DEVON BUILDINGS GROUP

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 35

Winter 2017

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Contents

Illustrations

Front cover: Detail of the south door at Buckland Brewer, which dates to the middle of the 12th century. This distinctive variety of beakhead decoration composed of highly stylised human, animal and bird heads, can also be found at the nearby Devon churches of Shebbear and Woolsery. In Cornwall there is similar work on the north nave arcade at Morwenstow © *Alex Woodcock.*

A note from the editors

Many thanks to Jo Cox who has retired from her post as co-editor of the Devon Buildings Group's newsletter, where she has done most admirable work for the last 6 years. Her role has now been taken on by Lizzie Induni, who has the good fortune of having fellow editor Dawn Honeysett to give continuity.

This newsletter focuses on the excellent series of lectures which were given at last year's summer conference. We had difficulties with image projection at the conference so decided to include a large number of the relevant photographs with the texts, thereby compensating for what was missed on the day.

The newsletter also includes 3 inserts – a card for Todd Grey's new book, *St Martin's Island*, Nigel Brown's flier for *Six Centuries of Organs Building in Devon* and, as Newsletter 34 omitted to include the captions for the images of the article by Helen Willson, *The Emergence of the Pinwill Sisters,* this is also included.

There will be a joint conference with the Devon & Cornwall Record Society, provisionally entitled 'Exeter Buildings: 20 Minute Histories' on the 19th May 2018 to be held at the United Reformed Church in Southernhay, Exeter.

The DBG Summer Conference will be held in Barnstaple on Saturday 23rd June 2018.

As always, we are keen to include articles in the Newsletter from as many members as possible. Brief notes on Devon buildings or a full article are always welcome. Please contact Lizzie Induni 01823 288508.

Lizzie Induni

Dawn Honeysett

Secretary's Report 2015-2017

The 2015 AGM was held in Cullompton Town Hall on 7th November. It was attended by 59 members and guests. Alison Bunning chaired the meeting. As usual it commenced with my own report of the group's activities during the last year. I also offered to stay on as secretary despite having previously said that this was to be my last year in this role. In the absence of Lizzie Induni, Alison Bunning gave the treasurer's report on her behalf. The group's finances were healthy with over £7,000 in the bank; in part this was a consequence of the money from the sale of the Plymouth angels. There were 165 paid-up members. A new treasurer would be needed in 2016 when Lizzie takes on the editor's post, relinquishing that of treasurer. Lyn Auty and Jenny Sanders were stepping down from the committee; both were thanked for their contributions. Bridget Gillard and Philip White were elected as their replacements and Mark Stobbs, Richard Parker, Oliver Bosence and myself were re-elected. The future of the DBG had become a matter of concern during the year and the committee had had a special meeting to discuss this in July. Lizzie's move to becoming editor was one product of the meeting, as the current editors (Jo Cox and Dawn Honeysett) did not feel they could carry on any longer after they had produced the 2016 Newsletter. Another major change decided upon at the special meeting was that as far as possible individual committee members would take on responsibility for organising specific conferences and AGMs so as to share out this burden more evenly. Theresa Oakley and Jonathan Rhind volunteered from the floor to help with conferences and Theresa has subsequently been co-opted onto the committee, as has Eve Van der Steen. Maintaining the Register of members also involved much work and it was resolved to stop producing this in hard copy and instead investigate having it online only. So far this has proved difficult to find out how to do this economically without breaching confidentiality. Francis Kelly then gave us a short report on the Devon Cobbles project, following which there was the usual discussion on possible subjects and places for future conferences; cobbles was one suggestion and this was of course taken on for the 2016 summer conference. It was also resolved, following a representation from a member, to have a more open membership policy without the need for committee vetting of prospective members.

The Walronds, Cullompton

After the AGM had closed, we were able to see a video on the subject of Devon cobbling presented by Jo Cox in which she covered the history of cobbling and what was involved in its conservation and repair. John Thorp then gave us a comprehensive talk on the Walronds which we were to visit later. He outlined the Walronds Trust's history and highlighted the importance of the renaissance of the house to the renewal of Cullompton. Although it had undergone restoration in the 19th century, these works had now begun to fail, necessitating the repair which the trust has undertaken. The Walronds was built in 1605 following a disastrous town fire. It was very unusual in its design

and character, being less a typical town house than a mini rural gentry house, comparable to others such as Forde House or Cowick Barton. It was never used fully by its builders, the Peters family, but was more of a grand statement by them. John described its principal architectural features, in particular its fine plasterwork; the over-mantel in the hall had coloured coats of arms but otherwise was white with red marbling streaks [see article by Jo Cox in Newslettter 32, Autumn 2014]. Some of the plasterwork was very similar to that at Holcombe Court. The main roof had originally been open from end to end making the only known urban long gallery. Curiously, the house incorporated a cob rear wing which must have survived from an earlier building.

After John's talk, we all moved to the Walronds where an excellent buffet lunch was provided. We then were at liberty to explore the house and its fine gardens and a good and interesting time was had by all.

***Above left*. The rear elevation of the grade 2* Manor House Hotel, Cullompton, visited after a convivial lunch at the Walronds. The Manor House was built in 1603 for Thomas Trock and extended in the 18th century. The gable peaks, seen behind the brick elevation and slate roof, are 17th century. Work to stabilise the north wall of the eastern range fronting Fore Street was being undertaken at the time. *Above right*. The head of an original door opening in one of the partitions running east to west below the valleys of the gabled roof structure. Visit courtesy of Roshan Sivlal, owner of the Manor House Hotel.**

The 31st Summer Conference was held in the sumptuous village hall at Merton on 2 July 2016; the subject was Devon Cobbles. After the traditional coffee and cakes, Jo Cox gave the first presentation describing the results of Keystone's 2015 research, commissioned by Historic England, into the subject of churchyard cobbled paths; their report had been submitted in March 2016. The DBG must take some credit for getting the report commissioned as our concern over the issue had brought it into prominence. DBG members had contributed to the work by visiting every churchyard in Devon to ascertain whether a cobbled path survived there and where it did, what condition it was in. 41 churchyards still had them. A distribution map of the surviving paths had been enabled by this work and was included in the conference notes. Cobbles were by no means confined to Devon in the past but have survived here in significant numbers compared to other parts of the UK. Paths until recently needed to be raised to be considered listable but recently, Historic England have changed their view on this and they may in some circumstances now be considered as a 'building' and thus listable. The definition of cobbles is that they are "small undressed stones of natural shape". Jo then described the technique of laying cobbles and how flat-topped Culm Measures pebbles, often quarried from river terraces, are the commonest type. In the past, cobble laying was probably a widespread skill and cobbles were commonly used for floors inside buildings as well as for paths and yards outside. Cobbles were very cheap compared to paving slabs. The use of cobbles starts in prehistory and is found at all periods thereafter but the earliest dated example – 1665 – is in Bayards Cove in Dartmouth and there are various other dated paths in Devon surviving from the 18th and 19th centuries. Generally, however, putting a precise date on a path is difficult, especially as written records relating to their laying use a terminology which is wholly obscure. It is probably safe to say that most paths date from 1780–1920. The

presence of cobbled paths in churchyards is in part a consequence of changing attitudes to the use of churchyards from the 18th century onwards. They began to be seen more as places of memorial than simply as functional areas in which to deposit the dead. Consequently they were given new enclosure walls, unsuitable buildings were cleared out of them and paths constructed to allow proper access into the church and around the churchyard. St Peter's, Tiverton, for instance had eight new cobbled paths by 1887. Jo concluded by saying that some churches love their cobbles but others hated them because of the perceived difficulties in using them. Proposals to remove or cover them presented a difficult problem for DACs to sort out. The work which Keystone had done on the subject had at least opened out the whole subject for more informed consideration.

John Alexander of Jonathan Rhind Architects and Richard Burrows of Williams and Burrows, conservation builders, spoke next with John Alexander starting on the topic of guidance and specification. He explained his approach to church cobbled paths as an inspecting church architect with eight churches with such paths. He encouraged his clients to take ownership of the paths rather than regarding them as liabilities. He believed in stitch-in-time repairs. Richard then described his work on the main approach path at St Peter's, Tiverton, which was constructed of fine 19th-century cobbles. It had taken 20 years to get permission to provide this with a smooth central strip of Pennant slabs. The cobbles had come out easily as they hold each other in so once you remove one the rest are loosened. Where necessary, the cobbles were re-bedded in a lime/sand mix. Subsoil was brushed in afterwards. John's predecessor at Merton church had specified in 1997 that it needed repair but no work had been done and it had further degraded so it was decided, in conjunction with the work towards the Historic England report, to carry out trials to identify an area for repair, unpicking it first archaeologically. Richard described how the paths at Merton church were held in place by deep slightly angled kerbs on either side and these needed to be wedged in place again, using a soil/lime mix on one side; the cobbles were laid in subsoil alone. It was difficult work as the weather was so wet and a short-fall of cobbles had to be made up with ones borrowed from Tiverton. John concluded various points from the Merton work: analysis of a path was important; its shape and the size of its stones and how they were contained by the kerbs all had to be considered. Provided a local source of cobbles was available, the material costs were minimal; the main cost was in labour. Most of the work was potentially possible as DIY, especially if guidance were to be made available. The Merton experiment had led to a basic understanding of how to repair and maintain cobbled paths and he had drafted 3 or 4 pages of a specification for this which he hoped could be developed for general guidance and use.

Below. Visit to the Church of St Michael and All Angels, Meeth, for a demonstration of cobbled path repair. The work was carried out by the Devon Rural Skills Trust. Right. Members at the Church of St John the Baptist, Hatherleigh.

In subsequent discussion, Jo Cox said that since the likelihood of HE/SPAB producing such guidance in the foreseeable future was slim then the DBG might think about doing it themselves.

The committee had met six times during the 2015–2016 year. As usual much discussion has been about the two annual meetings. The new system by which specific committee members take responsibility for particular meetings has worked well with Theresa Oakley organising the summer conference at Merton and Martin Watts the AGM at Bridgerule. These meetings will always need a collaborative effort but it is a great help to have one person who takes primary responsibility.

In terms of casework, the most significant case during the 2015–2016 year was that of Castle Primary School in Tiverton where it was proposed to demolish the elegant early 20th-century building, erected originally to house Tiverton Grammar School, and replace it with a nondescript new shed-like structure. Given that the existing building was within the conservation area and was designated as of special interest, albeit not actually listed, we were very disappointed that Mid Devon approved the application despite objection from ourselves and Historic England. The Mid Devon committee was in effect blackmailed by the Education Funding Agency who stipulated that they would only fund a whole new building and would not consider the retention and adaption of the existing one. We intend to make representations to the EFA, if only in the hope that this might improve their approach toward similar proposals in the future. We were pleased to hear that the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Barnstaple, which in 2015 was the subject of a third application for its demolition (the application has yet to be determined) is hopefully going to be taken over by a new Barnstaple buildings trust which is also looking at the Shapland and Petter building in the town. We are currently keeping an eye on proposals for the redevelopment of Colin Campbell House, an Art Deco garage building of some distinction which survived the Blitz in Plymouth city centre. We are of course always keen to hear of other cases which our members think might be appropriate subjects for the Group's intervention. Finally, the Group now has Twitter and Facebook accounts – you can see a wonderful cobbled floor on the latter posted by Jo Cox.

The 2016 AGM was held in Bridgerule on 8th October. It was attended by 48 members and guests. Alison Bunning chaired the meeting. As usual it, commenced with my own report of the group's activities during the last year. Lizzie Induni followed with her last report as Treasurer confirming that the Group was in good financial health with £8500 in the bank although the costs of Newsletter 34 had then still to be met. Membership had dropped slightly to 155. Mark Stobbs was now very nobly taking on the post of Treasurer. Five committee members were re-elected together with the two co-opted members, Eve Van der Steen and Theresa Oakley, filling the two vacancies left by the resignations of Peter Dare and Bridget Gillard. Jo Cox presented her last report as co-editor with Dawn Honeysett of the Newsletter, apologising that no 34 had yet to be published. She had been editor for six years, Dawn for ten. They were both thanked for all their work and Jo appealed on behalf of the new editor, Lizzie Induni, for contributions for future editions. After the usual discussion about possible topics for future conferences, Alison Bunning raised the possibility of the DBG supporting a conference on the topical subject of hot lime which in principle was agreed.

The business meeting was followed by an excellent talk containing a wealth of information and illustrated with fine slides by Martin Watts on mills and milling in Devon. He opened by saying that 'mills were a cross between a building and a machine' and that millwrights had to be multi-skilled. There are 2000 watermill sites recorded in Devon but only 100 windmill sites. In Domesday there were 96.5 mills in Devon but only 6 in Cornwall. He described the three types of watermills and the various kinds of millstones. Up to the second half of the 19th century, mills were essentially vernacular constructions but became less so thereafter, using cast iron components and spur wheel drives. The high watermark for mills in Devon was Coldharbour Mill whose wheel cost £1000 in the 1820s in comparison to the average value of £100 for a complete rural mill. Double mills were common in Devon and waterwheels could overlap each other. Many mills

Bridge Mill, Bridgerule.

were rebuilt in a traditional form at the end of the 19th century although by then the flour industry was moving into using roller mills – the last commercial flour mill was Thorverton Mill built in the 1890s as a roller mill but converted to stone milling in the late 20th century. Mills were used for various other purposes than corn milling, such as timber sawing and paper production. Given abundant water power, windmills were few in the county; there are about nine towers left. Farm watermills for driving farm machinery, especially threshers, are not uncommon with about 250 recorded in Devon. The one at Kilworthy near Tavistock is probably the largest. He concluded by saying that mills were functional buildings which reflected local needs and changing requirements; with the near-demise of water milling many had now been converted to houses.

After lunch in the village hall we walked up to Bridge Mill on the other side of the village which very kindly had been opened for us by its owners, Alan and Rosie Beat, who had restored the mill (with Martin's help) from 1987 onwards to a working condition with a new wheel cast in

Intriguing 'Dutch' barn at Bridge Mill, repaired with telegraph poles.

Wadebridge installed in 2000. The mill site is historic (probably a Domesday site) although the existing building was rebuilt extensively in the 1870s. The leat runs for a mile which is very long. It is a very typical corn mill for its period and originally had two wheels but only one has been restored. The mill building is a three-storey stone structure and now contains working mill machinery and stones. Alan ran the wheel for us so we were able to see flour being milled – and to buy it. An organic garden has been created by Alan and Rosie around the mill which greatly enhances its setting. It also retains various farm buildings, including a good early 20th-century stable, but most interestingly, a 'Dutch' barn of a type produced locally with a roof which can be raised or lowered to cover the crop below it tightly. A patent for such a barn was given in 1888 and they are known to have been manufactured by the Dunheved Ironworks in Launceston. Alan has restored this one using telegraph poles and pulleys to raise and lower the roof although the patent barn used a system of levers to do this. No other example of such a Dutch barn is known to survive. The excellent visit ended on high note with cream teas provided by Alan and Rosie.

Woolfardisworthy Sports and Community Hall, completed in 2001, is a community-initiated, sustainable public building. The hall won the 2003 Civic Trust Awards special award in the Vital Villages category. Designed by Gale & Snowden Architects as a carbon-neutral building with super-insulation and thermal mass to minimise temperature fluctuations, later additions include photovoltaics, a wind turbine and ground-source heat pumpto generate renewable energy. Consequently, the building costs around £1 per day to run.

The 2017 summer meeting took place at Woolfardisworthy (the north Devon one) on 17th June in the very large and sustainably designed village hall (above). Unfortunately, the roof lights were unable to be properly blacked out which made seeing the slides difficult. The subject of the meeting was the Romanesque in North Devon and Cornwall and we were very lucky to have as the first speaker Alex Woodcock, both a stonemason and a specialist and author on medieval sculpture. He took us through the characteristics of local Romanesque sculpture, in particular the use of beakheads in the arches over church doors. These occur in various churches in this area including Woolsery, Parkham, Kilkhampton and Morwenstow and are associated in the local Romanesque repertoire with capitals with volutes, interlace and chevron ornament. Beakheads nationally are found primarily in this area and in Oxfordshire and Yorkshire; the later examples date to 1160–1180. Alex believes that the later local examples are associated with Hartland Abbey which was being constructed in the 1170s; the doorways could have been made in their quarry. He also associated their use with Robert of Gloucester who was Lord of the manor of Kilkhampton and a patron of the arts. Robert was associated with Henry I who founded Reading Abbey in 1121, and which was the 'fountainhead' of beakheads. Their use at Reading inspired Kilkhampton in the 1130s or 1140s and Kilkhampton in turn influenced the Romanesque work at Morwenstow which in turn again was the inspiration for the other doors of the 1160s in this area.

Alex was followed by John Allan on the subject of Romanesque building stone in Devon. The Normans found Devon a county without stone buildings and although they in general preferred to use limestone for building, its paucity in the county (apart from Beerstone) made them turn

to a variety of other stones including Salcombe stone, Triassic sandstone and volcanic traps; a quarry was opened at Meldon for aplite. Local stone was used for the mass walling material but freestone was brought in for the detailed work. Beerstone was already being quarried by the 11th century as it is found in the White Tower in London but was not used in Devon until a little later when it became popular for fonts, such as the one at West Anstey demonstrating how far it sometimes travelled. Salcombe Regis limey sandstone was first quarried in the early 12th century when it was almost exclusively used at Exeter cathedral who owned the quarry. Later in the 12th and 13th centuries, it was widely used for quoins, arcades etc but not for elaborate work. There are other stones similar to Salcombe whose source has not been identified. From the mid 12th century, Purbeck marble is used especially for fonts of which there are about 30 in this stone in Devon. This represents a change in taste from matt stonework to one for polished stone. Triassic red sandstone is used for 11th-century fonts in south Devon and also for walling as for example at Kingsteignton. Volcanic stone was used as in the chapel at Bickleigh Castle and for tympanums as at Thornbury. In this north-western part of Devon other stones were brought in, such as the font at Bratton Clovelly which is probably of Polyphant stone and the font at Hartland which might be Catacleuse.

Stuart Blaylock concluded the morning with some background notes on Romanesque architecture in Devon. He began by pointing out the need for much more archeological research into churches. There were 190 Norman fonts in Devon and they were to be found all across the county. They represented the church's right to baptise and this accounted for their common survival. Similarly other Romanesque features, especially doorways, were kept in later rebuilding because of their symbolic meaning. Both Totnes and Axminster have such retained doorways in later churches and there are 60 to 70 similar examples in the county. If you take out fonts and doors from the picture then the extent of surviving Romanesque evidence become much less. Two-cell Romanesque churches are found across the centre of Devon such as St Pancras in Exeter and at Upton Hellions. He showed us distribution maps of churches with cruciform plans and ones with transeptal towers some of which are 13th century but others such as Braunton are 12th century. He concluded with two case studies, the product of close examination. The first was of Knowstone Church where the entire south wall can be dated as 12th century from the evidence of its doorway and archaeology of its masonry. The second was at Jacobstowe where a community excavation had revealed a semi-circular foundation under the Romanesque wall footings of the west end. This was evidence of a western apse which on the continent would be Carolingian in period – there may be an eastern apse to match it and yet to be revealed.

Detail of carving above porch door at the Church of St Mary and St Benedict, Buckland Brewer.

***Top left, above left and top right*. Church of St Morwenna and St John the Baptist, Morwenstow in its glorous cliff-top setting. The south porch at Morwenstow. *Right middle and bottom*. DBG members appreciating the south doorway at the Church of St Mary, Buckland Brewer with its pronounced chevron arch and crisp beakheads featuring bearded men and snouted and beaked creatures.**

After lunch we set out by car to see examples of what we had been hearing about. First we went to Woolfardisworthy church itself which was rebuilt in the C14 and C16 but retains a fine Norman south doorway with chevron and beakhead ornament. From there we drove to Parkham, a large C15 church but again with a Norman south doorway very similar to that at Woolfardisworthy and here enlivened with carved heads. From Parkham we went to Buckland Brewer, another C15 church with a Norman south doorway, again with beakhead and chevron ornament rising from volute and arch-decorated imposts. Here we were very kindly (and without having arranged it) given tea by the parishioners in the school room which is attached to the east end of the church. The decorated C15 doorway to this room from the church indicates that this unusual building was of some significance in the past and it is postulated that it was guild chapel and therefore a rare survival. From Buckland Brewer we set out on a twenty minute drive to Morwenstow just over the border in Cornwall, a rare instance of the DBG stepping outside the county. Morwenstow occupies a remote and spectacular position close to the coast and contains extraordinary Romanesque elements, in particular the north aisle arcade with its varying decoration on each arch surmounted by projecting rams heads. Its south porch also contains two Romanesque arches, partly reset, with

zig-zag ornament and beakheads again. It was wonderful climax to a remarkable day.

The Hot Lime day. Demonstration of materials, methods and application plus practical session.

The Committee has met six times in the last year and as usual has spent much time in discussion about the organisation of the summer conference and the AGM. I remain as Secretary (despite my best efforts) but my role has been greatly eased by various committee members helping to organise these events and we should thank Stuart Blaylock in particular for his efforts in arranging both of them this year. We had an additional event in late 2016 in the form of a day of demonstration on Hot Lime last November organised by Alison Bunning and presented by Bruce Induni and David Tyler. This was attended by 16 members and went very successfully. Next year we hope to share an event with the Devon and Cornwall Record Society and we are open to suggestions for other events beyond the two regular conferences. Newsletter number 34 was published in December with the usual selection of excellent articles which I will not list here, except to mention that Jo Cox and John Thorp reacted quickly to the disastrous fire in Cathedral Yard on 28th October 2016 by writing an account of the fire and its aftermath; this was illustrated by John's spectacular (and saddening) photograph of the Clarence surmounted by a rainbow, in this case certainly not leading to a pot of gold. This article was subsequently published on our website. Several DBG members took part in the public meetings prompted by Todd Gray immediately after the fire and their combined knowledge has no doubt informed the current applications for rebuilding on the site.

We have commented on various planning and listed building applications during the year. We raised an objection to Dartmoor National Park over the proposed substitution of water reed thatch for wheat reed on a house at Dunsford and this was refused both by the DNP committee and subsequently on appeal. It was not a straightforward application and it was interesting to see the Planning Inspectorate taking what might be considered by some as a very hard line on this matter. We have been chasing Exeter City to little avail over unauthorised work to buildings in Sidwell Street. It turns out that some undesirable alterations had been accidentally agreed under amendments to earlier approvals so the depreciation of Sidwell Street carries on despite its inclusion within a conservation area. We responded to a consultation on the redevelopment of the north end of the Esplanade at Sidmouth which includes the Drill Hall, not so much defending the retention of the latter, which has become a local cause célèbre, as objecting to a suggested overweening redevelopment of blocks of flats in this sensitive spot. We queried what was happening to the two historic house museums in Plymouth, the Merchants and Elizabethan houses, both now shut apparently awaiting repair; we are not aware what progress is being made toward this and their reopening. Finally we have made contributions toward the cost of the conservation of two Harry Hems statues and a stained glass window to be restored to St Sidwell's church in Exeter, as well as to the fund seeking to make a legal challenge against the construction of a massive tower block next to the Pavilion by the harbour in Torquay, a disastrous proposal in terms of the town's appearance and character but one approved by Torbay Council. As ever we are open to suggestions from the membership as to building matters in which they think we might become involved.

Peter Child

Treasurer's Report, Bridgerule, 2016

As the AGM is being held slightly earlier than usual it has not given me time to liaise with the accountant. Consequently the set of figures that you have are an interim account put together by myself. The final accounts will be presented at the next AGM.

Devon Buildings group is very good value for money and still costs individual members £15 per year. This year there has been a slight drop in numbers of members, but this still brought in an income of £2,203.

There has been no change in the cost for website – remaining at £150, and insurance has only shown a slight increase; the cost of our events have not changed significantly over the last year. The accounts show a surplus of £1,120.22, but the newsletter costs still have to come out of this, which will be about £850.

We have £8,523.88 available to us in the bank on 30th September, 2016.

This is my final year as treasurer, as I will become the society's newsletter editor. I am delighted to announce that the new treasurer will be Mark Stobbs, who some of you will know. Please contact him if you have any financial queries concerning the Devon Building Group.

I would like to finish by thanking Tony Elston the accountant, who will be checking the books.

Lizzie Induni, 7th October 2016

Treasurer's Report, Talaton, 2017

This has been a steady year financially, commencing with £8523.88 and closing with £8926.37 credit at the bank.

The Interim Income and Expenditure Accounts present a simplified summary for the year. The accounts are provisional, and subject to scrutiny by our Accountant.

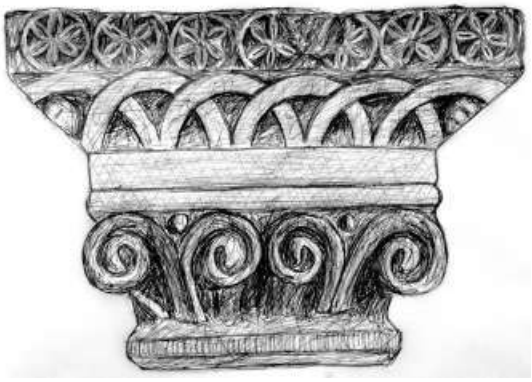
Membership has increased. With seven new members there is a current total of 146 paid up members. However, a few of these need chasing to pay the full subscription by updating their subscription Standing Orders. There are also several further memberships where subs are overdue or membership has lapsed. These need to be clarified, ideally before the end of the calendar year.

Those of you not already paying your membership subs by Standing Order, or equivalent payment, can expect a request that you do so in future!

I wish to thank Lizzie Induni, from whom I took over as Treasurer, for leaving things clear and tidy, and also thank Tony Elston who continues to check the books.

Mark Stobbs, October 2017

The Romanesque Sculpture of North Devon and North Cornwall



'Hartland', wrote the antiquarian Richard Pearse Chope, 'being thus bounded on two sides by the sea and on the other two sides by deep valleys, is "on the road to nowhere."[1] This situation, he concluded, not only made for its wonderful variety in terms of scenery – 'soft wooded cliffs on the north, bare rugged rocks on the west, wind-swept moorland heights, and calm secluded vales' – but largely isolated it from the outside world.[2] For Chope, a Hartland native, this was something to be celebrated rather than condemned. Much like the artist Ithell Colquhoun who lamented the loss of the silence that had drawn her to the secluded Lamorna Valley in West Penwith after the war, as tourists discovered the cove for themselves (were 'it not for the noise', she wrote in 1957, 'I should never have wanted to quit the valley'), Chope grumbled in similar fashion about the achievements of the petrol engine.[3] For him, however, there was a redeeming feature: it kept visitors away from the best bits. 'Fortunately, the most beautiful spots can only be reached on foot' he noted, not without some sense of relief, 'and these the motorist rarely pollutes with his presence'.[4]

Judging by its scant appearance in the archaeological literature, visitors interested in the Romanesque sculpture of the region have been similarly few, and in many respects the remoteness and sense of isolation that comes through in Chope's prose seems like an apt introduction (Figure 1). Produced over a period of about fifty years from c.1130–1180 and characterised by bold geometric designs and a particular ornament known as a beakhead, typically found around doorways, the

Figure 1. The church of St Morwenna and St John the Baptist, Morwenstow, in its scenic and isolated position on sloping ground near the North Cornwall coast.

Figure 2. The Romanesque doorways at (*above, top to bottom*) Buckland Brewer, West Woolfardisworthy/Woolsery and Morwenstow; (*right, top to bottom*) Shebbear, Parkham and Kilkhampton.

work has on the whole been overlooked.[5] The reasons for this, perhaps, are not unconnected to broader perceptions of the landscape within which it sits and is so closely identified. Throughout the 20th century the development and promotion of both Cornwall and Devon as desirable tourist destinations drew upon romanticised notions of each as places of 'retreat, simplicity and innocence, peopled by bucolic, smiling villagers'.[6] An expectation of the medieval art of the southwest as similarly cut off and uncomplicated, frustrated attempts by locals to replicate designs seen elsewhere, presumably in major cities, dovetails with this context. In his bestselling book *England's Thousand Best Churches* Simon Jenkins describes the Romanesque sculpture at Morwenstow as 'green, damp and primitive', a concise summary of this outlook.[7] The work around the south door is indeed green suggesting a history of damp (although the statement was written about the north arcade which has a remarkable freshness to it still, over eight hundred years later); but primitive? This is a difficult word. In general it is used to refer to something 'less complex, or less advanced' than something else – in this case, it is implied, other churches elsewhere – leading to the irrefutable conclusion that this is work 'lacking in elements such as organization, refinement and technological accomplishment'.[8] With regard to the Romanesque sculpture under consideration here, however, I do not believe this to be the case.[9]

The chief works must be the doorways to the churches at Buckland Brewer, West Woolfardisworthy (Woolsery), Parkham and Shebbear in Devon, and Kilkhampton and Morwenstow in Cornwall (Figure 2). At the latter there is also a richly carved north nave arcade that shares numerous similarities with the north Devon doorways (Figure 3). Then there are the fonts: Hartland, Frithelstock and East Putford, the latter no longer in situ, having been moved to the courtyard of a school in Surrey (Figure 4).[10] To this small corpus it is possible to add a number of other stones, including the doorway at Thornbury, the tympanum and associated voussoirs above the south door at Bondleigh (Figure 5), some reset fragments of sculpture in the porch at Molland, and a fragment of voussoir and a carved head excavated from the motte ditch at Okehampton Castle.[11] A range of stones appear to have been used, from the golden coloured and fine grained volcanic Hatherleigh stone (Bondleigh, Hartland) to the more neutral tones of the Culm Measures sandstone (Morwenstow) though there is much still

Figure 3. View looking northeast across the interior of the nave at Morwenstow to show the Romanesque font and north arcade.

Figure 4. The font at Hartland is carved with some of the key motifs found among the Romanesque sculpture of North Devon, including varieties of interlaced semicircles, stylised heads on each corner (face up and face down) and vertical chevron.

to identify for certain. There are no doubt other examples of the work of this group yet to be discovered.

The doorways, though often repeated in terms of their layout and decoration, are not identical. Woolsery, Buckland Brewer and Shebbear follow the template of an inner order of triple chevron carved on the face of the stone (lateral chevron according to the terminology advanced by Rachel Moss),[12] a central order of beakhead and an outer one of a singular geometric motif resembling a cylinder split in half, the two sections cut at sloping angles – like the wings of a butterfly at rest. Beakheads are heads that, as the name suggests, often have a beak, though they need not always be birds and even the beak isn't a strict requirement.[13] They are a Romanesque ornament typically found around doorways or windows of the mid-12th century and often connected to a roll moulding, but also sometimes as individual corbels.[14] Here they are carved in four main types, with no apparent order to their placing: a bird head; an animal head with a long, ridged snout and triangular ears; a human

Figure 5. The doorway at St James, Bondleigh. The tympanum is carved with the Agnus Dei within a circle and two birds on either side, the surrounding voussoirs cut with interlaced semicircles.

Figure 6. Detail of the beakhead and associated carving at (*above, top to bottom*) Shebbear, Morwenstow south door and Kilkhampton; (*right, top to bottom*) Woolsery, Buckland Brewer and Morwenstow north nave arcade.

Figure 7. Small carved heads hidden among the geometric ornament to the doorway capitals at Woolsery (*top left*) and Parkham (*top right*), on the capital at the east end of the north nave arcade at Morwenstow (*bottom left*) and at the termination to chevron decoration on the doorway at Kilkhampton (*bottom right*).

Figure 8. The inner order of chevron to the doorway at Buckland Brewer. Note the projecting points of each voussoir.

Figure 9. Detail of the doorway at Parkham to show the single beakhead in the centre of the arch.

head, invariably a male one with a pronounced moustache; and a head which appears neither fully human nor animal but a combination of both – for the most part a male head with small animal ears on the top of the skull (Figure 6). Despite initial appearances these heads are rarely repeated exactly, with subtle variations to be found on most. At the terminations of the arch there are capitals with large volutes or scallop designs supporting abaci cut with interlaced semicircles, on the corners of which, in the slightly larger space offered by the return, there is often carved a small head (Figure 7).

At each site this layout is enriched by local nuances and variations. Shebbear's south doorway is perhaps the most striking of the group (and 'probably the most ambitious in the county') for the inner order, unlike the outer ones, has been cut into a pointed arch, the chevron carving trimmed back.[15] When this was done is unclear. It may have been when the south aisle was added in the later medieval period, a transformation of the building that would have necessitated the moving of the doorway. What is apparent, however, is that the remodelled chevron voussoirs are of the same date as the rest of the doorway and not 'an attempt to fit a door of a later style'.[16] At Buckland Brewer the chevron voussoirs are not flat but slightly angled, thereby making the point of the V more pronounced (Figure 8). At Parkham the absence of all beakheads except one, a cartoon-like and disproportionate face remaining at the topmost part of the arch, breaks the pattern found on the doorways at Shebbear, Woolsery and Buckland Brewer (Figure 9). In all other respects though the sculpture of the doorway remains similar, with the flat chevron and outer geometric ornament framing the plain roll moulding of the central order.

Consideration of the Parkham doorway leads inevitably to Morwenstow, a few miles away in Cornwall, since the easternmost Romanesque arch of the north nave arcade here is almost identical (Figure 10). The other two of the three Romanesque arches of this part of the arcade differ substantially in their decoration. The most western of the three is relatively plain, with a carved head at the apex; the central one, however, is richly ornamented with beakhead and frontal chevron

Figure 10. The near identical decorative schemes to the south door at Parkham (*left*) and the easternmost arch of the north nave arcade at Morwenstow (*right*).

on the south side, lateral on the reverse. There are corbel heads and sections of capital carved with a vertical chevron design, highly reminiscent of the pedestals to the fonts at Hartland and Frithelstock.

Morwenstow is an outstanding site for Romanesque architectural sculpture. As Eric Walter Frederick Tomlin, a former professor of literature and philosophy at the University of Nice who had settled in the village, put it in his guidebook, the three Romanesque arches of this arcade count 'among the finest Norman or Romanesque work in Cornwall, and perhaps in the entire south-west', the workmanship 'of an excellence rarely surpassed' (Figures 11a and 11b).[17] Perhaps unsurprisingly, given its author's background, Tomlin's guidebook is an exemplar of the genre with numerous insights and detailed considerations of the carving. He describes the central arch of the three in detail:

> Most striking is the central arch with its "beak-head ornament" which, despite the softness of the stone, is still in excellent condition. No less than 26 faces are carved on it, spaced at three to four inch intervals and stylized in a manner unique to Cornwall, save for the Norman doorway at Kilkhampton. Six of them – from the left, Nos. 2, 5, 18, 22 and 26 – represent grave bearded men of fair verisimilitude, while the rest are deliberate caricatures or bird-men. Of these the forehead and eyes rest on the convex roll-moulding, but the noses or beaks, which are either elongated or wedge-shaped, overlap it. The whole ring is enclosed by an outer one of graduated pellets (small bosses of which two have perished), and by a nether ring of chevron.[18]

Tomlin, like Jeffrey West, makes the connection between the beakhead ornament here and at the nearby sites of Kilkhampton, Shebbear and Woolsery, noting that its 'iconography remains a mystery', before suggesting that 'it may have had something to do with warding off evil'.[19]

The south doorway at Morwenstow adds to the richness of the work here for it too is carved with chevron and beakhead and supported by carved capitals (Figures 12a and 12b). Its impact,

Figure 11a (*left*). Sketch to show the junction of the easternmost and central Romanesque arches of the north nave arcade at Morwenstow.

Figure 11b (*below*). The two most decorated arches of the north nave arcade at Morwenstow (*top left, top right*) and details of the easternmost capital (*bottom left, bottom right*).

however, has been lessened by its partial dismantling. Moved from its original location when the south aisle was added in the 16th century the arch has been split into two, the outer order now forming the entrance to the porch, the central and inner orders with their columns and capitals remaining as the main doorway inside. The sculpture shows little connection in stylistic terms to that around the doorways in north Devon but follows a similar, almost identical layout to that

Figure 12a. Details of the south door at Morwenstow: the outer order, now forming the entrance to the porch (*top left*); gable detail of two beasts supporting the Agnus Dei on a cord (*top right*); capitals on the west side of the door (*middle left*); capitals on the east side of the door (*middle right*); carved bases to the columns on the west side of the door (*bottom left*); beakhead and chevron carving (*bottom right*).

around the south door at Kilkhampton. Both feature an inner order of beakhead and a dazzling array of frontal and lateral chevron, with foliate and figurative capitals (the weathered remains of a double-bodied quadruped, possibly a lion, can be found on the west side of the Morwenstow door). A characteristic fir or pinecone, or perhaps spray of hops, is carved on capitals at both sites, suggesting a very close link in terms of their production. Tomlin remarks on this and suggests that the motif was a visual pun 'introduced later possibly because Sir Hubert de Pyn(e) was patron from 1272' but this is unlikely; the carving is clearly in situ and in accord with the rest of the 12th-century door.[20]

In the mid 18th century, the antiquarian and cleric James Hervey composed his influential 'Meditations Among the Tombs' in the churchyard at Kilkhampton. Of the doorway he wrote –

Figure 12b. Selected capitals from the south door at Morwenstow. Note the fir-cone or pine-cone (with characteristic scrolling Romanesque leaf) also found at Kilkhampton.

> The southern entrance to this Church is peculiarly rich and beautiful, and appears of greater antiquity than any other part of it; it is through a semicircular arch, enriched with grotesque heads and several bands of zigzag sculpture; the arch is supported by three columns on each side, having capitals differently ornamented.[21]

There is no doubt it is a spectacular piece of work (Figures 13a–c). Edmund Harold Sedding, writing in 1909, suggested that this doorway was 'all that is left of what must have been a very noble building', a sentiment echoed by Roderick Dew some decades later when he wrote that it must be counted as 'one of the finest doorways in England'.[22] Bigger and more dramatic than that at Morwenstow it takes the decorative elements to new heights, with carved bases to the columns and the chevron work extended across jambs.

Sedding offers an unusual take on the variations of the beakhead motif visible here:

> It should be noticed, however, that the sculptor has varied the usual formal ornament in three of the stones. Probably, during a pause in his work, he saw a bird carrying dried grass or straw to its nest, and so he conveyed the idea into his carving for ever.[23]

An architect by profession, and one who was immersed in the arts and crafts movement which drew upon nature and natural forms (his father and his uncle, Edmund and John Dando Sedding, were both architects trained by the Gothic Revival architect G. E Street), Sedding's interpretation is perhaps not entirely unexpected. Nonetheless, his comment highlights some of the variety to be found among the repeated geometric and figurative motifs.

Among all of these churches, however, it is that at Morwenstow which provides the crucial information that allows us to begin to get a deeper understanding of this body of work. This is because the archaeology suggests two phases of building here in the 12th century, and from this it is possible to start to compile a rough chronology and even explore potential patrons.

In the medieval period the addition of an aisle to a church was a common means of enlarging the building. While their 'function in church worship is unclear unless it was to enable processions to take place … they certainly gave a church status since they were more expensive to build and called to mind the processional nave aisles of the larger religious houses'.[24] The presence of the north nave arcade aisle at Morwenstow suggests that it was added to an already existing building, and if this likelihood is the case, then the south door – as part of the original build – predates it. This would indicate that the south doors at Morwenstow and Kilkhampton, which share so many similar motifs and arrangements, are earlier than the north nave arcade and the work of north

Figure 13a. The south door at St James, Kilkhampton.

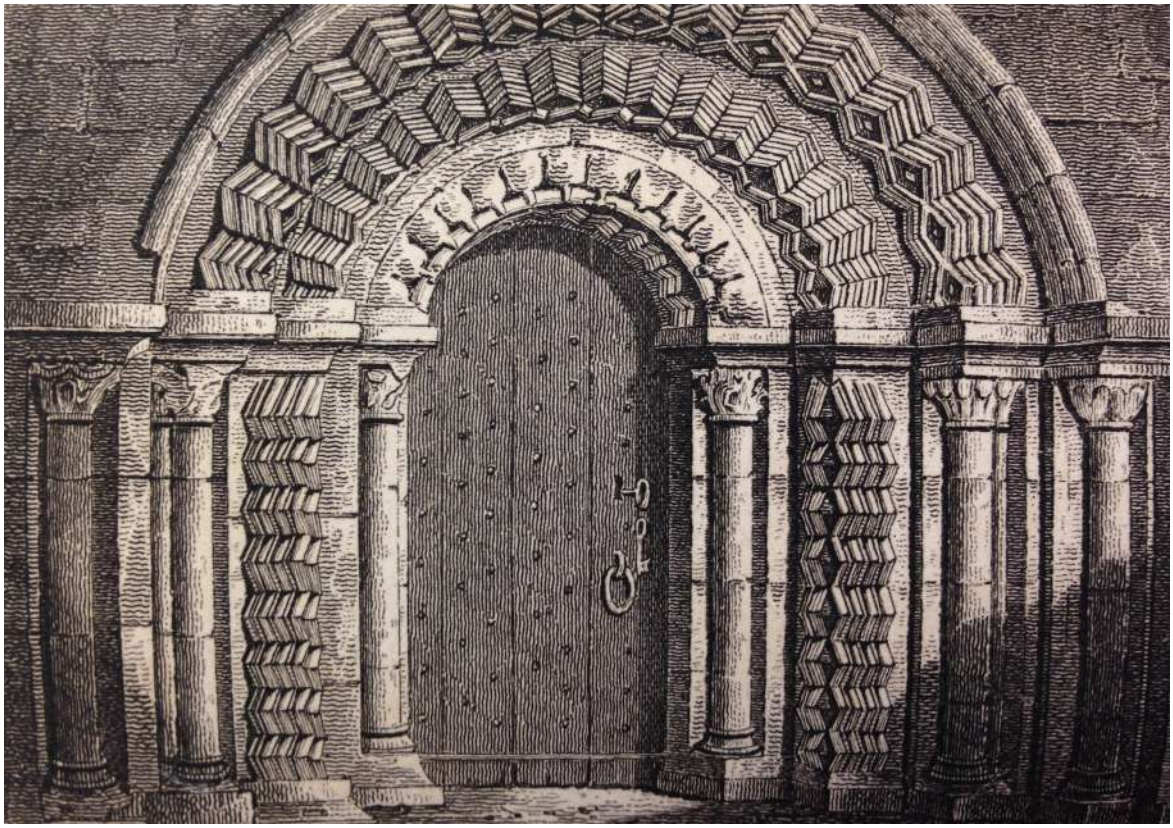


Figure 13b. Engraving of the south door at Kilkhampton from the Antiquarian and Topographical Cabinet (1818).

Figure 13c. Details of the Kilkhampton doorway to show capital and column carvings.

Devon, which, as discussed above, display many comparable features.

A variety of dates have been suggested for the North Cornwall and North Devon Romanesque sculptures. First, we can disregard a couple. Sedding dates the Kilkhampton doorway to between 1095 and 1109 stating that it was built by Richard Granville, brother of Robert Fitz Hamon, but this is far too early.[25] The beakhead motif is a helpful dating tool here since its first appearance in England isn't until the early 1120s, the 'fountainhead of beakhead in this country' generally understood to be Reading Abbey, founded by Henry I as his mausoleum in 1121.[26] It is also possible to dismiss Tomlin's date of 1130 for the north nave arcade at Morwenstow for similar reasons; this phase of build post-dates the doorway, and of course the doorway features beakhead carvings too.[27]

However, Sedding is on track with his proposed date for the nave arcade at Morwenstow: 1150.[28] West refers to a remark made by Archbishop Edmund White Benson (1829–1896) recorded in F. C. Hamlyn's book *The Pilgrim's Way at Morwenstow* (1929), who believed the nave arcade should be dated to the third quarter of the 12th century, a date that, West believed, was 'quite acceptable although there is no documentary evidence to support it'.[29] West himself suggests a date for the stylistically associated carved pieces from Okehampton Castle in the 1170s to the 1180s.[30] The doorway at Parkham, already noted as almost identical to the easternmost Romanesque arch of the Morwenstow arcade, has been dated to 1160–70 by W. G. Hoskins and (along with Shebbear and Woolsery) 1160–75 by J. M. Slader.[31] In fact the range of dates given by Hoskins for the other Romanesque doorways nearby – Thornbury, c.1150; Buckland Brewer, c.1160; Woolsery, late 12th century; Shebbear, c.1180 – is entirely consistent, and further backed up by patterns of land use in the period.[32] The breaking away of Woolsery from the royal estate of Hartland and its division into two ecclesiastical parishes (Woolsery and Clovelly) is likely to date to the middle or later part of the 12th century, the building of the churches in each place perhaps making this demarcation official.[33] All of which suggests that, for the nave arcade at Morwenstow and the north Devon doorways, a date range of c.1150–1180 is acceptable, both on stylistic and historical grounds. As the south doorways at Morwenstow and Kilkhampton are close to each other in stylistic terms and earlier in date than the arcade, as deduced from the building history of the former, but must post-date the early beakheads at Reading Abbey, I suggest that c.1130–1140s is plausible for both.

Is it possible to associate these campaigns of building with the local histories of each place? What was going on in this part of the world during this period that might have had an impact on the decoration of these doorways, fonts and arches? It strikes me that there are two motivating forces at work that are likely to have driven building work in the area, one secular and one ecclesiastical. The former is the influence of Robert of Gloucester (c.1090–1147); the latter is the regeneration of Hartland Abbey.

Robert of Gloucester was the eldest illegitimate son of Henry I. He held the manor of Kilkhampton as tenant-in-chief and was probably responsible for the nearby motte and bailey castle at Penstowe. An able politician and diplomat, literate and intelligent, he was also, crucially, an enthusiastic patron of the arts.[34] Numerous works of the period are dedicated to him including Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain* (1136). His foundation of the Priory of St James in Bristol in 1129 shows just how adventurous his architectural tastes were, the remaining façade complete with interlaced blind arcading decorated with chevron and an early appearance of a wheel window, perhaps the earliest example in the southwest of England.

The beakhead motif is an important aspect of this discussion. As previously noted it is to Henry I's foundation of Reading Abbey that its origin is customarily traced, and while the motif tends to be found concentrated in Oxfordshire and Yorkshire it is, as Ron Baxter notes, 'unsuspected links of patronage or emulation [that] can throw up surprisingly rich displays in counties that are otherwise lacking in the motif'.[35] I think that this is what we have happening here. It would seem unusual, given the familial connections and interests in art and architecture, if Robert of Gloucester weren't involved in the creation of the Kilkhampton doorway. If this is the case then it is to him that we can attribute the first appearance of the beakhead in Cornwall.

If Kilkhampton and Morwenstow are where the image first appears in the area, under the patronage of the Earl of Gloucester, then its renaissance a decade or two later in the work of the north Devon churches is likely to be due to the patronage of an entirely different kind: the Augustinian abbey at Hartland. The pre-Conquest foundation of secular canons attached to the church of St Nectan was consecrated by Bishop Bartholomew of Exeter in 1160, re-established according to the Arrouasian rule in 1169 with new building work recorded as underway in 1171.[36] The remoteness of the Hartland peninsula must have provided an ideal location for a religious community, and was no doubt part of the reason behind it being the last abbey in England to be dissolved by Henry VIII, in 1539.

That there was building work connected to a major ecclesiastical institution happening in this period is interesting considering the date of the nearby Romanesque doorways. Certainly, there are connections between these sites and the abbey: Woolsery, for example, was given by Hugh Peverell to Hartland Abbey in the 12th century, the grant confirmed by Richard I.[37] Medieval masons tended to organise themselves around either quarry sites, roughing out stone for delivery into basic forms – capitals, columns etc – or at the site itself, working and fixing stone into position. It is not inconceivable that the remarkable uniformity of the north Devon doorways isn't due to them being carved off site to order, then delivered and fitted. Certainly the likelihood of them being 'executed by a single workshop or team of masons who made few changes to their initial design' is a strong one, as is this workshop being connected in some way to Hartland Abbey.[38]

There is narrative quietly emerging from these buildings and associated fragments then. The beakhead motif appears first in Cornwall, probably under the patronage of Robert of Gloucester, around the south doors at Kilkhampton and Morwenstow in the 1130s or 1140s. This introduces truly magnificent architectural sculpture into the region, which is picked up again a decade or two later and possibly connected to the regeneration of Hartland Abbey. From the 1150s to the 1180s the carvers of the area took these motifs and made them their own, using beakhead and other forms including interlaced semicircles, triple chevron and beading to produce high status work, of which

the font at Hartland itself and the north nave arcade at Morwenstow must count among its best examples. This limited range of designs has given the work a strong sense of identity, which, once your eye is attuned, is easy to recognise.

I started with Chope's ruminations on Hartland and I'd like to finish with W. G. Hoskins on the same subject. Hartland, he wrote, is 'one of those Devonshire parishes in which one could happily spend a week in leisurely exploration, better still a fortnight, and best of all in the spring; and one would always wish to return to it'.[39] I imagine that these sentiments would happily resonate down through the centuries and apply not just to Hartland but the whole region, including the very top of Cornwall. While the remoteness and natural beauty of the area has drawn and continues to draw visitors, from Augustinians to antiquarians, it has also, perhaps, occluded to some degree the importance and uniqueness of the area's Romanesque sculpture. If the work here is little known, however, it is not because of any lack of quality. On the contrary, this is accomplished architectural sculpture of considerable status: not only does it utilize a handful of geometric and figurative motifs to great effect, but is likely to be connected to patrons at the highest level too,

Alex Woodcock

All photos and illustrations by the author except Figures 3 and 4 by Theresa Oakley.

Endnotes

1 Chope, Richard Pearse, 1940. *The Book of Hartland*, Torquay: Devonshire Press, p. 3.

2 Chope, 1940. *ibid*., 2.

3 Ithell Colquhoun, 1957. *The Living Stones: Cornwall*, London: Peter Owen, p. 90.

4 Chope, 1940. *op. cit*., 2.

5 A literature review of sorts may be found in what is still the best introduction to the work of the Romanesque sculptors in the region – West, Jeffrey K. 1982. 'Two Romanesque Stone Carvings' in Robert Higham, John Allan and Stuart Blaylock 'Excavations at Okehampton Castle, Devon: Part 2, the Bailey', *Devon Archaeological Society Proceedings*, 40: 79–82, note 3.

6 Deacon, Bernard, and Payton, Philip, 1993. 'Re-inventing Cornwall: Culture Change on the European Periphery', *Cornish Studies* 1: 62–79, 72.

7 Jenkins, Simon, 1999. *England's Thousand Best Churches*, London: Penguin, 77.

8 Rhodes, Colin., 1994. *Primitivism and Modern Art*, London: Thames and Hudson, 9, 13.

9 I have argued this point elsewhere, for example: Woodcock, Alex, 2015. 'Reconsidering the Romanesque Sculpture of Cornwall', *Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall*, 57–72; Woodcock, Alex, 2017. 'Beasts and Beakheads: Romanesque Sculpture at Morwenstow' in Paul Holden (ed.) *Celebrating Pevsner: New Research on Cornish Architecture*, London: Francis Boutle, 41–48.

10 Corser, Christina, 1983. A Catalogue of Norman Fonts in Devon, 5 vols, unpublished MPhil. Thesis, University of Exeter School of English, 354, 356.

11 Lega-Weekes, Ethel, 1906–1907. 'Tympanum at Bondleigh', *Devon Notes and Queries*, 4: 197; Beacham, Peter, and Pevsner, Nikolaus, 2014. *The Buildings of England: Devon*, London: Yale University Press, 572; West, 1982. *op. cit*., 79–82.

12 Moss, Rachel, 2009. *Romanesque Chevron Ornament: The Language of British, Norman and Irish Sculpture in the Twelfth Century*, Oxford: Archaeopress (British Archaeological Reports International Series S1908), 3–4.

13 Henry, François, and Zarnecki, George, 1957. 'Romanesque Arches Decorated with Human and Animal Heads', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 20: 1–34; Salmon, J., 1946. 'Beakhead Ornament in Norman Architecture', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 36: 349–356.

14 In the southwest there are examples of corbels carved with a solitary beakhead on the churches at Worth Matravers in Dorset and Mylor in Cornwall.

15 Slader, J. M., 1968. *The Churches of Devon*, Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 34.

[16] Oliver, B. W., 1948. 'Some Notes on Shebbear and Durpley Castle', *Report and Transactions of the Devonshire Association*, 80: 159–166, 159.

[17] Tomlin, Eric Walter Frederick, 1982. The Church of St Morwenna and St John the Baptist, Morwenstow, Cornwall: A Guide and History, church guidebook (printed in Bude by J. Gunner), 14.

[18] Tomlin, 1982. *ibid*., 14.

[19] Tomlin, 1982. *ibid*., 16.

[20] Tomlin, 1982. *ibid*., 10

[21] Hervey, James, 1746. *Meditations and Contemplations*, London: Kelly. The work is a crucial one in the nascent Gothic movement, and would help inspire the defining text of the genre, Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764).

[22] Sedding, Edmund Harold, 1909. *Norman Architecture in Cornwall: A Handbook to Old Cornish Ecclesiastical Architecture*, London: Ward & Co. 173; Dew, Roderick, n.d. Kilkhampton Church, church guidebook. (This must post-date 1927 as the note on page 2 states that 'Much that is printed here has appeared in the book 'A History of the Parish and Church of Kilkhampton'', which was published in that year).

[23] Sedding, 1909. *op. cit*., 173.

[24] Orme, Nicholas, 2010. *A History of the County of Cornwall II: Religious History to 1560*, London: The Victoria History of the Counties of England, 41.

[25] Sedding, 1909. *op. cit*., 173; West, 1982. *op. cit*., 81 n3.

[26] Baxter, Ron. 2004. 'Beakhead Ornament and the Corpus of Romanesque Sculpture', *Historic Churches* 11: 8–10, 8.

[27] Tomlin, 1982, *op.cit*., 14.

[28] Sedding, 1909. *op cit*., plate CXVIII, facing page 295.

[29] West, 1982. *op. cit*., 81 n3.

[30] West, 1982. *ibid*., 82.

[31] Hoskins, W. G., 1952. *A New Survey of England: Devon*, London: Collins, 451; Slader, J. M., 1968. *The Churches of Devon*, Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 34.

[32] Hoskins, 1952. *op.cit*., 493, 355, 519, 474.

[33] Hoskins, W. G. and Finberg, H. P. R., 1952. *Devonshire Studies*, London: Jonathan Cape, 306–7.

[34] As Christopher Tyerman writes, he had 'all the kingly attributes except one: legitimacy'. Tyerman, Christopher, 1996. *Who's Who in Early Medieval England (1066–1272)*, London: Shepheard-Walwyn, 103.

[35] Baxter, 2004. *op cit*., 8.

[36] Cherry, Bridget, and Pevsner, Nikolaus, 1991. *The Buildings of England: Devon*, London: Yale University Press, 473; Chope, 1940, *op.cit*., 54–55. See also Orme, Nicholas, 2010. 'The Medieval Church in North Devon', *Report and Transactions of the Devonshire Association* 142: 49–71.

[37] B. F. C., 1930–31. 'West Woolfardisworthy Church', *Devon and Cornwall Notes and Queries* 16: 145.

[38] West, 1982. *op cit*., 81.

[39] Hoskins, 1952, *op.cit.,* 406.

The Building Stones of Norman Devon

Introduction

In the past, writers on the subject of the Norman architecture of Devon have shown limited interest in the geology of the buildings they recorded. This is unsurprising in the case of early works; Clarke for example often mentioned the geology of fonts but frequently with general descriptions ('coarse freestone', 'grey stone', 'reddish stone') and sometimes wrongly; her identification of fonts in Caen and Bath stone, for example, are I think mistakes (Clarke 1913–22). Pevsner was evidently unfamiliar with the county's geology (Pevsner 1952a; 1952b) and, as Bridget Cherry was aware, this weakness was only partially addressed when the revised volume of *The Buildings of England: Devon* was issued in the 1980s (Pevsner & Cherry 1989, 41). The best starting point we have at present is Corser's 'strictly provisional' listing of identifications of Norman fonts, which is excellent in some places, less reliable in others (Corser 1983, 108–11). For example, all twelve Beer stone fonts she listed are in this writer's view correctly identified, although the six she recorded as examples of Portland stone are also of Beer stone, as are three others, and her group of ?Beer stone fonts in fine yellow limestone are a quite different group, probably from Dundry near Bristol.

The exploration of this strand in the study of Norman architecture in Devon deserves more attention; it provides a different framework for classifying works from stylistic study, and has the potential to shed light on such matters as the operation of regional trade, the organisation of the building trade and even patronage. The student of this subject has been greatly helped in recent years by the work of Mike Barr (2006; 2016), and by the provision of the online resource 'Strategic Stone Study: a Building Stone Atlas of Devon' (Horner *et al.* 2012). The Memoirs of the British Geological Survey continue to provide the most specific information for those interested in a particular stone type.

This brief paper is written by an archaeologist with an amateur interest in building stones, helped by advice from geologist colleagues, and is based almost entirely on direct observation. Although all Devon's parish churches have been visited, it is very imperfect, reflecting notes which have accumulated since the 1980s, with variations in the quality of observation and note-taking. The paper will concentrate on freestones; the numerous local sources used for rubble wallstones, for example of Greensand chert in south-east Devon, or the Culm Measures of north-west Devon, will not be discussed. In view of the limitations of space, and of expertise on the part of the writer, the coverage of the county's complex range of volcanic and metamorphic rocks will be especially brief.

Background: stone building in late Saxon Devon

The geology of Devon's few pre-Conquest stone churches – the Sidbury crypt and five fragments of late Saxon church fabric in Exeter – shows that some of the main building stones in the south-eastern part of the county were already being quarried and transported in late Saxon Devon, reviving their use in the Roman period. Beer stone was used at Sidbury, as Martyn Jope noted more than 50 years ago (Jope 1964, 103) and Beer, Salcombe and Exeter volcanic stone at Exeter. Freestone, therefore, was already being transported 35km or more; this was not unusual in southern England before 1066 (*ibid*.). The identification of the late Saxon cross fragments at Sidbury, Colyton and Dolton as Bath stone and (probable) Osmington oolite, the latter from the Abbotsbury–Weymouth area, shows that more ambitious journeys were sometimes undertaken in late Saxon Devon when stone was acquired for sculpture (*ibid*.; Cramp 2006, 81, 83, 89).

The search for building stone

Since most of Devon lacks evidence for late Saxon stone buildings, the construction of hundreds of new stone churches over the entire county in the Norman period must have necessitated many searches for suitable local materials. This need not always have entailed quarrying. The massive keep of Okehampton Castle, the earliest Norman stone building known in central Devon, is constructed largely of water-rolled rubble, no doubt taken from the bed of the river at the foot of the site, perhaps requiring no quarrying at all. In other parts of England the robbing of Roman buildings provided

Figure 1. (a–c) Caen stone fragments from Exeter: (a) Cedars Road (with modern voussoirs showing state when new). (b) Gandy Street. (c) The Norman House, Preston Street. All may have come from St Nicholas Priory. (d–f) Beer stone fonts at (d) Nymet Rowland, (e) Cheriton Bishop, (f) Farringdon. (g) ?Dundry stone font, Weare Giffard. Lower: The distribution of Caen, Beer and ?Dundry stone in Norman Devon (photos a, c, f: David Garner; graphic: T. Ives).

a ready supply of easily acquired materials, and this practice was commonplace in Exeter, where excavations have shown that even the foundations of most of the Roman buildings were robbed with great efficiency in the late Saxon or Norman periods. The reused Roman tile and stone in Exminster church, rather later than the Norman period, represent the sole example of this practice currently known in rural Devon (Allan *et al.* 2008). Field collection of surface material (e.g. the very small stones used in some buildings in the Culm Measures) and collection of material from beaches (perhaps the source of the rounded wallstones sometimes seen on sites close to the coast, as at Kingsteignton rather later at Haccombe) offered other possibilities.

Alongside the use of such *ad hoc* sources, many new quarries must have been opened. Some quarry sites seem remote to a modern observer. For example, the acid igneous rock used in the late 12th century at Okehampton Castle has been identified as aplite from a small outcrop in a fairly remote site at Meldon on the fringe of Dartmoor (identification by T.J. Brzozowski; for the fragment see West 1982). The use of such sources implies intimate knowledge of the landscape.

A. LIMESTONES

In the heartlands of the Norman world, limestone was the building stone of choice. As the Norman armies travelled westward into Devon in 1068 they moved from areas where building in limestone was an established practice to one where limestones were distant from most prospective building sites. Although limestones were carried considerable distances for specialist work, the county's complex geology offered a wide variety of choices; many sandstones and volcanic stones were pressed into use. And it is clear that the builders of Devon's more ambitious Norman churches were aware of the dramatic impact of polychrome masonry when such strongly contrasting materials were used in combination: yellow Salcombe stone with red sandstone (Exeter Cathedral nave; Paignton west doorway; possibly also the Buckfast Abbey arcades, known only from loose fragments), with grey tuff (Plympton Priory nave) or with dark purple trap of the Exeter Volcanic Series (Exe Bridge, Exeter); Beer stone with red sandstone (Paignton west doorway) and cream Caen stone with grey tuff (Plympton Priory Tower House).

Caen stone (Figure 1)

Compared with its abundance in some towns of south-east England, Caen stone is rare in standing Norman buildings in Devon, the principal examples being in Exeter Cathedral's north tower and Exe Bridge, Exeter (*c.* 1200), and in Plympton Priory Tower House. A few churches around the Exe estuary also display odd blocks of this stone (Figure 1); they include the rebuilt 12th-century doorway at Mamhead. Architectural fragments from the Exeter area, however, demonstrate that the modest showing of Caen stone in standing structures gives a misleading impression of its significance; it was used for a number of works whose quality and intricacy exceed anything standing in the county nowadays, derived from monastic buildings which have been demolished. Perhaps the most impressive are a series of voussoirs from a sequence of small arches, reused in a wall in Cedars Road, Exeter, probably from some form of internal furnishing (Figure 1a), and portions of at least two larger doorways whose most likely source is St Nicholas Priory (Figure 1b–c). These pieces show that earlier judgements of the achievements of Norman architecture in Devon have not taken the highest-quality works into account.

Beer stone (Figure 1)

Contrasting with its great popularity in late medieval Devon, Beer stone is surprisingly rare in Norman churches in Devon; it was used only in a few capitals and doorways (Figure 1). Its rarity seems the more striking when its early use and transport are considered: not only was it employed in William I's reign in the castle gatehouse of Rougemont, Exeter, and a little later in St Stephen's church nearby, but a batch of Beer stone has recently been identified in the White Tower of the Tower of London (Roland Harris *in litt.* to the writer 2011).

Beer stone was also favoured for fonts, where its deep beds and suitability for carving would have been advantages. Twenty are attributed here to Beer: they include many of the most elaborate examples in

the county (Figure 1d–f). It will be apparent that certain features are characteristic of this group: the hourglass form, the central cable moulding, the use of scale decoration, and occasionally the plain upper bowl. The county's finest examples of complex narratives and figure sculpture belong to this group. The combination of a single geological source with shared stylistic features suggests that, although each of these fonts is an individual creation, they are a closely related group.

Salcombe stone (Figure 2)
The sandy yellow Greensand of the parishes of Salcombe Regis and Branscombe (sometimes described as either as a sandy limestone or a calcareous sandstone) provided the facing stone for the county's principal Norman building – the cathedral – whose towers and lower nave walls are built very largely of this stone (Figure 2a). The plain early work there has generally weathered well. In the north tower, a building break half-way up the tower marks a change to Salcombe stone of poorer quality, now noticeably more weathered (Allan 1991, 12). It seems likely, therefore, that the Norman quarrymen could distinguish the best-quality stone and quarried it at an early stage. On occasion they may have exhausted supplies of the better-quality stone.

The use of Salcombe stone elsewhere in the county is shown in Figure 2, in which a gradation of usage from great to minor is indicated. Six buildings in the vicinity of the quarries used Salcombe ashlar (Figure 2c). Further afield, and in places where such expensive work was not commissioned, it is found in arcades, doorways and dressings. This more distant group includes the excellent doorways at Bishopsteignton (Figure 2b), whose elaborate working and use of Salcombe stone may reflect the patronage of the bishop, whose peculiar the parish was, and his relationship with the Dean and Chapter, patrons of Salcombe Regis.

Attention may be drawn to a distinctive feature of the late 12th- and early 13th-century arcades of Salcombe stone in south-east Devon: they are extremely low. It seems likely that they would commonly have been replaced with taller arcades, as was evidently the case at Membury, where an engaged Salcombe stone pier, formerly at one end of a Norman arcade, was discovered behind a taller late medieval replacement. They survive in modest churches (Farway, Colaton Ralegh) and were perhaps much more common.

Unlike Beer stone, Salcombe stone was not much favoured for fonts, the examples at Moreleigh and Trusham being the only ones known to the writer. Dr Roger Taylor has recently re-examined the celebrated Luppitt font, whose stone is a similar Greensand. He comments that it is sufficiently different to suggest that it is not from Salcombe but from a different Greensand outcrop, perhaps closer to Luppitt.

Purbeck marble (Figure 3)
With the growth in the fashion for polished stonework from the mid-12th century, the Purbeck marblers supplied Devon with tombs, fonts, and components of doorways and arcades. The use of this stone for the earliest of the cathedral tombs ('Leofric'?) and the shaft fragments from Buckfastleigh (discussed in Blair 1991) show that the trade to Devon began at an early stage in the growth of the Purbeck marble industry. The fonts, made to a limited range of stock patterns (Figure 3a–d), are appreciably more common than the ten examples recorded by Leach (1978, 75–81), the nine listed by Pevsner and Cherry (1989, 41), or even the eighteen listed by Corser (1983, 108–11); Figure 3 shows the 31 Devon examples of the late 12th and early 13th century noted by the writer. They were especially popular in the South Hams and in a band across the middle of the county, but their distribution extends into North Devon – even onto Exmoor.

Less well known has been the accumulating evidence for the use of Purbeck marble capitals and shafts for cloister arcades, known only from architectural fragments, the evidence for which has recently been discussed (Allan and Blaylock forthcoming). The spiral-decorated shafts and beautiful late 12th-century capitals from St Nicholas Priory, Exeter, deserve specific mention. They are the finest examples known in the county. As Richard Parker's memorable reconstruction drawing shows, they must have seemed very exotic in a Devon context (Parker 2017).

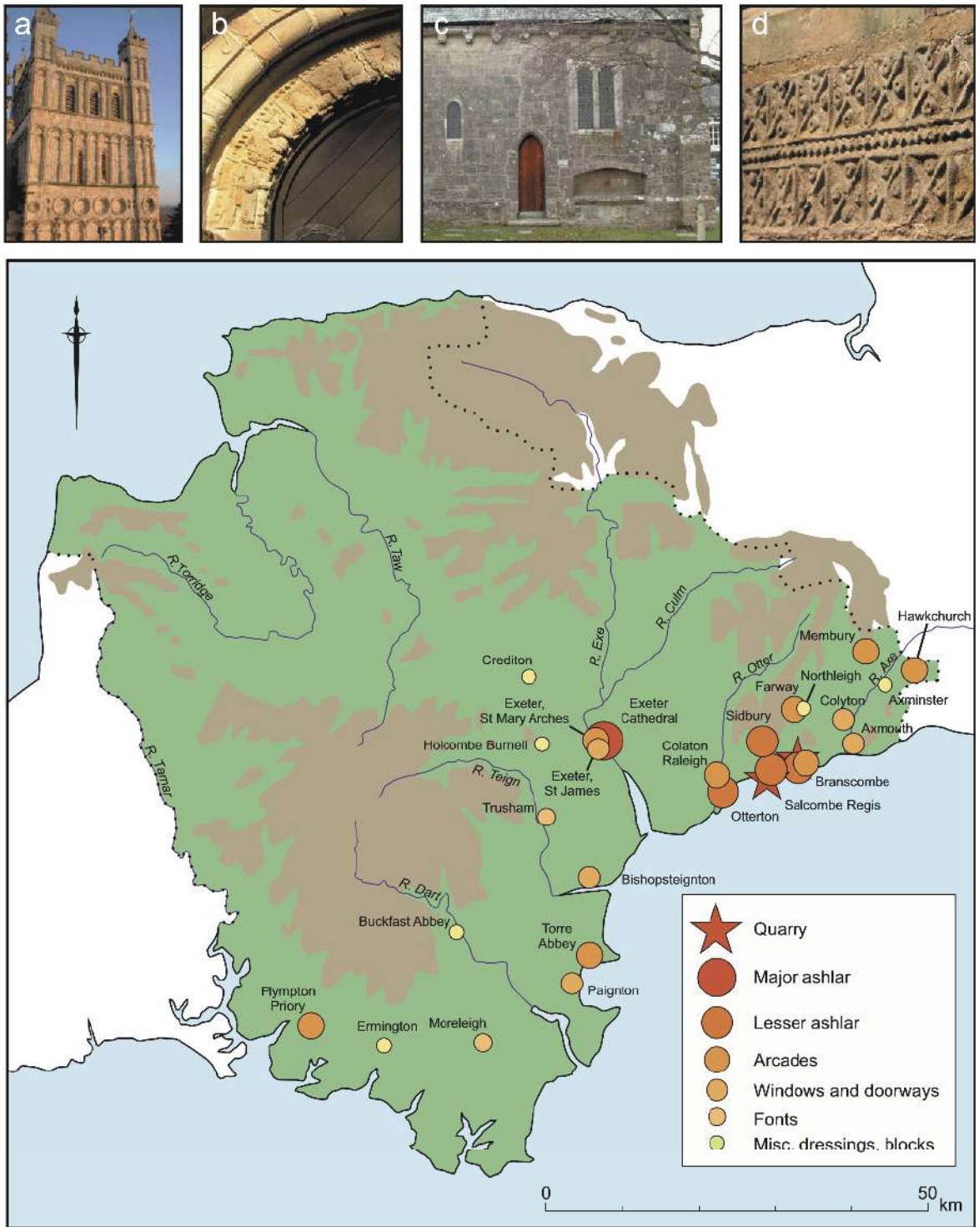


Figure 2. Salcombe stone in Norman Devon. (a) Exeter Cathedral, south tower. (b) West doorway, Bishopsteignton. (c) South chancel wall, Sidbury. (d) East chancel wall, Salcombe Regis. Lower: Distribution. (Graphic: T. Ives).

Figure 3. Purbeck marble in Norman and early 13th-century Devon. (a–d) Fonts at (a) Challacombe, (b) Bondleigh, (c) Hemyock, (d) Malborough. Lower: Distribution (excluding works post-dating c. 1250). (Graphic: T. Ives).

Other limestones from Dorset and Somerset

Both Devon and Cornwall furnish a few examples of the use of Portland stone in the 12th century, and these are notable in a wider context. The best example is the scatter of Portland stone blocks in the middle stages of the north tower of Exeter Cathedral, probably dating to the period *c*. 1150–80 (Allan 1991, 12). Coastal transport occasionally carried this stone far to the west; the most distant example noted by this writer is in the Romanesque doorway at Manaccan, western Cornwall.

Ham Hill stone is represented by a sculpture from Chardstock, probably from a 12th-century corbel table (Allan 1993), and, more surprising, the font at Christow, far outside the Ham quarries' usual range.

The supply of Somerset limestones to the medieval buildings of North Devon has received little attention. Ham stone is certainly quite common in its late medieval buildings. A finer yellow limestone is also quite common there, and a distinctive group of square Norman font bowls with scalloped undersides (Figure 1g) is of this stone type. This is clearly not a north Devon stone. I suggest that it offers a good visual match to Dundry stone from the Bristol area – an attribution which needs to be checked by a specialist. If so, the distribution of this stone type into north and mid-Devon mirrors its widespread use in castles and churches along the south Welsh coast.

The distribution of fonts of this stone type is approximately complementary to that of Beer stone fonts (Figure 1).

B. SANDSTONES

Red Rock sandstone (Figure 4)

The group of fonts worked from the Red Rock sandstone of Torbay has offered the most readily distinguishable group of Norman works in the county, as Kate Clarke recognised a century ago (Clarke 1913–22); it has been reconsidered by Woodcock in recent years, with an important addition (Woodcock 2009; 2012). The stone type and its use have recently been discussed by Barr (2016, 48–52), who suggests that more than one quarry may be represented, although all the likely sources are close to one another on the banks of the lower Dart. Figure 4 shows the distribution of such fonts; those with palmettes correspond to Clarke's 'honeysuckle' group (Clarke 1916, 312). The few examples of Red Rock sandstone in 12th-century buildings have been added; they include the fascinating south nave elevation of Kingsteignton (Figure 4d). The fragment in the north doorway at Ipplepen, here interpreted as a reused Romanesque tympanum, may be noted as an addition to the group (Figure 4c).

Other sandstones

The Triassic white and pink sandstones of south Devon are represented in a few 12th-century structures around the Exe estuary, such as Mamhead church (doorway) and Exe Bridge, Exeter. Although it disappears from the Exeter market in the later Middle Ages, it was still employed, for example at Woodbury, in the 15th and 16th centuries.

Other sandstones used extensively in the later Middle Ages include the Pickwell Down Sandstone of Exmoor; the purple beds of this stone were particularly favoured for arcades, windows and ashlar (Barr 2016, 34–6). Local sandstones naturally form the basic material of Exmoor's churches of the 12th and 13th centuries, such as Brendon, High Bray, Twitchen and Instow and were used for fonts, as at East Down; the purple sandstone was already in use by this time, as at Knowstone.

Regarding the use of the sandstones of north-west Devon, evident in the Romanesque doorways of Parkham, West Woolfardisworthy, Buckland Brewer, Morwenstow and Shebbear, one point which arose from the DBG summer meeting may be noted. They are worked from sandstones of different colours, no doubt reflecting different quarries, or different beds in particular quarries (so far unidentified). In some instances a sandstone of particular colour was chosen for the same architectural

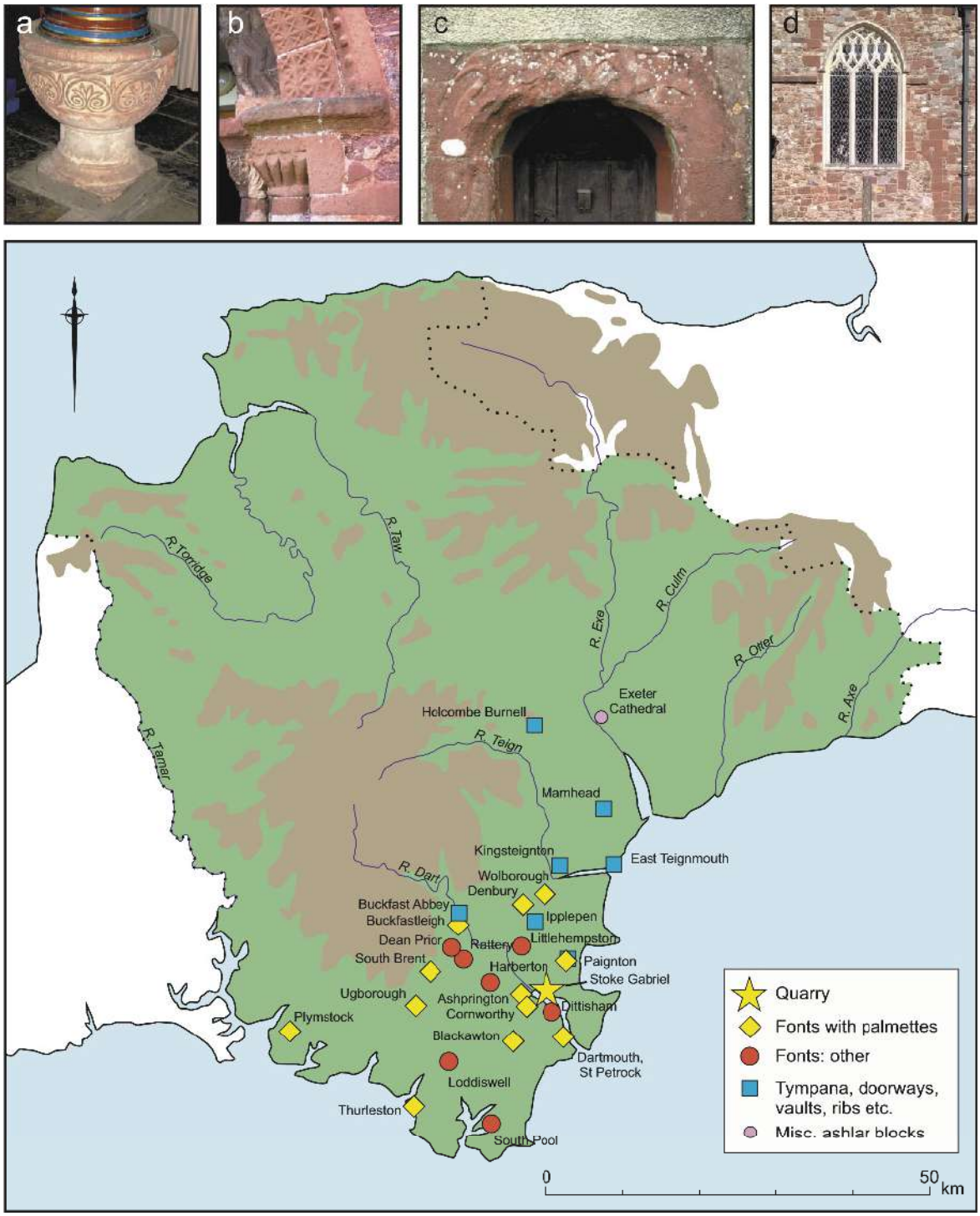


Figure 4. Red Rock sandstone in Norman Devon. (a) A font with palmettes: Blackawton. (b) Doorway detail: Paignton. (c) Reused tympanum, Ipplepen. (d) Part of the south elevation, Kingsteignton. (Graphic: T. Ives).

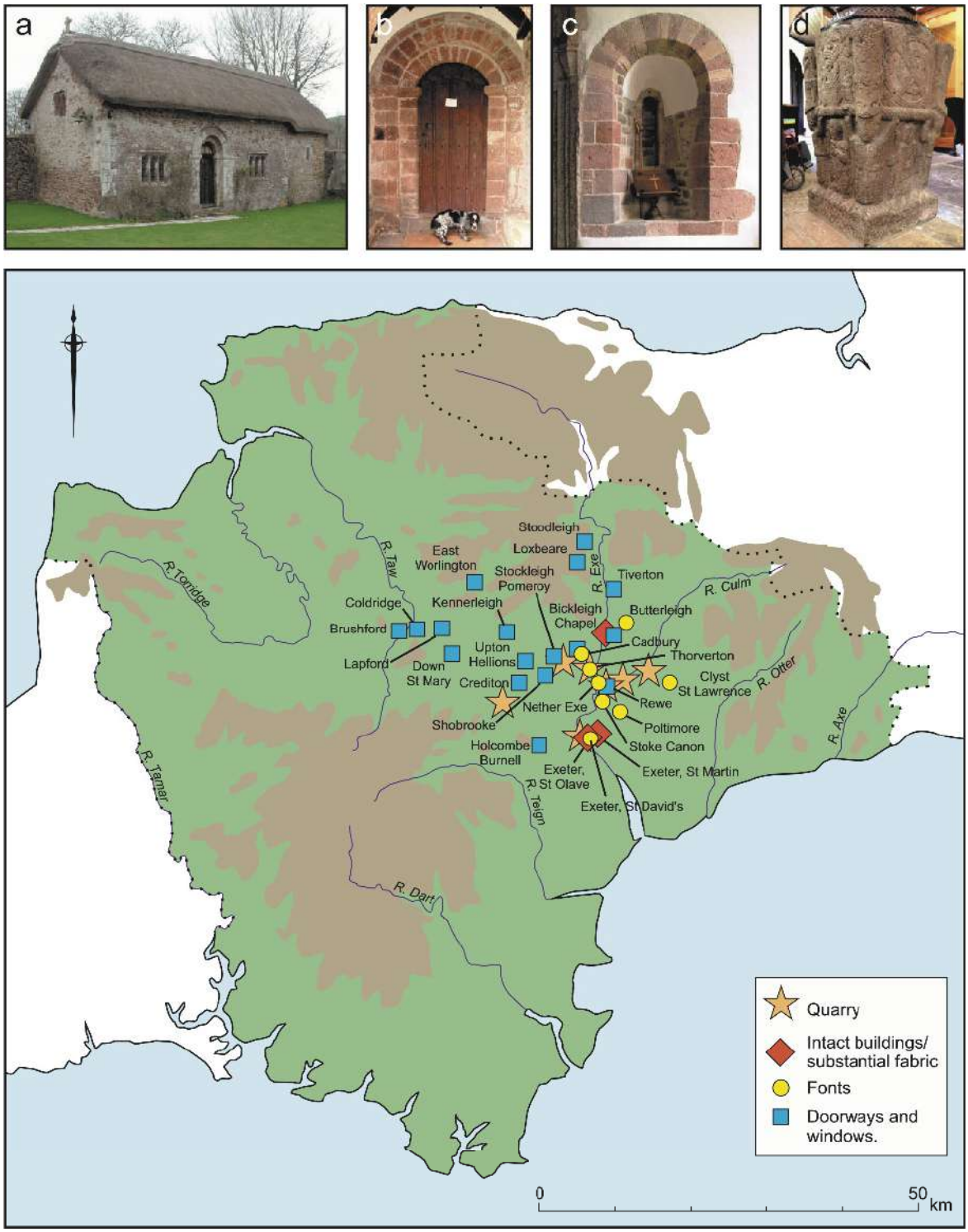


Figure 5. The Exeter Volcanic Series in Norman Devon. (a) Bickleigh Castle chapel. (b) Upton Hellions. (c) Coldridge. (d) Stoke Canon. (Graphic: T. Ives).

element in different doorways. This suggests preferential choice of materials for specific forms; the point could be explored much more thoroughly.

C. IGNEOUS STONES

A high proportion of the Romanesque masonry of Devon is either of volcanic lavas or of plutonic rocks; these are appreciably more common than limestones.

The Exeter Volcanic Series (Figure 5)

The purple trap of the Exeter Volcanic Series, which was quarried at various places in the Exe Valley and the surrounding countryside (Figure 5), was a major source of both rubble for walling and dressed stone for doorways, windows and quoins. The use of volcanic stone for these different purposes is best illustrated by the unusually well-preserved chapel close to Bickleigh Castle (Figure 5a) – an under-appreciated building which must surely be the most complete example of a Norman church in the county.

Despite its rough and typically vesicular texture, this material was used for Norman capitals, free-standing shafts and bases, even on well-endowed monastic sites such as the priories of St Nicholas and St James in Exeter, and for the elaborate font at Stoke Canon (Figure 5d). Such elaborate work in coarse material may have fallen from favour by the late 12th century; later Norman sculpture at St Nicholas Priory, for example, was in Caen stone and Purbeck marble.

A map showing the examples of Norman work in Exeter volcanic stone (Figure 5) might suggest that the stone did not travel far; the distribution of its fonts is especially restricted. This may, however, simply show the scarcity of firmly datable 12th-century fabric. In the later middle ages, for which the evidence is much more plentiful, this material had an appreciably wider range – for example to the eastern side of Dartmoor, around the Exe Estuary and in the Culm Valley.

Other igneous stones

We need a fresh study of the other examples of works in the igneous stones seen around the fringes of Dartmoor and in north-west Devon. Three examples will be mentioned here, but there must be several others. First, Hatherleigh Stone, a light brown, fawn or even pink rock with its characteristic pink algae, forms an important group of Norman works in igneous stone. Mike Barr has mapped the occurrence of this material in buildings of various dates spread over a wide area of north-west Devon (Barr 2016, 52–3).

Second, Hurdwick stone, the vesicular chloritic tuff seen extensively in buildings of later date in the Tavistock area, was evidently worked in Norman times; it was used for dressings, alongside granite rubble walling – for example in the keep of Lydford Castle in a context of the end of the 12th century (Saunders 1980). Further from the source, the plain central blocks in the tympana of Thornbury, Bradford and Highampton are of volcanic ash (clearly different from the other stones in the doorway) which may be Hurdwick stone. Stuart Blaylock has recently identified it at Jacobstowe church, where it was used for the arch and frame of the 12th-century doorway, and there are other odd blocks in the church, possibly re-used in later contexts; the church is about 28km from the source. A similar tuff was used, alternating with Salcombe stone, in the 12th-century nave responds at Plympton Priory, and I have presumed that this material was Hurdwick stone. Dr Chris Ruse tells me, however, that he suspects a more local source for this material.

In the past, much medieval stonework including various fonts in west Devon has been described as Polyphant stone. Dr Roger Taylor has re-examined some of these attributions in the homeland of the Polyphant quarries around Launceston, and found that a variety of different building stones is in fact represented; in contrast with true Polyphant stone, which is a plutonic rock, most are local tuffs/volcanic ashes (Taylor 2009). An exception, however, is the magnificent font at St Stephen, Launceston, which is indeed of Polyphant stone. The Devon fonts need detailed re-examination.

Some, such as that at Bere Ferrers, are not of Polyphant stone, but those at Bratton Clovelly and Clawton do seem to be of this material, showing that not only are they Cornish in style but they are made of Cornish stone.

Conclusion

A number of general points seem evident from this brief paper. First, there is a close correlation between some stylistic groupings and particular geologies. This has been obvious in the case of the fonts of Red Rock sandstone, but is also apparent with the Beer stone fonts, and with the fonts of fine yellow limestone which I suggest are probably of Dundry stone. Like the better-known Purbeck marble products, they seem to be stock items with a common quarry source, perhaps made by a single group of masons.

Second, the choice of materials seems to indicate particular perceptions of the qualities of some of these building stones. The very different pattern of use of Beer and Salcombe stone, for example, is clearly not random, and might show, for example, that Beer stone was deemed unsuitable for external work, whilst Salcombe stone was not a regarded as a good choice for fonts.

Third, by the late 12th century quite a sophisticated market in building stones had developed in some parts of Devon. Exeter offers the most striking example; Caen stone, Salcombe stone, Beer stone, Purbeck marble, at least two types of Triassic sandstone and various forms of volcanic stone were all used there. Their selection no doubt reflects a range of factors – their different costs of transport, suitability for carving and visual appearance, as well as such matters as patronage of particular building projects by leading clergy and laity.

John Allan

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Romanesque Architecture in Devon

Introduction

The absence of much modern work on Romanesque architecture in Devon is very noticeable, and all the talks given at the conference on 17th June 2017 will have been worked up from disparate sources, and mainly from field observations of primary data. Alex Woodcock has produced an impressive collection of articles on Romanesque sculpture (and will have done more when his forthcoming book on the subject is finished). The Corpus of Romanesque Sculpture of Britain and Ireland (CRSBI), which elsewhere provides a very full inventory of material, has not yet got very far in the West Country (its on-line catalogue offers 37 entries for Devon, about the same number for Cornwall, and just 9 for Dorset) and is rigid in sticking to the listing of sculpture (i.e. by and large ignores the architectural context, so that unless a church has sculpture of some sort it is not eligible for listing, no matter how much fabric there may be). Nor is there much in Devon that can compare with the very best (although arguably the group discussed below by Alex in North-West Devon and North-East Cornwall deserves such a place): no equivalents of Kilpeck (Herefordshire) or Kempley (Gloucestershire), or even Dymock (also Gloucestershire), still less the glories of the Midlands or Yorkshire. This is reflected in the near total absence of west-country material from established studies of the Romanesque period (three maps, published over a period of almost 80 years [Clapham 1936, opp. p. 158; Zarnecki *et al.* 1984, 412; Fernie 2014, xxvii], show this to perfection: other than Exeter the south-west peninsula is entirely vacant in all three).

Although I necessarily dealt mainly with sculptured items, as the main vehicles of dating, in preparing my talk I was not thinking, primarily, about sculpture *per se* (deferring to Alex on this), but on the messages that the fonts, doorways, corbels, tympana and other architectural fragments convey about the architecture of the 11th- and 12th-century parish church *when their associated fabric is taken into account*.

Numbers

Numbers and totals can be problematic, even the numbers of parishes and churches in the county and/or diocese can vary, usually depending on precise definitions (the official diocesan website gives a total of 606 churches in the Diocese of Exeter; since this excludes the 11 churches vested in the Churches Conservation Trust, the exact total is likely to be *c.*617 (also excluding closed and redundant churches); of these about 450 are usually said to be ancient churches (i.e. medieval or early post medieval), and therefore to form our primary data set.

As a starting point to try to say something reliable about Romanesque architecture in Devon, I have attempted to plot known survivals on maps, based first on a trawl of my own notes and photographs, and then on searches of the list descriptions (in reality based on searches for 'C12', 'Romanesque' and 'Norman' within the county of Devon, since other search terms proved too wide or too narrow). I am aware that this has resulted in *lacunae*: there are places where I know Romanesque material survives which did not come up, but this is the best that could be done in the time available.

J.M. Slader's very useful lists and digests of surviving features in Devon churches provide another starting point: he lists 144 Norman fonts (Slader 1968, 133–34) and 42 Norman doorways (*ibid.*, 132–33) (in addition to various other useful lists, such as tympana and piscinae). These numbers are close to those I attained from the trawling of lists, etc. In the text Slader states that 'there is still evidence of Norman masonry in about eighty Devon churches' (*ibid.*, 29). This seems a little on the optimistic side, and Slader does seem ready to accept a more generous dating than might now be thought reliable (for example in the arcade of Mariansleigh, which Pevsner and the listing both date to the C13; or accepting a number of early cruciform and two-celled plans as Norman: Aveton Giffard, Brentor, Haccombe, Honeychurch, West Down, West Ogwell: *ibid.*, 29).

For additional information on fonts I have followed the comprehensive lists in Christina Corser's MPhil thesis *Norman Fonts in Devon*; she catalogues 186 fonts or parts thereof and estimates a further 66 on the basis of churches with some trace of Norman fabric which do not retain a font (Corser 1983, 48; 90–93). Kate M. Clarke's series of articles on the Baptismal Fonts of Devon (Clarke 1913–22) lists 109 Norman fonts (admittedly not exhaustive); these are backed up by John Stabb's photographs of the features and fittings of Devon churches collected at about the same time (Stabb 1908–16; 1909; see also http://www.wissensdrang.com/dstabb.htm).

From these sources I produced a number of maps to illustrated my conference lecture, to show: all surviving Romanesque features; all features other than fonts; all features other than fonts and doorways; two-celled plans; Romanesque towers and arcades; Romanesque /Transitional towers. For conciseness in this article I have reduced the information from six maps to two, showing: Romanesque survival in general (Figure 1), distinguishing between single and multiple features, and complex/multiple features, broken down by type (Figure 2).

Single or isolated features

So, in Devon, early origins are represented in the majority of churches by the survival of a font, or a doorway (or both), and occasionally by other single or isolated architectural fragments (indicated in yellow on Figure 1). Fonts and doorways tend to survive for fairly obvious reasons of symbolism, stability and continuity. There are occasional examples of a Norman font being maintained in a church along-side a more recent one (such as Ugborough, Bickleigh [Roborough], or Buckland Monachorum), although canon law usually prescribes that a surplus font should be buried or destroyed, and there are numerous examples of this happening in the past (and some of rediscovery). Examples of isolated doorways are less numerous, although not infrequent: Tiverton St Peter (no doubt moved several times before coming to rest in its present position), Axminster St Mary and Northleigh come to mind as examples.

Other classes of information are rarer, but worth mentioning: occasional isolated items of sculpture survive: e.g. the tympana at Ideford and Down St Mary; the crucifix at Chulmleigh; the recently-discovered lintel fragment at Jacobstowe. Polychrome masonry is a feature: illustrated by the west doorway at Paignton, the respond of the chancel arch at Meavy, the C12 gatehouse of Plympton Priory, and a window at Coldridge, as well as in surviving responds of the nave piers at Exeter Cathedral. Occasionally one feels that the masons may have been trying to achieve a polychromatic effect but not quite getting there (albeit tempered by the possibility that many such details will originally have been plastered): the patchy use of different coloured stone at Buckland Brewer, is one example; the doorway at Holcombe Burnell another (arch: red; hood: white). Finally individual architectural fragments, whether loose or re-used in later fabric can often provide clues: St Mary's Totnes displays a collection of fragments from the earlier church and/or priory, including numerous circular shaft sections with keeled mouldings; the chevron voussoirs, and two fragments of hood moulding with relief semicircle motifs, built into the late medieval chapel of ease at Ayshford, immediately testify to a 12th-century predecessor (author's own observations).

Complex features

Indicated in red on Figure 1, and broken down in greater detail in Figure 2, the remainder of the evidence consists of a disparate collection of features ranging from two or more isolated features (as above) to complex survival including arcades, and even near-complete plans. I have classified these as: churches with surviving two-celled plans, or evidence therefore (including occasional evidence for a west tower as well); churches with surviving evidence for aisles and/or arcades; churches with evidence for a crossing tower (including occasional evidence for a cruciform plan without necessarily including a tower, e.g. Berrynarbor); and a final category of churches with transeptally-placed towers.

The basic two-celled plan

Two-cell churches, namely a nave and chancel, were the norm once building in stone had begun ('by far the commonest type': Fernie 2000, 222), with rectangular east ends more common than apses, and sometimes with a west tower. Fernie estimates that that there were almost 10,000 parish churches in England by the 16th century, and that the majority of those which survive have a core datable between 1050 and 1200 (*ibid.*, 208). Examples are many, each preserving a different combination of plan and features as a result of later alterations, *inter alia*: Honeychurch, Upton Hellions (C12 nave and chancel; late C12 Beer stone font), Loxbeare (C12 doorway, tower possibly C12/13); Clyst St Lawrence; Exeter St Pancras provide good examples. Jacobstow and Knowstone, are another two that I have looked at recently: both pretty featureless, other than plain C12 arches to doorways which enable the rubble fabric to be dated. Another example would be Axmouth (C12 nave and chancel, S doorway; C13 S aisle).

Eric Fernie's plan of Worcestershire churches with two-celled plans (Fernie 2000, fig. 168) is very much like the one I have in my mind's eye for Devon, but we are still a long way from having the resources to produce such a plan, particularly given the lack of plans of individual buildings. This problem nicely illustrates the point made earlier about the dearth of information available to us.

Arcades

Twelfth or early 13th-century arcades are few and far between; fully C12 examples really only comprise Exeter St Mary Arches and Exeter Cathedral (known from fabric evidence and architectural fragments), Plympton Priory, the north arcade of Hawkchurch (C12; the S arcade is *c.*1200); plus the arcade piers at Farway, St Michael (which retain traces of scalloped capitals, altered to accommodate the later arcade arches); and Salcombe Regis (N arcade piers, chancel south wall [blocked arch with chevron arch frags, etc.]; C13 N arcade arches). If one stretches the chronology only slightly a rather larger group appears in East Devon, namely: Colaton Raleigh, Sidbury, Southleigh. Other fragments of early arcades survive at Membury (pier and scalloped capital; plus fragments of a doorway with animal heads); and Colebrooke (round S arcade arches blocked in the C13/14; x2 carved heads from corbel table). Remains of a C13 or possibly earlier church, including blocked arches of a south arcade were found at Mariansleigh after the 1932 fire; Slader includes this in his account of Norman aisled churches. Finally there are the substantial arcades at St Germans and Morwenstow, both just over the border in Cornwall, but without which a consideration of the subject is hardly complete (Beacham and Pevsner 2014, 361–62; 542–46; pls 18–19). In this context North Petherwin, formerly in Devon, also deserves a mention (*ibid.*, 387 and pl. 20).

Churches with crossing towers or other evidence for a cruciform plan

The lower stages of the towers at Crediton, Colyton and Tawstock carry C12 architectural detail; all were later added to or rebuilt upwards. Axminster and Shute may also fall into this category. Branscombe remains one of the more complete plans with a centrally-placed (if not strictly a crossing) tower and fabric surviving to eaves level with corbel tables. There are slightly later (C13) crossing towers at Kingsbridge and Aveton Gifford. Several towers now at the west of the church originated as crossing towers: Hemyock, St Mary is an excellent example, with large round arches surviving in north, west, and south elevations, and possibly Bratton Clovelly, which has a west tower that was clearly intended as a crossing tower, and which seems earlier than anything else surviving in the church (although whether this can be dated to the C12 is another matter). Another former crossing, now west, tower exists at South Brent (C12). At Berrynarbor the nave has a C12 north chapel, originally the north transept of a cruciform church and now the vestry, this has a plain round headed arch, with a hollow chamfered impost, although no physical evidence survives for a crossing tower.

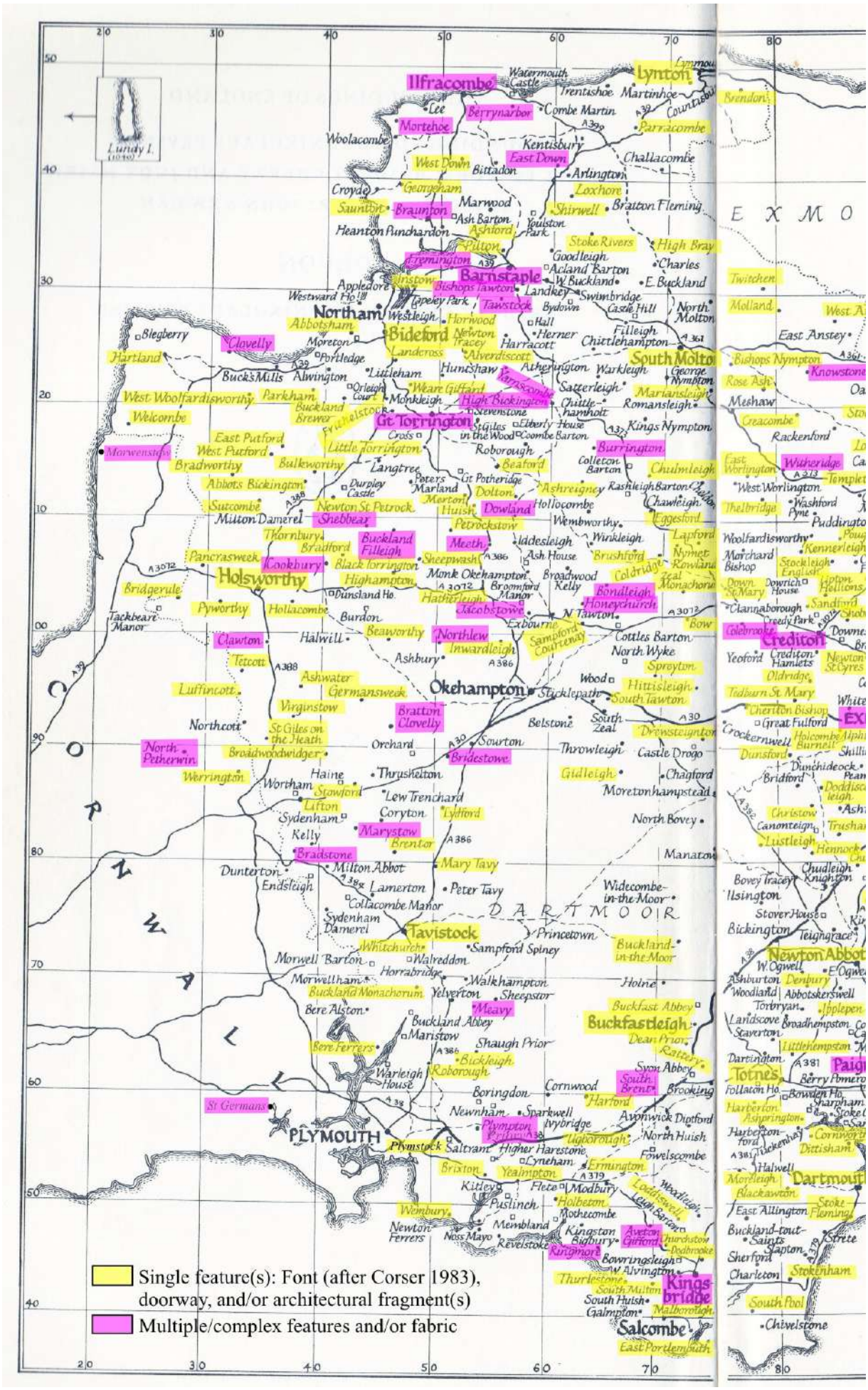
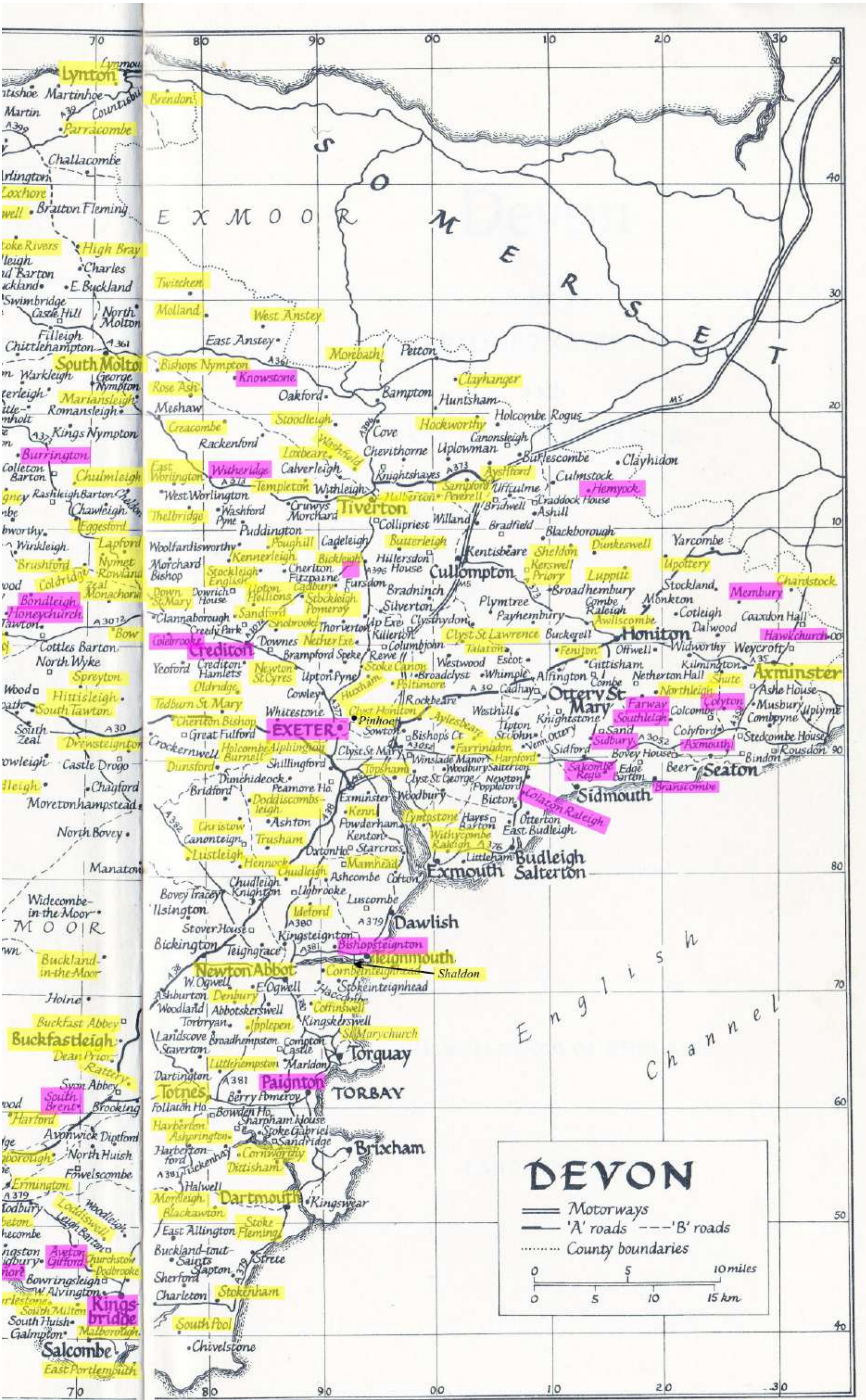


Figure 1. General Romanesque survival in Devon, distinguishing between single features (fonts, doorways, and/or architectural fragments) and multiple features and/or fabric (based on the county map of The Buildings of England: Devon [Cherry and Pevsner 1989], with the kind permission of Yale University Press).


DEVON
Motorways
'A' roads
'B' roads
County boundaries
10 miles
15 km
EXMOOR
SOMERSET
English Channel
TORBAY
Lynton
Martinhoe
Parracombe
Challacombe
Bratton Fleming
High Bray
Charles
Swimbridge
Castle Hill
North Molton
Filleigh
Chittlehampton
South Molton
George Nympton
Mariansleigh
Romansleigh
Kings Nympton
Burrington
Chulmleigh
Chawleigh
Eggesford
Lapford
Nymet Rowland
Zeal Monachorum
Bondleigh
Honeychurch
Bow
Cottles Barton
North Wyke
Spreyton
Hittisleigh
South Tawton
South Zeal
Drewsteignton
Castle Drogo
Chagford
Moretonhampstead
North Bovey
Manaton
Widecombe-in-the-Moor
Buckland-in-the-Moor
Holne
Buckfast Abbey
Buckfastleigh
Dean Prior
Rattery
Syon Abbey
South Brent
Brooking
Harford
Avonwick
Diptford
North Huish
Fowelscombe
Ermington
Woodleigh
Loddiswell
Aveton Gifford
Churchstow
Bowringsleigh
W. Alvington
South Milton
Kingsbridge
South Huish
Galmpton
Malborough
Salcombe
East Portlemouth
Brendon
Twitchen
Molland
West Anstey
East Anstey
Morebath
Petton
Bishops Nympton
Knowstone
Rose Ash
Meshaw
Oakford
Bampton
Clayhanger
Huntsham
Holcombe Rogus
Creacombe
Stoodleigh
Cove
Hockworthy
Rackenford
Loxbeare
Washfield
Canonsleigh
Chevithorne
Uplowman
Burlescombe
Clayhidon
East Worlington
Witheridge
Calverleigh
Knightshayes
Ayshford
Culmstock
Hemyock
West Worlington
Templeton
Withleigh
Tiverton
Halberton
Sampford Peverell
Uffculme
Bridwell
Ashill
Craddock House
Thelbridge
Washford Pyne
Cruwys Morchard
Puddington
Collipriest
Willand
Bradfield
Blackborough
Dunkeswell
Yarcombe
Woolfardisworthy
Poughill
Cadeleigh
Butterleigh
Morchard Bishop
Kennerleigh
Bickleigh
Cherlton Fitzpaine
Hillersdon House
Kentisbeare
Sheldon
Kerswell Priory
Upottery
Cullompton
Luppitt
Stockland
Chardstock
Membury
Coldridge
Stockleigh English
Down St Mary
Dowrich House
Upton Hellions
Cadbury
Fursdon
Bradninch
Plymtree
Broadhembury
Combe Raleigh
Monkton
Cotleigh
Coaxdon Hall
Clannaborough
Sandford
Stockleigh Pomeroy
Silverton
Up Exe
Clysthydon
Payhembury
Awliscombe
Creedy Park
Shobrooke
Thorverton
Killerton
Columbjohn
Clyst St Lawrence
Buckerell
Honiton
Dalwood
Hawkchurch
Colebrooke
Downes
Nether Exe
Crediton
Brampford Speke
Rewe
Talaton
Feniton
Offwell
Widworthy
Weycroft
Yeoford
Crediton Hamlets
Newton St Cyres
Upton Pyne
Stoke Canon
Westwood
Escot
Gittisham
Kilmington
Axminster
Oldridge
Cowley
Huxham
Broadclyst
Whimple
Alfington
Combe
Netherton Hall
Shute
Ashe House
Poltimore
Cadhay
Ottery St Mary
Northleigh
Colyton
Musbury
Uplyme
Tedburn St Mary
Rockbeare
Farway
Whitestone
Clyst Honiton
Aylesbeare
Westhill
Knightstone
Southleigh
Colcombe
Combpyne
Cheriton Bishop
Pinhoe
Tipton St John
Sand
Colyford
Great Fulford
Exeter
Sowton
Bishops Ct
Venn Ottery
Sidbury
Stedcombe House
Axmouth
Crockernwell
Holcombe Burnell
Alphington
Clyst St Mary
Farringdon
Sidford
Bovey House
Bindon
Rousdon
Shillingford
Winslade Manor
Harpford
Dunsford
Topsham
Woodbury Salterton
Salcombe Regis
Edge Barton
Beer
Seaton
Dunchideock
Clyst St George
Newton Poppleford
Bridford
Peamore Ho.
Doddiscombsleigh
Exminster
Woodbury
Bicton
Sidmouth
Branscombe
Colaton Raleigh
Kenn
Lympstone
Hayes Barton
Otterton
Christow
Ashton
Powderham
Kenton
East Budleigh
Canonteign
Trusham
Withycombe Raleigh
Lustleigh
Starcross
Hennock
Chudleigh
Mamhead
Littleham
Budleigh Salterton
Exmouth
Ashcombe
Cofton
Bovey Tracey
Chudleigh Knighton
Ugbrooke
Luscombe
Ilsington
Ideford
Dawlish
Stover House
Kingsteignton
Bickington
Teigngrace
Bishopsteignton
Teignmouth
Shaldon
Newton Abbot
Combeinteignhead
W. Ogwell
E. Ogwell
Stokeinteignhead
Ashburton
Denbury
Haccombe
Coffinswell
Woodland
Abbotskerswell
Torbryan
Ipplepen
Kingskerswell
St Marychurch
Landscove
Broadhempston
Compton Castle
Staverton
Torquay
Littlehempston
Marldon
Dartington
Paignton
Totnes
Berry Pomeroy
Follaton Ho.
Bowden Ho.
Sharpham House
Harberton
Stoke Gabriel
Ashprington
Sandridge
Harbertonford
Cornworthy
Brixham
Dittisham
Halwell
Moreleigh
Dartmouth
Kingswear
Blackawton
Stoke Fleming
East Allington
Buckland-tout-Saints
Stokenham
Chillington
Charleton
Sherford
South Pool
Chivelstone

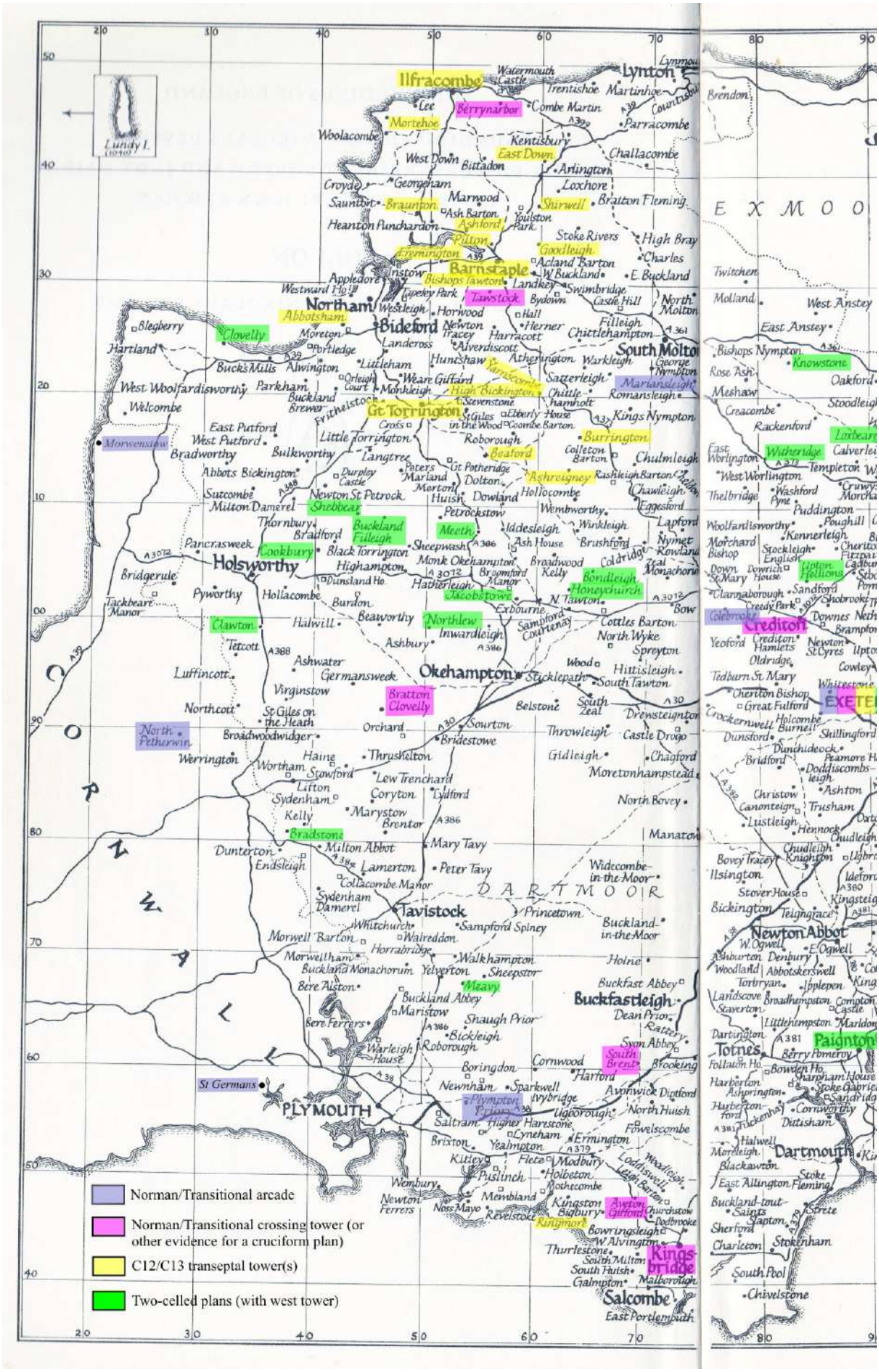
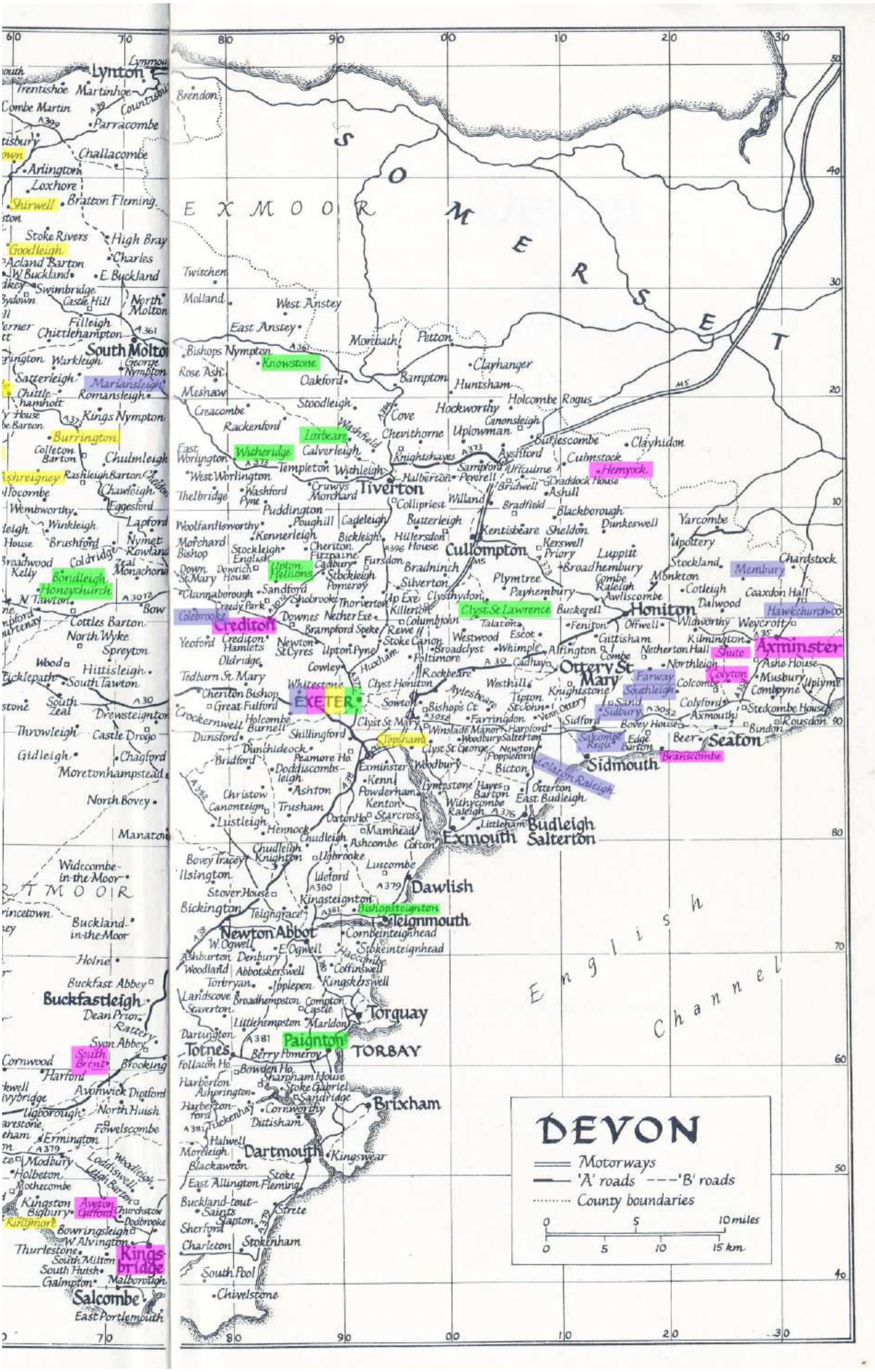


Figure 2. Complex/multiple features and/or fabric, broken down by type: two-celled plans; arcades; crossing tower (or other evidence for a cruciform plan); transeptally-placed towers (based on the county map of The Buildings of England: Devon [Cherry and Pevsner 1989], with the kind permission of Yale University Press).


DEVON
Motorways
'A' roads
'B' roads
County boundaries
10 miles
15 km
EXMOOR
SOMERSET
DARTMOOR
English Channel
TORBAY
Lynton
Combe Martin
Parracombe
Challacombe
Arlington
Loxhore
Shirwell
Bratton Fleming
Stoke Rivers
High Bray
Goodleigh
Charles
Swimbridge
Filleigh
Chittlehampton
South Molton
Warkleigh
George Nymptom
Satterleigh
Mariansleigh
Romansleigh
Kings Nympton
Burrington
Chulmleigh
Chawleigh
Eggesford
Wembworthy
Winkleigh
Lapford
Brushford
Coldridge
Zeal Monachorum
Bondleigh
Honeychurch
Bow
Cottles Barton
North Wyke
Spreyton
Hittisleigh
South Tawton
South Zeal
Drewsteignton
Throwleigh
Castle Drogo
Gidleigh
Chagford
Moretonhampstead
North Bovey
Manaton
Widecombe-in-the-Moor
Princetown
Buckland-in-the-Moor
Holne
Buckfast Abbey
Buckfastleigh
Dean Prior
Rattery
Syon Abbey
South Brent
Cornwood
Harford
Ivybridge
Ugborough
North Huish
Fowelscombe
Ermington
Modbury
Holbeton
Aveton Gifford
Kingston
Bigbury
Ringmore
Churchstow
Bowringsleigh
West Alvington
Thurlestone
South Milton
Kingsbridge
Malborough
South Huish
Galmpton
Salcombe
East Portlemouth
Brendon
Twitchen
Molland
West Anstey
East Anstey
Bishops Nympton
Knowstone
Rose Ash
Oakford
Meshaw
Stoodleigh
Creacombe
Rackenford
Morebath
Petton
Clayhanger
Bampton
Huntsham
Holcombe Rogus
Hockworthy
Cove
Washfield
Loxbeare
Witheridge
Calverleigh
East Worlington
Templeton
West Worlington
Thelbridge
Washford Pyne
Cruwys Morchard
Tiverton
Chevithorne
Uplowman
Canonsleigh
Burlescombe
Clayhidon
Culmstock
Hemyock
Knightshayes
Halberton
Sampford Peverell
Uffculme
Craddock House
Bradwell
Ashill
Willand
Collipriest
Puddington
Poughill
Cadeleigh
Butterleigh
Bradfield
Blackborough
Dunkeswell
Yarcombe
Upottery
Woolfardisworthy
Kennerleigh
Morchard Bishop
Bickleigh
Hillersdon House
Kentisbeare
Sheldon
Kerswell Priory
Luppitt
Cullompton
Broadhembury
Stockland
Chardstock
Membury
Monkton
Stockleigh English
Cheriton Fitzpaine
Cadbury
Fursdon
Bradninch
Upton Hellions
Stockleigh Pomeroy
Silverton
Plymtree
Payhembury
Combe Raleigh
Awliscombe
Cotleigh
Dalwood
Caxdon Hall
Sandford
Shobrooke
Thorverton
Up Exe
Clysthydon
Clyst St Lawrence
Buckerell
Honiton
Hawkchurch
Killerton
Columbjohn
Talaton
Feniton
Offwell
Widworthy
Weycroft
Colebrooke
Crediton
Downes
Nether Exe
Brampford Speke
Rewe
Stoke Canon
Westwood
Escot
Gittisham
Kilmington
Axminster
Yeoford
Crediton Hamlets
Newton St Cyres
Upton Pyne
Poltimore
Broadclyst
Whimple
Alfington
Combe
Netherton Hall
Shute
Ashe House
Oldridge
Huxham
Rockbeare
Ottery St Mary
Northleigh
Tedburn St Mary
Whitestone
Cowley
Clyst Honiton
Westhill
Farway
Colyton
Musbury
Uplyme
Cheriton Bishop
Exeter
Sowton
Aylesbeare
Knightstone
Southleigh
Colcombe
Combpyne
Great Fulford
Tipton St John
Sidbury
Colyford
Axmouth
Stedcombe House
Crockernwell
Holcombe Burnell
Clyst St Mary
Bishops Ct
Farringdon
Sidford
Bovey House
Rousdon
Bindon
Dunsford
Shillingford
Winslade Manor
Harpford
Woodbury Salterton
Beer
Seaton
Topsham
Clyst St George
Newton Poppleford
Salcombe Regis
Edge Barton
Branscombe
Dunchideock
Bridford
Peamore Ho
Doddiscombsleigh
Exminster
Woodbury
Bicton
Sidmouth
Colaton Raleigh
Christow
Ashton
Kenn
Powderham
Lympstone
Hayes Barton
Otterton
East Budleigh
Canonteign
Trusham
Kenton
Starcross
Withycombe Raleigh
Lustleigh
Hennock
Oxton Ho
Mamhead
Littleham
Budleigh Salterton
Chudleigh
Ashcombe
Cofton
Exmouth
Chudleigh Knighton
Ugbrooke
Luscombe
Bovey Tracey
Ilsington
Ideford
Dawlish
Stover House
Kingsteignton
Bickington
Teigngrace
Bishopsteignton
Teignmouth
Newton Abbot
Combeinteignhead
W. Ogwell
E. Ogwell
Haccombe
Stokeinteignhead
Ashburton
Denbury
Coffinswell
Woodland
Abbotskerswell
Torbryan
Ipplepen
Kingskerswell
Landscove
Broadhempston
Compton Castle
Staverton
Littlehempston
Marldon
Torquay
Dartington
Paignton
Totnes
Berry Pomeroy
Follaton Ho
Bowden Ho
Harberton
Sharpham House
Ashprington
Stoke Gabriel
Sandridge
Harberton ford
Tuckenhay
Cornworthy
Dittisham
Brixham
Halwell
Moreleigh
Dartmouth
Kingswear
Blackawton
Stoke Fleming
East Allington
Buckland-tout-Saints
Sherford
Stokenham
Chillington
Charleton
Stokenham
South Pool
Chivelstone

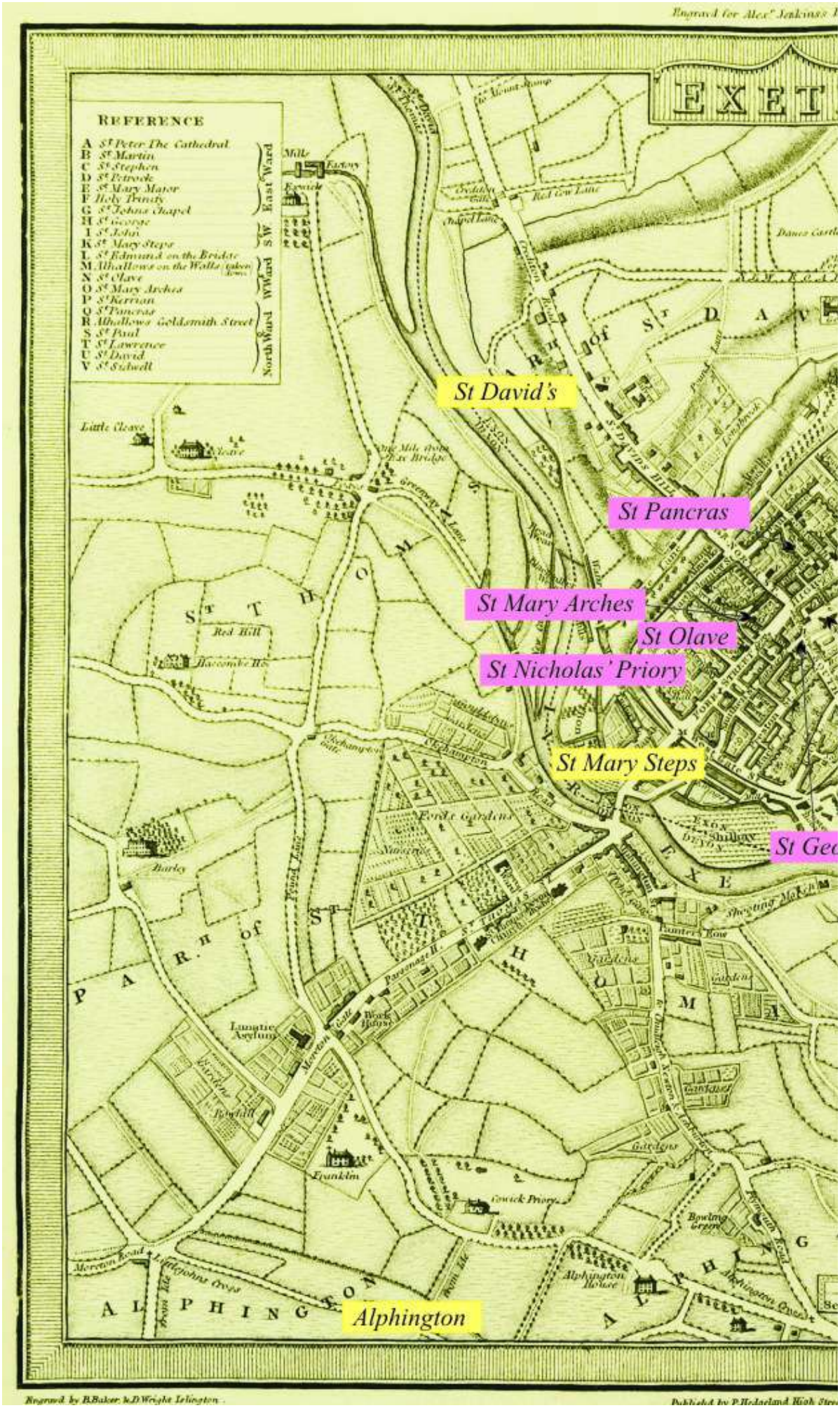
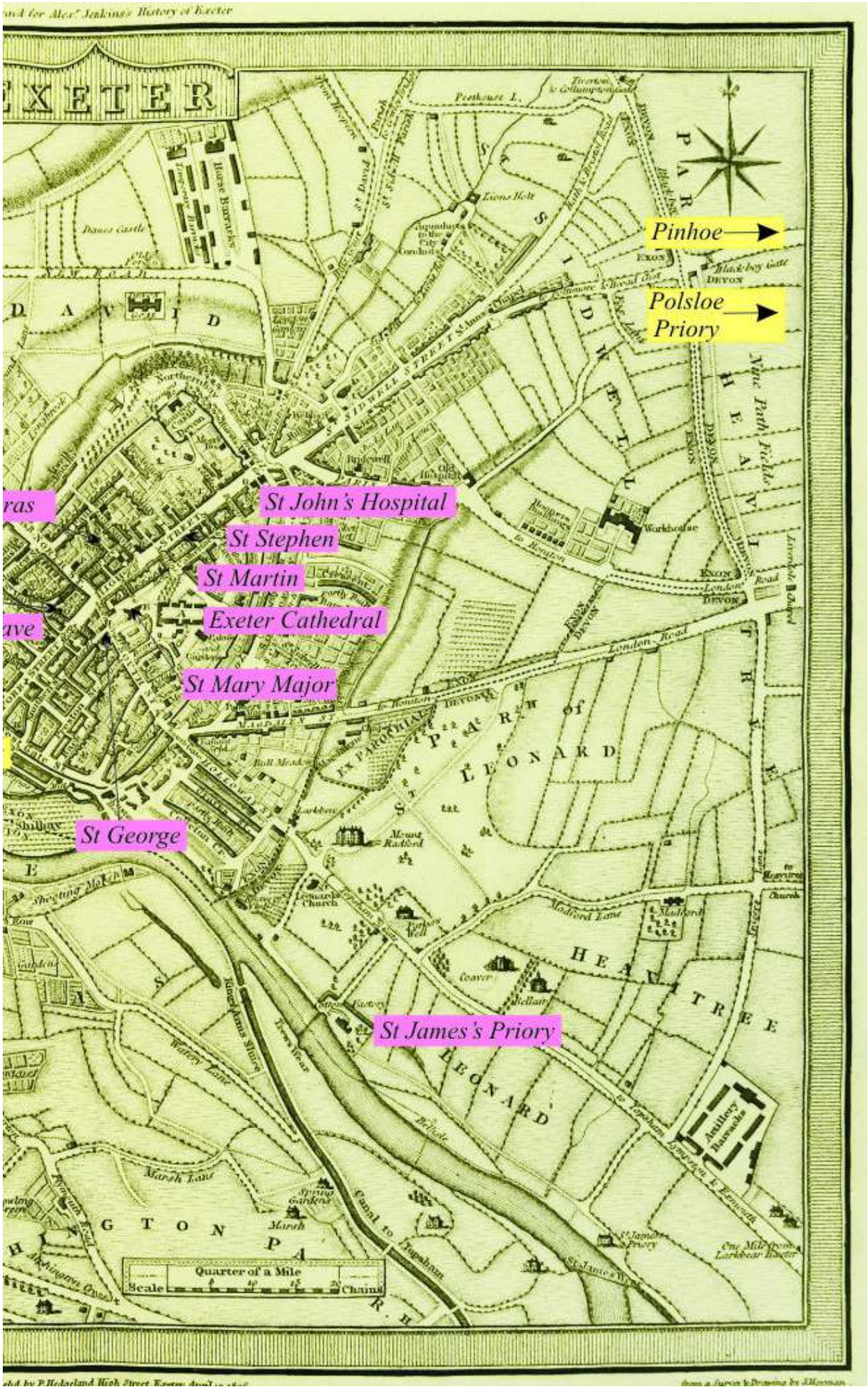


Figure 3. Map of Exeter to show details of Romanesque survival in the city, conventions as Figure 1 (based on the map of the city in Alexander Jenkins's History and Description of the City of Exeter; 1806).


Pinhoe
Polsloe Priory
St John's Hospital
St Stephen
St Martin
Exeter Cathedral
St Mary Major
St George
St James's Priory
Quarter of a Mile
Scale
Chains

Exeter churches
A separate map of Exeter was prepared (Figure 3), to represent the unusual range and breadth of buildings with surviving Norman features in the city; a brief summary of these may be appropriate to explain and amplify this map. St Martin, St George, and St Olave are largely of pre-Conquest fabric, potentially with some post-Conquest fabric. All Hallows, Goldsmiths' Street, the prebendal chapel of St Mary in the Castle, St Kerrian, St Pancras, St Petrock, and St Lawrence all have (or had) simple two-celled plans; St Mary Major had a massive decorated Norman tower, and potential early core to its plan; and St Stephen's has a Norman crypt (Hamlin 1976). The aisled churches of St Mary Arches and the cathedral have been mentioned already; remains of another arcade at St John's Hospital were recorded in the 19th century. The core of the surviving west range of St Nicholas's Priory is Norman, with a vaulted undercroft; complex fabric and ornate decoration are indicated by collections of architectural fragments here and at St James's Priory by the river. Isolated features in the form of fonts survive at Alphington, an outstanding example, Pinhoe, and St Davids.

Transeptal towers
The placing of an early tower in a transeptal position is a locally significant element, with at least eighteen examples, mainly in North Devon (Figure 2), and another eight in Cornwall, plus further examples in Somerset. This phenomenon has been interpreted as a local variation of the cruciform plan (Fernie 2000, 227), and as expressing the influence locally of the twin transeptal towers of Exeter Cathedral (Cherry and Pevsner 1989, 39; Thurlby 1991a, 29), itself a unique form in Britain (with the exception of the obviously influenced Ottery St Mary). The marked prevalence in North Devon is perhaps to be explained 'by the more energetic late medieval rebuilding which took place in the richer south.' (Cherry and Pevsner 1989, 39).

One has to admit that this phenomenon is not really wholly a Norman or C12 one, but continues rather later: where dating is possible, most of the examples are dated to the early C13 or later. But a sufficient number of transeptal towers can be dated to the 12th century adequately to demonstrate that the tradition is present in the Norman period. Transeptal towers with some claim to C12 dating include: Exeter Cathedral (obviously, as the progenitor of the type); Barnstaple (probably late C12 or early C13); Braunton ('the S transeptal tower appears to be C12' (CRSBI and Pevsner); west front buttresses and doorway: 'must belong [...] to the late C12 or perhaps the early C13, and so indicate a church already at that time of considerable size.' Cherry and Pevsner 1989, 208); Goodleigh, St Gregory; nothing survived the 1881 rebuilding by Edward Ashworth, but the *Rough Notes* of the Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society (1847) say: 'the remains of an arch at the north east of the nave have suggested their having belonged to a former tower in that position.' (see also Scott *et al.* 2007, volume 1, 5); High Bickington (remnant of S transeptal tower preserved as transept; other features include chancel arch and blocked north window); Ilfracombe (tower C13 on the N of a C12 nave; C12 font); Mortehoe (C12 fabric to nave; earlier low round-headed doorway between tower and nave; S doorway, also round headed, 'perhaps of *c.*1170, when William de Tracey is supposed to have founded the church' (Cherry and Pevsner 1989, 578); C13 chancel and north tower); Ringmore (mainly late C13, including tower over south porch, but some remains of C12 work: N transept has two Norman lights to E); and Yarnscombe (transeptal N tower 'with Norman masonry (see the small window in the E wall': Cherry and Pevsner 1989, 923).

The remaining examples are probably later, although this can never be quite certain when relying on stylistic dating, and individual examples could be earlier. Abbotsham (north, c.1300; C12 font); Ashford (north, with some medieval fabric at base, otherwise rebuilt 1798, plain Norman font); Ashreigny (north); Beaford (north, in angle of Upcott (N) aisle/transeptal position, said to have been added in 1909-10 in an Early English style, uncertain what, if anything, preceded this: Cherry and Pevsner 1989, 160); Bishop's Tawton (generally C14, but potential for earlier archaeological survivals); Burrington (C13, listing); East Down (C13); Fremington (north, C13); Great Torrington (south, demolished in 1646); Pilton (north, C13?); Shirwell (south, C13); Topsham (south, early

tower survives in rebuilt church); (based on Thurlby 1991a, 33/n.69, augmented by Parker 2013, 25, and Scott *et al.* 2007, vol. 1, 4–5).

The dating of early pointed arches

The origin of the pointed arch is a subject of academic debate, and is one that is far too complex to be satisfactorily discussed here (see, e.g., Fernie 2014, 185–6); one point is relevant, however, which is the simple truth that the presence of a pointed arch is not in itself grounds for rejecting a 12th century date. The tower at Northlew provides a clear example, with pointed tower arch and west doorway in fabric that is otherwise indubitably of early date, and there is no question of these features being insertions. Other examples might be cited at Branscombe, Cookbury, Meeth, Sidbury, Braunton, High Bickington and Yarnscombe (Thurlby 1991a, 29). Pointed arches also appear in the crossing of Crediton and Colyton, at South Brent, and at North Petherwin (north arcade). Similarly, with some of the arcades of East Devon, it seems simpler to accept that pointed arcade arches above clearly 12th-century shafts and capitals belong together than to postulate a rebuilding of the arcade arches shortly after the original construction. In any case the usual reason for rebuilding would have been to enlarge, and particularly to heighten, arcades in the later medieval period, in which context it makes little sense to retain 12th-century piers when the arches are 'rebuilt'.

Other churches with more than just isolated Norman features:

Ashwater: door, font, re-used corbel.

Bishopsteignton: W portal 'one of the best in Devon' (Pevsner), second doorway (blocked) with tympanum carving of adoration of the magi; related fabric, corbel table, small window in east gable, ?quoins; font.

Bradstone: south doorway, south wall, chancel window embrasures have deep splays and may have been C12 originally.

Bridestowe: chancel arch re-used as gateway to churchyard, sometimes said to be from a separate chapel in the churchyard.

Bondleigh: early fabric in the south wall (including SE and SW quoins); doorway with tympanum (Lega Weekes 1907), two capitals now in the east wall of the north aisle are likely to have come from the responds of a chancel arch. More C12 work surviving than average.

Buckland Filleigh: nave and tower preserve some Norman fabric; simple Norman S door.

Clawton: some C12 fabric in chancel, including a round headed window in the north wall; font in Polyphant stone.

Clovelly: south doorway, font and round arch to tower, all C12.

Cookbury: 'nearly the whole of the Norman church survives' (Pevsner); remodelled C14.

Dowland: some Norman fabric, including nave, S doorway.

High Bickington: has the base of a south transeptal tower, sculpted south doorway, plain north doorway, the remains of a chancel arch, as well as fabric containing a blocked C12 window.

Jacobstowe: C12 south wall and doorway, font, part of a lintel with greek cross and rosette decoration.

Knowstone: south doorway and associated fabric to east and west (with evidence for later heightening).

Meavy: chancel arch respond; Norman core with some C13 fabric.

Meeth: nave basically Norman with S doorway and N window, base of tower possibly contemporary (turret window; plain pointed arch); chancel also possibly contemporary but extended and added to 1893.

Northlew: base of tower Norman; C12 low pointed tower arch, rounded headed windows; west doorway (also pointed).

Paignton: west doorway, chancel(?).

Salcombe Regis: piers of arcade, south doorway to chancel; numerous re-used architectural fragments.

Shebbear: nave and chancel Norman; south doorway.

Sidbury: west tower with pilaster buttresses and two C12 figure sculptures, chancel, corbel table, chequerwork to east wall of chancel; transitional arcade to S aisle.

Thornbury: has quite a bit of C12 material including a doorway with less ornate decoration, but similar spurred bases to Buckland Brewer.

Witheridge: said to have a Norman chancel arch (Slader 1968, 34), and fragments of simple Romanesque carving built into the masonry (Cherry and Pevsner 1989, 914).

Conclusions

The main aim of this paper has been to try to show the extent and density of surviving Romanesque architectural evidence of various sorts in Devon. Where some detailed examination of parish church fabric has been possible (such as in my own recent case studies of Jacobstowe [Lane and Blaylock forthcoming] and Knowstone [explained at the conference]), it has been shown that there is scope for identifying more extensive fabric associated with isolated features of known date, especially doorways. This is research that can only really be done by archaeological analysis of the fabric of buildings: painstaking, often involving stone for stone drawings, and in a climate which makes it very dependent on private research (i.e. in which there has been little official will to promote the archaeological recording of churches, for various reasons). The assembly of plans would also help greatly by making a comparative plan of churches with known Romanesque fabric (such as that cited for Worcestershire, above) possible. All in all the subject of Romanesque architecture in Devon is crying out for further research, and there is a rich field here to be exploited.

Stuart Blaylock

Acknowledgements

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The South Coombe Shoe Hoard

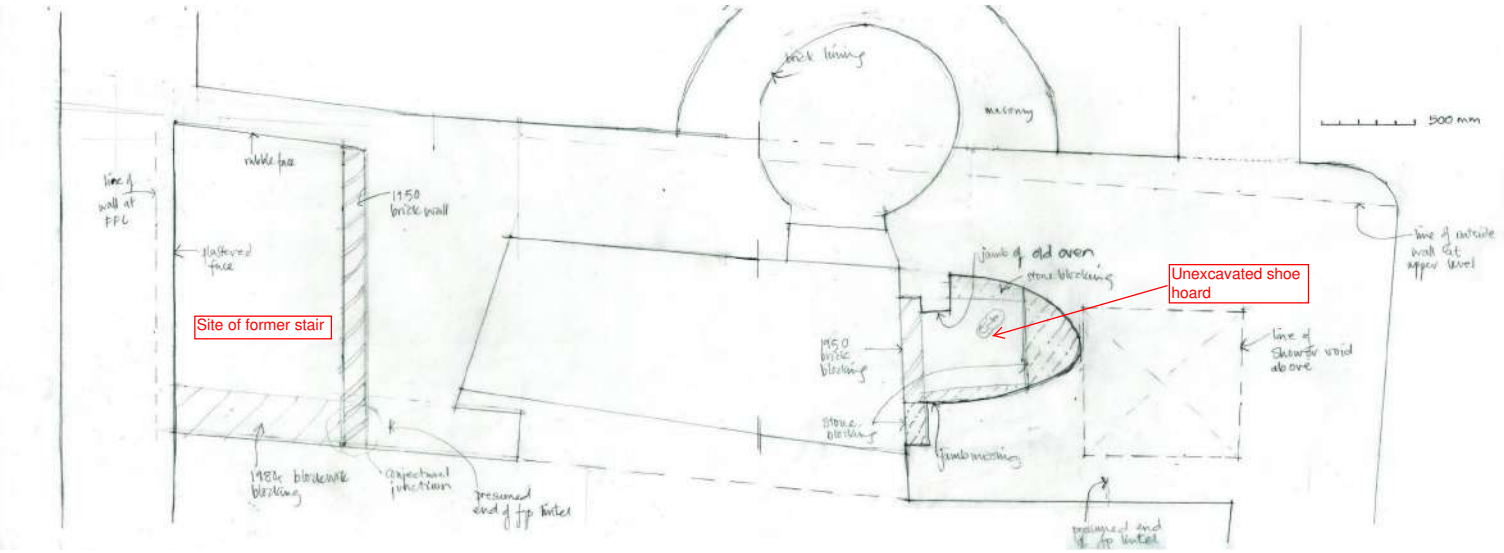
We hardly expected to find a ritual deposit when we were investigating the structure of the west gable wall of this medieval house to prepare for repairs, and even less that it should be of modern date. However, this was the case in February 2017 as we dug out piles of rubble from a tiny service stair built within the depth of the wall. Under the rubble were 4 pairs of shoes, all dating from the 1940s stylistically. Two pairs were men's slippers, completely worn out with holes in the soles, one pair of men's working boots, worn, and a pair of smart ladies' heeled shoes, also very worn, all in black leather (Figure 1). One of the slippers has a label – *Clarks Tor Brand, Street, Somerset* – stitched in to the leather upper.

Figure 1. South Coombe shoe hoard.

Only the upper flight of the stair remained – it appears to date from the late 19th century when the house was largely rebuilt at first floor level following a fire, and allowed access from the farm kitchen to a single room above, presumably for a servant or farm worker, since the room had no access to the rest of the first floor (Figures 2 & 3). The lower flight had been removed in 1950 when a cupboard was formed at ground floor – the date was inscribed in mortar together with the initials WB – but the half landing and upper flight left in situ as the ceiling to the cupboard. WB was William Bennett, the father of our builder neighbour Oliver Bennett who still lives in the house his father built, and who confirmed his father's habit of signing and dating his work. We also know the names of the shoe consigners – the Hamills, farm tenants of South Coombe in the 1950s.

Such modern shoe hoards are relatively rare, though shoes are by far the most common household objects found concealed in buildings as good luck charms. Others are smashed pottery, usually under stairs, and sometimes cats. Northampton Museum maintains a Concealed Shoe Index, started in the late 1950s. June Swann, former Keeper of Shoes at Northampton Museum, has written extensively on the subject of concealed shoes, and has given useful analyses of hoards reported to the museum. I have taken the following points from her article in Costume Vol 30, Issue 1, 1996.

The overwhelming majority of the deposited shoes are heavily worn, or worn out; this is likely to be because shoes have always been expensive and tended to be worn and mended for years before being discarded. She says 'The standing joke in Northampton factories in the 1950s was of men who returned boots, complaining they were beginning to wear out after only 20 years', and points out that the age of the shoes it is not always a foolproof way of dating the concealment. Amongst the earliest found were behind Winchester Cathedral choirstalls, installed in 1308, and others found have been dated to the 15th century. Shoes were made of a more substantial leather after 1490; the total reported for the 16th century is 20, 15 from 1600-1610, 154 from the 17th century, 270 from the 18th century, 424 from the 19th century and 44 from the 20th. There appear to be peaks of deposition coinciding with periods of war when superstitious practices generally increase: against Spain at the end of the 16th century, the Civil War, the Glorious Revolution of 1688 followed by the Marlborough Wars, the Seven Years War in the mid-18th century, the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars, and the Crimean War.



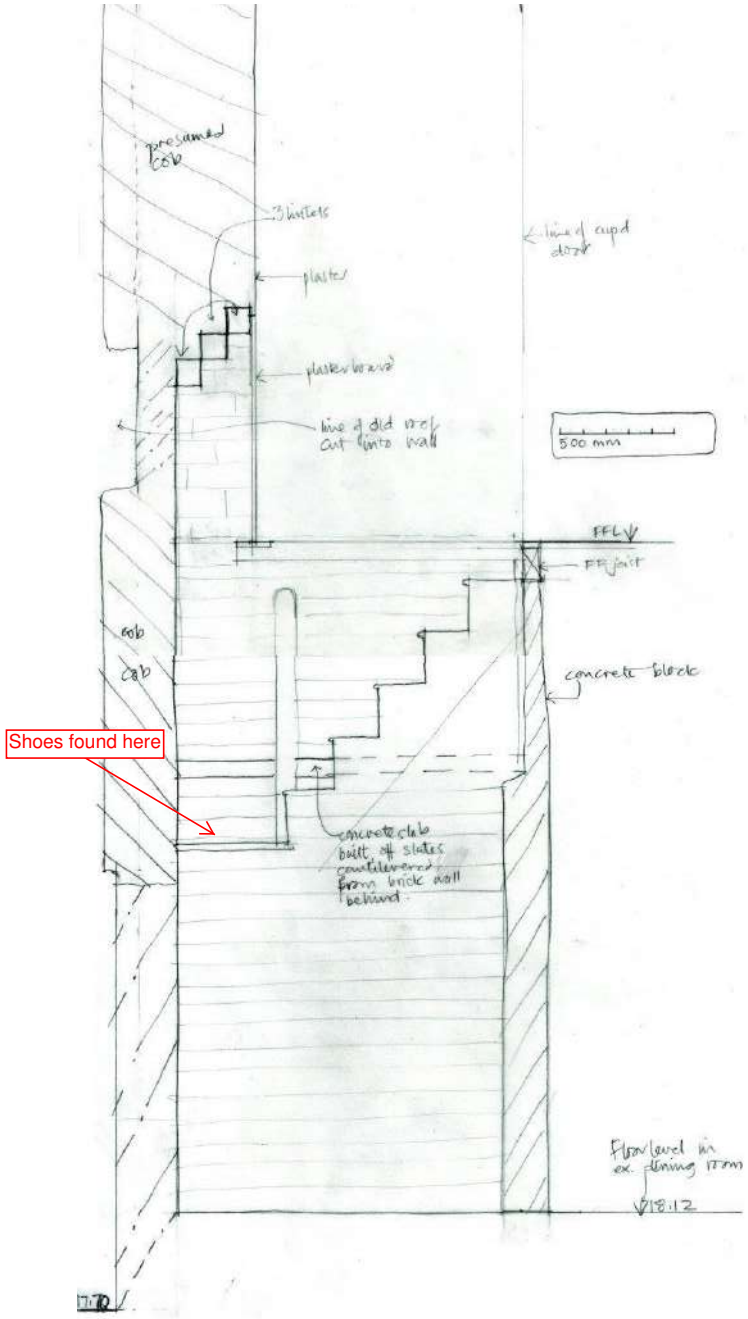


Figure 2 (above). Ground Floor plan west gable.
Figure 3 (left). Section through stair.

The commonest position in a building to deposit or conceal shoes is the chimney, fireplace or hearth, or nearby, as at South Coombe, where the combination of stair and chimney must have been irresistible. The quantities vary, from a single shoe to 28 from Quincy, Massachusetts and 32 from Earl Soham, Suffolk. Others come from an adjacent oven or cupboard; at South Coombe there are further shoes in a now-blocked bread oven within the stack, spied through a modern brick removed for inspection, but as yet un-excavated (Figure 4). Second most popular location is under the floor or above the ceiling.

Figure 4. Shoes in bread oven.

Why did/do people make these concealed deposits? Shoes have many superstitions attached to them; they are symbols of authority, as in the Old Testament; they are linked with fertility – we still tie them on the back of wedding cars – and they are generally associated with good luck. Shoe outlines drawn in the leadwork of church roofs by workmen are common, and the writer has seen many shoe shapes with chiselled toes indicating dates as early as the late 18th century. June Swann recorded comments of those finding the shoes, who believed them to keep away witches and bad luck. Ralph Merrifield (*The Archaeology of Ritual and Magic*, London, Batsford, 1987) has suggested that concealed shoes may be linked with the 14th century belief that Sir John Schorne, rector of North Marston, Buckinghamshire, conjured the devil into a boot. His shrine was a place of pilgrimage until the Reformation. Some who had reported finds to June Swann were keen that the shoes go back into the place they had been found, so as not to break the run of good luck/ protection from evil spirits. It has to be said that we are taking no chances, and the South Coombe shoes will be returned to their place beside the chimney as soon as the repair works are completed.

Rebecca Child

All photographs and plans by Rebecca Child and Peter Child

Henry Newte's Great House in Tiverton

This is the story of the decline of one of Tiverton's Great Houses. The very existence of Henry Newte's mid-17th century mansion on the eastern side of Bampton Street has long been forgotten by all but the most devoted historians of the town. Those few who had heard of it would probably have thought it lost in a fire in 1846, and today even its original site has been forgotten.

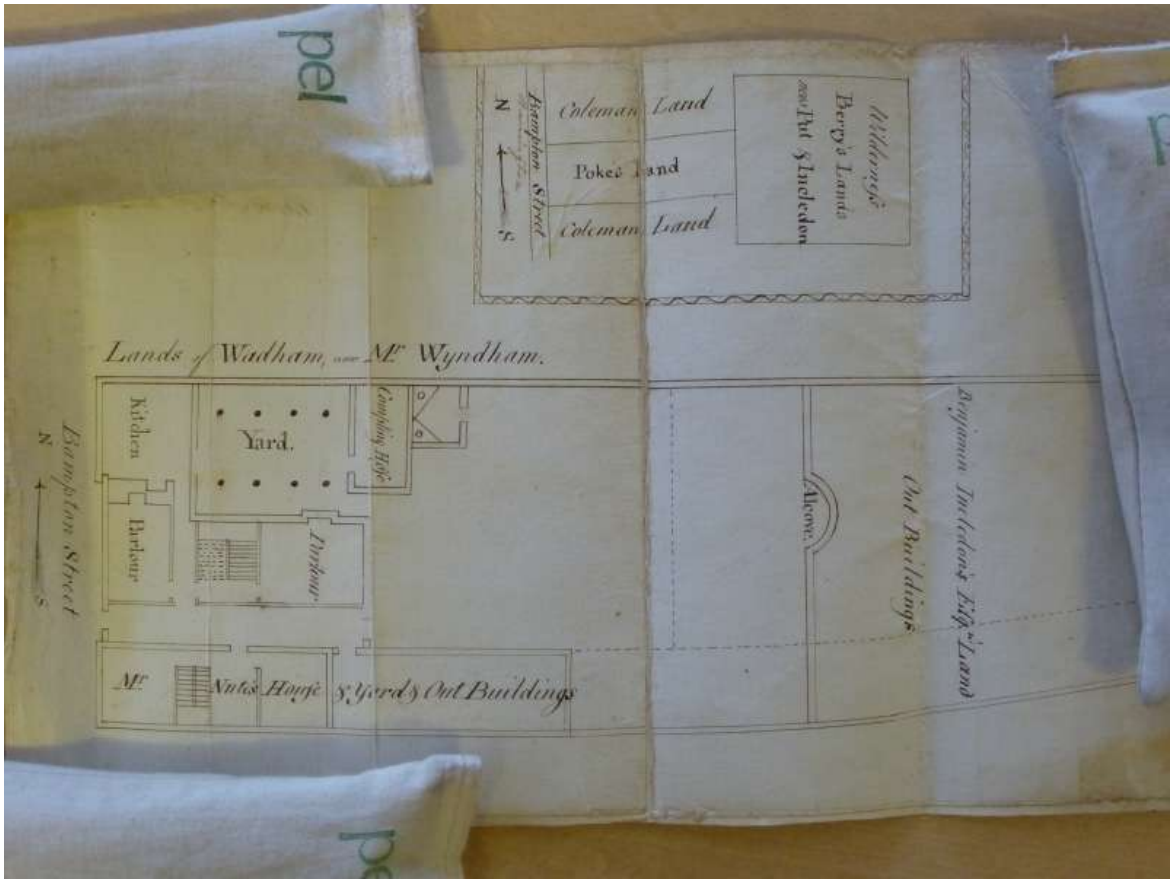
Newte's House first came to my attention as part of my research into the history of the town's woollen cloth trade. In the first decades of the 18th century it was the home of the Thornes, one of the town's leading families of cloth merchants who made their fortunes exporting locally-made serge to Holland. It was my interest in the Thornes that led me to seek out precisely where their house was located, and it was from that starting point that this surprising story unfolded. My thanks are due to Jane Evans for pointing me in the right direction at the outset.

The name will be familiar to many Tivertonians and others who go up and down Newte's Hill on the old road to Cullompton. The first member of the family to arrive in the town was Henry Newte. Henry, a Devonian, was born in about 1572, and graduated from Exeter College, Oxford in 1592. A lawyer by profession, by about 1600 he had arrived in Tiverton to take up the appointment of Steward of the Manor. After the fire which devastated much of the town in 1612, a fund was set up by Royal appointment for the relief of the inhabitants, and Henry was one of the nine collectors. Three years later, in 1615, Henry's input was pivotal in obtaining from King James I, the grant of the town's first Charter of Incorporation as a Borough. His role can be inferred not only because he was appointed Town Clerk under the Charter, but there was also special provision for his eldest son, five-year-old Henry, to succeed him.[1]

Henry Newte junior was baptised at St Peter's Church Tiverton on 8 June 1609. After most probably receiving his education at Blundell's School, and studying under his father, he began practising as a lawyer or "Attorney of the Common Pleas". As such he would have combined a local law practice with regular trips to London for the sittings of the Royal Courts.

As prescribed by the Borough Charter, Henry succeeded his father as Town Clerk on the latter's death in 1635, which office he held until 1655. In 1660, he briefly served as one of the town's two Members of Parliament, dying in 1670, two years after his wife Alice. During his lifetime Newte amassed a considerable fortune, doubtless adding to what he inherited from his father. In 1638 he made an agreement to induct his younger brother Richard into the rectory of both Tidcombe and Clare portions of Tiverton parish. Richard Newte thereby became the first of five generations of that distinguished family to hold sway in the Church in Tiverton.[2]

As befitted a man of status and authority in the town, Henry felt the need for an imposing house in which to live. Around 1656, he acquired two plots on the eastern side of Bampton Street, immediately to the north of his own dwelling house. These comprised a complex mix of leaseholds and freeholds (so much so that a lengthy legal dispute over their ownership took place in the 1820s). On this combined site Newte built a lavish new mansion house. Although no illustration survives, we know from a plan, dated 1783, that

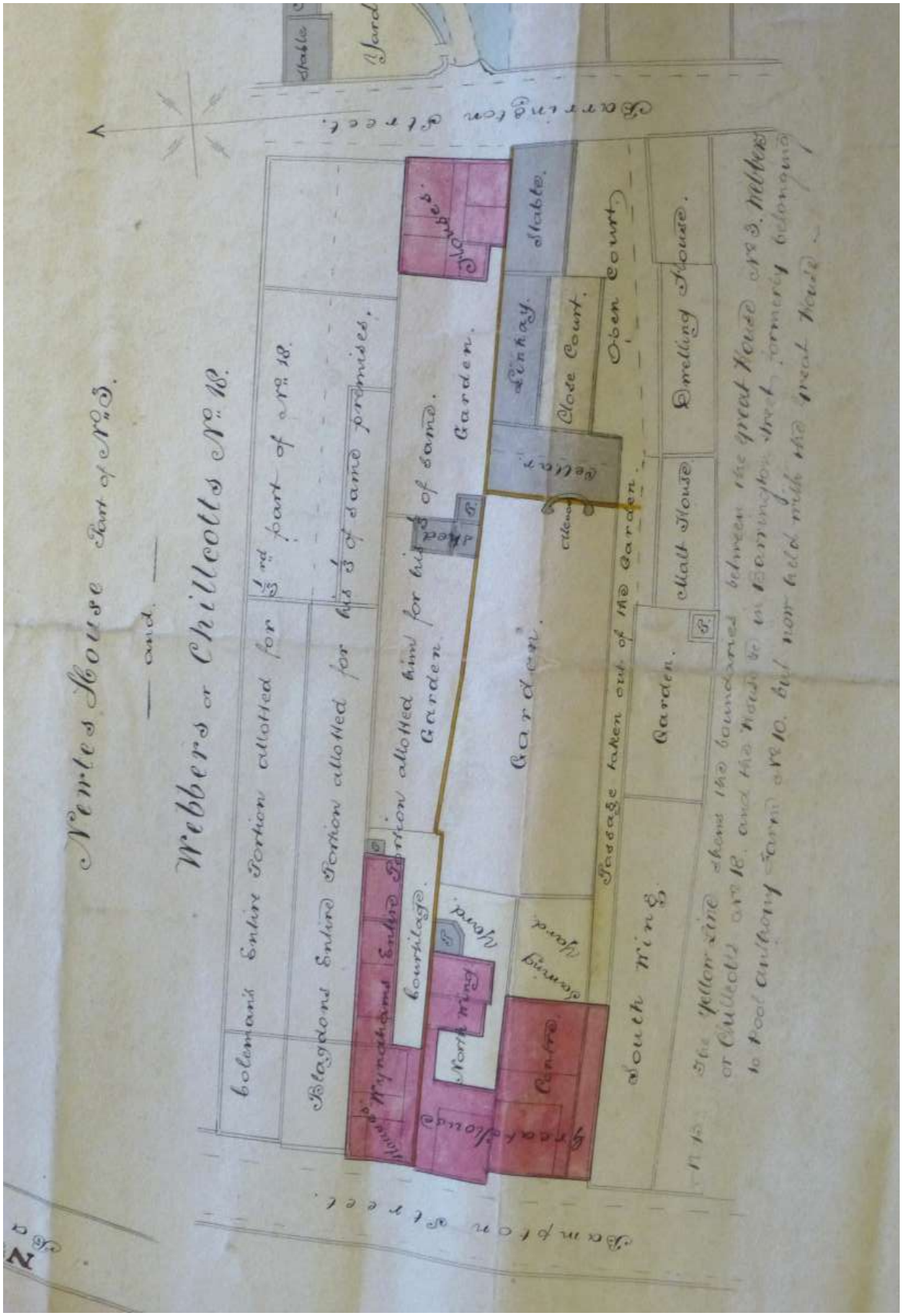


Plan dated 1783. This item forms part of the Wyndham Collection held at the Somerset Heritage Centre with acknowledgement to the South West Heritage Trust. DD\WY/1/49/28 (former reference number DD\WY/115).

it consisted of a central range flanked by two wings projecting slightly forward into the street. The overall width of the frontage was a substantial 70 feet, with a "Great Passage" leading from Bampton Street to the rear of the property with access through to Barrington Street behind. Entry to the central range and south wing was through doors in the passage. To the rear was a distinctive semi-circular "Alcove", perhaps a garden feature, which is marked on early maps of Bampton Street.[3]

After Henry Newte's death in 1670, the new house passed to his only daughter Elizabeth, then wife of Anthony Salter of Cullompton, her second husband. The published 1674 Hearth Tax assessment gives [Anthony] Salter's house, which must be Newte's House, with twelve hearths, the largest in the whole town and parish. After Elizabeth's death in 1676, the house passed to her only daughter Alice, wife of William Northcote of Crediton.[4]

The freehold of the leasehold portion of Newte's house formed part of the "Manor of Pool Anthony", owned by the Wyndham family. In 1699, the Wyndhams granted a new lease of their part of the house to George Thorne, one of Tiverton's leading cloth merchants, who presumably had acquired the purely freehold portions at that time from Northcote. George, together with his brother Nathaniel, operated their business from there. George died without surviving children in 1722, and Newte's house passed first to Nathaniel, and then to the latter's daughter Elizabeth Newton, a young widow, who was heiress to a fortune reportedly worth some £20,000. Madam Newton, as she was known, the last of



Plan dated 1829 relating to Case in Chancery brought by P. C. Wyndham against Thomas Leigh concerning ownership of land at The Great House, Tiverton (Devon). This item forms part of the Wyndham Collection held at the Somerset Heritage Centre with acknowledgement to the South West Heritage Trust. DD\WY/7/3/13 (former reference number: DD\WY/159).

the Thornes, lived in state there with her two unmarried daughters until her own death in 1753.[5]

The house's long decline can be said to have begun on the death of Elizabeth Newton. Her two heiress daughters Elizabeth and Margaret were quickly married into local gentry families, and moved away from Tiverton. Newte's House thus became the joint property of Thomas Putt Esq of Gittisham and Benjamin Incledon Esq of Pilton. At this time the leasehold element of Newte's House was dependent on the life of Elizabeth Putt, and the year after her death in 1782, Thomas Putt and Benjamin Incledon took out a new lease for which the illustrated plan was surveyed on behalf of the Wyndhams by a Mr Kingdon.

In 1787 Putt and Incledon sold the property to John and William Besly of Tiverton, father and son, cloth merchants. In this same year, they, together with two other partners, opened Tiverton's first bank. John and William Besly did not live in the house, but let it. By the early 1790s the property had been divided into three parts, doubtless for convenience. A succession of respectable tenants followed including, Lady Northcote, the Rev Thomas Land and Mrs Maria Leigh of Bardon among others.[6]

John Besly died in 1793 and his son William's fortunes waned along with those of the town's cloth trade. The tenants' status declined to mere tradesmen. From around 1807 Newte's house was the premises from which the partnership of William Besly the younger, Bernard Besly (two of William's nephews) and Samuel Warren operated their business as "wine merchants, common brewers and dealers in foreign spirits". This business eventually failed, and all three were declared bankrupt in August 1816. The following year William Besly sold Newte's house to Thomas Leigh of Dulverton.

After acquiring the whole mansion house, Thomas Leigh immediately put the fully-freehold south wing on the market again. It was bought by Richard Abraham of Oakford, a wine and spirit dealer, who no doubt made use of the facilities which had been installed by the Beslys. Bernard Besly vacated the south wing when it was sold, and moved next door to the northern part of the house, where he remained until 1820. After that the centre and north wing of Newte's house were leased to a succession of tenants, who by 1836 comprised Peter Battiscombe, an accountant and insurance agent, and George Capron, a bootmaker.

Meanwhile Richard Abraham moved out of the south wing into the house at the back of the plot which fronted onto Barrington Street, from where he carried on his business. The south wing was then leased to several tenants, including the Reverend William Burridge. Meanwhile Abraham had been trying, unsuccessfully, to sell the freehold. In one of the advertisements, the south wing is described as "*An excellent dwelling house and garden. The house consists of an underground kitchen and cellar, a sitting room, kitchen and scullery with wine vault, drawing room, nursery and seven good bedrooms, with a pump well supplied with water*."[7]

Richard Abraham died in August 1839, by then once again a resident in the south wing. His will stipulated that all his property in Tiverton was to be sold. Two years later, at the time of the 1841 census, the south wing was occupied by Henry Gould, a plumber, with Mary Grant, a dressmaker in the central range.

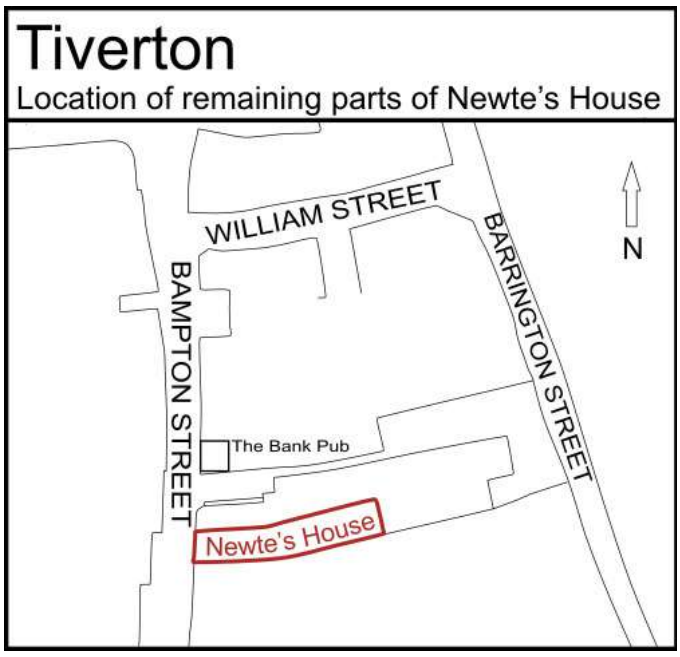
On Saturday 25 July 1846 a fire broke out in an early 17th-century timber-framed house immediately to the north of Newte's House, then partly occupied by a newly-opened branch of the National Provincial Bank (now the site of the Bank pub). Fire engines were soon at the scene, but the whole structure was destroyed. The front of the north wing and central range of Newte's House, being immediately next to the fire, suffered severe collateral damage. However, the south wing, Great Passage and rear parts of the building escaped. The north wing and central range of Newte's Great House were subsequently demolished. The site of the north wing was never built on and remains to this day an empty plot in front of the Constitutional Club, although the cellars are still beneath the paving slabs. The "ruins" of the centre range were acquired by John Heathcoat from the Leigh family in 1849, who built the present building, the former Tiverton Gazette office, shortly afterwards.[8]

As for the south wing (the present No. 27 Bampton Street), it appears to have been occupied for many years by James Jamieson (born in about 1823 in Scotland), a draper and tea dealer, later to become a wine and spirit merchant. Jamieson retired from business in the early 1880s, and after a spell as a corn merchant's, the south wing became the office of William Quick, a solicitor. For much of the 20th century, it was an ironmonger's shop, first Cornish's, then Heal's, with the Great Passage renowned as a store for an apparently inexhaustible stock of indispensable items.[9]

Thus the Great Passage and south wing of Newte's House remained. The roof line was altered to conform to the rest of the street and the windows replaced. In the middle of the 20th century, the roof was again altered, this time to a flat roof, and the front facade of the old south wing was taken back a foot or so, to line up with the rest of the buildings on Bampton Street. Everyone quietly forgot that Newte's House even existed.

The grand Thorverton stone archway, which stands as a reminder of the once great

Image courtesy of Tiverton Museum of Mid Devon Life.



Above. An open paved area in front of the Constitutional Club and south of The Bank Cafe Bar denotes the location of the now demolished north wing of Newte's House. Right. The cellars can be seen at the southern side, on the left of the photograph.

mansion which stood on this site, has long been thought not to be in situ.[10] Local legend has it that the archway formed part of the long-demolished Market Cross which was removed from Fore Street in 1783.

The story of the arch being from the Market Cross was so ingrained in Tiverton folklore that no one has ever thought to challenge it. Until I stumbled on the plans in the Wyndham archive, and realised that its location corresponds with the entrance to the "Great Passage" of Newte's House, nor did I. This folklore can, however, quickly be dismissed. Sun Fire Office insurance polices show that the Market Cross, which was built in the 1730s, was a timber and plaster structure.[11] When it was taken down parts were indeed re-erected in Bampton Street, but this has been proven to have been at another location well down the street, and a fire in the 1870s no doubt destroyed these remnants.[12] This is almost certainly the basis of the local legend.

The Thorverton stone archway in December 2017. Although it looks in poor condition, a close study of the image to the far left suggests that most of the damage to the stonework was present when the earlier photograph was taken.

I well remember the Great Passage from my many visits to Heal's the ironmongers. A monumental space, with a flagstone floor, wide enough for William Quick to drive his pony and trap through. Apart from the retail use, the building has been empty since 1999 and is thus in a state of considerable decay. The stone archway, which forms such a notable feature of Bampton Street today, is thus the surviving front door to Henry Newte's Great House. Whether this structure dates from the 1656 building, or whether indeed it is left from an even earlier house on this site remains to be determined.

Peter Maunder

No 27 Bampton Street, Tiverton in December 2017. The ground floor is currently tenanted by Guardian Games and the building appears to be poorly maintained.

Endnotes

1 Henry Newte's birth year is inferred from the fact that he was aged 52 in 1623 (National Archives C91/1/4). In that document he stated he had known Tiverton for over twenty years, and was steward to Mr Trelawney, one of the Lords of the Manor of Tiverton. Harding, *History of Tiverton*, Vol. 2, 1847, appendix, pp20, 36. *Alumni Oxoniensis*, 1891, Vol. 3, p1064.

2 Henry Newte senior was buried at St Peter's church, Tiverton on 11 March 1635. History of Parliament online. There is an elaborate black marble memorial to Henry Newte junior in St Peter's church. He died on 29 October 1670, aged 62. National Archives, C2/ChasI/U5/55.

3 Somerset Heritage Centre, Wyndham Papers, DD\WY/1/49/28; DD\WY/7/3/13; DD\WY/1/43/1.

4 Stoate, T.L. 1982. *Devon Hearth Tax Return, 1674*, 1982, p33.

5 Elizabeth Newton was buried at St Peter's church on 23 June 1753. DD\WY/Box 159. Thorne family memorials, St Peter's church. Gentleman's Magazine, Vol. 5, p619. .

6 Devon Heritage Centre: Tiverton Land Tax Assessments and Poor Rates R4/1/Z/PO5.

7 DD\WY/7/3/13.

8 Exeter & Plymouth Gazette, 8 August 1846. Tiverton Museum, Knightshayes Estate Office deeds catalogue Box 2/10.

9 Census Returns, 1841-91.

10 The building is Grade II listed. The listing text recites the story that the doorway is reused, but suggests it is medieval in date.

11 Chapman, S. D. 1978. *The Devon Cloth Industry*, 1978, p123.

12 Harding, W. 1845. *History of Tiverton*, Vol. 1, p107. See Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter for November 2013 where further details of the fate of the old market cross are given by Jane Evans.

Hot Lime Day at Hatherland Mill Farm

One very cold day in November 2016, some 16 members of the DBG met at Hatherland Mill Farm to explore the problems and possibilities of working with ‘hot lime’.

The day had been prompted by several members expressing their interest in learning more about working with this potentially problematic material, also that Conservation Officers and HE advisers had been asking if it could be specified for work on certain historic buildings.

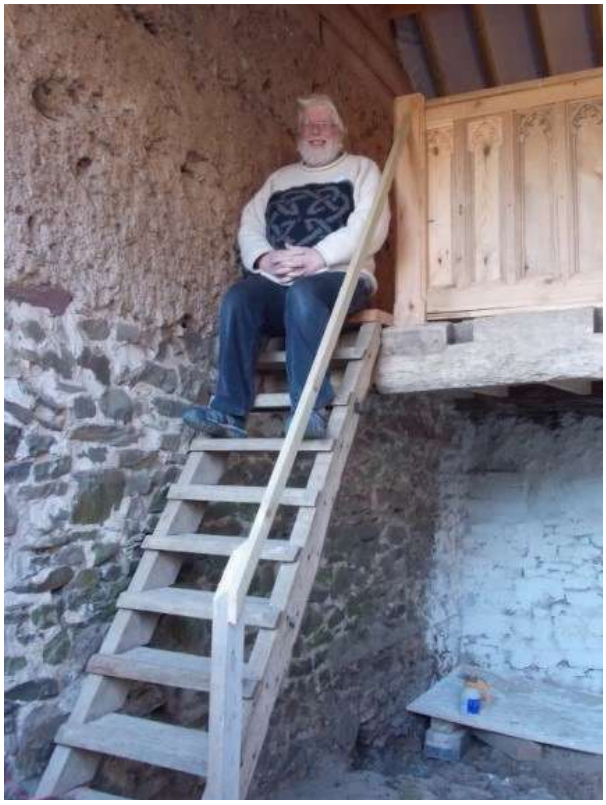
After the all-important health and safety talk, the day started with a quick mix of a “doughnut” of lime. David Tyler, our lime demonstrator from Jack in the Green Builders, mounded up quicklime and then covered it in damp sand. It was then left for the rest of the morning. Members went back inside where Dr Bruce Induni gave a very informative and thought provoking talk about the use of lime, its chemistry and whether the use of hot lime could be justified anywhere south of the border with Scotland. Many of you will know Bruce, whose knowledge of the subject is immense and we were very privileged to hear his latest thinking on this.

In the afternoon, we went back outside to uncover the lime/sand mound, where the quick lime had reacted with the water in the sand. This proved to be quite a lumpy mix, which needed throwing through a mesh screen before it resembled a workable mortar.

Above left. David Tyler demonstrating slaking lime. The quick lime is first added to water already in the tank, this photo was taken as additional water is added, as the initial quantity of water boils away.

Above right. The second method of making hot lime was then demonstrated, where-by quick lime was mounded up with sand and then water carefully poured into the mix and the whole mixed by shovel in the usual fashion, supplemented by a bit of treading the mix in suitable footwear. Intense heat and steam were produced by the reaction of the lime with water, and this seemed to produce a very workable mix, which the group went on to trial. Sections of stone walling were available on which to try it out as a plaster. Suitably kitted up in goggles, masks and gloves, members trowelled the hot mix onto the wall and despite the freezing air temperature that day, it produced a very passable result. Interestingly, several days later, although not having had any protection from the weather, the plaster surface appeared unaffected by frost action. However, what was noticeable was that where unslaked particles of lime had expanded as they reacted with water molecules, they had popped the surface of the plaster.

Left. Lime blows on the surface of the hot lime plaster.



Our "Lime guru" Bruce, watching proceeding from on above!

Conclusions

General agreement that in the course of a standard building contract, it was felt it would be unsafe to specify hot lime mixes.

The only place in the country where it might be advantageous would be north of the border, where there is more of a tradition of working with hot lime and the generally lower air temperatures for much of the year would preclude the use of cold lime mixes.

Hot lime doesn't suit use in plaster or render mixes. The best place to use it would be in the core of a wall as a mortar, where any unslaked particles could carry on reacting without affecting the appearance of the structure.

The day was felt to be an informative (and fun) experience.

Alison Bunning

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Bruce Induni and David and Glyn Tyler for their expertise and time given to us on the day, Richard Bunning for filiming the event and photographs by Lizzie Induni.

A Remarkable Farm Building at Sandridge Barton, Stoke Gabriel

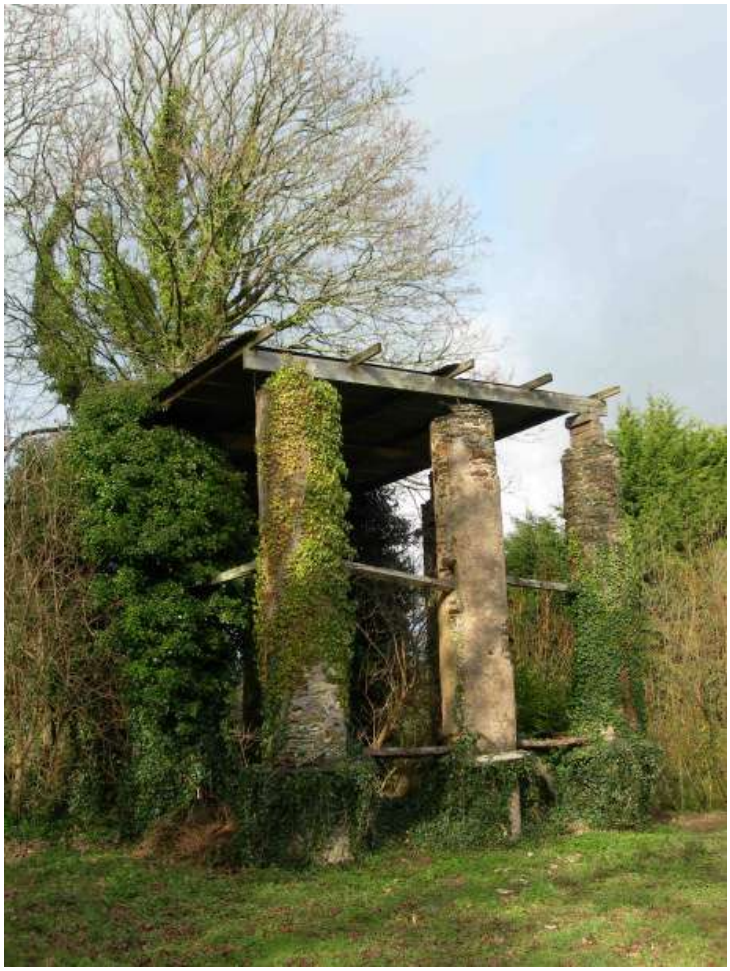


Figure 1. The barn from the south-west.

This article describes a farm building in the South Hams for which the author knows no parallel. Built around 1800, it consists of twelve 5 metre (16′6″) high stone-built piers, set in a rectangle of three piers by four and linked by wooden rails. Its construction and likely use are described in full below but in summary it appears to have been intended as an open building for corn storage, wholly unlike the traditional enclosed corn barns found at this date not only in Devon but across the whole of England. It is likely to have been a product of early experimental thinking about agriculture.

Sandridge Barton, which originally formed part of the Sandridge Estate, lies one mile south-east of Stoke Gabriel. Comparison of an estate map of c1772 with that of the Tithe Map of 1840 shows that a major reorganisation of the estate's buildings took place between these dates. This was presumably around 1805, since at this time a new principal house designed by John Nash was constructed on a fresh site north-west of the existing house; the latter was then demolished to make way for a stable block. Although farm buildings are shown in the vicinity of Sandridge Barton on the 1772 map, these do not coincide with those which are shown on the Tithe Map and no house is shown on the site of today's house. It would appear that what we see today was a reorganised home farm constructed between 1772 and 1840, the date of the Tithe Map (Figure 2). The farmhouse does in fact contain some earlier fittings (in particular a Tudor fire surround) but it is assumed that these were reused from the earlier house which was demolished to make way for the new stable block serving the 1805 Nash Villa or possibly from that house's predecessor which is recorded as still standing in 1809 albeit 'ruinous'. In all its other features the house is wholly early 19th century.[1]

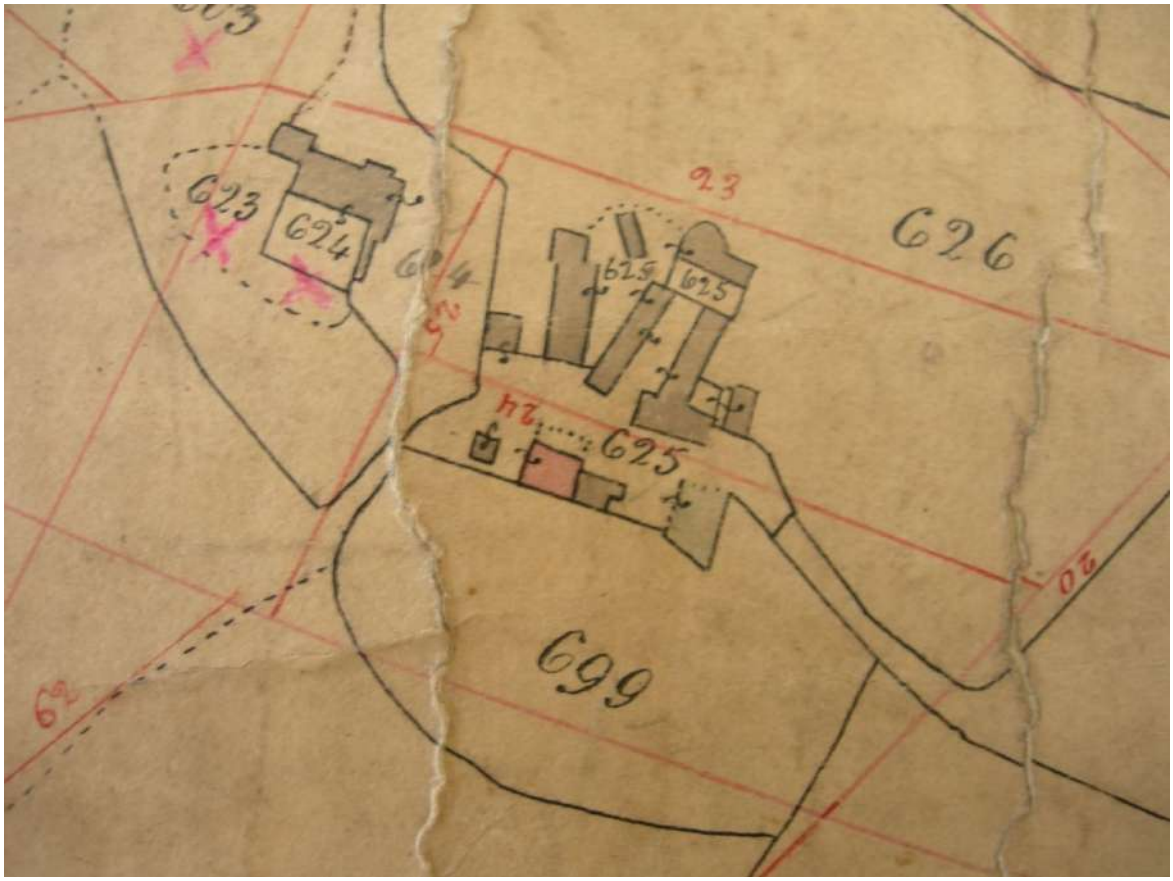


Figure 2. Extract from Stoke Gabriel Tithe Map 1840. The open barn is the free-standing building top centre. To its south-west is what is now a ruin, to its south the linhay [faced on the east by another linhay now lost] and to its east the barn with the projecting horse engine house [round-house] on its north side. The farmhouse is coloured pink. The building (624) to the north-west is the stable block to Sandridge Park. (Devon Record Office)

Before modern losses, the complex of buildings at Sandridge Barton consisted of a substantial farmhouse, described above, backed by a farmyard enclosed by linhays on its east and west sides and by a corn barn with attached round house at its northern end. The barn and the eastern linhay were demolished in the 1970s. The western linhay remains complete albeit with its originally open front enclosed and its thatched roof replaced by sheeting. Immediately to its west lies a substantial non-domestic stone building which is now very ruinous and whose function is unclear. Nearby to the north-east of this structure is the building with which this piece is concerned. It will be called the 'open barn' for the purposes of this piece.

This open barn (Plan Figure 3) consists of an entirely open structure constructed of round lime-rendered rubble-built columns some 5.0m (16′6″) high overall and 0.75m (2′6″) in diameter, forming a three-by-four rectangle measuring 9.75 by 5.5m (32′ by 18′) (Figures 1, 4, 5 and 6). The mono-pitch roof structure and corrugated iron cladding are wholly modern. How it was originally roofed can only be a matter of surmise but since the barn's construction predates the use of sheeting materials, a pitched roof either thatched or slated must be postulated. The columns have built-in slate 'staddles' projecting from the face of the columns set 95cms (3′2″) above the ground (Figures 7 & 8). Their function was to prevent mice and brown rats getting into the unthreshed crop to eat the grain; the projection was sufficient to stop them from climbing up.[2] The columns were linked by two sets of horizontal rails 15cms wide by12.5cms deep (6″ by 5″), one set 15-23cms (6-9″) above the level of the staddles and the other half way up the columns (Figure 6). The lower rails must have supported a loose timber floor, the mid-rails an external framework (a surviving original mid-rail has three through mortices for vertical studs and there are matching

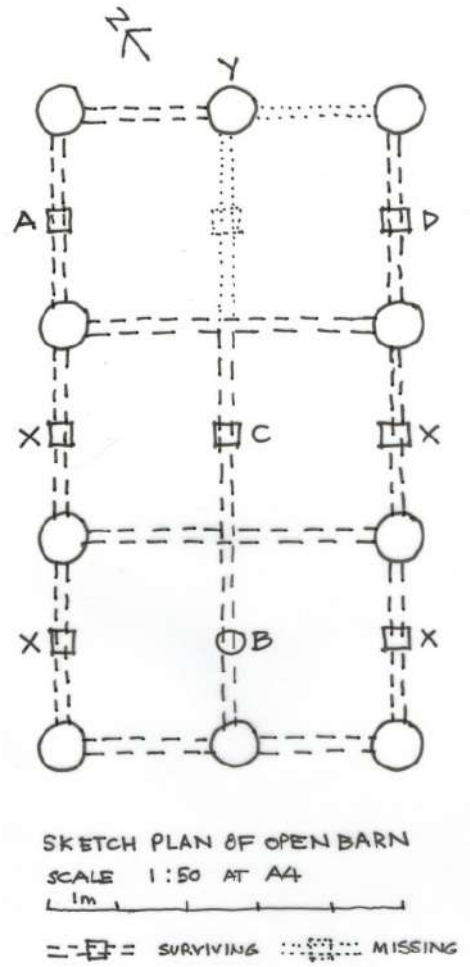


**Figure 3. A: Block with its staddle leaning against it.
B: Base only of rubble-constructed block.
C: Reused piece of attached column.
X: Reused volute blocks.
Y: Rubble column base.**

mortices in the floor level rail below) to hold in the crop stored within the barn. There is no evidence that there was any external cladding attached to these timbers.

The floor was supported not simply on the rails between the columns but by masonry blocks (Figures 7 & 8) set between each column around the exterior and with three more down the centre of the long axis. These originally were capped with slate staddles of which one survives albeit fallen (Figure 7). There is a discrepancy in height between the tops of these blocks and the lower rails linking the columns which is most easily explained if the blocks were not part of the original structure but were added to support the floor when it was seen to be sagging by means of additional beams sandwiched between the staddles on top of the blocks and the lower side rails. If this explanation is correct, the original designers were somewhat optimistic in thinking that the floor would work without such intermediate support. There are no sockets for a mid-rail in the columns on the

Figure 4. The barn from the west.

Figure 5 above. The barn from the east.

Figure 6 left. View from the south-east showing the floor and mid rails and the rendered rubble construction.

Figure 7. A surviving floor rail with block A and its fallen staddle beneath it.

Figure 8. Interior of east side showing reused volute block between the columns.

Figure 9. The north-west column with linking floor rails but no mortice for an intermediate rail at this end of the barn.

north side of the barn (Figure 9) so presumably this was the side from which the barn was loaded.

The blocks themselves are remarkable in that all but one (which is of rubble construction like the columns), are reused pieces of carved elvan or granite from a 16th- or 17th-century building of some grandeur. Four of these are about 90cms (36″) long by 30cms (12″) wide by 23cms (9″) deep and have volutes (Figure 10) carved on both sides of one end as if to project as large consoles. They have wide angled grooves on each long side behind the volute which presumably relate to their fixing originally on a building, although the function of these is unclear. One block is a section of an attached half column with a hollow and quarter-round moulding; the other two (Figure 7) are rougher with no obvious architectural form. It seems very likely that the carved blocks were reused from one of the grand houses at Sandridge which preceded the one built c1805.

On the 1st edition 25" OS map of 1888 the building at the north end of the farm yard (now lost) is shown with a half-round projection on its north side which is given the dotted outline of an open-sided structure. This was clearly a horse engine house of the type used throughout Devon to drive stationary threshing machines located within the corn barns. The building onto which it is attached must therefore presumably have been such a corn barn. It was however only some 13.5m (44′) long which is small for a medium sized farm (98 acres in 1842) such as Sandridge Barton. Given that until the second part of the 19th century in Devon it was normal practice if possible to store cereal crops inside a barn, this relatively small size may account for the additional presence of the open barn, as this would have been used not for hay but for un-threshed cereal crops for which there would not have been sufficient

Figure 10. Reused volute showing groove.

space in the barn. That its function was to store cereal crops rather than hay is made more likely by the presence in the past of the two large linhays in the farmyard whose lofts would have been sufficient for hay storage on their own. Similarly the use of projecting staddles to deter vermin indicates that corn rather than hay was being stored. The open barn was moreover located just outside the northern end of the yard close to the enclosed barn to which its contents could handily be taken to be threshed.[3]

This open corn barn is a most remarkable building for which there is no close parallel known to this author either in Devon or elsewhere in the UK. Dutch or open barns were not part of the traditional Devon farm building repertoire. There is one listed open barn at Bratton Clovelly (now converted to a house) and a similar building in the grounds of Manadon House, Plymouth (now converted to a chapel and not inspected) but both appear to be later 19th century in date, and are different in character from the Sandridge barn in that they are buildings with solid end walls and are much longer than they are wide. Moreover in the apparent absence of raised floors or staddles they would appear to be intended for hay rather than corn. Nationally, occasional examples of open barns of 19th-century date can be found throughout England, perhaps most commonly in Durham and Derbyshire; again these would appear to be intended to hold hay rather than corn and these all seem to be of the solid end wall type, not open on all sides as with the Sandridge example.

The agricultural commentators of the early 19th century do make occasional (and approving) references to the use of open barns in various parts of the country (although not in Devon) possibly either because these were rare novelties which were worth drawing to the reader's attention or because they were something that these authors thought farmers should be constructing. Typically, from *A General View of the Agriculture of Cambridge* 1811: "Mr. Lane's open-barn, (viz, a roof on posts) for corn deserves attention",[4] and from *A General View of the Agriculture of the County of Stafford* 1808: "A Dutch or hay-barn, on an economical and durable construction, would save the occupier so much trouble in thatching, that he could afford to pay a consideration for it. They afford likewise security from rain in the hay-harvest; and no loss is suffered in what farmers call the tops and bottoms".[5][6] The Cambridge example is called a corn rather than a hay barn, so the idea of using such a structure for this purpose was not unknown. However although the concept of such open or Dutch barns was clearly appreciated, in practice relatively few were constructed until the arrival of modern materials, in particular corrugated iron, towards the end of the 19th century; the traditional practice of storing un-threshed corn in enclosed barns remained predominant. When corn and hay production increased to a point where it was no longer viable to contain the whole crop within buildings, farmers moved instead to using thatched ricks set on staddles and frames in open yards.

Peter Child

All photographs by Peter Child.

Notes and references

1 The rebuilding of Sandridge Park is fully described in *A History of Sandridge Park*. Rosemary Yallop. Transactions of the Devonshire Association Vol 141, 2009 181-217.

2 John McCann. *The influence of rodents on the design and construction of farm buildings in Britain, to the mid-nineteenth century*. Journal of the Historic Farm Buildings Group. Vol. 10, (1996), 1-28.

3 Unfortunately the Torbay office of the Valuation Office Survey of c1910, which might normally throw some light on building use at least at this date, chose not to record the same detail as in other areas of England and simply valued the farm without the usual detailed description.

4 William Gooch. *A General View of the Agriculture of Cambridge* 1811, 30.

5 William Pitt. *A General View of the Agriculture of the County of Stafford* 1808, 20.

6 For full list of open barns mentioned in these works see: N. Harvey. *A History of Farm Buildings in England and Wales* 1984 p110 note 122.