost £23.40. One service is not allowed to subsidise the other. It was mentioned that GRO certificates are a secondary source and that the recent legislation only relates to the GRO. Adoption records and records held locally are *not* covered by the legislation.

Regarding primary source information from Register Offices transcribed by UKBMD volunteers, I asked why some local Registrars refused to cooperate with the UKBMD project. They quoted “*GRO regulations*” which prevented this, despite it happening in many other districts. Andrew Dent explained that there are 175 registrar districts in England and Wales, all in the control of the local councils, with the GRO giving advice. He suggested that we could ask local Registrars to contact the GRO, with regard to these “*regulations*”.

So, the outcome of the meeting? Nothing will happen right away, but the GRO is listening to its customers and wants to provide the service we have been asking for, subject to the constraints of legislation. I think that there is light at the end of the tunnel and will keep you up to date with any future meetings. If you go to WDYTIA-L in April, make your second port of call the GRO stand, after visiting Devon FHS’s stand of course!

Maureen Selley (4019)

## Was it Really Forty Years Ago?

By the mid 1970s family history, or genealogy was becoming a very popular hobby. Family History Societies had been started in several counties and this had led to the formation of the Federation of Family History Societies, acting as a central link to all the member societies. At their 1975 conference, many counties including Cornwall were represented but Devon, one of the largest counties was notable by its absence, so the call went out for volunteers.

Miss Joy Beer, a local researcher, who had also been concerned that Devon was lagging behind, contacted another researcher, Ann Chiswell, to discuss the situation. This led to their sending invitations to others, who they considered to be of like mind, to meet at Ann's house with the idea of putting this matter to rights; this was in November 1976. I received one of those invitations and felt excited at the prospect. There were eleven people at that first meeting, which led to a committee being formed, as follows... Mrs B. Marlow (Hon. Chairman) Mrs A. Chiswell (Hon. Secretary) Mrs S. Blott (Hon. Treasurer) Mr R.W. Chell (Hon. Editor). Committee members were Miss J. Beer, Mr W. Chiswell, Mrs E. Churcher, Mrs N. Gamble, Mr R. Isherwood, Mr T. Penney and Mr R. Rowland. Membership numbers were given alphabetically to the group; Joy Beer became number one and I was (and still am) number two. The new committee agreed to an annual subscription fee of £2 for UK membership and £4.50 for overseas airmail; and the news spread about the birth of the Devon Family History Society.

The next task was to publish a magazine, so committee members submitted articles to the editor. Computers were things of the future in those early days, so all the entries had to be typewritten on to 'skins' and printed on Roneo machines. The question was: how many magazines would be needed? By January 1977 membership had grown to one hundred and ten. Ann Chiswell reckoned it would level off at about 200 so we took a chance and printed that number. However, the predicted 200 was soon passed as not only researchers from the UK joined us, but others from the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand expanded the membership far beyond any number that the original committee could ever have dreamed.

When I think about Tree House and all the latest technology that is now available for members to use, I smile when I think of the very first piece of equipment that we bought. At one committee meeting, Hugh Lidstone, (member number 70), with a very serious expression said that the time had come when we ought to think about buying an electric typewriter and made a proposal to that effect. The rest of the committee agreed, and so the purchase was made. One of our members, Mrs Jenkins, found this typewriter to be a great help as she had the arduous task every quarter of typing out all the address labels for the magazines. I did not envy her!

Although the society started in Plymouth it soon became apparent, as groups were formed in various parts of the county that Exeter, being more accessible for most members, should become the central meeting place. And so many changes have been made throughout the years, usually for the betterment of the society in general.

I value the friendships that I have made along the way, some of whom have passed on. But I have happy memories of those past years and value the friendship of those who are still here. Successful ancestor hunting to you all!

**Sylvia Blott (2)**

## Devon's Economy and Population at the Start of the 19th Century

You may well have seen a copy of Charles Vancouver's 1808 book '*General View of the Agriculture of the County of Devon*' on a library shelf, and assumed (not unreasonably) that it is all about farming. Not so. Although its main focus is indeed on farming (and none the less fascinating for that) it scans wider horizons, reporting much that will be of interest to the family historian, and much more again of interest to the growing band of 'one place study' researchers. It provides an educated overview of Devon's economy at the start of the 19th century, at a time when the local cloth industry was declining fast, under pressure from larger competitors in Yorkshire, and as a consequence of the disruption to foreign trade caused by the Napoleonic wars.

The book's full text can be found on-line (via the archive.org website), or in the form of a modern re-print published in 1967 by David & Charles Reprints of Newton Abbot. Because some of the information was provided on fold-out pages which were not scanned, the hard-copy version is better, if you can find it.

It is clear from some of the evidence which he cites that Vancouver's field work had been carried out in about 1806, and his findings would undoubtedly have been discussed by the Board of Agriculture (who had commissioned him to do the work) prior to publication.

He was able to draw on the published results of the 1801 census, which he reproduced, parish-by-parish, in a series of detailed tables. I have recently transcribed the main results, plus 'headline' data from later census reports, into a working spreadsheet, which can be found on the Devon pages of the Genuki website. From the main Devon page, follow the link to 'Censuses', and you should find it easily enough.

The 1801 census tells us how many houses, households and persons there were in every parish. It also tells us how many individuals were employed in agriculture, and how many in manufacturing/crafts/commerce. The table that follows shows a very simple example of how some of this information can be consolidated, once the data have been loaded into a spreadsheet.

As you would expect, and as the table shows, the ratio between non-farm jobs and

Parishes, by type	Total population in 1801	Manufacturing etc. jobs per agricultural job	Other residents per worker
All of Devon	41,047	0.64	1.15
Exeter and its immediate surrounds	20,553	8.41	1.73
Plymouth and Stoke Damerel	43,286	8.06	4.26
Devon outside the two main cities	277,208	0.51	0.94
36 market towns with continuing markets	81,974	1.55	1.30
19 former market towns	20,731	0.54	0.80
Other small towns/large villages (over 1,500 inhabitants)	11,407	0.72	0.85
Other medium villages (1,000 to 1,499 inhabitants)	21,309	0.46	1.17
Small villages and hamlets (under 1,000 inhabitants)	141,787	0.27	0.78



farm jobs was far higher in Exeter, Plymouth and Stoke Damerel than elsewhere (reflecting the lack of farm work in the cities just as much as their commercial activity). It also shows smaller but clear structural differences between market towns and all other parishes; and between larger, medium and smaller villages. Over 40% of the population of Devon (and over 50% of the non-city dwellers) lived in parishes with fewer than 1,000 inhabitants, where four out of every five economically active persons were either farmers or farm labourers, and where it was necessary to go to a larger village to find a blacksmith or an inn, let alone a shop.

The final column of figures shows the ratio between 'other residents' (wives, children, retired folk, the unemployed and sick, and the relatively small proportion of professional persons, merchants and the 'idle rich'), and those engaged in agriculture, manufacturing, crafts and commerce. Again as might be expected, the smallest parishes supported the fewest non-workers, who were mainly to be found in Plymouth and Stoke Damerel, Exeter and the market towns. If you find (for example) that your ancestors lived in a small parish which bucked this trend, you will know that their local circumstances were unusual, possibly due to the presence of a 'big house' with a lot of servants.

One other thing which can be seen from the table is the adverse consequences for those towns which had allowed their ancient market privileges to decay. Former market towns were on average likely to be less than half of the size (in terms of total population) than those where the market had been retained, and demonstrably worse off in terms of the diversity of their local economy. What is more, they were often worse off than similar sized settlements which had never had a market.

What access to an organised data set such as this allows you to do is to compare the parishes where your ancestors were living with others of a similar type throughout the county, or with neighbouring parishes. This is far more informative than having a single parish return, which cannot really be understood in isolation.

I have included much more background explanation about the 1801 census returns, and on how they might be used, on the Genuki website. By the time you read this, there may well be a detailed set of returns from 1831 there as well. By 1831 the questions teased out considerably more useful employment information, though without any proper acknowledgment of the contribution made by women and children, without whom industries such as lace making, gloving and carpet manufacture could not have functioned.

Getting back to Vancouver's book, the fact that Torquay hardly existed in 1808 is emphasised by his inclusion of drawings for the proposed development of the town centre, which was still entirely at the planning stage. He also provides comments on the state of industry throughout the county, as well as fascinating snippets about the role of workhouses and the local taxation needed to pay for them, and even a description of wrestling, which was then more or less the only organised sporting activity enjoyed by the masses.

<http://genuki.cs.ncl.ac.uk/DEV/DevonMisc/Census1801/index.html>

David Knapman (16959)

## The American Women's War Hospital Oldway, Paignton

The Friends of Oldway have embarked on a project to research and record the history of the American Women's War Hospital, funded by a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Oldway, the mansion built by Isaac Singer in the late nineteenth century, was donated for use as a hospital by his son, Paris, during the First World War. The hospital was unique in being established and run by the American Women's War Relief Fund.



The project focuses on identifying and recording the stories of the people who worked and were treated at the hospital. Volunteers are using contemporary diaries, photographs, postcards, letters and other documents to research the staff and patients of the hospital. Much of this information is held in private collections and will be made available to the public for the first time. Over 700 individuals associated with the hospital have been identified to date; more than 5,000 patients were treated there from 1914 - 1918. Whilst the hospital was operated and funded by Americans, the patients admitted and treated were nearly all British and Commonwealth soldiers. In 1918 the Hospital was taken over by the American Red Cross and treated American soldiers until the end of the War.

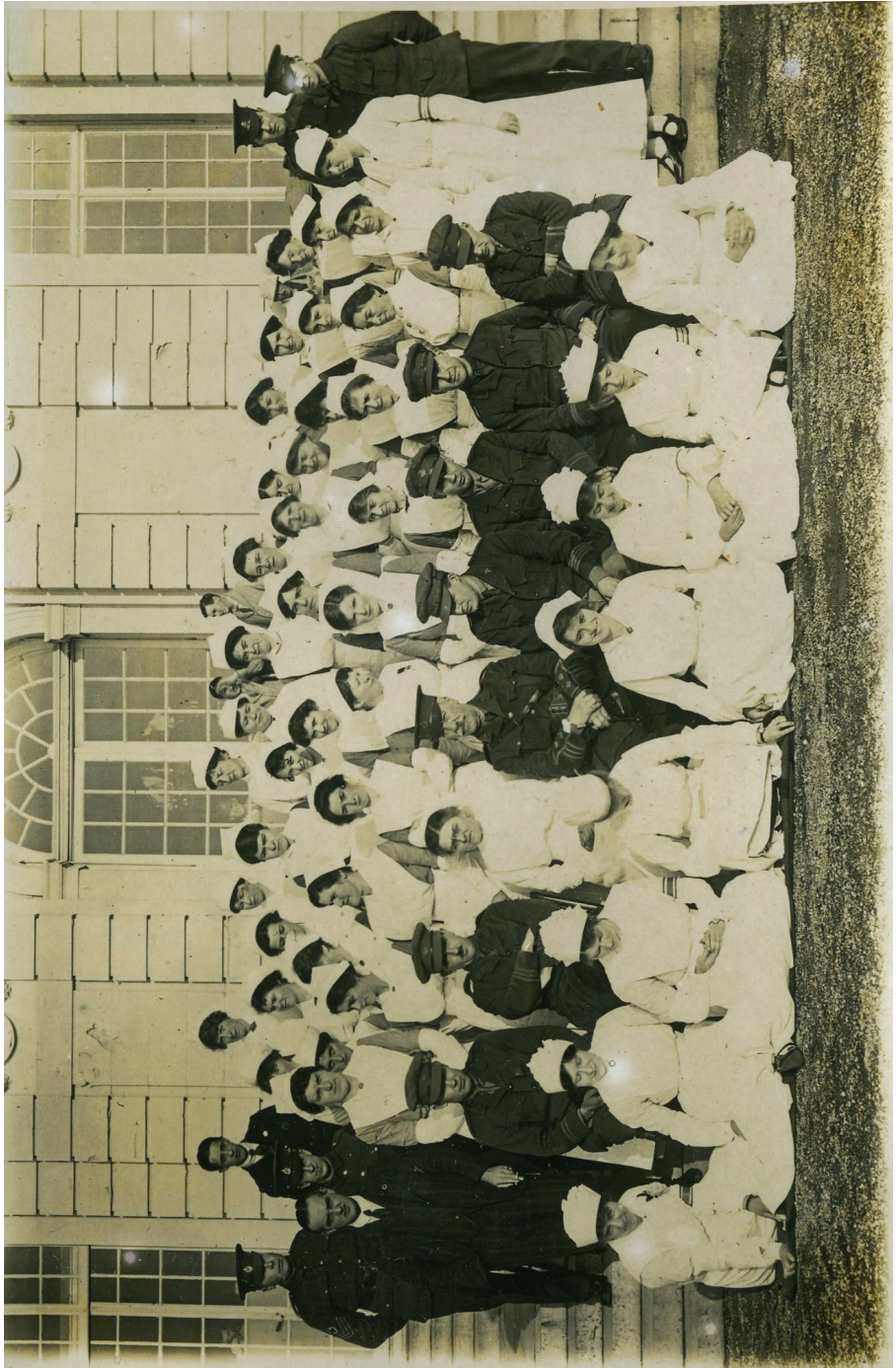
With help from professionals, the information gathered is being digitally recorded and an on-line interactive archive created, where everyone can access and contribute information. The archive will allow the public to discuss, contribute, share and research information about this fascinating period in Oldway's history. The international nature of the hospital means some resources are held overseas; early work on the project has already built links with relatives of the hospital staff and patients in the USA and Canada.

If you would like to learn more about becoming a volunteer for this project, or have information that you would like to contribute, I, on behalf of the Friends of Oldway, would like to hear from you. The website will be launched at the end of January 2016, and new information will continue to be added.

**Paul Hope (20962)**

**Editor:** <http://circulatingnow.nlm.nih.gov/tag/mary-dexter/NIH>

Read or download for free from the US National Library of Medicine's Digital Collections, the complete book *In the Soldier's Service: War Experiences of Mary Dexter: England, Belgium, France*, published in 1918. Mary Dexter wrote to her mother, Emily Loud Sanford, about her experiences as a volunteer with the British Red Cross at the American Women's War Relief Hospital in Paignton, South Devon.



American Women's War Hospital staff.



A ward at Christmas. The 255 bed hospital was situated in Oldway House and was financed by the American Women's War Relief Fund, headed by Lady Randolph and the Duchess of Marlborough. Queen Mary visited the hospital in November 1914.

## Are Benjamin and William Father & Son?

On 9 April 1842 William Horwill made his will in New York. Exactly ten days later, his wife gave birth to, it is believed, their only child, named William Edgar Horwill. It is not known exactly when William Horwill senior died and his will was not proved until 27 March 1843.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the Atlantic, Benjamin Horwill, a baker of St Sidwell Street, Exeter, made his will on 4 June 1842. He was to die some 18 days later, on 22 June. Alas, only a transcript of his will exists, but the brief entries state that "I leave 16 guineas to the daughter of my deceased son William". The rest of his estate was divided equally between his surviving seven children, his wife having predeceased him. Benjamin had married Mary Soper on 23 November 1796 at St Sidwell's church and her burial is recorded as taking place on 19 September 1830.

William was the first born son of Benjamin Horwill and his wife, Mary, and he was baptised on 19 November 1797 at St Sidwell church, Exeter. Details about his early life are not known, but it would appear that some time before 1826 William joined up with brothers Thomas and Joseph Pike to form a bank based in London and Watford. They were to be declared bankrupt in 1826 owing some £26,000 of which one creditor was William's father, Benjamin, who was owed over £3,000. Following the bankruptcy, all sight of William is then lost. As an aside, a rare banknote of the Horwill and Pike bank recently came up for auction - it was signed by Joseph Pike and was expected to make between £300-£400. However, a recent find of a ship's manifest dated 26 July 1833, show a William Horwill, age 33 or 35 (the last figure is not clear) as a passenger on the *President* arriving from London in New York.

Up in London, Charles Harper was to marry Elizabeth Agar on 18 July 1822 at St Mary's Islington and they had two sons, Charles Harper and Thomas Edwin Harper born in 1824 and 1827 respectively. Charles Harper senior died and was buried on 15 April 1829 in St Pancras church at the age of 40. Elizabeth and her two sons set sail for New York, though when they arrived has not been discovered. However, Elizabeth appears on the 1850 census for New York, as Elizabeth Horwill, with William Horwill, age 8 and Thomas E Harper age 23, both Elizabeth and Thomas were born in England.

The question that arises is whether William Horwill from Exeter (previously a banker) travelled to New York in 1833 and subsequently married a widow, Elizabeth Harper (no actual marriage has been tracked down so far), and they had a son, William Edgar. It is also possible, but by no means proven, that William and Elizabeth could have had a daughter, but that she was to die before the 1850 census was taken.

Interestingly, and what may be significant, is that the two witnesses to William's will were Abraham D Soper and William H Soper, and that there is a possibility that they had ancestry from St Sidwell; bearing in mind that Benjamin Horwill married Mary Soper in the same church. Also, William mentions a brother John in his will and says that *if John returns to New York within two years of my death, he is to take over the running of my stores*. Benjamin and Mary's second child was named John - he never married and it is thought that he lived in Exeter all his life, but that is not necessarily so. John Horwill died in 1873 leaving a will but there is no mention of a nephew, William. In fact, William's and John's siblings all made wills but none make any mention of family in New York.

Between 19 April 1842, when William Edgar Horwill was born in New York, and 4 June 1842, when Benjamin Horwill made his will in Exeter, did a garbled message travel across the Atlantic such that Benjamin was led to believe that a daughter had been born to his son William, also stating that William was dead? The facts are not conclusive and more evidence is really required to state with a reasonable degree of certainty that William Horwill (1797 - c1842) was the son of Benjamin and Mary Horwill. The search continues for the origins of William Edgar Horwill in New York. He subsequently married and had a son, Edward Thomas Horwill, both being fairly important persons in New York (Edward's obituary appeared in the New York Times). So far the research has been spread over some dozen years now and it would be really great to pin down this ancestry at last.

I would like to acknowledge the valuable help I have received in preparing this article from Lois Walsh in the USA, a descendant of Charles Harper and his wife Elizabeth née Agar.

David Horwill (5159)

## Devon to Andersonville: Four Hern Brothers in the American Civil War

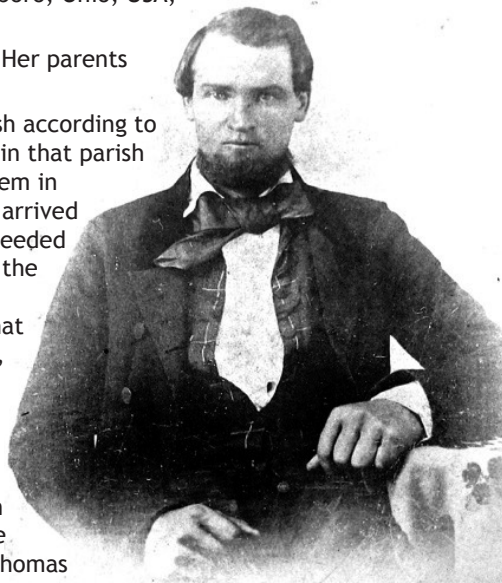
I compiled a book by this title about my great-grandfather, Samuel Hannaford **Hern** (pictured below), and his brothers and their service for the Union side in the American Civil War on the occasion of the War's sesquicentennial, and related genealogy. You might be interested in some of the story.

Their parents, William Hern (1799-1875) and Elizabeth **Hannaford** (1813-1887), were born in Widecombe, Devon, and left for Hillsboro, Ohio, USA, with their children, arriving in June 1853.

The parents married in Widecombe in 1829. Her parents were Joan and James Hannaford.

They were living in Michelcombe, Holne Parish according to the 1841 census, and Samuel was christened in that parish in St. Mary's church. The 1851 census lists them in Widecombe. U.S. obituary accounts say they arrived by sailing vessel at Quebec, Canada and proceeded to Cincinnati, Ohio, and then by stage coach the 50 miles to Hillsboro. They must have known someone there since they went directly to that small town. Perhaps it was the Pearce family, which my grandfather married into.

The children, Enoch (1832-1864), John (1834-1903), Samuel (1836-1912), Thomas (1838-1865), Robert (1844-1871), Harriet (1847-1882), Ann (1851-1912+), were all born in Devon. Robert was listed as an invalid. The four other sons - John, Samuel, Enoch, and Thomas



- served in the War for the Union (north). The last two did not survive. My grandfather was named Thomas Enoch Hern after his fallen uncles. I was named after my grandfathers. And the weird part: the original Thomas and I have the same birthday.

John served first, in the 60th Ohio Volunteer Infantry Regiment, January to June, 1862, serving at Gallipolis, Ohio, and in the Virginia Shenandoah Valley campaign against Confederate General Thomas 'Stonewall' Jackson.

Samuel served as one of the volunteer "Squirrel Hunters" in the defence of Cincinnati in 1862, later he joined the 168th OVI, May to September, 1864, serving in Cynthiana, Kentucky, and Cincinnati. Enoch and Thomas served together in the 89th OVI, enlisting in August, 1862. They first served at the defense of Cincinnati in September, 1862, and remained at nearby Camp Shaler in Campbell County, Kentucky until October. They then served in western Virginia (now West Virginia) and in Tennessee in the Tullahoma campaign, and were captured in the Battle of Chickamauga, Sept 20, 1863 (the only day they had seen battle), and sent to prison in Richmond, Virginia. Enoch died in prison in Danville, Virginia in 1864. Thomas was then sent to the infamous Andersonville prison in Georgia, and died in 1865 soon after being paroled in North Carolina.

Currently in the United States this war is called the Civil War, but at the time it was referred to as the War of the Rebellion, or just the Rebellion. In the South it was called the War Between the States. The South, really radical South Carolina, ignited it with the first shot; but the South had caused things to come to a head over a period of decades. The issue was slavery (which was, after all, inherited), but the war was not begun to free the slaves. Lincoln said that he would save the Union, with or without freeing the slaves. That was paramount, although he was strongly opposed to slavery. There was tremendous capital tied up in slaves, as in land. The precipitating issue was secession: the right of states to secede from the Union. Under the U.S. Constitution the states have certain rights reserved; not all are ceded to the Federal government. Abraham Lincoln and the new Republican Party, as well as the former Whigs of Henry Clay, were against letting the southern states leave the Union - feeling that secession was not permitted by the Constitution. Northern soldiers were fighting for the preservation of the Union. They used the term "secesh" for the southerners they encountered. Non-slave-holding southerners fought hard, and when asked why, they replied, "*Because you are down here*".

I got started with family genealogy when as a kid we would drive to Hillsboro for family reunions. But there were two such reunions, about two weeks apart, at the same roadside park. One was the Hern reunion and one was the Pearce reunion, my grandmother's family. There were a lot of people, and many generations. I had a horrendous time keeping people straight. So on the rides home I would pepper my mother with questions about who was who. We began to draw family trees on large pieces of brown paper. We had a family bible with many dates of family events and newspaper clippings. I suspect others got started in a similar way.

A copy of the book will be in the DFHS Library. I would be happy to correspond with anyone interested or who has further knowledge. I spent a couple of days in Holne 25 years ago, and walked down to Michelcombe. It's a beautiful area.

**Thomas Hern (21316)**

## The Devonshire Regiment and Mesopotamia: January - March 1916

1916: a century ago when the words “Verdun” and “Somme” became horribly familiar. No doubt there will be events to commemorate these battles. Whilst some will do, it is also appropriate that we remember a particular action from a campaign to which many Devonian families could have a connection. But this campaign is hardly ever referred to.

It involved British and Indian Army troops in the Mesopotamian campaign against the well-equipped and numerically-strong Turkish army. British imperial and economic interests were under threat: oil fields, Egypt & Suez, India. We know a great deal about the British and Imperial (i.e. Commonwealth) armies that suffered a terrible defeat at Gallipoli, but of the actions further east in the area we now refer to as Iraq, we hear very little, unless it is about the later exploits of “Lawrence of Arabia”. I believe we should know more about the period in between, as the sufferings, tragedies and horrors we see on our TV screens and read about everyday, have their roots in the political, military and diplomatic decisions which were made in the war period and in the decade that followed the war.

Many Devon families will have ancestors who served in the Devonshire Regiment, and some families still have representatives serving today, although there have been name changes and amalgamations. However, this article is specifically about those from North and North-central Devon, who were members of the 6th Battalion, 1st Regiment. In 1915, other Devonshire battalions had already seen action in France, especially at Loos where losses were very high. But with this piece I want to commemorate a battalion of men who left North Devon in 1914 to augment British troops already serving in India, alongside regiments of the Indian Army.

The Devonshire men were in Lahore when their Brigade received orders to embark for Mesopotamia in Dec. 1916. The 1/6th included my mother’s eldest brother, William Arthur **Webber**. He was born in 1885 and grew up in Chulmleigh. His army number was quite low (382) and he was a corporal, which suggests that he had joined what was then a territorial regiment well before the 1st World War. He was married and had two children, with their home in King’s Nympton, where he and his wife, Emma, ran a small shop. In 1914 my mother, Florrie as she was known, was just 5. It is not surprising that she could tell us nothing about William. She probably saw little of him in those very early years, let alone have really known him, she would not see him again.

The 1/6th, 642 other ranks and 32 officers, arrived at Basra (in modern-day Iraq) on 3rd January 1916 but could not disembark for two days. Then, to reach the front of operations, meant a 200-mile march. River transport along the Tigris was reserved for carrying supplies. Boats were often held up by low river levels, and supplies of food severely delayed and men fed as late as midnight after a day’s march. Supplying fresh water was a constant problem. The depleted 1/6th was strengthened in early March by the arrival from Britain of a new draft: 8 officers and 300 men. Some of these had had experience at Loos, but many had not seen any action and were not fully trained. In addition to William, two of his younger brothers were also in the 1/6th - Frederick



## A Patriotic Family.



The four sons of Mr. and Mrs. James Webber, of Great Shute, Chulmleigh, who are serving their King and country. William is with the 1st-6th Devons in India; Fred with the Devons in France; Alfred with the Territorials at Tavistock; and Sid is in L.M.S. Lion. Mr. Webber has also a son-in-law in the Army.

Left to right: The youngest Alfred; the eldest William, then Sydney who had joined the Royal Navy as a boy-entrant and finally, Frederick. This treasured cutting from a local paper has been folded and unfolded many times! We believe that the picture appeared early in the war as there is no mention of a fourth son who was also in the Devonshire Regt. Also, it refers to William as being in India, which he was before his battalion was sent to Mesopotamia. We think Frederick had been at Loos, in France. But he later, along with his younger brother Alfred, would be part of the detachment of men sent from Devon to strengthen the depleted battalion that had come from India.

and Alfred (Alf) Webber; all in the same Company. (Another brother, Lesley, was in the RN and another, Arthur Richard, was killed in an accident on Jersey in 1911, where his battalion of the Devons was deployed on Garrison duty.)

We know nothing of Frederick, aside from his having been in the army, but we did get to know Uncle Alf. His two daughters had been bridesmaids to our mother in 1930. In the late 1940s my sister visited them in their Ilfracombe home, and I got to know Alf when he made visits to us, at Exmouth. The 2nd World War had only recently ended; there was no talk of the 1st. Although we no longer have relatives in Ilfracombe, together with our brother we still make visits there from Exmouth.

The main objective in the campaign in March 1916 was the relief of Kut, on the River Tigris, where there was a large army of British and Indian troops who were struggling without any supplies getting through. It was a very confused operation, involving a number of British and Indian Army Brigades. The 1/6th became heavily engaged at the Dujailad Redoubt and sustained heavy casualties. In total, across all the forces involved, there were over 4,000 losses. Kut was not relieved.

After a non-stop, 21-hour-long action, over the 7th/8th of March, 9 officers and 44 men of the 1/6th Devons had been killed or reported missing, and 8 officers and 181 other ranks wounded. William was killed on March 8th; Alf was wounded and eventually discharged the army on August 26th as a result. (I still have a memory

of him wearing his “silver” lapel badge that men who were discharged-wounded were given during the 1st WW). Frederick survived the campaign but remained in Mesopotamia and Palestine until February 1919, when he returned and was demobbed. It is not known if he returned to Chulmleigh. My sister, as a little girl in the 1940s often stayed with her gran and an aunt in Chulmleigh but she cannot recall ever hearing of an “Uncle Fred” (but has an excellent memory of many other Chulmleigh relatives) so, sadly, he remains essentially unknown to us.

William was buried in the Imperial War Graves Cemetery at Basra. Its presence became a sensitive issue in our modern era and when some redevelopments began, the President, Sadaam Hussein, said that the cemetery should be re-located in its entirety. It is now at Nasiriyeh. William is commemorated there and his name is also inscribed on Chulmleigh’s War Memorial and on the Parchment Roll of Honour in St. James’s Church, Chawleigh, his mother’s home village near Chulmleigh. (Conscious of the deep desire of descendants to visit cemeteries where their ancestors are commemorated, and knowing that visits to Iraq would now be very problematical, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission had a 2-volume Roll of Honour created, dedicated to the 40,500 Commonwealth forces 1914 - 1921 whose graves in Mesopotamia are not known. This is on permanent display at the Commission’s Head Office in Maidenhead.)

Someone wrote of his Mesopotamian experience: “*A battlefield in France was not a pretty sight but a battlefield in Mesopotamia was a veritable nightmare*”. I’ll conclude with three other quotations, which I think are poignant and also worth knowing: As the exhausted survivors arrived back at the rear base, an officer who commanded a river boat called out “*Three cheers for the Bold and Dusty*” and he was very nearly court-martialled because on his own initiative, he took all the wounded he could find aboard his boat and sailed it to the nearest hospital.

A Brigadier, speaking to one of the surviving officers said he had only one fault to find with them - “*they were too brave*”. Perhaps the most heart-felt of all is this, by someone who wrote about men he had known all his life in North Devon: “*The happy family who had sailed from England in October 1914.....is no more*”. I think it appropriate that we remember these men of the 1/6th at this time.

There was to be a terrible conclusion to this period of operations. The attempt to relieve Kut and the army of Gen. Townsend held there failed in the face of overwhelming odds, and political and military procrastination back in London on how to proceed. An offer of an enormous payment to buy their release and the promise that those troops would never be used again, was rejected. On April 29th 1916 an army of 2,000 British and 6,000 Indian troops, together with their General, was surrendered to the Turkish army and a dreadful captivity began. Eventually, only half the British and a third of the Indian forces survived. And it took a very long time for that story to come out.

Sources for military information: *History of the Devonshire Regiment* and “*The Bloody Eleventh*” (The Regiment’s nickname, from the 11th Regt. of Foot of 1757.)

**Norman Goodman (18839)**



### **Devon Family History Society Help Desk**

**Family History Drop-in session, no need to book. Free to all.**

Find out how to start your family history or let us try to break down that brick wall.

Members of Devon FHS will be available - bring along what you already know.

**Tuesday 10th May 11.00am - 3.30pm ■ Devonport Park Pavillion Cafe PL1 4BU**

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**Tuesday 17th May 11.00am - 3.30pm ■ Devonport Park Pavillion Cafe PL1 4BU**

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**How to start your Family History using the Record Office**

Find out what's in the Record Office to help with your family history.

Members of Devon FHS will be available - bring along what you already know.

Perhaps we can help to break down that brick wall.

**Monday 23rd May 10.30am - 11.15am OR 11.30am - 12.15pm**

**Plymouth & West Devon Record Office, Clare Place, Plymouth PL4 0JW**

**Parking available ■ Free to all. Please ring or email to book a place.**

### **Devon Family History Society Meeting**

#### **The Lost Churches of Plymouth Graham Naylor**

Plymouth has a rich and interesting history in its beautiful churches. Many are now long forgotten churches which were destroyed in the Blitz of Plymouth during World War Two and sadly many other churches have since closed and been demolished.

**Tuesday 24th May at 7pm ■ All welcome, no charge.**

**Spurgeon Hall, Mutley Baptist Church, Plymouth PL4 6LB**

### **Devon Family History Society Event**

#### **Children's Treasure Trail (suitable for ages 5-14 years)**

The trail takes about an hour, walking around the park.

Children, bring your parents or carers and see how many clues you can solve.

Badges and certificates for all who take part.

**Monday 30th May - any time between 11.00am - 2.00pm ■ Free to all**

**Meet at Devonport Park Pavillion Cafe PL1 4BU**

# Research Corner

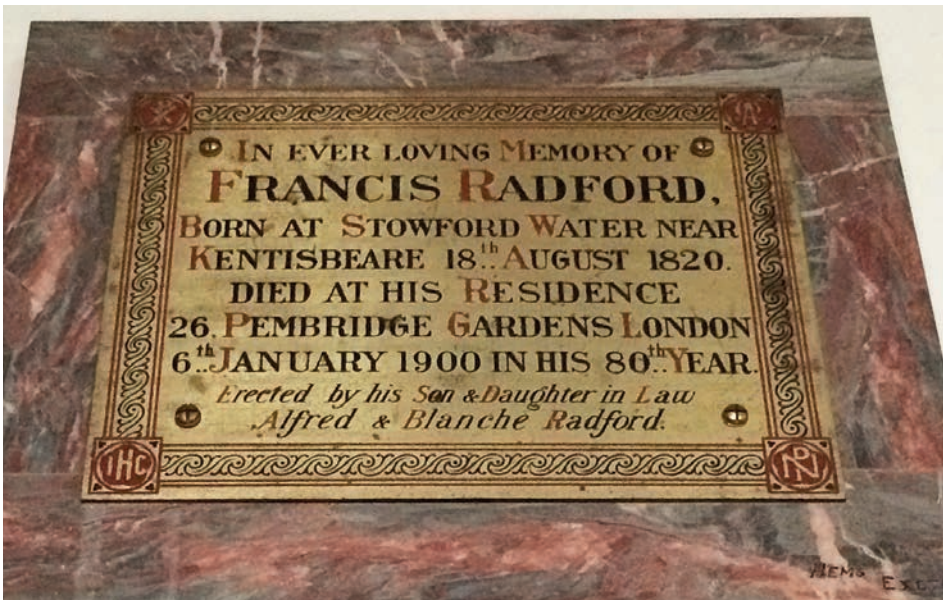
The death is announced of Mr. Francis Radford, of Pembridge-gardens and Holland-park, Kensington. Mr. Radford's name was identified with the very highest class of building in Bayswater and Kensington, being both architect and builder of those well-known properties Holland-park, Pembridge-square, Pembridge-gardens, and Dawson-place. He was a great benefactor to his native place, Kentisbeare, Devon, and contributed liberally to many charitable works in Kensington. For many years Mr. Radford took a prominent part in Kensington local affairs, and was the founder of the Notting-hill Electric Lighting Company.

Above: Morning Post -  
Tuesday 09 January 1900 from:  
[www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)



Left: 26 Pembridge Gardens,  
the home of Francis Radford junior

Below: Brass plaque in St. Mary's Church,  
Kentisbeare, dedicated to a Francis  
Radford, for his donation of the organ  
in 1884.



## A Visit to Kentisbeare ...

My father's family was always a mystery. He never spoke of the family he left in England when he came to Canada in 1919. The only information we had was that he was born in Kentisbeare Devon in 1891 and his parents were Francis Thomas **Radford** and Sara Ann. When I decided to search for my ancestors, the first thing I did was join the Devon Family History Society. Through their web-site, I used their Research Service and they found my family.

This past September, my daughter and I made a trip to Devon to visit the village and St. Mary's Anglican Church. In the church I saw a plaque dedicated to a Francis Radford, for his donation of the organ in 1884. The church history, published in 1970, gives a brief story of the donor. The material in the pamphlet was excerpted from the '*Parochial History of Kentisbeare and Blackborough*' compiled by Rev. E.S. Chalk and published by the Devonshire Association in 1934.

This Francis was the son of Francis Radford and Mary Ann **Blackmore**, descended from the Blackmores and Mores of Moorhayes. Richard Persey, his grandfather was the church warden in 1807. When quite young, Francis left home and walked to London to make his fortune. It is said that he had 7/6d in his pocket. He quickly found work and since he was very talented, acting as his own quantity surveyor, he soon owned his own business. A note in the census of 1871 states he employed about 60 workers. As a builder he erected a large number of houses west of Kensington Gardens. He was a most generous man and one son stated that his father gave half his goods to charity. His estate, sworn for probate, at his death was worth £255,617/14s/4d. He died at his residence, 26 Pembridge Gardens, London, January 6, 1900. When the organ was gifted to the church, he also left £625 as an endowment for its upkeep.

When attending the church for Sunday Morning Worship I was very moved when permitted to play the organ. At this time we are not sure of what connection this Francis has with my family, but the connections I made with my roots was a wonderful time in my life. I shall never forget the beautiful countryside, the warm friendliness of the people whom we met and who helped me. They opened their homes to me, and showed me where my father was likely born, and where my grandfather worked as a wagoner.

And the search continues.

**Betty Radford Turcott** (22054)

## ... from Kentisbeare to Kensington

Betty asked us to see if we could establish a link between her grandfather, Francis Radford and the Francis commemorated in the Church. So far we haven't found one, although it seems likely that they are both descended from a Francis who was baptised in Kentisbeare on 5 March 1698, the son of William and Alice. At the moment we have one or two generations 'missing'!

One of the joys of helping people with their research is that it's very easy to get fascinated by some of the stories relating to their ancestors!! How come that a carpenter's son from Kentisbeare ended up as a wealthy architect in London?

This investigation illustrates how lucky we are to have so much information available now at the 'click of a mouse' (with a cautionary note, don't believe it all!)

Francis Radford junior was baptised in Kentisbeare on September 10th 1820. His father, also Francis, was a carpenter-joiner and his mother was Mary Ann. The only marriage that appears to fit for his parents is that between Francis and Mary Ann Pearsey, celebrated on 7th May 1818 in Kentisbeare. If you have already read Betty's account of her visit to the village, you will see there is a difference here from the information cited by the Rev.Chalk in the 1930s.

It has proved possible to find a huge amount about the Radfords in London. Rather than writing up the whole story, which is quite colourful, I will list the websites that featured in the research, some very well known, others perhaps a little more obscure.

[www.ancestry.co.uk](http://www.ancestry.co.uk) for censuses, London baptism, marriage and burial records, Divorce proceedings, National Probate Index and PCC Wills [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk) for censuses, Devon parish records [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk) for many articles, including marriage and death announcements, obituaries, advertisements for the sale of houses the Radfords had built and at least one very detailed account of the divorce application between Francis and his wife Sarah.

[www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol37](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol37) 'Chepstow Villas and Pembridge Square area', in Survey of London: Volume 37, Northern Kensington, ed. F H W Sheppard (London, 1973), pp. 258-275

[www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol37](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-london/vol37) 'The Holland estate: To 1874', in Survey of London: Volume 37, Northern Kensington, ed. F H W Sheppard (London, 1973), pp. 101-126

The short synopsis below is from information now available online. As you can see this also varies from the detail available to Rev. Chalk when he wrote his book in the 1930s. Perhaps less romantic, it shows how much more is now available from many different sources. By 1851 the whole of the Radford family, Francis senior, Mary Ann and all their children were in London. Francis junior was already in London when he married Sarah Burden in 1845. He was working for his father as a 'journeyman builder'. The marriage was very unhappy and their difficulties are described in great detail in the newspapers and in the divorce proceedings:

The petition of Sarah in 1868 says *'that the said Francis Radford hath ever since the fourth day of June one thousand eight hundred and sixty or thereabouts without any just cause refused and still refuses both to permit me to live and cohabit with him and also to render me my conjugal rights'*. It isn't clear if they did actually divorce or were just granted a 'judicial separation'. The Divorce proceedings also give eight addresses where they lived in Campden Town, Bayswater and Westbourne Grove. The exact dates of birth for Francis and Sarah's two youngest sons are also stated.

The detailed documents on the development of housing in these upper class areas of London show that all three of Francis senior's sons joined him in the building trade and they acquired many properties and leases. Francis junior ended up as an architect as well as a builder and several of the houses he designed are now listed buildings. The details of his death and considerable estate are described in Betty's account and in the newspaper article on the previous page.

**Sue Bond** (7960), Research Coordinator

## The Escapades of Miss Caroline Bellew - part one

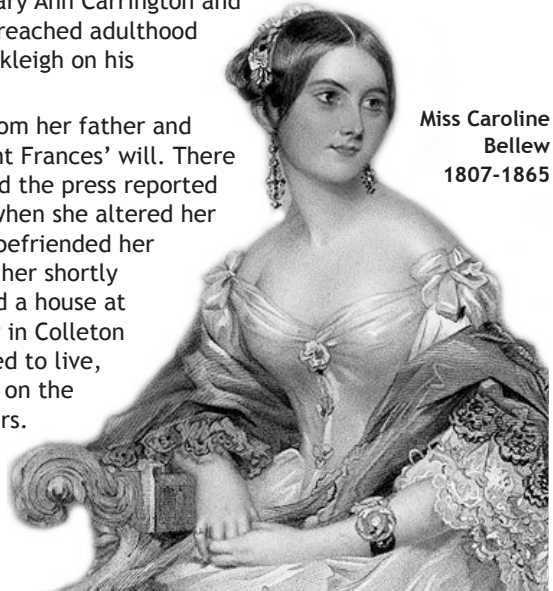
The beautiful Caroline Bellew was born in 1807 to William Bellew and his wife Prestwood Love Froude. She had an elder sister Louisa Philippa 1800-33, and a younger sister Frances 1806. Her brother John Prestwood Bellew who was born 1803 was son and heir to his father's considerable fortune. Other siblings, Henry born 1808 and William Henry born 1802 both died young.

Their parents had married at Knowstone in December 1798, which became a violent and lawless little village thanks to Prestwood's brother Rev John Froude who succeeded his father as rector and was said to be a drunken villain, more interested in gambling and hunting than in religion. He lived in East Anstey Barton until his death in 1852 and gained notoriety with his five packs of hunting hounds and numerous fine horses. It is believed that he ruled his parishioners with a rod of iron and exercised a mystical power over those he knew. The village was notorious for cases of sheep and poultry stealing, arson, theft, body stealing, wife selling and animal mutilation and Froude, a witty and intelligent man was not averse to appearing in court both as prosecutor and as the accused. R D Blackmore wrote a lesser known novel called "*The Maid of Sker*" featuring a character called Evil Parson Chowne, said to be based upon Rev Froude.

Caroline Bellew may well have inherited her uncle's wayward genes, for she led a contentious life, courting scandal and gossip wherever she went, adopting the title of Countess Caroline in high-society and appearing in court on several occasions. She was certainly charismatic and somewhat manipulative of others and had a taste for fine things and for gambling.

Caroline's brother John Prestwood Bellew married his first cousin Mary Ann Hancock in 1827 and took on Stockleigh Court with his children John Froude Bellew, Louisa Philippa, Fanny, William, Lavinia, Mary Ann Carrington and Camilla Prestwood. Not all of them reached adulthood however but John jnr inherited Stockleigh on his death in 1862.

Caroline inherited other property from her father and was also chief beneficiary in her Aunt Frances' will. There was scandal around this however and the press reported that Frances was of unstable mind when she altered her will in favour of her niece who had befriended her and exerted a strong influence over her shortly before she died in 1844. Frances had a house at Cowley Bridge and another property in Colleton Crescent, Exeter where she preferred to live, allowing her favourite niece to take on the Cowley Bridge house and make it hers. Personally she was very fearful of being burgled and did not feel safe in the country property. Unmarried, Aunt Frances spent her life looking after her sister Philippa



Miss Caroline  
Bellew  
1807-1865

who suffered from epilepsy and was said to be an imbecile. There is no doubt that Frances adored her niece and Caroline did spend a lot of time with her, talking about her escapades in London's High Society and bringing a measure of excitement and vitality to her two maiden Aunts. There is little doubt that Caroline offered Frances much-needed emotional support as she struggled to care for Philippa. When she inherited from both Philippa and Frances her sister Frances was understandably incensed and fell out with Caroline for the rest of her life.

Near neighbours were the Misses Sarah and Catherine Moore, spinster sisters who lived a reclusive life in a large, dilapidated mansion house around the corner from Colleton Crescent in St David's Hill. Caroline would have known them and was certainly familiar with their story for they had been cruelly treated by their violent brother when he inherited the family home, Cadeleigh Court, near Stockleigh English. The Moore sisters had retreated to St David's Hill in fear of their lives, hiding behind closed shutters and allowing the house to deteriorate around them. When Sarah died, Catherine is said to have clung to her decaying body until something had to be done with it. Reminiscent of Miss Haversham she continued to live with her possessions mouldering around her until Miss Caroline Bellew gained her trust and entered her life.

Suddenly there was vitality in the house and Catherine became very fond of her new, young friend and could believe no ill of her. Caroline had already gained notoriety for some of her escapades in London and in Paris, attracting attention at the theatre and other society events. She was a woman of some beauty and she clearly enjoyed fine clothes and beautiful possessions. The Moore sisters may have lived in a house that appeared semi-derelict from the outside, but it was full of fine things: pianos, furniture and paintings, silk dresses, lace veils, brocades, and Mandarin shawls, silver salvers, chased silver tankards and fine glassware. This became apparent when the house contents were put up for sale after Catherine passed away in 1846. Many people crowded into the property, keen to snap up a bargain when objects were offered for knocked-down prices. Others attended out of sheer curiosity, wanting a glimpse of life in the eccentric old lady's home. A painted portrait of Caroline Bellew was one of the items sold shewing that the Countess was much admired by Catherine Moore.

And it was Caroline Bellew who stood to benefit from the sale of the estate, for it seems that Catherine had altered her will in favour of her new, young friend. Very quickly the Moore family registered a complaint. The sale was halted and the matter went to court and to the press.

Miss Caroline Bellew was already the source of scandal, for in 1842 when only 25 she had travelled to London and then to France with society friends, Lord and Lady William Paget. Always seeking the company of those who were slightly higher than her in society she purchased herself a title from a foreign source and thereafter was known as Countess Caroline Bellew.

The friends arrived at the Hotel Bradford in Paris and stayed there in great style for some time and lived lavishly with four carriages and a retinue of servants. Caroline had a maid called Charlotte who shared her bedchamber, a butler called Chapman and a retainer called Francois. With the party were two young men, one of them Mr Berkeley Cassidy had taken responsibility for obtaining the groups passport for them all to travel to Paris, naming himself and his 'wife' Julia, said to be Caroline on it. He had designs on Miss Bellew and her substantial fortune and gave her gifts valued



at £800 whilst in Paris, hoping to win her hand in marriage. She boasted about the presents but seems to have been leading Cassidy on. He began to resent the fact and on one occasion he decided to send her a cup of coffee for breakfast which apparently made her very sick indeed. The following night he paid for her three servants to attend the opera and then to dine out at a restaurant. At about 2 am he entered Caroline's bedchamber and tried to 'talk' with her. She resisted and there was a struggle, the door was barred to prevent her escape and the bell-rope was broken off when she tried to summons help. Caroline and her servant Charlotte who was often complicit in her mistress's dalliances, are said to have woken the entire hotel with their screams of 'Murder!' and Cassidy fled. In his defence he later produced a letter signed by Caroline agreeing to the late-night assignation with him but Caroline and her maid denied that it was written and signed by her hand.

Unknown to the party of friends, and probably to Caroline herself, Cassidy had been declared a bankrupt back in England in January 1842 the month before the Paris trip took place. (*George Berkeley Kirkwood Cassidy, merchant of Bucklebury, bankrupt, born 1815.*)

Caroline Bellew was hailed 'a heroine' in some newspapers for fending off the unwanted attentions of an immoral young upstart, but others took the story and ran with it, turning the episode into a satirical playlet that poked fun at the upper classes and their dramatic and somewhat ludicrous exploits.

Elly Babbedge (21968)

Follow the next episode in the Historian May 2016

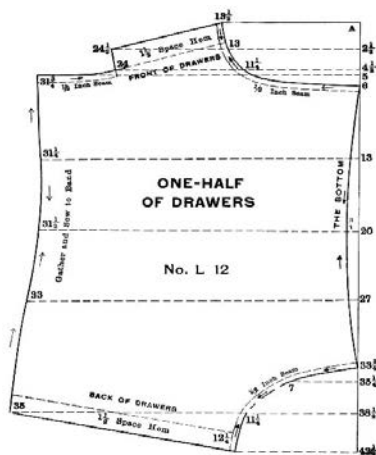
## Wear What Your Ancestors Wore

Can you or someone else in the family make clothing from a pattern?

The Ladies Treasury, a magazine of Victorian and Edwardian costume and needlework, presents articles, original fashion notes and perhaps best of all, Free Patterns for clothing and needlework copied from original period ladies magazines and books. All the patterns can be printed out at home directly from the website. [www.tudorlinks.com/treasury/freepatterns/index.html#Victorian](http://www.tudorlinks.com/treasury/freepatterns/index.html#Victorian)

If you possess the necessary skills and a sewing machine, you will probably enjoy spending some time on Free Historical Costume Patterns at [www.costumingdiary.com](http://www.costumingdiary.com) For anything from "Adapting the Elizabethan Lady's wardrobe for lower class use" to "Dalek Queen Elizabeth VI". You'll also find patterns for everything in between, including Victorian girdles and early 20th century wear.

Dick Eastman



Ladies' Drawers, 1907

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The Ladies Treasury, 2002

## 1689 Burial Anomalies in Parishes of South West Devon

In a review of the baptisms, marriages and burials of Plympton St. Mary parish, an interesting anomaly stood out for the year 1689 (figure 1). Between 1679 and 1699, the number of marriages was fairly consistent at around 10 per year. Baptisms averaged 35 per year although there appears to be a slight downward trend over the 21-year period. Burials were around 36 per year except for 1689 when 82 people died and 1690 when 53 died.

There was one clue in the burial register as to why the sudden rise in burials in 1689 - notes showed five of them were soldiers. No other year indicated the deaths of any military personnel. This was, of course, the time period of the Glorious Revolution when King James II of England was overthrown by English Parliamentarians aided by the Dutchman, William III of Orange-

Nassau. The battles had spread to Ireland and Scotland with the port of Plymouth as a naval base. A first thought was that many more of the increased deaths may have been related to military personnel stationed in the region.

A closer examination of the data showed that the greatest number of burials occurred in October, December, January and February. Note this time period predated the change from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar in 1752. The Julian year began on March 25th and ended on March 24th. All yearly totals are summarized for these intervals just as they are recorded in the parish registers.

In looking at the BMD statistics of the adjacent, more urban parish of Plympton St. Maurice (figure 2), a similar peak in burials was also present in 1689 with a secondary peak in 1694. Notes in the register did not give any indication of why the higher numbers. The largest number of burials in the parish in 1689 occurred during November and December.

One's first thought, of course, is that perhaps an epidemic raged through the area. Parish vicars and clerks did always record the causes of death so there was no direct evidence that disease was the reason for the higher numbers.

Research of burial numbers done separately for nearby Brixton Village also indicated a substantial increase in the number of deaths in 1689 (figure 3). In comparing notes it appeared there was something to the data that was more regional in character.

Figure 1. Plympton St. Mary  
Baptisms, Burials & Marriages 1679 - 1699

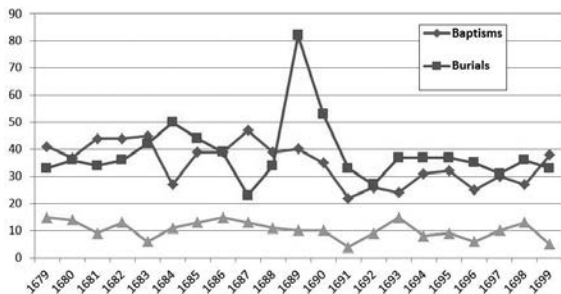
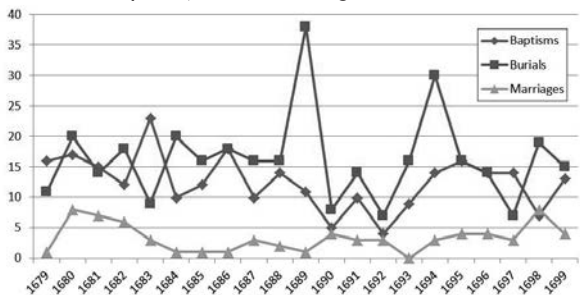


Figure 2. Plympton St. Maurice  
Baptisms, Burials & Marriages 1679 - 1699



Additional information on burials was collected for several parishes in and around Plymouth. Other information was also sought out that might shed light on deaths and death rates during that time period. Besides Brixton, Plympton St. Mary and Plympton St. Maurice, actual images from burial registers were examined, most of them available online at FindMyPast, from the following parishes: Egg Buckland, Pennycross, Plymouth Charles, Plymouth St. Andrew, Plymouth, Stoke Damerel and Wembury (figure 4).

These records were mostly complete for the years 1679 through 1699. Data from some of the smaller, adjacent parishes were combined to produce the chart (figure 5). In every area, there was a major increase in burial numbers in 1689.

Plymouth St. Andrew parish had the greatest number of burial entries and the largest peak in 1689. In addition, the burial register also had a substantial number of notes describing the deceased (figure 6) *overleaf*. The average number of burials for all years except 1689 was 215 per year. The total in 1689 was 726, over 3.4 times the average.

During 1689, a total of 333 military-related personnel were buried in St. Andrew parish: 118 sailor, 135 soldiers, 21 “Dutchmen” and 59 French prisoners of war. These individuals represented 46% of the total burials. This was a substantial proportion which now suggested that perhaps deaths from a military campaign were part of the story.

In 1688, William and Mary of Orange assumed the throne of England following the defeat of James II. By 1689 William, along with allies in Europe, was engaged in the Nine Years War with France. In addition to the main campaigns in and around Europe, major battles were also fought in Ireland and Scotland, with the French providing

Figure 3. Burials in Brixton parish 1679 - 1699

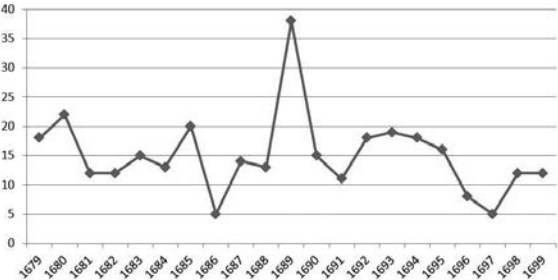


Figure 4. Map showing parishes around Plymouth, Devon where burial registers were examined

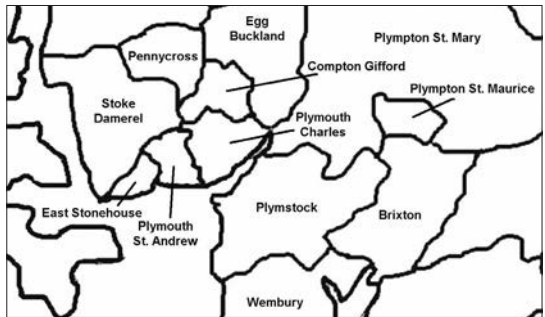


Figure 5. Comparison of burial numbers for parishes in the Plymouth Area 1679 - 1699

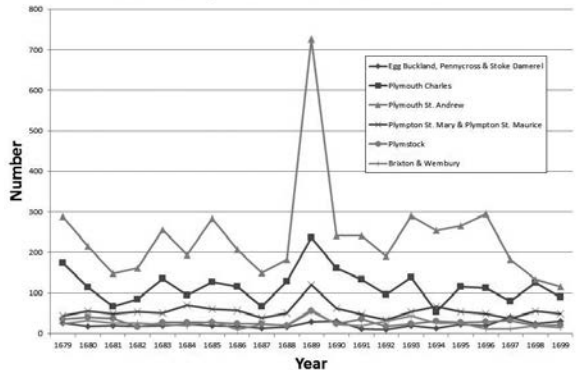


Figure 6 - page from burial register of Plymouth St. Andrew parish, Devon; notes are present for many individuals indicating their occupation or position (downloaded 25-10-2014 from FindMyPast and reproduced here courtesy of Plymouth and West Devon Record Office, copyright-holder).

Burials January 1689		Burials January 1689		Burials Jan. 1689 22	
1	Richard Marshall	17	2 Scaman. than names not known.	31	George Ireland 113
	Richard Sec. master of the flou. fight.	18	2 Scaman from hospital.		Joan Walters vidua.
	Elizabeth Havers. vidua.	19	Ann. John. son. & 2 Scaman.		Bridgett Martyn vidua.
	son John Shipherd.	20	Honour wife John Spry. sto.		Jane Hughes. vidua.
	Mathias Mansfield } soulless		Cuthbert Rayn. south.		Elizabeth Triggs.
	Jos. h. Brown } soulless		Priscilla Crake		David Mgar } soulless
	Dorothy da. Charles Christopheras		3 french prisoners.		William Shaw } soulless
2	Thomas Hawkins		Mary da. Tho. Pottoll.		Arwaman & 4 french prisoners.
	John son John Bowman	21	Benjamin Clapp.		Christiam Henry vidua.
	Jane da. John Werry		Richard Saper.	<b>Burials February 1689</b>	
	Mark Smith		William Habins of Dofph	1	Robert Esyllat
	John Davis } soulless		Ralph Bolithor.		4 french prisoners.
	Matthew Ash } soulless		Loudey Werry	2	Cap. Peter Baker adurkman
4	Christopher Habion		A Scaman & 2 french pris.		James Gibbs. south.
	John Skinner. scaman	22	Doborah wife Joseph Crooking		Eadith Byland vidua.
5	Francis Bartkell. sto.		3 Scaman. & 2 french pris.		Mary Lewis vidua.
	John Bl. amir a grendbey	23	Stephen Pinner of London. sto.		Mary da. Emanuel Steyl.
	Agnes Bunnors.		Rebekah wife John Harris		5 french prisoners
6	Henorick Petersen.		Agnes Proust.	3	M <sup>r</sup> Daniel Prato.
	Humphry Hosking.		Elmor wife James Congdon.		M <sup>r</sup> Richard Saltorly.
7	William Blart burn scaman.		John Davis.	4	John Baker. south.
8	George Stephensen. master of 3 York.		Arwaman & 2 french pris.		Martha Martyn. & french pris.
	Mary wife Robert Moorshead		William Dannis.	5	M <sup>r</sup> John Alphen } wayfor.
	A durkman		John Dwasoll } scaman.		William Dommis } scaman.
	Elizabeth da. Hare. sto.		4 french prisoners.		Thomas White.
	William Jantaster. south.	24	M <sup>r</sup> Richard Hingston		4 Scaman & 4 french prisoners
	2 Scaman		2 Scaman.	6	Richard Whiteway mangt
9	George Lennate.	25	Grace Raddon.		Catherine da. Richard Carey.
	George Hoams a Cooper		Arwaman & french pris.		Margary Rogdis
	Nathaniel Reeves.	27	M <sup>r</sup> Thomas Martyn.		Gras Doust.
10	John Hurt.		John Noell of London.		
			Ambros. Coler.		

support to the deposed King James by way of money and troops. Plymouth became a staging area for battles fought in Ireland and France. Its suitability as a major port area prompted the government to later build a major dockyard there, capable of servicing a first rate man-of-war.

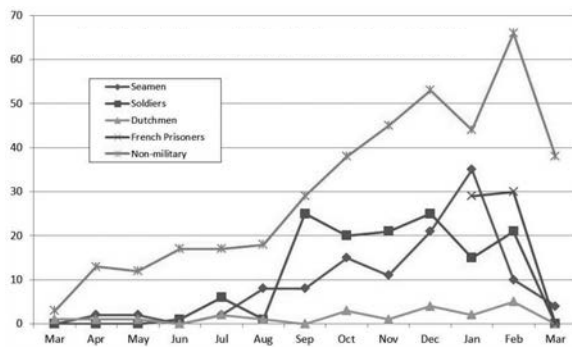
As was the case for Plympton St. Mary and Plympton St. Maurice parishes, Plymouth St. Andrew also had higher burial numbers in the last half of 1689 (figure 7). This was true for military-related burials but was also the case for civilians as well. The increase began in September when 25 soldiers and 8 sailors were buried. The high numbers continued through February with a peak in deaths of naval personnel in January. In that month is also found the first note regarding the burials of French prisoners of war. The French were allied with James II in the war against England. These individuals were undoubtedly captured in battles that raged near the English coast.

Injured and killed soldiers and sailors appear to have been returned to the Plymouth area for treatment and burial. And if they brought with them any infections or

diseases those may well have been transmitted to the general population.

Non-military deaths also increased beginning in September which is a strong indication that diseases contracted by military members were spread to the general population on their return to Plymouth. From the port area proper, they then spread to communities in nearby parishes. By the end of 1689, burial numbers had gone back to normal rates.

Figure 7. chart showing monthly totals of burials in Plymouth St. Andrew parish, Devon, by category.



A full transcription was completed for the burials in Plymouth St. Andrew parish for the years 1688 to 1690. From that an analysis of the families affected was done. Within the three-year time period, there appeared to be a number of families which suffered losses of several individuals. While it could not be confirmed that all of those with the same surname were related, the coincidence of forenames did suggest familial connections. Examples of multiple family deaths include:

- Four individuals with the surname Bartlett died in 1689, three of them in February. Three were shown as children of a John Bartlett and one was shown as the wife of John.
- Three children and a wife of a Peter Fox died between September and February 1689. Another child died in August 1690.
- Two sons and a wife of a John Shipherd died between June and January 1689. John Shipherd died in November 1690 when living at the almshouse.

The sample of family deaths is not a large one but there are indications that at least a few were also affected by the disease that ran rampant through the military personnel.

Few references have been found that would suggest what or whether specific diseases may have accounted for the abrupt increase in deaths.

Barbara Bolt (2001, page 21) comments that "*Plymouth suffered in 1689/93 when plague was brought from Portugal.*" Plague was a name that was often given to many widespread epidemics but not necessarily one that involved the classic disease commonly referred to as the Black Death. The Plague, as it is generally understood, is believed to have disappeared after 1666 (Creighton, 1891). While deaths in the Plymouth area may certainly be ascribed to disease epidemics, it is not believed that the Plague was a factor. While numbers are relatively high, they are not as significant as might be the case if the Plague was present. The absence of any reference to Plague in any burial register, or other publication found so far supports this conclusion.

Dr. James Yonge, a surgeon in Plymouth in the late 1600s, kept a journal of his life, including voyages with the Royal Navy and as a working physician. He briefly describes caring "*for the sick and wounded in 1689*" and the appearance of spotted fever that

year. His own son was apparently stricken and almost died (Yonge, page 203). Others of his acquaintance and employ were fatally afflicted by the disease. In a second publication Yonge, 1708, page 44), Yonge commented that, in 1689-90, "... 4 Regiments of Soldrs were sent here to embark for Ireland, and 400 Ships Wintred here, so that great Infection happened, & above 1000 people buried In 3 months."

Creighton (1894, pages 229-234) documents a fever which killed hundreds in Londonderry and Dundalk, Ireland, during a siege by the Catholic Irish army of James II between April and July of 1689. He states the fever was "a most malignant form of typhus" also often referred to as "spotted fever". He describes the appalling conditions of army camps in Ireland where dysentery was rampant and corpses lay among the living for long periods of time.

While most died or were treated in hospitals in Ireland, it seems likely that some survivors as well as many sick soldiers may have been evacuated back to England, likely Plymouth. They would have carried the typhus, or spotted fever bacteria with them, infecting both sailors on the ships carrying them and other inhabitants of Plymouth on their return. That might explain why the infection of sailors seemed to follow illnesses of soldiers.

The experiences in Londonderry and Dundalk may not have been unique. It is certainly possible that other encampments also suffered from sickness such as typhus that was eventually exported back to Britain.

There is not sufficient data to conclude what the causes were for so many deaths in late 1689 but it seems apparent that diseases accounted for most of them and that those infections were carried into the area by military personnel. Further study might be made of individual families to see if their connection to army or navy personnel made them more susceptible. If information on garrisons or ships' companies can be found, it might also further pinpoint where the diseases first took hold.

**Wayne Shephard** (13624) and **Samantha Tucker**

**References:** Bolt, B. (2001). *Epidemics and Diseases in Devon*. Published by author through the Devon Family History Society.

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**About the authors:** Wayne Shephard is the Online Parish Clerk for Cornwood, Harford, Plympton St. Mary and Plympton St. Maurice. He has collected and studied the baptism, marriage and burial registers of those parishes along with other documents and records originating with those parishes. Samantha Tucker is the local historian for the village of Brixton. She has been involved in compiling and studying historical records for the area.

# George and William Bond

I was very interested to read about the naval career of Rear Admiral Thomas Louis in the November 2015 issue of the Historian and particularly the reference to his time on board *HMS Canopus* with Jane Austin’s brother Francis Austin.

My wife’s great great great grandfather George **Bond** and his brother William joined *HMS Canopus* as volunteers from Guernsey in 1803 and were on board when the ship was part of Nelson’s fleet in the Mediterranean.

In 1804 both brothers made their Wills on board the ship leaving each other all their belongings. Perhaps it was fortunate that they missed the Battle of Trafalgar when the ship was sent to Gibraltar for supplies. However, the next year, 1806, they sailed across the Atlantic and fought the French fleet at San Domingo. Both brothers survived and when the Naval General Service medal was introduced in 1847 they each received the Medal and a Clasp for the battle of San Domingo 1806. On 11th November 1816 George Bond married Mary Wittry (or Wittey) at Stoke Damerel Church and neither of them could sign their names.

After serving on a number of ships George Bond transferred to the Coastguard and in 1820 was a Boatman at Mothecombe in south Devon. There his sons George and William were born and baptised at Holbeton Parish Church in 1821 and 1823 respectively.

The family left Devon in 1825 when George (senior) was transferred first to Barton Cliff and then Pitts Deep near Southampton. In 1829 he was promoted to Chief Boatman and sent to Ireland where he served at Casleh Bay, Co., Galway, Bray, south of Dublin and finally Annalong, Co., Down before being “Discharged to Pension” in 1856. He remained in Ireland for the rest of his life and died at Kilkeel, Co., Down in 1870 at the age of 85.

**Crauwfurd Matthews (4709)**

## on the Bookshelf.....

### My Family History

A ten generation family research record book with pedigree charts - £9.99 A4, 80 pages, ISBN: 978-1-906280-49-9

An efficient and attractive method of recording and displaying your family history research and a handy ‘aide memoir’ to carry around when researching. The product is in two parts: a record book and a two-sided pedigree chart. It allows the recording of 256 marriages, 512 ancestors plus offsprings, stretching back to the early 1700s and beyond. Ideal for anyone just starting out on family research. Its format provides a useful research guide for the beginner.

### Irish Family History on the Web:

4th Edition *Stuart Raymond* - £7.95 A5, 144 pages, ISBN: 978-1-906280-51-2

This internet directory provides a comprehensive overview of websites for the Irish researcher. Contents include: Gateways, Search Engines, etc; General Introductions to Irish Genealogy; Libraries, Record Offices and Books; Family History Societies; Discussion Groups: Mailing Lists; Newsgroups, and Message Boards; County Pages; Surnames; Births, Marriages and Deaths; Occupational Records; Miscellaneous Sites. It also provides: a Subject Index, a Place Index and an Instruction Index.

## Who was William Hellyons?

I am hoping a member/members of the DFHS can help. My query is to help with a session I am organising for our U3A History Group on primary sources in Tudor England.

On Whit Monday June 1549 the Devon Rebellion against the New English Prayer Book began in Sampford Courtenay. A group of angry parishioners confronted the Minister saying that the new Liturgy was “nothing but a Christmas Game”. The new service had been used on Whit Sunday. They demanded that the old service in Latin be reinstated.

WG Hoskins and various other sources state that a local farmer/member of the gentry/JP, a William **Hellyons** tried to pacify the crowd. He was pierced with a pitch fork/shot/bludgeoned to death (the sources disagree). One source states that a man called Letherbridge, a local farmer led the attack.

The name Letherbridge appears in various records in Sampford Courtenay and nearby. However I can find no reference to the surname Hellyons (Hellions) in the 1524 Subsidy List or the 1545 Subsidy List anywhere in Devon. Of course the name may have been misreported, but it is strange that all the sources I have read, including Hoskins, agree.

As this William was reported to be a local man, I have looked carefully at other names in the available 16c lists, both in Sampford Courtenay and in several adjacent parishes. I contacted the online Parish Clerk for Sampford Courtenay who confirmed that there were no references to the name in the Sampford Courtenay Parish Register, and none of the data she holds indicates where he came from. She also adds that one of her sources states he was a Franklin - a Middle English name for a freeman who owned land but was not of noble birth.

In the 1545 Subsidy List there are 16 entries for the name Hele and 35 entries for the name Helyer, but none in the vicinity of Sampford Courtenay. In Winkleigh in 1544/5 there was a William Hyll with Goods £8, and a John Hyll with Goods £4. In South Tawton there was a William Hole with Goods £20 (this would be the correct level of wealth for the man who intervened in Sampford Courtenay). I realise that name spellings do vary considerably, but all the spellings above are surely too far removed from the name in all the sources. So who was William Hellyons?

Jane Taylor (3628)

## Higher Uppacott a Dartmoor Longhouse

Higher Uppacott on Dartmoor is an intact 14th century Dartmoor Longhouse (a variant of the Devon Longhouse). It provides a unique view of life in the mediaeval period, around the time of the Black Death, and is pure social history, graphically wrenching you back to the basic realities of life through living off the land. It's currently being restored by the Dartmoor National Park.

It's one of Devon's great treasures, you can read more about it in the *free to view* digital version of *The Devonshire Magazine*.

Nigel Jones



## Granpop’s Memories of WW2 - A Near Miss!

In April 2015 on a visit to Torquay where I was born I walked across the road from the Grand Hotel on to Corbyn Head. There, in summer lunchtimes with friends from Torquay Grammar School, I explored the caves under the sandstone cliff and fished for crabs. The Head is much the same today, except for the big elm trees that in those days gave it a woodland appearance.

It was great to relive those far away schooldays in the late 1940s when many wartime defences were still in place. I was particularly fascinated by a granite pyramid overlooking Torbay which was unveiled in 2005 in memory of the sacrifice and bravery of the Home Guard. The memorial is on the spot where an artillery gun exploded during a training exercise in August 1944, killing 5 Home Guard soldiers and their Royal Artillery Sergeant Major.



It also records other Home Guard casualties from enemy action over Torquay, one of which was of particular significance for me. It was:

*Killed by enemy action  
Gnr C R Crocker  
Barton Gas Works bombing June 1942*

Our house on Barton Hill Road was only a few hundred yards from the large gas storage holder which I recall was strafed on a number of occasions but cannot remember a bomb actually falling on it. Researching on the web I found that on that particular raid an enemy plane missing its target had dropped a bomb about a quarter of a mile away on Salisbury Avenue falling on the house of Gnr Crocker sadly killing him, his wife and daughter.

It was a near miss for my family and neighbours as the bomber would probably have passed directly over our house so close to where its bomb landed. My discovery also answered another question as when I was a

bit older my newspaper delivery round passed the bomb site where I often wondered what had happened.

The more I learn about enemy action over Devon the more I understand that Torquay was very much in the front line from the time of the Blitz on Plymouth, through the frequent “hit and run” raids and the massive build up to D Day.

Peter Noble (16099)



5<sup>th</sup> 1703

To the Right Honourable Sir Nathaniel Wright Knt Lord of  
 Orisk Barshebah an yorshur widow Execut and execut  
 Compton afore said deid beinge in his life time and all the  
 & make his last will & testament bearing date on or abo  
 havinge there by devised some small Legaryt but and  
 for and one yorshur voysey of Culmpton afore said w<sup>ch</sup>  
 to Dispose of the said gods and Chattes also directed  
 best security that they will gett for the same for the sa  
 every yorshur and yorshur voysey Overseer and Executor  
 his he found to payme & when provided Related to  
 & in all the time of his deate to be in and w<sup>ch</sup> the best

Part of the opening lines of the case brought by Barshebah Palmer widow, 1703. TNA C 6\_338\_9

Complaint of vs ad the hon<sup>ble</sup> Court Hall

Will the mark of  
 Land

Francis Andrew  
 his mark  
 John Andrew  
 the mark of  
 Mary Andrew  
 the mark of  
 Thomas Andrew

The X marks of Robert Andrews's children, John, Thomas and Mary. TNA C 6\_338\_9

# Family Feuds - Introduction to Chancery Court Records

## The Court

There were four Courts of Equity - the Court of Chancery, the Court of the Star Chamber, the Court of Requests and the Court of the Exchequer. They arose towards the end of the medieval period for ordinary citizens to gain redress against other ordinary citizens and became ever more popular over the centuries.

The Courts of Equity particularly served those people who did not have the necessary documents to prove their case, usually because they were in the hands of their adversaries. The courts were also more concerned with the possession of property rather than the legal ownership of it, which was particularly relevant for lands which were the subject to complicated entails. Judgements in the Courts of Equity were made on the basis of what a sensible person of good conscience would do, rather than being based on a strict legal interpretation of the facts.

The Court of Chancery was the most important of the Courts of Equity and this article is concerned principally with this court. Before 1500 there were probably about thirty thousand cases. In the 16th century there were about a hundred thousand cases, and in the 17th century there were nearer to two hundred thousand cases. By the 18th century this number had pretty much doubled. Moving into the 19th century the court was a little less popular, partly because it had become bogged down in its own administration and cases could take many years to be resolved, as can be seen in Charles Dickens's "*Bleak House*".

The records are held at the National Archives, Kew, and occupy over 10 miles of shelving. These records are full of genealogical information and are a much neglected source. Where else can you find several generations of a family all mentioned in one document, with their relationships all described? Where else can you find definite proof that there were two (or three) people of the same name in the same parish all living at the same time? For Devon the records are particularly rewarding as many of them involve disputes over wills, which are often quoted, sometimes in full.

## The records

Cases in the Courts of Equity rely on written documents in that there are no verbal court hearings, no cross examination of witnesses. The result is the most amazing collection of written records and reading them is like shining a torch down the centuries into the personal lives of your ancestors.

A case starts with a Bill of Complaint brought by the plaintiff in which he sets out his case. The defendants then give their Answers, either jointly or separately. The Bill of Complaint is always believable and engenders a certain amount of sympathy for the plaintiff, however reading the Answer makes you realise that there is more to it and somebody is lying! Both the plaintiff and defendants then have the chance to prepare a list of questions to be asked of specially chosen witnesses. Each witness will only answer the questions that are relevant to them, such as whether or not they were a witness to a document. These are the basic documents for a case, others include Masters' Reports, Masters' Exhibits, Affidavits, Orders and Decrees, and Petitions. The amount of personal information, conversations quoted verbatim, descriptions of

people, their houses, all render these documents as some of the most enjoyable that any family historian can study.

### What was being disputed?

Most cases involve either money or land. The 'land' cases can be the result of a mortgage, a marriage settlement, or an entail. The 'money' cases generally refer to debts and loans. Then we have the cases about wills, which of course often refer to both land and money.

### Who brought cases?

All sorts of people - men, women and children - brought cases to the Court of Chancery. Typically they were the class of person who might have left a will, but many poorer people are also mentioned. Those holding land ranging from manorial copyholders to the great inter-county landowning families form the basis of Chancery records. In maritime counties such as Devon there are often cases relating to ship owners and mariners both in Devon and in the Americas.

Unlike many other documents, the Chancery records are full of references to women and children, particularly where there is a dispute over the welfare of a second wife and her children. In one case I looked at, the father died leaving one of his sons as executor. This son then died leaving his wife as executor. She then died leaving a brother as executor, so the wife of the original man brought a case against this brother for what she thought was her rightful inheritance. Wonderfully involved stuff, and just what we family historians like to see!

### Sample cases

Although this first case<sup>1</sup> refers to Dorset, it is absolutely typical of the sort of information that can be found in a Chancery case. It illustrates beautifully the range of names and places mentioned in the document and the complexity of family relationships, giving details of when people were alive or dead.

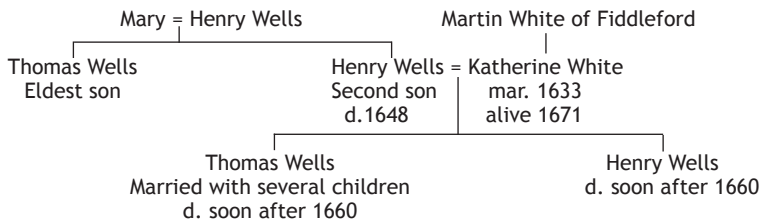
The listed parties are: *Plaintiffs*: George Penne the younger of Tollard and Richard Gildon of Gillingham co. Dorset. *Defendants*: Temperance Cockram widow, John Pitt, and Matthew Page, all of Blandford.

In September 1633 Henry Wells held lands and the manor of Godlingstone in Studland and Swanage, and other lands in Crawford Parva, Crawford Magna and Spetisbury. He married Katherine White daughter of Martin White of Fittleford and the land was to descend to their eldest son Thomas, after their deaths. Henry Wells died in 1648, but Katherine had no means of supporting her many younger children, who, apart from sons Henry and Thomas, are sadly not named in this document. With her son Thomas's consent she granted a lease on some of the lands to her younger son Henry, Thomas retaining the freehold. Henry then mortgaged these lands to one Temperance Cockram in 1663. Temperance claims that she has not been paid either the capital sum or any interest, and now both brothers Thomas Wells and Henry Wells have died. She is anxious to have the money as she wants to "*bestow her children upon the world*".

This case is a typical 17th century legal wrangle, with lands being mortgaged, put in trust, and the ownership being very unclear to modern eyes. The parties bringing the case are trustees for the Wells family. Typical of many Chancery cases in that it clarifies the relationship between the three different generations of people of the same name.

<sup>1</sup> TNA reference: C 5/59/44.

In this instance we learn about three men all named Henry Wells:



Have you ever wondered what happened after a will was made in which trustees were appointed? A case in 1703 concerning the Andrews and Palmer families of Cullompton<sup>2</sup> is typical of this sort of dispute in that it concerns the will of Robert Andrews dated 23rd May 1695. Robert appointed his two friends Henry Palmer and Peter Voysey, both also of Cullompton as trustees to look after the interests of his wife and children. They made an inventory of the goods, which were valued at about £100, and gave some of them to his wife. The remaining goods were sold for about £45 which they tried to lend out at interest to create an income for the family. They succeeded in lending some of it, but the rest remained with the trustees Peter Voysey and Henry Palmer. Peter Voysey then became insolvent and Henry Palmer died on 24th May 1700 having made a will leaving his wife Barshebah as executrix. Barshebah Palmer, who is bringing the case, claims that she should not be responsible for any of this and is afraid that the guardians of Robert Andrews's children, John, Thomas, and Mary (the eldest son Robert having died) will request all the £45 from her, with interest.

In their Answer the guardians say that Barshebah had agreed to pay £8 per year, however, although she initially paid 30s she has since only paid £3 10s. As always with Chancery, you never know quite who to believe. One of the bonuses of the Answers is that you get signatures, so for this case we have the x marks of the three children.

### Access to Chancery records

The National Archives (TNA), Kew, has many of its Chancery indexes online, accessed via the Discovery catalogue. <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>. The records can be searched for using names of persons and, in some classes of documents, using names of places. There are many series of records relating to Chancery, but all have the class letter "C" and this can be used to limit a search just to Chancery records. Those records that are not yet described in full in Discovery, are mostly covered by paper calendars on the open shelves at the National Archives. The Society of Genealogists also has a good number of Chancery cases included in the Bernau Index.

<sup>2</sup> TNA reference: C 6/338/9

### Further reading

TNA Research Guides to Chancery records (online)

Susan T. Moore, *Family Feuds, An Introduction to Chancery Records* (Federation of Family History Societies, 2003) (widely available, also direct from the author)

Henry Horwitz, *Chancery Equity Records and Proceedings 1600-1800* (PRO, 1998)

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk> <http://www.sog.org.uk>

Susan T. Moore M.A.,

## Josias Rogers 1814 -1852

But they were all called Josias or Josiah!

Josiah **Rogers** was my mother's grandfather. Mother told me that her grandmother was called Dorcas and the family anecdote was:

*"Dorcas attended a boarding school in Devon and eloped with Surgeon Rogers who died while out on a case in his brougham. He left three children, Blanche Marion, Frances and Mary. Emily, born 3 months after he died, herself died at age 9."*

Then I checked it all out and came up with a less respectable tale!

Josiah James Rogers was born in 1814 (per census returns) in St Petrock, Exeter, son of Josias Rogers and Mary (nee Hine). He, like his father, was a druggist and veterinary surgeon of Paris Street Exeter.

1841 census - Josiah at Paris Street, Exeter aged 25 (approx) Veterinary surgeon. The next entry is James, also a vet, also aged 25. They were not twins as James was christened in November 1815 and the census rounds down to nearest 5 years.

The 1851 census finds Josiah together with Dorcas Neale (daughter of his housekeeper) and the daughters mentioned in the anecdote, at Belmont Place. ref RG107/1868 p69 Was this a school?

He died 14th April 1852 (No will found - destroyed in the Blitz?).

Devonshire Chronicle & Exeter News... 20th April 1852 *"April 14th, after a long illness. Mr J J Rogers of this city, veterinary surgeon aged 37"* (so much for death while on a case!) I have his death certificate, it mentions G Rogers and Charlotte Langmead as informant. Who was she?

I should be thrilled if any reader could throw light on any of this.

Graham Ford (18158)

**Editor:** *Josias Rogers (Snr) d. April 24th 1845 age 62. Mary, his wife dies Feb 9 1855.*

*The Devon Wills Project: <http://genuki.cs.ncl.ac.uk/DEV/DevonWillsProject/> Contains details of over 300,000 wills, etc., from almost 550 different sources.*

Rogers Josias     Saint Thomas the Apostle [Exeter St. Thomas the Apostle]  
DEV\_gentleman\_1827\_W\_co\_PCC\_PROB 11\_1733

Rogers Josias     Dawlish\_DEV\_1845\_W\_co\_IRW\_R 55

No. 19.	No. of					
26	James Josias	Rogers	Fore	Druggist	William	
Nov.	Hine	& Mary	street		Oxnam	
No. 20.	son of				Rector.	

James Hine Rogers bapt 26th November 1815, Exeter St. Petrock.

© Image courtesy of South West Heritage Trust and Parochial Church Council.  
(downloaded 14-01-2016 from FindMyPast).

## The Life & Times of John Dominy Orchid Grower

John Dominy (1816-1891) was orchid grower to the nursery of James Veitch in Devon. He became the first person to artificially raise orchid hybrids. He flowered his first hybrid, *Calanthe Dominyi* in 1856. The Council of the Royal Horticultural Society awarded him their gold Flora medal in 1882 in recognition of his services to horticulture generally, especially for his remarkable achievements in hybridisation.

The Dominy Family has a long pedigree in Devon and we are looking to celebrate the life and times of John Dominy in Gittisham over the weekend of **7/8 May 2016**. As far as I can ascertain, to date, from my family research, the Dominy tree commences when a certain Erasmus Dominy married Susannah Prince in Seaton on 10 August 1775. Was Erasmus the son of a Spanish seafarer shipwrecked on a Spanish galleon? A son of Erasmus and Susannah was another Erasmus who married Sarah Richards in Branscombe on 18 January 1803. One of their sons was John Dominy.

In the photograph is my great grandfather, Harry (with beard!) married Sarah Ann Anstis 19 Oct 1874 in Uptontery. Harry and Sarah emigrated to India 1876 to establish tea plantations in Darjeeling. They had 12 children of which 6 survived to adulthood. The picture also shows my grandfather, John Henry Dominy, and his wife Esme (nee Chicheley-Plowden).

They succeeded Harry in managing the plantations in India and had 5 sons, including my father, Wilfrid John Dominy (1917-1991).

Harry was born 1 January 1851 in St. Leonards, Exeter and was one of the children born to Henry Dominy, born 19 Oct 1813 in Buckerell, and his wife, Sarah Grant, born 10 Aug 1817 in Farway. They married 20 April 1836 in Southleigh. Henry was brother to John Dominy of orchid fame.

Through the pages of DFH, I welcome contact from any of your readers who would like to be involved in our celebrations.

**Jeff Dominy (19606)**



## North Devon Record Office - An Update

Those of you who have been following the tribulations of the NDRO may be in need of an update of recent events. You may recall that in the autumn all seemed lost and closure looked to be inevitable with the county council moving into the premises of the NDRO and all the records due to be sent to Exeter. In the event this did not happen!

Two things happened: firstly, Devon County Council discovered belatedly how much the moves would cost and that the annex to the Civic Centre was sufficient for their needs and was a substantially cheaper option. Secondly, Barnstaple Town Council belatedly realised what was happening and that their records were to be taken to Exeter. In the event the town council moved quickly and led moves to raise emergency funding of £22,500 to secure the NDRO until the spring of 2016. Local parish and town councils provided grants as well as a substantial one from DCC.

Recently there has been a follow-up meeting chaired by Barnstaple Town Council, at which were present some parish councillors and representatives from most of the major towns in North Devon plus people from the South West Heritage Trust, the local museum and the Athenaeum. The Mayor of Torrington was present also. At the meeting it was agreed to look for funding for the next three years. Papers were presented by the Barnstaple Town Clerk and the chief executive of the South West Heritage Trust. The aim is to provide some stability for that period and look forwards to a more long term solution during that period.

The total shortfall in funding is £61,000 per annum however DCC and South West Heritage Trust have contributed most of this and the remaining gap is approximately £22,000 per year of which Barnstaple Town Council have pledged £10,000. The remainder is being sought from the towns and parishes. The meeting agreed in principle to make this up between the various councils present. It was thought wiser to ask for grants from each body in a single lump sum rather than ask for continuing funding agreements over 3 years. Each council will now have to decide whether to agree to make such a grant according to their means.

Details of the funding arrangements should be available from the town clerk in Barnstaple shortly for those wishing to have a breakdown in greater detail. This is an opportunity to keep the record office and all the cultural gems it contains in North Devon where it belongs. If the records go to Exeter we can be sure they will never come back to us. I would urge everyone to lobby their councillors urgently (budgets are being finalised now) to make a grant payment towards keeping the NDRO open.

28th January 2016

Jon Frayne (21340)

## Historian Challenge 157 ..... ⇨

The photograph (bottom right) was taken in the churchyard of one of our Devon parishes. Do you know which church and what it is the feature?

The winning answers sent by email and by post will be revealed in the May Historian.



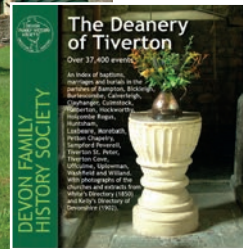


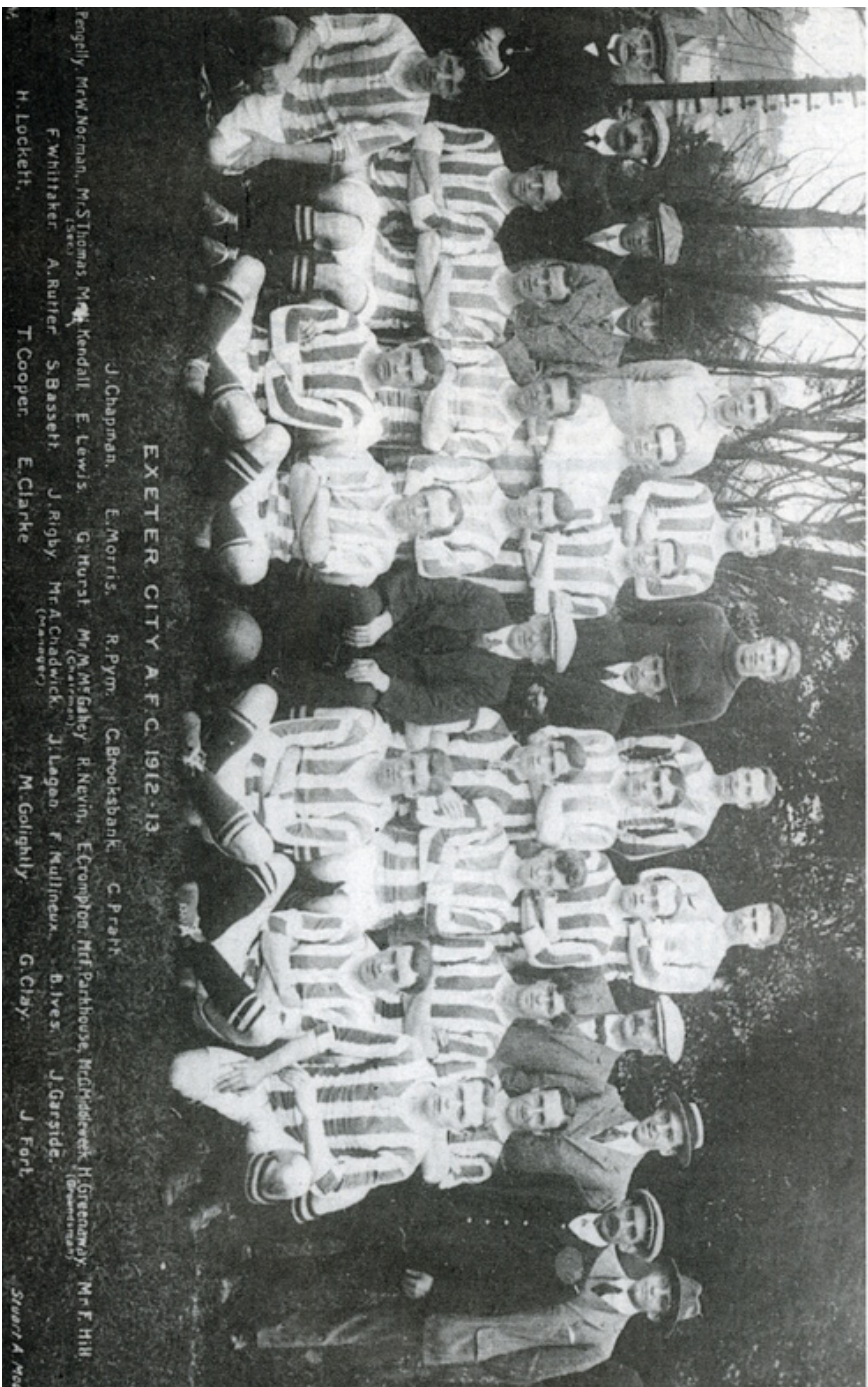
Burlescombe  
St Mary the Virgin

## New CD Publication The Deanery of Tiverton

An index of baptisms, marriages and burials in the parishes of Bampton, Bickleigh, Burlescombe, Calverleigh, Clayhanger, Culmstock, Halberton, Hockworthy, Holcombe Rogus, Huntsham, Loxbeare, Morebath, Petton Chapelry, Sampford Peverell, Tiverton St. Peter, Tiverton Cove, Uffculme, Uplowman, Washfield and Willand. With photographs of the churches

and extracts from White's Directory (1850) and Kelly's Directory of Devonshire (1902). Over 37,400 events (CD064) £15.00 To be launched at WDYTYA-L 2016.





Exeter City A.F.C. 1912-1913 Fred Whittaker is the first player on the left in the seated row. Photo Credit: The Grecian Archive, Exeter University, Exeter City Football Club and Exeter City Supporters Trust. <http://grecianarchive.exeter.ac.uk/items/show/223>

## My “Uncle” Fred - the Man with Two Lives

I was born in the Sebastopol Inn, Teignmouth, on the floor of a Morrison shelter during an air raid in August 1942. During my childhood we had a very close family friend and neighbour called Fred Whittaker who lived alone in a cottage in East Brook street. To me he was “Uncle” Fred but to my parents and the locals he was known as “Whitty”.

When I joined Devon FHS some twenty years ago I decided that although Fred was not a blood relative I would include him in my research. That eventually proved to me how very little we often know about those apparently ordinary people in our lives.

When I was very young my dad bought me a pair of football boots and Fred provided me with a real football which at the time were luxuries. We would play football on the Den on Teignmouth seafront and even at that young age I could see that Fred seemed to be quite good at it. I can recall that when I mentioned this to my father, he let slip that Fred had played football in South America. Anyway there were many amusing and happy memories. He worked as a painter and decorator and as a cellarman at the Railway Hotel. Although he was not a young man nothing was known about his background except that I later felt that my father knew a lot more than he ever told us.

During the mid 1950s the police came to our home and said that Fred had been taken seriously ill. He had only mentioned my parents, but they needed to know whether he had any next of kin. My mother went with them to his cottage and found some old letters which led them to his family in Camberwell. They were contacted and it was at that point that we lost contact with him.

Many years passed, my parents had died and I was now retired and living in East Sussex. I then started an amazing search for the man I had known as “Uncle” Fred, if only to find when and where he had died and if possible where he was buried.

As I am hardly computer literate I started there. I joined Ancestry which gave me the basic parts of his story. Fred had been born in Nelson, Lancashire, in 1886 and had become a professional footballer.

He had played for Burnley, Bradford City, Northampton Town, Exeter City and Millwall F.C. Representatives from Burnley and Exeter City provided me with a considerable amount of information. As a lifelong Exeter City supporter I discovered to my total surprise that in 1914 he had gone on a famous tour of Brazil and Argentina, played in every match and scored a lot of goals. A book was written ***“Have you ever played Brazil?: The story of Exeter City’s 1914 tour of South America”***. It contains the story of the tour and photos of the team. There he was in the photos as I had never seen him - a young man.

He then returned from Exeter to London to play for Millwall before joining the 17th “Footballers’ Battalion” of the Middlesex regiment and sailing to France to the horrors of the 1st World War including the Battle of the Somme. He fought alongside many famous footballers of the time, many of whom never came home and again that part of his life was written about in a book ***“When the whistle blows”***. It was a famous Battalion.

He survived and came home but although he played again for lower league clubs he never regained what a war had probably cost him.

In about 1931 he had left his family and disappeared. Neither the clubs or his family heard from him again. Why he did such a thing we can only guess. Because of my memories of him as a kind, amusing and older man, I feel that he tried to leave behind the memories of a war and what he had been, to start a new life. Some of course would find that shocking but others would I hope try to understand.

Now back to my search. Although I had a lot of information I felt that I needed to know where he had died and if possible where he had been buried. Nobody seemed to know and I recently seemed to have failed at the final hurdle to finish the story. The registration of his death which I had believed to be in the mid 1950s could not be found. So I contacted the Secretary at Devon FHS and told her the story. Maureen pointed me back to the basics, clearly I had been overcomplicating my search and needed to be more flexible.

As I believed that Fred had died in Teignmouth or thereabouts I phoned the Registrar at Newton Abbot who again confirmed that there were no entries that seemed to be relevant. However they now passed my request to the Devon Registration Service in Exeter who contacted me the same day. After a few additional questions they said that there was a death registered in Honiton in 1960 but that the name did not fully match. I was then asked what his profession had been. When I said that he had been a professional footballer they confirmed that that part of my search was now over and three days later I received the copy of his death certificate.

Fred had died in a residential home for the elderly in Seaton on Christmas Eve 1960. I subsequently phoned the Vicar at Seaton Parish Church who confirmed that Fred was buried in their churchyard. When he died he was the same age that I will be later this year. I am glad that our lives crossed as they did, but I must now come home to Devon and make that visit to Seaton.

**Dave Cockram (9124)**

**Editor:** From the as yet unpublished, “A-Z of Exeter City Players” is the following entry: **Frederick Whittaker** Birthplace: Burnley Appearances: 68 Goals: 17 Position: Winger (inside/outside forward - right side)

Whittaker joined Exeter City from Northampton Town in the summer of 1912, having previously played for Burnley (1905-1908) and Bradford City (1908-1909).

He made his debut for the Grecians in a 4-0 defeat at West Ham United; the opening match of the 1912-13 Southern League season. Staying at St. James’ Park until the end of the 1913-14 season, when he top scored with 13 goals, Whittaker then signed for Millwall, but not before had played for the Grecians on their South American tour, in the summer of 1914. During the tour, which included matches in Argentina and Brazil, Whittaker played in every game, scoring a total of five goals. His final game for ECFC was the first match ever to be played by the Brazilian International team.

<http://grecianarchive.exeter.ac.uk> The Grecian Archive aims to facilitate the exploration of the history and heritage of Exeter City Football Club. The archive, which was created in 2015 by the University of Exeter in collaboration with the Exeter City Football Club History Group, hosts materials from Exeter City F.C., the Supporters Trust, and a number of individuals who have generously contributed resources to it.

## Titchfield Remembers: The Hunt for Charlie Chalk's Living Relatives

**CHALK**—In loving memory of our dear son Charlie,  
killed in action May 3rd, 1917.—Never forgotten.  
—Mum and Dad.

Portsmouth  
Evening News  
Monday 3rd May 1926

The Titchfield Remembers Project has researched the men on our war memorial.

We are looking for photographs of the servicemen, but one has eluded me. Private Charlie Chalk had a younger brother Edward (1894-1951) who went to live in the West Country and died in Plymouth. Edward's grandchildren still live in Plymouth and despite pieces I have sent in to local radio and newspapers they have not made contact.

Father Daniel, a local fruit grower and his wife Emily had three children, the middle one was Charlie. He emigrated first to Canada aged 22 and then on to Australia to become a farmer. His parents were living in my current home in Titchfield by the time Charlie enlisted in the Australian Infantry in October 1915. After training he embarked from Sydney to join the war and died on 3rd May 1915 alongside 7,000 others for the gain of 1 kilometre. Private Charlie Chalk was found and is buried at Queant Road Cemetery, Northern France.



Charlie and me - France 2015

Charlie's father Daniel (1866-1930), his mother Emily (1864-1940) and brother Edward (1894-1951) moved to 16 The Crescent, Torpoint, Cornwall where Daniel set up 'Chalks Garage'. Edward had married in Hampshire in 1919 and had two girls Joan and Doreen. In 1930, after Daniel's death the garage was up for sale, Edward moved to Plymouth and was given custody of both his daughters (*Western Morning News 13th May 1936*).

Edward died in 1950 in Plymouth and I believe that both his daughters have also passed away. The surnames of living relatives are Rice and Hicks.

Edward's daughters: Joan Chalk (1923-2001) married Francis E Hicks in 1947 and had four children. Doreen Chalk (1928-1999) married Alan Rice and had five children.

I used electoral rolls to locate one of the daughters, but she had moved and the letter returned unopened. If anyone can help to put me in contact with a family member, please contact me.

**Amanda Laws**

From the Past - First published in January 1978

## Where Oh Where Can They Be?

Most of us have experienced that frustrating feeling of searching year after year and book after book in St. Catherine's House, only to discover that great-grandad isn't listed where he should be or where we thought he ought to be. Why isn't he there? What could be the reason?

Actually there could be a few ... Although there is a possibility that some births between 1837 and 1875 were not registered, it is generally thought that very few were not. However, the possibility of incorrect information being given was a much more realistic reason, and in most cases, unintentional, but the Registrar had no way of knowing, so recorded whatever the informant told him. Accent and dialect too were misleading and if the person reporting could not read or write he had no way of checking if the spelling was correct. It is always wise therefore to check all variations of a name as it is not unusual for children of the same family to be registered with their surname written differently from each other on their certificates. The Indexes at St. Catherine's House are in strict alphabetical order ... and if the informant dropped an H the name Hannis would be listed under Annis.

When we compare the date of a birth in a Family Bible with the date of the same birth on a certificate it doesn't always tally. One likely reason for this is that the child wasn't registered within the six weeks allowed by law, and rather than risk prosecution, a few weeks were taken from the child's age when the birth was registered, although the correct date was entered in the family record. The Index books are made up from the date a child was registered and not from the date of birth, so that if a birth took place on the 30th November 1870 and was registered the 6th January 1871 the entry would be found in the first quarter of 1871 and not in the last quarter of 1870. The most common cause for not identifying a person is that they were called by a different name than the one they were given at registration. Most families have an uncle "Bill" who is really George William ... There are cases also where a child is simply listed as male or female.

Illegitimacy can sometimes cause problems - apart from the obvious. Perhaps the mother of a child born out of wedlock married shortly afterwards and the child assumed the surname of the husband. The child goes through life knowing nothing of the true situation, and is known to all as Fred Jones but was registered as Fred Smith.

Locality too can sometimes throw us. Too often we assume that because a person was brought up and perhaps married in a town that he must also have been born there but not so ... The census of course can often help, providing that the person himself knows where he was born. An example in my own family shows that my second great grandmother gives her place of birth as Bickleigh in Devon whereas in fact she was born at Lewtrenchard but had been brought up from babyhood at Bickleigh and assumed that was the place where she had been born.

All these possibilities must be considered when we meet problems and maybe we will find that great grandad is tucked away somewhere after all.

**Sylvia Blott (2)**

*Much of the above is still true today, although St. Catherine's House is now closed and the indexes can be found online.*

## Family History Events around the country

### **Dorset FHS - Family History Day**

**Sat 12th March 2016**

Parkstone Grammar School, Sopers Lane, Poole, Dorset, BH17 7EP. 10am - 4pm.  
Admission and Car parking Free. Family history talks with guest speakers, £1 on the day, limited numbers. Family History Societies from other counties. Free and friendly Help Desk. See details on our website <http://www.dorsetfhs.org.uk/openday.htm>

### **Who Do You Think You Are? Live**

**Thurs 7th - Sat 9th April 2016**

Hall 2, The NEC, Birmingham B40 1NT. 9.30am - 5.30pm.

Ticket packages available, look out for special offers. Children under 16 go free.  
<http://www.whodoyouthinkyouarelive.com/workshop-timetable>

### **The Friends of Devon's Archives: Spring Conference** Sat 16th April 2016

Guildhall, Barnstaple North Devon. Small charge to include tea/coffee

(lunch will be self-catering). Non-members of the Friends are welcome to attend.

Speakers include Dr Todd Gray, Peter Christie, Mary Siraut and Dr Janet Tall.

Chaired by Dr Ian Mortimer. Further details on the Friends' website [www.foda.org.uk](http://www.foda.org.uk)

### **Grand Family History Discovery Day**

**Sat 21st May 2016**

Discover Your Ancestors, Discover Your Heritage and Your Roots. 10am - 3pm

Liskeard Public Hall, West St, Liskeard, Cornwall PL14 6BW. Admission Free.

Devon FHS and Cornwall FHS will be attending this event to support the South East Cornwall Museums Forum. Exhibitions of documents, photographs and objects of local interest. Light refreshments and entertainment for children.

Lizzy Sharpe-Asprey

### **The Yorkshire Family History Fair**

**Sat 2nd July 2016**

Knavesmire Exhibition Centre, The Racecourse, York. 10am - 4.30pm

Admission £4.80. Children under 14 free. Free parking. Free Family History Talks with guest speakers. Over 40 Family History Societies & County Record Offices.

See full information and ticket offers at [www.YorkshireFamilyHistoryFair.com](http://www.YorkshireFamilyHistoryFair.com)

### **Pomeroy Family Gathering**

**Sat 9th/Sun 10th July 2016**

The Pomeroy Family Association is to hold a gathering at Berry Pomeroy near Totnes for all those who have a connection to the Pomeroy name and its variants. Meet other Poms, share stories and explore the castle and surrounding area. Contact Patricia Graham Facebook: Pomeroy Family Gathering 2

### **Buckinghamshire FFHS Open Day**

**Sat 23rd July 2016**

The Grange School, Wendover Way, Aylesbury, HP21 7NH. 10am to 4pm

Free parking - Free Admission. Research facilities including our names database (over five million entries). Expert advice; guest societies from around the country; local heritage groups. Full list of organisations attending, at [www.bucksfhs.org.uk](http://www.bucksfhs.org.uk)

### **Liddiard Family Gathering**

**Sat 13th/Sun 14th August 2016**

Aldbourne Wiltshire England - meet at the village green 10.30 am Saturday.

Do you have any Liddiard, Lidiard or Lydiard (or variants) amongst your ancestors?

Join us for a family gathering with activities, displays of trees, photographs and talks on the Liddiard family. Contact Karen Rogers Facebook: Liddiard Family Gathering.

## General Information about the Society

Devon Family History Society is a Registered Charity, number 282490.

The Society is a member of the Federation of Family History Societies (FFHS) and of the South West Area Group of Family History Societies (SWAG).

**President** The Society's President is Mr Christopher Braund.

**Objects** The Society's objects are to promote the study of genealogy and history, especially of Devon families and places, to educate the public therein through advice and instruction, and, for the public benefit, to encourage the preservation and transcription of relevant documents and records, especially for the county of Devon.

**Education** The Education Coordinator will help to create, organise and carry through education events, designed to assist members and non-members in the study of genealogy. Contact: [education@devonfhs.org.uk](mailto:education@devonfhs.org.uk).

**Constitution** A copy of the Society's Constitution may be obtained by post: Devon FHS, PO Box 9, Exeter EX2 6YP and is on the website at [www.devonfhs.org.uk/constitution.pdf](http://www.devonfhs.org.uk/constitution.pdf)

**Membership subscriptions** These fall due on 1st January each year and may be paid by sterling cheque, credit/debit card or by standing order. A renewal form and a standing order form are included in the November Devon Family Historian. See our shop on [www.devonfhs.org.uk](http://www.devonfhs.org.uk) for on-line renewal.

**UK Membership - £15.00** (Four Devon Family Historians sent by post)

**Overseas Membership - £20.00** (Four Devon Family Historians sent by Airmail)

**E-Membership - £10.00** (Four Devon Family Historians downloaded from the Society's Members' Area [not available in the EU])

**Magazine - The Devon Family Historian** The magazine is published quarterly in February, May, August and November and is issued free to members. Articles, notes and comments are welcomed by the Editor, particularly from new members. If appropriate, please quote your sources, so that others may benefit from your research. Please supply text and images as separate files and include your membership number and postal address. **You may include photos or documents, providing that you have obtained the permission of the copyright holder(s).**

**Members' Queries** are requests for advice or pieces of information that you have looked for thoroughly and have been unable to find.

The above items should be submitted by email to: [editor@devonfhs.org.uk](mailto:editor@devonfhs.org.uk) with the word HISTORIAN in the subject line. Or submit by post on separate sheet(s) of paper. No manuscript will be returned unless a stamped addressed envelope is enclosed.

**Please ensure that your name, address, email and membership number appear at the end of your contribution(s).**

The Devon FHS Committee and Editor do not necessarily agree with the statements or opinions appearing in this magazine.



**Members' Area** AGM minutes, reports and many benefits may be found on the website.

**Your Members' Interests** may be submitted online via the Society's Members' Area at [www.devonfhs.org.uk](http://www.devonfhs.org.uk) If you do not have an email address, send your interests by post, to the Members' Area Coordinator.

## Projects News <http://www.devonfhs.org.uk/projects.htm>

The success of Devon FHS's project work is due entirely to the efforts of our volunteers, in Devon, the UK and worldwide.

Work is done at home, at Tree House, at the three Devon Record Offices.

If you would like to help, email [volunteers@devonfhs.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@devonfhs.org.uk) or write to Volunteers, Devon FHS, PO Box 9, Exeter, Devon EX2 6YP.

**M** Free on Members' Area  
**F** FindMyPast  
**G** Free on Genuki & FMP  
**S** Available in our Shop

Many more items are available on our Members' Area, free as a benefit of membership.

### Projects In Progress

Social & Institutional Records in the three Devon Record Offices

Monumental Inscriptions and photos **M**

Plymouth (Weston Mill and Efford) Cemeteries Project

US Military Personnel in North Devon 1943-44

1919 Absent Voters in Devon

VAD Hospital, Newton Abbot, Devon

Devon Methodist Registers

### Projects Completed

Devon Marriages 1754-1837 **F**

Devon Baptisms 1813-1839 **F**

Devon Burials 1813-1837 **F**

Plymouth Marriages from 1837 **F**

Plymouth Baptisms post-1837 **S**

Plymouth Ford Park Cemetery Burials **F**

Torquay Cemetery Burials **F**

Social & Institutional Records **F**

Cullompton Cemetery Burial Register 1856-2013 **M**

Devon Census 1861 **M**

Devon Coastguards **M**

Devon Marriages 1754-1837 **M**

Devon Strays **M**

Devon Wills Project **G**

Lamerton Cemetery Burial Register 1881-2011 **M**

Methodist Obituaries **M**

Tavistock Cemetery Project - *coming soon!*

Booklets for all parishes in Devon **S**

25 Deanery CDs covering the whole of Devon **S**

Facsimile Book CDs **S**

Torquay Burial Index **S**

Plymouth Prison Index **S**

Teignmouth Cemetery Burials **S**

Wesleyan Methodist Historic Roll **S**

Devon Masters and Mates **S**

Greycoat School (Plymouth) Admissions **S**

## Tree House - Research Centre

**Open Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday 10.30-4.00. Telephone 01392 433212.**  
(Closed Bank Holiday Mondays: 28th March, 2nd May, 30th May, 29th August 2016.)

**Why not make a day of it?** The Tree House volunteers are offering to open Tree House, by appointment, on the mornings of the Exeter Saturday group meetings. Please book a slot by calling **01392 433212 during opening hours**. We will open from 10.30am to 1.30pm as requested. Next Exeter meetings are 12th March, 9th April and 14th May. 2.30pm at the Mint Methodist Church, Fore Street, Exeter.

### **Guidance notes for those visiting Tree House who are less able**

Tree House Research Centre is located on the ground floor on King Street in Exeter. There are two small steps and a grab rail providing access to the premises and we have a portable ramp for wheelchair access. Visitors have use of the two lavatories which are up steps adjacent to the search rooms. These are outside our lease and are not adapted for the disabled. The nearest car park is Smythen Street Pay & Display which is 100 metres away; disabled drivers displaying a valid badge may park free in any space. Parking in the road outside the Centre is restricted but it is understood that the display of a valid blue badge allows parking for up to three hours. As some of our material is on computer or microfiche, magnifying glasses and a large print keyboard are available. A 13 amp power socket is available for your laptop. A helper accompanying a less able member, solely for the purpose of giving him or her assistance, will be welcomed without payment.

In general, if you need some assistance, please let the Lead Volunteer know in advance and we will do all we reasonably can to help.

## Tree House - Research Service

Tree House contains many indexes, documents, books and finding aids, mostly related to Devon. The cost is £10 for 60 minutes research and up to 10 pages of material, subject to copyright restrictions. Although mainly a service for Devon research, we may also be able to help with research in other parts of England and Wales. The fee is payable in advance and is non-refundable. Requests must be made on a Research Form on the Tree House page or completed via the Society's Online Shop. Request a postal form from: Devon FHS Research Service, PO BOX 9, Exeter EX2 6YP

We cannot guarantee a result, but will do our best to answer your enquiry, using the resources available to us at Tree House. Further research may be advised and can be arranged. We will consult online resources and local information, as appropriate, to help in answering your research enquiry.

- Our complete range of indexes
- Devon Parish Registers & Inland Revenue Wills
- GRO indexes, Consular returns, Marine births & deaths, Regimental returns
- Our 6,000 volume library of Devon people, places & family histories
- Parish files with a miscellany of contents
- Family Trees, Certificates, Wills, Maps, deposited family history research
- Our large collection of microfiche and CDs
- Methodist Records
- Censuses and online resources

## Area Group Meetings

ALL the Group meetings are open to members of the Society and to the public. For the latest information on meetings and special events visit the Devon Family History website at [www.devonfhs.org.uk](http://www.devonfhs.org.uk) and click the **Events** button.

- Exeter** Meets on the 2nd Saturday in the month. 2.30pm  
The Mint Methodist Church, Fore Street, Exeter EX4 3AT
- South Devon** Meets on the 2nd Friday in the month. 7.30pm  
Community Centre, Old School, Dobbin Arch, Kingskerswell TQ12 5DJ
- Plymouth** Meets on the 4th Tuesday in the month. (November 7.00pm)  
**7.30pm (please note new later start time from January 2017)**  
Spurgeon Hall, Mutley Baptist Church, Mutley Plain, Plymouth PL4 6LB
- North Devon** Meets on the 3rd Saturday in the month. 2.00pm - 4.00pm  
Pollyfield Centre, East-the-Water, Bideford EX39 4BL

Current contact information can be found on the website: [www.devonfhs.org.uk](http://www.devonfhs.org.uk)

## Have you registered and used the Members' Area?

<http://www.devonfhs.org.uk/members-area.htm>

Members can add and edit up to 50 interests in this part of the website and search those posted by other members. Members without internet access can submit their interests and searches can be made. Write to the Members' Area Coordinator.

Free to Devon FHS members on the Members' Area of our website:

**Surname searchable indexes:** 1754-1837 Marriage Index, Cemetery Register Indexes, Strays, Methodist Obituaries, Monumental Inscriptions and photos, Devon Coastguards and more. Check out our Speakers' Notes and Presentations, Articles from Historians 1-152, Devon Parish Maps and church photos. Discount codes for Family History Magazines, Findmypast, British Newspaper Archive, The Genealogist and Pharos Tutors.

Volunteers have photographed a variety of documents provided by individuals, societies, museums, libraries and record offices. These have not been indexed, but are here for you to browse, School Admission Registers and the Brixham Western Guardian Newspaper. **Parishes that have scanned registers available are:** Abbotskerswell, Arlington, Aveton Gifford, Axminster, Bigbury, Bow, Bratton Fleming, Challacombe, \***Chardstock**, \***Clannaborough**, Clayhidon, Coffinswell, Coleridge, Combpyne, Cullompton, Culmstock, East Woolfardisworthy, Exeter St. Matthew, Exeter St. Sidwell, Hawkchurch, Hemyock, Holsworthy, Ilsington, Kennerleigh, Kentisbury, Kingskerswell, Kingston, Lapford, Loddiswell, Loxhore, Malborough, Mary Tavy, Milton Damarel, Modbury, Morchard Bishop, Nymet Rowland, Peter Tavy, Plymtree, Ringmore, Salcombe, Shirwell, South Huish, Stockleigh English, Stockleigh Pomeroy, Stoke Rivers, Torwood Holy Trinity, Torquay St. Mark, Torquay St. Matthias, Washford Pyne, Withycombe Raleigh, Woodleigh and Zeal Monachorum. \***New.**

# Devon FHS Meetings in Devon 2016

## Exeter

*No Exeter meetings take place in January or August*

- Sat 12 March Scoundrels in your family - Colin Roulstone  
Sat 09 April Murder most foul - did he do it? - Jill Drysdale  
Sat 14 May Torrington Cemetery Scandal Peter Christie  
Sat 18 June A visit to the Cathedral Library and Archives *Limited places,  
a small charge will be incurred*  
Sat 09 July The Vanburgh Sisters - Christine Trigger

## South Devon

- Fri 11 March The Hackney Canal - Richard Harris  
Thu 14 April A visit to Newton Abbot Museum - 10.30a.m.  
Fri 13 May Military History for Beginners, with particular regard to the Great War,  
1914-1918 - Rob Palmer  
Fri 10 June Heart of Oak Conservation Project - Felicity Cole, Curator of Newton  
Abbot Museum  
Fri 08 July The Fatal Shore: the transportation of Devonian convicts to Tasmania  
in the early 19th century - Philip Badcott  
Fri 12 August Devon's Marvellous Marble - Colin Vosper

## Plymouth

*No Plymouth meeting takes place in August*

- Tues 23 Feb Stonehouse: the Cinderella of the Three Towns - Richard Fisher  
Tues 22 March St Helena with a bit of Ascension - Robin Blythe-Lord  
Tues 26 April Cyril Tawney and RN songs and poetry of the 20th Century  
- Martin Hazell  
Tues 24 May Lost Churches of Plymouth - Graham Naylor  
Tues 28 June Murder on the Moor and much more - Barbie Thompson  
Tues 26 July The Royal Family Scandal - Janet Cowlard

## North Devon

- Sat 20 Feb The Tamar Valley - Paul Rendell *Please note change of venue for this  
meeting only - Burton Art Gallery, Kingsley Road, Bideford EX39 2QQ*  
Sat 19 March North Devon's Military Tribunals in the First World War - Peter Christie  
Sat 16 April Roots and Shoots at Tree House - Sue Bond  
Sat 21 May Tracing European Ancestors - Julie Goucher  
Sat 18 June Visit to Holsworthy History Day  
Sat 16 July Beginners and slow starters  
Sat 20 August Beginners and slow starters

For further meeting information, venues, times and  
contact details - see page 51 inside back cover  
or visit the Devon Family History website  
at [www.devonfhs.org.uk](http://www.devonfhs.org.uk) and click the Events button.