

Tamar

Journal of the Friends of the Tamar Valley
Number 39 – 2017



Tamar

Journal of the Friends of the Tamar Valley
Number 39 – 2017

© The Friends of the Tamar Valley

The Friends of the Tamar Valley are grateful for the support of the
Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



All articles, photographs and drawings are the copyright of the authors,
photographers or artists and may not be reproduced without the
permission of the editorial board and the author.

Cover photo of Millbrook Lake by Clive Charlton

Printed by The Printing Press, Plymouth 01752 250580

CONTENTS

Admiralty stones at St John's Lake

Richard Spear..... 4-12

From Beer to Bricks: Southdown near Millbrook, Cornwall

Cynthia Gaskell-Brown.....13-25

Some Early Photographers in Plymouth: the River Tamar
and George Washington Wilson's visit in 1861

Nigel Overton.....26-35

Two Admirals on the Saltash Blue Plaque Trail

Bruce Hunt.....36-44

Early Postcards of the Tamar Valley

Helen Wilson.....45-48

General Booth in Gunnislake

John Snell.....49

The Long Life of the 'Good Intent'

Gary Hicks.....50-55

The Fate of the *Fluvius Tamar*

Clive Charlton.....56

Meetings of Friends of the Tamar Valley – 2016

Helen Wilson.....57-64

Friends of the Tamar Valley details 64

EDITORIAL

It will be immediately apparent that 'Tamar 2017' has a distinct geographical bias towards the lower reaches of the river. This focus reflects, of course, the interests of this year's expert contributors – to whom I am extremely grateful for their patient research, knowledge and enthusiasm. In the opening article, Richard Speare provides a detailed review of the boundary stones that were set up around St. John's Lake by the Admiralty in the 18th and 19th centuries. 41 such stones have been

identified and recorded as part of the ‘Plotting Plymouth’s Past’ project, which has done such an amazing job of recording hundreds of boundary and marker stones around the city.

It is truly splendid that this 39th edition of *Tamar* contains an article by Cynthia Gaskell-Brown, who is undoubtedly one of the all-time ‘greats’ among historians of Plymouth and its environs. Cynthia contributed to the very first edition of our journal, back in 1978 (about the Ship Inn, Morwellham). Now, in 2017, she profiles the long, varied industrial history of Southdown on Millbrook Lake.

Nigel Overton, of Plymouth City Museum is another great authority on local maritime and industrial history. Among his many enthusiasms is early photography. For *Tamar* 2017, he focuses on images taken by the photographer George Washington Wilson on a visit to the Hamoaze in 1861, although there is also a very early photograph by the famous William Henry Fox Talbot.

Bruce Hunt has written extensively about Saltash, local railways and other topics. His article this year features two more personalities celebrated on the Saltash Blue Plaque Trail. Both had illustrious careers as Admirals in the Royal Navy – and remarkably, both lived in the same house in the town (at different times, of course!).

Friends member Helen Wilson shares a few images from her collection of postcards depicting the Tamar Valley. Some of the fascinating views range beyond the ‘lower Tamar’ that dominates this year – past Cargreen and Pentillie to Danescombe and Gunnislake. Another very remarkable postcard photo of Gunnislake has been provided by John Snell of Bere Alston; it shows the visit there of General Booth in 1904.

Finally, the chronicler on Plymouth’s maritime history, Gary Hicks, tells the tale of a remarkable Plymouth-built ship with Tamar connections, the *Good Intent*; she stayed afloat for at least 136 years.

Thanks to Helen Wilson for detailing the Friends’ meetings in 2016.

Clive Charlton, Editor, *Tamar*

ccharlton@plymouth.ac.uk

Admiralty stones at St John's Lake – a survey, some context and a possible explanation

Richard Spear

Fieldwork and photos by Mark Fenlon

Historical outline

St John's Lake lies just south of Torpoint and less than one kilometre directly across the Hamoaze from the original Dockyard, which is now referred to as the South Yard. The Lake is an area of mudflats exposed at low tide, now protected as an area of Special Scientific Interest because of visiting wildlife. Its eastern boundary lies along the main Hamoaze channel, from where it extends inland 2.5 kilometres at its maximum extent, west to the tidal ford outside the village of St John. To the south, it extends around Inwork Point to the creek where there is the ancient village of Millbrook with its own channel giving access to the Hamoaze.

When the Royal Dockyard was established in 1691, the Millbrook area may well have seen changes, as boats could ferry men and produce across the Tamar to supply the Dockyard. The hamlet of Southdown (between Inwork Point and Millbrook) became the location for victualling operations from 1729 as an adjunct to those of the depot then at Lambhay on the Plymouth Barbican. The King's Brewhouse was established there in 1733 with an extra brewhouse in 1741 and a cooperage the following year. Those operations continued until transferred to Royal William Yard at Stonehouse, completed in 1835. Thereafter the Southdown brewhouse became a soap manufactory and later a powder mill.

A chart of the Hamoaze of 1774 shows moorings for 21 ships on the east shore, 5 in the middle and 14 on the west shore with the two additional locations of Millbrook Lake (one ship of the line and one frigate) and St John's Lake (one frigate). By that time the Dockyard was expanding with the "New North Dock" visited by George III in 1789. There are examples of Admiralty boundary stones from that period (e.g. marking

the initial barrack area of the Marines in Stonehouse (1781-1785)) but none are known to have been at Southdown in connection with the King's Brewery. Millbrook was considered as a possible site for a proposed new Victualling Yard in the 1820s but the decision was to build at Stonehouse (construction 1825 -1835) which again gave employment and trade to Millbrook and its hinterland during that time.

Boundary stone survey 'Plotting Plymouth's Past' 2012-16

What have now been recorded (it is thought for the first time) are 41 Admiralty stones around St John's Lake, which are the surviving stones of a ring of 97 shown on Ordnance Survey maps of the late nineteenth century. It is those stones that form the focus of this article.

First something should be said about how a group of volunteers on a Plymouth boundary stones project came to finish by recording stones across the Tamar. The joint project between the Old Plymouth Society and Plymouth City Museum (which had Heritage Lottery set-up funding) updated the records of the boundary stones of each of the "Three Towns" plus those of the Stonehouse Leat and other private markers. The project then did the first comprehensive record of the numerous military boundary stones on locations in Plymouth including Plymouth's east and northern defences. The decision was then taken to continue the project to take in the Rame Peninsula and the Palmerston Forts of the western defences (Tregantle Fort, overlooking Whitsand Bay, and Scraesdon Fort overlooking the Lynher), each with a series of War Department boundary stones. Study of the old maps of the area showed a number of stones marked as B.S. A  D which then became the next objective for investigation – confirmed as a line of Admiralty Department boundary stones along the foreshore. They appeared on Ordnance Survey maps (e.g. 1895 and subsequently, on both 25 inch and 6 inch to the mile scales), as a numbered sequence of 93 (to which 4 stones were found to

have been added) all around St John's Lake. The 97 were looked for over six excursions in June and July 2016 and 41 were found¹.

The St John's Lake stones

The 41 stones are all rectangular granite bollards. If the 4 added stones are ignored it can be stated that all the numbered sequence of stones found are of uniform design, each with a slightly rounded top and inscribed with a sequence number above the "fouled anchor" motif of the Admiralty Board. Those stones are in appearance and inscription similar to seven more Admiralty stones on the Devon side and 17 on the Cornwall side of the Tamar, also along the foreshore, which had already been surveyed. None of the stones of either the River Tamar or the St John's Lake series have any date inscribed and no date for them has been established from other sources. Mark Fenlon recorded all these stones and summed up the challenges of the St John's Lake survey as follows:

"Previous experiences, with similarly located stones, had made us aware of what to expect but no two field trips are ever the same. For some of the stones a great deal of effort was needed to locate them. The reward of finding a boundary stone that had probably not been visited for many years, justified the effort to get to it. The shoreline around St John's Lake presented many hazards, from slippery rocks and deep tidal mud to muscle-sapping shingle and 7ft tall 'jungle grade' reed beds. All of these obstacles were overcome, but it is the thrill of finding the stones that form the lasting memories. Every boundary stone that was found is unique, each with its own story to tell. Some have suffered from the effects of the weather, some no doubt completely lost by changes in mud levels or by the effects of developments over time. A few may have

¹ The military boundary stones section of the 'Plotting Plymouth's Past' project can be found at: www.plymouth.gov.uk/boundarystone/militaryboundarystones (accessed 16/10/2017). <http://web.plymouth.gov.uk/boundarystones>

remained hidden by vegetation despite our best efforts and a few may have been removed by persons unknown, but 41 remained in situ visible and fulfilling their first role - to be seen.” Examples can be seen in Fig.1.



Fig.1 Selected St.John’s Lake boundary stones, with Plotting Plymouth’s Past database reference numbers (images by Mark Fenlon).

The first extant stone found was on private land at Southdown Quay and inscribed '3'. The numbering continues from there north along the foreshore past Inswork Point and Sango Point and on round the Lake to the most westerly point of the Lake by the ford near St John before turning east along the north shore to the outskirts of HMS *Raleigh*. Stones 63 to 93 appear to have been lost in the development of *Raleigh*, save for number 77 which has been placed opposite the entrance to the establishment, on the north side of the Trevol Road.

The distinguishing features of the collection were first the high concentration of stones, secondly their position along the shoreline and thirdly that in each case the stone was positioned facing into the Lake so the inscription was viewed not from the land but from the Lake.

The use of the shoreline for the stones is curious in the light of the Admiralty being an agent of the Crown, and the legal presumption in the nineteenth century and earlier that the Crown owned the foreshore i.e. the shore between high and low water marks of medium tides. In Cornwall that rule gave way to the title being vested in the Duchy of Cornwall. The River Tamar stones mentioned above are all north of the Hamoaze (considered to be the Tamar estuary between its confluence with the River Lynher and the Sound) so are clear of the area of general mooring used by the Navy. Neither those stones nor the St John's Lake stones relate to land boundaries of Admiralty land. However, they were categorised as "Boundary Stones" by the Ordnance Survey and the recent project recording them has adhered to that label.

The question remains as to what their purpose was.

HMS *Cambridge* 1856 – 1907

A possible or partial reason for the presence of the St John's Lake stones was found when it was discovered that between 1856 and 1907 the Naval Gunnery School was provided by HMS *Cambridge*, a training hulk moored in the Hamoaze off St John's Lake. Those were the days

when training establishments were located on floating hulks at the main Naval ports. HMS *Cambridge* was one such hulk (a ship of 80 guns, built in 1815). She was replaced in 1869 by HMS *Windsor Castle* (a ship of 100 ~~84~~ guns, built in 1858) which was then renamed *Cambridge*. In 1907 the Gunnery School relocated to HMS *Drake*, a shore based establishment.

A second hulk, HMS *Calcutta*, had joined *Cambridge* in 1865 (Fig.2). The two ships were linked by a wooden bridge and together were reported to accommodate 8 officers, 500 men and 300 boys. Gunnery training included landings and shore gun drills at nearby Trevol, where a rifle range was added around 1880. By 1907 a drill shed and parade ground had been built. This training area later became the present HMS *Raleigh*.

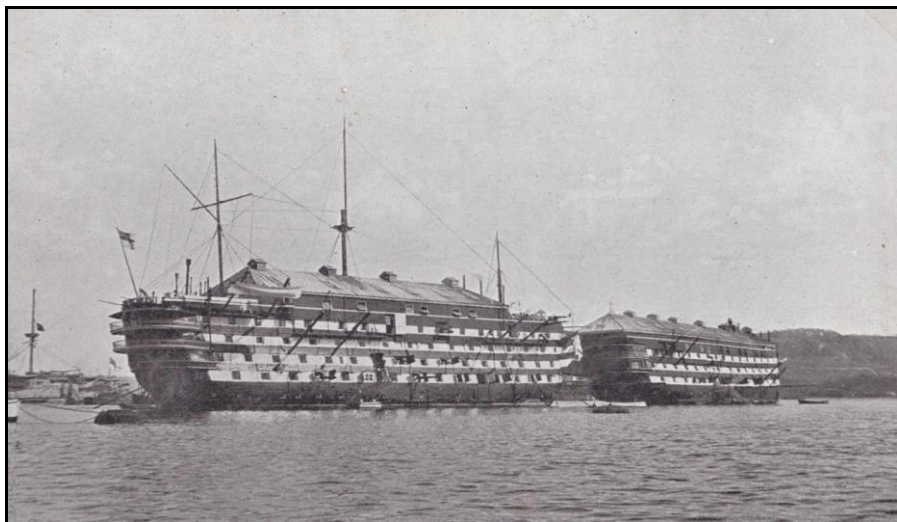


Fig.2 HMS *Calcutta* and HMS *Cambridge* c.1903 by Hiorns & Miller Devonport (courtesy Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery)

The most significant feature of training as far as St John's Lake was concerned was "Target practice-LAND" which involved firing over the mudflats at cloth targets set on wooden struts set deep within the mud.

For firing inland, it is thought the cannon balls used would have been solid shot rather than the active service version of hollow shot filled with gunpowder. Information received locally during the survey was that cannon balls have been frequently found in the area, especially around Sango Island.

The period of HMS *Cambridge* as Gunnery ship in the Hamoaze was one of considerable change in naval construction and of rapid development of both naval and shore-based guns. French ambitions under Napoleon III were the immediate cause of concern, notably after the laying down of the French ironclad *La Gloire* in 1858. English development of improved guns was led by [Sir] William Armstrong with his first rifled ordnance being approved in 1859. The following year HMS *Cambridge*, in company with other naval and army establishments, tested various guns including an Armstrong 40 pounder. The report from the captain of *Cambridge* included the fact that: “No experiments in firing from the Cambridge could be tried, the range of St John’s Lake being too confined”. The trials reported on were conducted outside the Sound: firing at the Shag Stone rock from a range of 2,400 yards, comparing firing from the shore at Bovisand pier with firing from the gunboat *Redwing* at sea². The next decade saw the building of the ‘Palmerston forts’, as recommended by the Royal Commission set up in 1859, with Tregantle being the first to be built and completed in 1865. As noted above the War Department placed boundary stones around the perimeter of the forts but none of these developments throws further light on the Admiralty use of stones around St John’s Lake.

Despite further advances in armaments after 1879, HMS *Cambridge* continued to use the St John’s Lake range and in 1895 (and probably before) the ships were on the tourist trail. John Murray in the 1895 edition of his *Handbook for Travellers in Devon* told his readers of the

² The firing experiments of 1860 are reported as Appendix 6 to Parliamentary Report of Ordnance Committee (1863), pp 320-1.

Cambridge ships and that there were daily practices so that “A trip to these ships will repay, and admission is freely given any day except Sat.”

On 30th October 1907 HMS *Cambridge* was towed to the Dockyard to enable the Gunnery School to come ashore and move into HMS *Drake*. On 4th November the *Cambridge* and *Calcutta* were paid off and presumably all use of the St John’s Lake range ceased, save for the reserved safety area behind the butts of the present Trevol rifle range, which is still an active range area. Left behind were the granite markers inscribed with the Admiralty “fouled anchor” and their respective position numbers - a record of a particular chapter in local as well as Naval history.

Warning! All land surrounding St John’s Lake is private land and farmed or otherwise occupied, so permissions are needed to enter and hedges often prevent access to the foreshore. The land along the north shore from Efford’s bridge eastward has no access, as it consists of the South West Water treatment works and the MoD property of HMS *Raleigh* beyond. Furthermore, that northernmost shore plus some of the southern shore and a segment of the lake in between is within the danger area of the Trevol rifle range at HMS *Raleigh*, so regard must be had to the range marking notices. The danger area is shown on later editions of the Ordnance Survey Explorer (1:25,000) map – sheet 108 *Lower Tamar Valley and Plymouth*.

Author’s thanks

Appreciation is expressed to Mark Fenlon and Ernie Stanton who researched and surveyed the stones, and to Nigel Overton of Plymouth Museum (Curator - City & Maritime Heritage), who oversaw the ‘Plotting Plymouth’s Past’ project from the outset and helped in many ways along the way, as well as having responsibility for the website content. Both he and Cynthia Gaskell Brown read an earlier draft of this article and made valuable suggestions, for which the author is most grateful.

Sources

For information regarding Millbrook and the history of the Southdown Brewery see: Gaskell Brown, C. (1973) *Industrial Archaeology of Plymouth and Millbrook*, Workers Educational Association.

For more recent accounts of the Insworke and Southdown areas see: Gaskell Brown, C. *et al.* (2011) *Insworke Tide Mill: Archaeological Report, Building Record and Interpretation of the Mill* www.insworkemillquay.com/assets/insworke-tide-mill-report-22-november-2011.pdf (and available in Torpoint and Plymouth Libraries).

Gaskell Brown, C. (2014) *Beer, Soap, Gunpowder, Copper and Bricks: Southdown near Millbrook, Cornwall*, Cornwall Association of Local Historians. February 2014.

Gaskell Brown, C. (2017) *From Beer to Bricks: Southdown near Millbrook, Cornwall, Tamar*, Vol.39 (this edition).

The 1774 chart with the table of moorings transcribed is to be found at item 154 in Elizabeth Stuart's *Lost Landscapes of Plymouth* published by Alan Sutton, Stroud, 1991. The original chart is in the British Library (King's MS 44f. 15).

For information about HMS *Cambridge*, reference was made to "H.M.S. CAMBRIDGE - The Famous Naval Gunnery School at Devonport, Plymouth, in old photographs" on Steve Johnson's website: www.cyber-heritage.co.uk/waiting/cam.htm (accessed 17/07/2017). See also Andy Endacott's book about HMS Cambridge: *Wooden Walls to Stone Frigate*, privately published, Saltash, 1999.

From Beer to Bricks: Southdown near Millbrook, Cornwall

Cynthia Gaskell Brown

Millbrook Lake

Millbrook lies up a creek at the south end of the River Tamar. It was established as market town by the Champernowne family in the late 13thC. The family manor house of Insworke with a chapel and home farm stood on the north bank of Millbrook Lake with the fields now known as Southdown at the eastern end of the little peninsula. The creek was seen as a safe haven for ships in Tudor times with convenient access to the Tamar and Plymouth Sound and a tide mill was built there at Insworke in 1598.

The character of Millbrook Lake changed dramatically after 1691 when the Royal Naval Dockyard was founded on the marshy shores of the Plymouth side of the Tamar. Insworke and Southdown were only a short distance across the river from the new Yard.

Food supplies of all kinds were needed for the Navy. Before 1691 these had been provided in a dispersed manner from victualling storehouses, bakeries, cooperages and brewhouses near Plymouth's Sutton Harbour and from cattle merchants who drove in cattle from the south Devon hinterland. By 1691 the Navy was paying a rent of £100 p.a. for the use of a Brewery at Insworke, close by the tide mill and manor house. This is shown as the Kings Brewhouse on a map of 1724 (Fig.1).

In the early 18th century the need to create a more efficient base for these victualling supplies was being discussed at length by the Navy Commissioners.

In 1707 the Navy Board had looked at the possibility of building a Victualling Office at Empacombe, a small harbour on the south side of Millbrook Lake where the timbers for the second Eddystone lighthouse were being assembled between 1706 and 1708. The idea produced an

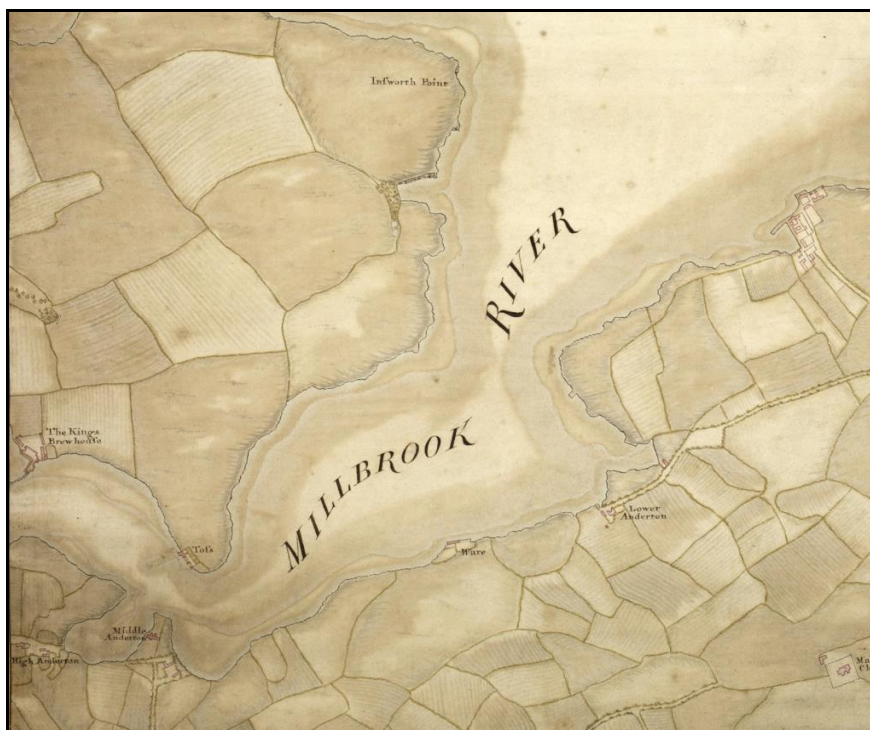


Fig.1 1724 Map showing the Kings Brewhouse at Insworth (far left)

outcry in Plymouth where cattle merchants argued that most oxen came from the Devon side of the river. A second attempt to use Empacombe also failed in 1722. The debate continued with the Insworth Brewery meanwhile continuing in use, being supplied with coal from Milford in South Wales and using the tide mill for grinding malt.

His Majesty's Brewhouse, Southdown in Hamoaze: 1729 - 1835

Eventually, in 1729, Southdown at the mouth of Millbrook Lake was chosen as the site for a new Brewery (Fig.2), and land was leased from the Countess of Orford - by then owner of the Champernowne manor.

clear that His Majesty's Brewhouse was a very imposing piece of architecture. Two storey buildings of limestone with high quality dressed granite arches and quoins stood on substantial paved quays. The quays still exist and extend about a quarter of a mile.

A plan dating from 1794 (surviving only as a much-reduced image on a photo-card in the author's possession) shows the complexity of the site (Fig.3). It clearly had pasted onto it in 1896 a series of 18th century letters and notes which although hard to decipher give a substantial amount of information about the Brewery site.

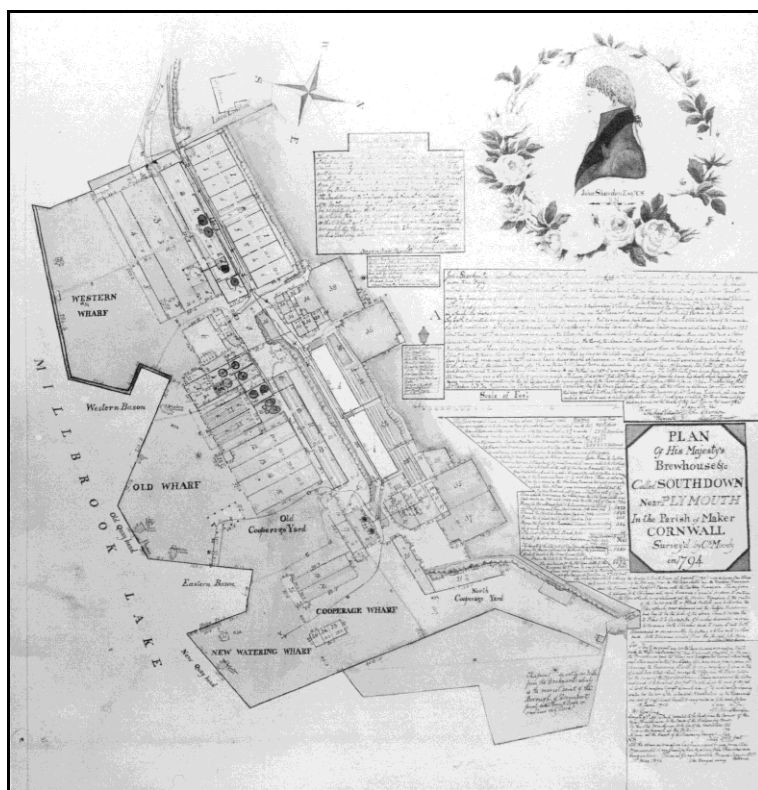


Fig.3 1794 plan showing details of the complex layout of H.M. Brewhouse Southdown.

The most important requirement for a brewery was a good water supply. This was brought to Southdown over a distance of 8,634 feet through pipes from the stream west of Millbrook village. Water was stored in two large reservoirs at the top of the site, and purpose-built quays with cranes allowed barrels, malt, hops, coals and other supplies to be transferred to and from ships lying in the Hamoaze. The Brewery could produce up to twenty thousand gallons of beer a week.

But the stream also served a paper mill in Radford Lane and a problem arose as this water became polluted by rags. A letter pasted onto the 1794 plan tells the story:

“South Down Brewhouse, 2nd Dec 1809

Sir,

In reply to your letter enclosing Miss Alice Parkin’s memorial to the Secretary to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty dated 25th of last month in which she makes a reference to me. I think it my duty to inform you I have not had any conversation with Miss Parkin on the subject which she hath mentioned.

I beg leave to acquaint you that supplying His Majesty’s Navy with beer and water commenced at this place in the year 1735. About that period (1735) pipes were laid down for conveying the water from the place which Miss Parkin hath described where there was at that time a paper manufactory, the lease of which was the property of Mr Henry Parkin, father of the memorialist, then Master Brewer, and let by him at a yearly rent of fourteen pounds.

I have often been informed by my predecessor, Edward Williams Esq, who died in June 1793, and those in this service senior to myself when I first began to know these premises in the year 1757, that as long as the mills were used for manufacturing paper some rags and filth were frequently received into the pipes and had a disagreeable appearance in the water, and some complaints were

made by officers of the Royal Navy to obviate which the Master Brewer (Miss Parkin's father), Mr James Parkin, discontinued the use of the mills.

Afterwards all parts of the building and masonry went to decay and when I first came here (with my father in 1757) it was entirely in ruins. The water hath ever since been conveyed from the same stream and is allowed to be of very good quality. I believe it is a fact that Mr Parkin nor his family since his death which happened in 1755 never received any compensation for the loss he sustained by giving up the use of the paper mills which Miss Parkin states to be in 1736. It is also true that Mr Parkin had ten children, viz three sons and seven daughters, one of the sons a Lieutenant in the Navy, all the others in extreme poverty. I have this day applied to Miss Parkin who is the only survivor of Mr Parkin's children and very poor indeed and obtained a sight of the lease which I find was granted for three lives in 1727 and expired on the death of the last life in the year 1782.

John Skardon, Master Brewer to the Agent Victualler, Plymouth"

A recent discovery is the *"Eighth report of the Commissioners of Naval Enquiry. His Majesty's Victualling Department at Plymouth. Embezzlement of the King's casks. Printed 16 July 1804.* This very lengthy report into the embezzlement of casks by the Tamar Brewery at Plymouth Dock is full of details about the running of the Brewery at Southdown including verbatim statements by named employees called to give evidence. Its full potential is still being explored.

A New Era: Soap, Superphosphates and Gunpowder

Once the Royal William Naval Victualling Yard was opened at Stonehouse in 1835 the Southdown Brewery became redundant. But its robust buildings, ready water supplies and excellent quays would have been very attractive and were rapidly taken over for a surprising range of

industries. Teasing these out is quite difficult as it seems that a lot of businesses worked there at the same time. However, by using maps, trade directories and census returns some of the many 19th century activities can be identified.

Houses and cottages originally built for the officers and labourers of the Brewery now provided homes which are identified in the Census returns which also sometimes identify the trades of the families living there

Initially part of the site became a soap factory, the site being leased by Thomas Gill, owner of the Millbay Soap Works. Of the 24 households at Southdown in the 1841 census twelve have the address "Southdown Soap Factory" with the head of household being a labourer. But by 1851 the western end of the site had a large chemical works. The census lists 11 labourers living at Southdown as working at the chemical works with John Edgcumbe Gill as Chemical Manufacturer. This industry led to new buildings being added to the site to make sulphuric acid for superphosphate fertiliser. The Ordnance Survey map of 1867 shows that flues and chimney stacks had been constructed. Much of the use of the site as a chemical and fertiliser works has now been studied in depth by Bob Ashford and published in *Tamar* 2016.

The fortunes of the site were clearly varied and another major enterprise was the Southdown Gun Powder Works which was probably created by adapting some of the substantial Brewery buildings. A newspaper account of its spectacular end in 1865 tells much about both the buildings and the actual processes (as cited in Thomas (n.d)):

“Southdown Gun Powder Works. This works was totally destroyed by a fire and an explosion which occurred on the morning of Wednesday 5th July 1865 but happily was attended with no loss of life, which might have been expected from so serious a casualty. At the South Down works Davey’s Patent Safety blasting powder has been manufactured in a block of strongly-built stone buildings covering a very large area of ground.

The smoke...rapidly increased in volume and spread an effectual alarm; guns were fired from the flagship in the harbour and assistance speedily arrived from the ships of war. Vigorous efforts were made to check the flames, but before the appliances could be fully brought into play a tremendous explosion in the centre building shook the ground and flung into the air some 500 square yards of slate roofing with the rafters and beams. It also threw to the ground the whole of the frontage wall of the centre building.

Half a dozen cottages adjacent were partially stripped of their roof coverings, most of their windows were blown in and the ceilings in all rooms thrown down. The manager's house which was situated on rising ground just above the manufactory, was damaged to even a greater extent, burning timbers were thrown considerable distances into the land and water. ... The main block of the building some 120 feet square, was left a complete wreck.

There does not appear to have been any considerable quantity of manufactured powder destroyed. The five tons that had arrived from Glasgow being nearly all rescued and the main stock of some fifty tons, being in the magazine which was one hundred yards off was uninjured. In the central building were stored seventy tons of nitrate of soda and fifty tons of sulphur on an upper floor, and below the ground there was an immense quantity of tan.

The manager of the works stated by the fact that when the soda and sulphur became fused and were precipitated by falling upon the tan – which in this patent powder takes the place of charcoal – a rough spec (sic) of gunpowder was instantly formed and as such instantly exploded. In the gap caused by the explosion a pool of boiling nitre was left, which continued for some hours to bubble and hiss with a most formidable appearance.

The disaster caused a great loss to the shareholders, whose

operations it put to an effective and permanent stop, it was feared that it would be a long period before the premises, which had so often been partly destroyed, would ever again be rebuilt. Flames then extended to 3 portions of other sheds used for drying the powder, in each of which were several hundredweight of material in different stages of manufacture. Fortunately, each shed was divided off with a strong part wall and the fire was prevented from making rapid progress...”.

Southdown Brickworks 1888 to 1956

In the 1871 Census Henry Bird describes himself as Metal Extractor and in 1881 and 1891 as Manufacturing Chemist. Under his management the Southdown Metal, Chemical and Brick Company transformed the site into what was to become one of three major brickworks on the north shore of Millbrook Lake. The Southdown Brickyard, initially with a square kiln, drying sheds and mill, was put up on the central quay area. The local mud shales were trammed from a quarry behind the Brewery site to the brickworks, crushed, homogenised with water to form a clay, moulded into bricks and fired in the kiln. A circular Hoffman kiln had been built by 1895 and in 1928 a rectangular kiln was added to the north of the Hoffman kiln.

The brickworks at Pottery, Foss and Southdown were amalgamated as Westbrick Products in the 20thC. The brickworks closed in 1956 but their chimneys were a distinctive feature of the local skyline until their demolition in 1972.

Glue and Silver

Lesser enterprises were also set up in and around the 18th and 19th century buildings. For fourteen years from 1900 the Lomax Gelatine works made glue and gelatine from animal bones. And at much the same time the Chandeau Silver works extracted silver from the waste slag that had built up on the quays.

Marina and boat building

Until very recently fragments of the various buildings could be traced on the quays. (Fig.4). Two free standing key stones incised “G R III 1791” were recently briefly seen during clearance work (Fig.5).



Fig.4 *Ruinous buildings on the Quay in September 2012*



Fig.5 *1791 date stones, indicating a major building phase*

At the east end, some of the 18th century buildings have been turned into houses, one of which still retains a date-stone of 1796 (Fig.6).



Fig.6 *Ruins of part of the Cooperage with 1796 date stone, September 2012*

On the higher parts of the site the reservoirs and walls of houses and gardens can be traced while a large solar farm has been built in the quarry. But over the past five years much of the site has been cleared and is used by a number of successful marine related businesses including a marina, boat building and boat repair yards. Small fishing boats, the Cremyll Ferry and other excursion boats moor up here, taking advantage of the deep-water channel and the shelter of the creek. There is a public access road and a Marina café.

But the most striking and significant remains of this long and intriguing history are the quay walls, the basins and steps of splendid dressed granite which were created for His Majesty's Brewery in 1735 (Fig.7). This piece of major 18th century architecture must, when first built, have matched the quality of the Royal William Yard which succeeded it.



Fig.7 Southdown Quay walls April 2017

Sources

Ashford, Bob (2016) The Tamar Fertiliser Industry, *Tamar: Journal of the Friends of the Tamar Valley*, Vol.38, pp.4-21.

Coad, Jonathan (1992) The Development and Organisation of Plymouth Dockyard 1689-1815, in Duffy, M. *et al. The New Maritime History of Devon*, Vol 1, Ch.28.

Cornwall Archaeological Unit. Report (1989) R013. *Southdown Quay, Millbrook; Proposed Insworke Marina Village*, Report for Anglo South West Consultants, Redruth.

Cornwall Online Census Project

http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~kayhin/project_detail_s.html

Gaskell Brown, C. (1973) *Industrial Archaeology of Plymouth and Millbrook*. WEA.

Gaskell Brown, C. *et al.* (2011) *Inswork Tide Mill: Archaeological Report, Building Record and Interpretation of the Mill*
www.insworkemillquay.com/assets/insworke-tide-mill-report-22-november-2011.pdf

Stephens, Len (1996) *History of the Naval Victualling Department*, Old Plymouth Society.

Stuart, E. (1991) *Lost Landscapes of Plymouth: maps, charts and plans to 1800*, Alan Sutton, Stroud.

Thomas, Colyn (no date) *Millbrook Heritage*,
www.rameheritage.co.uk/images/article_images/ct_millbrook.pdf

Note: A previous version of this article was published in the *Journal of Cornwall Association of Local Historians*, Vol 66, 2014. Many thanks to Andy Plumbly and Dr Michael Wheatley for sharing their ongoing research.

**Some Early Photographers in Plymouth:
The River Tamar and George Washington Wilson's visit in
1861**

Nigel Overton

The oldest known photograph of Plymouth interest is thought to have been taken by Robert Hunt in 1839 - the year Louis Daguerre and Henry Fox Talbot each independently announced their new photographic processes to the world. Hunt, born in Plymouth Dock-Devonport had recently returned to his birth town, where he briefly ran a chemist shop at 12 Cornwall Street, which was possibly the subject of the photograph.⁴

The best known early photographs of Plymouth interest are a group of 'Sun-Pictures' using the Talbotype or Calotype process – i.e. salted paper prints taken from negatives made from quality handmade paper coated in silver nitrate.

Taken in September 1845, the photographer was Fox Talbot, or because he is thought to be the figure with the telescope in the photograph, more likely his 'operator' Nicholas Henneman. The vantage point in Fig.1 was just inshore of the private Gun Battery at Mount Edgcumbe; with cannon in the foreground and looking across the Tamar to the Clarence Block at the Royal William Yard. Some other views in the series include more of Devil's Point (to the south) and others, more of Stonehouse Pool (to the north). Talbot's half-sister Caroline was married to the 3rd Earl of Mount Edgcumbe and, perhaps because of the family connection, Talbot was also able to take photographs aboard HMS *Superb* on the same visit⁵.

⁴ See University of Oxford Museum of the History of Science online exhibition 'Cameras': 'Early Photographic Images', Item 66 "*Robert Hunt's direct-positive photogenic drawing of houses taken with the camera obscura, 1839*" www.mhs.ox.ac.uk/cameras/ (accessed September 2017).

⁵ Gray, Michael (2014) *Talbot and Henneman, Mount Edgcumbe and Plymouth Dockyard Images*, *The PhotoHistorian*, No.170, Autumn 2014, pp. 31-37.



Fig.1 *Royal William Yard from Mount Edgcumbe*, by Fox Talbot, September 1845. (Metropolitan Museum of Art, USA).

In the early 1850s, the first photographs thought to have been taken by Devonport-born amateur Linnaeus Tripe⁶ include a view from above Empacombe, near Mount Edgcumbe, across the Hamoaze to the South Yard, and two views overlooking the Cremyll boatyard - one looking towards the Dockyard, the other across to Mount Wise, Devonport. Like Talbot, Tripe photographed a deck scene, this time aboard the then Port flag-ship HMS *Impregnable*. He also took his camera into the Keyham Steam Yard when building work was still in progress on the Quadrangle workshop and Gate towers. Tripe photographed HMS *Queen*, the first ship to use the facility and christen the Queen's Dock in 1852. A few years later he returned to photograph HMS *Duke of Wellington* being prepared for the Crimean War. Tripe also ventured into the original

⁶ Dewan, Janet (2003) *The Photographs of Linnaeus Tripe. A Catalogue Raisonne*, Art Gallery of Ontario.

South Yard to photograph HMS *James Watt* under repair and the entrance to 'The Camber'.

The 1850s saw great progress in the art and science of photography, catalysed by the Great Exhibition of 1851 and the spread of the new and patent-free Collodian process, using wet-plate glass negatives. In Britain, the protected rights held in the Daguerreotype process ceased and Fox Talbot's patents ended. Amateurs and professional photographers or 'artists' increased in number and whilst many early professionals would specialise in studio portraits, pioneering amateurs and some professionals preferred to photograph topographical subjects.

The views and landscapes that caught the eye of the both the artistic amateur and the commercial Victorian artist, engraver and print publisher were often those captured by the early topographic photographer. Popular images from this era often depict scenic landscapes, natural wonders or man's greatest or most recent built achievements. British warships and other pioneering man-made 'wonders' also stirred and symbolised a sense of pride and patriotism. Tripe, for example, photographed wooden-wall warships at Keyham; some of the biggest things made by man pictured at the latest and largest industrial dock facility in the world. He also photographed the Plymouth Breakwater - 'The Great National Undertaking' of its age.

As printed photographs became ever more affordable they also became fashionably collectable. This applied to the carte de visite-sized portrait and also to the topographical image. By the late 1850s, the new popular format was the stereoscopic slide featuring a pair of images, depicting left-eye and right-eye views of the same scene. When viewed through a stereoscopic viewer the result was an amazing 3-D effect. Soon, commercial photographers and publishers were producing large numbers of stereoviews, with some also publishing the same images in carte de visite format.

Aberdeen based George Washington Wilson ventured into the South West on a short tour in the summer of 1861.⁷ He took stereoscopic photographs of Exeter Cathedral (published as Nos. 295-300), The Land's End (Nos.309-12) and The Cheesewring, near Liskeard (Nos.307-08). Happily, he visited Saltash, Torpoint, Devonport and Mount Edgcumbe too, photographing Tamar scenes and Naval shipping. A selection of the resultant stereoscopic photographs was added to Wilson's 1863 Catalogue. His listing (with the featured numbers underlined), is augmented below by known examples of surviving published stereoviews, with Wilson's full given titles (in *italic*) and additional notes by the author⁸.

No.305 Viaduct on the Cornwall Railway at Saltash, from below the Piers on the Saltash side with top-hatted man by pier.

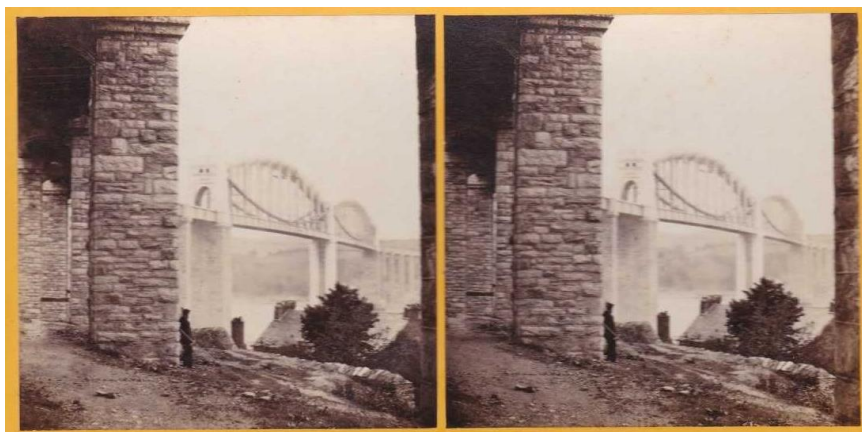


Fig.2 George Washington Wilson No.305 - *Viaduct on the Cornwall Railway at Saltash (Author's Collection).*

⁷ 'The British Journal of Photography', January 15th 1862 - "*Stereographs: An Artist's Gatherings in Cornwall, Devon, and the West of England*", (pp 24-25).

⁸ The George Washington Wilson Collection is held by the University of Aberdeen. Some of the stereoviews from his 1861 Tour can be viewed online at www.abdn.ac.uk/special-collections/george-washington-wilson.php (accessed September 2017).

No.306 **Viaduct on the Cornwall Railway at Saltash, from the River** - looking upstream with four vessels bow on mid-stream + Variant: vantage slightly to SE.

No. 313. **H.M.S. *Impregnable***, [1810] *104 Guns - Guard-Ship in Hamoaze* - starboard side view framed by trees and Dockyard covered slipways beyond. Note: a single print version is labelled “*HMS Royal Adelaide*” in ‘Cocks Album’ at NT Lanhydrock.

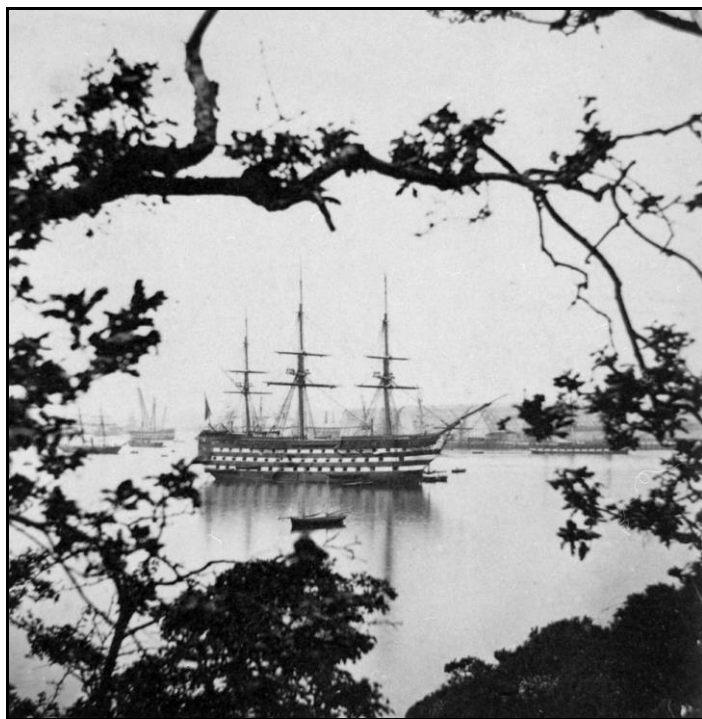


Fig.3 George Washington Wilson No.313 – *HMS Impregnable* in the Hamoaze (National Trust, Lanhydrock House).

No. 313A **HMS *Impregnable*** - port side view with two awnings strung between masts & small boat in foreground (stern & port side $\frac{3}{4}$ view).

No. 313B **HMS *Impregnable*** - port side view with two awnings strung between masts and small boat in foreground (starboard side view)

No. 314. The Hamoaze. Devonport - view across the Hamoaze from the SW to NE with unidentified 3-decked wooden warship (as No. 313 above) anchored mid-channel. Over ten other vessels in view and Dockyard covered slipways beyond.

No. 315. ‘Folly’ Ruin at Mount Edgcumbe and view to Drake’s Island - seated couple in mid-ground left.

No. 316. H.M.S. Cambridge [1815] in the Hamoaze, Great-Gun Practice - mostly starboard view with stern and stern flag in frame and cropped to smoke pall right + Variant1: cropped to stern flag left with bow of second vessel right + Variant2: stern and flag in frame; bow of second vessel right slightly obscured by smoke pall.

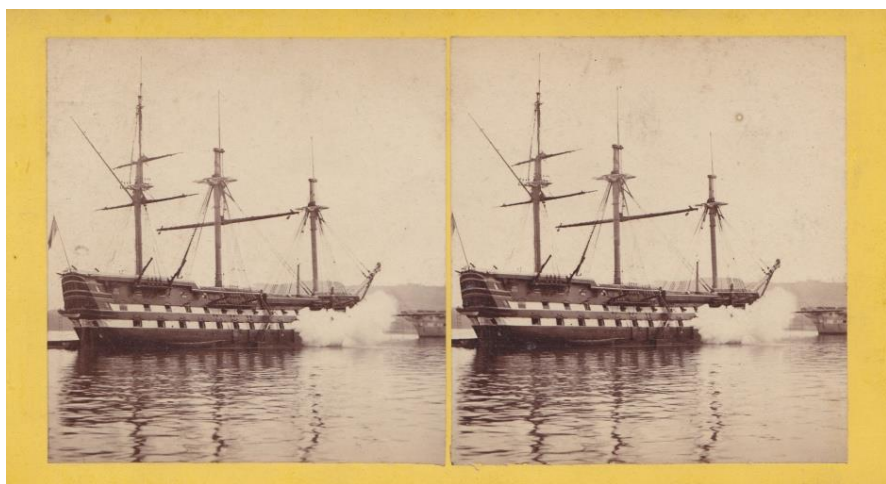


Fig. 4 *George Washington Wilson* stereoscopic view No.316 Variant 1. *H.M.S. Cambridge, in the Hamoaze – Great-Gun Practice.* (Author’s Collection).

No. 317. H.M.S. Cambridge in Hamoaze. Great-Gun Practice. A Broadside - more astern and starboard side $\frac{3}{4}$ view, with small boat left further away + Variant: astern and starboard side $\frac{3}{4}$ view with small boat left closer and all of bow obscured by smoke pall; bit of photographer’s vessel in right foreground in right side image.

No. 318A. H.M.S. Revenge 91 guns, 800 horse-power. Flag-ship of the Channel Fleet - port side view; Torpoint chain ferry left, two people on shore and ferry chain right.

+ different (possibly originally No.318?): port side viewed across Tamar; Keyham Steam Yard and Church (St James the Great) left and Tamar Terrace (Exmouth Road) right.

No. 318B **H.M.S. *Revenge* 91 Guns, 800 Horse-power. Flag-ship of the Channel Fleet.** - port side view; man with top hat on shore and paddle steamer right.

No. 318C **H.M.S. *Revenge* 91 Guns, 800 Horse-power. Flag-ship of the Channel Fleet** - starboard side view; Torpoint chain ferry right.

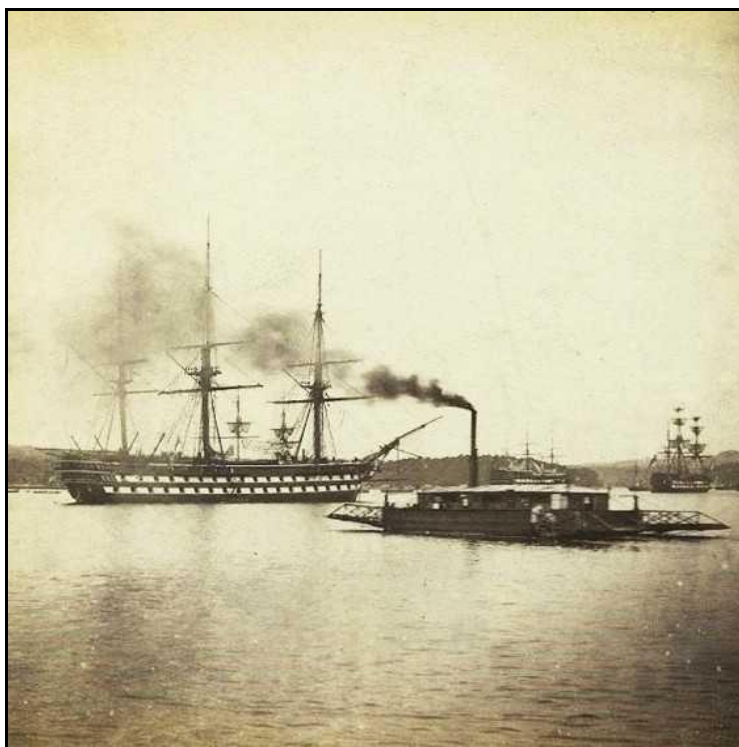


Fig.5 George Washington Wilson No.318C HMS *Revenge* with Torpoint Ferry (Collection: José Calvelo).

No. 319 **H.M.S. *Royal Adelaide* [1828] 104 Guns - Training Ship for Boys, Devonport** - bow starboard $\frac{3}{4}$ view; viewed across Tamar from Torpoint towards Devonport Dockyard.

- No. 320.** **H.M.S. *Aboukir***, [1848] **90 Guns, 600 Horse-power.** - **Channel Fleet** - port side view with ketch under sail left + possible variant: port side view at sea.
- No. 321** **H.M.S. *Conqueror*** [1855-61] - starboard side; viewed in Plymouth Sound
- No. 322.** **H.M.S. *Conqueror* 101 Guns, 800 Horse-power and H.M.S. *Centurion*** [1844] **80 Guns, 400 Horse-power.** - **Channel Fleet** - both port side views; in Plymouth Sound.
- No. 323** **H.M.S. *Orlando*** [1858] **50 Guns, 1000 Horse-power.** - **Steam Reserve** - starboard side view; man in small boat and shore in foreground.
- No. 325.** **H.M.S. *Sheldrake*** [1855] **and H.M.S. *Charon*** [1856]. ***Gunboats in Tamar with Keyham Steamyard & Quadrangle Chimneys in background.*** - image not yet seen.
- No. 336.** **HMS *Ariadne*** [1859] -starboard side viewed across Tamar; backdrop South Yard and Devonport

Wilson was a skilled photographer, with a good artistic eye and willingness to adopt or attempt new ideas. In 1860, having established a name for himself in his native Scotland, he had visited and photographed London scenes but also took in Stonehenge, Salisbury Cathedral and views of the PS *Great Eastern* on Southampton Water. Already proficient in the more difficult shorter exposure ‘instantaneous’ photographs⁹, which captured movement, Wilson was considered among the pre-eminent photographers of his age. On his visit to the South West in 1861, he was able to experiment with a new wide-angle lens developed by J H Dallmayer. The excellent results part enabled Wilson to pioneer a new collector product in the form of a larger format topographic photograph. The ‘instantaneous’ photographs taken in

⁹ “While the term was in common usage during the 19th century, there was surprisingly little discussion or agreement as to precisely what it meant. In practice, it was applied to any photograph which contained an element of movement or which was taken with an exposure of less than one second.” from Roger Taylor (1982) *George Washington Wilson: Artist and Photographer, 1823-93*, Mercat Press, Edinburgh, and information sent to author by Roger Taylor in September 2017.

Plymouth would be among the first to be published in this ‘Cabinet’ format.¹⁰

Among the local man-made wonders seemingly not photographed by Wilson were the Plymouth Breakwater and Smeaton’s Lighthouse (still out on the Eddystone). Happily, other local photographers and publishers filled this gap. By the late 1850s and into the 1860s, there were many regional photographers and publishers of stereoviews and, sometimes, of cartes de visite, all catering for the same market. These included William Heath of Plymouth, William Spreat of Exeter and Way & Sons of Torquay. However, these men may not have taken any of the photographs themselves. William Heath, an optical and scientific instrument maker by trade, is known to have published Plymouth views taken by West Midland’s based photographer William Harding Warner. Heath also employed a professional ‘operator’ in his successful photographic studio on George Street, Plymouth.¹¹

William May of Devonport was one local photographer who published his own series of stereoscopic views, possibly from as early as July 1858. Along with Spreat and Heath, he was, of course, drawn to the subject of Brunel’s new and remarkable Royal Albert Bridge at Saltash. Indeed, both May and Spreat took some of their photographs before the Bridge was completed and opened in May 1859.¹²

It would be two years later when George Washington Wilson photographed the Saltash Viaduct. One view, from the River, is less successful, but that “...from below the Piers” perhaps better highlights his photographic and compositional skills. However, the contemporary

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Overton, Nigel (2014) Plymouth: Three Towns, One City - The nineteenth century ingredients for urban and economic expansion and early photography, *The PhotoHistorian*, Autumn 2014 / No.170, pp. 5-13.

¹² Hannay, John (2014) Saltash Bridge Under Construction, *The PhotoHistorian*, Autumn 2014 / No.17, pp. 42-45.

reviewers of Wilson's work were especially complimentary about his pair of 'instantaneous' photographs of the gunnery training ship HMS *Cambridge* firing into St John's Lake (Nos.316 & 317); commenting on the detail, the reflection, and the percussion ripples on the water. Also praised was his view of HMS *Impregnable* framed by trees (No.313).¹³

For the modern day local historian, other values come into play. Wilson's photographs of HMS *Revenge* drew some criticism by those that reviewed them at the time¹⁴ - but two of the photographs capture Rendel's pioneering steam powered Torpoint chain ferry, which entered service in the mid 1830s. Clearly, the surviving work of early topographic photographers, both in and of Plymouth and its environs, provides an important but often under-researched and untapped historic resource.

Image Sources

Metropolitan Museum of Art

www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/285840 (accessed Sept. 2017).

Collection José Calvelo

www.stereoscope.canalblog.com/archives/2016/08/07/34161062.html

(accessed September 2017).

National Trust - Lanhydrock House, Cornwall - in 'Somers Cocks' Album.

Further Reading

Greeves, Tom (2015) *Dartmoor's Earliest Photographs: Landscape and Place 1860-1880*, Twelveheads Press, Chacewater.

Thomas, Charles (1988) *Views and Likenesses: Early Photographers and Their Work in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, 1839-70*, Royal Institution of Cornwall, Truro.

¹³ *The British Journal of Photography*, January 15th 1862, pp. 24-25.

¹⁴ Taylor, Roger (1982) *George Washington Wilson: Artist and Photographer, 1823-93*, Mercat Press, Edinburgh.

Two Admirals on the Saltash Blue Plaque Trail

Bruce Hunt

Admiral Sir Henry B Jackson RN

In the 1880s the Admiralty decided that the Devonport naval base should have a torpedo training facility (there was already one at Portsmouth). The site chosen for it was in Cornwall, in the lowest reach of the Lynher estuary.

The Royal Navy had in reserve a 5,000-ton wooden warship, HMS *Defiance*, powered by sail and steam but never armed (she would have had 91 guns). After conversion into a ‘school-ship’ at Devonport Dockyard, in 1886 *Defiance* was moved into the Lynher and permanently moored on the northern side of the river off Wearde Quay. Subsequently other obsolete naval vessels were added, all linked by walkways. Officially they lost their original names, becoming part of HMS *Defiance*, but staff used their old names informally.



In 1895 a new commander, Henry Jackson, was posted to the establishment. In addition to his normal duties, he began experimenting with ‘Hertzian waves’ for communication purposes. He gradually made progress, so that by Autumn 1896 the world’s first ship-to-ship wireless telegraphy (i.e. radio contacts) took place in the Lynher estuary, adjoining the parish of St Stephens-by-Saltash.



Henry Bradwardine Jackson (left) joined the Royal Navy as a cadet in 1868, just before his 14th birthday. He was trained on HMS *Britannia*, Dartmouth (then still a ship). By 1878 he had reached the rank of Lieutenant. In 1881 he joined the staff of HMS *Vernon*, the torpedo school-ship at Portsmouth. He became very interested in electronics, and also realised that the Navy had problems with

signalling, particularly at night. He began to consider the use of “Hertzian waves” to assist with night-time identification of ships.

Having been promoted to Commander in 1890, Jackson was posted to HMS *Defiance* in January 1895. After he had settled in, he began a series of experiments, aiming to use Hertzian waves for true communication (rather than simply signalling). He made a spark transmitter (using an induction coil taken from a toy!) and a crude receiver, which didn’t perform well. Jackson was promoted to Captain in June 1896; he is seen here on the rear deck of HMS *Defiance*.

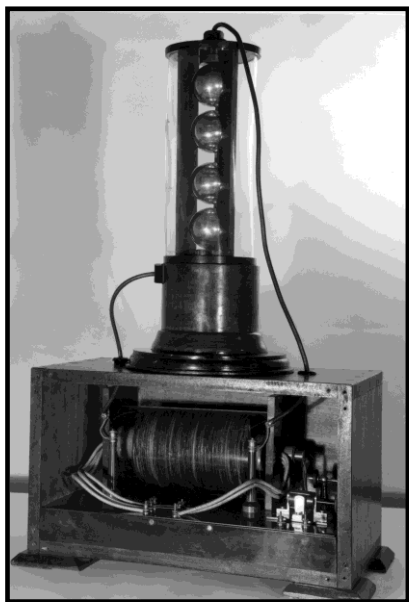
In July 1896 Jackson built a new receiver. By the end of August he and his staff were transmitting and receiving Morse Code signals over the length of the vessel. Bulkheads didn’t cause any loss in strength. At last he was getting somewhere, but he didn’t know that a young Italian had advanced further, and had already filed an application for a patent - in England!

Late in 1894, at the age of 20, Guglielmo Marconi had begun experimenting on his father’s estate near Bologna. By the end of 1895 he had succeeded in transmitting and receiving radio waves over a range of 1½ miles. He was convinced that his system could, with

development, revolutionize communications. However, he received no encouragement in Italy, so in February 1896 he took his equipment to London. He met the chief engineer of the British Post Office, and staff in the War Office and the Admiralty. At a War Office conference in September 1896, Henry Jackson met Marconi for the first time.

Jackson and Marconi realised that, independently, they had been working on similar lines, although Marconi's apparatus was more advanced technically. However, it appeared that Jackson had made the most progress as far as aërials were concerned. Later, they became firm friends.

By spring 1897, after Jackson had built a new transmitter, the signals could be received from the *Scourge* wherever she went in the estuaries, whether it was two miles up the Lynher (she was too big to go any further) or 3 miles down the Hamoaze at Cremyll.



Left. The last transmitter which Jackson built on HMS Defiance

During a demonstration arranged for Devonport's Royal Navy Commander-in-Chief on 20th May 1897, it was used to transmit an extract from that day's edition of "The Times". In that early period, all messages were sent in Morse Code. There were no speech transmissions by radio until nearly 20 years later.

In 1899 for the Royal Navy's Summer Manoeuvres, radio was used for the first time. Three ships taking part were equipped with wireless. One of them was HMS *Juno*, a light cruiser. She was under the command of

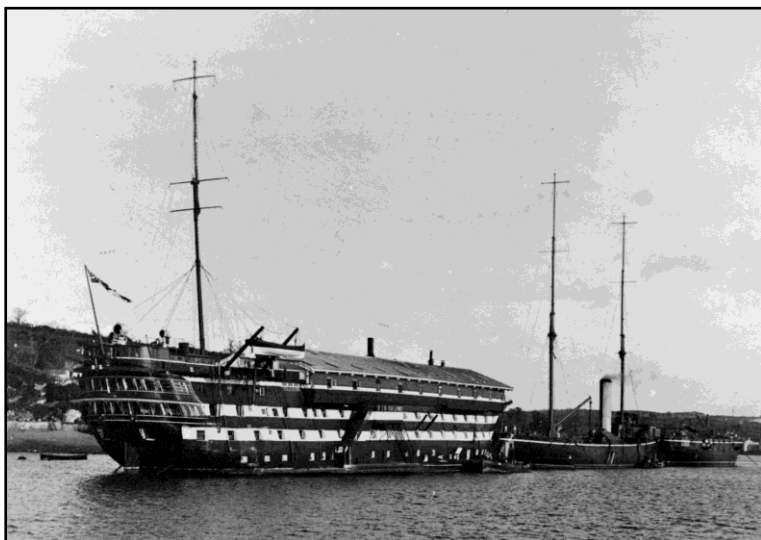
Captain Jackson, and Marconi was on board as an observer. The Admiralty was finally convinced that radio communication had an important role to play in the Royal Navy.

In 1900 courses in wireless telegraphy were started at HMS *Defiance*. By the end of that year, the Navy had 51 radio sets, 32 designed by Marconi and 19 designed by Jackson.



Great Western Railway steam rail-motor train at Defiance Platform

With greater numbers of personnel coming to HMS Defiance for training, better transport arrangements were needed. In 1905 the Navy constructed wooden staging beside the main railway line above Wearde Quay, and made arrangements with the Great Western Railway for trains to stop there. Thus 'Defiance Halt' came into being. It was renamed 'Defiance Platform' in 1908, after the line was converted to double track and realigned.

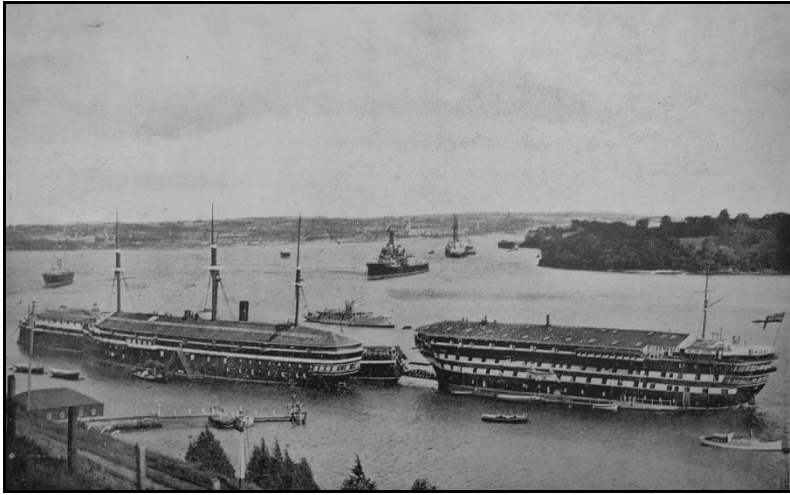


HMS Defiance and HMS Spartan

The addition of wireless telegraphy courses at HMS *Defiance* meant that the main vessel's mast had to be heightened to support radio aerials. This also applied to the two masts of the former HMS *Spartan* (a steam vessel added to the group circa 1907, because the boilers in *Defiance* were almost worn out).

After the end of the First World War, many more training courses were provided at HMS *Defiance*, so more living accommodation was required. To supply this, in 1920 the hulk of a cruiser, the 4,000 tons HMS *Inconstant*, was added.

In October 1930 all the vessels were removed and (except for *Inconstant*) broken up. In 1931 the HMS *Defiance* training school was re-established in *Inconstant* and two other hulks, moored in the Hamoaze near Wilcove. However, the practice area in the Lynher estuary continued to be used until 1955.



HMS Defiance (right) and HMS Inconstant (left)

During his naval career, he was given many foreign awards, including the Grand Cross of the Spanish Order of Naval Merit, the Japanese Order of the Rising Sun, and the Russian Order of the White Eagle (1st class). He was also a Grand Officer of the French Legion of Honour. Jackson was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1901. The following year, he wrote a paper for the Society entitled: ‘On some phenomena affecting the transmission of electric waves over the surface of the sea and earth’ Jackson was a member of the Institution of Electrical Engineers, Honorary Vice-President of the Institution of Naval Architects, and also Vice-President of the Seamen’s Hospital Society. He received a knighthood (Royal Victorian Order) in 1906, and another (Order of the Bath) in 1910! In 1920 he was appointed the first chairman of the government’s Radio Research Board.

After he had completed his active service, Jackson was able to spend time at home on Hayling Island, near Portsmouth, where his favourite pastime was experimenting with radio and electronics. In this he was joined by his wife, Alice (daughter of Samuel Burbury, a prominent mathematician who published work on electromagnetic theory). Admiral

Sir Henry Jackson died at home on 14th December 1929; he was 74. His grave is in St Mary's Churchyard, South Hayling.



Boisdale House was the home of both Admiral Sir Henry Jackson and Admiral Gordon Campbell VC.

During the period January 1895 to October 1897, when he was in command of HMS *Defiance*, Captain Henry Jackson and his wife, Alice, lived in Boisdale House, North Road, Saltash. (The house has since been extended, and is now converted into flats.)



Admiral Gordon Campbell VC DSO

Vice Admiral Gordon Campbell VC DSO (6 January 1886 – 3 July 1953) was an English naval officer and later a writer and politician. He was a recipient of the Victoria Cross, the

highest and most prestigious award for gallantry in the face of the enemy that can be awarded to British and Commonwealth forces. He was also awarded the Croix de Guerre and appointed a Chevalier of the Légion d'honneur.

During part of World War I, Captain Gordon Campbell's home was in Saltash. He and his wife lived in Boisdale House, North Road.

Born on 6 July 1886, he was educated at Dulwich College, which he attended between 1898 and 1900. He then joined the Royal Navy. By the age of 31 he had reached the rank of Commander. It was during WWI that he was awarded the VC. On 17 February 1917 in the north Atlantic, Commander Campbell, commanding HMS *Farnborough* (Q.5) (one of the "mystery" Q ships) sighted a torpedo track. He altered course and allowed the torpedo to hit Q.5 aft by the engine-room bulkhead. The 'panic party' got away convincingly, followed by the U-boat. When the submarine had fully surfaced and was within 100 yards of Q.5 - which was badly damaged and lying very low in the water - Campbell gave the order to fire. Almost all of the 45 shells fired hit the U-boat which sank.



Q5 was taken in tow just in time and was safely beached. On 22 March 1916, another U-boat, U-68 was also sunk by HMS *Farnborough*. Most of the crew followed Campbell to HMS *Pargust* (another Q ship) On 7 June 1917, *Pargust* was suddenly struck by a torpedo fired at very close range from an unseen German submarine. A vicious battle took place between *Pargust* and UC29, with the submarine finally being sunk and *Pargust* severely damaged. Unusually, the Admiralty were unable

to decide who among the ship's crew should receive the Victoria Cross, as all were deemed to have participated in the action with equal valour. It was thus decided for the first time, under article 13 of the Victoria Cross's royal warrant, that one officer and one enlisted man would be granted the award following a ballot by the ship's company. After the vote, from which Campbell abstained, the Victoria Crosses were awarded to Lieutenant Ronald Stuart and Seaman William Williams RNR. Fourteen other crew members were awarded medals, including DSOs for Campbell. In addition, every sailor had his participation in the action and subsequent ballot noted on his service records.

Campbell took command on another 'Q' ship, HMS *Dunraven*, which was disguised as the collier *Boverton*. During an attack on 8 August 1917 against U71, shells began hitting *Dunraven*, detonating her depth charges and setting her stern afire. Her crew remained hidden letting the fires burn. Then one of her 4-inch guns was blown away by a shell burst revealing *Dunraven*'s identity as a warship. The ship continued to fire on the U-Boat and launched two torpedoes. Badly damaged, *Dunraven* was taken in tow but later sank with colours flying. The survivors were picked up and taken to Plymouth. Only one member of her crew was lost.

In recognition of the action, two Victoria Crosses were awarded to the ship. Two crewmen were again selected by ballot from amongst the crew of HMS *Dunraven*, Lieutenant Charles George Bonner and Petty Officer Ernest Herbert Pitcher. Campbell received his second bar to his DSO.

Campbell later achieved the rank of Vice Admiral. He commanded the battlecruiser HMS *Tiger* 1925-27 and served as Naval Aide-de-Camp to George V 1928-29. In 1931, he was elected as National Member of Parliament for Burnley, defeating the Labour leader, Arthur Henderson. In 1935, however, standing as a National Liberal, he lost his seat.

Early Postcards of the Tamar Valley

Helen Wilson

Faster and cheaper transport in the late Victorian and Edwardian period produced a boom in tourism. Not only could people more readily go ‘on holiday’ for days or weeks at a time, but they were also able to indulge more in what were known as ‘excursions’. These were usually day trips taken by train or, in the Tamar Valley, on river steamers, often incorporating some walking to local beauty spots. There are many examples of steamboat excursions advertised in local newspapers, such as the *Western Morning News*, but those who could not afford that luxury could still avail themselves of the attractions of the Tamar Valley by walking and using the many small ferries that criss-crossed the river.

This increase in tourism is reflected in the vast number of pictorial cards of the Tamar Valley produced to appeal to visitors. Postcards of the period are of interest today not only for their intrinsic appeal but also because they reveal aspects of the history of the Tamar Valley and its industrial, horticultural and social past. They were produced by many of the national postcard companies, such as Frith and Valentine, but local photographers were also able to take advantage of the trade. The most successful was T.H. Harris of Quethiock, who knew the area well, which is reflected in the sometimes more unusual photographs he produced.

The postcards on the following pages – all from the author’s collection - are a small selection of those shown in the first of the two talks given to the Friends of the Tamar Valley.



Fig.1 Postcard of Forder, near Saltash. By C.A.Pratt of Saltash, 1905



Fig.2 Postcard of Cargreen, looking up the main street from near the Tamar shore. By T.H.Harris of Quethiock .

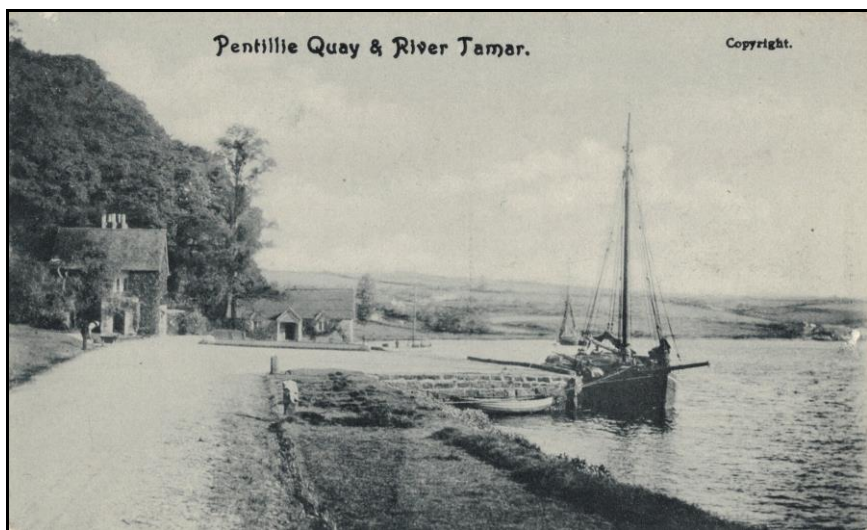


Fig.3 Pentillie Quay, by T.H.Harris of Quethiock (author's collection).

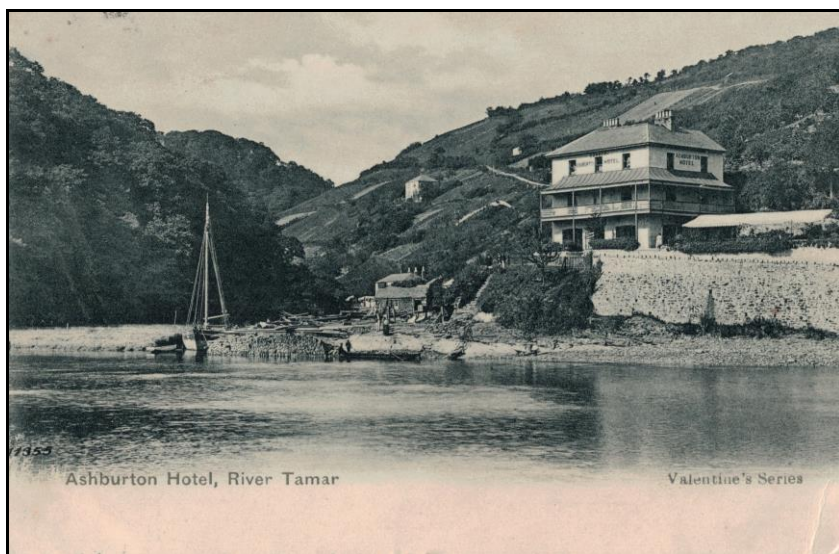


Fig.4 Danescombe Valley, viewed across the Tamar, with the Ashburton Hotel (right) and the May boatyard in the centre. The steep slopes of the Danescombe valley were intensely cultivated at this time, although are now heavily wooded. (Valentine's Series)



Fig.5 This appears to be a view past Prospect Terrace in Gunnislake towards Dimson. The wording at top left indicates the remarkable circular Hoffman kiln of the Plymouth Works, which produced firebricks.

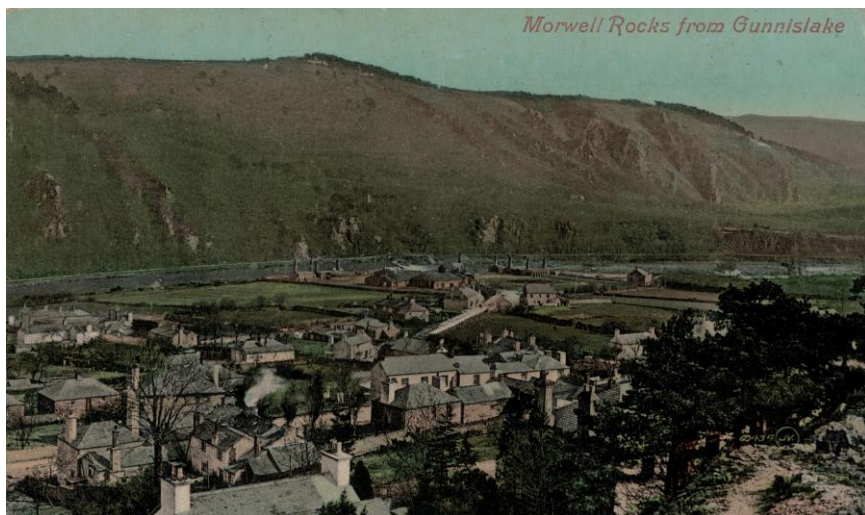


Fig.6 View over Gunnislake to Tamar and Morwell Rocks. In the middle distance are the kilns and drying stacks of the Bealswood Brickworks.

General Booth in Gunnislake

John Snell

This photo, produced as a postcard, was taken by the well-known Gunnislake photographer H.C.Gimblett on Tuesday 11 August 1904. It shows General Booth addressing a large crowd opposite the Square in Gunnislake.

The Salvation Army's 'War Cry' of 20 August 1904 records that spent 15 minutes at the Gunnislake Wesleyan Chapel in Chapel St. The visit took place during his 1904 'Motor Tour'.

The Salvation Army started in Gunnislake in 1883. It had a hall at the end of Commercial St. In the 1950s, the Salvation Army moved to the old Plymouth Brethren Gospel Hall in Under Road, Gunnislake. However, the premises closed in 1985, and the area is now covered from Tavistock.



General Booth, of the Salvation Army in Gunnislake, 11 August 1904

The Long Life of the ‘Good Intent’

Gary Hicks

During 1789 George Washington was elected the first President of the United States. In the same year, a few men, under the direction of a master craftsman worked anonymously, somewhere on the shores of the four rivers emptying into Plymouth Sound, to create a long-lived little vessel. On the 14 March of the following year, William Bligh returned to England with the first news of the Bounty mutiny and within weeks of the breaking of that astonishing story, our little vessel was launched.

She may have been launched ‘all a-tanto’ and ready to sail away, or perhaps her single mast had still to be stepped and rigging completed, but the men who built her and her new owners, were justifiable proud of their creation. While they left her head unadorned, without figurehead or scroll-work, they carved below her taffrail the first phrase of verse 5 of Psalm 95: “The Sea is His and He Made it” and she carried that thought all her long life.

Whatever her state of completion when she entered the water; before she could begin to earn her keep the new formality of registration (introduced in 1786) would have to be completed, as her owner intended that she should be able to trade outside the ‘inland navigation’ of the four rivers.

On 28 May 1790 her first owner visited the Customs House in Plymouth to register her under the name *Good Intent*. There were, of course, fees to pay and he took with him her builder’s certificate, indispensable under section 20 of the 1786 Registration Act, certifying: *the time when, and the Place where, fuch Ship or Veffel was built; and alfo an exact Account of the Tonnage of fuch Ship or Veffel, together with the Name of the firft Purchafer or Purchafers thereof*. (The

substitution of ‘f’ for ‘s’ here reproduces the archaic language of the then new Act of Parliament.)

In addition he would have come prepared to swear an oath naming all the owners, swearing that they were the sole owners and that none had ever sworn any Oath of Allegiance to any foreign state and that no foreigner had any interest whatsoever in the vessel.¹⁵ The Tide Surveyor of the Customs would have surveyed the vessel, verified that she was British built and, measuring her maximum dimensions, finding her volume as if she were a rectangular box and then dividing the volume by 94, in order to calculate her Register Tonnage, in accordance with the 1786 Act. This required a certain skill in mathematics; after a later alteration the calculation for the *Good Intent* was as follows - length 49ft. 10ins x breadth 18ft 2ins x depth in hold 5ft 8¾ins ÷ 94 which gave her a Register Tonnage of 64⁷¹/₉₄ tons. One surveyor at Plymouth frequently included fractions of an inch, perhaps as a demonstration of his arithmetic virtuosity. During her long life *Good Intent* experienced several changes of tonnage arising from changes to where measurements were taken and the divisor, altered in 1836 from 94 to 3,500 and then to a more sensible 100 in 1854.

Her builder, original owners and even her measurements are unknown, because no Register Books for the Port of Plymouth survive prior to the post 1824 registers held by Plymouth and West Devon Record Office.

The paintwork of the *Good Intent* had barely lost its first shine when the French Convention declared war on Great Britain on 1 February 1793, but she avoided being taken as a prize and her recorded history begins with a copy of a re-registration on 3 June 1819, following unspecified alterations. This may have been some quite minor

¹⁵ (At this point, British goods could only be carried in a British built, owned and manned ship and the only acceptable evidence of this was the ship's Certificate of Registration.)

alterations in her description, but could have been lengthening, by the simple sounding, but technically-exacting, expedient of cutting her in half, drawing the severed sections apart and inserting a new mid-ships section.

Her registered owners in the post-war boom, were James Ayres of Calstock, William Gill and John Rundle of Tavistock (who, to re-register her, attended the Customs House in Plymouth together and subscribed the oath referred to above) the other owners were, John Hornbrook Gill and Nicholas Rundle both of Tavistock, Merchants and James Lamerton of Calstock, Mariner; James Ayres was also her master. Benjamin Hooper, Tide Surveyor, took the measurements and made the tonnage calculation referred to above. The names of her masters are recorded on the register until 1854 - John Pearne was appointed to follow Ayres in 1822, William Adams took command in October 1824, Thomas Petherick, June 1840 and Thomas Adams in June 1850, with only five masters in 35 years she seems to have been a well-liked, kindly vessel.

Perhaps at this point in order to envisage her more clearly it would be worthwhile to compare her to *Shamrock* – both were ketch-rigged and square-sterned, their respective measurements being:

Shamrock length 57.6', breadth 18.1' depth of hold 5.4', 31.71 gross tons (initially)

Good Intent length 49ft. 10ins x breadth 18ft 2ins x depth in hold 5ft 8¾ins, 64⁷¹/₉₄ tons

It would be easy to assume that the *Good Intent* was simply a barge, confined to the quiet waters of the four rivers, but this was not the case. This was a different age and vessels of small tonnage frequently made lengthy open sea voyages.

On 1 May 1820 Ayres and Lamerton sold their 4/16^{ths} to their co-owners and on 26 November 1823 William Gill sold 1/6th to John Rundle and Nicholas Rundle. On 29th December 1825 the *Good Intent* was re-registered, as required by the 1825 Registration Act; that Act required all shares in vessels to be held only in multiples of 64ths and her owners and their shares were - John Rundle of Tavistock 22/64 and Nicholas Rundle of 'Beer Ferris' (sic), Merchants 21/64, and John Hornbrook Gill of Whitchurch in the County of Devon, Merchant 21/64.

On 10 April 1843 Nicholas Rundle transferred the whole of his shares to John Rundle and John Hornbrook Gill, co-partners trading under the firm of "Gill and Rundle" and on 20 November 1854 John Rundle transferred his share in *Good Intent* to John Hornbrook Gill of Bickham in the Parish of Buckland Monachorum, Merchant. J.H. Gill continued to own her until he sold on 12 June 1861 to Alexander and George Hubbard of Stonehouse, Merchants and Contractors. The Hubbards were her last local owners and they sold her eleven years later to William Hiscock of Bridgwater who somewhat surprisingly was a Gamekeeper; William died on 19 December 1879 and *Good Intent* passed under his will to his widow, Mary. Mary's ownership continued until a sale was made on 22 December 1891 to Martha Jane Smart the wife of William Smart of Bridgwater, Master Mariner.

Good Intent was by then 101 years old and had been on the Plymouth Register for all that time, but her new owners decided to register her at Bridgwater on 16 June 1902. When launched she would have been very much part of the everyday scene, one of tens of thousands of vessels trading under sail, but gradually the others died away and *Good Intent* became a curiosity, an object to excite nostalgia, remarkable because of her age and survival and something to attract the photographer (Fig.1). This image shows her during this later period of her life, for when acquired it was found to be endorsed "Good Intent 1790 Bridgwater Dock 17/4/11". One hundred and twenty years old

when pictured, she is clearly being well cared for, her paint looks new, her wheel is covered and she has the refinement of a WC on deck, a luxury which would have been missing in her early years. Another great war was looming, even more brutal, with hundreds of her old-time friends providing the easiest of targets, but *Good Intent* sailed on throughout the conflict.

After the First World War, there was one more move, to Bristol, where she was registered on 20 February 1920, her owner thereafter Alfred J. Smith. In her Plymouth register she is described only as a barge, but she is shown as a sloop in both her Bridgwater and Bristol registers. However, the photograph below shows her rigged as a ketch.



Fig.1 *The Good Intent* in Bridgwater Dock, 17th April 1911 (from the author's collection).

When she was 130 years old, she provided inspiration for a poem, which in time became a folk song - so let us sing of the old *Good Intent*¹⁶!

THE GOOD INTENT – Cicely Fox-Smith

They built her in the olden days,
They built her strong, they built her
stout,
In Farmer George's golden days
It must have been or thereabout.

They knew no rush or hustle then,
They drove no rivets racing time:
A sort of pleasant bustle then
Filled up the hours from chime to
chime.

With care and pains they'd linger on
Each chisel touch and mallet stroke,
And lay a loving finger on
Her curving sides of Devon oak.

As so they worked, and so she grew
From garboard unto gunwale strake,
And if uncommon slow she grew
They built to last and no mistake.

Well, finish her they did at last;
Sparred, rigged and fitted, forth she
went,
And out to sea she slid at last -
The ketch of Plymouth, *Good Intent*.

She went - and Lord! she's going still,
The same old sea's beneath her bow,
The same old winds are blowing still,
The same old skies behold her now.

Finally, her Bristol register was closed on 8 December 1926: "vessel broken up". It is believed however, that this may not have been the final chapter in the life of this grand old lady and that she was in fact unrigged, her masts removed and she was converted to a dumb lighter.

¹⁶ Near the end of her long career, at Bridgwater or possibly Bristol, the *Good Intent* caught the eye of that remarkable, evocative chronicler and poet of ships, seamen and the sea, Cicely Fox-Smith ('Cicely' pronounced like 'nicely'). She was clearly appreciative of the old vessel's provenance, long career and significance. Her poem celebrating the ship first appeared in 1919 in 'Rhymes of the Red Ensign' and subsequently in 'Sea Songs and Ballads 1917-22', published by Methuen in 1923. The full poem can be found at www.poemhunter.com/poem/the-good-intent/ (Clive Charlton).

The Fate of the Fluvius Tamar

Clive Charlton

Tamar 2015 featured a short item on a ship called the *Fluvius Tamar* (= ‘River Tamar’, of course), which had recently been brought into service by the Exe Shipping Co. In fact, that ship was sold, and was replaced in 2016 by another *Fluvius Tamar*.

But sadly, our river was to have a very short life as a seagoing name. After maintenance, *Fluvius Tamar* loaded 3,800 tons of magnesium oxide at Eemshaven in The Netherlands and sailed for Pasajes in Spain on January 12, 2017. However, at night, and in very rough weather, the ship started taking in water about 35 miles northeast of Ramsgate, and a ‘Mayday’ was declared. The crew abandoned ship, and their ship sank shortly afterwards. Fortunately, all seven were rescued, some by the Finnish ship *Norstream* and others by helicopter.

The sunken wreck became a navigational hazard, so a successful salvage operation took place in July 2017. The battered hulk of the poor *Fluvius Tamar* was raised and towed, ignominiously, to a scrapyard at s’Gravendaal. However, her sister ships are still busy around the coasts of Europe, including the *Fluvius Tavy* and the *Fluvius Plym*.



The salvaged Fluvius Tamar being towed to the scrapyard in the Netherlands, July 2017. Source: <http://kiekjesdief.nl/jml3/schepen/2480-de-ondergang-van-de-fluvius-tamar> (accessed 15 November 2015).

Meetings of Friends of the Tamar Valley – 2016
***Helen Wilson, with contributions from Jane Kiely, Clive
Charlton and Anthony Lewis***

The Friends held a total of thirteen events in 2016 and credit must go to Jane Kiely for her work in setting them all up and taking bookings for the summer excursions. At the January meeting we welcomed back the ever-popular Simon Dell to tell us about Lundy Island - the isle of puffins. Lundy came up for sale in 1969 and was bought for £150,000 by Jack Hayward who then donated it to the National Trust. It is leased to the Landmark Trust and most of the buildings have been adapted as holiday lets. Many people travel to Lundy for the wildlife. It is popular with birdwatchers, not only for the puffins, but also many other species, including Manx shearwaters and razorbills. Around Lundy and on the journey there, dolphins and Minke whales can be seen. The island has an endemic species of plant - the Lundy cabbage - and much conservation work has been carried out to ensure its survival. Some go to Lundy for the amazing diving experience in the Marine Conservation Zone. Others are drawn to the island for its peace and tranquillity, and to explore the island's fascinating history that dates back to Roman times.

At the February meeting a capacity audience welcomed Barry Gamble to talk about 'Tamar Mines, Miners and Migration'. As Chair of the Trust that ran Morwellham Quay until its privatisation in 2009, he is well known to some of our longer-term members. In 2003 Barry became part of the Bid Team for the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site. The success of that bid in 2006 led to further projects in Australia, Mexico, South Africa, Poland and Japan. We were treated to some fabulous aerial photographs of mines in the Tamar Valley, including Devon Great Consols, Gunnislake Clitters, Hingston Down and Prince of Wales. All over the world where miners from Cornwall and West Devon migrated, there are gravestones that record their origins. Barry has photographed many of these gravestones and researched the stories of some of the men who pioneered mining in Australia and South Africa.

Our March meeting required some knowledge of a popular TV programme to be fully understood, as it featured Anthea Lay, a contestant in *The Big Painting Challenge*. Anthea related how her nephew had spotted a TV competition for amateur artists, for which one had to send three paintings for consideration. This was followed by a phone interview and Anthea was then invited for audition, at her own expense. She was finally selected out of about 7,000 applicants to appear on Series 1 of the programme. Over six episodes, aired in February and March 2015, the contestants were challenged to produce pictures of still life, landscapes, portraits, buildings, etc., by presenters Una Stubbs and Richard Bacon. Anthea brought along some of work for us to see. Although she did not win the Challenge, she thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

The first part of our April meeting was taken up by the AGM. We then welcomed our speaker, Ron Smith, to talk on 'The Pilchard Industry in Plymouth Sound'. Ron began by presenting the rich history of this industry, which has been important in the South West since at least the late Elizabethan period. The major method for catching pilchard (simply mature sardine) was by seine fishing. Three or four boats were directed by a 'huer' standing on the cliff above to spot the shoals. The seine nets were cast according to his instruction, and then drawn around the catch. The fish could be preserved by being pickled, smoked or, more commonly for export, dry-salted. Kingsand was a centre for processing pilchard, and still retains several 'pilchard palaces' (large open courtyards) where the work was done. The fish were taken from the shore by horse and cart and cleaned in lean-to sheds around the palaces. Stacked between layers of salt for a few weeks, they were then placed in hogshead barrels with drain holes. Weights were applied to extract the oil, used in lamps, which drained into a pressing trough. All the processing work was done by the women of the village. The best-preserved examples of 'pilchard palaces' are along the foreshore of Kingsand, although several have been converted, one roofed as a boat store and another used as a walled garden. A major reason for the demise of the pilchard industry was that shoals move around, with West Devon and East Cornwall being favoured in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As the shoals moved west and then round to North Cornwall, the trade declined. The very last seine boats were deployed in 1924. Look out for those pilchard palaces the next time you are in Kingsand.

In very early May, member Ruth Desborough organised a visit to Morwenstow. She was born in the area and has a friend living at the old Vicarage there, who kindly agreed to welcome us in the afternoon. A justification for the Friends visiting Morwenstow, if one is needed, is that the source of the River Tamar is in the Parish. In the morning we met at the Rectory Tea Rooms for coffee, before making our way along the cliff-top to Hawker's Hut, the very smallest National Trust property. It is literally a cave cut into the cliff with stone seating and a wooden door. This was where Reverend Hawker, the vicar of Morwenstow, born in Plymouth in 1803, went to commune with nature and, it is said, smoke opium. He was, by any standard, a rather eccentric gentleman, who kept a pet pig and is said to have excommunicated his cat for catching mice on a Sunday. There are, however, positive stories about him. He defied the convention of the time in giving a Christian burial to shipwrecked sailors washed up on the beach. One of his lasting achievements was the introduction of the Harvest Festival and he also wrote *The Song of the Western Men*, an unofficial anthem of Cornwall. Our group returned along the cliff-top and lunched at the Tea Rooms. Afterwards, we visited the church, where Helen showed us the woodcarving work there by the Pinwill sisters that inspired her research. We then went on to Hawker's Vicarage with its distinctive chimneys modelled on towers of churches in which Hawker had served. Here we enjoyed the rare opportunity of a tour of parts of the house and viewed Hawker memorabilia. This was followed by a generous cream tea, fortifying us for the long journey home. Thanks to Ruth for a great day.

Two days later, we were looking forward to welcoming Cynthia Gaskell Brown to talk to us but unfortunately, she was taken ill. Ron Smith saved the day at the eleventh hour. We had a wild flower evening with a difference – in the form of a quiz! Ron had visited Devil's Point to find an amazing variety of wild flowers growing there, and also investigated Drakewalls Mine to see what he could find. It was certainly entertaining, making us think and talk to each other. Our thanks go to Ron for stepping into the breach again.

For a summer outing in early June, Kate Threlfall provided a guided walk of Gunnislake to see the many chapels there once were in this mining village. Only two of these chapels are still open for worship: St Anne's Church and the Bible Fellowship. Until mining started in the late

18th century, Gunnislake was little more than a few farmsteads, but it grew rapidly, and many chapels of various denominations were built. The Wesleyan Methodists were provided for with a chapel at the end of Commercial Street built around 1840. By 1856 this was overcrowded and a larger one built in Chapel Street. The Orchard, where there is now a doctors' surgery, was possibly the site of an early Bible Christian Chapel. Newbridge Chapel opened in 1863 but was soon closed and demolished owing to subsidence. The Public Hall in Fore Street was built as a United Methodist Church in 1856. In Lower Calstock Road there was a tiny Baptist chapel, the first non-conformist chapel in the village, opened around 1790. This soon became too small and a large square chapel built across the road, now Church House, which was superseded by a larger one, now the church hall, built in 1834. By 1841 the Baptists had sold the chapel to the Anglican Church, as the Parish church was a couple of miles away in Calstock. We had a great evening with Kate and learned a lot of local history.

Later in June, Jane Kiely and Clive Charlton led a walk from Calstock to the Danescombe Valley. We met in the quirky new café, Lishe, in Calstock, and some people turned up just for that. From there about ten of us walked towards Danescombe. Jane had recently taken part in a survey of the horticultural packing sheds that are still in the valley, so along the way she regaled people with stories about them. Once in Danescombe, Clive described the industrial archaeology of this part of the valley, including the engine houses that have been converted into holiday accommodation, and the old sawmill built in 1878 but out of use by the turn of the century. Along Lower Kelly there are various sites to be seen. We then went into Calstock Boatyard to have a picnic and use their new DIY café. This is a great success, with a wonderful view down the river. We were joined by two non-walkers, so our numbers went up and down all day. Walking back to Calstock, we investigated the road that collapsed a couple of years ago. We decided that Calstock Ice Cream Parlour was too good to miss, and agreed that that was the perfect end to a perfect day!

Our visit to Trematon Castle Garden in July was a popular event and a good number of people found their way to the field that serves as a car park for Trematon Castle. This was a good place to start as the views across the fields towards Saltash, including St Stephen's, were well

worth seeing with the swallows swooping around. We wended our way to the entrance and through the café to the hidden world of the Castle, to be met by a breathtaking garden set in front of a Regency house that sits within the ancient fortifications. The Castle itself is a remarkably complete piece of early Norman military architecture known as a motte and bailey. It is one of four such castles built by Robert of Mortain when he was granted the Earldom of Cornwall by his brother-in-law, William the Conqueror, the others being at Restormel, Launceston and Liskeard. The structures consist of an artificially raised mound (motte), on which sits a keep, within a walled enclosure (bailey). The Castle remained in the hands of the Duchy, largely unchanged, until the next phase of building work in the early 19th century. Rather perversely, some might say, Benjamin Tucker built a Regency house within the bailey in 1808. In order to provide a view of the Tamar estuary, a substantial length of the bailey wall was demolished. Today, Trematon Castle Garden has been given a new lease of life as a visitor attraction. Still owned by the Duchy, since 2012 they have been leased by garden designers Isabel and Julian Bannerman. The gardens were delightful, and the visit really was a treat with a twist.

In August a circular walk along a lower stretch of the River Tamar on the Cornish side was led by Anthony Lewis and Helen Wilson. We began just south of Wayton, where we followed a footpath that led to magnificent views up and down the river. We eventually emerged at the water's edge, though we soon lost sight of the river as the path leads into a deep lane and out on to a road shielded from the river by trees. Where the road dips down, the river comes into view again where an arm of the estuary extends across the boardwalk path. At the end of this stretch lies a group of houses, at least one of which was once a tidal mill. The next stage of the walk is a fairly steep climb, but every so often there is a handy gate on which to lean and admire yet another view. At the top, the most spectacular aspect is reached, as well as rather a surprise. Through a gate on the right lies a small airfield, from which several light aircraft are flown. Opposite the hangers are two gates at an angle to each other; one provides a view towards Bere Alston and above Cotehele and the other of Pentillie. Here the bends in the river confuse the eye and the mind into questioning which side is Devon and which is Cornwall. The last leg of the walk is mostly along the road, but there are again several gates where the view upstream towards Plymouth and the Tamar Bridges

can be enjoyed. This was a wonderful afternoon out on the Tamar, full of beautiful views and interesting features.

There was a packed house in September for a talk by Helen Wilson on Early Postcards of the Tamar Valley. She began at the mouth of the estuary with a view of Devonport and one of Millbrook Lake and the industry around it. There are numerous early postcards of the Torpoint Ferry and Helen chose two to illustrate the different types in use before and after 1925. The images continued with one labelled ‘Anthony Woods near Saltash’ that shows Jupiter Point, where a ferry once crossed to Antony Passage. Several good postcards of Forder show the early 20th-century industry with the quarry and its quay, as well as more picturesque views of the village itself. The Saltash ferry featured in postcards from 1904 and 1925. A rare card of Cargreen, posted in 1911, was taken by local man, Thomas Harris of Quethiock, who also took an unusual view of Pentillie. On the Bere Peninsula, Helen showed a shot of the quay at Bere Ferrers, followed by one of Weir Quay and several of Bere Alston’s Fore Street and Station Road. A view of Cotehele Quay from the river featured a paddle steamer, another of 1889 of the Ashburton Hotel with all the slopes around occupied by market gardening and a view from Goss Yard showed Calstock before the viaduct was built. Morwell Rocks was a popular tourist spot in the early 19th-century and there are numerous postcards of this area. Weir Head, with its canal and brickworks, was also a popular view for postcards and Gunnislake Newbridge attracted much attention. From much further upstream, Helen showed a rather misty image of Horsebridge, posted in 1908, and two of Milton Abbot from 1906 before the Lutyens houses were built. Helen concluded with three very early postcards: two of Endsleigh House and another of Greystone Bridge, all from 1875. There was a great deal of interest in this talk and Helen promised to produce more images for another presentation in 2017.

For our October meeting, Rupert Kirkwood gave us a wonderfully entertaining and fascinating account of his intrepid water-borne adventures kayaking the South West Coast Path. Rupert’s great passion is to be afloat on his sleek and sturdy sea kayak. As often as he can, he heads for the coast, taking his camera with him. He has undertaken a remarkable complete circumnavigation of the coast of the South West Peninsula. For Rupert, ‘coast’ means not just along the beaches and cliffs

of the sea's face, but also up the many estuaries and obscure creeks, including those on the Tamar system. His adventures are far from simply clocking up the nautical miles, for Rupert uses his kayak to get close to, and photograph, the wonderful array of wildlife and landscapes he encounters. He combined a wonderful, infectious enthusiasm and awe for his subject with an authoritative understanding of nature and the sea. His accessible talk was enriched by a superb series of photographs, some of them unique, as well as beautiful to look at. We also saw fine images of the Tamar and Tavy. Rupert kindly let us use one of these – of Calstock Viaduct – for the cover of the 2016 edition of our 'Tamar' journal.

Well known for his interest in mining, Rick Stewart also has a fascination with WWI, and hence this talk on 'The Road to Messines: Military Mining and Underground Warfare on the Western Front' at our November meeting. The familiar image of that war is of the maze of trenches along the frontline, but a hidden war was carried on underground. At the beginning, there were few people who envisaged that hostilities would be prolonged beyond a few months. John Griffiths (later Sir John Norton-Griffiths), a politician with a military and engineering background, thought that preparations should be made for a longer conflict. By December 1914, after the British Army had suffered tremendous losses at Ypres, and the Germans were detonating mines in underground tunnels under the Allies' trenches, Griffiths approached the government with an idea. His engineering company was engaged in tunnelling work for new sewers in Manchester and he envisaged that their skills could be useful for the war effort. The system used for the tunnels was referred to as 'clay kicking'. The digger or 'mole' lay at an angle on a wooden frame with his feet towards the workface. The technique was fast, quiet and suited to clay. When British efforts at tunnelling by the small Royal Engineers (RE) force were successful but inadequate, Griffiths' men were taken off the work in Manchester and sent to the Front. The 251st Tunnelling Company was also formed and recruited mainly from Devon and Cornwall, including two men from Harrowbarrow and another from Calstock. Rick explained in some detail how the tunnels were constructed and used in several operations that eventually ensured the success of the Allies, particularly at the Battle of Messines in June 1917. The role of the tunnellers in this success had been highly significant, yet only one was awarded the VC during the

four years of the war. Griffiths was awarded the DSO in 1916 and knighted in 1917.

The Friends are indebted to all those who have contributed to our programme. We try to present a wide range of talks, which we could not do without those who provide these presentations. The summer programme of visits is only possible through the assistance of volunteers who give their time to run our walks and tours.

The Friends of the Tamar Valley

Meetings are held usually on the first Friday of every month at 7.30 pm at the Tamar Valley A.O.N.B. Centre, Drakewalls, Gunnislake, Cornwall.

Visits and walks are arranged for the summer months. The full programme of meetings is published in the Friends' Newsletters.

Committee 2017 / 2018

Chair and Programme Secretary:

Jane Kiely, Tel: 01822 834964 janekielyintamarvalley@uwclub.net

Hon. Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Editor of Newsletter:

Dr Anthony Lewis calewis@plymouth.ac.uk

Hon. Secretary:

Cliff Lambert

Hon. Editor, *Tamar*:

Clive Charlton, Tel: 01822 840497 ccharlton@plymouth.ac.uk

Committee Members:

John Chilvers, Peter Hunkin,