DEVON BUILDINGS GROUP

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 32

Autumn 2014

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Illustrations

Front cover: Sharpham © *Barry Honeysett*

A note from the editors

The editors are always looking for articles for the next newsletter. If you would like to contribute to a future Newsletter, whether a brief note, or an article, and would like to talk about it first, please contact Jo Cox, 01392 435728.

The editors would like to thank all the authors who have contributed and Sandi Ellison for proofreading.

Jo Cox
Dawn Honeysett

Secretary's Report 2012-2013

The Group's year started with the 26th AGM held at Kennaway House, Sidmouth, on 27th October 2012. Some 45 members attended. Kennaway House was an appropriate venue being a very elegant early 19th century building now in community use but originally a private house or houses. Besides its principal entrance to the raised ground floor, it has a puzzling grand side entrance leading only to the basement where we held our meeting. Peter Marlow chaired the meeting which followed the usual format, starting with my own report for the year and followed by the Treasurer's report which confirmed that our finances were in good state, particularly as a consequence of the sale of the church angels from Plymouth, which raised £3,783, giving the Group a total reserve of £6,473. The election of committee members followed. This was complicated by the fact that over the years the even annual rotation of members had collapsed so that the majority was coming up for election at the same time. In order to cure this problem, it was proposed that five committee members should retire and be re-elected immediately. Messrs Stobbs, Parker, Bosence, Child and Marlow volunteered for this. While this rearrangement does not provide an exactly similar number to be re-elected each year, it does make the annual distribution much more even.

Kennaway House, Sidmouth. Dating from 1805 and listed grade 2*, the house underwent extensive repair and restoration in 2008-2009 following public appeals, loans and a substantial grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Previously known as Church House, the name was changed following public consultation.

Discussion then followed on the future of the Newsletter, the conclusion of which was that it should remain as a printed document, as putting it entirely online would not be viable or desirable. As usual, the subject of future meeting places for the group followed, without any firm conclusion. Under AOB the fate of the Dutch tiles in the Knowle and indeed the fate of the Knowle itself was discussed. At the end of business, we were privileged to have two talks. The first was by David Daniel on the historic development of Devon seaside towns with particular reference to those in south-east Devon: Sidmouth, Budleigh, Exmouth,

Southfield, Bickwell Valley, Sidmouth. Designed by R. W. Sampson.

The Grotto, located in the former gardens of Knowle Cottage and listed grade 2 in 1951.

Dawlish and Teignmouth, which, with the exception of the latter, had until the late 18th century only been simple small agricultural and fishing settlements. At this time and as a consequence of the wealth emanating from nearby Exeter, all took off as places of resort, characterised by typical Regency architecture, in particular the cottage orné, as well as ambitious terrace developments such as Fortfield Terrace in Sidmouth and The Den at Teignmouth. In the early 19th century these towns grew in population three times as fast as that of Devon as a whole. All have since grown into substantial towns in the 19th and 20th centuries, although Budleigh and Sidmouth developed later than the others. This interesting talk was followed by another by Martin Mallinson on the Sidmouth architect, R.W. Sampson, who practised in the town from 1891 to the 1930s. He first worked for the Manor Estate but then formed his own practice in 1895. His style was in the Arts and Crafts tradition. He was particularly notable for the development of the Bickwell Valley from 1900 onwards with large detached houses for the middle classes; some of these he occupied himself for three or four years before selling them on. These houses characteristically were often only of single room depth under steeply pitched tiled roofs; the walls were in red brick made on the Manor estate. His work was not confined to housing and he turned his hand to other building types as for instance the Victoria Hotel. He also infilled a gap in the Esplanade with a terrace of three high and irregular, almost baroque, houses contrasting with the traditional classicism of the existing buildings there. He later became the architect to both Sidmouth UDC and Honiton RDC. During his long years in practice, he left a distinctive stamp on Sidmouth's architecture.

After lunch we walked along the Esplanade, past the Victoria Hotel and then up the Bickwell valley to see examples of his work. We then returned to Knowle Drive to see the spectacular grotto. This is now in the grounds of a modern house but was originally one of the landscape features of Knowle Cottage which then occupied the site of today's council offices. Dating from the 1840s, this grotto is constructed of minerals and pebbles and is fronted by a rockery of conglomerate boulders. We are much indebted to its owner Mr Kiely for allowing us to visit. Finally, those who were not by now exhausted looked at the extensive grounds still attached to The Knowle which were currently the subject of a planning application for development with housing. This proposal has since been rejected.

The Summer Meeting took place at Holcombe Rogus on 22nd June. 55 members and guests attended. The morning session was held in the village hall. Charles Scott Fox, the author of a history of the house, first talked about its owners, the Bluett family, whose seat it became in the 13th century and who remained in occupation until the 19th century. The existing house was rebuilt in the 15th and 16th centuries but was in poor condition when acquired by the Rev Rayers in 1857. He employed John Hayward to carry out an extensive restoration and rebuilding. Charles Scott Fox outlined the many phases of construction and demolition up to the recent repairs and alterations by today's owner, Nigel Wiggins. Nigel Wiggins has funded tree-ring dates for the house which have enabled its phases to be precisely dated. Remarkably this has proved that the

Holcombe Court.

kingpost roof over the lower end is 16th century, a date at which such roofs are only normally found in Yorkshire, but Charles had identified that the Bluetts were connected by marriage to a Yorkshire family at this date. John Thorp followed this talk with a description of the great rebuilding of the medieval house by Roger Bluett in the 1550s who, *inter alia*, enclosed the hall's open roof with a ceiling, created a long gallery and introduced decorative plasterwork to the house, a cutting edge architectural fashion at that date and then essentially a court style, although later its use became ubiquitous in the county. From the start it employed a combination of ribs run *in situ* and applied motifs. The frieze in the long gallery at Holcombe Court is identical to that at Haddon Hall in Derbyshire, an indication of the high social status of such plasterwork at this time. John described other early plasterwork in Devon and houses where the same craftsmen worked, as for instance at Walronds in Cullompton. The third talk was by Caroline Garrett who had carried out an historical survey of the grounds of the Court. Not much is to be found out about the Tudor gardens although from field names it seems there was then a bowling green and a deer paddock although not a deer park. A survey of 1701 shows many orchards but more embellishment of the grounds took place in the 18th and 19th centuries including a folly, an ice house and a pinery (for pineapples). The earliest estate plan is 1821 and shows walks in the woodlands (these were cleared by 1838) and four fishponds. The demolition of the south wing in the 19th century by Rev Rayers opened up the front of the house; he enclosed the new forecourt with a balustrade and arched entrance. He made a large new pond and replanted the woodland. The layout of this period remains basically the same today albeit with some more recent additions such as a rockery and tennis courts. The final talk was by Stuart Blaylock on the subject of the Bluett Pew in the parish church, a remarkable and very rare survival of a 17th century private pew. This is attributed to Richard Bluett and probably dates from 1607. Although restored in 1880 much of it is original. It has been moved from its original position in the church and it is not clear where it initially stood.

The Bluett pew, Church of All Saints, Holcombe Rogus.

It is decorated above a frieze of balusters with 15 carved medallions (of which two are 19th century) showing scenes from the Old Testament probably copied from printed sources. Stuart described the medallions in detail. He considers that they may belong to an Exeter school of carving although there are also similarities with Somerset carving.

After lunch we reconvened in the church to be shown the pew by Stuart. Then we split into groups to visit the house, the stable block, the dovecote and the walled garden in rotation. The interior of the house is as memorable as the exterior is impressive with its fine great hall, its extensive plasterwork and other fittings and its intriguing long(ish) gallery with little box rooms leading off it. We were all greatly impressed by the immense work which Nigel Wiggins had carried out to both the house and the garden and very grateful to him for allowing us to visit. He even provided tea and cake at the end of the visit to complete a very good day.

The Committee has met six times during the year. Much discussion has taken place about organising the summer meeting and the AGM. It becomes harder to find suitable locations and perhaps we need to think about revisiting places or themes for a second time. After all the Group has been active for 25 years so recollections of early meetings are becoming somewhat hazy and many members have joined in more recent years. Another principal topic of discussion by the committee has been the future of Plymouth's 19th and early 20th century churches. These have been subject to severe attrition since WW2. Following our involvement last year in

the proposed demolition of St Philip and St James, Weston Mill, upon which I reported last year, we have been thinking of ways in which we can bring this issue into more public prominence. A publication of some sort would be one way of doing this. We have made various contacts in Plymouth and Richard Parker led a party of committee members to Plymouth in May to see some of the churches in question. One of these, St Simon's Mount Gould by Harbottle Reed had then only just been shut by its congregation, seemingly without reference to the church authorities. It is not listed but we felt that its architectural quality merited listing so we have requested this of English Heritage; the results of this request can be found in the Newsletter. Both Alphington and St Thomas churches in Exeter have also been the subject of proposals which concerned us. These have not yet got to stage where formal representations (if appropriate) can be made but we are monitoring the situation with them. The group were also asked to intervene in the proposed demolition by Plymouth Council of another unlisted but attractive building in Plymouth, the lodge at Pilgrim Primary School designed by the local architect H J Snell. The demolition seemed gratuitous and there was much local objection but this was ignored and the building is now regrettably lost. Otherwise we have not been involved in much casework and we hope, perhaps over-optimistically, that this is because not too many poor proposals for work to historic buildings are being made. We have however been recently approached by the Council for British Archaeology to see whether we would be prepared to become their local correspondents for Devon. The CBA are a statutory consultee for in particular works of demolition to listed buildings and such a link-up might be a means of better keeping our finger on the listed building pulse. It may on the other hand involve too much work for us to be able to carry out adequately. We are going to meet with them in the near future to explore this matter further. We have been approached by two councils to see if we had suggestions for buildings or structures which should be added to local lists i.e. non-statutory lists. This follows an initiative by English Heritage who see such lists as a useful contribution to the current localism agenda. Although we did not have any suggestions to make, if any of you have buildings in mind which you feel are suitable then I am sure your District Council would welcome these.

Finally Newsletter No 31, yet another exemplary publication, was published in the summer, thanks again to the enormous efforts of Jo Cox and Dawn Honeysett. I am sure they would be delighted to receive contributions for the next Newsletter and we would of course be pleased to hear of any issues concerning historic buildings in which you feel we might usefully become engaged.

Peter Child

Devon Buildings Group AGM: Treasurer's Report, Sharpham 2013

I want to begin by giving members a sense of the considerable work undertaken by dedicated individuals who ensure that Devon Buildings Group continues to promote the appreciation of the county's historic buildings, to provide advice regarding their preservation and repair, and to take an active part in their preservation through casework.

DBG's members enjoy a consistently high standard of Conferences and Annual General Meetings thanks to the professionalism and expertise of committee members. Noting places of interest in the built environment is one thing. Identifying an overarching theme or topic for the day, finding speakers to illustrate these and arranging for members to visit buildings which are not usually open to the public, is quite another. Committee members are frequently called on as speakers. Preliminary visits are undertaken to ensure that venues for meetings are suitable, to liaise with owners of houses, to work out the logistics for walks or for travelling between buildings, to check access and parking. Caterers may have to be booked. Notes for the day are written and printed, envelopes stuffed and labelled with Newsletters and Registers, and cakes are baked. Laptops, screens, blackouts, seating, signs and refreshments also appear on the day.

Committee members attend six meetings a year and many expenses incurred in their work are never claimed for. Minutes are written, casework reported on and undertaken. The DBG has an excellent website only because we are lucky enough to have members with the expertise to maintain, and to refresh it. The site plays an important role in fulfilling the DBG's objectives as in its Constitution. This carries, for instance, an archive of newsletters which can be downloaded free of charge by anyone. The DBG also disseminates annual newsletters of a very high standard, both in authorship and production, but relies heavily upon two committee members who are willing to devote their skills, time and patience to editing and preparing them for printing. The production of the bi-annual Register also requires patience and dogged determination so that members can consult it for specialists in the research and maintenance of historic buildings.

Members who are unable to attend meetings still get good value for their money. Roughly £10 from each subscription in this accounting year was spent on newsletters, registers and the website. The newsletters cost £5.45 each, plus £1.40 postage, and money was saved by the inclusion of the AGM notices for today. Once again the committee agreed that, although savings could be made by only posting newsletters online, members valued receiving printed copies. Furthermore, institutions such as the Ancient Monuments Society and the Devon and Exeter Institution archive newsletters for their members to consult. Sales of newsletters at £10 each also generate some of DBG's income. The register cost £1.72 to print and post, and the website costs each member about a pound a year.

Devon Buildings Group is very pleased to welcome seven new members this year. The society began with a membership of 56 and this peaked at 194 in 2010. Today membership stands at 164 having declined again in response to the increase in subscriptions and the recession. Ten members, for example, allowed their memberships to lapse. Gathering in the full rate of subs has involved many extra prompts and reminders; sixteen bankers' orders still remain to be updated for the third year running. On a more cheerful note, it is reassuring that more than a hundred memberships have existed for at least ten years and of these about eighty began in the 1990s or even in 1989.

Writing in 2004, Ann Adams recorded that she attempted to keep the costs of meetings to around £150, although I am not sure if she was including the costs of sending out notifications, and the DBG was not insured then.

The 2012 AGM at Sidmouth was attended by 49 people including four guests and two speakers. The accounts sheet shows that the AGM cost £19.57. However, several payments were made in advance of the meeting in October and the cut off date for the auditing of DBG's accounts at 30th September. The total cost of the AGM was actually £172.57 (room hire £75.00, notifications £38.00, meals etc. for speakers £59.57). Ann would have approved. However, I have not factored in that insurance for each meeting costs £83.08 (Tower Gate £131.16, CBA £35.00).

The 2013 Summer Conference at Holcombe Rogus was attended by 55 people including five speakers. The day cost more than usual because the committee felt that they could not ask members to pay the full amount of £7.50 per tour of Holcombe Court. Since the money raised was to be donated to Holcombe Church funds by Mr Wiggins, it was decided to subsidise each tour by £2.50. This resulted in a 'top-up' donation from DBG of £142.50. The cost for the day, excluding the donation, was £214.23 (hire of hall £35.00, notifications £65, meals etc. for speakers £114.23). But Ann might have blanched at the total cost of £356.73.

As the audited accounts show, the DBG is in a financially healthy position thanks to the sales of the architectural salvage, the increase in subs and the use of email to counter rising postage costs. However, it should be born in mind that, in the last two years, the DBG's regular income has only just covered the costs of its activities.

All of the DBG's money is in its current account; a total of £6,729.04 on the 30th September 2013.

This includes a sum of £681.11 from the closure of the TSB savings account and the total profit of £3,806.52*, after expenses, from the raffle and sales of the angels and font.

I had intended to differentiate these monies from the DBG's regular sources of income by depositing four and a half thousand pounds into a new savings account, even though this would only provide about £20 interest a year. This would have left about two thousand pounds in the current account. But it has proved well-nigh impossible to open a new savings account. Banks are not interested in providing a service for small societies and clubs, a fact confirmed when the bank manager I saw during the last futile attempt admitted that she found such applications an irritation, and by three friends at a meeting recently who had experienced similar problems. I won't even attempt to go into any details!

So the DBG has £4,500 which should be regarded as savings, and around another two thousand pounds ready for today's costs and next year's activities. It is important to bear in mind that not all subs are paid before the main expenditure of producing the newsletters. Although the DBG's finances are in good order, the reconciliation shows that the excess of income over expenditure for this year was only £254.90. Future decisions regarding extra expenditure on such things as equipment, publications or bursaries should be based upon the premise that the Group has four and a half thousand pounds of savings to call upon.

Lyn Auty

*Raffle £412.60 (£515.00 – £102.40 gambling licence and tickets)
Architectural salvage £3,783.22 after commission/VAT, less £250 gift to National Trust for storage and £139.30 expenses for transportation.

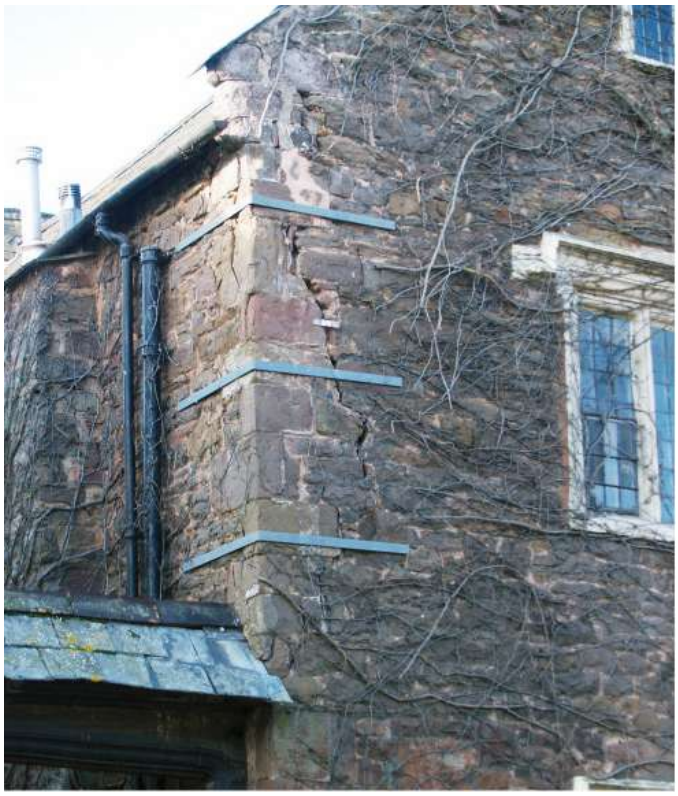
The Walronds

On June 13th the Walronds, Cullompton, a high quality early 17th century town house (see articles in the DBG 2010 and 2011 Newsletters), was formally opened in a ceremony attended by the Duke of Gloucester, following repair and adaptation.

The rescue has taken 18 years, from 1996 when the main owner, Miss Severn, asked Mrs Jane Campbell to form a group to take on the property and give it a useful future for the community. By then the house was suffering from neglected structural problems and a history of well-meaning interventions made by an elderly owner (one of three) without the advantage of good quality professional advice or the funds for properly-experienced craftsmen: this in spite of selling off part of the burgage plot for development. Major beams had rotted from the walls; walls and chimneys were failing through water ingestion, cob was failing as a result of cementitious renders, the slate roof was in urgent need of replacement and some of the interior features and finishes had collapsed or were about to. The boarded-up house contributed to the sense of a downward spiral

POOR IMPRESSION: Philip King by the boarded-up windows of the Grade I listed building, The Walronds

Traders hope to restore civic pride



Above left. Trustees at Scaffold. Picture courtesy of the *Mid Devon Gazette***. Top right. The key ceremony, 1st October 2012.**

in Cullompton, a town suffering from economic problems. The Walronds was placed on the English Heritage 'At Risk' register on 17 February 2005. Emergency repairs to the roof and stair tower in that year did little to arrest the rate of decay. The imagination to see that conservation would make a difference not just to the building, but to the whole town—place and people—and sheer hard work, led by Jane Campbell and Colonel Michael Woodock, has seen the project succeed. Challenges met include bringing a building in three ownerships into one while showing real care for elderly owners; a failed HLF bid; the unexpected withdrawal of the Landmark Trust as partners and finding a replacement; a challenge from HMRC over VAT that took two years to resolve in the Trust's

Rear elevation. Above. Perilous condition of the stair turret and the hall chimney shaft dismantled. Below. Following repair and rendering, the rear turret and chimney rebuilt, the chimney shaft reinstated and the garden redesigned


Above, left. A window problem. Above, right. A window repaired.


Ornamental plasterwork, propped to prevent collapse of ceiling [above left] and following repairs [above right].


Above left. The condition of the hall stack and ceiling putting the 1605 overmantel at risk. Above right. The hall overmantel cleaned and secured.

Hall overmantel in all its glory.

favour; and adjusting plans for the building to deal with a funding shortfall and worse condition than anticipated. Successful grant-aid applications were made to 13 different funding bodies and there has been a welcome to all visitors throughout the project (very good cakes provided), generating private donations.

Under the supervision of Marcus Chantrey of Benjamin and Beauchamp, the house now has a triple-lapped roof of Trevillet slate; 90 tonnes of lime render on its walls: 4.5 kms of MICC cable providing a safe electrical supply system, and a completely new plumbing and heating system. Almost every lintel, major beam, rafter and purlin has had stainless steel flitches let into it. Every window frame has been remade and ancient glass and catches reinstated. Historic timber has been preserved by splicing in seasoned oak; patina has been retained. The decorated plasterwork has been restored where missing and the hall overmantel is now cleared of its garish colour, secure and splendid. Entrances, pathways and garden walls have been made good and the gardens are in good order. The upper floors are in use as a holiday let, the ground floor and most of the burgage plot garden in community use. The project has not only resurrected the house but lifted the whole of the town centre.

Jo Cox

Plymouth's 19th Century Churches

The DBG committee has for some time now been concerned about the future of Plymouth's heritage of C of E churches, especially those of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The rapid expansion of Plymouth in the 19th century led to an extensive programme of church building so that today there are arguably more churches than can feasibly be used for their original purpose. Following severe losses in the Blitz, other churches, over subsequent years, have been declared redundant and have been demolished, usually to be replaced by social housing. While this at least offers some benefit, the replacement buildings are of minimal architectural quality, while the lost churches were often the only buildings of any consequence in their locality and their demolition deprives unexciting areas of housing of their only visual focus. Most recently St Philip and St James, Weston Mill (1912) has been granted permission for demolition, while St Simon's, Mount Gould (1905-7) has seemingly been abandoned by its congregation in anticipation of a similar fate. Neither church is listed but both are of architectural significance; the DBG is currently awaiting English Heritage's decision on our request for listing St Simon's.

St Philip and St James, Weston Mill (1912) with its extraordinary 1963 concrete and stained glass apse. On stylistic grounds, this can be attributed to Walls and Pearn (pers.comm. Jeremy Gould), glass by Fr. Charles Norris of Buckfast Abbey.

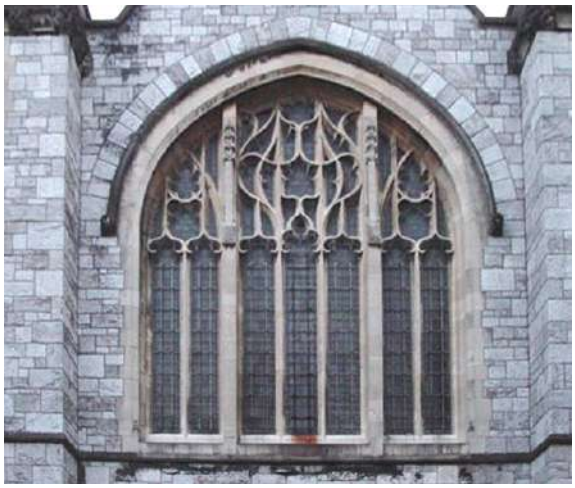
The committee believe that an overview of the existing situation with the C of E churches in Plymouth would enable better decision-making on their future. Such a survey should look at what has already been lost as well as assessing the significance of what has survived. DBG members Linda Watson and Bridget Gillard (both with strong Plymouth connections) have volunteered to coordinate such a survey with the aim of producing a report for next year's Newsletter. We are delighted that they are able to do this and look forward to their conclusions. If any member would like to be involved please do contact Linda (L.Watson-2@plymouth.ac.uk). She and Bridget would be happy to provide guidance to anyone interested but not experienced in this field.

Peter Child

STOP PRESS: St Simon's, Mount Gould (1905-7)

Since the piece on Plymouth churches in this newsletter was written, English Heritage has decided that St Simon's is worthy of listing, albeit only at Grade 2. The DBG requested its listing precisely a year ago, so English Heritage's wheels have ground slowly but they have at last come to a considered and sensible decision. St Simon's is the only complete church designed by the Exeter architect, Harbottle Read, who otherwise was involved in the alteration or repair of a great number of churches in the West Country. Sadly it was never finished and the west front was only completed in 1957 using limestone for the walling taken from bombed buildings and modelled cement (a period curiosity) for the doors and windows in a wholly Perpendicular in style in stark contrast to the rest of the church, the character of the rest of the exterior at least being a kind of gothic Art Nouveau. Even in its unfinished state and without its planned tower, the church is an impressive building, occupying the centre of a sloping square, flanked by the late 19th century suburban housing which it and the other churches of the Three Towns (of Plymouth) Church Extension scheme were intended to serve.






English Heritage describe its qualities as follows: *The external impact of the church is strong, with the tall street elevation emphasised by slanting buttresses moving towards the complex geometry of the east end; the dramatic massing of the whole is varied by vital flamboyant window tracery with an Art Nouveau character, and other surprising but subtle stone detailing, such as the crocketed pinnacles which adorn the east window. Internally, the building is lofty and spacious, with theatricality at the east end in the arrangement of the side chapels, vestry and sacristy, and the spiral staircase. The interior's stone carving is of high quality, with Biblical texts announcing the chancel, and engaging angels within; particularly unusual are the nave capitals, in which rich naturalistic carving surrounds cartouches bearing initials, thought to commemorate donors to the church, apparently prominent local Masons. The church fittings are also of interest, with a number of notable items dating from the first half of the C20; the suite of 1920s furnishings by the Pinwill sisters, well-known local carvers, is of particular interest, including elaborate choir stalls, and probably the lectern.*

Sadly St Simon's seems to have been abandoned by its congregation and its future is hard to predict. At least having it listed will ensure that any proposals for it will ensure that its value as historic building will be properly considered–something that does not seem to have happened with other churches of this period in Plymouth.

Peter Child

The Sharpham Staircase

The 2012 AGM was held at Sharpham, in Ashprington, just outside Totnes. The first phase of the house was begun to the designs of Sir Robert Taylor in c.1769. Members were fascinated by the construction and design of the jaw-dropping staircase that occupies an extravagantly large proportion of the Phase One building. Chris Nicholls of the Sharpham Trust had kindly arranged for the rug on the stairhall floor to be rolled up so we could see, inscribed in the floor paving, the elegant geometry of its setting out. However, some of us who are not designers or engineers remained somewhat baffled. Bill Harvey was in attendance and not only brought along a model to show why the staircase does not fall down, but explains below how it was set out. In the process he reveals something of a structural engineer's thought processes when analysing an historic structure without the advantage of detailed measurements.

Oliver Bosence suggests that members hungry for more education about this type of staircase could seek out a relevant article 'Stone cantilevered Staircases' by Sam Price and Helen Rogers of Price and Myers, Consulting Engineers, in *The Structural Engineer*, 18 January 2005, pp.30-36.

Jo Cox

Setting out the Sharpham Staircase

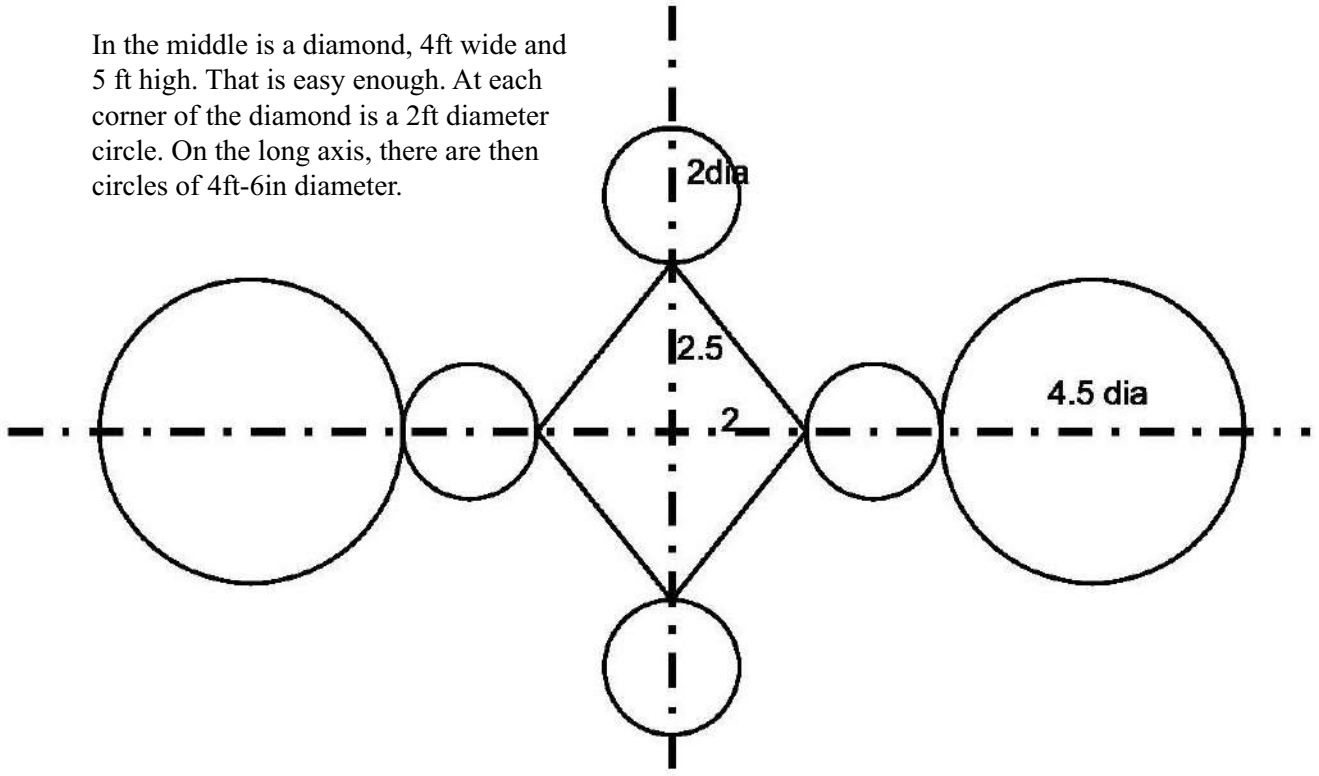
The staircase in Sharpham looks like an ellipse, as does the hall that contains it, but it isn't. It was set out using the same techniques used by mediaeval masons, a scale of feet and large fractions and something to draw circles. An ellipse can be drawn with a loop of string, 2 nails and a pencil but there are reasons why that wouldn't work for the staircase. So, perhaps we should start with the stair itself and the issues there.

The stair runs begin and end with a tight radius and then open out into a long sweep. An ellipse does that, but in an ellipse the radius of the curve changes continuously so that every tread in the stair would be different. That would drive the mason mad, but more to the point it would be very difficult to use. To switch treads from a tight corner to a longer run has been normal ever since stairs were straightened out from a spiral. Where space was difficult, a turn at the end could create a more manageable fit with the going and rise constant on the line of walking (roughly the centre of the stair). On those corners, the treads narrow to nothing at the inner post and widen considerably on the outside corner. Even a modest change of going is acceptable where there is a marked corner to give the user a clue, without that trips would be frequent and trips on stairs are not a good idea.

So the stair, and the hall surrounding it, is built with only two radii, a tight one at the corner and a broader one through most of the run. Once that decision is made, it becomes possible to have only two sizes of tread (though actually the first floor stair has smaller treads and is steeper).

If the stair hall itself is not elliptical then the pattern in the floor cannot be either. The setting out of both will be the same so we can move on to the pattern and think about that.

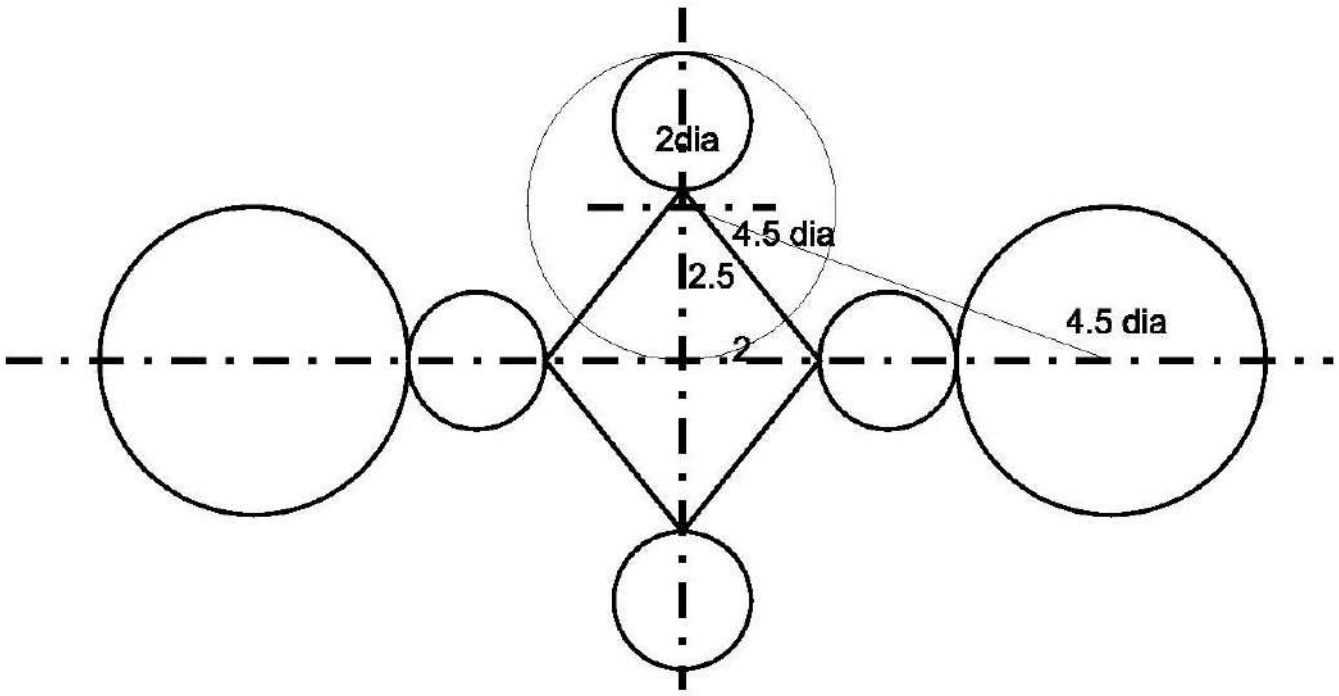
In the middle is a diamond, 4ft wide and 5 ft high. That is easy enough. At each corner of the diamond is a 2ft diameter circle. On the long axis, there are then circles of 4ft-6in diameter.



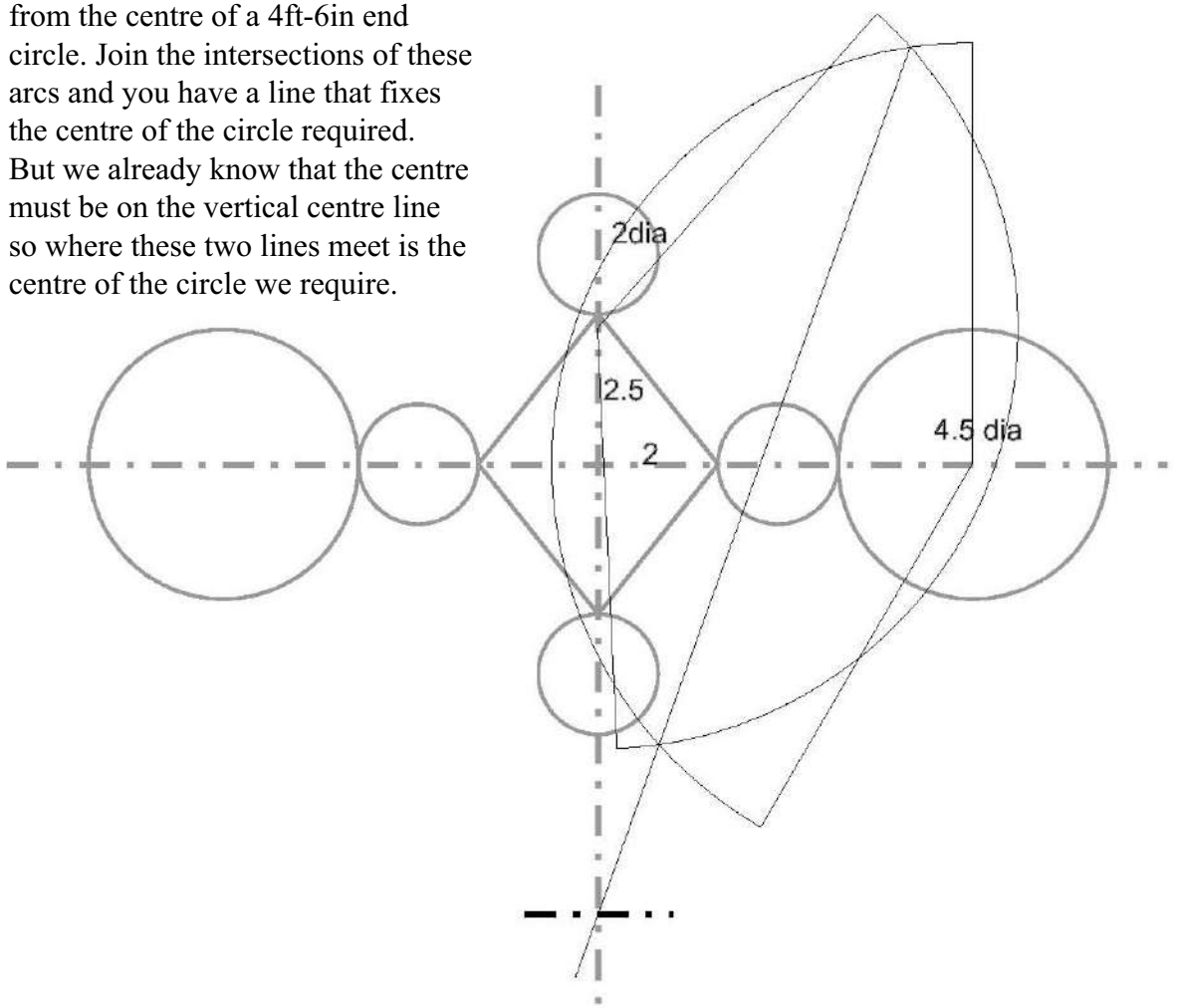
The hard bit is then finding the centre for a circle that will pass through the top circle at a tangent on the centre line and continue to meet the 4ft-6in circles at a tangent.

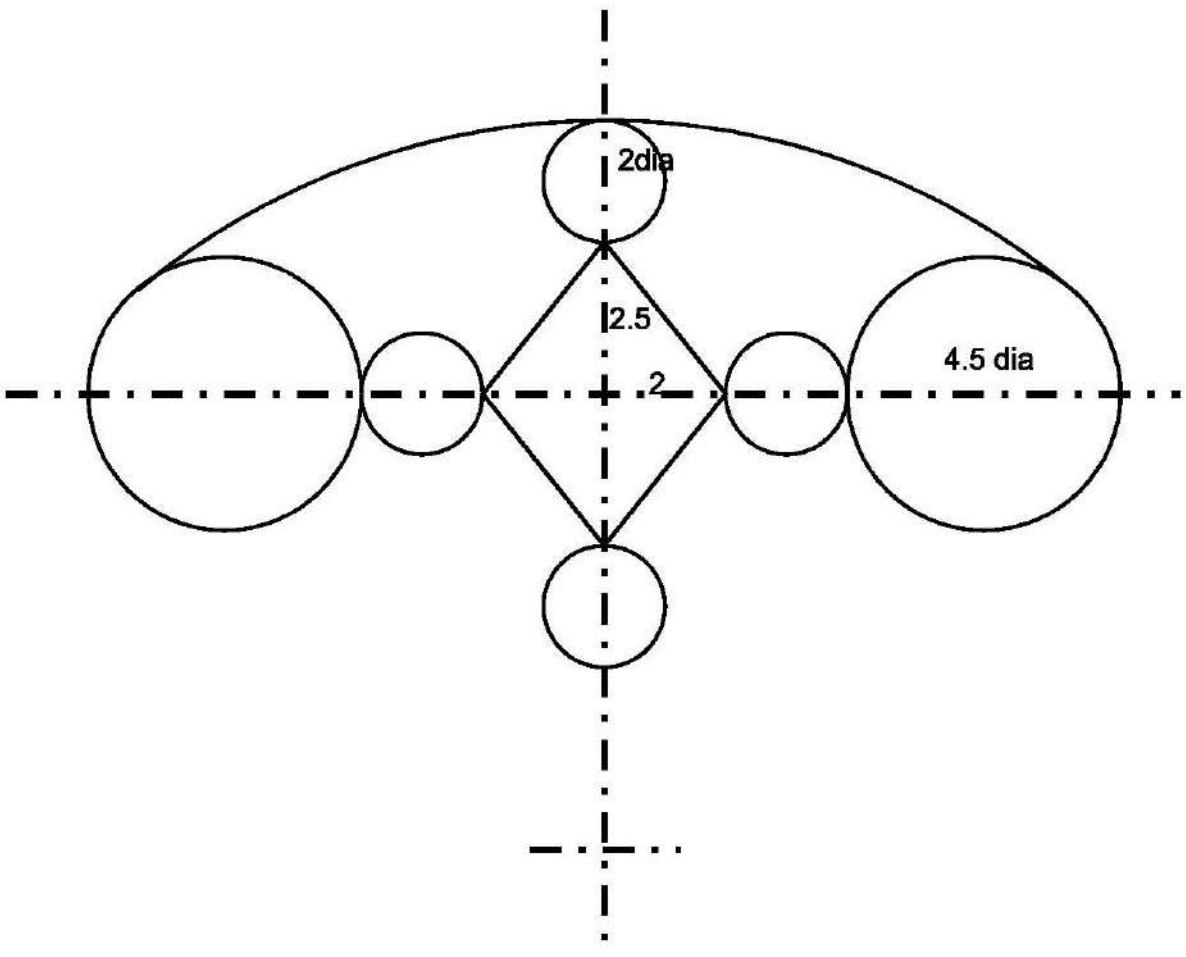
The trick there is to note that any radius circle that is also tangent to the 2ft one can form a basis of the setting out. So, choose one of the same diameter as the other circle we wish to touch (4ft-6in). Find the centre of a circle that passes through the centre of the 4ft6in-ers and crosses (what is drawn here as) the vertical centre line, 2ft-3in from the top.

That can all be done with compasses. First, strike off a point 2ft 6in down from the top edge at the centre line.

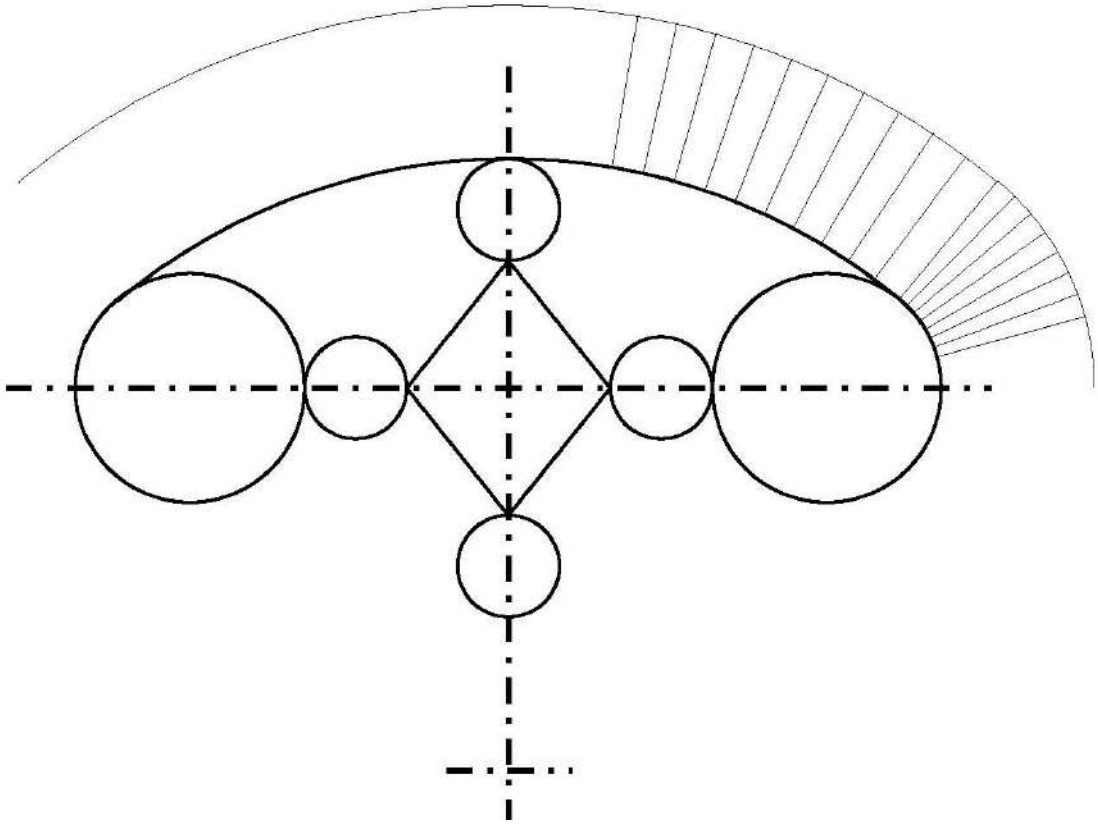


Then set your compasses wide and draw two arcs, one from the point just set out and one from the centre of a 4ft-6in end circle. Join the intersections of these arcs and you have a line that fixes the centre of the circle required. But we already know that the centre must be on the vertical centre line so where these two lines meet is the centre of the circle we require.

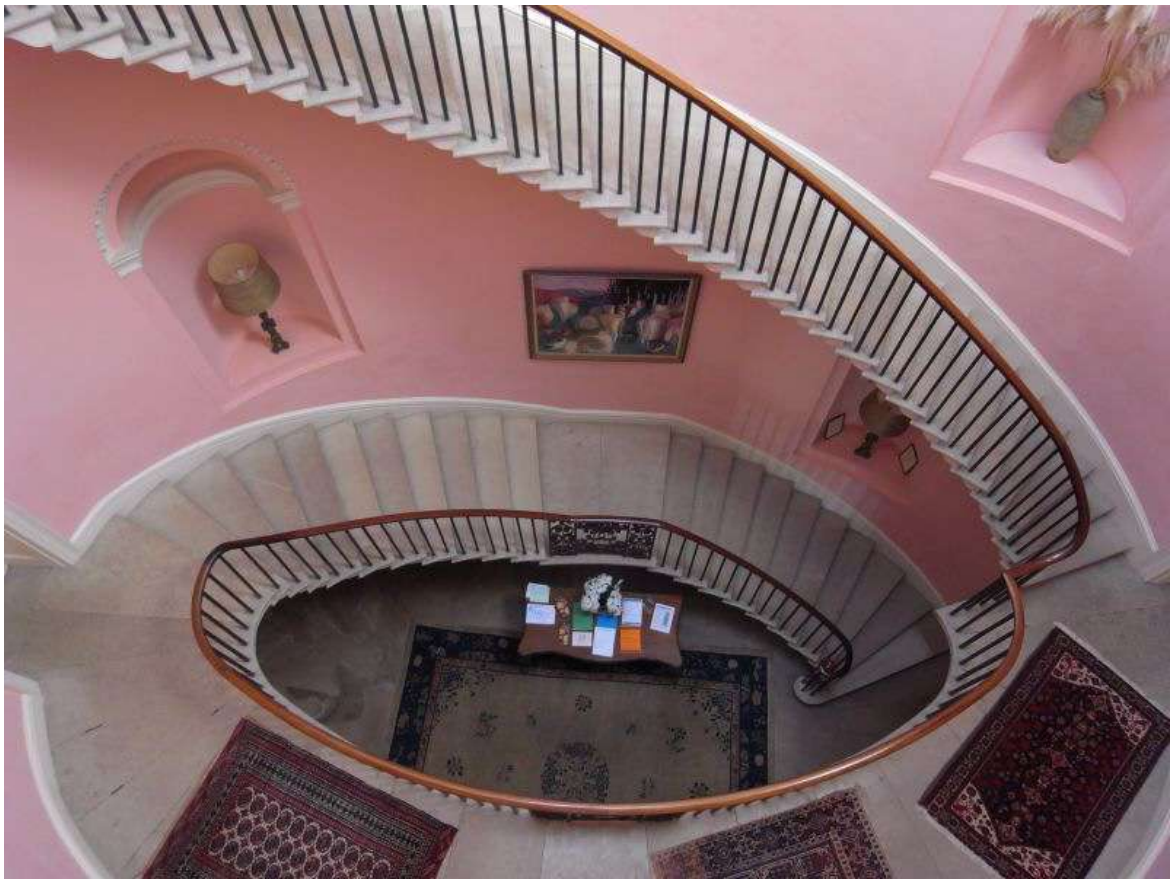




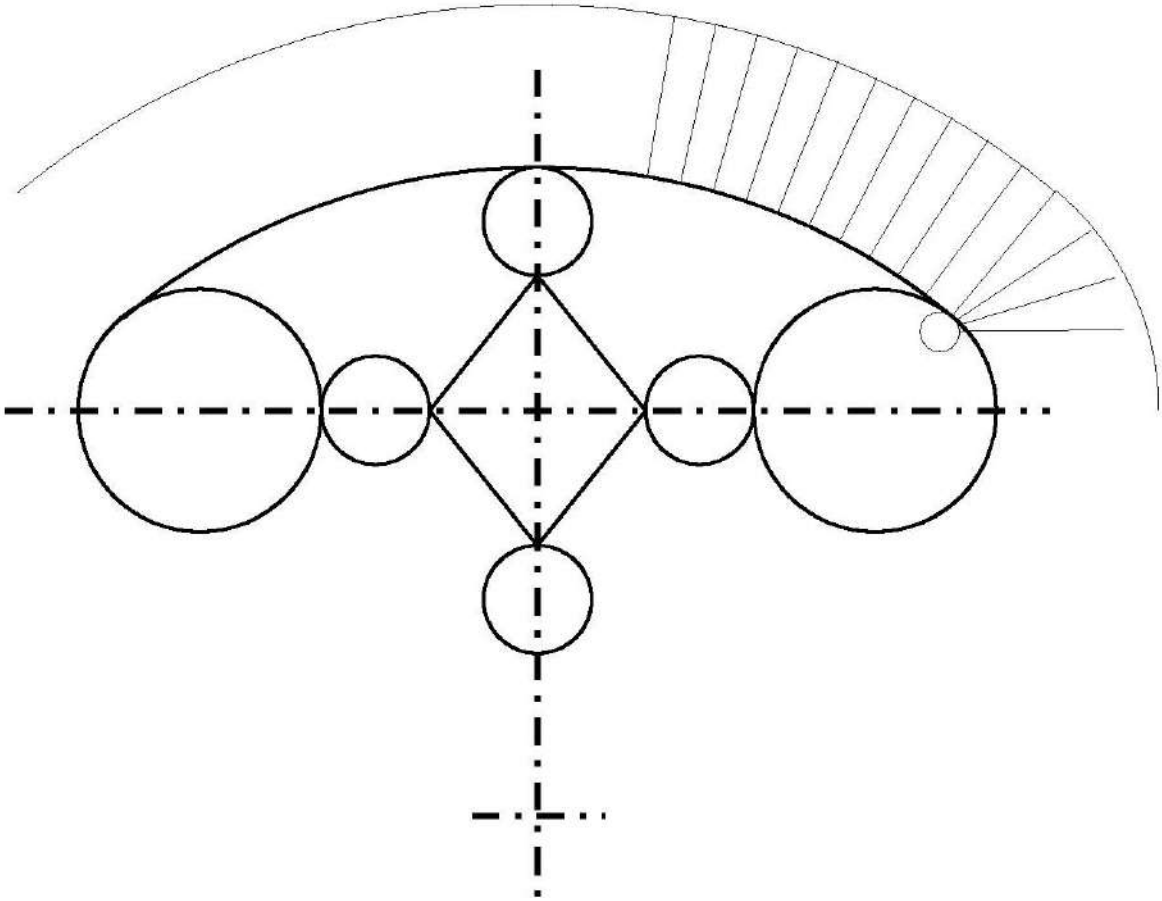
Having found that centre, the inner and outer edges of the stair can be set out from the same point. Here I don't have dimensions so I have simply done 2 step sizes as an indication.



But look at the photograph and you can see that this isn't right. The end steps do not have edges at right angles to the wall but turn much sharper. It took a bit of thought to sort that out.

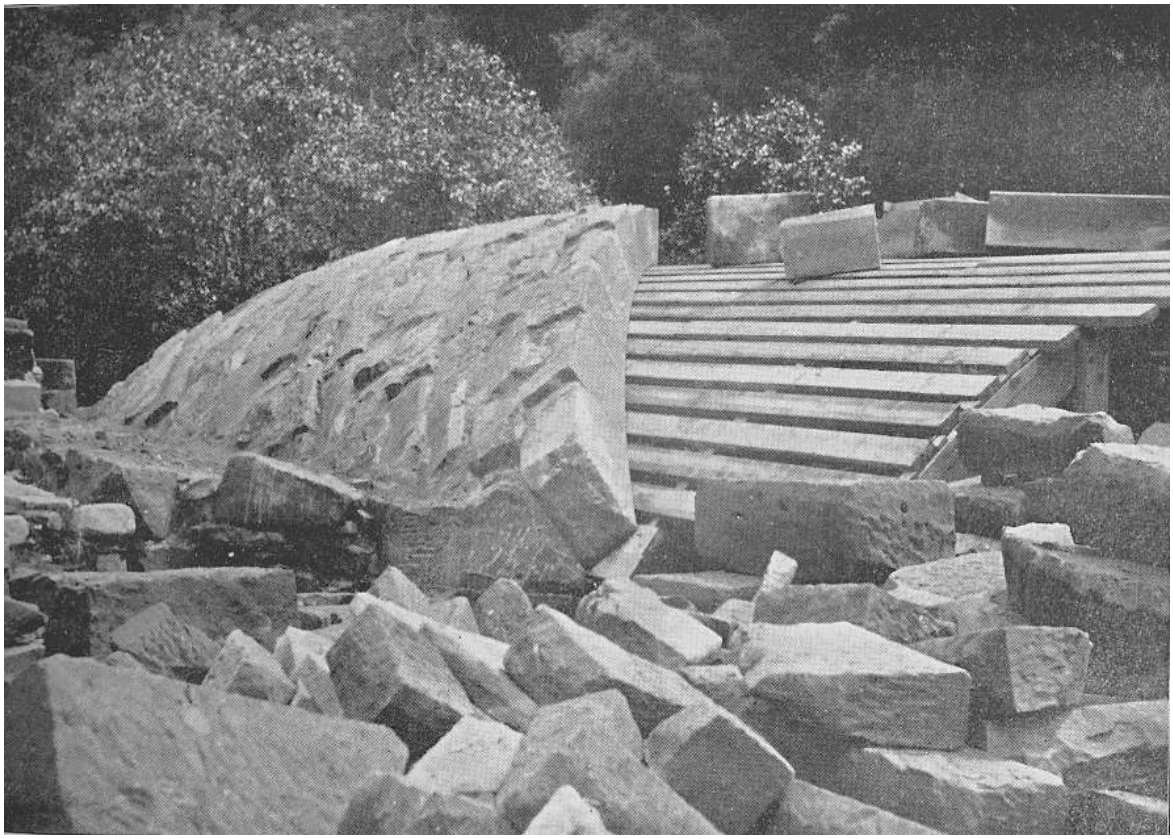


Taylor would want the bottom stair to finish more or less parallel to the long axis of the hall, but offset to leave clear space for the door. By turning on a much sharper circle, he could do that and still keep the end steps all the same. They just need to be a bit longer at the wall end for each step down. And since the wall end is built in, it doesn't need to be neat, or even an accurate length, so long as it is long enough.



I hope this has communicated some of the joy of geometry and given an idea about the sort of things architects (and engineers) had to work out in those days. There was great pride in getting this sort of thing right.

And if you think that is clever, think about the stereotomy (three dimensional cutting) of the stones in skew arch bridges. No they didn't trim the stones to fit *in situ*.



Bill Harvey

The Origins and Early Years of the Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society (1837-47)

The Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society (officially entitled the Exeter Diocesan Society for Promoting the Study of Ecclesiastical Architecture, shortened as EDAS hereafter) was founded in 1841. At its quarterly meeting in October 1841, Philip Chilwell Delagarde, a fashionable Exeter eye surgeon and stalwart committee member, set out the new Society's mission.[1] The Society was established, he told the meeting, in response to the parlous state of Anglican churches. He exhorted its members to carry out research and survey work; to provide models and ground plans to encourage the adoption of appropriate internal arrangements for new or restored churches, advising members to emulate but not slavishly copy old work; he championed the rekindling of lost skills, notably glass making; and urged the Society to publish and to recruit new members. Within two years the Society had over 200 members, and grew to 270 by 1847. It published a high-quality series of transactions, finely illustrated by plans, drawings and engravings, often meticulously hand coloured—a major publication achievement, far more ambitious than that of similar societies of its day. [Fig.1] By the middle of the decade it had permanent premises to hold its impressive library and collection of drawings and objects (mainly prints, models and casts). A network of daughter groups had been set up based on the deaneries, each with a secretary, designed to promote the local efficiency of the Exeter Society and it was well advanced in a deanery-by-deanery survey of the churches of Devon, modestly entitled 'Rough Notes'. Some EDAS members were motivated by antiquarian interest, others by the urgent need for church improvement, many by both these things. The membership figures for 1841-2 suggest that the initiative early on lay more with laymen than clergymen but during the greater part of the 1840s, a striking balance was achieved between lay and clerical members.

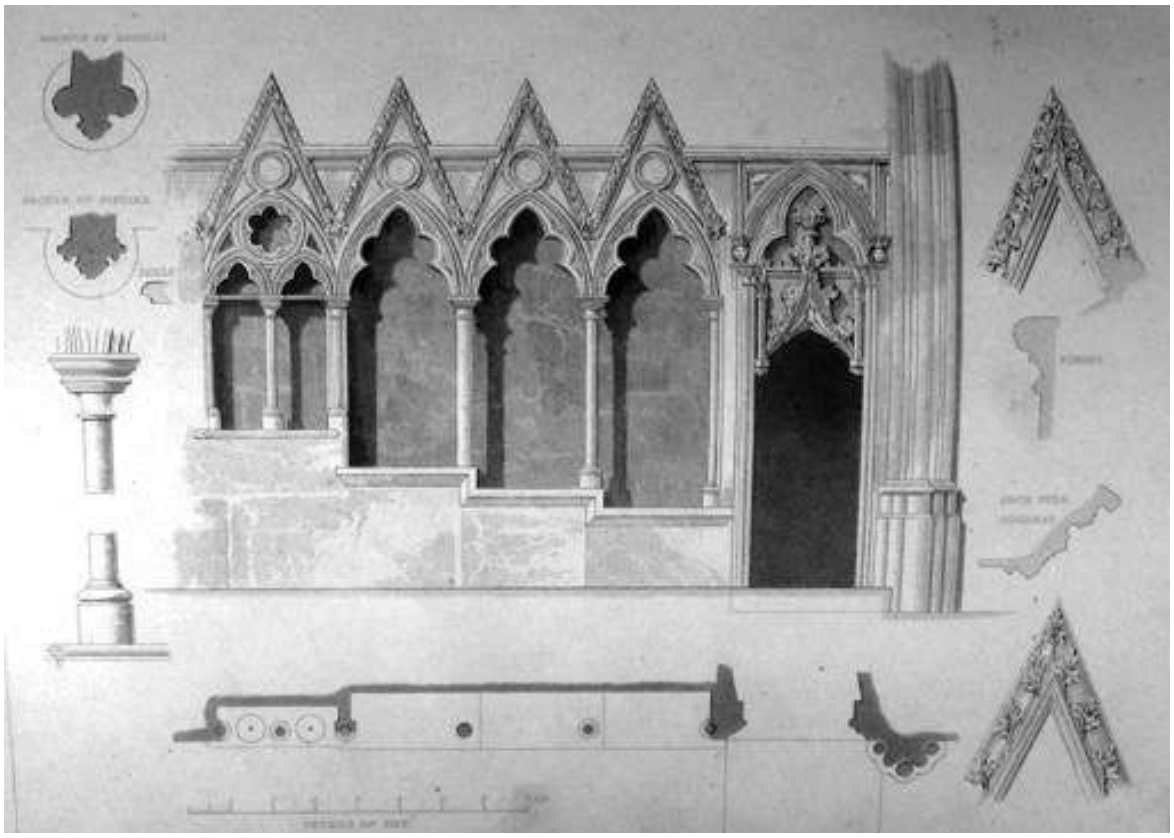


Fig.1. TEDAS set a high standard of architectural drawing for a local society. Many unpublished drawings survive in the Society's scrapbook, held at the Devon & Exeter Institution. This engraving of the sedilia at Exeter Cathedral is from a drawing by Hayward's assistant, Frank Wills, who went with Bishop Medley to Canada in 1845.

EDAS MEMBERSHIP 1841-67

YEAR	TOTAL NO	CLERICAL	%	LAYMEN	%
1841	111	44	39.6	67	60.4
1842	169	69	40.8	100	59.2
1843	208	100	48	108	52
1845	256	125	48.8	131	51.2
1846	257	124	48.2	133	51.8
1847	270	142	52.6	128	47.4
1850	253	127	50.2	126	49.8
1853	211	104	49.3	107	50.7
1857	158	71	45	87	55
1867	162	75	46.3	87	53.7

Numbers for 1841-2 are derived from the 1841-4 minute book in the Devon & Exeter Institution. The others come from the lists of members published in TEDAS.

Right from the beginning, the Society and its work were seen as something special and its influence spread quickly. It was the third society of its kind in the country following the university-based Oxford Architectural and Cambridge Camden Societies, founded within a few months of each other in 1839,[2] and the first one to be established on a regional or diocesan basis—the diocese of Exeter then encompassing (until 1876) the two counties of Devon and Cornwall. John Medley, its dynamic secretary and the diocesan architect, John Hayward, were singled out by the Cambridge Society's journal, *The Ecclesiologist*, as among the most advanced men of their day—Exwick Church (1841-2 by Hayward with Medley's help) was described as being the 'best specimen of a modern church' it had seen. The High-Church party in Scotland chose Hayward as architect for its bridgehead church at Jedburgh. Of lasting significance was the departure of Medley to New Brunswick, Canada, as Bishop of Fredericton in 1845. With him went two of Hayward's staff, Henry Dudley and Frank Wills. Wills worked with Butterfield on the new cathedral there, and then moved on to become architect for the New York Ecclesiological Society, an influential agent for the dissemination of the ecclesiologically correct Gothic style in the United States. All this is reasonably well known.[3] The questions addressed in this paper are: first, why was EDAS set up when it was, given that there was already a strong current of church enlargement and rebuilding in the diocese? And, second: what did it achieve in its early and most dynamic period of activity?

Background to the setting-up of EDAS

During the second quarter of the 19th century, men and women within the Anglican community felt that their church was facing a crisis comparable with the cataclysmic years of civil war and republicanism in the mid 17th century. The menace of godlessness raised its head both on the continent and at home. The French Revolution and the worldwide wars it unleashed seemed to bring into sharp relief the dire consequences of rejecting Christian principles and overturning the ordained social order. A precarious peace had been long established by the late 1830s, but there was thought to be an equally great and more insidious threat from within. The post-war depression had created hardship on a scale that traditional measures of social relief were ill equipped to handle. The unprecedented growth of the industrial towns and cities rendered the old parish structures unequal to the task of reaching those most in need. In January 1837, Henry Phillpotts, the Bishop of Exeter, addressed a public meeting at Exeter to set up an association to raise funds for the building or enlarging of Anglican churches in the diocese—a meeting that attracted around 300 people, 'a considerable portion of whom were ladies'. While recognising that the situation

in his diocese was not as dire as in the industrial heartlands, he thought it bad enough: in parts of Plymouth there was only accommodation in churches for one-seventh of the 80,000 souls who lived there, and much of this was available only to those who could afford pew rents. Church building was seen by many as the key to re-establishing social order and injecting a heightened sense of spiritual meaning into the lives of Christians. It was, as the Rev. George Hole reminded his Exeter audience, the only sure weapon with which to combat heathenism at home, which existed at far higher levels than the public realised.[4]

Across the country as a whole, men and women from both the High and the Evangelical wings of the Anglican church were promoting vigorous campaigns of church building and extension, often in partnership with each other, frequently using state funding set aside for the task of Christianizing through church building. Some Anglicans were generous enough to pay tribute to the zeal of their 'Dissenting brethren', who provided religious instruction where the Church had no room; a view that enjoyed considerable support at the Exeter meeting, including from the bishop himself. Although Phillpotts later became notably active in this field—he established 77 new parishes and districts and encouraged the erection of many churches and chapels elsewhere in the two counties—the West Country had been rather slow off the mark, responding grudgingly to earlier fund-raising campaigns, despite the Incorporated Church Building Society and its local branch 'having conferred liberal support on this diocese'. Perhaps the main problem was ignorance. Even the Bishop felt culpable: he told the 1837 meeting, 'I am free to take my share for the omission, for I did not know that the diocesan society was in existence'. But even though that meeting elicited the promise of substantial funds, there was a feeling among many clergymen and laymen that something deeper lay behind the inertia.

Delagarde, at the 1841 meeting, also referred to a 'vague feeling of mortification and regret' that lay behind the establishment of EDAS: a need to address deeper issues. What, then, marked EDAS out as being different from the other church building bodies? There was, after all, a general concern about the lack of church accommodation. Most agreed that new churches and extensions should be soundly constructed, provide value for money and a decent setting for worship. Many shared the view that a modern church should expel signs of social distinction such as private pews and extravagant funerary monuments. But EDAS injected a new element into the situation, one with the potential to turn sour. The views of many of its members were underpinned by a deep respect for the catholicity of the Anglican Church, one that valued continuity and held that the authority of the priest was derived from the bishop who stood in direct succession to the Apostles. EDAS laid far more emphasis than the other church building bodies on the style and ethos of new churches and church furnishings. A church as the house of God should reflect the sacramental role of the priest and the centrality of communion. Furthermore, a church should be Gothic. Gothic churches created a visual link to the architecture of the Middle Ages and helped reinforce, symbolically, the chain of unbroken priestly succession from the time of the Apostles to the present day. This combination of factors—the stress on the special status of the priest, on reverence and on reviving the Gothic style—led EDAS to be perceived by many not simply as High Church but tarred by the Tractarian or Puseyite brush, even as Papist.[5] This was no light matter in Devon: the Hon. G M Fortescue maintained that 'there is no county in England where a more deep-rooted ... bigotry on the Catholic question prevails with half the violence it does here' and blamed much of this on 'thick-headed parsons and squires'.[6] The perception of EDAS as a Roman Catholic Trojan horse led to a haemorrhaging of members in around 1850 and forced the Society to redefine itself as one that dealt equally with secular as well as church antiquities, moving it away from church politics. But that is another story that I hope to tell elsewhere: during most of the 1840s the Society managed to steer a middle course between the extremes of High and Low.

During its early years, EDAS managed successfully to grow—both in terms of membership and influence—and kept any overt High Church tendencies reasonably under control. At first, it appears to have been closer in feel to the Oxford Architectural Society rather than its more militant, campaigning Cambridge cousin. John (later Cardinal) Newman, a benefactor of the

Oxford group, though never a member, described it as 'the only neutral ground' in the city where Tractarians and their opponents could meet to discuss ecclesiological matters, and EDAS may well have served a similar function in Exeter.[7] Although overwhelmingly conservative, the Society's officers and members were far from extreme. EDAS embraced Whigs and liberal conservatives such as Lord Ebrington and Sir Thomas Acland, as well as Tory ultras such as Lewis William Buck and high and dry, old school Tories like Colonel Baldwin Fulford, both vehemently opposed to constitutional change of any sort. It contained those in favour as well as those against catholic relief and electoral reform. It was a broad church, its members generally enlightened and humane—not one to attract Fortescue's thick-headed parsons and squires. But nor did all those who shared Fortescue's disdain for his neighbours prove to be natural recruits to EDAS either. Edward Baring Gould, for instance, was one such: bored with the small-mindedness of local society—the gentry 'drones without stings', the curate 'who wears out shoe leather, but not brains'—he was (according to his son, Sabine, the famous rector of Lew Trenchard) 'a distinctly religious man', cosmopolitan, well-travelled and a talented artist, but nonetheless, 'totally incapable of appreciating the beautiful in architecture'.[8] His ill-informed treatment of his parish church was precisely the sort of thing that galvanized EDAS and Sabine's ecclesiological restoration incensed family members of his father's generation. The case of Baring Gould, senior, shows that those who opposed, or were indifferent, to the exhortations of EDAS, did not all conform to the image the Society propagated of them as being bone-headed, irreligious backwoodsmen. And, although EDAS's rules did not formally exclude non-Anglicans, its energetic Anglican reform agenda effectively did so and those who were attracted mainly by the Society's research and recording activities would not remain long in doubt that its main purpose was to promote ecclesiologically correct church building and restoration: when this became apparent, several left.

People: movers and shakers, activists and members

EDAS members included several who commanded Devon's political heights: many of the old aristocratic families and political leaders from both the county and Exeter city joined, along with the Bishop and Dean and numerous cathedral dignitaries and diocesan officials. And the great and the good did not simply lend their names—several were active in meetings, especially in the early period as the Society got off the ground. Notable among these were Lord Courtenay, growing in stature as the county's most powerful magnate and Sir Thomas Acland, singled out by Sir Walter Scott as the leader of the church party in parliament: both attended meetings and held the office of President in the Society's early years. And, although not competing with these aristocrats in terms of political power, the Coleridge family—of whom eleven became EDAS members—with their bishops, judges, philosophers and teachers, exerted a moral influence that was disproportionate to their landed wealth. Together, these men created a favourable political climate in which the Society could prosper. Despite its being a broad church, politically, the overall feel of the Society was conservative. The leading Exeter oligarchs among the membership were decidedly of an old school Tory complexion with family or political connections with the county gentry. They were beginning to lose ground around 1850 to a newer breed of businessmen and developers. Most of the cathedral church dignitaries were conservative and espoused a quieter Anglicanism than that of Phillpotts or the Tractarians: the Dean (an energetic Tory and active EDAS member) inclined towards Evangelicalism.

Nonetheless, as with all societies, much depended on a relatively small core of activists. Who were these men? One measure of engagement is attendance at monthly committee meetings; the following table introduces the twelve most constant attendees over the first three years of the Society's life.[9] Figures exclude the numerous *ad hoc* site visits and special sub-committees (of which there were many):

Committee Member	Attendance (July 1841-February 1845)
Mr T G Norris	41
Mr Philip Delagarde	40
Rev. John Medley	36
Mr John Hayward	35
Rev. John Loveband Fulford	31
Mr William Miles	29
Rev. Philip Carlyon	28
Capt Locke Lewis	24
Rev. Nicholas Lightfoot	21
Mr David Macintosh	20
Rev. Hinds Howell	18
Rev. John Armstrong	16

We must start with Medley, not only because he was the key player in EDAS's early years, but also because he typifies the careers of many of the Society's core clerical members.[10] [Fig.2] It was through his energy and commitment that EDAS was so quick to follow the two university societies; he was very active in examining plans and made many visits 'often at much personal inconvenience and expense'.[11] In a retrospective of the Society's first fifty years, his was the only name mentioned, 'the virtual founder of the Society'.[12] Born in London in 1804, he was the only son of George Medley, a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal.[13] George's first wife died in the early 1790s and, in 1798, aged 60, he married the 23-year old Henrietta Lockhart, a talented musician (daughter of the famous blind organ virtuoso, Charles Lockhart). She was organist of the London Magdalen Hospital, an institution for the rehabilitation of prostitutes, well known for the quality of its music and especially the choir of 'magdalens', hidden behind a veil, which drew crowds and made the hospital chapel a fashionable place of worship.[14] Shortly after John's birth, George fell off his horse and died. His young widow and infant son were well provided for. The churchmanship of those immediately responsible for the boy's welfare was of a distinctly Evangelical hue—Medley's journey from Evangelical to Tractarian was common to many of his generation, John Newman being the best known—and his mother subjected him to a rigorous private education (Latin at six, Greek at ten, Hebrew at twelve).[15] His father's court connections helped, too; among these was John Bacon, senior, the eminent sculptor. John Medley later married Christina, the daughter of Bacon's son (another John, who took over the family firm): Bacon, junior, retired to Exeter, joined EDAS and created the touching medievalised monument to Christina in St Thomas's Exeter.[16] Although Medley went to Pembroke College, Oxford (with its Evangelical reputation) he attended, and at some point organised, the extra-mural tutorials of Edward Burton—occasions attended by some of the key Tractarians, such as Keble and Pusey (who became for a time a very close friend).[17] These contacts were to help shape the future course of his life. His emergence on the Devon scene was probably the result of Keble's close friendship with John Coleridge of Ottery St Mary (later to be Keble's biographer). From 1828-31 he was curate of Southleigh (close to the Coleridges and also the Bullers, key supporters of the Society). Supported by Rev. George Cornish, an intimate of Coleridge and Keble, Medley moved to Truro where, among other things, he co-edited (with Cornish) an early volume of one the Tractarians' greatest achievements, the *Library of the Early Fathers*. With friends like this, and singled out by Bishop Phillpotts among fellow Cornwall churchmen as a 'very zealous man'[18]— and clearly, from the accounts of local newspapers, a respected and popular minister—he was well placed to take the lead in pursuing EDAS's reform agenda when he arrived in the challenging Exeter parish of St Thomas in 1838.

Space does not permit equal treatment of all the activists. The balance between clergy and laymen, reflecting that of the membership at large, is worth mentioning, not least because there was a widely held commitment in the diocese, not least on the part of the bishop, to involve committed

Fig.2. Portrait of John Medley (1827 and newly arrived in Devon) by John Bacon jr., one of a book of sketches he made of family and friends. (Copyright Bacon family collection/John Bury)

Anglican laymen in matters of church reform. Of Medley's fellow clergymen on the EDAS committee, most shared his brand of churchmanship, and all of them were young, their ages in 1841 ranging from 23 to 35. His close friend, John Loveband Fulford, who lived and worked with him as curate at St Thomas's, moved on to Woodbury where some found his services too high and set up a rival church in the parish. Carlyon, Medley's fellow secretary, was a brilliant scholar from Cambridge, and also toiled in one of Exeter's poor parishes, next door to St Sidwell's where his relative, old friend and fellow EDAS member (Howard Browne) introduced the surplice, a vestment that many felt was not authorized by the Anglican Church and even smacked of Romanist ritual. Armstrong, later Bishop of Grahamstown in South Africa, was a reserved Tractarian priest vicar of the Cathedral, shortly to be instituted to another demanding Exeter parish—St Paul's, a mix of middling shopkeepers, gentry on the brink and the very poor: he, also, wore the surplice and tensions over his high churchmanship persuaded him to take up the Principalship of Lampeter College (although he did not fare better there). Howell and Lightfoot held livings just outside Exeter. Howell was Bishop Phillpott's curate at Shobrooke where he also crossed swords with the local farmers by wearing the surplice. Lightfoot's churchmanship—he was curate to his father at Stockleigh Pomeroy and shortly to become vicar at Cadbury—is more difficult to pin down.

Leaving aside for a moment the two architects, Hayward and Macintosh, the lay activists were older men: Norris and Delagarde were prominent Exeter politicians. Three (Norris, Delagarde and Miles, the Society's treasurer) were medical practitioners who gave freely of their time to philanthropic charities such as the Public Dispensary; and Miles, in addition, was deeply concerned with the welfare of horses, writing the definitive tract on the health of horses' feet. Locke Lewis was a retired Royal Engineer and a keen observer of natural phenomena, notably,

while in service, of hurricanes. Antiquarian interests may well have been the primary draw of EDAS for these men: Norris became the EDAS curator and Delagarde had strong archaeological and engineering interests, authoring a significant history of the Exeter Canal as well as various contributions to *TEDAS*. Even so, the wording of Lewis's will and the sentiments expressed by Delagarde in his address to the Society in 1841 suggest High-Church sympathies.[19]

Fig.3. St Michael's, Sowton, 1844-5 by John Hayward for John Garratt of Bishop's Court (a) exterior; (b) interior. Singled out by EDAS as 'one of the most successful fruits of the revival, in our own age, of architectural taste and skill'.

Hayward and Macintosh, like the clerical activists, were young men at the time of the founding of EDAS (33 and 26 respectively) and hailed from outside the county: Hayward from London, Macintosh from Greenock in Scotland.[20] They learnt the ecclesiological vocabulary very fast and used EDAS as a means of furthering their careers. I have discussed Hayward's career elsewhere.[21] His connection with the Coleridge family (by the late 1830s) proved critical and his association with Medley, and his almost hyper-active commitment to the Society's work, led to many key commissions in the county—churches, parsonages, schools and private houses. Sowton Church (built 1844-5 for EDAS member, John Garratt), rather more than his more famous Exwick, stands out as among the finest and most intact achievements of the first phase of the High Church revival in the country, not just Devon. [Figs 3a & b] But, despite the key commissions of Exwick and Jedburgh, it is important not to see Hayward as being in the pocket of the Tractarians. One of his most important jobs was the transformation of Pembroke College, Oxford (1848), for the Master, Francis Jeune, a vigorous Evangelical and 'determined opponent' of the Oxford Movement. Jeune admired Hayward's work and the fact that he could be relied upon to come in on budget: it was a connection that would lead to work for Hayward in Jersey (where Jeune had been Dean

between 1838 and 1843): Victoria College at St Helier was a major scoop for Hayward, and some of his church work on the island has a distinctly Low Church character.

Macintosh's career was in many ways similar, although his early years are less well documented. It is possible that he worked in Hayward's office—the drawings in the first volume of *TEDAS* (splendidly engraved by Le Keux) are the work of Hayward; Wills and Dudley (who we know were Hayward's assistants); and Macintosh. His earliest independent jobs in Devon were Holy Trinity, Barnstaple (1843-5), Woodbury Salterton (1843-4) and Heavitree (1844-6): all of them were prestigious contracts to be won by so young a man. Much can be said of all three, but let me single out Woodbury Salterton. [Figs 4a, b & c] It was one of the star churches selected by EDAS in 1847 to show how far ecclesiastical architecture had progressed during the Society's lifetime. It provides an intriguing foil to Hayward's Sowton. Although it is Puginian in its architectural character, it is unecclesiological in its furnishings, which include benches with doors (reminiscent of pews) with the choir seating and organ where ecclesiologists said they should never be, in a western gallery—they were removed to their 'correct' position in 1925. Its architect has not hitherto been identified—The *Buildings of England: Devon* understandably attributed it on stylistic grounds to Hayward—but EDAS's Rough Notes come to the rescue in confirming it to be Macintosh. With the abundance of carved texts that enliven all the buttresses, there is no doubting its seriousness, but—as the remarkable will (1841-4) of the church's founder and benefactress Marianne Pidsley, confirms—it is Evangelical seriousness. Here, in a desperate attempt to keep Evangelicals in the parish within the Anglican fold, she ties the hands of future patrons, insisting that its ministers should be of 'known Evangelical opinions and sentiments' and that candidates be vetted by John Bird Sumner and Charles Richard Sumner (then respectively Bishops of Chester and Winchester), who were among the most Evangelical men on the bench and, most surprising of all, Dr Hugh McNeile, the perpetual curate of St Jude's, Liverpool, an energetic opponent of Tractarianism, who once flirted with the breakaway Catholic Apostolic Church.[22] If Miss Pidsley took an equally controlling interest

Fig.4. Holy Trinity, Woodbury Salterton, 1843-4 by David Macintosh (a,b) exterior; (c) interior. An ostensibly ecclesiological church approved by EDAS but furnished for Evangelical worship. It retained a strong Evangelical tradition well into the 20th century.

in the church building as she did over those who served there, then Woodbury Salterton is an outstanding example of that brand of serious Evangelical revivalism that favoured decorum and liturgical propriety and that produced churches comparable in quality and earnestness to the High Church mainstream.[23]

Although Miss Pidsley was never a member of EDAS—very few women were, despite their active engagement in church building and embellishment—the unexpectedness of Woodbury Salterton should alert us not to paint the Society's members with too monochrome a brush. Churchmanship ranged from the ultra highs such as Lord Courtenay and Lord Henry Kerr (who both equipped their churches at Cofton and Dittisham[24] with stone altars, a diagnostic feature of ritualist High-Church inclination) to men such as Rev. John Rashdall (curate of the Bedford Chapel, Exeter during the 1840s) an Evangelical who, however, shared a love of church order and beautiful ceremonial. There was considerable fluidity, some members changing their positions within the Anglican Church: Rev. Henry Lyte, of 'Abide With Me' fame and curate of Lower Brixham, graduating from Evangelicalism to a non-dogmatic Tractarianism; Rev. William Haslam moving in the other direction, converted in his own pulpit in 1851 to a radical revivalism akin to the Methodists. A handful seceded to Rome. Others held personal and eccentric convictions that are difficult to categorize: broadly high but tinged with a Celtic romanticism in the case of Rev. Stephen Hawker of Morwenstow, in Cornwall; very high and tinged with medieval romanticism in the case of Rev. James Dornford, who stuffed his bedroom with old furniture, 'the wonder and awe of the neighbourhood' and decked out a private oratory with a magnificent reredos and pictures 'not admissible into an Anglican church.'[25] There is also the danger of reading back into the early years of the Society the views of those who became anxious about High Church tendencies at the time of the so-called papal aggression and the setting-up of the Roman Catholic diocese of Plymouth in 1850, especially if they had an axe to grind. The flamboyant Plymouth-based architect and self publicist, George Wightwick, looking back from the late 1850s when the various camps had become entrenched, described how he fell foul of the High-Church 'party': 'It is needless to say how that party predominated in the diocese of Exeter before it became so general as it is now'; his views of Protestant architecture 'lost me all *prestige* with my kind clerical employers; and I was sometimes opposed with a virulence not quite becoming the *Christian* spirit of orthodoxy. Others were soon in the places which had very likely remained mine had I consented to be the mere draughtsman of the Diocesan Architectural.'[26]

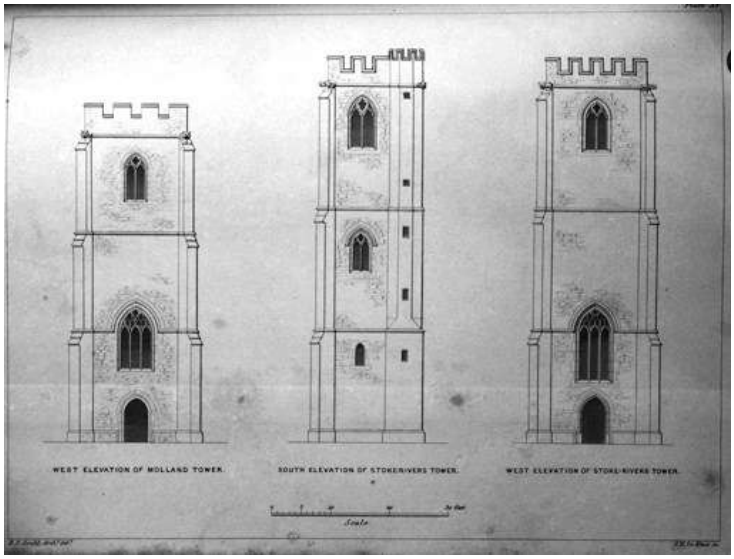
Something should be said of the EDAS membership generally, although a brief discussion unfortunately disguises the remarkable diversity of family connection, networks of friendship, interests and activities that I intend to make more widely available digitally in due course. Of the clergy in 1843, rather fewer than 20% were cathedral or diocesan dignitaries, and the great majority (60%) comprised incumbents whose livings were mostly in Exeter (nearly 30%) or within a twenty-mile radius of Exeter. Many of the Exeter clerics were young men in their twenties and early-thirties, attracted by the High-Church climate created by Bishop Phillpotts. 11% combined their living with a formal teaching post. Of the laymen, around a quarter were independent country landowners, with estates of varying value flung across Devon (far fewer in Cornwall), who together with some of the clergy and a small number of professionals formed a sort of extended county family. Of professionals, a little over 20% were lawyers, followed by architects, surveyors and engineers (13%), medical practitioners (10%), bankers, retired military men and other diverse gentlemen of leisure. Most (27% of the laymen) were based in Exeter, where there were already close professional, cultural and neighbourly networks to build upon. These, of course, included business opportunities, not least for architects and lawyers, but also for fashionable retailers such as publishers, booksellers, artists and the aristocrats of the luxury trades—wine merchants, cabinetmakers and upper-crust home furnishers. As a result of energetic membership drives in the mid-'40s (a special sub-committee was set up for this purpose), the dominance of Exeter declined: in 1843, over 40% of the entire membership lived in Exeter; by 1847 this had dropped to just under a quarter, with a corresponding rise in Plymouth and Cornwall. Overall, membership became more evenly spread with a noticeable contingent from outside the diocese.

Achievements of EDAS

It is reasonable to assume that not everyone from among such a large and varied membership would have been transfixed solely on the correctness of ecclesiastical detail and liturgical propriety. Many shared the early-19th century passion for observation and classification over a startling array of fields: geology, fossils, insects and flora; prehistoric artifacts; the distinguishing characteristics of foreign peoples or of famous artists; as well as of architecture, inspired by the attempts of Thomas Rickman and others to discriminate between the styles and chronology of building in England and the wealth of local variation—specifically to set the study of local churches on a more scientific footing. The 1845 EDAS quarterly report observed: 'It is of very great importance to obtain a correct account of the style, peculiarities, and present state of the Churches in the diocese'. From its earliest days, the Society cautioned that striving for a 'harmonious and consistent style of building' should not blind one to 'provincialisms in art which are analogous to the minor varieties of dialect'. Various papers were read and published that focused on such topics as the regional distinctiveness of Cornish churches or of the towers of North Devon; on bench ends, brass memorials and sepulchral monuments; on individual churches such as Ottery and Cullompton. Many members, including Medley, who, like most ecclesiologists, favoured the Decorated style for new churches, admired the simplicity and dignity of the regional Perpendicular and encouraged its study to achieve informed and sensitive restoration. But the most ambitious project (other than the *Transactions*) was the compilation of the 'Rough Notes', a deanery-by-deanery survey of churches carried out by local volunteers, and checked and corrected by the committee. It was suggested that local informants concentrated on specific features, one on mouldings and capitals, for instance, another on towers; a template was provided, as with the Cambridge and Oxford Societies, to help ensure that nothing was missed; sketches were encouraged, however crude, to be classified in the Society's scrapbook. The process took time—the last one for Devon, number 20, was not completed until 1859: by then the challenge was keeping the old notes up-to-date.[27] [Figs 5a & b] In this respect EDAS fits into the tradition of scientific and literary societies that were emerging in provincial towns throughout the country around this time, such as the Exeter-based Athenaeum (1835), Philosophical Society (1835), Literary Society (1841) and Scientific and Literary Institution (1844). Some members had also been involved in the establishment of an earlier generation of learned societies such as the Plymouth Athenaeum (1818) and the Devon and Exeter Institution (1813).

In addition to promoting the science of ecclesiology, practical help also issued from the EDAS committee in the spirit of the various notes and hints disseminated in pamphlet form by the Cambridge Camden Society. In 1845, EDAS was preparing practical hints for church repair to be distributed to rural deans (and thence hopefully to incumbents and church-wardens) covering damp, ventilation, pews and galleries, whitewash, materials and repairs to towers and bells, and the care and proper form of windows, roofs, pavements, brasses, fonts, pulpits and screens.[28] This followed on from earlier advice such as J L Fulford's on the repair (and design) of open roofs and Medley's on open seating (aided by Fulford's full-scale models deposited in the Society's premises at College Hall). And while the use of professional architects was insisted upon, the committee fostered grass-roots engagement, stating that it could not 'too strongly recommend the encouraging of native art in the restoration and in the adornment of churches.'[29]

But, as would be expected of a Society run by Medley and his associates, and under the patronage of the High Church Bishop Phillpotts, the Society's principal role was to create churches worthy of a House of God, 'to foster the rising spirit of restoration' by which was meant to ensure that the 'interior arrangement be church-like and catholic'. This was not a plea for elaborate ritual—indeed, Medley, for one, was vigilant in searching out any change 'that had no authority from the Anglican Church to support it', such as the introduction of a sculpted crucifix, for instance.[30] The Society's objective was to create a Catholic ethos, what Medley called a Catholic *morale*. When addressing the inaugural meeting of the Plymouth branch of EDAS in 1847, the Rev. William Nichols, freshly arrived from a church in fashionable Bath, put it bluntly: 'It is not to be a mere



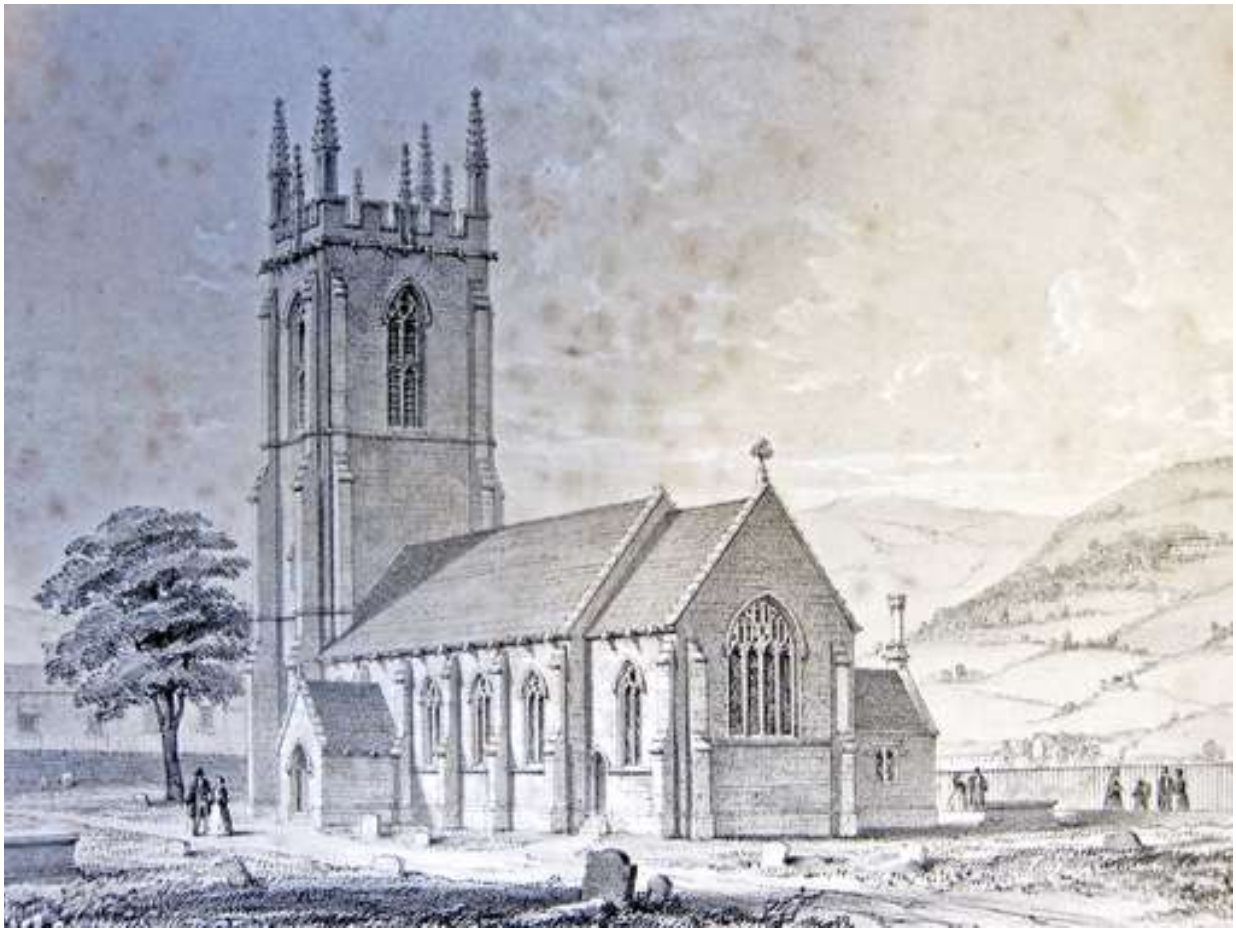
antiquarian Society'; its main task was to promote church building and 'restoration' and combat 'the old sacrilegious spirit [that] is still rife in many of our parishes'. 'Judicious restoration' did not imply running roughshod through an ancient fabric—he respected the 'harmony of proportion' and 'solidity of material' found in the vernacular of highland areas—but such churches might require an element of correction, achievable at relatively little cost. Specifically attributing the current revival as 'emanating in the first place from our Universities', members were exhorted to adhere to the 'correct principles of Ecclesiastical design' and evoke a 'Church *ethos* [the first use of the word in *TEDAS*] and devotional tone of mind'.[31]

There is nothing extreme about Nichols's call to arms but the Society was seen by many to be proceeding headlong in an unhealthily High-Church direction. As early as 1843 the committee implored the 'conscientious and sincere Churchman, who may be afraid that the members of such Societies [as ours] may be going too fast or too far, we say: "Give us a fair trial—join us and direct our course"' and, in 1845 it reiterated its determination not to 'entangle the Society in the meshes of theological controversy, or to decide *ex cathedra* on doubtful points'. The feeling of foreboding deepened. In 1847 members were warned (Nichols

Fig.5. Material supporting EDAS's recording and restoration programmes (a) R D Gould's study of North Devon tower types is one example of EDAS's passion for the study, recording and classification of church features. (b) Recording was the pre-requisite of sensitive repair. Medieval glass at Doddiscombsleigh 'much neglected…and needing immediate attention'. Both plates appear in *TEDAS*, 2 (1847).

Fig.6. Two of the five (pre-ecclesiological) modern churches in Exeter that EDAS disapproved of: (a) St David's Church, Exeter. A classical preaching box with shallow chancel, built in 1816 to replace a small medieval church and to celebrate the victory of Waterloo. (Engraving by W H Bond, c.1830/2). (b) The Bedford Chapel, Exeter, 1832. Fully galleried with a very small font at the east end and the altar at the west. 'The whole appearance of the building gives one the impression that the original designer was not sure whether he was building a church or a theatre, or having been asked to design both at the same time, had got his plans mixed'. (Beatrice Cresswell, Exeter Churches (Exeter, 1908)), 15. The minister was the noted Evangelical, John Rashdall, who was a member of EDAS until 1847. (Lithograph by G Townsend, c.1860).
Both images courtesy of the Devon and Exeter Institution.

Fig.7. St Thomas, Chevithorne, 1843 by Benjamin Ferrey (a) exterior; (b) interior. EDAS loved it; John Davidson did not: 'The entrance to the porch has a label over it resting on corbel heads, one intended to represent Queen Victoria and the other the Bishop of Exeter, but certainly they are no portraits and as unlike those personages as the whole structure is to a Protestant place of worship' (Church Notes, East Devon, 651-2). (c) All-Hallows-on-the-Wall, 1843, by John Hayward. Built on a different site to that of the old church, it was conceived as part of the general improvements of the city, 'in its general outline a decided success' thought Archdeacon Freeman, '[it] has distinctly improved the general view of that part of the city' (quoted in Cresswell, op.cit., 13) (Courtesy of the Devon and Exeter Institution).



again) that ‘especial care will be taken that no stress be laid on such peculiarities as have not been recognized by the Reformed Church of England.’ To those who thought that church restoration had ‘some mysterious connection with Romanism’, he repeated: ‘Give us but a fair trial. We desire to proceed with judgment and caution, as well as vigour. When you find us devoted to frivolous and superstitious notions, deaf to the voice of reason and friendly counsel, and to the injunctions of lawful authority, then leave us and oppose us. But remember that the most prudent way is to join us and direct our course.’[32] Nonetheless, the label attached to EDAS as a Tractarian fifth column—or worse—stuck: membership figures faltered towards the end of the 1840s and fell catastrophically during the early- and mid-‘50s, fuelled by a series of threats to Anglican authority: the surplice riots, the Gorham case, and the establishment of the Roman Catholic diocese of Plymouth.

The EDAS quarterly report for 1846, however, looked back on the last seven years as a period of steady advance in the study and progress of church architecture in the diocese, marked ‘with a firm if not hasty step’. Six exemplary churches were singled out, ‘each the fairer daughter of a fair mother’. When Exwick, Barnstaple, Chevithorne, Woodbury Salterton, All-Hallows-on-the-Wall (Exeter), and Sowton were compared with the five churches erected in Exeter before 1840, the author of the report opined, ‘who will not own that a risen sun has dispersed the shades of night?’[33] Now these churches can hardly be taken as a representative sample of the churches built in Devon in the first half of the 19th century. Clearly they were selected to make a point and therein lies their interest for our present purpose: contrasting them allows us to understand, almost at a glance, the direction in which EDAS was moving and the standards of church building it was both rejecting [Figs 6a & b] and encouraging. [Figs 7a, b & c]

Martin Cherry

(Endnotes)

1 P C Delagarde, ‘Observations on the state of church architecture with hints for the regulation of the society’, *TEDAS* 1 (1843), 109-15.

2 James F White, *The Cambridge Movement: the Ecclesiologists and the Gothic Revival* (Cambridge University Press, 1962); Christopher Webster & John Elliott (eds), *‘A Church as it should be’: the Cambridge Camden Society and its influence* (Shaun Tyas, Stamford, 2000).

3 Martin Cherry, ‘Patronage, the Anglican Church and the local architect in Victorian England’ in Chris Brooks & Andrew Saint, *The Victorian Church: architecture and society* (Manchester University Press, 1995), 175-84; Phoebe B Stanton, *The Gothic Revival & American Church Architecture: an episode in taste, 1840-1856* (John Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1968), Ch. 4; G A Bremner, *Imperial Gothic: religious architecture and High Anglican culture in the British Empire, c.1840-1870* (Yale University Press, New Haven & London, 2013), 80-7.

4 The fullest accounts of the 1837 meeting are in *The Western Times* (7 January, 1837) and *The Royal Cornwall Gazette* (13 January, 1837).

5 The term ‘Tractarian’ derives from the *Tracts for the Times*, published to counter both Dissent and Popery—Newman, Keble and Pusey were its most famous leaders. Pusey was considered by his many critics as crypto-Papist and the term ‘Puseyite’ was universally one of abuse.

6 http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/fortescue-hon-george-1791-1877

7 Peter Howell, ‘Founders of the Oxford Architectural Society (*act.* 1839–1860)’, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/theme/97266.

8 S Baring-Gould, *Early Reminiscences*, *1834-1864* (London, 1923), 12, 247; inexplicably, Edward joined in 1853 only, probably on the urgings of his son, to help bolster the society against perceived Romish tendencies.

9 Committee attendances are recorded in a small bound minute book held by the Devon & Exeter Institution (1841-4) and, thereafter, a larger minute book (which slightly overlaps) held by Exeter University Special Collections.

10 The official biography, William Quintard Ketchum, *The Life and Work of John Medley* (St John, New Brunswick, 1893) has been largely superseded by Barry L Craig, *Apostle to the Wilderness: Bishop John Medley and the evolution of the Anglican Church* (Madison, Farleigh Dickinson UP, 2005)—both focus

on the years after Medley's arrival in Canada.

11 *TEDAS* 2 (1847), 106.

12 *TEDAS*, 5 n.s. (1892), 235.

13 http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report from R O Buckolz (ed.), *Office Holders in Modern Britain, 11 (revised): Court Officers, 1660-1837*, 2006. Some time into researching Medley, I came across an excellent family web site (www.airgate.com.au) and found we had traversed similar ground: the following references are supplementary to this.

14 H F B Compston, *The Magdalen Hospital: the story of a great charity* (London: SPCK, 1917) 163, 215.

15 The trust arrangements safeguarding the interests of his son are set out in George's will: TNA PROB 11/1428.

16 For interesting comments about men like Medley and the court milieu in which they circulated, see Neil Jeffares, *Dictionary of Pastellists before 1800* (on-line edition at www.pastellists.com updated 10/02/2011): entry on John Russell who painted Medley and his first wife.

17 Thomas Mozley, *Reminiscences chiefly of Oriel College and the Oxford Movement* II (London, 2nd ed., 1882), 9. Burton was Regius Professor of Divinity: interestingly (considering Medley's own focus on the issue) he introduced open seats in place of pews in his parish church in the early 1830s. For the closeness of Medley's friendship with Pusey, see Craig, *op.cit.,* 29-35.

18 Phillpotts's diary for 8 August, 1833 (Exeter Cathedral Library, ED 11/86/2a).

19 Lewis's will is at TNA PROB 11/2165: He recommends his soul 'to my Creator, Sanctifier and Saviour' and wished to be buried 'in a plain unostentatious manner' in St David's Churchyard.

20 Dictionary of Scottish Architects via www.scottisharchitects.org.uk (search under Mackintosh).

21 *The Victorian Church* (op.cit)

22 TNA PROB 11/2075.

23 I am encouraged that Richard Parker is of the same view. I am grateful to him for many stimulating discussions on matters ecclesiological. Many High Churchmen and Evangelicals continued to occupy common ground in the early-1840s, stressing the importance of what they shared rather than the differences between them—this is the ground I think EDAS occupied at the time: Newman's secession to Rome and the increasing confidence of the Roman Catholic Church made it increasingly difficult to adhere to a middle way.

24 Information on Dittisham from Stuart Blaylock.

25 Mozley, *Reminiscences* II, 79.

26 George Wightwick, 'Life of an Architect' in *Bentley's Miscellany* 42 (1857), 612. I am grateful to Jo Cox for making a photocopy of this available to me.

27 A complete set is in DHC (DHC sx726.5/WES/EXE), but it does not cover Cornwall; there are slightly incomplete runs in the Devon & Exeter Institute and Exeter Cathedral Library (which covers the Cornish deaneries).

28 *TEDAS* 2 (1847), 151-2.

29 Ibid, 127.

30 Devon & Exeter Institution, EDAS minute Book 1841-4 (13 January, 1842). The church is not identified. Medley wrote: 'the committee venture to express a hope that you will pause before you introduce the crucifix, if it be in contemplation, or that if it is already fixed , that you will seriously consider the propriety of removing it'. In the event, it all turned out to be a misinterpretation of the drawing submitted.

31 *TEDAS*, 3 (1849), 14-19.

32 *TEDAS*, 1(1843), 15; 2 (1847), 3; 3 (1849), 21.

33 *TEDAS* 3 (1849), 6.

The Curious Case of A Hare and A Coney

3 White Street is a small late 17th century house off Fore Street in Topsham, then the major port on the Exe. At the time Topsham was a bustling and prosperous place since this was the peak of the Devon wool trade. Built of brick the house is three bays long. The interior has been modernised to the extent that no original joinery shows. However the roof structure remains and features a most unusual and intriguing date inscription. It was painted in limewash on the northern face of the eastern principal rafter of the northern truss. It reads: 'A' followed by a crude representation of a four-legged creature, then 'Hare 1697 A', then another four-legged creature, and finishing 'Coney'. There are no drips so presumably the inscription was created on the flat in the builder's yard.
The inscription provides a nice date for the house, and the roof structure. 1697 is what one might expect for an uncollared tiebeam truss, and there are other contemporary examples in Topsham, notably in the Strand houses. However the meaning of the rest of the inscription remains a matter of speculation. After all it was never intended for view.

One thing to notice is that the animals depicted look nothing like a hare or a coney (a dialect name for a rabbit). Both have long tails and neither has long ears. Indeed the hare looks more like a dog and the coney a cat. Was there a carpentry workshop in Topsham run by or employing Messrs A Hare and A Coney? Or does the inscription record some obscure joke? About hunting? I doubt whether we shall ever know for sure. Finally the inscription is also interesting since it illustrates literacy at artisan level.

John R.L. Thorp

A Barn at Cadbury and the Pulley Question

I am most grateful to Jo Cox for drawing my attention to the following account for the construction of a barn in 1769 at Higher Endicott, Cadbury in the Fursdon papers deposited in the Devon Heritage Centre (DHC ref: 5242 Fursdon 23/.13 Bills and receipts 1769)

The Account Out Going for Building The Barn Upon Higher Endicott in The Year 1769.

	£.	s.	d
The Mason for Riding The foundation and Taking out The Stones.	1.	1.	0
The Masons for Building The walls	8.	9.	4
for forty Two Seems of Straw	2.	2.	0
the Carpenture for Timbering The Roofe 60 foot Long	3.	0.	0
for fifty pare of Rafters 8d per pare	1.	13.	4
for Eight Hundred of Reed att Eighteen Shillings per Hundred	7.	4.	0
for Lying The Same att Seven Shillings per hundred	2.	16.	0
for 12 lb of Tarr Cord	0.	4.	0
for forty Bundles of Spares for Lying the Same	1.	0.	0
The Carpenturs for Sawing The Plink and Bord for The Barn doors and for Sawing The derns and Lying The flore And Makeing The derns and doors and for Carridge of the plink	3.	3.	0
for Spukes and Hitch Nails About the doors and Roof	0.	5.	0
The Mason for putting in Sloning Slapers	0.	10.	6
for Lime and Carridge and Carridge of Stones about the Slapers	0.	9.	0
The Carpenturs for pulling in The Stadles in The puly	1.	1.	0
for 24 Lattains To putt Upon The posses of The Sladles	0.	4.	0
	£33.	2.	2

Most of this is straightforward, describing an orthodox threshing barn, constructed of cob as no mention is made of masonry for the wall. The sub-soil for the cob would have been dug for free on the spot so it is not itemised as a separate cost and the ‘seems’ of straw would have been for making the cob mix. ‘Reed’ was combed wheat straw for the thatch which was held down with hazel ‘spares’ or spars. ‘Dern’ is Devon for a door post. ‘Plinks’ are planks and ‘Spukes’ are spikes, although what kind of a nail was called a ‘Hitch’ nail is unknown. The last four items are more cryptic. ‘Sloning Slapers’ seem likely to refer to the stone plinth essential at the base of a cob wall—‘Slaper’ as in a sleeper beam. This would have been mason’s work necessitating the lime mortar. The next item however was carpenter’s work: ‘pulling in The Sladles (i.e Staddles) in the puly’ . ‘Pulling ‘ is presumably ‘putting’ with the t’s left uncrossed, but why were the carpenters and not the masons used to put the staddles in the ‘puly’? Staddles were the supports for a framework on which hay and corn stacks rested and we nowadays think of them as ‘staddle stones’ but timber ones may well also have been used, particularly as surviving stone ones are quite rare in Devon. So the ones here may have been timber—quite possible as this is not a good area for finding large pieces of stone - and thus fell instead into the carpenters’ remit . The carpenters perhaps also put the ‘lattains’ onto the ‘posses’ of the staddles; lattain is an unknown word but one can guess that this item refers to the framework resting on the tops of the staddles, as ‘posses’ is Devonian for posts. This still leaves one baffling word : ‘puly’. Since this is where the staddles were sited, it is presumably an area outside the barn, although stacks were usually located in a ‘mowhay’, the Devon word for a rickyard.

But ‘pully’ (in various spellings) does turn up in other early barn contexts. In Anita Travers’

publication of the 1593 Furze Memoir (see the author's review in DBG Newsletter 31), the description of Robert Furze's rebuilding of his farmstead in the second half of the 16th century at Moorshead, Dean Prior near Buckfastleigh includes the following: *'Robert newe made the same barne* (it had collapsed) *... and to avoid the inconvenience of pulles he then in voyed ground fyrste made the crosebarne and a polle dore'*. It seems here that he is referring to rebuilding the collapsed barn on the same site as well the construction of second barn on a new (voyed) site. In my review I postulated that the decription of the latter barn might be interpreted as the type of barn found uniquely in the South Hams where one gable end is built into a bank so as to provide a loading door at a high level inside but at ground level outside. Such a door reduces the need to pitch crops upwards from the ground inside the barn. In Furze's case it seems as if he may previously have been using pulleys inside the barn for this purpose and the new barn design helped to eliminate these. Samuel Colepresse (also from South Devon), in his 1667 'Georgicall Account of Devon and Conwalle' in his section on *'waies of preserving grain in the straw'* says of barley and oats that they were gathered into '*trusses, bound with four ropes, and a long rope, as much, as 2 can well lift to horse, (our generall way of carriage) and soe carried by a leader* (a horse or string of horses lead by a boy or woman) *into the barne: for we house all, takeing advantage of a pole-door att one pinion end, and aputting in the midst for the better filling it*....*'*Here again is the pole or pully door, this time certainly placed in the gable or 'pinion' end. Given that the bundles were so heavy that they took two men to lift them, a high-level or 'pully' door would have been a sensible way of loading them into the barn. Presumably 'aputting in the midst' refers to using the opposed threshing doors in the long walls to load the lower part of the barn. A feature of South Hams barns which I have only once seen elsewhere in Devon is the positioning of a cross beam at eaves height on either side of the threshing floor. The function of these is mysterious but could they possibly have been intended as the supports for internal pulleys used in the middle of the barn?

Conrad Heresbach in his 'Foure Bookes of Husbandry' of 1577 states (p.42*)*: *In some places they have a Pully in the middest werewith they hoyse up the Corne to the very Rafters of the house* but he is almost certainly here referring to continental, not English, methods; nevertheless this does at least show that the practice was known about in the 16th century. Otherwise no other record has been found of pulleys being used for this purpose but Colepresse does say that the standard practice in Devon and in Cornwall was to 'bind all graine but with us, none, but wheate', i.e. outside South Devon where he lived, unbound trusses as described above were not used but conventional bound sheaves were used not just for wheat but also for barley and oats. These sheaves would have been able to be lifted up by pitchforks readily from ground level; pulleys would then not have been needed. Marshall (Vol.1, p.177) indeed comments on the prowess of Devon men in pitching sheaves up to a great height and neither he nor Vancouver make any mention of pulleys. Marshall however in 1796 does describe the carriage of loose corn in bundles on horses in his West Devonshire district which includes the South Hams, but only by then as an obsolete practice (Vol.1, p.167).

Higher Endicott is of course not in the South Hams but between Tiverton and Crediton, so the use of the word 'pully' here may be quite unrelated to the above. My best suggestion is that the meaning of the word had been transferred to the area adjacent to the pully door i.e. at the gable end of the barn and used here as a rickyard with staddles. Colepresse does seem to confirm that these latter could be made of wood: 'some place their mowes on frams, sett on soe many little postes, fastened in the ground with broad shindles on their tops'. Perhaps in Mid Devon a 'shindle' was called a 'lattain'.

The Cadbury tithe map shows no building of barn size at Higher Endicott in 1842. However Higher Endicott was then one holding with the adjacent Endicott where a barn (identifiable by the attached round house) of similar dimensions as in the specification was then located and this may well be the one described in the account. This barn had been demolished by 1905, the date of the second edition of the 25" OS map. Only the foundations of Robert Furze's farmhouse at

Moorshead are now left but the barn which abutted its southern corner is now converted to a house. This barn is built with its north gable end into the bank in the manner of the South Hams barns described above but there is no trace now of any door in the gable end but it is possible that this has been rebuilt in the conversion. Whether this barn was constructed by Robert Furze it is impossible to say; its roof structure is 18th century but the shell could be older.

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William Marshall. *Rural Economy of the West of England*. 1796
Charles Vancouver. *General View of the Agriculture of Devon.* 1808

My thanks to Nat Alcock and John Smith for their thoughts on the words used in the account, and to Roger Robinson who introduced me to the South Hams barns of the unique kind described above and which have never been properly researched or recorded. I fear that there are few unconverted examples now left. I am also very grateful to David and Sarah Smith for kindly allowing me to see their house at Moorshead.

Peter Child

Spot the Difference: Stoneman and Bowker

Can you spot the difference between the Stoneman and Bowker building, 69-73, Sidwell Street, Exeter on the left and the replacement of 71-73 on the right in the photos [Figs.1-3]? If so, you are doing better than two members of the Exeter City Council planning committee, who, in the discussion that preceded the granting of planning and conservation area consent for demolition and replacement in 2011, stated that they could not really see any difference between the two, though to be fair, they were looking at the plans of the new building, not the real thing.

Figs.1-3. Before and after.

The DBG Committee regularly objects to applications that we consider unsympathetic, whether planning applications, listed building consent applications or applications in conservation areas. With two (retired) conservation officers on the committee, we are well-placed to frame the objections, with proper reference to the various guidance documents that underpin planning. The letters are always written by Peter Child, our Secretary and former County Council Conservation Officer. The case of 69-71 Sidwell Street involved more than a letter of objection. This was partly because Peter Child spotted that the City Council had failed to ask for the advice of English Heritage on the application, as they were obliged to do so for a development of more than 100 square metres in a conservation area. Putting this right meant that the application had to be

considered twice and additional letters of objection written.

With a ‘nimby’ interest in buildings I walk past several times a week, I also became interested in trying to understand why the City seemed minded to give consent for demolition and why well-constructed objections seem **not** to inform discussion at Exeter’s planning committee meetings. I found myself mustering objections by local residents, acquiring some enlightenment about competing planning policies and guidance and speaking for the three minutes allotted to a single objector to (or someone speaking for) the application at the planning committee meetings.

71-73 Sidwell Street were three rendered, slate-roofed late Georgian houses, largely gutted behind the facades—as so many historic buildings in town shopping streets are— to provide the furniture showrooms for Stoneman and Bowker. They made up part of a row of 3-storey buildings, completed at either end by taller buildings: Exeter’s Grade 2* listed and grandest non-conformist chapel with a pepperpot roof, downhill, towards the High Street and the blocky Art Deco style Odeon cinema, uphill. There was a large area of warehousing to the rear of the site, which backs on to Oxford Road and clearly represented an opportunity for a developer.

The Georgian houses had nicely proportioned front elevations. They retained original window openings, although re-glazed, and natural slate roofs (in need of repair), the changes in roof height indicating probable different phases of building [see Fig.1]. They made up part of a Georgian group that, in an unflashy and unposh fashion, was part of the range and variety of Georgian Exeter before the 1942 bombing of the City. These were not the aristocracy of Exeter Georgian buildings. Since 1942 you have to go to the centre of the City and look at Cathedral Close, Baring Crescent, Southernhay and Colleton Crescent for those. However, as a row with their downhill neighbours, they made an important contribution to the historic scale, proportions, attractive materials and character of Sidwell Street, which is part of the St Sidwell’s Conservation Area. The buildings were, in the view of the DBG Committee, unlistable, but richly deserved the protection afforded by the conservation area.

Conservation area legislation should offer some protection for buildings like these: the more ‘ordinary’ buildings which are not listable in themselves but which, accumulatively, make up the distinctive character and sense of history of any area.

Exeter City Council’s *Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan* for the St Sidwell’s Conservation Area, June 2007, includes a map on which 71-73 were identified as making a ‘positive contribution’ to the conservation area. On this basis the presumption should have been in favour of their retention, unless the developer could demonstrate that this was unfeasible or that an alternative scheme for the site represented an enhancement of the conservation area or provided public benefits which would justify their loss. Had the buildings survived they would have been obvious candidates for inclusion on the Exeter local list, reinvigorated since 2011.

The planning and conservation area consent applications were for the demolition and replacement of 71-73 with a block of purpose-built student accommodation. These blocks are supposed to be an answer to the problem of large numbers of houses in multiple student occupancy in parts of Exeter close to the university campus. In most university towns a high density of such houses represents competition for housing permanent residents. It can make a big difference to the character of an area, leaving it largely unoccupied in summer and with knock-on effects on the types of shops, clubs and pubs that flourish, reductions in the number of children and therefore an impact on local schools.

Exeter City Council’s local plan in 2011 included supplementary planning guidance of 2007, requiring that 75% of the increase in Exeter University student numbers should be accommodated in purpose-built blocks provided in the city centre. Whether or not this guidance, which I interpret as some kind of ‘promise’ by planning to permit sufficient development for this, was based on a

crystal clear idea of the rapid rate at which university student numbers are increasing, I have been unable to discover. The university proved very adept at not answering, or fudging, my requests for figures for the rate of student expansion: presumably they have been more candid with the City. However the application by developers of another, nearby, site for purpose-built student accommodation included the following:

'Forecast Student Growth

'The overall growth assumption below is a *conservative estimate as the University has further plans to increase*. [My italics]. However, assuming a steady growth of the student population at 2% per annum, the net demand of students seeking accommodation over the next five years would be as follows:'

2009/10 13,144
2010/11 13,407
2011/12 13,675
2012/13 13,948
2013/14 14,227'

Exeter's population is around 119,600. The months when the census is taken means that it usually includes the university student population.

Given that some students live at home, these figures do not establish how many need accommodating, whether in the City or on campus. What they do indicate, rather vaguely, I admit, is the kind of pressure on the Exeter City planners, given the supplementary planning guidance, to grant permission for purpose-built accommodation blocks. It was this pressure that saw the loss of 71-73 Sidwell Street, in spite of the building group having been identified as making a positive contribution to the conservation area. Planning is a tricky balancing act between competing demands and in this case, quite wrongly in my view, conservation area status lost out to the politics of the City's support for the university, not only on the basis of their own supplementary planning advice, but as Exeter's biggest employer.

The above assumes, of course, that planning decisions are the province of the planners, rather than the elected councillors on the planning committee and that the committee always takes the advice of the planning officer. This is not always so, but in my experience of attending some Exeter City Council planning committee meetings on behalf of the DBG, it is usually the case. Councillors generally take the advice of their planning officer because they are not on top of the mass of local plan policies and national guidance; may find it difficult to read drawings without being steered by an officer; often do not seem to have read letters of objection and have neither the interest not the language to debate historic buildings matters with any degree of fluency, hence my opening paragraph.

As Councillor Roger Spackman, the deputy chair of the planning committee observed to me, councillors are not elected because of their knowledge of historic buildings. Those in full-time work are often unable to attend site meetings organised during the working week and the relatively modest expenses they receive are not much of an incentive to make themselves better-informed about the areas in which they make decisions. As important as this, is the terror of the appeals procedure. If an application is turned down and the developer wins on appeal and the Inspector considers that the application was unreasonably refused in the first place, the LPA may be saddled with costs. Planning officers are very ready to remind planning committee members of this and it is usually enough to bring to heel a committee that might be minded to make a decision contrary to his or her advice. The status of the conservation officer in the process is likely to differ from one planning authority to another. At Exeter City they seem to have very small voices relative to planning officers. Pre-application advice (paid for by developers) for heritage buildings does

give a conservation officer a chance to argue for changes to a design. All too often these are trifling amendments that render a really bad design slightly less awful, but may be as much as a conservation officer can do.

The Stoneman and Bowker case threw up a number of problems which are worth noting. The City Council failed to request the advice of English Heritage for a development of more than 1000 square metres in a conservation area. After the DBG pointed this out, we did have a second chance with this application. The decision to grant consent had to be put on hold until, and re-made after, that advice was received. The Historic Areas Officer for English Heritage's South West Office provided very careful, wide-ranging and fluent advice, pointing out that a report on the buildings for the developers failed to provide a condition survey proving that the buildings were beyond repair, or that it was impossible to retain them in part (e.g. the facades) as part of a viable development. The proposed new building was described as 'out of scale with the defining townscape of the conservation area and contextually alien in its design', a rather kindly comment in my view [Fig.4]. The advice went further, and noted that, in the context of a planned expansion of student numbers by 6,000 over 14 years (EH evidently had better information about university expansion figures than I had been able to obtain) and the supplementary planning guidance, the City has no strategic assessment to 'indicate how or where the area might accommodate such provision, equivalent to 45 sites such as that proposed in this application or the same number of medium sized hotels'. It also pointed out that, in place of a city council strategy, sites for these blocks were being identified largely by the private sector on a speculative basis. There is one university-funded accommodation block in the Sidwell Street area. The other three in the same area have all been erected by private developers. However, because the advice had been asked for so late in the planning process and after extensive negotiation between the LPA and the developer, English Heritage felt unable to recommend refusal outright but considered that, having made the case for it, the decision must be left up to ECC, and consent was granted a second time.

Fig.4. This photograph gives some idea of the scale of the site, extending to Oxford Road at the rear.

In the course of the demolition and construction work, the striking chimney shafts of No 69, with stringcourses and moulded cornices, which were to be retained according to the planning application, were demolished and their flues scraped out. This was said to be on grounds of safety. DBG members can judge from the photos whether or not they were rebuilt, as required, as faithful copies [Fig.5].

It seems only too likely that No 67, formerly Kents the jewellers (shown scaffolded in the recent photographs), in a wobbly state before work began, will be difficult to retain, given the extent to which the rear of the building has been knocked about as part of the development. This has been a reminder that losses beyond those in the application can, and often do, occur during works.

The new building is now up. Its Shrek-sized artificial slate roof is as big as it is to mask a huge building behind, extending to 1m from the rear gardens of the Oxford Road houses. In the opinion of this author, the completely characterless front with top-heavy dormers scarcely merits the term 'architecture'. It accommodates 100 students. It has a Tesco Metro on the ground floor (likely to

Fig.5.
5a) [Top left] The demolished stacks had a string course and cornice.
5b) [Bottom left] The shafts above the roofline were demolished because they were said to be dangerous. The internal shafts were scraped out by the contractors. Why?
5c) [Top right] The contrast between the lost stacks and their replacement is a microcosm of what has been lost in the development – proportion, detail, patina, elegance texture.

impact on the small independent food shops in Sidwell Street) and incorporates a gym. In spite of being next door to the Odeon, it also has an in-house cinema. These are all profitable elements which are likely to ensure that any students have already spent their grant inside the building before venturing out to contribute to the wider economy of the area.

What lessons, if any, can be learned from this sorry DBG casework tale? Firstly, it is important that the DBG pays attention to local plans and national guidance and that we comment when these documents are in draft. In this case I doubt that any of us would have picked up the unintended consequences to historic buildings of Exeter's supplementary planning guidance of 2007. I do not think we would have worked out, as EH's Historic Areas Advisor did, the risks to the City of leaving the selection of sites for student accommodation up to the private sector, given that the private sector cannot be expected to have any interest in the knock-on effects of their developments apart from profits. Nevertheless, national planning guidance and Local Plans are the basis of planning decisions and we need to continue to look at the policies that affect historic buildings and comment, when there is an opportunity, on behalf of Devon's built heritage. These documents are not a good read, and your Committee finds commenting a real trudge and thankfully leaves this to Peter Child.

Casework is an element of every DBG committee meeting and the outcome is often depressing. In the case of Sidwell Street, I was left feeling that well-argued objections went unnoticed, even though copies of our objections were sent to individual committee members, as well as to the planning department. Pre-application advice to developers, who negotiate a design with the LPA in advance of applying for consent, seems to mean that by the time public objection is possible, an application is a done deal, and the views of those outside the system count for nothing. This is a long way from the fine words of the current government about local involvement in the planning process.

Since the origins of the group we have never managed to deal with casework in a rational way. We attempted coverage in the early days of the group. Individual committee members agreed to undertake the mammoth task of looking at all the applications in their LPA. For a short period only we managed to cover North and Mid Devon. No-one now has the time for this. We know we sometimes miss important cases altogether. We can also expend a lot of energy on less-important cases, like Sidwell Street, simply because it happens to be, metaphorically-speaking, in a committee members' backyard. I am not suggesting that we should abandon casework altogether, but it seems to me that the group is more likely to make a difference by producing, or supporting, publications on types of building or features at risk, for example the Exeter Schools Report, Newsletter No 22; the pending work on Plymouth churches (see Peter Child's articles), or Peter Marlow's cobbles article, Newsletter No 31, which arose out of casework on church paths. We are optimistic that the DBG cobbles article, sent to the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and to English Heritage, will eventually lead to a publication by one (or possibly both) of these weightier, national organisations. This will not restore the church paths that casework has failed to save, but may help to avoid future losses.

Jo Cox

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BOOK REVIEW

Of Sirens and Centaurs: Medieval Sculpture at Exeter Cathedral

Alex Woodcock.
Impress Books 2013 £9.99 Paperback 146pp

Alex Woodcock is a stone mason at Exeter Cathedral as well as having a PhD on medieval architectural sculpture. He is therefore arguably the perfect author for this subject and his book more than fully meets expectations. His well-written text is matched by 77 brilliant photos, all in colour, taken by Mark Ware. There are two background chapters, the first on the chronology and the ecclesiastical context of the sculpture, and the second on the masons, carvers and sculptors who produced them. Then follow nine chapters each covering a theme to be found in the sculpture, for example 'Animals and Insects', or 'Musicians and Angels'. The book concludes with extensive notes and a bibliography; it is indexed. The first two chapters provide an accessible introduction to the succeeding thematic ones which set out to explain and interpret the many themes that the sculptors employed. Legends represented in the sculptures are explained, as is the choice of particular animals. Those human figures which do not fall readily into other categories are given their own chapter; this includes the ranks of the Kings of Judah and the ancestors of the Virgin on the west front. The descriptions and interpretations of the carvings are accompanied by comments on their relative quality and upon their state of conservation. Parallels are drawn with similar works elsewhere. The high standard of the photographs, many of which are of details hard to see from floor level, adds greatly to the attraction of the book.

Although this is both highly readable and highly visual book, it is also a work of considerable scholarship with a great deal of material in a relatively short compass. It is very well produced and the price is very modest indeed. It is much to be recommended for anyone who enjoys medieval art either for itself or for the insights it gives into medieval thinking.

Peter Child