

DEVON BUILDINGS GROUP

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 5

APRIL 1988

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Since my last report the Group has been involved in well over twenty new cases. This increase in the rate of our casework partly results from a steady growth in the number of cases that we get to hear about. But it also reflects the growing level of general economic activity in the county: Devon is experiencing a boom, and, economically, is one of the most rapidly growing areas of the country. Every village, almost every hamlet, is being affected. New roads, new industry, more houses and more shops - always more shops - are causing radical changes in the character and the very appearance of the county, a process accelerated by the decline in farm incomes, the consequent move away from agriculture and from the agrarian use of land, and the ever higher prices that can be commanded by building land. All this is putting unprecedented pressure on Devon's historic buildings, a pressure that is particularly evident in the north and in the eastern half of the county. The completion of the listed buildings re-survey in the rural districts has also added enormously to the county's total of protected historic buildings. While listing affords initial legal safeguards for important buildings, protection always needs to be ensured: it is not only freedom that requires eternal vigilance. Useful as listing is, its effectiveness depends upon the attitudes of local authorities and, more particularly, of Planning Committees, for whom architectural preservation - even if it is a statutory requirement - is only too often a minor concern. Listing, moreover, is necessarily highly selective and is conceived primarily in terms of individual structures: it can do little to protect the countless number of buildings that, though individually of lesser architectural distinction, nevertheless make up much of the characteristic fabric of Devon's built environment.

Among the many threats to historic buildings, unsympathetic or merely uninformed alterations and additions are the most usual. We received a helpful response from West Devon when we expressed our concern about unsuitable alterations to Rumleigh farmhouse in Bere Alston, and about the use of an artificial sealant in treating the late medieval roof of Chimsworthy farmhouse in Bratton Clovelly: in both cases the unacceptable aspects of the proposed work were remedied after negotiations with the owners. The Group protested to Mid-Devon when illegal alterations to the interior of Steart farmhouse, Stoodleigh, threatened to wreck an important and unusual seventeenth-century

plan, which included a wool loft. Objections, and fast work by the County Conservation Office, had their effect: the scheme was stopped before major damage was done, and far more sympathetic proposals have been substituted. Another serious loss was averted in Ilfracombe: among the buildings recently listed in the town is the chemist shop at 3 Broad Street, included for its elaborate and remarkably complete late-Victorian shop fittings. The owner wants to sell the premises and, without applying for listed building consent, arranged for the whole interior to be shipped off to a perfume museum in Aberdeen. Work was only just stopped in time, and protests from the Devon Buildings Group, along with the North Devon Civic Society and the Victorian Society, should mean that the fittings will stay in the building for which they were designed. We were less successful in Plympton, where we objected to new building in the garden of Trevanion, an attractive Regency house that is one of the few survivors of the planning process that has inflicted architectural disaster upon Plympton's Ridgeway over the last ten years. Plymouth City gave permission for the new work, though with the provision that the house itself should remain unaltered. This is some comfort, but not much: Trevanion's immediate context will be destroyed, just as the larger urban context of central Plympton has been.

Among cases that fall under the general heading of alterations and additions, one of the most fascinating in recent months has been that of Eggesford House in Wembworthy parish. Designed by Thomas Lee of Barnstaple - the architect of the very different Arlington Court - Eggesford was built 1820-1830 for the Hon. Newton Fellowes who inherited the extensive Devon estates of the Earls of Portsmouth and became 4th earl in 1854, the last year of his life. Whereas Arlington was Greek at its most austere, Eggesford was Elizabethan Gothic at its most Romantic, superbly sited above the valley of the Taw, restlessly picturesque in its proliferation of turrets, battlements and chimneys - these last particularly fantastic in appearance. The Portsmouth fortunes declined in the period before the First World War, and Eggesford followed suit. The Devon estate was broken up and, in 1913 and 1914, the lavish fittings of the house were auctioned off. Nobody wanted the house itself: by 1917, the roofs were gone, the interiors had been stripped out, and much of the masonry had been carted away for building stone. Eggesford became what it has been ever since: one of the most striking and evocative ruins in Devon. Now, however, the owner has put forward ambitious proposals for incorporating part of the main block in a new house. The DBG Committee felt that the new plans were generally sympathetic, but that the outstandingly picturesque landscape quality of the existing ruin had not been sufficiently considered. A similar view was taken by the Victorian Society. The Group suggested a site meeting with the architect and representatives of Mid-Devon and the County, and this proved very positive. It was agreed that a major part of the north range which was to be demolished will be preserved and consolidated, and that existing walls will be capped off as ruins to become the boundary walls of the garden to the new house. In addition, the south front - which is the principal and remains the most intact - is to be restored, with the new glazing to match that of the original. Revised plans are currently in preparation, and we look forward to seeing them.

A major part of Devon's current economic growth is retailing, with developers and local councils alike scrambling to take maximum advantage of the consumer boom. The results are usually unseemly. In Honiton the developers of a new shopping precinct, tucked with reasonable discretion behind the High Street, apparently forgot that access from the High Street would be through a couple of early nineteenth-century listed buildings that they would need consent to alter.

On the peculiar grounds that these inconvenient buildings had "come to the end of their design life" - where would that argument leave Exeter castle or the city walls? - they put in a silly application to demolish them and partially rebuild in replica. We objected to East Devon, with the result that new proposals have been submitted which at least make some attempt to preserve the historic fabric - though much of the detailing could best be described as heritage twee. Up in Torridge District, the DBG has objected to proposals to put shops into the open arcade beneath the central bay of Great Torrington town hall: we await the outcome. We are also worried about new plans that are emerging for Tavistock Pannier Market, which for some time we have argued should be statutorily protected. With financial backing from English Heritage, West Devon and Tavistock Town Councils have prepared a town enhancement scheme: this has many worthwhile features, including a proposed extension of the scheme to include the market. Reports in the press, however, suggest that the market may become the victim of plans to "enhance" retailing in Tavistock as well. This could be disastrous: the only way adequately to protect the pannier market as urban architecture is to ensure that it continues to function as a market. The Devon Buildings Group has been asked to repond to the town scheme proposals, and this is a point we will be making strongly. The most serious current threat involving shopping development is to the splendid late Victorian Methodist church in the market square of Dartmouth. South Hams District Council, who own the church, claim it is unsound and want to flatten it and build a new community centre, "with limited retail use" - thus nicely combining an appeal to social conscience with the lucrative prospect of yet more shops. An article on the church and the present state of the case will be found later in this Newsletter.

Two new cases involving historic industrial structures have also come up in the last months. Ivybridge Town Council contacted the Group about a scheme devised by South Hams to tidy up a nineteenth-century aqueduct in the centre of the town. The proposals, though well-intentioned, treated the site like a municipal park and would have trivialised an impressive industrial monument. In conjunction with the Victorian Society, whom we brought into the case, we wrote to South Hams expressing our doubts about the scheme and suggesting alternative approaches: the proposals were withdrawn and have been subsequently amended. In Bovey Tracey a rare group of three bottle kilns seemed to be threatened by the development of a trading estate. The kilns are Scheduled Ancient Monuments, but permission to demolish existed for two of them. Following an excellent report by the Devon Archaeological Society, we wrote to the Scheduling division of English Heritage asking for action to protect the kilns. Fortunately demolition consent has now lapsed and we received a very positive response: ways are to be sought of ensuring the long-term preservation of the group.

As well as work related to new cases, old cases continue. I have to report that two of these have ended badly. The corner pavilion on the south side of the old market in Crediton, the Devon Buildings Group's first case, has been demolished. This modest but attractive building, dating from 1837, was listed Grade II: it formed one of four pavilions, two of which survive on the north of the site. The owners, Mid-Devon District Council, want the site for development and the two pavilions on the south side were inconvenient. The Council managed to get rid of one as a dangerous structure some years ago; having entirely neglected the other for a decade, they obtained permission to demolish it on the grounds that it was no longer economically repairable. Mid-Devon's handling of the issue bears more resemblance to the tactics of unscrupulous developers than it does to the behaviour of a responsible Local Authority, and English Heritage's

failure to prevent the destruction of the building suggests an alarming feebleness of purpose. The Group has protested strongly but there is little that can be done. If the statutory bodies who should protect historic buildings connive at the neglect and destruction on the ones they own, who can blame private owners for adopting the same strategy? The other case that has come to an unhappy conclusion is that of 9 Colleton Crescent, Exeter. Webb and Bower, publishers of 'heritage' items, own the building and wanted to put four new houses in the back garden, despite the fact that the Crescent is listed II* and in the middle of a highly sensitive conservation area: so much for Webb and Bower's concern for the heritage. As I reported in the last Newsletter, Exeter City Council rejected the application, in which they were supported by a number of conservation groups, including the DBG. The owners went to appeal; objections were renewed and restated; the Department of the Environment Inspector found in favour of the appellants. It is surely a particularly bad decision that supports commercial opportunism against the united views of the local authority, the amenity groups, and the local residents. What kind of unwelcome precedent this may set for developments in the conservation area remains to be seen. Other cases have come to a better resolution. The application for a lumbering extension to the fine Regency house of Stonelands, Dawlish, to which we objected, has been withdrawn. The developers of Cross House, Bishopsteignton, seem to have abandoned their attempts to demolish the building, following some vigorous opposition that was led by the Group. New proposals include the retention and exterior restoration of the house: although there are a several aspects of the scheme with which we are unhappy, it is obviously a signal improvement on what preceded it. At Holsworthy, the disagreement between Torridge and the developers of the Wesleyan Day School in the town has been sorted out after a number of representations from the DBG: the building will be saved and converted for housing.

Although casework has been the Committee's primary concern over the past months, other activities and matters concerning the DBG have also been dealt with. The Group's second AGM was arranged for the end of October and held in Tiverton Castle. Over forty members attended, and the whole day was very successful. The discussion that followed my Annual Report was a particularly valuable one, and several of the issues raised about the Group's overall strategy and objectives were most useful. It is very encouraging for the Committee to have such lively and informed support and guidance from the general membership of the Group. The afternoon walk around Tiverton was equally rewarding, and thanks are due to Jo Cox, Isabel Richardson and Mark Lewis for organizing it: an article on Blundell's School, which we looked at during the afternoon, is included in the current Newsletter. I am glad to be able to report that membership of the Group has been increasing steadily, as will be evident from the considerably enlarged Register which was assembled during the autumn and distributed to all members in the New Year. Updates of the Register will be circulated as appropriate, and I enclose one with this Newsletter. During the past couple of months the Committee has been engaged in arranging the DBG's Third Annual Conference: this will be held on Saturday 18 June and will deal with farm buildings, their conservation and their re-use. There is a preliminary item on the Conference in the current Newsletter and fuller information will be sent out to members nearer the date. The Group continues to pursue active relationships with other organizations involved in architectural conservation. Pauline Brain, Secretary of the North Devon Civic Society, was elected to the Committee at the AGM, and this has given us the opportunity for closer involvement with conservation issues and cases in

the north of the county. The Committee has also welcomed the establishment of a Historic Buildings Section of the Devonshire Association, and Veronica Chesher has agreed to liaise with the new Section on behalf of the Group. We have also been contacted by a number of bodies, including the National Trust and the MSC, who have set up cob repair schemes: it would seem a good idea for information and experience to be pooled, and perhaps to be made more widely available. Jo Cox is trying to collect details of the different schemes and if members have information that might be useful they should contact her. In addition to these various developments, the DBG continues to work closely with local amenity groups like the Devon Archaeological Society, and with the national amenity bodies - particularly the Victorian Society and the Ancient Monuments Society.

I have already mentioned several of the pieces in this issue of the Newsletter. In pursuance of a policy stated several numbers ago, I am also glad to be able to include items not directly related to current casework: David Evans's article on the fortifications of Berry Head, and Peter Dare and Jo Cox's account of recent conservation work undertaken for the Redundant Churches Fund at Torbryan. As always, I would welcome more contributions, no matter how brief, from the members of the Group. If possible, I want to bring out Newsletter Number 6 at the end of the summer, but this will largely depend upon whether there are sufficient articles forthcoming.

Chris Brooks

OLD BLUNDELL'S SCHOOL TIVERTON

Members who did not previously know Tiverton were impressed by the town, which was toured in the afternoon following the Devon Building Group's last AGM. An outstanding building on the tour was Old Blundell's School, now owned by the National Trust and divided into six houses. Multi-occupancy made it impractical to see the interior on the tour.

Blundell's school is probably best known from the opening chapter of R.D. Blackmore's *Lorna Doone* (1869), set in the late seventeenth century. The hero, John Ridd, describes his education at the "worthy grammar-school". The curriculum is described briefly as a struggle with Eutropius, Caesar and Ovid (with a crib). The more boisterous schoolboy occupations predominate: the elaborate custom of burning his name into his desk with salt petre; beating up the day boys and eating their food; the occasional excitement of a holiday as a result of the flooding of the river Lowman, which was defined by the waters reaching the initials of the founder, 'P.B.', which were "in copy letters...done in white pebbles" in the paving at the school gate.

Peter Blundell was born at Tiverton in 1520 and became a successful cloth merchant. When he died unmarried in 1601, he left a fortune of about £40,000. His will, dated 14 June 1599, directed his executors to found a grammar school which, in point of the numbers of pupils, was second in the country only to the

Merchant Taylors' school and, in point of the size of the building, was second to none. The school was to teach not more than one hundred and fifty boy scholars between the ages of five and eighteen, with priority given to pupils brought up in the town or parish of Tiverton. Blundell himself was reputed to have had humble origins as an errand boy, which may account for his request that, if children from outside Tiverton were needed to fill up the places, they should be chosen "of such forreyners as are of honest reputation and feare God, without regarding the riche above or more than the poore".

The bequest for the foundation of the school was £2,400 for the building; the unprecedentedly high sum of £50 for the master's salary; £13 6s 8d for the usher's salary; £4 for the clerk's salary and £2000 for the purchase of land to maintain three scholars at Oxford and three at Cambridge. The scale of the foundation made it essential to divide the pupils into groups and this affected the planning of the school. Blundell's will details, not only the materials of construction, but also the internal arrangements of the school.

... a faier School House to conteyne for the place for teaching only, in length one hundred foote, and in breadth fower and twenty foot, a hawle, buttery, and kitchin, all of convenient space and biggness to be joined unto it, with fit and convenient rooms over the said hawle, buttery and kitchin, all the rooms strongly glassed and barred within iron barres and well covered, the floor of the schoole to be well plancked with planks of oke etc., and to be devided on or neere the middest with some fit partition of fower foot in height or thereabouts, and to be strongly wainscotted rounde abowte, to extend abowte five or six foote above the settles or formes, etc. The hawle to be alsoe plancked or paved and alsoe wainscotted round abowte, and to have in the hall or chamber over the same one or other chimney, and in the kitchen one faier great chinmey with an oven and chamber over the kitchen with a chimney therein...and the whole to be rounde aboute well walled and inclosed with a stroong wall, the goinge in and forthe to be at one only place with a fair strong gate with a little dore as is usual.

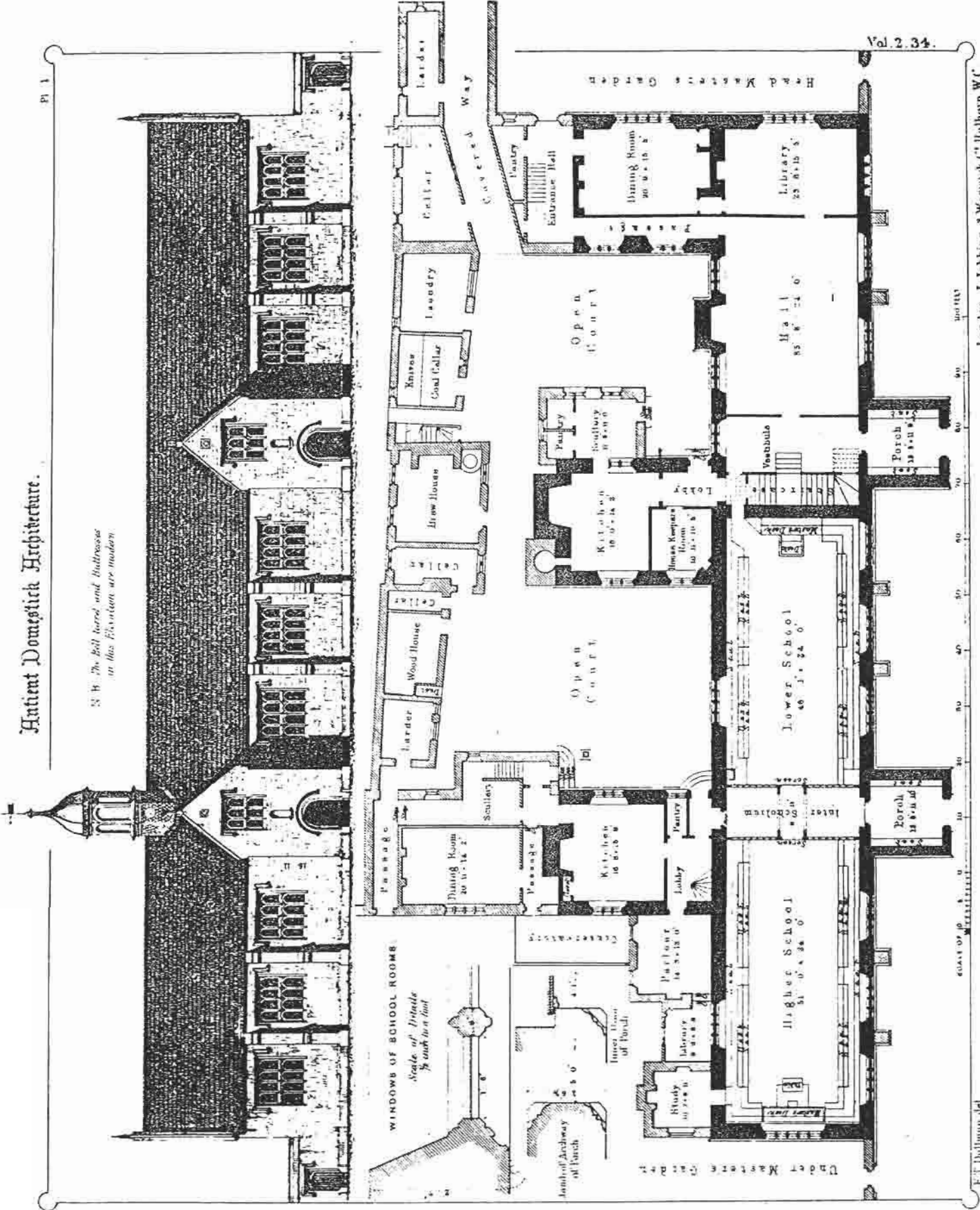
All the details relating to the establishment of the school and the foundation of the scholarships were left, according to the direction of the will, to Blundell's friend, Sir John Popham, Lord Chief Justice of England, who nominated the first six scholars.

The siting of the school and the walled yard in front of it suggests that Blundell may have read or known of Richard Mulcaster's *Positions* (1581), a systematic treatment of education and schools in which the author advocated siting elementary schools within towns, to allow the children to be close to their parents, but suggested that grammar schools were better sited further from town: "so I could wish that grammar schools were planted in the [out]skirts and suburbs of towns, near to the fields, where partly by enclosure of some private ground, for the closer exercises...[and] partly for the benefit of the open fields for exercises of more range, there might not be much want of room, if there were any at all".

Antient Domestic Architecture.

Pl. 1.

33 ft. The bell tower and buttresses in this elevation are modern.



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E. F. Dollman del.

London, J. Robbins, 3, Warwick St, Holborn, W.C.

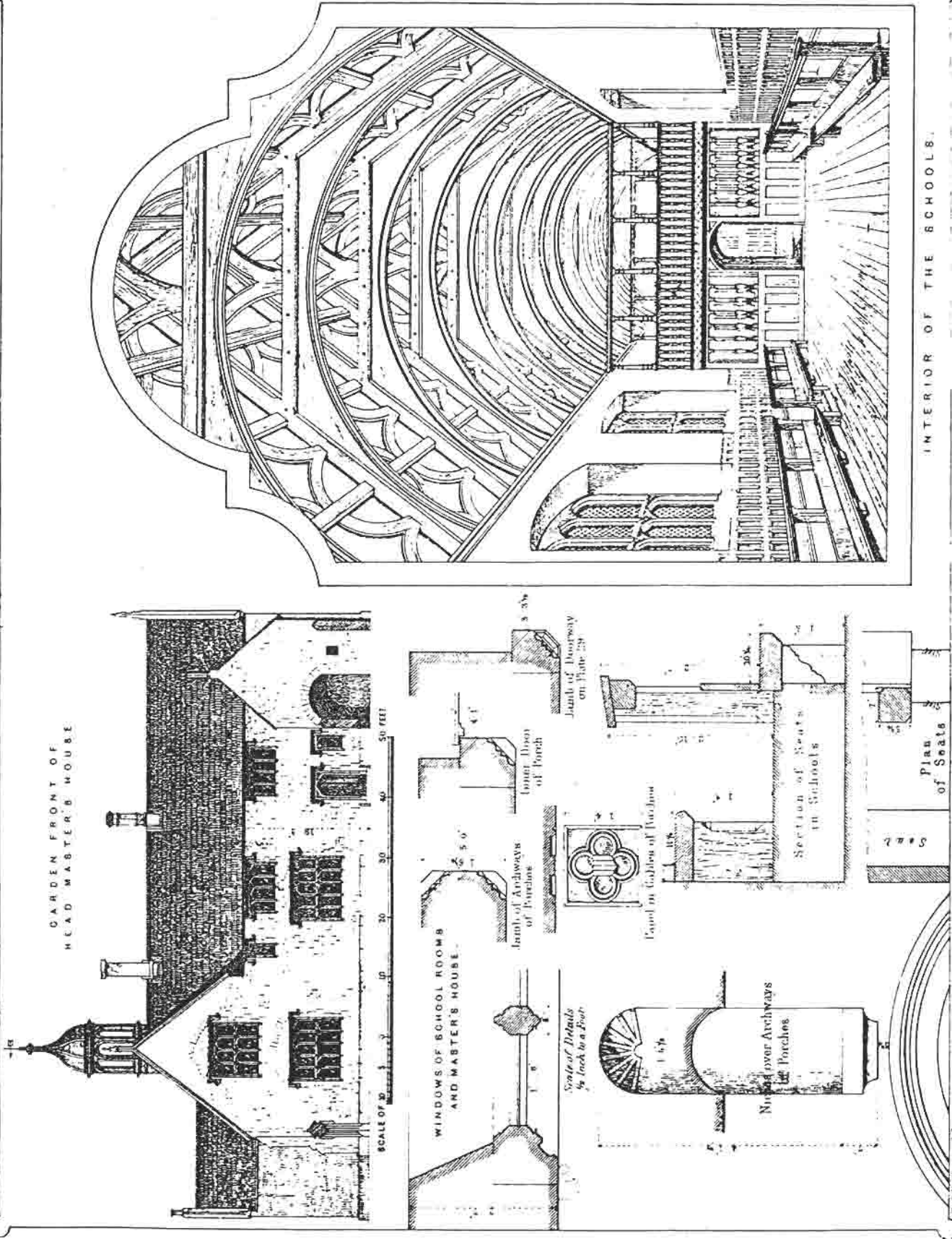
Blundell's School, Tiverton, Devon.
Ground Plan and Front Elevation.

[Figure 11]

The school was completed in 1603. It was built of Ham Hill stone with ashlar masonry and a slate roof and faced north. The long eleven-bay, single depth range had a three-bay full height schoolroom, "the higher school", at the east end. The boys' seats were arranged along the side walls, facing each other. The higher schoolroom was divided from a similar three-bay full height "lower" schoolroom in the centre by a screens passage with a gallery above it. On Dollman and Jobbins' plan of 1863 the passage is called the "inter scholium" (*Analysis of Ancient Domestic Architecture* (1863)) [Figure 1]. It is not clear whether this gallery was used for the supervision of the boys, perhaps by a boy-president or boy-prefect, or even by the master or usher, or whether it was simply a means of access to the room over the porch which led into the screens passage. Beyond the passage, to the rear, there was a south-east wing which was probably the usher's house. A second porch, west of the lower schoolroom, led into a vestibule separating the lower school from the dining hall to the west. The kitchen and buttery were in a rear south west wing behind the vestibule. The master's house was at the west end of the range, returning to the south.

Some of the architectural details of the school are remarkably old-fashioned for the date, given the ambition and expense of the project. The transomed stone windows (lowered and given an extra bottom tier after Blundell's moved to its new site), still have segmental arched lights and the two schoolrooms have massive open oak roofs of arched brace construction with four tiers of wind bracing. This was commented on in Dollman and Jobbins' nineteenth-century account of the building: "The design of the roof, an open one of oak, exhibits the attachment to the medieval type that still lingered after the abandonment of the style itself" (ibid) (Figures 2 and 3). I am indebted to Michael Laithwaite for pointing out that old-fashioned design is characteristic of early schools. Berkhamstead school in Hertfordshire, which was established in 1541, is probably the earliest surviving example of a school, as distinct from a college, with integrated accommodation for teaching staff. In spite of its date it is late fifteenth-century in style with traceried Gothic windows. The early schools of lay foundation are, in one sense, a new building type and perhaps conservative design gave them a visible connection with the earlier established collegiate schools. The old-fashioned roofs were reserved for the school rooms; the full height dining hall and first floor chambers in the master's and usher's houses had more fashionable coved plaster ceilings.

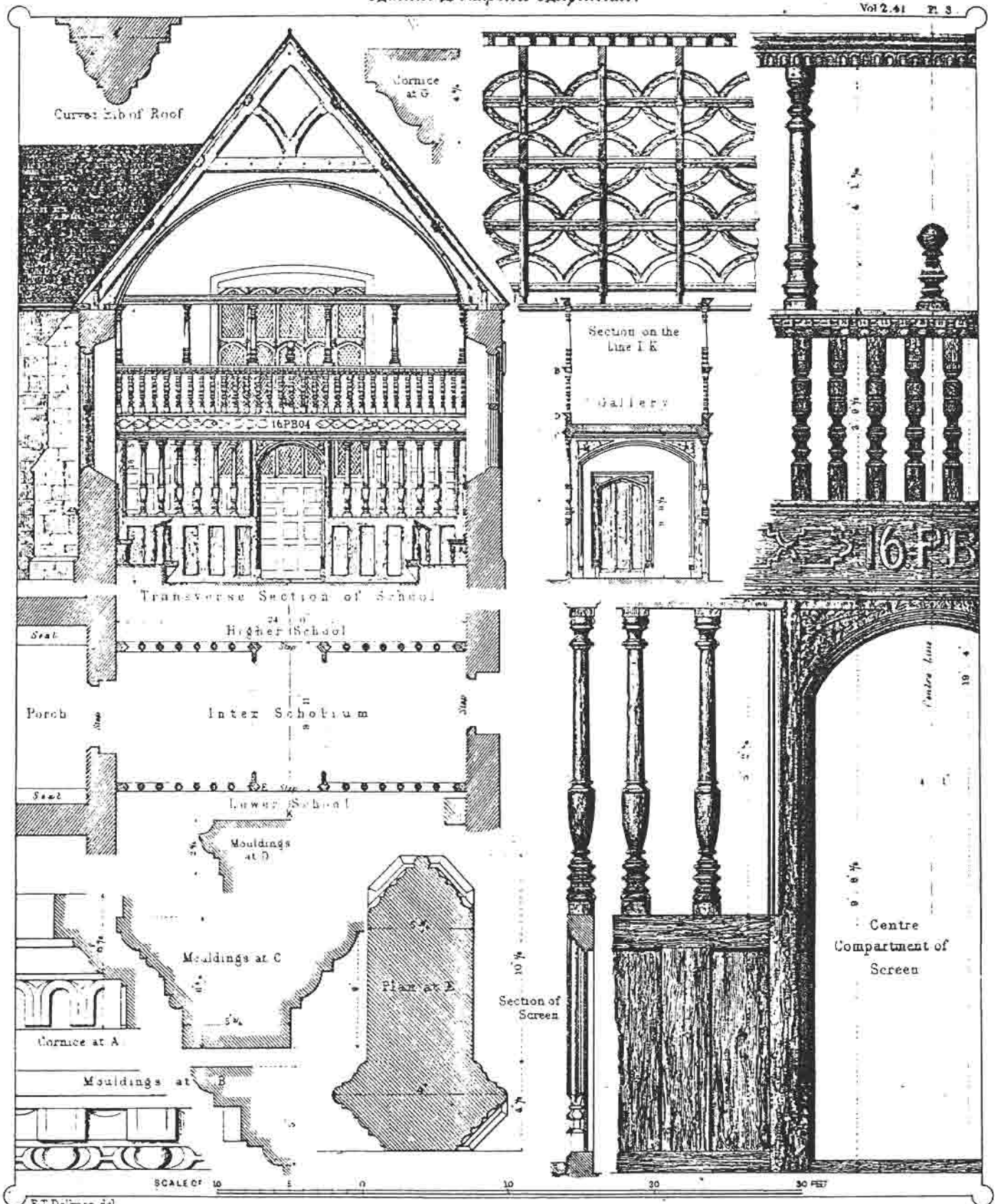
Peter Blundell's school had its influence on other buildings, both nationally and locally. Malcolm Seaborne notes that Archbishop Hasnet's schools, founded in 1629 at Chigwell in Essex, followed the plan of Blundell's on a more modest scale and originally had respective entrances to the two rooms, which were probably divided by a screen (*The English School, its Architecture and Organisation, 1370-1870* (1971), p.51). There is a more intimate connection between Blundell's and the Chilcot School in St Peter Street, Tiverton. This was founded in 1611 by Robert Chilcot, Peter Blundell's nephew, confidential clerk and beneficiary. The limited curriculum of English and writing and the specific exclusion of girls, suggests that it was intended as a preparatory school for Blundell's. Tiverton is extremely fortunate in having two such early schools surviving in a town so regularly plagued with fires in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.



London, J. Jobbins, 3, Warwick Ct. Holborn, W.C.
 Blundell's School, Tiverton, Devon.
 And Elevation, Details and Interior View.

F. T. Hollman del.

[Figure 2]



F. T. Dolman del.

London, J. Jobbins, 3, Warwick C^o Holborn W.C.
Blundell's School, Tiverton, Devon.
Sections and Details.

[Figure 3]

By 1863 the school building had undergone a number of alterations. Dollman's plan shows the original building in black and additions, of whatever date, in grey. These included the buttresses of 1840, which make the exterior look even more old-fashioned, and a new cupola and bell of the same date. There were also various additions to the south east and a range of service rooms to the rear, which created two open courts behind the school. Judging from existing interior details there was a major programme of work carried out in the 1840s, particularly to the master's house, which has nineteenth-century Tudor doorframes, doors and a chimney-piece. Dollman describes the curriculum in 1863:

Latin and Greek classics, English History, and modern Geography in the lower school, and Roman and Grecian History, Ancient Geography and Mathematics in the higher school. Writing and arithmetic are taught, by a master during the leisure hours or on holidays; and instruction in the French language has recently been added. For the two latter modes of instruction an additional sum is charged. Theological prizes of books are given every year for the best answers to a series of questions out of a stated book of the New Testament. Prizes are also given for the best Iambic verses. After the boys have completed their education at this school they are fitted at once to proceed to the University.

Blackmore's account of the school in *Lorna Doone*, although set in the seventeenth century, is probably closer to his own memories as a pupil in the 1840s and certainly offers a rather livelier account of school activities. The distinction between the local day boys and the paying boarders was, literally, a sharp one:

...while we ate their victuals we allowed them freely to talk to us. Nevertheless, we could not feel, when all the victuals were gone, but that these boys required kicking from the premises of Blundell. And some of them were shop-keepers' sons, young grocers, fellmongerers, and poulterers, and these, to their credit, seemed to know how righteous it was to kick them. But others were of high family, as any need be, in Devon - Carews and Bouchiers and Bastards, and some of these would turn sometimes and strike the boy that kicked them. But to do them justice, even these knew that they must be kicked for not paying.

In 1882 the school was sold to fund new school buildings on a new site further out of the town. The new school was designed by the Exeter architect, John Hayward, who had already carried out several projects in Tiverton for the Heathcoat estate. The decision to move the school placed the buildings under threat and the case was taken up by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. William Morris, Secretary to the Society at the time, reported on the case at the second AGM of the newly-established society:

The architecture and fittings...are known to all architects, and are without doubt among the very best specimens in existence of School architecture...it had been proposed to remove the school from its present site and to sell the existing buildings, but

there was considerable local feeling in favour of the site of the school not being removed; the Committee, though not feeling themselves in a position to give any opinion on the question of removal, pointed out to the Charity Commissioners and others the great value of the buildings; they believe they can claim to have influenced the decision which has been come to, i.e., that in any case the buildings shall be respected and preserved.

The old school was eventually bought back in 1940 with funds collected by the Old Blundellian Club and was presented to the governors in 1945. In 1954 it was given to the National Trust. Considering its history of several changes of use, ownership and sub-division, it is surprisingly intact and is listed grade I. The large walled and grassed yard in front of school - and absolutely crucial to the building - has been preserved. Apart from the lengthening of the windows, the front elevation is little altered since Dollman's elevation of 1863. The splendid screens shown in the 1863 illustrations have, unfortunately, disappeared but original carpentry includes good doorframes and a fine staircase with turned balusters leading off the vestibule. Seventeenth-century panelling exists in the room labelled 'Library' on Dollman's plan, but this has probably been re-sited. The two schoolrooms have had floors inserted but the spectacular arched brace roof is intact, although largely concealed. The coved plaster ceilings of the dining hall and master's house also survive. Some of the later additions are interesting in their own right: an eighteenth-century block in local handmade brick adjoining the south east wing; eighteenth-century doors and a chimney-piece in the master's house and the extension of the master's house, which is probably 1840s, in a style matching the original.

The extraordinary graffiti carved on to the front elevation of the building, in a variety of styles of architectural lettering, is also notable. The names include those of R.D. Blackmore and members of the Carew family. Senior boys are said to have had the privilege of being allowed to employ a local stone mason to carve their names for them. This example of paid and licensed vandalism is certainly most impressive and must have involved considerable expense, competition, and the use of ladders.

R.D. Blackmore, *Lorna Doone. A Romance of Exmoor* (London, 1869).

F.T. Dollman and I.R. Jobbins, *An Analysis of Ancient Domestic Architecture in Great Britain*, 2 vols. (London, 1861-3).

Malcolm Seaborne, *The English School. Its Architecture and Organization 1370-1870* (London, 1971).

I would like to thank Isabel Richardson and John Schofield who have both provided information for this article.

Jo Cox

THE FORTIFICATION OF BERRY HEAD

On February 1 1793 the French Republic declared war on England, and Berry Head, just outside Brixham, was earmarked for development as a permanent coast defence site. On April 8th, 1794, the following letter from the office of the Master-General, the Duke of Richmond, was sent to the new Commanding Engineer at Devonport.

I am directed by The Master General to desire you will go to Torbay and form a Plan for Fortifying the Berry Head, that is, in the first place, for Erecting such Batteries on that Hill as shall best protect the Shipping and the Entrance to Torbay.

2dly. To enclose these Batteries, so that an Enemy landing Infantry in the Neighbourhood may not get possession of them without being obliged to break Ground, and erect Batteries.

3dly. To have Barracks for 600 Men to defend these Batteries, which Barracks may be sent ready framed from London and will then only require putting up, Brick Nogging, Plaistering and Building the Chimneys. Each Barrack is 100 feet long by 22, from out to out, and will contain 2 Officers and 60 Men. The Men are not to dress their Victuals in the Barracks but Cooking Places are to be put up for that purpose according to the Plan which has been tried and found to answer for similar buildings at Hythe, on the Coast of Sussex, which Captain Twiss is to Explain and a Copy of his Description will be sent down to you, as soon as possible.

4thly. If there is no Water in the space proposed to be occupied by these Works, a Tank must be made to receive the Water from the Buildings. These Buildings may be covered with Slate which can be got in the neighbourhood.

The Master General thinks the Ground you are likely to want belongs to the Duke of Bolton, but wishes enquiries to be immediately made, a Survey taken and as much Ground Demanded as is necessary, in which His Grace desires that you will take care to have a sufficiency in front of the Works so that at no time any Buildings may be Erected to incommode them.

The Master General further desires that you will take care that the Works are no where Commanded, altho' this should give the Works somewhat more Extent. (1)

The officer concerned, Lt.Col. Alexander Mercer, had been promoted only the previous month. He was to become Major-General in 1796, Lt.General in 1803, and, after leaving Plymouth, full General in 1813, dying at Exmouth on 10 November 1816. He was responsible for all the works of military architecture emanating from his office, and engaged in much design work himself: Topsham Barracks at Exeter is probably his best known building.

The letter gives a clear explanation of the purpose of the fortification (and an interesting early example of the use of partially prefabricated buildings, only the foundations of which survive). Coastal defences were usually taken by a *coup de main* from the landward side by troops which had been landed further down the coast, and the defensive works had to be very strong on that side. In the case of Berry Head, the precipitous cliffs formed a perfect defence

on the seaward side. The purpose of all fortifications was to delay the enemy whilst reinforcements could be brought up; the fall of any fortress was, in eighteenth-century military theory, certain, with a competent engineer in charge of the siege, but the operation took time and could not be rushed.

Mercer's plans were ready by July 14 1794, when three sections through the proposed works were sent to the Drawing Room of the Board of Ordnance to be copied (2). These original drawings do not survive. However, two sets of plans drawn up in 1803 are preserved. One set is Mercer's autograph, and the other is a fair copy from the official Drawing Room. They are identical except in the degree of finish. The original design, which was executed for the most part, is the sheet dated 24 February 1803, captioned "Plan of the Works at the Berry Head as Projected by His Grace the Duke of Richmond". Like its companions, it is an accomplished drawing in ink and watercolour.

General Mercer's design solution, as executed, protects the area of the tip of the headland set aside for two batteries, barracks, stores, parade ground etc. by a revetted wall and dry ditch spanned by a drawbridge. Protected musketry positions along the cliff edges were provided by a line of redans joined together by low curtain walls; this now survives only on the southern side, adjacent to the main wall, and considerably obscured by undergrowth. This is redoubt No.3. A separate redoubt, No.1, placed in advance, flanks the approach to No.3, and would need to be taken first in a separate operation by attackers, as its fire, if left unsuppressed, would take them in flank. No cannon embrasures are provided on the side facing No.3, it being assumed that it would be adequately protected by fire from No.3. The masonry revetments are of the same type as those of Redoubts 4 and 5 on Maker Heights, overlooking Plymouth Sound, which had been largely built according to the Duke of Richmond's designs, the earthworks being completed in 1783 and the revetments applied in 1789-1790. Though the redoubts are attractive and impressive pieces of military architecture, the fortification is weak. There is no protection for the entrance, and the works are only redoubts, whose parapets do not defend their ditches. The Berry Head defences cannot be classified as a fort for this very reason, which defines the principal difference between a redoubt and a fort.

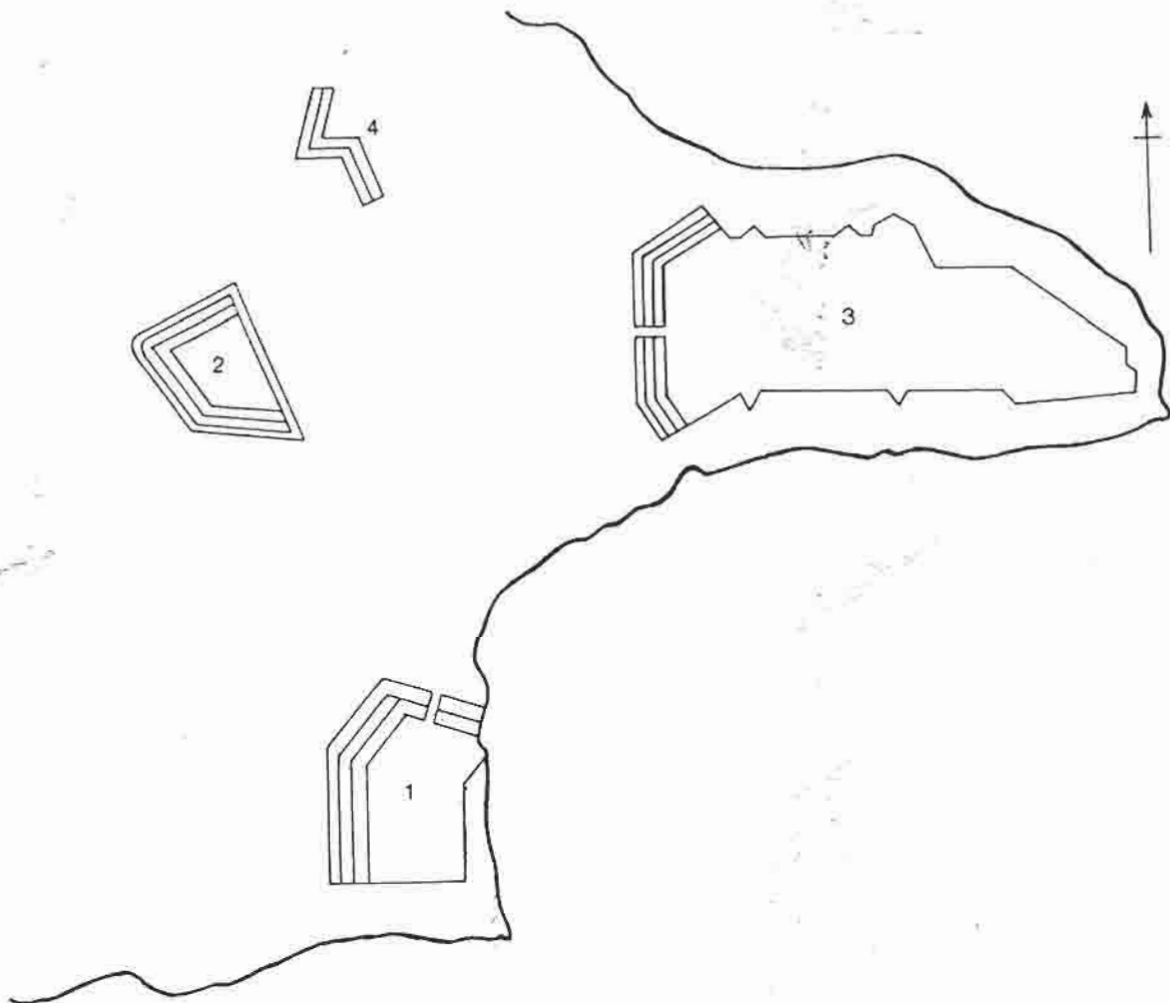
However, alternative plans had been drawn up which show that a much more effective design was in fact proposed. Plans of the proposed works, as well as those actually executed, were made by official draughtsmen of the Board of Ordnance in February 1803 from Mercer's originals (which also survive.). These are titled respectively:

- 1) Plan of the Works on the Berry Head as Projected by His Grace the Duke of Richmond. (Feb.24, 1803)
- 2) Plan of the Works at the Berry Head, with a Couvre Port to the Line no.3, and without the Demi Bastion No.2 and Line No.4. (Feb.23, 1803)
- 3) Plan showing the proposed Couvre Port. [Plan and Section]
- 4) Plan of the Duke of Richmond's Casemates in the Flank of No.2 Demi-Bastion.
- 5) Sections of the Duke of Richmond's Casemated Work of No.2 Demi-Bastion.
- 6) Plan of the Casemates, in the Flank of No.2 Demi-Bastion with a more Contracted Passage, to obviate the Groined Arches, in the Original Plan. (Feb.24 1803)

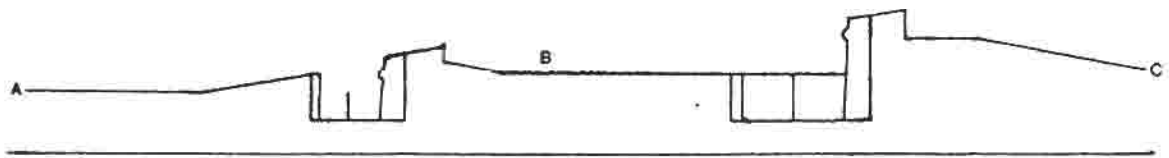
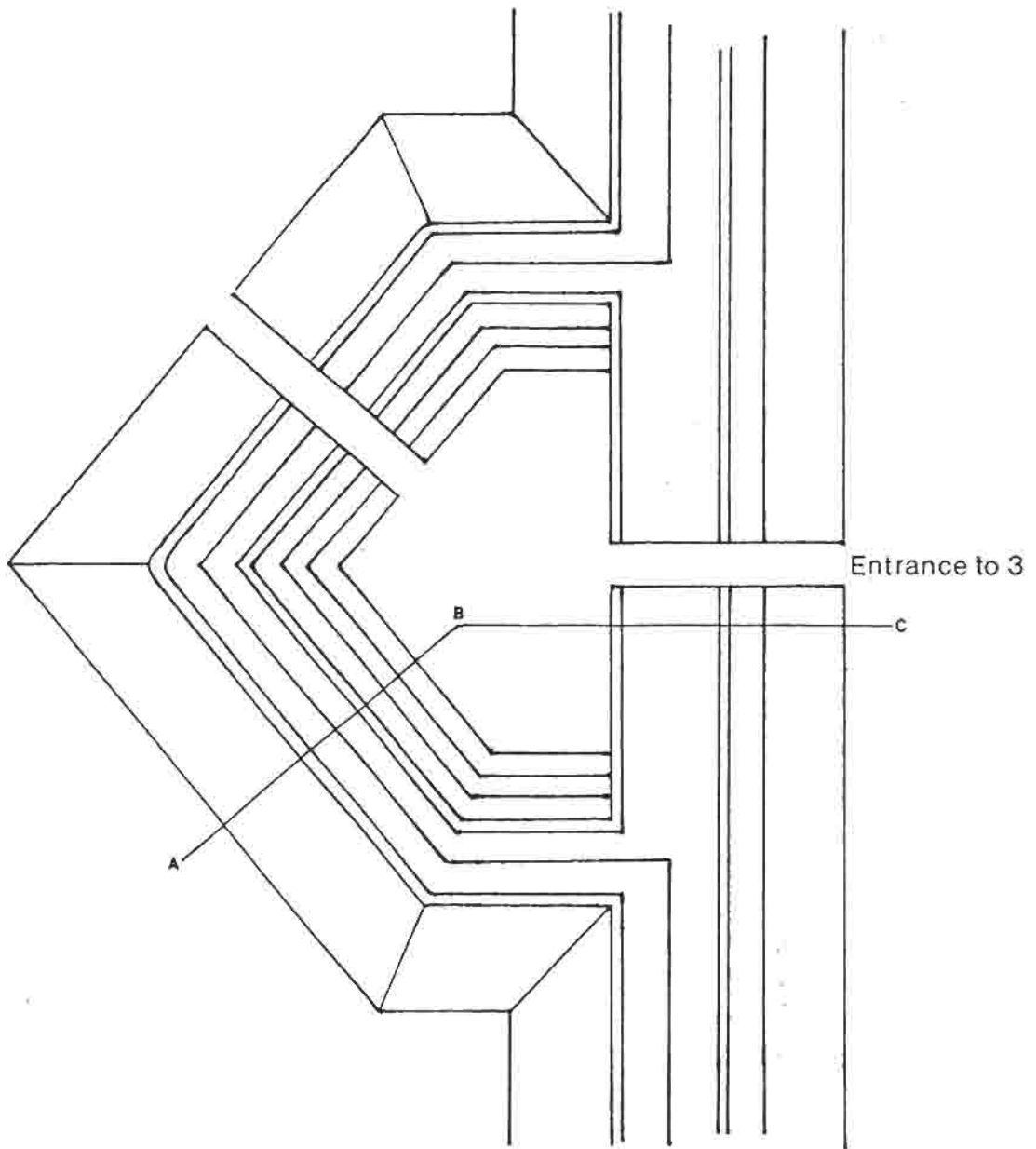
7) Section of the Casemated Flank of No.2 Demi-Bastion with the Contracted Passage. (Feb.24 1803). (3)

These represent designs of 1794, as is shown by an estimate of the work for them dated April 1802, which refers to the original estimate having been "transmitted to [Richmond] on 19th November 1794."

The Duke of Richmond's design adds a third principal work, a polygonal demi-bastion, No.2, surrounded by a ditch on all sides, in advance of both the other works. This is a strong work with casemated barracks in one of the faces, capable of enduring a sustained bombardment. Behind it another work, No.4, much simpler and not separately defensible, protects the Castle Battery, where the guns (as executed) had no permanent fortifications. Acting with No.1, these two works would afford a vastly improved protection for No.3 [Figure 4].



[Figure 4] The Duke of Richmond's proposals for Berry Head. 1 and 3 all actually built. Only ditches and revetted works shown. Not to scale.



[Figure 5] Plan and section of Mercer's proposed ravelin.

The other design, with the ravelin, the "Couvre Port", as it is not specifically ascribed to the Duke of Richmond, may be assigned to Mercer. This shows the work as executed, save for the important addition of a ravelin in front of the entrance to No.3, whose ditches have a palisaded fence at their centre and are swept by the fire of the work behind it. Unlike the projected demi-bastion, it contains no bomb-proof accommodation, and its gorge or rearward face is only protected by palisades [Figure 5].

Why was such a relatively ineffective fortification erected after all this design-work? The answer probably lies partially in the rock of the Berry Head promontory, which would make the cutting of regular saps and trenches by an attacking force an extremely laborious proceeding; given such difficulties, it seems likely that the building of fortifications that could counter a formal siege was thought unnecessary. A further reason almost certainly lies with the disputes and quarrels which the fortification plans of the Duke of Richmond had provoked. In 1785 and 1786 his elaborate schemes for the defence of the dockyards of Portsmouth and Plymouth had been sponsored by Pitt, but had been defeated in the House of Commons after bitter debates and a minor pamphlet war, much of the opposition being on personal grounds rather than military considerations. Following this defeat he had not resigned his office, but contrived to salvage as much of his cherished plans as possible. Over the years he had antagonised people both in the Office of Ordnance and the Royal Engineers, and schemes which he had promoted were perhaps now not favoured. Also economy, always an obsession with the Board, certainly had a part in the acceptance of this mutilated scheme of defence. Despite its evident inadequacies, however, the Berry Head fortifications, as eventually executed, were considered satisfactory at the time. This is clear from Mercer's report of July 1804, when the redoubts were nearly finished.

Torbay - The Sea Batteries are well armed, & in a good State. No.3, or Line, of the Berry Head, has a good, and entirely Revetted Escarp, with a strong Palisade in Front - It is well Armed, and Capable, with a proper Garrison, of resisting any Assault, and of forcing the Enemy to Break Ground, and to bring up Heavy Guns and Mortars - The Flanks, of this Line, have been lately secured by Scarping, and we are proceeding with the Garde Foux and Line of Musquetry upon both Flanks. No.1 Redout has a good Ditch and Escarp, and is in a State to be defended, provided a Garrison is given of about 200 men. (4)

(1) PRO WO 44/12

(2) PRO WO 55 2281. Register of Drawings. The Berry Head drawings were numbers 79 and 85 ; they do not survive.

(3) PRO WO 78 MPH 381 5/6/7/8/9/10/11

(4) PRO WO 55 797

David Evans

JOHN WILLS AND THE WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH, DARTMOUTH

The first church in Dartmouth "to be erected & built for the Worship of Almighty God by the people called Methodists late in connection with the Revd. John Wesley" (1) was opened on 3 June 1816. It cost £1300, inclusive of £210 paid for the site, part of which was a disused quay on the north side of Mill Pool - the inlet that then ran well inland from the river and that was crossed only by Foss Street on the mill dam. Dartmouth had been in sharp economic decline since the collapse of the Devon textile industry in the eighteenth century and, by the time the chapel was built, the Mill Pool and the wharves around it were largely redundant. Within the next few years the Pool was filled in and, in 1828-9, the part of it to the south of the chapel was turned into the Market Square when the present single-storey market buildings were erected on the reclaimed land. The chapel's quayside location thus became a market-side site and an important element in the Dartmouth townscape.

Methodism evidently prospered in early nineteenth-century Dartmouth and galleries for additional accommodation were added to the interior of the chapel in 1820 and again in 1836. By the last quarter of the nineteenth century this additional room was proving inadequate: the lack of sufficient seating combined with a number of other factors to make the building of a new chapel necessary. The contemporary manuscript account makes clear the considerations which led to the decision to rebuild.

1st The dilapidated state of the Old Chapel. 2nd The paucity of accommodation for the Congregation & 3rd The absolute necessity of providing a suitable room for Sunday School & other purposes, - the School ever since its establishment having been conducted in the galleries or the Chapel.

When land adjoining the chapel was offered for sale in 1873, the chapel Trustees bought it and asked John Wills of Kingsbridge to prepare plans for a new church on the enlarged site. As well as providing more accommodation for worshippers, a total of 630 sittings, Wills' initial scheme incorporated a Sunday School room underneath the chapel itself. This was amended by the Trustees because of the danger of flooding, and the final design placed the schoolroom, which had provision for no less than 460 children, on the top floor of the building. The memorial foundation stones of the new chapel were laid on 19 August 1874 and the building was finished by the following year: the contractors were John and James Short of Kingswear and the final cost was some £2300.

When he designed the new chapel at Dartmouth (Figure 6), John Wills was at the turning-point of a career that was to make him a significant figure in the history of Victorian Nonconformist architecture. Wills was born at Dodbrooke, at the head of the Salcombe estuary and part of Kingsbridge, in 1845. He was the youngest child in a serious Methodist family: his father, William Wills, was a preacher and circuit steward of the Kingsbridge Wesleyan Circuit; his mother was a class leader. At the age of eighteen John also became a local preacher, the beginning of a lifelong commitment to Methodism (2). But it was not only his religion for which he was indebted to his family. White's *Devon Directory* for 1850 lists William Wills of Dodbrooke as a builder and carpenter; after his early education at the National School in Kingsbridge, John Wills worked under his father in the family firm, until 1865. This was almost certainly where he would



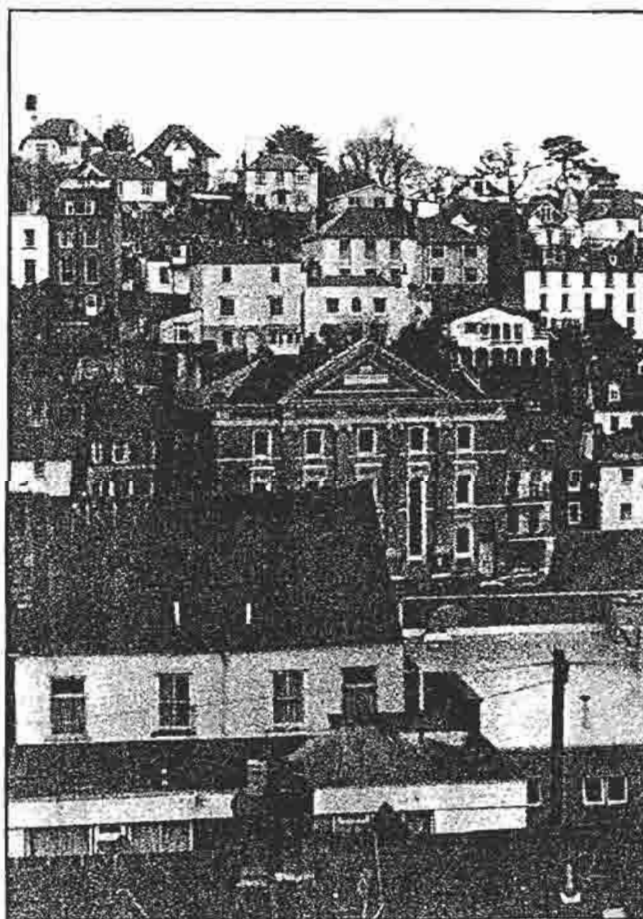
[Figure 6] Dartmouth Methodist Church

have received his training in architecture. In the mid nineteenth century, formal architectural education was still in its infancy and architecture as a profession still in the process of formation. Earlier in the century, the functions of builder and architect - and, indeed, developer - were frequently not separate. Men like Thomas Nosworthy in Exeter designed buildings as well as erecting them, and being articled to a builder was a standard first step towards an architectural career: one of Nosworthy's apprentices, for example, was the great Charles Fowler. Although this pattern was discredited by the growing professionalisation of Victorian architectural practice, which increasingly regarded building as a trade activity distinct from the professional activity of design, it seems to have persisted in rural Devon, particularly where family firms were involved. Thus Samuel Hooper of Hatherleigh, the architect of a number of important north Devon church restorations in the 1870s and 1880s, had been articled as a builder to his father, William Hooper, and was still describing himself as a builder in the 1860s. John Wills' career is a further *example of this process in action.*

Evidence for Wills' early work is scanty. In 1871, he probably designed and superintended the building of a new landing stage at Onestone, Salcombe, along with other associated improvements. This was mundane employment, firmly at the trade end of the professional spectrum. In 1872, however, he was placed third in a competition for the design of a Methodist chapel at Howden, Yorkshire (3). In a society that was very practised in making nice discriminations, this was work of a distinctly higher status. It is indicative in other ways as well. In common with other nineteenth-century churches, the Nonconformist denominations chose their architects from their own ranks: Wills' relative success at Howden represents both an advance in professional terms and a movement into an area of architectural practice for which his background particularly qualified him. And not only his background. Wills' participation in the Howden competition almost certainly resulted from personal connections: in the same year of 1872 he had

married Jane Ross, the daughter of a ship's chandler from Hull. Howden is only some twenty miles away, and Hull was the centre of one of the most important and active Methodist circuits (4).

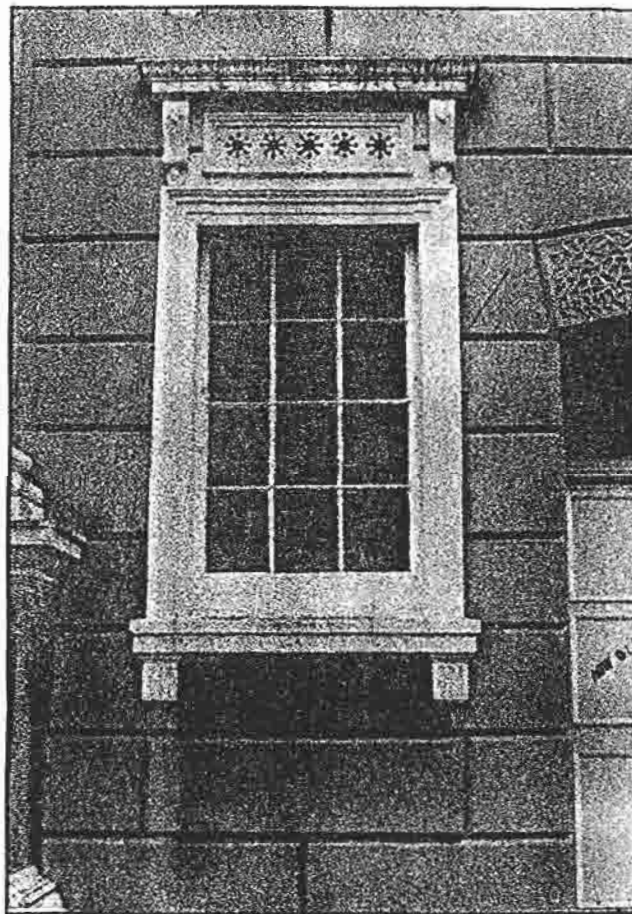
In the meanwhile, Wills' practice was still in Kingsbridge. The commission for the Dartmouth Methodist church that came in 1873 or early 1874 is the next documented step in his career. It thus represents his first major work known to date. As such, it is a building of remarkable assurance and presence. Wills' design exploits the enlarged site on the north side of the Market Square to produce an architectural focus both for the square itself and for the surrounding townscape (Figure 7). As is frequently the case with Nonconformist churches, particularly in an urban context, all the architectural emphasis is concentrated in the main elevation to the street. Unblushingly, the design is an exercise in display - and what it displays, in triumphantly physical terms, is the combative confidence of late Victorian Wesleyanism. St Saviour's, one of the most visually rich of Devon parish churches, is only a few hundred yards away across the Square, its churchyard wall originally washed by the same Mill Pool that the first chapel looked out over. Just as Nonconformity offered the protestant alternative to nineteenth-century Anglicanism, so Wills' church offers the aesthetic and architectural alternative. Its vocabulary is classical, frequently chosen by the Nonconformist churches, particularly earlier in the century, instead of the Gothic that had become universal in Anglican church-building. The scaling of the chapel is ambitious and the detailing careful: its stuccoed



[Figure 7] The church in its setting

front, the ground floor and quoins coursed, is of five bays, the central three pedimented above a giant order of four Ionic pilasters on big plinths. Originally there were three tiers of windows, each tier nicely distinguished: on the ground floor, square-headed with a moulded architrave and bracketted cornice; on the first floor, segmentally headed with the same moulded architrave but a heavier modillion cornice; on the top floor, the windows are smaller, again segmentally headed but with only a moulded architrave. Below the cornices of the ground and first floor windows, pierced panels give ventilation [Figure 8]. The building underwent changes in 1938, when the ground and first floor windows in the three central bays were made continuous - an alteration that is by no means unsympathetic. Decidedly grand in its proportions, dominant in its setting, the church that Wills provided for the Dartmouth Wesleyans is one of the most imposing in Devon.

In 1875, the year in which the Dartmouth church was completed, Wills won first place in a competition for a Wesleyan chapel in Waltham, Lincolnshire (5) - just outside Grimsby and, like Howden before, only some twenty miles from Hull. Within the next year or so Wills made the decision to move north: by 1878, when he won first place in a competition for the cemetery chapels of Castle Donington, his practice was established in Derby. Whether there were personal reasons for choosing Derby is unknown; nevertheless, it was an astute choice of location, for



[Figure 8] Ground floor window

the town was growing steadily in size and prosperity, and, as a railway centre, provided easy access to the midlands and the north. Certainly, it had far more potential for a Nonconformist architect than south Devon. Wills quickly became an established figure in Derby's Methodist community, as a local preacher and a class leader. He was twice elected by the Synod as a lay representative to the Wesleyan Conference, and, in 1891, was sent as representative to the Ecumenical Conference in the United States. Wills' diligent commitment to the cause of Nonconformity brought access to commissions and, with it, substantial professional success. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century he designed some sixty three chapels just for the Wesleyan Methodists. The list of these in Derbyshire alone is impressive: Alfreton, Allestree, Ashbourne, Bolsover, Borrowash, Brampton, Brimlington, Ashbourne Road in Derby, Fairfield, Long Eaton, Mosborough, South Normanton, Sawley. In addition there were chapels for the Primitive Methodists, the New Connexion, the Congregationalists and the Baptists. Though most of his chapels are to be found in the north and east midlands, two of his most impressive works are well away from his home patch: the Presbyterian church at Wallington, Surrey, and the Primitive Methodist church at Douglas, Isle of Man. Such geographical range suggests that, in Nonconformity at least, he enjoyed something approaching a national reputation. The majority of his ecclesiastical buildings were Gothic, thoroughly cleared of its Anglican taint by the last years of the century, though he also continued to employ the Classical style of Dartmouth. There was secular building as well: from 1883 he was architect to the Derby Cooperative Society, and at Chard in Somerset he designed model workers' housing for the lace manufacturers, Bodens. Even though practising in Derby, Wills retained a commitment to Devon, and to the interests of the Wesleyan church in the county. Around 1890 he built Bar Lodge, near Salcombe, as a second home, and died there in 1906. As well as obituaries in the *Methodist Recorder* and the *Methodist Times* (both 28 June 1906), he was also given an obituary in *The Builder* (7 July 1907).

As with other denominations, the last twenty five years have seen a general decline in the membership of the Nonconformist churches. Methodism in Dartmouth has been no exception. Wills' church was closed several years ago and its contents auctioned off in 1984. Now in the ownership of South Hams, it has stood empty since the sale. The council claims structural weaknesses and has recently decided to demolish the church and redevelop the site. It is not at present listed, though it is in a conservation area. English Heritage is currently assessing the building for statutory protection. The Devon Buildings Group, the Victorian Society, and the Ancient Monuments Society are all firmly opposed to its destruction. Dartmouth Methodist Church is a major work by a significant architect, important in its own right, vital in its contribution to the town's architectural and historical fabric. It must not be allowed to disappear.

- (1) MS account of Dartmouth Methodism, 19 August 1874, Torquay Circuit Records.
- (2) David Barton, "John Wills of Derby and Salcombe", Two Methodist Architects, Occasional Publication 2 of Plymouth and Exeter Methodist Historical Society: my article draws extensively on information about Wills in this paper.
- (3) *The Builder*, vol 30 (1872), p.191.
- (4) W.J. Townsend et al, *A New History of Methodism* (London 1909) vol 1, p.580ff.
- (5) *The Builder*, vol 33 (1875), p.148.

I would like to thank Roger Thorne for his help in preparing this article.

Chris Brooks

THE CONSERVATION OF HOLY TRINITY CHURCH, TORBRYAN

Holy Trinity Church, Torbryan, is vested in the Redundant Churches Fund. From the point of view of the preservation of the fabric and public access to the building, this is the best possible fate for a pastorally redundant church and is peculiar to Anglican places of worship. There is no equivalent system for non-conformist or Roman Catholic churches. The Redundant Churches Fund was set up in 1969 "to preserve in the interests of the nation and the Church of England churches or parts of churches of historic or architectural interest vested in it" (*Facts about the Fund* (1977)). The question of economic viability is, for once, not the basis for preservation. The need for some system to preserve Anglican churches in a period of rising repair costs and falling congregations is borne out by the figures. By 1977 608 Anglican churches had been declared redundant, 176 had been demolished and 110 vested in the Fund, which is partly financed by the State and partly by the Church of England. Churches vested in the Fund remain consecrated and may be used occasionally for services, when authorized by the diocesan bishop. They may also be used occasionally for concerts, flower festivals and art and history exhibitions but the terms of the Fund do not allow them to be used as a permanent secular place of meeting comparable to a village or town hall.

The distribution of redundant churches in the Fund in any diocese varies from none (Truro), to over sixteen (Salisbury). Churches vested in the Fund in the diocese of Exeter are St Petrock, Parracombe, with a splendid set of eighteenth-century fittings; St Peter the Poor Fisherman, Revelstoke, abandoned in the late nineteenth century and now a spectacularly-sited ruin; St James, Luffincott, a tiny church with sash windows sited on its own next to a farmhouse; West Ogwell (dedication unknown), a small cruciform church, and Holy Trinity, Torbryan. There is public access to all these churches, except for Torbryan, as the Fund arranges for a local keyholder. There will be access to Torbryan once the current repair work has been completed.

Once a redundant church is vested in the Fund, the Fund becomes responsible for its care and maintenance, including furnishings and fittings. In the period prior to redundancy, often with a small congregation unable to muster their share of money for repairs, the church fabric may have deteriorated badly. Once vested in the Fund, the church is put into repair. It can seem ironic that funds for sensitive repair become available following pastoral redundancy, while the same church in use may have suffered from years of underfunding and consequent neglect.

The contract for the work of conserving the tower of Torbryan church for the Redundant Churches Fund was won by Dart and Francis Conservation, Crediton, under the direction of Peter Dare and John High. The architects were Architecton of Bristol, the work supervised by John Schofield. Parts of the stone conservation work were carried out by Bruce and Lizzy Induni. The work consisted of clearing the old render back to the stone on the outside walls and re-rendering with a soft lime mortar. The lead on the tower roof, which proved to be beyond repair, was stripped and replaced, incorporating the eighteenth century graffiti, with conservation work carried out on the oak beams.

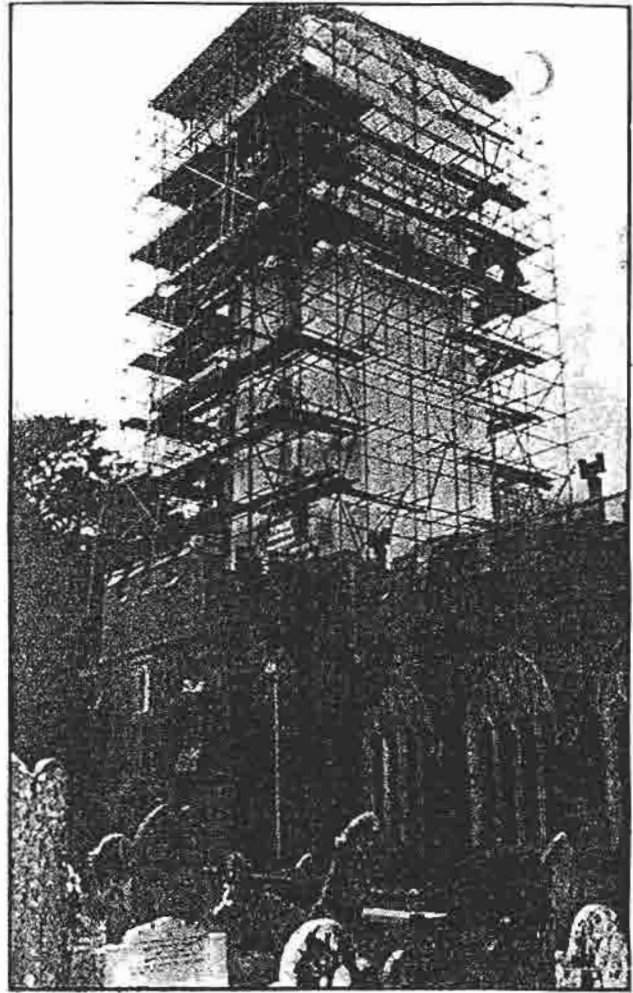
The old render, which had failed, was partly fifteenth-century lime render with some 1930s replacement on the lower stages which was a lime-based render

mixed with cement. The new render was made with Tottenhoe lime, brought to site in knob form, approximately 1" to 6" in size. This was slaked down with water in an iron water tank, with heat applied under the tank to speed up the process. When the lime had boiled, it was tipped into a pit through a sieve of 1/8" gauge. The pit was lined with boards to allow excess water to escape into the ground. The lime was taken from the pit and mixed with a sharp sand, one part of lime to two and a half parts of dry sand. The mixture was then placed in a second pit where it was ready for use.

The tower was prepared by removing the old render and cleaning and washing down the masonry, which is a hard limestone from a quarry close to the church. Open joints and large depressions were filled with mortar. In some cases this required several coats, each coat about 1/2" in depth. Very deep holes were built up using tile repair. This is a technique developed by the nineteenth-century architects involved in the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. Small tiles and pieces of tile, unlike new stone, can be easily

adjusted to the weathered and often uneven plane of an old masonry wall. This avoids the problem of the new work jutting out and creating surfaces where water may lie. It also minimises the need to cut away old fabric. The tiles used were a soft Bridgewater tile about 1/2" thick with joints of equal thickness, using the same mortar used for rendering. The tiles were cut into shape using a disc cutter and laid by cutting into the core of the wall to form ties. The window jambs of the west window were also repaired with tiles, as was part of the arch and the hoodmould. The west window tile repairs were limewashed. This does not disguise the repair which, according to the principles of the SPAB, should be distinguishable from the old fabric, but not so prominent that they draw attention to themselves at the expense of the old masonry.

The lime render was applied as two coats of 'scat' - thrown on to the surface - each coat approximately 3/8" thick. The second coat was not applied



[Figure 9] Torbryan church under repair

until the first coat was dry. The type of lime, as well as the temperature and humidity, affect drying time. This can make it much more difficult to assess the length of time a job may take. When the second coat was 'green-hard', the surface was lightly rubbed down with a wood block and brushed with a soft brush to give an even finish without depressions or projections that might cause water penetration.

The tower was finished by applying five coats of limewash to the render, with twenty four hours drying time between each coat. The limewash was made by slaking lime in a bucket of water and adding a small amount of tallow, about the size of a hen's egg, to each 2 gallons of water. This is allowed to boil and then run through a 1/32 " gauge sieve into a second bucket, where it was mixed to the consistency of thin cream. The limewash was brushed well into the surface of the render to give a good finish. The creamy colour of the tower will quickly tone down towards the grey render on the rest of the church.

Timbers supporting the tower roof were carefully repaired, preserving as much of the original as possible and jointing new pieces of oak into the old where necessary. The lead covering of the roof was replaced using cast lead sheets as before and rolled lead for the gutters. Leadwork also included a waterspout and downpipe, the downpipe carried out over the stringcourse of the tower to avoid cutting into the medieval masonry.

Jo Cox and Peter Dare

THE DBG CONFERENCE 1988

The subject of this year's conference will be the future of farmbuildings in Devon. All members will be aware of the speed with which these buildings are disappearing or being converted to houses and the need for the Devon Buildings Group to have a clear idea of the reasons for and the process of 'redundancy' and conversion. The planning policies that apply to conversion can seem contradictory - the Local Planning Authorities insist that the farmbuilding should be deemed "worthy of retention" as a condition of consent to convert. This phrase is understood to include some assessment of their historical and landscape interest as well as their structural soundness. The subsequent conversion frequently removes all the historic interest (and most of the fabric) of the building and the inevitable car parking spaces and fenced garden areas that replace the originally simple context succeed in destroying most of the landscape value. This is one of the saddest examples of the gap between intention and effect in planning policies.

The conference will be held on Saturday, June 18th, with a programme of talks in the morning, held in a farmbuilding at Lower Chapple Farm, Gidleigh, and visits to farmbuildings in the Chagford/Gidleigh area in the afternoon. Lower Chapple Farm has a variety of interesting granite farmbuildings (still very much in use) and the owners have said that it will be possible for members to have a look at them. Speakers in the morning will include Peter Beacham from the

Properties Department of Devon County Council, Rex Haythorne-Thwaite, the Rural Development Officer from the Agricultural Development and Advisory Service (ADAS), which is the advisory section of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries and architects who have worked on the conversion and re-use of farmbuildings. We also hope to have a speaker from one of the national amenity societies. The afternoon visits will include farmbuildings in use as well as those that have been converted. Although the conference will be held in the National Park the theme of the conference is the future of farmbuildings in the whole county, upland and lowland.

We hope the conference will provide much-needed information and debate on the future of farmbuildings. It also represents an opportunity for members, who all have an active interest in the preservation of historic buildings in Devon, to keep in touch with one another. This is extremely useful in such a large county and has been an essential part of the DBG's success in casework. Please note the date of the conference in your diary **Saturday June 18th**, we will be sending out invitations to the conference shortly.

Jo Cox

STOP PRESS. DARTMOUTH METHODIST CHURCH HAS BEEN LISTED GRADE II.
