

Tamar

Journal of the Friends of the Tamar Valley
Number 41- 2019



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Number 41 – 2019**

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Cover photo: the Tamar at Calstock Viaduct, 27th October 2019
Clive Charlton

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EDITORIAL

This edition opens with a meticulously-researched and -referenced article by Stephen Docksey, which completes his detailed, knowledgeable interpretation of the 16th century map of Calstock manor – here, with a focus on a dovecote near Calstock and three mills on the Morden stream to the west of Cotehele.

Over the years, ‘Tamar’ has perhaps neglected the upper reaches of the river and its tributaries. It is therefore very pleasing to begin to redress this neglect with an account by Alan and Rosie Beat about the history and restoration of their watermill up at Bridgerule. Over many years, they have successfully brought this fascinating industrial site back to life. *(Note: there is scope for research on the wider history of watermills on the Tamar system – any volunteers?)*

Jill Lane links Calstock with Spain in her absorbing article on Thomas Down and Tharsis. The name ‘Tharsis’ was shared by this locally born mine manager’s house in Calstock and the mines where he worked in far southwestern Spain. Thomas Down’s story is a reminder of the many linkages between the Tamar Valley and the wider world, not least through the metal-mining industry.

Lesley Strong of the Tamar Valley AONB brings us up to date about the on-going research on the celebrated daffodil heritage in the Tamar Valley, including the ‘Heralds of Spring’ project.

Once again, thanks to Helen Wilson for kindly supplying some images from her collection of historic postcards of the Tamar and its tributaries. I have taken the liberty of using two of them as the basis of a short article on the historic Horsebridge and have also supplied short annotations for more of Helen’s postcard photos.

As a reminder that the Tamar Valley is still a very lively place in the 21st century, our chair Jane Kiely has provided an account of the successful and enjoyable Calstock Heritage Weekend in July.

I have included edited extracts of ‘Picturesque Excursions’ in the lower part of the Tamar and Tavy valleys, written enthusiastically in 1804 by T.H.Williams. While places such as St.Budeaux and King’s Tamerton

are now Plymouth suburbs, they were idyllic rural retreats at the start of the 19th century.

Finally, many thanks to Helen Wilson for supplying her superb summaries of the Friends' meetings and excursions in 2018. They are excellent records of our events – and also provide much interesting information in their own right.

In putting together this 41st edition (a surprisingly lengthy task!), I am very aware that there are some differences in terms of the extent and style of referencing and presentation of figures. I hope readers will tolerate this diversity!

Last but not least – **my very grateful thanks to all the contributors to 'Tamar 2019'**. We are absolutely dependent on the enthusiasm and generosity of our authors. If any reader feels able to write an article for inclusion in the 2020 edition, that would be greatly appreciated!

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The ruins of Thomas Westlake's Rumleigh Brickwork son the Bere Peninsula, seen across the Tamar from Okel Tor. It operated from 1879 until the First World War, supplying bricks for the expansion of Plymouth-Devonport in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The tall stack was badly damaged by a lightning strike. Trees now mask much of this view.

Archives; the Public Record Office / Duchy of Cornwall Office references are those that appear on the transcriptions.

In this concluding article, I will be discussing ‘*the Dove howse*’, shown to the west of ‘*Calstock towne*’, the ‘*Morden Mylles*’ and ‘*bonds myll*’, all three mills powered by ‘*Merden lake*’, and their connections with the Edgumbes at the suggested date of the map.

The right to possess a dovecote was a manorial perquisite. Dovecotes ‘*were originally confined to the demesne lands of manorial lords and monasteries*’; demesne land is defined as: ‘*Land on a manor that was reserved for the lord’s own use, as distinct from land held by tenants*’.⁴

The income from the manor would go to support the current lord, and the right to a dovecote, for which a non-resident lord might have no use, could be leased off. At this point, a summary of the history of Calstock manor is appropriate. In 1066, the Saxon lord, Esger, was dispossessed and his manor given to Robert, Count of Mortain, the Conqueror’s half-brother.⁵ Robert settled the manor on one of his knights, Reginald de Valletort; Reginald held several manors and his seat was at Trematon. In 1269/70, Roger de Valletort disposed of the manor to Richard, Earl of Cornwall, brother of Henry III. On the death of Richard’s childless successor in 1300, the manor reverted to the Crown. In 1337, the manor was included in the Duchy of Cornwall.⁶ From 1066 until 1798, when the manor was sold by the Duchy to the Footes of Harewood, the lord of the manor was non-resident.⁷ At the suggested date of the mid-sixteenth

⁴ *The Oxford Companion to Family and Local History*, edited by Professor David Hey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) pp.363, 353.

⁵ *Domesday Book*, ed. Dr Ann Williams and Professor G.H.Martin (London: Penguin Books, 2002) p.347.

⁶ Calstock Parish Archive Trust (CPAT), 1695, *The Captain of Seisin of the Duchy of Cornwall*, ed. P.L.Hull (Exeter: Devon and Cornwall Record Society, vol 17, 1971).

⁷ CPAT, 1752, *Contract for sale of Manor of Calstocke to John Foote* (1798).

century map, there was no male heir to the throne, so the Duchy had reverted to the Crown.

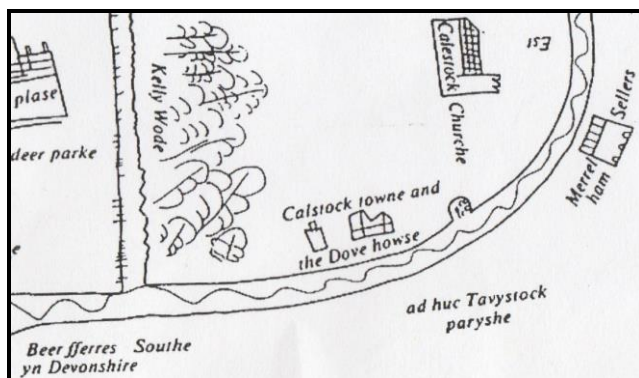


Fig.2

What do the manor records tell us about ‘the Dove howse’ (Fig.2)? The manor assessions were normally recorded every seven years; they have not all survived, and on occasion, the manor might be leased out, resulting in no Duchy assession record. The assessions record the manorial tenants, the land they held of the manor, rent payable and service due. The Calstock ‘Dove howse’ first appears in the manor assessions in 1500 when ‘*Petrus Egecomb knight held in the same place (Calstock) one dovecote. And water of Calstock. And he rendered from there every year 4s paying in the last assession no more than 3s 4d*’, suggesting he may have held the dovecote previously⁸. Piers (1469/70-1539) was still in possession in 1506 and 1528⁹. In 1556, ‘*Ricardus Edgecombe, knight (c1497-1562), holds one dovecote and the fishing of the water of Calistock. To be paid annually from there 4s. Which the lady Katherina Edgecombe*’ (Piers’ second wife) ‘*held at the last assession*’¹⁰. In 1563, ‘*the aforesaid Petrus Edgecombe, armiger (1535-1608) took one dovecote and fishery of water from Calstock which*

⁸ CPAT, 2382 (DCO 482) *Manor assession roll, 1500.*

⁹ CPAT, 2383 (DCO 482) *Manor assession roll, 1506*; CPAT, 2384 (DCO 496) *Manor assession roll, 1528.*

¹⁰ CPAT, 2385 (PRO E315/4/6) *Manor assession roll, 1556.*

Ricardus Edgcombe took in the last assession’; Piers continued to hold the dovecote in 1577 and 1584¹¹. In the assession of 1618, ‘*Richard Edgcombe, knight (1565-1639), by the surrender from Peter Edgcombe, knight, took a dovecote and fishery. Which Peter Edgcombe, knight, took at the last assession*’¹². In 1654, ‘*Peirce Edgcombe esq (1610-1667), took one dovehouse and fishing. Which Peirce Edgcombe esq, by the surrender of Sir Richard Edgcombe, knight, took in the last assession...*’¹³. Curiously, in the Parliamentary Survey of the Duchy of Cornwall of 1650, Anthony Barlett and Nicholas Adams are given as the manor tenants of ‘*one pigeon house with the fishing of Tamar*’¹⁴. The rent, which included the fishing rights, remained at 4s throughout.

The dovecote at Cotehele does not appear on the map. The de Coteheles and their successors the Edgcumbes were free tenants of the manor. Would this status give them the right to set up their own dovecote on their holding or might further study of Duchy and manorial records show the grant of such a right? The listing of the Cotehele dovecote reads: ‘*Probably late 16th century – early 17th century*’¹⁵. In view of the Edgcumbes’ holding of the Calstock dovecote on manor land, questions arise as to the need for a dovecote at Cotehele and its date. The licence for the deer park in 1515 would result in less arable land on the Cotehele estate and less foraging for the pigeons; abandonment of the deer park in

¹¹ CPAT, 2378 *Manor assession roll*, 1563; CPAT, 2386 (PRO E306/3/3). *Manor assession roll*, 1577; CPAT, 2191 (PRO E306/3/5) *Manor assession roll*, 1584.

¹² CPAT, 2198 (PRO E306/4/4) *Manor assession roll*, 1618.

¹³ CPAT, 2602 (DCO B1/4) *Manor assession roll*, 1654.

¹⁴ CPAT, 2200, *The Parliamentary Survey of the Duchy of Cornwall*, ed. N.J.G. Pounds, Devon and Cornwall Record Society, vol. 25 (Exeter: Devon and Cornwall Record Society, 1982).

¹⁵ Eric Berry, James Gossip, Joanna Mattingley and Nigel Thomas, *Cotehele House, Calstock, Cornwall: Historic Building Analysis* (Truro: Cornwall County Council, 2004) p.129.

the 1630s and the division of the park into arable fields might result in the building of the Cotehele dovecote¹⁶.

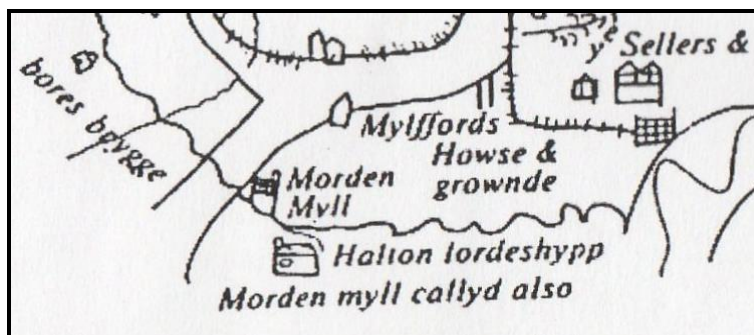


Fig.3

Two ‘Morden Mylles’ appear on the map, on either side of ‘Merden Lake’ (Fig.3). The map indicates that the topographical name Morden applies to both sides of the stream, the present Morden Farm standing in St.Dominick parish, to the south of the stream. The mill on the right bank of ‘Merden lake’ is shown as being in ‘Halton lordeshypp’, Halton being a manor in St.Dominick parish. On William Doidge’s estate map of 1731, the land on the right bank is shown as ‘joyning to Esqr Scawens land’¹⁷. The description of this mill as ‘Morden myll callyd also’ does not indicate an alternative name but that this mill is also called Morden Mill.

This mill need no longer concern us, being outside Calstock manor and the Edgcumbe holdings; when the Edgcumbes acquired this part of Halton manor is uncertain – Martin Watts records that St.Dominick

¹⁶ Licence to empark, June 30, 1515, CRO ME682. Peter Herring and Bryn Tapper, *A Report for the National Trust, Cotehele, Cornwall: Historical and archaeological scoping survey and historic landscape characterisation* (unpublished, Truro: Cornwall County Council, 2006) p.32.

¹⁷ William Doidge, *A Plan of the Barton of Cotele...Surveyed MDCCXXXI*, CRO ME 2371, CPAT 7762.

historian Ann Murphy told him that the purchase was in 1778, but provides no reference¹⁸.

The application of the name Morden to both sides of the stream at ‘bores brygge’ means that we have to distinguish between the two manors, Halton and Calstock, when discussing any reference to Morden. The name ‘*probably comes from... ‘mor tun’, meaning the farm in the marsh*’¹⁹.

The earliest reference to a mill in Calstock manor occurs in 1287/8 when one corn and one fulling mill are recorded, let out at 8d²⁰; the fulling mill was part of the woollen cloth industry, ‘*a mill in which woven cloth is scoured and beaten to felt the fibres together*’²¹. A rent of 6d had to be paid to the lord of Halton manor for the millstream, indicating that the mills were on the Morden stream. In 1296, there is a definite reference to Morden: ‘*In rent paid at Mauton for watermill 6d. And 49s from the farm of the two mills, corn and fulling...*’, 6d representing the payment to Halton manor for the water²². In 1337, at the time of the founding of the Duchy, ‘*William de Horawode*’ held ‘*1 water mill for corn and 1 fulling mill. Rent £4 15s 8d*’²³.

The first record of the Edgcumbes’ formal involvement with the corn mill occurs in the assessions of 1500 when: ‘*The aforesaid Petrus Egecomb Knight took one corn mill which Johannes Bound previously held*’; the rent was 26s 8d. All the tenants of Calstock manor took the

¹⁸ Martin Watts, *Cotehele Mill, Cotehele Estate, Cornwall: Historic Building recording for the National Trust* (Cullompton: Martin Watts, Project No.40/2008) p.37.

¹⁹ Patrick Coleman, *The Place Names of Calstock Parish* (Calstock: Patrick Coleman, 1996).

²⁰ CPAT, 3602 (PRO SC6 816/9) *Ministers’ accounts*, 1287/8 (?).

²¹ Martin Watts, *Watermills* (Oxford: Shire Publications Ltd, 2006) p.52.

²² CPAT, 3603, *Ministers’ accounts of the Earldom of Cornwall*, 1296/7, ed. L.M.Midgley (Camden Society, 3rd series, vol. LXVIII, 1945) pp. 242-3.

²³ Op.cit. in footnote 6.

fulling mill.²⁴ Piers held the corn mill in 1506 and 1528, all the tenants still holding the fulling mill.²⁵ Piers' son Richard held both mills in 1556, though the manuscript is damaged²⁶. His son Piers held both mills in 1563²⁷.

In the Henderson papers held by the Royal Institution of Cornwall, the noted Cornish historian Charles Henderson gives a reference to the Mount Edgcombe archive before its partial destruction in 1941, dating to 1533: '*Sir Pers Eggecombe knight and Dame Katernyn his wife to John Milford. Lease of corn mill called Mourton mill in the manor and Parish of Calstock*', confirming that the Edgcombes held the mill at that date and the name of the tenant and, presumably, the miller²⁸.

One of the problems when consulting the manor records is that these mills are not always named as Morden mills. In 1356, for instance, '*Willielmus de Lonehille and Martinus Pellon took the corn mill of Calstok*'²⁹. In the assessions of 1556, both corn and fulling mill are listed under '*Mederhill*' (Metherell, the largest settlement in the parish) and '*Mederhill*' recurs in 1577. 1584 and 1598³⁰. As late as 1639, there is a reference in Duchy records to '*certain mills called Mederhill Mills alias Morden Mills within the manor of Calistoke*'³¹. By a process of deduction, all these references apply to the mills first recorded in 1287/8.

As well as the mill, another property appears under the name of Morden Mill in the manor assessions. The first clear reference to this holding occurs in 1500 when: '*Robertus Webbe and Edwardus Herry holds from*

²⁴ Op.cit. in footnote 8.

²⁵ Op.cit. in footnote 9.

²⁶ Op.cit. in footnote 10.

²⁷ Op.cit. in footnote 11.

²⁸ CPAT, 2992, Charles Henderson MSS, Royal Institution of Cornwall, Truro, CAL25 f22.

²⁹ CPAT, 1810 (PRO E306 2/1) *Manor assession roll*, 1356.

³⁰ Op.cit. in footnotes 10 and 11; CPAT, 2194 (PRO E306 4/2) *Manor assession roll*, 1598.

³¹ CPAT, 1759, *Acts of the Duchy Council*, 1639.

the Lord one messuage (a dwelling house) and one furlong of land at Morden myll formerly of Juliane who was the wife of Walterus Robyn...'³². It would be possible to trace this holding back through the manor records by following the tenants. The same holding appears in 1506 as 'Mordon myll' and again in 1528 as 'Morden Mille'³³. By 1563, the Morden mill holding had passed to the Edgcumbes: '*The same Petrus Edgcomb and Andreas Harris son and heir of Edwardus Harrys holds from the Lady Queen one messuage and one furlong of land Cornish at Mordonmill...*'³⁴. The assession roll for 1556 is damaged and incomplete. The Morden Mill property is held solely by 'Petrus Edgcomb esquire' in the assession of 1577³⁵. We know that the corn mill itself was sub-let to John Milford in 1533. Was the Morden Mill house and land also sublet to him, accounting for *Myllfords Howse & grownde* on the mid-sixteenth century map?

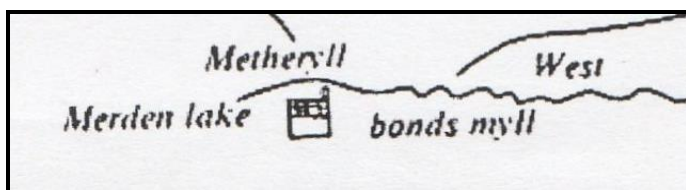


Fig.4

Further up 'Morden lake' is the third mill powered by the stream, 'bonds myll' (Fig.4). The manor assessions for 1500 record: '*The aforesaid Rogerus Bounde native took 2 mills from the beginning of construction above the water in a place called Glamarigan evidently one watermill and another Blowyngmyll Renderring from there every year 12d*'³⁶. Hatcher gives an earlier reference to these mills; in 1463, Roger Bond was granted a licence to construct two mills on 'Glamaryn water' in

³² Op.cit. in footnote 8.

³³ Op.cit. in footnote 9.

³⁴ Op.cit. in footnote 11.

³⁵ Op.cit. in footnote 11.

³⁶ Op.cit. in footnote 8.

Calstock manor and to maintain them at his own expense³⁷. In 1506, ‘*John Bounde freeman took two mills lately reconstructed anew by him upon the water there called Glamarigan, that is to say, one Corn and the other a ‘Blowing myle’*’³⁸. By 1556, ‘*Willielmus Bonnde*’ was in possession, the rent having risen to 16d – ‘*Which the same Willielmus took at the last assession*’³⁹.

The blowing mill was for the smelting of tin ore which had been eroded from the parent lode over geological time and accumulated in valley bottoms and depressions; such ore had become detached from the rock in which it had been embedded in the lode and could be taken straight to a smelter without the need to crush it. The smelting furnace would require a waterwheel to power bellows.

Only in the assession rolls of 1563 are two mills recorded for the stamping of tin ore, at ‘*Harebere*’ (Harrowbarrow) and ‘*Goliatche Parke*’ (Newbridge), indicating that tin ore was having to be crushed to release it from the rock of the lode and was thus being mined⁴⁰.

It is not until the assession roll of 1618 that ‘*2 newly built mills on the water called Glamarigan, that is a corn mill and the other a blowing mill*’ are recorded as being held by ‘*Richard Edgcombe, gentleman*’ as a tenant of the manor⁴¹. What interest in these mills the Edgcumbes had at the suggested date of the mid-sixteenth century map is not, as yet, known, but it may relate to Richard’s great-grandfather Piers’ involvement as an adventurer in tinworking in the parish, to which Glyn Howells alluded in his article in Volume 8 of *Cotehele Journal*⁴².

³⁷ John Hatcher, *Rural Economy and Society in the Duchy of Cornwall, 1300-1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970) p.161 (DCO 64).

³⁸ Op.cit. in footnote 9.

³⁹ Op.cit. in footnote 10.

⁴⁰ Op.cit. in footnote 11.

⁴¹ Op.cit. in footnote 12.

⁴² Gwyn Howells, *Two 16th century Edgcumbes* (Cotehele: Cotehele Journal, vol.8, 2016)halton , p.33.

Glamorgan Mill is the present name and the building is quite clearly in Calstock parish. The mid-sixteenth century map places it to the west of ‘Merden lake’, in St.Dominick parish and outside Calstock manor; one must interpret this as a cartographic error.

I drew attention in my previous article to the inscription on the map of ‘bores brygge’ (see Fig.3) possibly referring to a building shown on the St.Dominick bank, outside the Duchy manor and in Halton manor;⁴³ A Duchy manor court roll of 1542 records: ‘*To this court came lady Katerina Eggecomb widow, and took from the lord prince one piece of waste land called Borysbrygge, to hold to her and her heirs...for the annual rent of 6s 8d*’⁴⁴. Does the building indicate that this holding, the placing of the property outside Calstock manor being another cartographic error?

If we accept William Ravenhill’s suggestion that the map dates from the period 1553-1560, who, with an interest in Cotehele in particular and Calstock manor and parish in general, is likely to have commissioned it at that time?⁴⁵ Piers Edgcumbe died in August 1539, and his son Richard in February 1562. But Piers’ second wife, and Richard’s stepmother, did not die until December 1553. At the time of her marriage to Piers, she had been granted Piers’ land in Calstock as her jointure and she continued to live at Cotehele until her death.⁴⁶

During her widowhood, documentary evidence suggests that Richard was living at Stonehouse, his mother’s old home.⁴⁷ The Cotehele building analysis indicates there were major works at Cotehele in the mid-sixteenth century, the first campaign relating to the 1550s; this

⁴³ Stephen Docksey, *Now you see it, now you don’t: The plottes of Morden Mylles, Cuttell* (Cotehele: Cotehele Journal, vol.8, 2016) p.19.

⁴⁴ CPAT, 1739 (PRO SC2 158/14) Manor court rolls, 1542.

⁴⁵ Op.cit. in footnote 1, p.171.

⁴⁶ Alan Taylor, *The Family and Social Network of Sir Piers Edgcumbe (1469/70-1539)* (Cotehele: Cotehele Journal, vol.1, 2009) p.15.

⁴⁷ Op.cit. in footnote 15, p.21.

campaign involved raising the roof of three ranges and a renewal of doors and windows, work unlikely to be undertaken while Catherine was still resident.⁴⁸ The suggestion is that Richard's renewed interest in Cotehele and its estate and holdings in the manor dates from post-1553, which might account for the commissioning of the map.

My second article drew attention to connections between the Edgcumbes and several topographical features on the map within the manor but outside the bounds of the free tenement of Cotehele.⁴⁹ To establish those connections, I have mainly followed the manor assession rolls, with occasional references to other manor documents. When studying the earlier history of Cotehele, there has been a tendency to ignore the fact that Cotehele was a free tenement within the manor of Calstock, not a manor in its own right. As indicated in my previous article and in this, the Edgcumbes held other property in the manor, mainly as conventional tenants, *'a system of tenure peculiar to Cornwall and parts of Devon, by which tenants obtained a seven-year lease at a negotiated rent, with no automatic right of renewal.'*⁵⁰ The surviving manor documents are a rich source of information concerning the Edgcumbes and their dealings with the Duchy.

⁴⁸ Op.cit. in footnote 15, p.22.

⁴⁹ Op.cit. in footnote 43, p.16.

⁵⁰ Op.cit. in footnote 4, p.338.

Bridge Mill, Bridgerule: History and Revival

Alan and Rosie Beat



Fig.1 Overshot waterwheel bridge Mill, Bridgerule⁵¹

A charter of AD 762 contains the earliest documented reference to a watermill in England (at Cert near Dover). By the time of the Norman invasion, watermills were in widespread use over much of the country and the Domesday survey of 1086 lists over 5000 of them. There were however surprisingly few in Devon, and most of these lay in the east of the county. West of the river Exe only 18 mills are recorded for the remainder of Devon, and only 6 for the whole of Cornwall. This is remarkable in a region so rich in flowing water, suggesting that the technology of water milling was spreading across England from east to west, and was only just starting to penetrate the Southwest Peninsula at that time.

⁵¹ Source: Mills Archive, item SWAT-009 'Overshot waterwheel at Bridge Mill, Bridgerule', <https://catalogue.millsarchive.org/overshot-waterwheel-at-bridge-mill-bridgerule>

Only 4 mills were recorded on the river Tamar by the Domesday survey; one of these was at 'Brige' (now Bridgerule): '*a mill which pays 4 shillings*'. Frawin (the Saxon lord) held the manor before 1066, but it passed to the Norman knight Roald along with other local manors in return for his part in the conquest.

2 Roald holds BRIDGERULE himself. Frawin held it before 1066. It paid tax for 1½ virgates of land. Land for 8 ploughs. In lordship 2 ploughs; 3 slaves; ¼ virgate. 14 villagers and 8 smallholders with 6 ploughs and 1 virgate. A mill which pays 4s; meadow 7 furlongs long and 2 furlongs wide; pasture 1 league long and ½ league wide. 5 cattle; 6 pigs; 68 sheep. Value formerly and now 50s.

Fig.2 Extract from Domesday Book for Bridgerule⁵²

It is not uncommon for a Domesday site to remain in continuous use for milling right through to the twentieth century. A carefully chosen site had the best position available in the locality, and throughout most of the intervening centuries the 'soke rights' required all corn grown in the manor to be ground at the manorial mill, thus preventing competition. It is therefore fairly certain that waterpower has ground corn at Bridgerule for more than 900 years. Naturally the buildings and machinery would have decayed and been replaced a number of times over that period.

The parish of 'Brige' became known as 'Bridgeroald' after its Norman lord (Roald), then by corruption through 'Bridgeruell' and other variants to Bridgerule by the time of Risdon's survey of Devon around 1640 '*where the Tamer's stream is so sturdy as it cannot be passed without a bridge, which was the original of the primitive name of this place*'. The river then formed the boundary between Devon and Cornwall; Polwhele records in 1797 a bridge '*each county repairing one arch*'⁵³, so the river at that time must have been a more substantial watercourse than we see today.

⁵² Extract from Caroline and Frank Thorn, *Domesday Book: Devon, Part One*, Phillimore, Chichester, 1985.

⁵³ Richard Polwele, *The History of Devonshire*, Exeter, 1797.

After the Domesday survey of 1086, the next reference to Bridgerule Mill can be found in the records of Launceston Priory⁵⁴. Cartulary no.437⁵⁵ refers to a gift, grant and confirmation by Ralph de Dune, lord of Bridgerule to the Priory '*with the assent of Thomas, his father, and for the salvation of his soul and those of his ancestors and successors*' of a moiety of his mill (a moiety was a part, commonly a half-share). The canons were to find contribute to the maintenance of the mill. The donor promised not to erect any other mill in the vicinity to the harm of the mill. However, if they did erect another mill in a better place it would be at common cost and there would be mutual sharing of the profits. The document was witnessed by Ralph, archdeacon of Barnstaple; it is undated, but an archdeacon of that name held office from 1119.

Cartulary no.443 contains a note by Paschasius, Lord of Doune and Bridgerule confirming that Adam, prior of the monastery of St Stephens of Launceston and the convent there, had held and continued to hold '*a moiety of the profit and multure*' of the mill of Bridgerule '*in free, pure and perpetual alms*' by the charters of his ancestors⁵⁶. Adam and his successors were excluded from '*homage and fealty and suit of court*' to the manor of Bridgerule, but they were bound to provide timber for the mill. Again, the document is undated, but it falls within the period 1183 – 1202.

After this, there is a long gap in the record; little detail is known until the late eighteenth century. By then the mill and much of Bridgerule parish belonged to the Molesworth family of Pencarrow, Cornwall, and it remained as part of the Molesworth estate until 1920, when the Bridgerule lands were sold to pay death duties. Thus, throughout most of the mill's long history the miller was a tenant of the controlling landowner.

⁵⁴ Thanks are due to Jim Edwards of Launceston for the original research that uncovered this information.

⁵⁵ The cartularies of the priory of Launceston record information about aspects of the Priory's operations and transactions relating to its many properties in the area.

⁵⁶ 'Multure' was the toll paid to the miller for grinding, usually one sixteenth part of the resulting meal or flour.

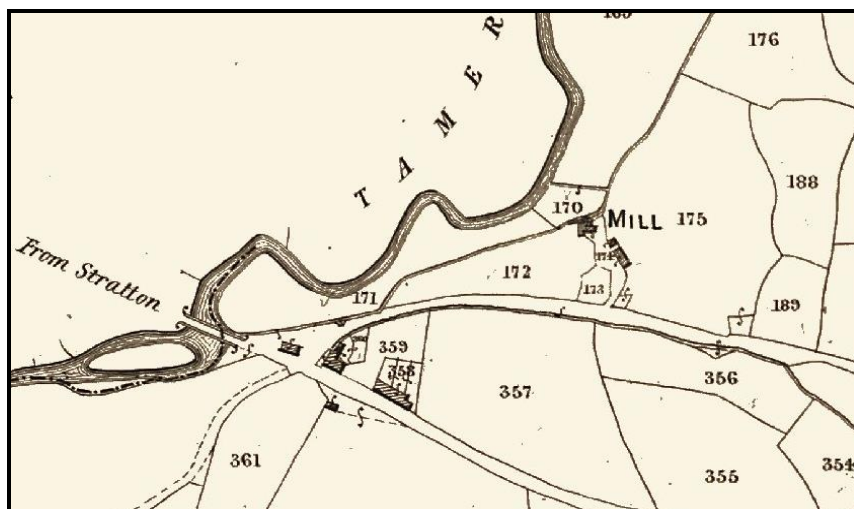


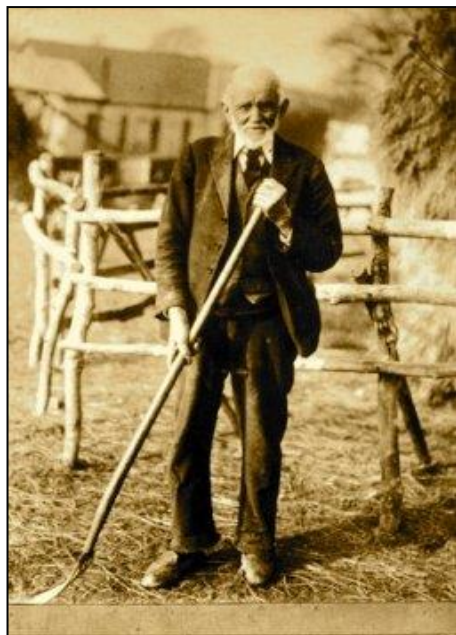
Fig.3 Extract from Tithe Apportionment Map, 1842.⁵⁷

The Tithe Map of 1842 (Fig.3, above) shows the layout of the mill, watercourses and field boundaries much as they are today; the Tithe Apportionment of that date records John Rogers as tenant of the Mill house, together with 6 acres of land. The 1851 census tells us a little more about him. He was then 56 years old, married to Mary, 48, with 6 children ranging from 3 to 23 years old. Both he and his eldest son William are recorded as millers, while a 12-year-old servant, Richard Pakeman, was a 'loading boy'. This implies a thriving family business.

The Rogers remained as tenants through three generations. William had succeeded his father by 1871, living there with his wife, three children and a 16-year-old servant, Francis Trim. The present mill was constructed around this time to replace an earlier building.

⁵⁷ Extract from Devon County Council, *Tithe Apportionment map for East Bridgerule parish*: www.devon.gov.uk/historicenvironment/tithe-map/east-bridgerule-1/

The stonemason was William Vinnicombe, a local craftsman who built several other notable buildings within the parish such as the school and part of the rectory (now Glebe House). The stone used may have come from the nearby quarry below Churchtown hill and adjacent to the Bridge Mill land. Fig.4 (right) shows William Vinnicombe, aged 90.



Originally there were two external waterwheels of about 8½ feet diameter by 4½ feet wide, made of cast iron with wooden buckets. Each wheel drove a set of grindstones within the building, one for flour, the other for animal feed. The larger internal gearwheels were cast iron with individual wooden teeth, running against smaller gears of solid cast iron; this gave smooth running plus the facility to replace a broken tooth easily.

The 1871 census records William Rogers at 53 years old as '*miller and farmer of 60 acres, employs 1 labourer*'. His youngest son Henry took over as miller around 1889 and was still listed in Kelly's directory of 1897 as '*Henry Rogers, miller (water)*', but by the turn of the century the long tenancy of the Rogers family had come to an end.

Fred Brock took over the tenancy and continued as miller until his death in 1918, when his son Francis succeeded him for two more years before the mill was sold in 1920. By this time the Brocks were renting about 100 acres of farmland from the Molesworth estate plus additional land from neighbouring farms, so clearly the milling business had gradually declined and been supplemented by farming. The Brock family is still represented in the village today.

This pattern of decline was typical of watermills around this period. Cheap imports of grain from the USA arrived in increasing quantities from 1870 onwards; these were hard winter wheats, difficult to grind finely between stones, but well-suited to the steel roller mills which were being introduced around the same time. The resulting finer, whiter flour became very popular very quickly. Large roller mills were built at ports to process the imported grain, producing flour that old-established inland mills struggled to compete against. Many converted to grinding grist (animal feed) alongside flour to survive, then developed into grist-only mills, to finally close as uneconomic in the early part of the twentieth century.

Bridgerule Mill was finally sold into private ownership in 1920, along with 16 acres of land, for £1,200. The purchaser was John Honey, a man whose roots in the parish could be traced back for at least three centuries. The parish register records for 21st July 1660 a son born to Samuel and Mary Honey, and throughout the intervening years the surname appears time and again on documents relating to the village. The family is still well represented locally today, so John Honey was truly a local man.

John worked the mill by waterpower until the late 1940's, grinding the grain of local farmers into grist for feeding their own livestock. A few older villagers remember riding to the mill as boys on their father's horse and cart once a week, unloading grain and collecting the grist produced from last week's delivery. The steady rumble of machinery, water pouring over the wheel, a horse and cart turning in the cobbled yard - a busy place in a quiet rural setting. John is well remembered as a good-humoured and practical man, turning his hand to many skills in the course of his work. He used the waterpower to drive a wood-turning lathe, a saw-bench, a grindstone for sharpening tools, and a pump to raise river water to a storage tank on the top floor of the mill, feeding by gravity from there to the outbuildings around the yard.



Fig.5 Old postcard of Honey's Mill, Bridgerule (authors' collection).

The leat required a good deal of cleaning out and maintenance to keep the water flowing through from the river to the mill; no doubt this was a major factor in John Honey's decision around 1947 to abandon the use of waterpower. A 3~phase electric motor was installed to power the mill through a flat belt drive, but in 1952 John suffered a serious accident with this belt, losing one leg as a result. Disabled and growing older, he was persuaded to sell the water wheels and some of the internal drive gear for scrap around 1955. He died in 1959.

For several more years, relatives of John Honey worked the mill occasionally to grind their own grain, using a tractor with flat belt drive through the open doorway of the workshop. This finally came to an end in 1968, although the Mill was owned by the Honey family, we came in 1987, with the intention of restoring the buildings and land into a viable smallholding, and the distant dream of restoring the mill to waterpower. With a young family to raise there were naturally other priorities, but little by little work began on conserving the mill waterways, building and machinery.

For several years we searched for a suitable old wheel to re-home, but the relatively small diameter of eight feet made this a rather forlorn hope, and eventually we accepted that a new one would need to be purpose-made, along with a pair of large bevel gears (pit wheel and wallower⁵⁸) that were also missing. A modest grant was obtained from the Countryside Stewardship scheme to support this work, as it complemented the educational visits we were developing for schools and adult groups to the smallholding. Having joined the Mills section of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), we opened on National Mills Day from 1997 onwards to raise funds for the restoration.

With a background in engineering, I was able to draw up my own designs informed by observations and measurements from other mills. A friend in the village had experience of pattern making and kindly offered his skills. Iron castings were made from his wooden patterns at a local foundry in Wadebridge, transported in the back of my estate car (!) and manhandled into position for assembly in situ. The foundry also cast replacement plain bronze bearings for the original steel axle. Wooden buckets were fashioned from boards of pressure-treated Douglas fir. The new water wheel turned successfully in the year 2000, but the bevel gears failed to mesh properly, so with some disappointment it was back to the drawing board.

After much research and several blind alleys, the wallower was redesigned and recast, then the teeth were accurately machined using computer control to obtain the correct pitch. With this new wallower in position, the corresponding oak teeth of the pit wheel could be hand fitted, wedged into place and finally profiled for smooth meshing. To correct inaccuracy and run-out of the pit wheel casting, I devised a method of profiling these teeth in situ using a router within a sliding fixture attached to the hurst frame⁵⁹, so that the teeth have accurate pitch and run true, although the casting does not. It took several hundred hours

⁵⁸ ‘The wallower is a small gear at the base of the upright shaft in a watermill, it is driven by the pit wheel’. See Wikipedia: Glossary of mill machinery. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_mill_machinery Accessed October 18, 2019.

⁵⁹ ‘An internal framework supporting the gears and millstones. This isolation prevents damage to the building from the vibrations of the workings, *ibid.*

work spread over two winters, within the cramped confines of a dark, damp wheel pit, to fit and profile one hundred teeth.

On 9th March 2012, the millstones turned by water power for the first time in 60 years.⁶⁰ I never anticipated it would take more than 20 years to achieve our dream, or that it would be so technically challenging, but we have had wonderful support and encouragement from the local community. An opening ceremony was held shortly afterwards. Guests included members of the Brock and Honey families as descendants from past millers, and local people who played a role in restoring the waterways, building and machinery. The guest of honour was Christine Parsons, former owner of the mill and niece of the last miller. She gave a short speech before cutting the ribbon to re-open the mill, then closed a trapdoor to send water pouring over the wheel and set the mill in motion.

The water supply once came from the nearby river Tamar but is now limited to a pond that stores natural drainage to power the wheel for short periods. Our intention has never been to grind commercially, but instead to demonstrate a process that was central to village life for a

In its 21st century guise, Bridge Mill hosts group visits and workshops for schools, special needs, family groups and other groups. School visits to the mill, barns and adjacent smallholding are fun, ‘hands-on’ and fit in with the curriculum, including various historical themes and periods, technology (including design and testing of levers, pulleys, gears and waterwheels), art (sketching and digital photography), literacy (including colloquial expressions and stories), and nature studies.

Bridge Mill also includes a smallholding of 16 acres, which is farmed along traditional lines without use of chemicals. There are organic gardens, growing fruit and vegetables, herbs and dye plants (used to colour the white fleeces from the sheep). The Mill also has 600 yards of Tamar river frontage, three ponds and some Culm grassland. The farm

⁶⁰ Videos of this event can be seen at:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=MWkJ9XHJfdE and
www.youtube.com/watch?v=-8NkvsG_HxQ.

hosts breeding birds, amphibians and dragonflies, and kingfishers, herons and otter are regular visitors.

The mill is also normally open during the National Mills Weekend (the second weekend in May), which is organised by SPAB (Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings) Wind and Watermill section.

Note: *National Mills Day 2020 is on Sunday 10th May 2020. Bridgerule Mill will be open from 11am until 4pm, grinding flour all day by waterpower and with a range of other attractions including Morris dancing, plant sale and refreshments. Details and directions on: www.thebridgemill.org.uk/thebridgemill/Home.html The mill will also be open under the National Garden Scheme on Sunday 31st May 2020 from 11am until 5pm, with plant sale and refreshments.*

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A brief nautical diversion on the Tamar...



'Southern Belle' at Calstock, late 1970s – photo: Clive Charlton

The 'Southern Belle' of the Millbrook Steamboat Company was a much-loved and long-lived pleasure boat on the Tamar. She was originally the steam-powered 'Shuttlecock', launched in 1925. She was later fitted with a diesel engine and renamed. She left the Tamar in 2000 and was last heard of operating from Great Yarmouth in 2011 (any update on her?).

Thomas Down, Tharsis Villa and Tharsis Mine

Jill Lane

Tharsis Villa overlooks Calstock from an imposing site overlooking the Tamar, although construction of Calstock viaduct and the railway line and station encroached on its land. The Cornish Gardens Society regards the garden of the house as an important example of a ‘gentleman’s smallholding’.

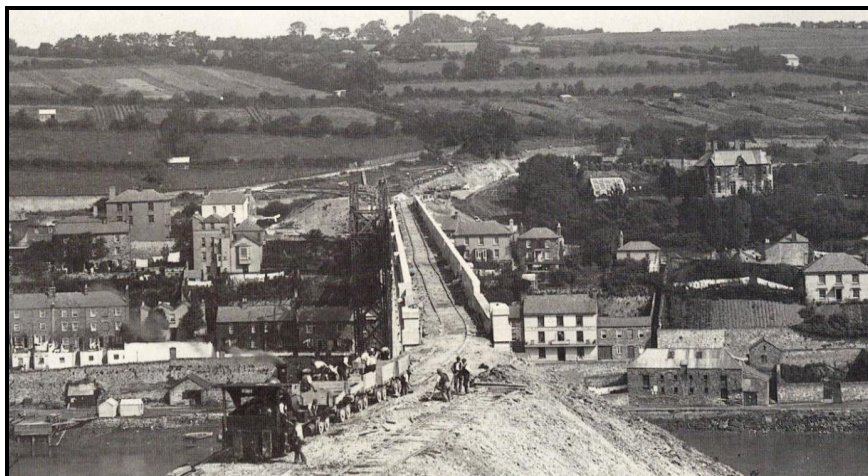


Fig.1 Tharsis Villa is the prominent house in its own grounds, situated in the upper right quadrant of the photograph, which shows Calstock Viaduct in its final stages of construction.

The house was built around 1870 and the first resident was Thomas Down, who was born in Calstock and became an assayer and smelter. He died on 23 September 1879, aged 64, and his will mentions his properties in Calstock and his shares and bonds in Tharsis Copper and Sulphur Company as part of his estate.

His widow Anne lived there until her death in 1890, and then their surviving son Thomas let the house, before putting it and the other properties up for auction in 1897. Few sold under the hammer but were later sold to local businessmen Samuel Worth and James Henry Reed.

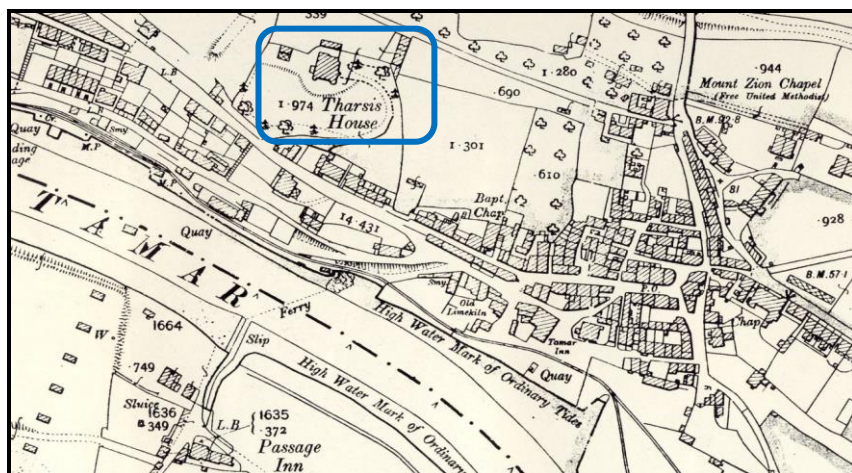


Fig 2 Tharsis on 1906 6-inch O.S. map, before completion of Calstock Viaduct.

Tharsis Villa was evidently sold to James Walter Lawry (1830-1931) who was living there in 1901. He came from St Dominic and had established the strawberry-growing industry in the Tamar Valley. He and his wife had six children. Their youngest son was killed on the Somme in 1915 - there is a memorial to him on the staircase. The house passed to the Lawry's daughter Charlotte, who was married to Thomas Hicks, and after the death of their son T. A. L. S. Hicks in 1992, the family sold the property.

Thomas Down (1815-1879) was the eldest of the eight children of Thomas Down, mason, and his wife Jane. His brother Joel (1821-1898) lived in Calstock all his life and worked as a builder, while Joel's son Henry was also a successful builder, living for many years at Westfield House, Sandhill, Calstock. Both Henry and his sister Jane married into the Bowhay family of Albaston.

Another brother, Jonathan (1824-1880), left home in his 20s to become a lead smelter in Derbyshire, working at various mines and chemical works. As manager of the Alderley Edge mines in Cheshire around 1860, he worked with William Henderson, a Scottish chemist who had patented several chemical processes – one the 'wet process' for extracting copper from the ore using salt and water, the copper settling

out on scrap iron, and another to do with the preparation of sulphuric acid.

Several works were set up using Henderson's new wet process, one being the Staffordshire Copper Extracting Company. As soon as operations started in 1865, the local press carried complaints of pollution from the works and the company was taken to court. The first witness was manager Jonathan Down.

Sulphuric acid was used in many chemical processes, being made where it was needed because it is dangerously corrosive. The starting materials included sulphur and salt. Sulphur (brimstone) had come from Sicily, but in 1838, to protect the sulphur miners, a monopoly was granted to a French company and the price of sulphur more than trebled. Manufacturers then turned to pyrites (sulphur-rich ores of iron and copper) as their source of sulphur. Pyrites came from various sources but the Iberian Pyrites Belt, stretching from west of Seville into Portugal was the most promising.

After the Napoleonic wars and the loss of her South and Central American colonies from 1821, Spain was a poor country with many internal political factions. The mines in the south of the country had been worked in Roman times, or even earlier, and some were in production but there were no resources for further development.

In 1851 the Spanish government opened the mines to foreign investment. Numerous foreign companies took concessions in the lead mining area of Linares, where modern equipment was needed to take the mines deeper. Linares became a boom town. John Taylor and Company operated several very successful mines which they called their 'drops of comfort'. The company had been started by the same John Taylor who engineered the Tavistock Canal. The last mine in Linares closed in 1997 and a local project has stabilised some of the mine buildings, recording 47 mines and 34 engine houses and is hoping for World Mining Heritage status.



Fig.3 Location of mines within Spain

In 1853, a French engineer, Ernesto Deligny, was sent by a French entrepreneur to prospect the area of Tharsis in the Iberian Pyrites Belt, which had not been worked since Roman times. He took a number of concessions and persuaded his sponsor to provide capital to develop a copper mine at Tharsis. A manager was sent out to supervise his work, but because of financial difficulties and close supervision by Spanish inspectors, very little progress was made, and the initial capital was used up with no results.

Charles Tennant (1823-1906), whose grandfather had founded the St Rollox works near Glasgow – the largest chemical works in the world by the mid-19th century – recognised the need for sulphur and was aware of the difficulties of the French company at Tharsis. In 1866 he formed the Tharsis Copper and Sulphur Company, buying William Henderson's patents and making him a director. They leased the French company's concessions and operations in Spain and commenced building a 30-mile railway to the coast at Corrales, on the opposite side of the river from Huelva, which took three years. Because of the nature of the ore bodies in the volcanic rocks, opencast mining was used, being cheaper and more efficient.

Thomas Down seems to have been the manager of the Tharsis operation, and then became a consultant there until he became ill in 1878. Professor S. G. Checkland's book "The Mines of Tharsis" (1967), mentions Mr. Down three times. He was sent out from the Staffordshire Copper Extracting Company, where he had become expert in using Henderson's methods - evidently his brother Jonathan had passed on his expertise. However, Thomas Down and Henderson tried and failed to extract the minute quantities of silver and gold from the results of the processing for copper. Then in 1870, Thomas Down patented a process to use lime to remove traces of arsenic in the copper that remained after the use of the Henderson process.

At the 1873 AGM in Glasgow of the Tharsis Copper and Sulphur Company, Sir Charles Tennant gave a long and optimistic report of the activities in 1872. He quoted Thomas Down: "this statement of Mr. Down is probably a very safe one", and "Mr. Down thinks we should have no difficulty in doubling output". The meeting voted to pay a 40% dividend.

Thomas Down's 28-year-old son Lawrence died suddenly at Tharsis Mine in 1878. Thomas himself died on 23 September 1879 after being ill for about a year. His death certificate and will are in the Calstock Archive. The Cornish and Devon Post carried the following obituary on 27th September 1879:

"DEATH OF AN OLD INHABITANT.

This place has lost one of its oldest and most valued inhabitants the death of Mr. Thomas Down of Tharsis Villa, who died at 7.30 a.m. on Tuesday after a painful illness, which continued for about year. Mr. Down, who was a native of the place, was for many years the chief manager the Tharsis Copper Mines at Huelva, in Spain, and had employed under him about 3,000 men, who, with their families formed a town of considerable size. Since his return a few years ago, when he retired from active business engagements, he has gone occasionally to Spain to survey works, &c., at the request of the company, by whom his services were much valued. By his death the Baptist Church, of which was a deacon, has sustained a great loss; and his removal will much regretted by the parishioners, being Guardian & c. of the parish he

leaves wife and son. One of his sons, who was in Spain, died suddenly a short time since."

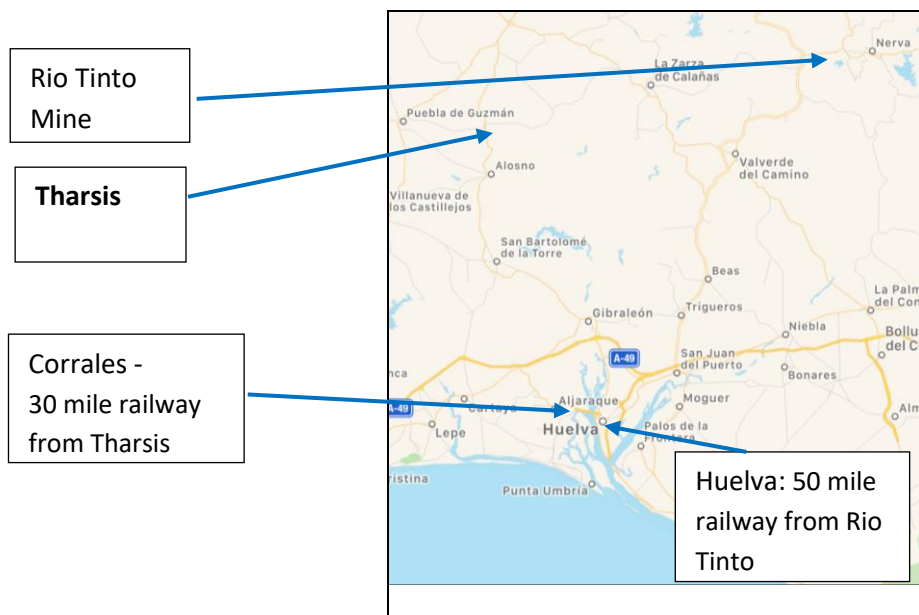


Fig.4 Location of Tharsis and Rio Tinto Mines, Southern Spain

The Tharsis Copper and Sulphur Company continued to work the mines for many years, until the company was absorbed into ICI in 1922. More recently, mining continued at Tharsis under Spanish control and management until its abrupt cessation in 1997.

The town of Tharsis is surrounded by remains of opencast mining, which ceased in 1997. The *Asociación Amigos de Tharsis* have recorded the history of the mine online (<http://amigosdetharsis.blogspot.com/>) and have a museum in the former hospital, which is open at weekends. European Union funding made the smallest opencast mine at the site accessible to the public but the railway to Huelva was dismantled following the insolvency of the mine.

Seeing the success of the Tharsis mining ventures, the Spanish government offered the royal mines at Rio Tinto to foreign investment in 1871, and the mainly British Rio Tinto company was set up in 1873,

building a 50-mile railway to Huelva. The region became one of the most important sources of copper and sulphur in the world. This opencast mining area, about 5 miles across, became the largest in the world, although the Rio Tinto company sold its Spanish interests to the Spanish government in 1954, during the Franco era.

The Rio Tinto mines also closed in 1997 but part of the area there has been developed for tourism. Members of the public can join a car convoy to visit the oldest opencast pit, and then take a train ride of several miles on the surviving part of the railway (it originally went 50 miles to Huelva). This trip passes through a desolate landscape of worked-out opencast mines with rusting railway engines and wagons, with stops so that the passengers can walk to the Rio Tinto river. The water is bright red and so acidic that nothing can live in it.

In the nineteenth century many thousands of Cornishmen travelled the mining areas of the world in search of work, giving rise to the saying that wherever you found a hole in the ground you would find a Cornishman at the bottom of it. In Thomas Down's case he seems to have been recruited as a smelter and assayer then became manager overseeing the beginning of digging some very large holes in the ground.



Fig.5 Tharsis mine buildings 2017 (author's photograph).

Celebrating our unique daffodil heritage
Lesley Strong, Project Officer, Tamar Valley AONB

During the spring, Tamar Valley hedgebanks and woodlands explode into a riot of colour as daffodils bloom, making a striking impact on the landscape. These are very special daffodils, representing the strong heritage and cultural legacy of the market gardening industry, one of the key factors determining the Tamar Valley's sense of place and the heritage of communities within this nationally protected landscape.



Image supplied by Tamar Valley AONB

In order to record and raise awareness of this amazing collection in the local landscape, the Tamar Valley AONB applied for Heritage Lottery funding under the Sharing Heritage programme in 2016 for a one-year pilot project initially focussing on the Bere Peninsula. The bid for just under £10,000 was successful and the Heralds of Spring project became reality. Tamar Grow Local were appointed to deliver the project on behalf of the AONB, supported by a steering group of local organisations, groups and individuals.

The original **Heralds of Spring** project aimed to:

- Celebrate the importance of our historic daffodil collection.
- Record the varieties in the landscape and to identify key areas with very special collections.
- Capture local people's memories about our beautiful daffodils.
- Use this information to help safeguard the daffodils for future generations to enjoy.

During Spring 2017 the project recorded and increased awareness of the important populations of historic daffodil varieties in the Tamar Valley AONB on the Bere Peninsula and beyond. Volunteers sent in records from across the AONB and the results were astonishing with 352 surveys undertaken and 104 varieties identified.

With the help of a dedicated group of volunteers, Tamar Grow Local delivered an action-packed programme of events, training volunteers to undertake surveys, holding events across the AONB and beyond to raise awareness of the importance of the heritage varieties of daffodils, arranging daffodil walks and talks to local groups, talking about the project on TV and radio, capturing oral histories from local people, producing daffodil guides and a swatchbook for volunteers, holding school and community daffodil planting events, capturing the Bere Ferrers Spring Flower show on film and arranging a visit Ron Scamp's nursery for volunteers. Three 'Heralds of Spring' downloadable daffodil walks on the Bere Peninsula were also produced and are available on the AONB website.

The 2017 season culminated with the very successful Daffodil Conference at the Tamar Valley Centre in October, with a full programme of presentations from some of the most knowledgeable daffodil experts in the country.

Following the end of the Heritage Lottery funding period we were delighted that Tamar TLC agreed to continue to support the project for further surveying seasons. Building on the successes of the first year, further surveying took place between December 2017 and May 2018 to widen the survey window and to help determine how the local daffodil populations may have changed in the past year. The project welcomed

back volunteer surveyors who took part in year 1, as well as recruiting surveyors new to the project.

Recommendations from the year 1 evaluation were incorporated into the year 2 survey programme. These included starting surveys in late December to capture early varieties, encourage surveyors to revisit last year's survey sites as well as fill in the gaps on the 2017 survey map and expanding the survey area to include Cornwall side of the Tamar particularly around Landulph and St Dominic. A total of 237 records were added to the survey results with 58 varieties identified, with some additional varieties recorded. The number of varieties was less than year 1 because many of the volunteers had focussed on varieties than may have been missed during the previous year's survey rather than recording all varieties that they found.

An additional outcome of the project in 2018 was the acquisition of the archive material donated from Rumleigh House. The archive stretches across most of the 20th century and covers two generations of ownership of the property and focuses on cultivation of cut-flowers, including daffodils, and on soft fruit production. It consists of detailed farm records, industry publications and promotional material, and a reference library. The books and reference materials have been catalogued by Heralds of Spring volunteers. However, the whole archive has since been passed on to the Devon Rural Archive who have existing protocols to deal with archive materials and have dedicated storage and archive staff. It has been agreed that material from the collection can be borrowed as needed for any future exhibitions concerning historic market gardening in the Tamar Valley.

Further surveying of daffodils took place in 2019 and a dedicated survey phone app was developed to ensure consistency in recording, particularly around grid referencing. We are awaiting the final results. Work is now underway to determine the future of the database and how survey results will be used to further protect daffodil populations and how to take the project forward in the coming years.

**For more details about the Heralds of Spring project, please visit
www.tamarvalley.org.uk/heraldsofspring**

Horsebridge

Clive Charlton, with photos from Helen Wilson

This short article is included to support two images of Horsebridge, supplied by Helen Wilson from her collection of postcards of the Tamar Valley. More of Helen's postcard images other images follow immediately after this article.

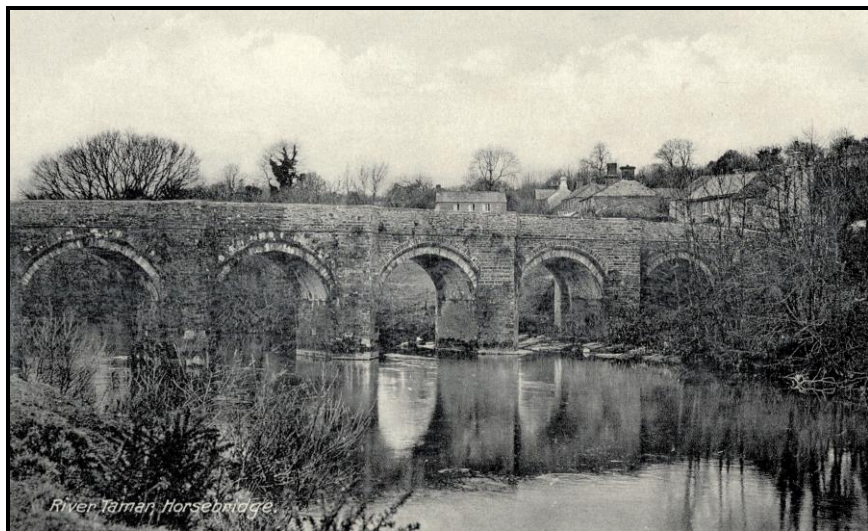


Fig.1 Postcard of Horse Bridge across the Tamar, from downstream on the Cornwall bank of the river (Collection of Helen Wilson).

Horsebridge is a fine example of a well-preserved and relatively lengthy late medieval bridge. It is designated as a Scheduled Monument and Grade One Listed Building by Historic England.

Most of the stone used in the construction of the bridge is slate. Each of the six spans is approximately six metres wide and has a double ring of slate ‘voussoirs’⁶¹, the inner one recessed within the outer. The bridge piers have pointed ‘cutwaters’ rising from the river; above parapet level they form ‘refuges’ for people crossing the bridge.

⁶¹ ‘Voussoirs’ are the wedge-shaped stones that make up the arch.

The first mention of Horsebridge was in 1437, when Edmund Lacy, the Bishop of Exeter, granted indulgences of 40 days⁶² to contributors towards its construction⁶³. However, the present bridge may itself have been substantially rebuilt around 1685, following serious flood damage. It is possible that the 15th century project was for the rebuilding in stone of an earlier wooden structure⁶⁴.

Until the earlier 16th century Horse Bridge was the lowest bridging point on the Tamar, on the main route between Tavistock and Liskeard, and thereby an important routeway into the Duchy. However, it was eclipsed by the opening of New Bridge at Gunnislake in 1520, and mainly served local trans-Tamar travellers. In fact, its relative insignificance was a key factor in its survival as a relatively unaltered historic structure – and the oldest surviving bridge across the Tamar.

The name ‘Horse Bridge’ probably has nothing to do with ‘horses’, as the bridge was named as ‘Hautes Brygge’ in William of Worcester’s ‘Itineraries’ of 1478⁶⁵, while the celebrated 16th century traveller and antiquary, John Leland, called it ‘Hawte Bridg’.⁶⁶ Before the Dissolution

⁶² For explanation of indulgences see: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indulgence>.

⁶³ Medieval arched bridges in Devon, Stewart Brown, 2008, *Devon Buildings Group Newsletter* Number 26, 7-33. Accessed via: www.devonbuildingsgroup.org.uk/uploads/Newsletter%2026%202008.compressed.pdf

⁶⁴ Rob Furneaux, *The Tamar: a Great Little River*, 1992, Ex-Libris Press, Bradford on Avon, 1992.

⁶⁵ ‘William of Worcester’s Itinerary’ in Appendix VI of *The Parochial History of Cornwall, Vol. IV*. London, 1838, pp.244 and 255. William Worcester (1410-1480/5) undertook journeys in southern and western Britain between 1478 and 1480. The notes he recorded about his journeys and the places he visited, were published as his ‘Itineraria’, and are one of the earliest such accounts of travel in the South West.

⁶⁶ ‘The Itinerary of John Leland’ in Appendix VII of *The Parochial History of Cornwall, Vol. IV*. London 1838. p.256.

of the Monasteries, Tavistock Abbey owned the adjacent land on the Devon side, and rented the fishing in the River Tamar from the Duchy of Cornwall. It is thought that a monastic settlement or possibly a nunnery, dependent on Tavistock Abbey, stood on the site of today's historic Royal Inn on the Devon side of the bridge (the pub was formerly named 'The Packhorse Inn').⁶⁷

For most of its existence, Horsebridge has been a tranquil backwater. But all calm was shattered by a dramatic and violent episode during the English Civil War. On 26th July 1644, the Earl of Essex's Parliamentary troops pushed across the Tamar at the bridge, after a fierce and bloody battle with Royalist forces seeking to keep them out of Cornwall. However, the victorious intrusion merely sped the Parliamentarians to a disastrous defeat at Lostwithiel later in the year.⁶⁸



Fig.2 Early 20th century postcard of Horse Bridge, as seen from higher ground on the Cornwall side, with the slopes of the Devon side beyond. A causeway leads the road across the Tamar's floodplain onto the bridge. (Helen Wilson).

⁶⁷ See website of The Royal Inn, Horse Bridge: www.royalinn.co.uk

⁶⁸ Philip Photiou, *Plymouth's Forgotten War (The Great Rebellion, 1642-1646)*, Arthur Stockwell Ltd., Ilfracombe, 2005.

More Early Postcards of the Tamar and its tributaries

Helen Wilson

Here are a few more postcard photos from Helen's collection, following on from those that appeared in 'Tamar' 2017. They date from the Edwardian heyday of the postcard in the early 20th century.

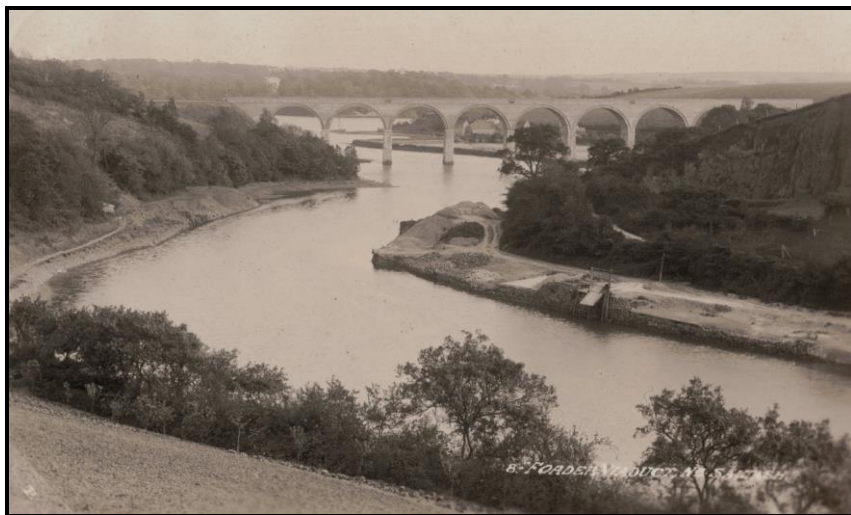


Fig.1 Postcard of Forder Lake, near Saltash, posted 1914.

The tidal Forder Lake is seen viewed from the hillside near St. Stephens, Saltash, south towards the Great Western Railway's viaduct carrying the main line west into Cornwall.

The tide mill at Antony Passage on the Lynher is just visible beyond the viaduct (through the fourth arch from the left). Trematon Castle is not far out of sight up the wooded slopes on the right. Quays on the west side of the creek served the adjacent Point Field quarry, although it had closed by the time this photo was taken. Stone also came to the quay via a tramway from the longer-lived Tor Quarry to the north. See 'Forder Community and Conservation Area' at: www.forder.org.uk/articles/fcca.pdf.



Fig.2 Postcard of Antony Passage Ferry, early 20th century.
For detailed information on this interesting location, see Bruce Hunt's website at: www.brucehunt.co.uk/Antony%20Passage.html

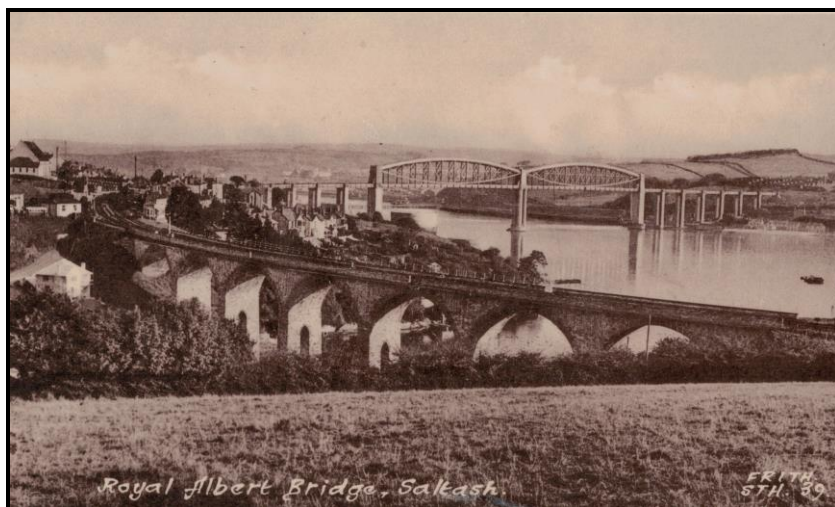


Fig.3 Postcard of the Royal Albert Bridge, Saltash, posted 1918.
Coombe Viaduct, in the foreground, was relatively new when this photo was taken in the early 20th century; the original Brunel timber trestle bridge over the tidal creek below was rebuilt in stone in 1894. The viaduct is about 600 feet long.



Fig.4 Postcard of the 'Duke's Drive' below Morwell Rocks (*not* 'Calstock!'). The drive was used by the Duke of Bedford and his visitors to travel from Morwellham Quay to his 'country cottage' at Endsleigh. This section is on now private land and not normally accessible to the public.

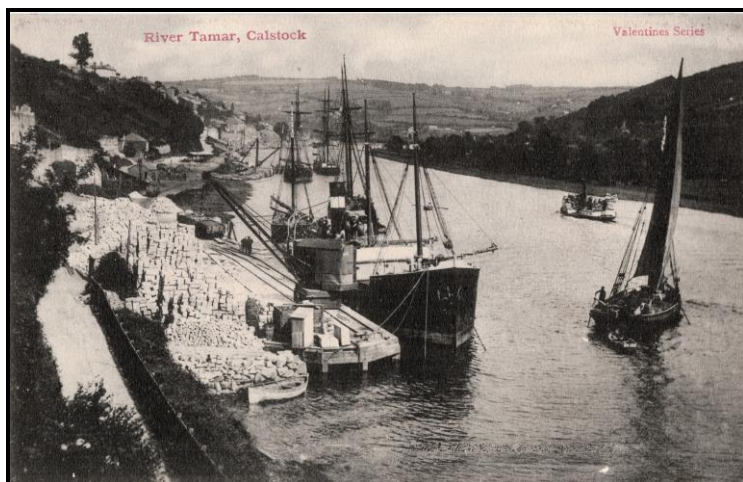


Fig.5 Postcard of the steam coaster 'Albion' loading granite blocks below Lower Kelly, Calstock, early 20th century.

A well-known photo, but superb in showing not only a steam-powered cargo vessel, but also a Tamar barge, a paddle-steamer and two sea-going schooners (beyond the *Albion*) – with the viaduct yet to be built.



Fig.6 Postcard of Lockett and New Consols Mine

The photo was taken (presumably in the early 20th century) from the road descending north from the Kit Hill-Hingston Down ridge, on the final slope into Lockett village. On the left of the road (and village) is the New Consols Mine; it had several names, including ‘New Wheal Martha’. The mine produced copper, tin and arsenic. Although it closed several times, it was one of the last survivors among Tamar Valley mines, as work continued on the site until the early 1950s, mainly re-processing mine waste. Prominent in the middle distance, in ‘left centre’, is the engine house of Philip’s Shaft, with its large steam-powered Cornish pumping engine, which was not removed until the 1930s, when it was replaced by electric pumps.

In the middle distance and to the right is Lockett Methodist Chapel, built in 1877, but demolished in the 1990s. Much of the view is now obscured by trees.

See John Manley’s web page on ‘Lockett and New Consols’ at:
<https://navsbooks.wordpress.com/2018/11/19/lockett-and-new-consols/>

Celebrating Calstock's Steamboat Heyday

Jane Kiely

Visitors to Calstock this summer were able to step back in time to remember an era when this village on the banks of the River Tamar enjoyed a true heyday. The Calstock Heritage Weekend took place between 26 and 28 July 2019, with a flotilla of steamboats once again moored off the pontoon at Calstock as the centrepiece of three days of celebrations.



Two of the small steam vessels attending the heritage weekend

During the industrial boom of the nineteenth century, Calstock was the largest of the industrial river ports upstream from Plymouth. The Tamar was the main highway for the import and export of goods to the area, due to the lack of suitable roads. During the peak of river trade there were up to 40 barges and 20 deep-water boats operating from the quays at Calstock. Loads included farm- and market-garden produce sent to Plymouth for distribution, and copper ore transported to Swansea to be smelted, while granite, bricks and tiles were shipped as far afield as Russia. As well as trade, the Tamar was a very popular destination for river excursions. One of the most popular outings was the trip up the Tamar to Calstock and Morwellham, with the cherry blossom and fields of daffodils a sight to be seen in season. In 1856, Queen Victoria and her family travelled up the Tamar to Morwellham, giving river excursions the royal seal of approval.

In 2018, steamboat enthusiast Ian Richards invited a few friends with steamboats to come to Calstock for a steamboat rally. Few of them had visited before but fell in love with the area and wanted to return. Ian spoke with various Calstock people and the Village Hall committee about repeating the steamboat visits, and the Calstock Heritage Weekend was born.



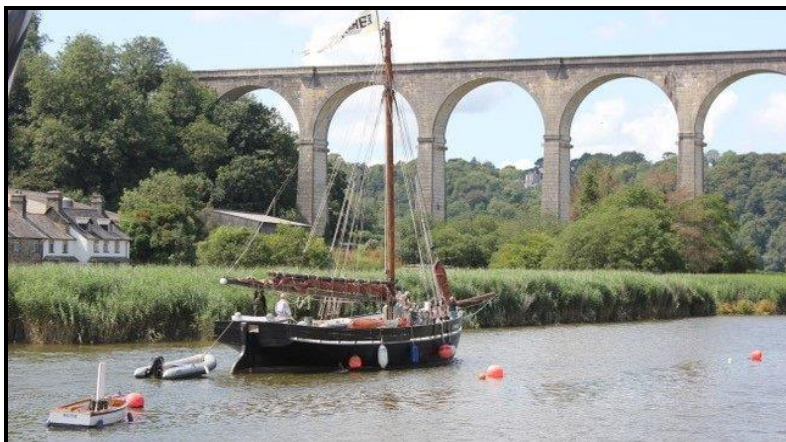
The 2019 event was a great success. As well as the visiting boats, Calstock Parish Archives⁶⁹ mounted a display in the Village Hall, together with Dr Chris Smart's display of details of Calstock Roman Fort on the Sunday.

There was shanty singing on the Quay, together with visiting Morris and clog dancing sides, all giving a colourful musical edge to the weekend in Calstock. There were concerts at Calstock Arts and Calstock Village Hall, while the steamboats went off on short trips up and down the river, including to Pentillie on the Sunday. The weather was perfect, which made the whole scene all the more delightful.

One of the 'star turns' of the Heritage Weekend, was a short visit by the Tamar barge *Lynher*. This vessel was built in 1896 at the legendary

⁶⁹ For details of the well-known Calstock Parish Archive, see: www.calstockhistory.org.uk/

shipyard run by James Goss, right opposite Calstock. Although she was unable to come alongside, it was a great delight to see this historic vessel by her birthplace o the Tamar. The full story of the *Lynher* and her remarkable survival and restoration can be found at: <https://tamarbarge.org.uk/boat-history/>



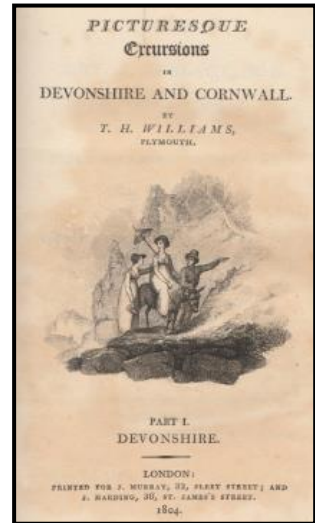
Lynher returning down the Tamar after her visit to Calstock on July 27th 2019. The site of the Goss shipyard is in the background.



Plymouth Maids Clog Dancers performing at Calstock Heritage Weekend (photo by Jane Kiely)

Picturesque excursions near Plymouth, 1804
T.H.Williams, adapted by Clive Charlton

The following script is drawn from 'Picturesque Excursions in Devonshire and Cornwall, Part I, Devonshire', by T.H.Williams of Plymouth, published in London in 1804. The text presents selected extracts of Williams' observations on his excursions from Weston Mill (then several miles outside Plymouth) to Denham Bridge in the Tavy Valley, via St.Budeaux, Tamerton, Maristow and Lopwell. Besides changing the order of the material somewhat, and omitting much of the frequent romantic philosophical musings, I have made some minor changes to punctuation and syntax. However, most spellings are as per the original (hence 'Tamer' and 'Tavey').



“The village of St. Budeaux is situated about four miles to the north of Plymouth, on an eminence near the Tamer, which commands, on every side, an unbounded prospect of fertility and picturesque beauty. Not only the artist, but the general admirer of nature, may here find inexhaustible gratification. Extensive scenes, rich in diversity of objects, exhibit at every step, the most beautiful combinations, while the more confined scenery, composed principally of woody dells, interspersed with cottages, abounds with prospects of romantic seclusion and simplicity rarely to be equalled. Everything, indeed, that can charm in Nature, everything that can add grandeur or beauty to the landscape, conspires to adorn the village of St. Budeaux, and its neighbourhood.

The road from Plymouth and Dock to this interesting place is, for the first three miles, the same that leads to Saltash-passage, and affords many pleasing views; among which the village of Weston-mill merits particular notice. It is seated at the head of a small inlet of the Tamer, environed by hills, which surround it like an amphitheatre.



'Weston Mill', in 'Picturesque Excursions in Devonshire and Cornwall, Part I, Devonshire', by T.H. Williams, 1804.

The turnpike-house, with a small bridge thrown across the river, the mill and the stream which supplies it, are so happily disposed that, in almost every point of view, whether from the road or the sides of the hills, they form a beautiful combination. The pleasure however does not arise solely from picturesque effect: the tranquil aspect of this little village awakens in the mind the sentiment of rural felicity, and domestic quiet, and heightens the charms of nature.

The road immediately beyond Weston-mill presents, from its steepness, a very formidable ascent, which is, however, occasionally relieved by a pleasing retrospect of the village. A cottage at the summit has the very appropriate name of 'Traveller's Rest.' A little beyond this, you leave the Saltash road to the left, and arrive at the village of King's Tamerton, consisting of five or six cottages, some of which are the most picturesque we have seen in Devonshire. Their tall chimnies, projecting in front of the house have a very happy effect, while the surface of the walls, and the roofs, encrusted with lichens and mosses of a thousand hues, exhibit specimens of colouring not easily imitated or described. These beautiful sportings of Nature would be totally lost, if the custom so prevalent in

many parts of Wales of white-washing the walls of cottages, were fashionable here; but either from the taste or indolence of their inhabitants, these rural abodes are not yet likely to be deprived of their cheap ornaments. The Lynner, or St. Germain's River, as it is commonly called, is an interesting feature in the view from this village, in conjunction with which it forms a beautiful subject for the pencil.



'Kings Tamerton', in 'Picturesque Excursions in Devonshire and Cornwall, Part I, Devonshire', by T.H. Williams, 1804.

Mount Tamer, the seat of the late Captain Sir Thomas Byard, well known for the distinguished part he sustained in Lord Duncan's memorable action with the Dutch off Camperdown, stands on the brow of an acclivity adjacent to King's Tamerton, and commands a fine view of the surrounding country. The prospect, however, is seen to greater advantage from some broken ground which rises rather to the eastward of the house.

A descending road in the foreground, and two or three of the picturesque cottages before noticed, are most happily disposed. Beyond these the Tamer recedes 'in long perspective to the stretching eye,' and forms a grand feature in the view. It is that part of the river called the Hamoaze, the receptacle of those stupendous fabrics of human ingenuity to which, for ages, England has chiefly owed its security and pre-eminence among nations. On the left banks of the river the town of Dock, with the

dockyard and arsenals, is a busy and interesting scene, and on the opposite shore is seen the town of Torpoint, and Thanckes, the seat of Admiral Lord Graves, whose nautical skill is so justly celebrated.

Mount Edgcumbe, rising majestically in the distance, with its deep mantling of wood, closes the scene with much dignity. Beyond the eastern extremity of the promontory, however, the eye catches a glimpse of the Channel, which gives a peculiar character to the view. The Lynner is still seen to advantage on the right, retreating behind a succession of projecting promontories, till it is lost amongst hills which seem to oppose its farther progress. It winds, however, many miles farther, through a rich and picturesque country, and frequently varies its character, exhibiting sometimes a bay in miniature and where its banks become lofty, collecting its waters into the form of a lake.

Leaving this diversified prospect in the rear, a new scene suddenly bursts on the sight; so instantaneous in its disclosure, and so different from the preceding, that it appears to be the work of enchantment. The Tamer here resigns its channel like aspect and, apparently environed by the surrounding hills, assumes the character of a lake, presenting a wide expanse of water where all vestiges of the harbour and indeed every characteristic of the former view are lost.

This scene, though unlike the preceding, is however equally beautiful. An air of simple grandeur pervades the whole, and every object tends to inspire the most soothing tranquillity. The Church of St. Budeaux, on an eminence in the foreground; the Tamer beneath it, presenting a broad surface, undisturbed, save by a solitary barge, or perhaps the boat of a fisherman; the banks of the river, alternately woody and cultivated, in some parts gradually shelving to the water and in others, descending abruptly; apparently uniting at last, in a semi-circular form, which conceals the farther progress of the river. Beyond these, a richly cultivated country, gradually melting into a mountainous distance, compose a picture admirably calculated to awaken all the fervour of enthusiasm.

Approaching the village of St. Budeaux, the prospect becomes partially concealed, but it is only to collect new powers, and to display the whole with superadded beauty and effect. The field adjoining the western side of the church-yard is the spot from which this glorious view is seen to

greatest advantage. In a still evening the tuneful bells of the little church of Landulph, on the remote banks of the river, add a new charm to the scene, wafting at times their full quire of melody on the ear and again melting, like the notes of the Eolian harp, into tremulous and almost imperceptible vibration.



'Kings Tamerton', in 'Picturesque Excursions in Devonshire and Cornwall, Part I, Devonshire', by T.H. Williams, 1804.

The church of St. Budeaux is a simple edifice, and though devoid of architectural embellishment, possesses much picturesque beauty. The parish church stood originally at the distance of nearly a mile from its present site, in a very unhealthy situation near the water's edge. But in the beginning of the fourteenth century, the whole fabric was taken down and rebuilt, with the same materials, on the spot where it now stands. The expense of this laudable undertaking was defrayed solely by Robert Budokshed, Esq. who resided at the mansion house of that name in the parish of St. Budeaux. By a seeming fatality, his own daughter, who died shortly after, was the first person whose remains were deposited within the precincts of the new pile; a circumstance which, at that dark period, no doubt, excited many pious and superstitious conjectures. In the church-yard is a tomb-stone which the village sculptor has taken some pains to decorate. Three or four trunkless heads, in all the naked

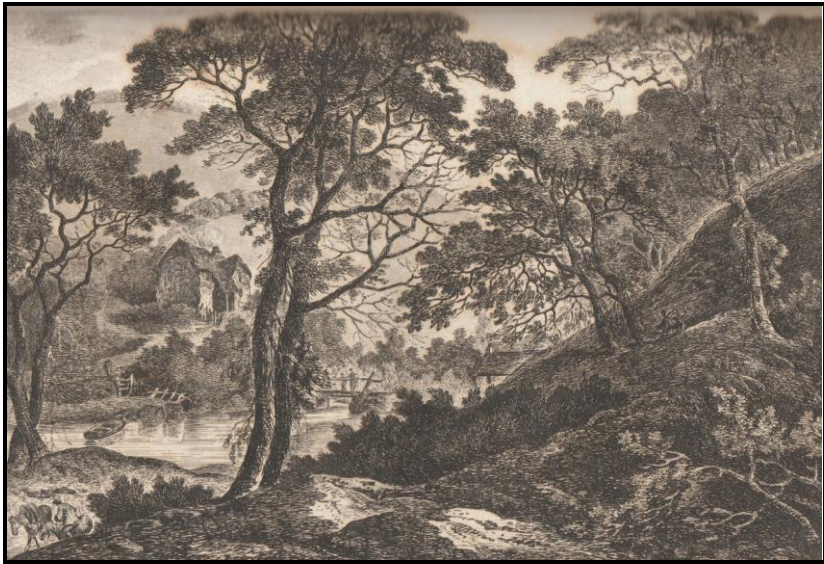
simplicity of ugliness, are ranged at the top of the stone; and lest their nature might be misunderstood, the artist kindly informs the reader that: 'Of such is the kingdom of heaven!'.

The road to Budshed is also an indirect road to the village of Tamerton. After a gradual descent of about half a mile, enlivened by new combinations of the scenery beheld from the church, you arrive at Budshed Wood, from which there is a beautiful view of the Lake of Tamerton, another arm of the vagrant Tamer. Budshed House, the mill beyond it, the lake like a mill-pond, reflecting a fine hanging wood; and on the opposite side of the creek, the woods of Warleigh, with its majestic torr, present themselves to the delighted sight. At the base of the torr, the waters of the Tamer placidly glide along, conveying the barges laden with limestone for the purposes of agriculture to a small quay. A cottage and a limekiln are near the quay, being fortunately placed where the greatest effect arises, from their contrast in colour and form, with the other parts of the picture.

Warleigh, a beautiful situation nearly surrounded by the Tamer, and well covered with wood, is at present the property of the Radcliffes. The antiquity of it is recorded by Prince, in his *Worthies of Devon*. "Gilbert Foliot, Lord Bishop of London, [was] most likely born at Tamerton-foliot. In King Stephen's time, these were the lands of Sampson Foliot, who had his principal residence at Warleigh, a seat both pleasant and profitable, for standing near the Tamer side, and having a park and fair demesnes belonging to it, it wants no variety which sea or land can afford."

The pleasant village of Tamerton is seen farther to the right, and the circle is filled by the distant blue hills of Dartmoor and in the near ground, the improved appearance of Whitleigh (the seat of Mr. Gennys), adjoining to Woodland and Budshed. Tamerton is about five miles from Plymouth and is accessible by water from the beautiful inlet of the Tamer. The church, which is a well-built, unornamented edifice, is embosomed in fine trees, one of which is a large ash, presenting a striking and rare combination of elegance and grandeur. The tower of the church is beautifully tinted with a profusion of lichens and mosses. The seclusion of the churchyard produces the effect of concentrating the attention on the mementos of the departed; a train of interesting

reflections arise where the vanity of pomp and the falsehood of inscriptions excite no sympathy.



'Cottage Scene between St.Budeaux and Tamerton', in 'Picturesque Excursions in Devonshire and Cornwall, Part I, Devonshire', by T.H.Williams, 1804

Marystow, the beautiful seat of Manasseh Lopez, Esquire, who purchased it, together with a very extensive domain, of the executors of the late Mr. Heywood, is three miles from Tamerton. It is situated at a small distance from the Tavey, which flows at the bottom of the lawn, and about two miles from the junction of that river with the Tamer, which is seen from the house. It is, like Tamerton, to be approached at a proper time of the tide. Mr. Lopez has lately added to the ruins of a limekiln a very neat pavilion, for the reception of the numerous water-parties, who are attracted by the various beauties of this enchanting place. The house is large, and has a very handsome chapel attached to it, where divine service is performed every Sunday when the family is there. The house, which was irregular before, has lately been much improved by the proprietor, with the addition of a corresponding wing, and a handsome portico of the Ionic order. The colour lately given to it is also a great improvement; it is chaste and pleasing.

The next interesting feature of the Tavey is known by the name of Lophill; it is composed of a fine limekiln, which, as on the Tamer, has a greater length and more picturesque appearance than those on the other rivers. A fine wood proudly overhangs the whole view on the right and the timber-wains, which are frequently seen emerging from it.

The river above Lophill contracts its banks, at which place its navigable character ceases. Until lately the valley through which it flows abounded with the finest wood in the county, but some thousands of trees having been felled, and not replaced by new plantations, its beauty is considerably diminished, and the lover of nature is left to regret the indiscriminate destruction of the richest feature in a fine landscape. The course of the river is devious, either flowing through rich meadows, or winding round some sudden projection, breaking its water over large masses of rock, or in other places apparently at rest, in pools of an ebon blackness. About two miles on the river from Maristow is a salmon weir, overhung with trees; a scene of uncommon beauty and poetic interest, which is increased by the general woody character which the country now assumes.

Denham-bridge is the centre of the next striking scene; it is a simple structure of only two arches. Around it, nature appears to have been unassisted by much cultivation, as the fine oaks are the spontaneous production of the soil; their huge limbs, covered with grey mosses, overhang the dark water, enjoying an uninterrupted reflection, except where the playful trout, darting above the surface, breaks the stillness, and occasions a circular undulation. A mill is at a small distance; the high ground behind is well-wooded, and a silver stream glides between the trees, which, after turning the mill-wheel, makes a pleasing little fall, before it mingles with the river. A farm-house and some cottages lie in woody seclusion on the Buckland side."

Meetings of the Friends of the Tamar Valley – 2018

Helen Wilson, with contributions from Clive Charlton and Jane Kiely

The Friends held 11 successful events in 2018 and our thanks must go to Jane Kiely for all her work in organising speakers and events and for taking bookings for the summer excursions. For the first talk of the year in January we welcomed **Chrissie Le Marchant** to talk about Kit Hill, where she worked as a Ranger for many years. It is the highest point in the Tamar Valley at 333.4 m. It was 290 million years ago that the granite intruded into the Devonian slates and in the process created the seams of metal found on the Hill. About 6000 years ago, hunter gatherers were using the Hill, as evidenced by a Neolithic long barrow. Two thousand years later, Bronze Age round barrows and field systems were created. Then about 800 years ago the Hill began to be quarried for its granite. A few hundred years later tin streaming began and, later still, mining until 1921, leaving 37 shafts and nine adits. The Duke of Cornwall acquired Kit Hill in 1337 and in 1985 gave it to the people of Cornwall to celebrate the birth of Prince William. In 1995, the Hill became part of the Tamar Valley AONB.

Chrissie showed us historic photos of the various mining sites, including Kit Hill Great Consols on the top that includes the familiar stack, and the incline on the north side that served the main quarry, worked until 1955. At the bottom of the incline it joined the East Cornwall Mineral Railway that later became part of the Plymouth, Devonport and South Western Junction Railway after Calstock Viaduct was built. A later development in mining occurred during WWI when wolfram (to produce tungsten) was mined on the east side of the Hill.

Management of the heathland is an important part of the work. Highland cattle are brought in to graze on the north side and swaling takes place under a 12-year rotation. Since 2012/13, Kit Hill has been managed for Cornwall Council by Cormac Solutions. Now, only one Ranger is provided for all East Cornwall sites, which makes the work at Kit Hill more of a challenge. We were very grateful to Chrissie for this extremely

interesting and informative presentation, for which there was a record turnout.

After the guided walk along the Tavistock Canal in June 2017, **Simon Dell** came along in February to tell us more about this fascinating industrial venture. He showed us the original track that served as the road between Tavistock and Morwellham in the early part of the nineteenth century, the steepest parts of which are now ‘green lanes’ dissected by the sweeping bends of the modern road. It was entirely unsuitable for transporting ore from the highly successful mines run by brilliant engineer John Taylor. He initiated the idea of constructing a canal between the Tavy and the Tamar and his final plans for a 4½ mile canal with a tunnel through Morwell Down were produced in early 1803. The bonus to his plan was that the canal would enable the exploitation of tin and copper lodes in Morwell Down, using water from the canal to power the mines efficiently.

At the Wharf in Tavistock the specially designed wrought iron boats could tie up under the grain store that straddles the canal to receive cargo direct from above. Along all its length before the tunnel under Morwell Down is a tow path, to enable horses to pull the barges. Over 20 water mills along its route were supplied with water from the canal, including one at Crowndale Farm, where there were further wharf buildings.

The canal passes under the railway at Shillamill Viaduct and then one side of the canal opens out into a wide area with lock gates and a wharf for boats from the Mill Hill Cut. Around the corner is Lumburn Valley embankment – a colossal construction across the valley created from 100,000 tons of spoil from the tunnel and mine workings further on. Just around from the embankment lies the end of public access. In a deep cutting before the tunnel, copper was struck and Wheal Crebor established with its ¼ mile deep incline. The tunnel, at the time, was the deepest in the country. The terminus is at Canal Cottage, where turntables were used to unload goods on to an incline running down to Morwellham Quay. We thoroughly enjoyed Simon’s talk and, as usual,

even the best informed learnt a thing or two.

For the meeting in March we should have had **Terry Faulk** speaking on the Forgotten Garden of Lewtrenchard but the inclement weather prevented him travelling. The talk was postponed until February 2019.

After the AGM in April we heard from **Jill Lane** about her extensive research on Calstock shops and the people who served in them. She began after being inspired by a 1949 photograph of the High Street showing all the shops that existed then. Jill related a brief history of Calstock and its development as a town, with work in the mines and on the quays bringing in people from the countryside and further afield. The burgeoning tourist trade, with steamers plying up and down the River, and the arrival of the railway in 1908, all added to the need for a range of shops to provide goods and services to residents and visitors.

With the help of many photographs, Jill showed lots of examples of the shops she had researched. In Fore Street there were several draper's shops, one run by William Bickle & Sons to 1919, William Maddern 1919 to 1927, followed by the Misses Palmer from 1927. Further along was Terrill's Drapers from 1878 to 1914 and the greengrocer Easterbrook. F.J. Paul was a tailor, photographer and bank manager and was responsible for the many excellent photographs of the building of the Calstock Viaduct between 1905 and 1908. Some other characters that Jill has researched include Sid Geake the baker, who delivered bread by horse and cart, and his wife Ethel. Ann Joll Rowe ran the Post Office and Store 1873 to 1919, followed by Dorothy Cox 1919 to 1954.

The demise of many of these shops came with the end of mining in the district, and the advent of supermarkets was the 'nail in the coffin'. We thoroughly enjoyed this trip down memory lane and many members remembered at least a few of the shops from the post-war era.

The May meeting welcomed **Roger Radcliffe**, a volunteer with St Agnes Museum, Cornwall, who came to tell us the extraordinary tale of his search for the figurehead of a locally-made ship. Although the location for this story is many miles away, there are several parallels in

the Tamar Valley, with mining and shipping very much to the fore.

The port of St Agnes was the gateway for the import of enormous supplies of coal and the quay there was significantly expanded in 1875/76, responding to the demand for greater capacity. The local shipyard began producing sailing ships for that trade in 1872 and in 1877 the *Lady Agnes* was launched. This two-masted schooner was owned by M.T. Hitchins and sailed under Captain Adolphus Blowey (pronounced as in Fowey). It was more than 80 ft long and 21 ft wide and bore a typical figurehead of a woman.

From the *Lady Agnes* logbook, Roger ascertained that in 1878 she left Cardiff for Newfoundland with salt for the dry codfish, and then on to Lisbon, Malta and Gallipoli, with goods in the hold on each leg. We heard several stories of the various Captains and owners over the years, including one Captain William Cock who smuggled a gallon of perfume in October 1896.

By 1899 the *Lady Agnes* was in North Wales with Portmadog as her home port. She ran aground near there with slate on board in 1937. When she was sold for scrap in 1948, the figurehead was missing, and the search was on to find it. It had been purchased by an antique dealer in Fowey, but when the shop closed in 1963, the figurehead was sold for £25. It surfaced again in 1989 in a catalogue for a Christie's Maritime Sale and sold for £9,000 to a buyer in the USA.

Luck and persistence paid off and Roger finally tracked the figurehead down to a maritime antiques shop in Cape Cod, USA, with a price tag of £15,000. He began an appeal to raise the money and received an enormous amount of support in St Agnes. The money was eventually raised, and the figurehead arrived in St Agnes on 14 September 2001, to great excitement. The figurehead is now on display in St Agnes Museum. Roger was congratulated for his tenacity and enthusiasm in bringing this story to such a happy conclusion.

Our first summer event in 2018 was a walk around **Plympton** in June, led by our own John Chilvers. The weather was great and a select little group gathered outside Plympton House. John's knowledge is amazing, and he seems to know every nook and cranny in the area he has lived in for many years.

Our July outing proved to be a great success with 20 Friends meeting at Launceston Railway station for our trip to **Newmills**. The railway is built on the trackbed of the North Cornwall Railway that used to bring in the tourists. The station is lovely, with bits of railway memorabilia from around the country, and a great museum to while away the time, as well as the nearby remains of Launceston Abbey. The weather was perfect as we chugged and steamed merrily along to Newmills, some of us in what I was later told started its life as a bicycle rack at a college in Wales. After a bit of alteration, it became a railway carriage! Newmills was a revelation with wonderful animals and lots of toys, for big boys as well as little. It's amazing what committee members get up to when let loose!

It was so good to have a child with us and to see her enjoying her time at Newmills playing with all the toys – I think she slept well that night! It was then back on the train for our cream tea at the station.

In August we visited **Greystone Quarry**, situated on the Launceston to Tavistock road, quite near Greystone Bridge, after which it is named. The quarry is owned and run by Aggregate Industries UK and, as the name implies, the primary output is aggregate for roadstone. We were assigned three members of staff for the tour, including ex-Operations Manager **Graham Hicks**, who knows most about the history of the site and has set up a small archive centre.

In the meeting room of the office complex, we were provided with a detailed account of the working of the quarry including, from the company's Explosives Manager for the region, how blasting is carried out. Greystone Quarry is situated on the strike of a lode system worked by several small 19th century lead mines (Greystone silver lead mine, Wheal Sophia and North Tamar). The quarry produces dolerite, known

locally as Blue Elvan, an essential component in asphalt and skid resistant surface dressing. The workings currently cover around 38 ha and employ 18 full-time staff on site. The company estimates the quarry is worth more than £1 million per year to the local economy.

With hi-viz jackets and hard hats on we travelled between vantage points in a minibus. Our first stop was to see a storage area for a range of grades of aggregate and the sorting equipment, which was re-used from another quarry. We then went on to a viewing platform near the top of the quarry, with the vastness of the workings below us.

Back at the archive centre, we were given more information on the extensive safety procedures necessary for blasting and looked around at the small exhibition, including many photographs of the wildlife found around the site. We also heard about the planned southerly extension of the quarry that would extend the life of this regionally important operation by a further 33 years and provide an additional 10 million tons of dolerite reserves. We were very well treated during the visit and the company is keen to show its safety and environmental credentials.

At the September meeting **David Price** treated us to another wonderful selection of his photographs of nature, set within the Tamar Valley's landscape. David organised his images around the theme of 'colours'. He started with white, which brought together double white daffodils (a Tamar speciality), the white crab spider, a rare white sparrow and extraordinary, delicate 'frost flowers', which occur on dead wood when a type of fungus exudes strands of 'hair ice'.

Then came the colours of the rainbow, beginning with red elf-cup fungus, guelder rose berries, a superb image of a Humming-bird Hawkmoth hovering by red valerian, red admiral butterfly and a robin puffed up against the cold. Orange was heralded by a dawn photo, and starred mainly butterflies, including the silver-tipped fritillary. Yellow allowed flowers to join the butterflies in the nature parade. There were reminders of the beauty of 'common' species – a buttercup meadow and 'native' daffodils thriving undisturbed at Inny Foot, as well as a glimpse

of relative rarities such as cow wheat. The yellow ‘team’ also included the heath fritillary – one of the butterfly stars of the Tamar Valley – plus a 14-spot ladybird and broad-bodied chaser dragonfly.

They were followed by greenfinch, green hairstreak butterfly and a green variety of shieldbug. Bluebells just had to open the parade for the next rainbow colour, with the spring display in Carthamartha Wood. Holly blue and common blue butterflies, blue damselflies, and a blue tit followed. Then David’s alerted us to the wonderful *detail* in nature with a close-up of the blue in the wings of a tortoiseshell butterfly. Plants made the case for indigo in nature, with columbine, early purple orchid and a variety of the parasitical toothwort, growing near Endsleigh. The final colour was, of course, violet; especially remarkable here was the violet oil beetle, which has an amazingly complex life cycle.

David completed his presentation with a miscellany of flora and fauna that could not quite fit into the rainbow spectrum, including a Jersey tiger moth, coal fungus – and a black sheep! Through his splendid portraits David gave the audience a vivid reminder of the natural wonders on their doorsteps.

Our next speaker in October was **Robert Hesketh** who has researched Devon newspapers to see what they had to say about the last days of WWI. November 11, 1918 was the day the armistice was signed between the Allies of World War I and Germany at Compiègne, France, for the cessation of hostilities on the Western Front. Reports of the last days in the *Devon and Exeter Gazette* were realistic, telling of the series of victories that led to the armistice. But reports from earlier in the war were much restrained and did not tell the full story of the death and destruction of trench warfare.

The Defence of the Realm Act was brought in during the very early stage of the war in August 1914. As the war progressed, it was extended several times, granting extraordinary wartime emergency powers to the Government, including censorship. It became an offence to spread alarm among troops or civilians. Soldier’s mail was censored, and no cameras

were allowed at the Front, so the true story was not revealed. Although the rules were flouted, punishment was severe.

The *Devon and Exeter Gazette* declared the Allies triumphant at the Battle of Amiens on 8 August 1918 and the *Western Times* reported British counterattack and success. Headlines such as ‘Full Steam Ahead’ appeared in the *Western Times*, as well as positive reports of ‘Wounded Entertained at Pinhoe’. Surprisingly, wartime strikes were reported, as well as appeals against conscription, and that 600 German prisoners were being put to work in Devon, but not within 5 miles of a city. What appeared on a regular basis were long lists of the fallen – the Roll of Honour. As the end of the war was in sight, triumphant news of Allied advances was reported: ‘How the Mighty have Fallen!’ declared the *Devon and Exeter Gazette*. We were grateful to Robert for this reminder that though we are aware today of the horrors of WWI, family and friends were not always told what their loved ones were going through.

The talk from **Chris Smart** in November was based on the three-year Heritage Lottery-funded Understanding Landscapes Project, which includes community-focused archaeological and historical research in the Tamar Valley and around Ipplepen, near Newton Abbot. The project is building on previous work, and integrates excavations at various sites, geophysical surveys, and historic landscapes surveys and analyses. The research programme will involve local communities, including primary schools.

Chris gave some background on the Romans in the South West. Exeter was the site of a fortress and then became a civitas. Although formerly considered unlikely, it is now well-established that the Romans built fortresses west of Exeter, including at Nanstallon, Restormel and Calstock. However, non-military evidence is scant, with no villa sites identified in the far South West. Chris suggested that the whole of the area may have remained an imperial estate. However, many Iron Age settlement sites would surely have continued in use into the Roman era and beyond.

The Understanding Landscapes Project will also examine possible continuity between the Roman and medieval periods. Research at Ipplepen has demonstrated that there was a Roman-era settlement there, with many Roman coins discovered, as well as burials and round houses dating from the 1st to 4th centuries, identified by geophysical surveys. Chris showed some superb, very detailed plans based on the team's surveys and analysis; they confirm that the development of the settlement was lengthy and complex. It is now thought that the site continued in use into the 7th and 8th centuries and presumably on into the medieval period.

Chris told the meeting that a 'community excavation' in and near the hilltop enclosures would take place in June 2019. Although there has been no evidence in the area of Roman-period mining, it is possible that other 'extramural activity' associated with the fort might be found. Further geophysical surveys will be undertaken west of the fort area.

The Understanding Landscapes Project will also re-examine the Bere Peninsula, where the medieval silver industry is now quite well understood. The team also intends to investigate settlement patterns at the time of the two major medieval silver-mining booms. It is still unclear where the many medieval miners and other workers lived, as well as how the wider local economy operated. Chris was thanked for a very full, informative and thoroughly-illustrated talk.

We welcomed back **Nigel Overton** for our December meeting, speaking on early photography in Plymouth. He began with a brief history of the invention of photography. Louis Daguerre (1787-1851) developed the Daguerreotype process, the first commercially viable photographic process. It was announced to the world in 1839, generally accepted as the birth year of practical photography. The metal-based Daguerreotype process soon had competition from paper-based processes invented by William Henry Fox Talbot (1800-1877).

The earliest photographic image of Plymouth by Fox Talbot was taken in September 1845 of the Victualling Office from Mount Edgcumbe

Battery. Plymouth appears to have had more than its fair share of innovative photographers and we were introduced to one eminent exponent after another, illustrated by numerous images. For example, Robert Hunt FRS (1807-1877) was born at Plymouth Dock and qualified as a chemist by 1829. He later worked with the Admiralty and from 1839 began experimenting with photography, producing a direct-positive of houses that is the first known photograph of Plymouth. He also wrote the first book on photography in 1841.

Major General Linnaeus Tripe (1822-1902), born at Plymouth Dock, joined the East India Company as young man but on extended leave due to ill health he became interested in photography. His work culminated in the highly acclaimed book 'Photographs of India and Burma 1852-60'. Tripe died at Devonport and is buried in Ford Park Cemetery.

In contemporary Plymouth directories Nigel has discovered advertisements for chemists with wholesale photographic departments. Two examples in 1857 were William C. Cox at No. 89 Fore Street, Devonport, and W. Heath at No. 116. The Royal Photographic Society was set up in 1853 and its first President was Sir Charles Lock Eastlake, a notable figure in the British art establishment born in Plymouth.

Nigel finished his tour de force with several amazing photographs of the building of the Royal Albert Bridge across the Tamar at Saltash by Robert Hewlett. They documented the enormous engineering feat that Isambard Kingdom Brunel had achieved in spanning the river for the first railway line into Cornwall. A most apt end to this highly enjoyable talk.

Committee 2019 / 2020

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The new Royal Navy Offshore Patrol Vessel, H.M.S. *Tamar*, built at Scotstoun on the Clyde and due to enter service in 2020 (Royal Navy photo).