DEVON BUILDINGS GROUP

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 36

Winter 2018

DEVON BUILDINGS GROUP

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 36, AUTUMN 2018

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Illustrations

Front cover: Reeve Castle, Zeal Monachorum © *Nigel Browne*

A note from the editors

Welcome to the Devon Buildings Group 2018 newsletter. This edition focuses on some of Devon's Victorian grand buildings. Nigel Browne has written a fascinating account of the building of Reeve Castle; Jo Cox has written about the Exwick Chapel, and why it was considered the 'best modern church' 1842; and Hugh Meller has given an overview of the Victorian country houses of the county. Also, close to my own heart, the continued destruction of Devon's 'lesser buildings' are discussed. Val Harrison and John Massey both put up a valiant fight for the retention of the Carriage and Wagon Repair shop in Newton Abbot – a building associated with the railway network, and Castle Primary school in Tiverton. These buildings are only two of the many lost in Devon over the last year. The Devon Buildings Group fought to retain both of these, alongside others, but the current political climate of 'progress' has allowed for their destruction.

The editors are always delighted to receive articles for the newsletter. If you feel inspired, please contact Lizzie Induni on lizzieinduni@gmail.com or 07747031036.

Please note that the DBG Summer Conference will be held on the 8th June in Exeter.

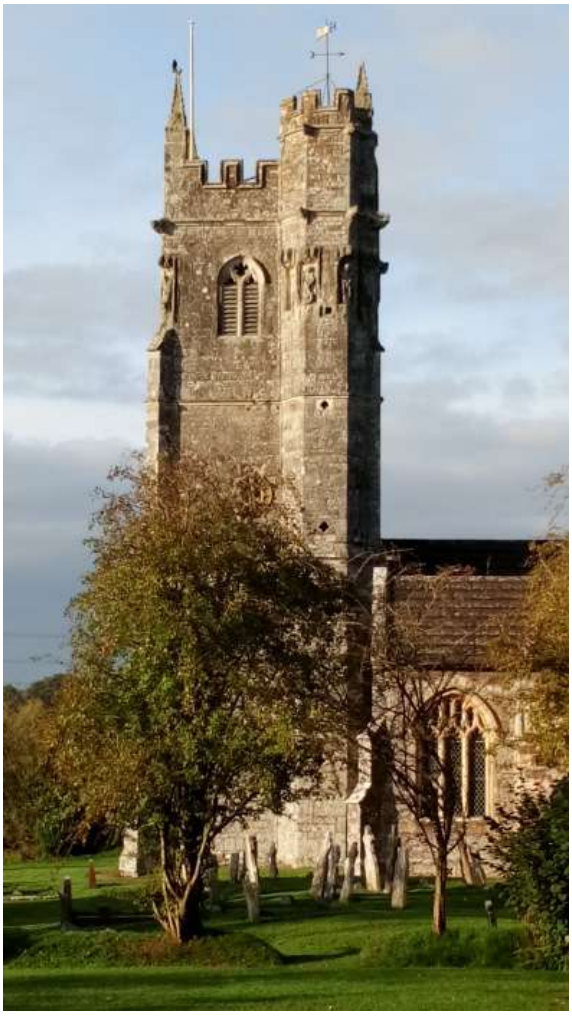
Lizzie Induni

Dawn Honeysett

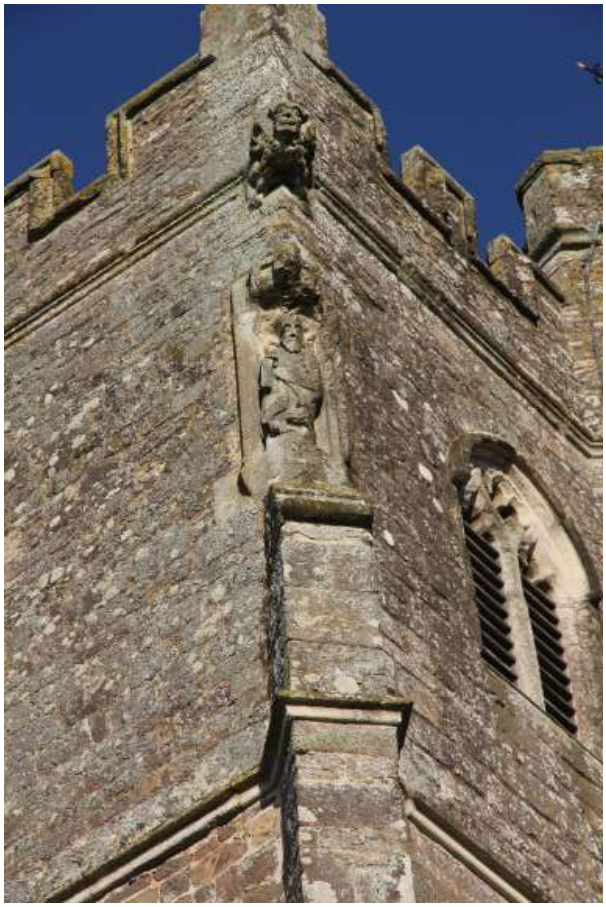
Secretary's Report 2017–2018

Last year's AGM was held in Talaton Parish Hall on 4th November 2017. It was attended by 52 members and guests. Jo Cox chaired the meeting. As usual, it commenced with my own report of the group's activities during the last year. Mark Stobbs followed with his report as Treasurer, confirming that it had been a steady year financially with £8,900 in the bank. Membership was now at 146 with seven new members this year. He thanked Lizzie Induni for handing over the finances in a clear and tidy manner. Three committee members who had served their three year term were re-elected, but Stuart Brown had decided to stand down. He was thanked heartily for his contributions to the activities of the DBG. Lizzie Induni reported that the compilation of the Newsletter was going well; she was looking for books to review in it. Dawn Honeysett gave a brief update on the website. Then followed the usual discussion about possible topics for future conferences; one of these was to have one on castles which is why we are here in Okehampton today. Other suggestions included the West Devon World Heritage site, particularly in view of the fact we have rarely covered industrial buildings in past conferences.

John Thorp then gave us an excellent talk on early brickwork in Devon, topical since Talaton has several early brick houses in its vicinity. He pointed out that brick is not a native material to the South-West. The earliest references to it in the region are from the 1580s and 1590s but these probably only refer to brick employed for special uses, not for the construction of whole buildings. Such uses were often in show places such as the backs of fireplaces or for chimney stacks. The unfinished wing of Talaton Farm, dated 1623, is in brick but is attached to an otherwise cob house. After the Civil War, more buildings were completely constructed in brick such as the terrace row of 1657–9 in Magdalene Street, Exeter (sadly demolished) and the Tudor House in Tudor Street, Exeter, of 1660 with side and back walls in brick but with a timber-framed front over a brick ground floor. The Exeter Custom House of 1680–81 is wholly in brick and used 32,067 bricks laid in English bond. John gave other examples of wholly brick buildings of this period such as 41 The Strand, Topsham and 28 Bridgeland Street in Bideford, both superior buildings using what was still a prestige material. The earliest wholly brick farmhouse known to John was nearby: Harris Farm, Talaton, dated 1687, which not only employed brick for its walls but also the newly fashionable central service room plan. Bricks at this early date were made on site and sometimes poor quality brick was rendered over as at Pound Farm, Lupitt. He concluded with other examples of brickwork of this date, including nearby Hawthorne Cottage where brick laid in Flemish bond was used in a house which otherwise was entirely traditional in its three room and cross passage plan.



John was followed by Stuart Blaylock who described the tower sculpture on Talaton Church, one of the best collections in the county. He believes figure sculpture on towers to be the apogee of local medieval sculpture; it represented a major outlay by a parish. The Talaton figures include the four evangelists



Above left and right. The Church of St James the Great, Talaton. The sculptures are mainly identifiable, consisting of the four evangelists on the parapet: Matthew (NE), Mark (NW), Luke (SE) and John (SW). On the stair turret is a vacant niche (W), St Michael (SW) and an unidentified sculpture (SE). Below these, on the SE angle are the Virgin and Child. This is an unusually high number of figure sculptures for a parish church: eight, or nine if one includes the figure formerly on the porch parapet. Such a number represents considerable expense. In comparison, the nearby churches of Plymtree and Clyst St Lawrence have single figures of the Virgin and Child. However, Upton Pyne has a similar number to Talaton, with seven: four evangelists at parapet level with King David, Christ in Benediction, vacant (possibly the Virgin and Child) lower down. Cadeleigh church also had seven: again with four evangelists on the parapet, with St Anthony, St Eustace, vacant (again possibly the Virgin and Child) lower down.

at the top of each tower buttress, as well as the Virgin and Child and St Michael, alongside one unidentified figure, in niches. He compared them to those on Upton Pyne church of c.1390 which in turn relate to figures on the west front of the cathedral. He also described the figures at Cadeleigh, Plymtree and Clyst St Lawrence – the Virgin and Child figure at the last – is very similar to the one at Talaton.

Sadly, both his and John's excellent talks were marred by the gradual collapse of the projector, so that their pictures became more and more obscured by an IT snowstorm. This was most regrettable as was the fact that we had been unable to gain access to any of the local brick houses about which John had told us. We had to make do, as far as these were concerned, by passing by two of them as we walked after lunch from the hall to the church. At the church, Stuart pointed out to us the figures on which he had talked earlier. We were able also to enjoy the church itself thanks to excellent notes provided by Jo Cox. Its state was heavily criticised in 1849 in the Ecclesiologist

for its rural and backward character, something which today we would treasure, and it was given a full Victorian restoration into its present form by Edward Ashworth in the 1850s. It was recorded that before this restoration, the congregation turned to the west to sing the hymns; Nigel Browne explained that this was in order to 'face the music' (hence the expression) being produced in the gallery at the west end. It was pleasant afternoon in chilly sunshine.

In May, the DBG participated with Devon and Cornwall Record Society in a joint conference organised by Todd Gray on the subject of Exeter Buildings. It was held in the United Reformed Church hall in Southernhay and consisted of eight 20-minute talks on subjects relating to Exeter buildings, in particular, how documents augmented their archeological interpretation. Four of the talks were given by DBG committee members: Stuart Blaylock on Exeter Guildhall, Stewart Brown on the medieval Exe Bridge, Martin Watts on Cricklepit Mill and Jo Cox on St Andrew's Church, Exwick. All were brilliant presentations and I will not try to précis their extensive content here. The other four talks were equally good with memorable contributions by Paul Cleave on Deller's Café, Julia Neville on Fowler's Lower Market, Diane Walker on the sculpture of the west front of the cathedral, and by Todd Gray on 53 High Street, which his research had proved had been designed by Boots the Chemist deliberately to match its historic setting. It was an excellent day with contributions of a high quality.

The Summer Conference was held on 23rd June 2018. Its theme was 'The Civic Buildings of Barnstaple' and suitably enough, the morning talks took place in the courtroom of Barnstaple Guildhall, an elegant building of 1826 in the centre of the town. There were over 50 attendees. Our principal speaker was Terry Green, a landscape archaeologist and historian who had carried out the urban characterisation study of Barnstaple. Terry's talk was titled 'From Saxon Burh to Regional Shopping Centre,' in which he traced the history of Barnstaple since its original foundation under King Alfred in the 9th century. It had 57 burgesses in Domesday and possessed a castle from the late 11th century, a Cluniac Priory from 1107 and town walls which survived until the 16th century. The Long Bridge was built in the 13th century. Its subsequent post-medieval development and wealth was based primarily on maritime trade, particularly in Newfoundland cod, pottery and wool. It was a town of rich merchants who were much involved in the development of quays and warehouses, reclaiming considerable amounts of land from the riversides; from 1700 they demonstrated their wealth in the building of almshouses, schools and the guildhall itself. The pottery industry flourished into the 20th century. The town flourished through the later 18th century and the early 19th century with 24 houses in the High Street wholly rebuilt and 25 re-fronted in that period. The town expanded further in the 19th century when lace manufacturing was introduced with the construction of a large factory. The fine pannier market and Butchers Row were erected in 1855, as was the Roman Catholic church. From 1970 onwards, there has been further huge expansion although the form of the Saxon burgh is still able to be identified in the centre of the town.

Terry was followed by Collette Hall, North Devon's conservation officer, who told us about the history of the Guildhall in which we were sitting and the adjacent Pannier Market. The former

Barnstaple Guildhall. The upper chamber was used as a courtroom until 1960.

Top, Queen Anne's Walk. Middle left, The Pannier market. Middle right, Butchers Row. Above left. St Anne's Chapel. Above right, DBG members enjoying the summer sunshine outside St Anne's Chapel.

replaced an elaborate 17th century building in 1826 to the designs of Thomas Lee, the architect of Arlington Court. The Guildhall combined as a magistrate's court and town hall and originally was surrounded by cattle, sheep and horse markets in urban chaos. After a cholera epidemic in 1855, it was decided to move the cattle market and put all the sale of produce under one roof. To do this, R. D. Gould designed the existing Pannier Market as well as Butchers Row with its little butchers shops. The market originally had a louvred glazed roof but this has not survived. At the Boutport Street end, there was new Corn Exchange. Goods were brought in from outside the town by pannier or maund (a wooden basket). In combination with the shops of Butchers Row, it is a remarkable 19th century survival.

Paiges Almshouses, Litchdon Street.

Stuart Blaylock then recounted the history of Queen Anne's Walk, an arcaded building by the riverside; it replaced a previous merchants exchange on the quay in 1708-1713. It is convincingly believed to have been designed by William Talman. It originally faced the Great Quay, the site of which is now demarcated by hard landscaping. It retains an earlier 'Tome Stone' or merchants nail for sealing deals. The frieze along the front contains a series of coats of arms of local aristocracy surrounded by military trophies. It was rebuilt in 1859 with a building added behind which contained a bath house and a Masonic hall; it is now a restaurant. In 1986, it underwent extensive repairs at which time it was studied in depth by Exeter Archaeology.

Finally, John Thorp gave us a presentation on St Anne's Chapel, which lies in the centre of Barnstaple close to the parish church and was a chantry chapel in the 15th century; after the Reformation, it became a charnel house and then a school. He investigated it as part of the research towards a conservation management plan in 2011. It has a traditional wagon roof typical of many Devon churches (but not found in Devon houses) which was assumed to be 15th or 16th century in date as so many are. His previous work at St James Priory in Bristol, which also has wagon roofs, had however established that these ones were mid 14th century, i.e Decorated rather than Perpendicular in origin, and dendro dating of the St Anne's roof established that it too was of this period; the posts supporting the floor proved also to be of the same date. The chapel is therefore earlier in origin than had been previously thought and its wagon roof the earliest in Devon as yet to be found.

After lunch we gathered at Queen Anne's Walk in blazing hot sunshine where Stuart expounded both on the building itself and on the surrounding area, where the two quays or little harbours, which

Brannam Pottery, Litchdon Street.

Penrose Almshouses, Litchdon Street.

were created within the reclaimed riverbank frontage, have now been filled in to form public open space. We moved from there up Cross Street (where some were lucky enough to be allowed into a house of c.1700 above a friendly shop) to the Pannier Market and Butchers Row. From there we went to St Anne's Chapel (now a community centre) where we admired the early roof about which John had told us. Next we went to Paiges Almshouses, brick-built in 1656 for eight inmates on two floors. Paiges are continuous with Horwoods Almhouses of the same period but stone built. These originally had eight dwellings for sixteen inmates. From there we proceeded to Litchdon Street, where we admired the exterior of Brannams Pottery with its idiosyncratic art nouveau frontage, before arriving at the very fine Penrose Almshouses of 1627 which had been opened for us. These have an arcaded walkway with granite columns fronting the street and a central entrance leading to large courtyard which originally comprised 20 dwellings, each containing two inmates of the same sex. At one end of the front is a board room; at the other a chapel. The original form onto the courtyard has been fully maintained by adding to the dwellings discreetly at the rear. The whole complex is a spectacular survival of early civic building. We were helped in our appreciation of Barnstaple's historic centre by the company of an official town guide, Tom Evans, who was entertainingly well-informed on all aspects of Barnstaple's history. His voluntary contributions added to our enjoyment of a hot but very interesting afternoon.

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. We have concerned ourselves with various items of casework, some of which are long-running and were mentioned last year. In particular, the plastic cladding on Pizza Hut in Sidwell Street which, thanks to Eve van der Steen's detective work on Google Street View, we were able to prove had not been up as long as the owners had quite falsely claimed and thus could be enforced against. Exeter City council are

to be commended on pursuing this and the cladding has now been removed. We also asked them to investigate the loss of the mace rack and the bells from Wynards almshouses chapel which has itself recently been sold although its future is unknown. The rack was an impressive structure specifically mentioned in the list description and has disappeared. Exeter City have tried to trace when and where it went but believe that it is an almost impossible task. The fate of the bells is also unknown. We made a representation in vain to Budleigh Salterton Croquet Club about the removal of a fine wooden pavilion of c.1900; our only hope is that its replacement will be of similar character. The consultation on the redevelopment of the area at the end of the Esplanade at Sidmouth on which we responded last year and which includes The Drill Hall, about whose retention there has been local concern, does not seem have produced a clear way forward and the Council have put the hall up for sale by tender, so the consultation seems to have been a waste of time. The permission for the proposed tower block next to the Pavilion in Torquay has been quashed following a judicial review but not on conservation grounds but on an environmental one. Whether it will come back again we do not know. Given the administrative chaos in Torbay, anything might happen and we will also be keeping an eye on Oldway House in Paignton which the mayor wished to sell off but which was prevented by local pressure. We made various representations relating to Exeter: firstly, and unsuccessfully, about the inclusion of an additional roof-top floor on the rebuilt Clarence Hotel which we felt was inappropriate; secondly, about the neglect of nos. 8-9 Pennsylvania Road where I was pleased to see builders at work the other day; thirdly, about retaining the brickworks office building in the redevelopment of the Clifton Hill Sports Centre, something with which the council agreed; and finally, about the proposals for an overweening block of student accommodation on the site of the arcade on Fore Street. Somewhat less dire designs for the last emerged from huge objections (primarily against more students here); these have yet to be determined. In Mid Devon, there is a current proposal for the restoration and alteration of Blackborough House to turn it into a hotel, with the additional construction of two large 'pavilions' and seven houses of stark modern design . We objected, as although we felt it was desirable to have the house brought back from its wholly derelict state, the amount of accompanying development was excessive and would undermine the benefit of any restoration. There has been enormous and quite justified local objection but Mid Devon seemworryingly seem uninclined at this time to reject the proposals. At the instigation of a local member, we submitted an objection to the Chancellor of the Diocese to the reordering with the removal of several historic pews from Stoke Damerel church in Plymouth; this has not yet been determined. In Plymouth, too, we are concerned about the condition of the Old Cooperage in the Royal William dockyard for which a new use has yet to be found, as well as for the future of the Tudor and Elizabethan Houses which have been shut for some time now with no apparent plan in place for their repair and reopening. With the big celebrations of Mayflower 400 looming, they deserve better.

More cheerfully, I hope you all have received and read Newsletter 35, excellently produced by our new editor, Lizzie Induni, and full of interesting material. Dawn Honeysett has also produced a complete set of Newsletters to deposit with the British Library so our publication will now be able to have a national audience. We have also given £100 to the North Devon and Barnstaple Museum to help them in their purchase of the great table with its fixed benches from Landkey Parish Rooms which the feofees were about to sell at Bonhams. The table has, as far as is known, been in the Rooms since at least the 17th century and we felt that it would be tragic if it left the county, as would have been the case if the auction had gone ahead. While we would have preferred it should remain in the parish rooms, having it in the local museum is a lot better than nothing. Finally, we are for once in advance of ourselves, as we have already decided on the theme of the Summer Conference next year, which is to be on historic plasterwork in Devon with special reference to recent research on the Abbot's copy book. It will be held in the Exeter Custom House in June next year and I hope to see you all there.

Peter Child

Treasurer's Report, Okehampton 2018

As for the previous year, this has been a steady year financially. It began with £8,900 and ended with £9,600 credit at the bank, ie £700 surplus.

We have 8 new members. However, we have lost 2 long-standing members and another 2 by lapse or resignation. The current total of 138 paid up members (146 last year) comes out at 165 on the membership list. Thus 27 are still in arrears, mostly by one or two years full subscription or through underpayment by outdated standing order. I had expected to clarify many of these cases last year, and am now more confident of resolving them before or during 2019. Those of you not already paying your membership subs by Standing Order, or the equivalent payment, can expect a request that you do so in the future.

I wish to thank certain committee members who have helped me with Google Sheets, and accountant Tony Elston who continues to check the books.

Mark Stobbs, October 2018

The Building of Reeve Castle

Figure 1. General view of the house.

Introduction

Reeve Castle, because of its prominent yet isolated position, its size, and its rather peculiar history, is one of the best-known landmarks in the vicinity of Bow. It was abandoned from the mid-1950s until restored in the 1980s; there can have been few children in the area who did not explore the building and grounds during that time, and it became a place of mystery and legend. An article in the *Western Morning News* described it thus:[1] 'It is, in fact, one of those places that you might stumble across accidentally, but when you go back some time later it is not there, or at least it is not where you thought it was, and you never find it. As the years go by you begin to wonder if you ever saw it at all or simply dreamed about it.'

The interior of Reeve Castle generally is literary Gothic. Indeed, it might almost have been invented by Horace Walpole, Mrs Radcliffe, or, in a whimsical mood, Thomas Love Peacock. There are Greek inscriptions round the tiled entrance, the gargoyles, niched figurines, long dark passages, narrow spiral staircases for twisted Gothic servants to limp and writhe around in, while the air was split with storms and wild organ music.'

The current Historic England listing states: 'The plan was dictated by Carter-Pedlar's [sic] interest in playing the organ, and therefore the rooms are ranged around a massive stair well which was designed to house a large organ.'[2]

It has also been said that the house has 4 wings, 52 rooms and 365 windows.[3]

This is all romantic nonsense.

Reeve Castle is highly unusual, if not unique, among Devon country houses in that the owner was his own client, architect and builder. He was also meticulous in keeping records and accounts, and it is extremely fortunate that his letter books (1889–1935), wage books, accounts, inventories etc survive in the Devon Heritage Centre, although unfortunately no drawings beyond rough sketches in the letter books.[4] These taken together provide a remarkably detailed picture of the building of the house, and also give some clues as to William Carter Pedler's character and modus operandi.

The letter books record the letters he wrote to suppliers and contractors, but do not include any incoming post, although the contents of these can often be inferred by his replies. The letters recorded are almost entirely drafts rather than finished copies, and are often so covered with

emendations, crossings-out and alternative versions that they are very difficult to decipher; aides-memoires for their author rather than a record for posterity. With a few exceptions, personal letters are not included. In this article, direct quotations from the letter books is indicated in italics. Inevitably, illegibility and ambiguity had created a number of lacunae, which further study may be able to fill, but the general sense is usually quite clear. Much else is included, such as his handling of investments and other financial matters, which would make a fruitful study in itself.

Family background

The Pedler family seems to have originated in the upper Tamar valley; the name possibly derives from the Norman French for hare's foot.[5] William Carter Pedler's grandfather William came from Drewsteignton, and was descended from a line of William Pedlers living there or South Tawton and connected by marriage with the Wrefords and Quicks, but by the time of his marriage in 1810 was living in Zeal Monachorum, where his son Robert was baptised in 1820. By 1841 the family was living at Barons Wood, and had built up a considerable land holding in the area. William had two sons, John and Robert. John seems to have inherited Barons Wood and other property in North Tawton parish, and Robert inherited Reeve, which had been acquired by Grandfather William in 1804. When Robert married in 1853 he was living at Burston (probably Middle Burston, of which he seems to have been tenant at this time). His bride was Mary Carter of Mettaford Farm, Hartland, from whom William was to take his middle name. William was born 23 September 1854 at Burston, but his parents moved to Sherford Down Farm, near Kingsbridge, in 1858. Robert Pedler bought Higher Burston Farm (which adjoins Reeve) in 1871, which is presumably when the family returned to Zeal Monachorum. They were staunch Congregationalists, and William was sent away to be educated at Mill Hill School, a non-conformist boarding school in north London, which he left in 1872 having become Head of School. He matriculated at the University of London in English and Greek that same year, but there seems to be no evidence that he graduated. In the 1881 census he described himself rather unexpectedly as musician and composer, and ten years later as of independent means. Like his father he married relatively late, on Tuesday 30 July 1901, to Lizzie Frances King, niece of the Dowager Countess of Egmont, and daughter of the late James King, Chief Sanitary Inspector to the Borough of Hove.[6]

The Reeve estate

Reeve itself was a comparatively modest property amounting to about 40 acres in 1840, with cottages, gardens and barn lying at the centre. In 1891 the cottages were inhabited by the Bolt and Wadman families. The 1888 25 inch OS map shows Reeve, and a couple of disused quarries nearby.

Bow Congregational Church

On 24 August 1898, the first stones were laid of the new Congregational Chapel in Bow. William Carter Pedler had donated the site and designed the building. He also undertook to supervise the construction, financed by contributions from members of the congregation.[7] I have not yet been able to trace any previous building experience, but he obviously felt confident to undertake this project. Dressed stone was ordered from Charles Bolt at Gunnislake, brick from William Thomas & Co at Wellington, and timber for the roof from Thomas Gabriel of Commercial Road, Exeter.[8]

Thirteen months later the building was ready to be opened, and he wrote a description:

The new Congregational church at Bow, which is to be formally opened on Wednesday next, the 4th October, has many interesting features and will be an ornament to the place. Beauty of line however, rather than elaborate detail, has been aimed at, whilst especial attention has been given to render the building light, well ventilated, and comfortable, with good acoustic properties….

He goes on to describe various features for the building, including some which he was to use again at Reeve Castle: a Gothic style using moulded brick in multiple courses; coloured glass windows by Mitchell & Son, 164 Fore Street, Exeter; a warm air heating plant in a cellar by John Grundy

& Co; and *The scheme of interior decoration, takes its tone from the somewhat vivid tones of the windows and displays a much freer use of bright colouring and sharp contrasts than is usual*. The lighting was by acetylene gas.

Those who take an interest in modern [gothic] Architecture might do worse than attend the opening ceremony.

He was evidently rather pleased with it.

Building Reeve Castle

By this time he was seriously thinking about building his own house, possibly spurred on by the prospect of marriage. He ordered books on building construction, heating by hot water, plumbing and drainage, colour theory and the mechanics of architecture, and requested price lists and best terms from the Marland Brick and Tile Works near Torrington.[9] The design of the house is in many ways intensely personal. The layout is a simple asymmetrical villa plan of the type popularised about a hundred years earlier by John Nash (Luscombe Castle is an example), where all the principal rooms open off a central staircase hall.[10] This means that there are very few passages for a house of this size, and gives a suitably impressive 'dinner route' between the drawing room and the dining room. The two main reception rooms both face south-east, but with large bay windows looking south-west and north-east, making the most of the panoramic views of Dartmoor and Exmoor. The rear of the house is sheltered by slightly higher ground to the west and north-west, and it is evident that the site was carefully chosen, high on a hill above the Yeo valley. The elevation did, however, cause some problems with the water supply.

The house is constructed of rubble stone faced on the outside with cream Marland brick, with a red Wellington brick plinth and red and black brick dressings. The exterior openings are elaborately formed with multiple courses of moulded brick, and, even more remarkably, the internal openings, which include numerous niches and alcoves as well as doorways, are similarly treated, but with red Wellington brick. The rear of the house is more simply treated.

Figure 2. First floor gallery (while derelict) with openings dressed in red brick.

The household was run with only two servants living in, a cook-general and a house parlourmaid, so the servants' accommodation took up relatively little space at the back of the house, and there seems not to have been a back staircase. This was an up-to-date feature of the plan; large and complicated service wings were becoming less necessary as domestic staffs decreased in size towards the end of the nineteenth century, although the two servants must have had to work hard in a house this size (and few of them stayed very long).[11]

The style of house, though, is more of a puzzle. At first sight it is reminiscent of the Modern Castellated Mansion lampooned by Pugin in the 1840s,[12] and bears little resemblance to houses being built at the beginning of the twentieth century by professional architects.[13] The Gothic style

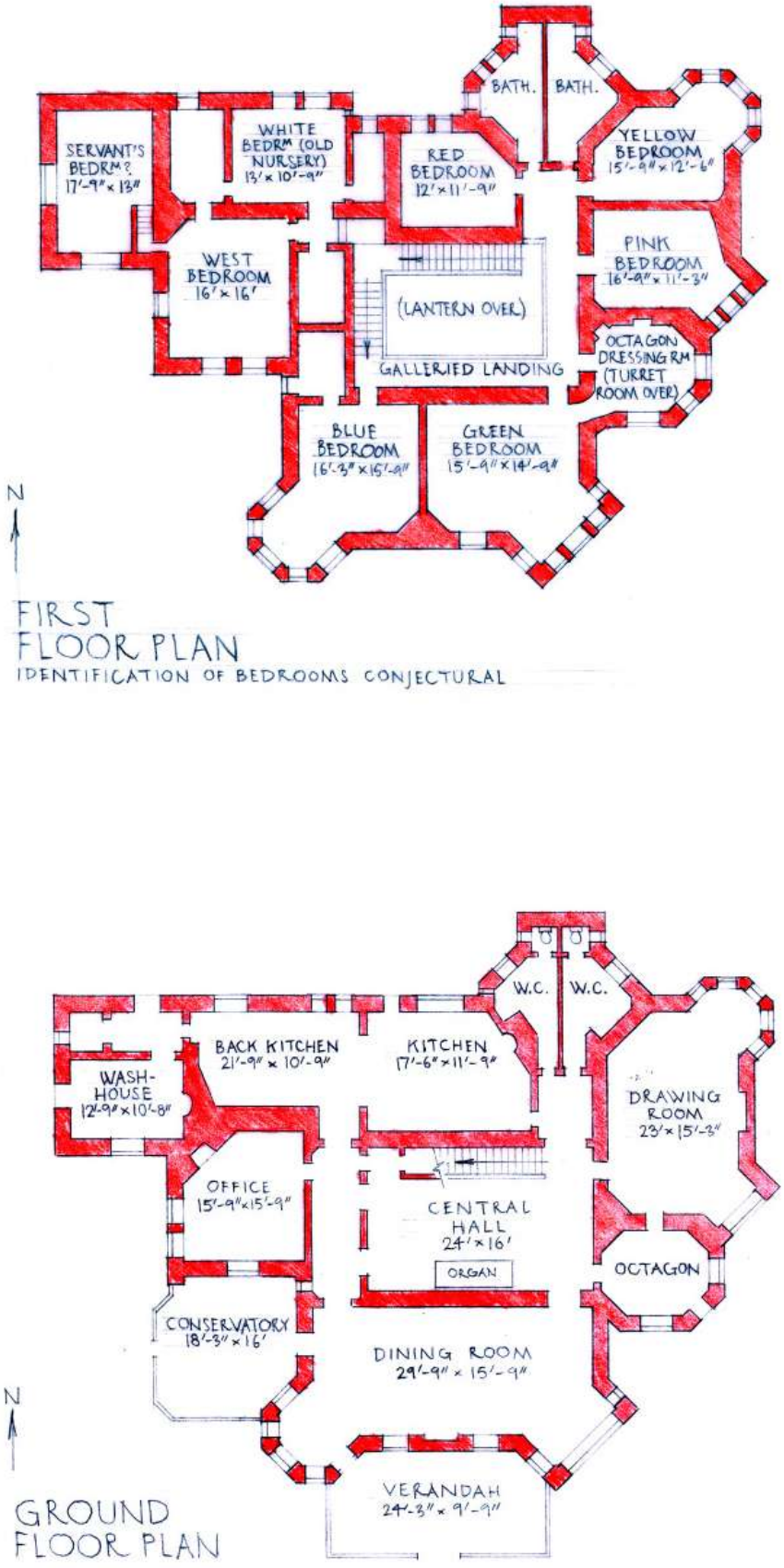


Figure 3. Floor plan, drawn by Edmund Browne, RIBA.

was perhaps at least partly determined by Carter Pedler's interest in playing around with moulded brick.

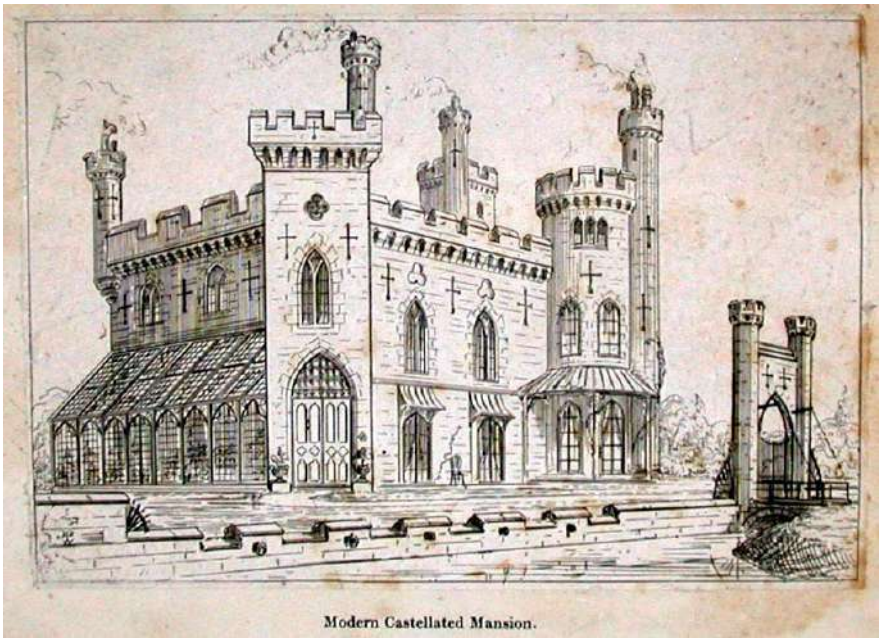
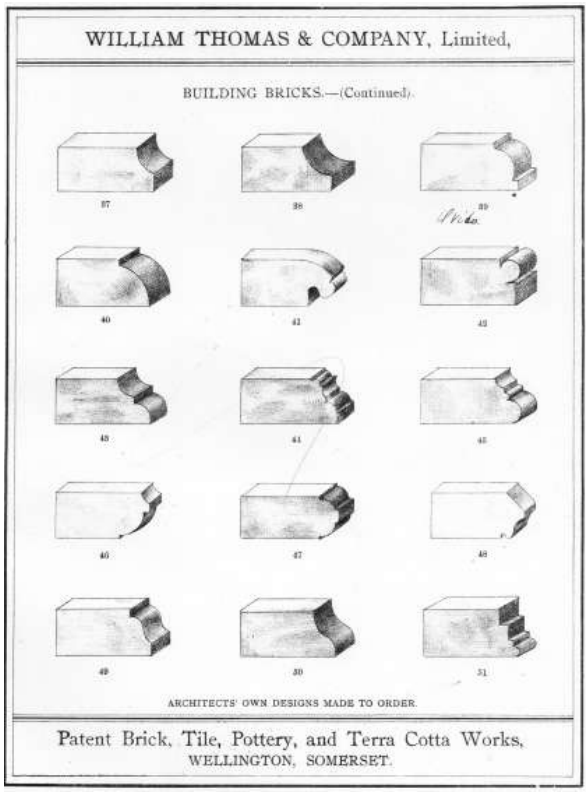


Figure 4. Modern Castellated Mansion – A W N Pugin.

He had already experimented at the Congregational church, where the main door is framed by four concentric orders of differently-shaped bricks (seemingly types 29, 38, 42 and 65 from William Thomas & Co.'s catalogue). At Reeve Castle he achieved an even richer effect, but in each case using only commercially available shapes, and drawing his curves of large enough radius that he did not need to trim the bricks. The general idea may be derived from the mediaeval brick architecture of northern Italy, which had been popularised by John Ruskin half a century before, but the combination of narrow lancets and large semi-circular-headed windows is surely his own idea.

Work began on 14 September 1899 with the boring of a pit in Eastern Hill, the field in which the house was to be built (enclosure 549 on the 1840 Tithe Map). This was presumably a quarry to provide rubble stone for the walls, and which eventually became a notable feature of the garden.


WILLIAM THOMAS & COMPANY, Limited,

BUILDING BRICKS.—(Continued).

ARCHITECTS' OWN DESIGNS MADE TO ORDER.

Patent Brick, Tile, Pottery, and Terra Cotta Works,
WELLINGTON, SOMERSET.

Figure 5. Sample page from William Thomas & Co Catalogue (undated).

Figure 6. Main door of Bow Congregational Church.

Figure 7, above. Detail of front door of Reeve Castle. Figure 8, right. G E Street, Brick and Marble Architecture of Northern Italy (1855). Detail of brickwork.

On 30 December work began on levelling the site of the house. Three or four labourers were employed, together with a carter. As the weather improved, the next project was the 'new road': the drive that runs in an arc from the house to the public road to the north-east. This was started on 1 February 1900, and by mid-March 10 men were being employed. The record of the men's daily wages includes such details as the fact that a snowstorm stopped the work on 19 March, and that on 3 April Frederick Darke went home at lunchtime with a bad hand.

Meanwhile Carter Pedler had turned his attention to the construction of the house. He had previously used William Thomas & Co, of Wellington, Somerset for the supply of red bricks for the Bow Congregational Church, but for the exterior facing of the walls of the house he required a source of white brick. He therefore approached the Marland Brick Co. (North Devon Clay Co.) for a price list and terms on 27 December 1899, and followed this with a request for samples the following March. Meanwhile, on 13 February 1900 he ordered a large quantity of moulded red bricks from William Thomas & Co., probably for the plinth of the house. On 28 March 'masonry commenced', although the foundations for the octagonal entrance hall were still being excavated a few days later.[14]

On 4 April he wrote to John Grundy & Co for an estimate for heating, enclosing plans of the

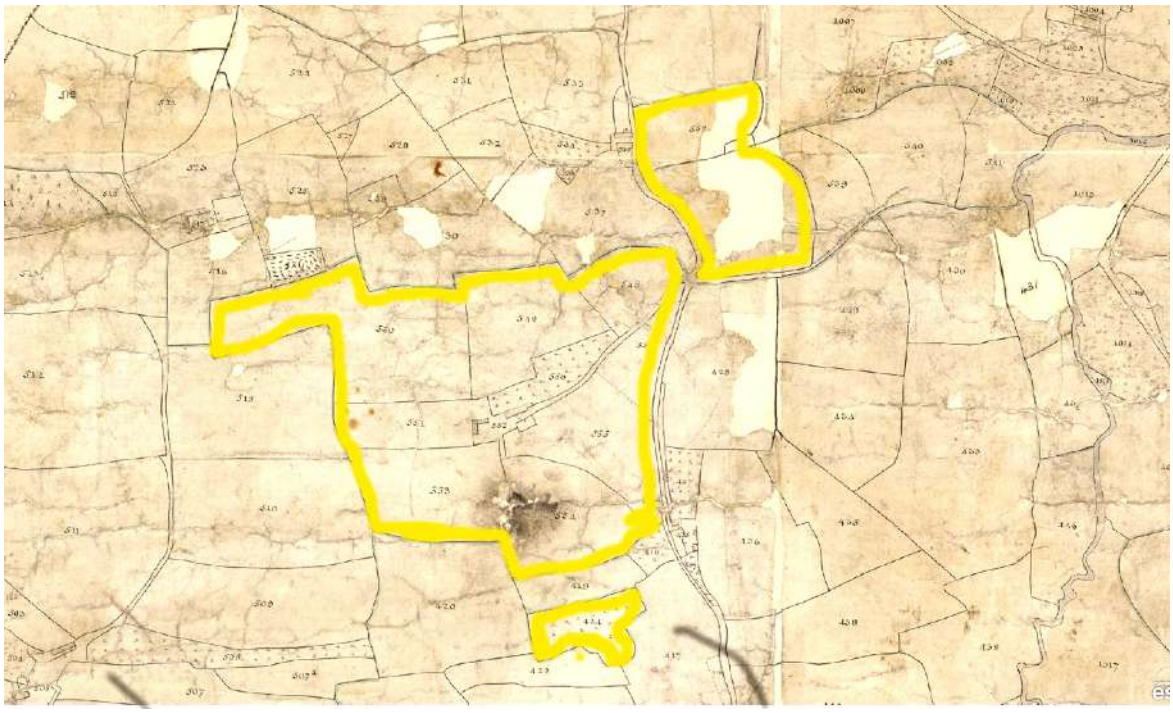


Figure 9. Extract from the Zeal Monachorum Tithe Map, 1840.

house. He had previously used the firm to supply heating plant for the Bow Chapel.

You will observe I have worked out a scheme such as appears to be the most central and convenient, also one that renders it easy to render the boiler chamber fireproof.

It is essential that the Central Hall be well warmed. And the large body of air here contained if well warmed should practically warm the rest of the house and more especially the bedrooms…

The flues to the Central Hall would be kept going day and night during cold weather, and probably it might be desirable [to] heat the office occasionally for a short time, to assist the fire during [cold weather], and at night occasionally [directed] to one or more bedrooms.

This suggests one practical reason for adopting the villa plan; the house, and more particularly the central hall, was to be heated by hot air using a hypocaust system, and the heat from the centre would percolate through to the surrounding rooms. The house also had open fires, mainly against the outer wall so as not to interfere with the expanse of flat roof.

The first of many orders for Marland bricks was sent on 23 April, and began a somewhat chequered relationship that lasted for the duration of construction. Thus on 5 July 1900: 'My work is practically at a standstill awaiting the moulded bricks'. This was the first of many such letters: did he have difficulty in estimating quantities, or was he designing the details as work progressed? Or perhaps he was simply a pioneer of the 'just in time' method of stock control. On 16 July scaffold poles were ordered; presumably the walls had reached a sufficient height to require scaffolding.

On 15 August 1900 he was chasing up a bicycle on order from the North Tawton Cycle Works. He was a keen cyclist, and cycled well into old age. He bought his first car, a Clyno saloon, in 1927, and before then had a carriage. It is said locally that the long serpentine and carefully graded drive from the south-east corner of the estate up to the house was designed to make his cycling ascent easier.

On 28 August he wrote to Marland asking that all trucks to be loaded to 6 tons, as he had negotiated a special deal with the London & South Western Railway Co. He was a very acute businessman, always asking for the best rates for cash or maximum discount, and working out the most economical methods of carriage. Transport and postal services could be remarkably efficient in this pre-telephone age. He could write a letter and have a reply or goods from a local supplier delivered the following day, and he expected prompt attention to any order. Perhaps the most frequent phrase found in the letter books is *at your earliest convenience*… . Heavy items were delivered by train to Bow station, the other side of Bow village, from where they were collected by cart. Railway rates were most favourable when complete truckloads could be arranged.

By September the walls were up to the arches of the ground-floor windows, and rough timber was ordered for making centres for turning the brick arches; on 26 September 1900, the spandrels over the arch of the porch were being formed. Early in October there was a further delay with Marland Brick: *I shall not be able to get the roof on before the end of the year*. The following month, perhaps somewhat belatedly, he made enquiries about an insurance policy for his employees, from which we learn that he employed three men on the farm, and an average of six in *building, road making, excavating, draining etc.* in connection with the construction of the house.

In November 1900 steel girders were ordered, and on 26 November 1900 he sent an enquiry to the Vulcanite Roofing and Asphalt Co. about construction of a flat roof. His plan was to carry the rain water down to storage tanks, *or for use inside the Lantern which would be to some extent a conservatory*. This is the first mention of the ill-fated Lantern, and its potential use as a conservatory. The lantern was to sit on the roof above the full extent of the central hall, about 24ft

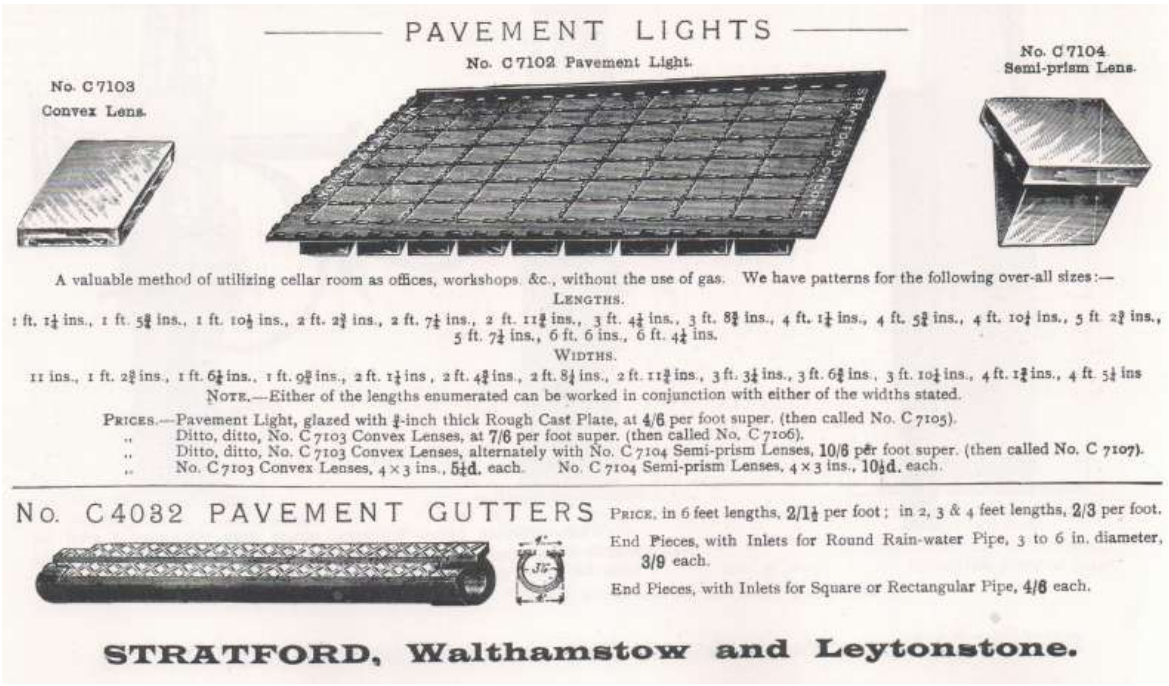


Figure 10. Pavement lights from Young & Marten's catalogue.

x 16ft. He also enquired as to whether the roof tanks could be made in Vulcanite, but decided to use galvanised iron instead as Vulcanite tanks would have been extremely heavy. On 25 February 1901 he wrote to Young & Marten, the well-known builders' merchants of Stratford, east London, about using decorative pavement lights to roof the hall. *It is a question of pavement lights so that the whole of the conservatory floor ... can be utilised, or, leaded lights for the glazed part (12' x 6') and a walk around.* To construct a ceiling over the staircase hall entirely of pavement lights would have been a novel idea, but the effect from below would have been somewhat like a subterranean public convenience. The alternative solution was eventually adopted, with a solid gallery about 5ft wide (wider than its modern replacement) and a glazed central well.

By this time construction was sufficiently advanced for him to turn his attention to the window frames, and on the same date he wrote to Henry Green of the Okehampton Joinery Works, discussing whether to dowel or mortice and tenon the sills. Pedler enjoyed the minutiae of design and construction, and would often lavish much ink on such details.

The distressing saga of the Lantern began on 1 March 1901 with an enquiry to Skinner, Board & Co of Bristol about the suitability of their wire-tension greenhouses. By 11 May the lantern had been erected, and Pedler was not impressed:

Skinner, Board

Erection of lantern

Your man Haynes should have reported himself [to you] before this.

As the material bears evidence of imperfect fitting and hasty despatch, it is obvious I cannot allow my men to proceed alone with any part of the erection (even with ample instruction) as possible defects might be attributed to them ... . I will supply ... nine men, to work as directed [by] your responsible fitter.

I have carried out my part of the agreement and have paid your instalment on delivery as agreed on, actually before the goods were at my station. And you were to send a competent man to

'BOARD'S PATENT'

'WIRE TENSION' GREENHOUSES

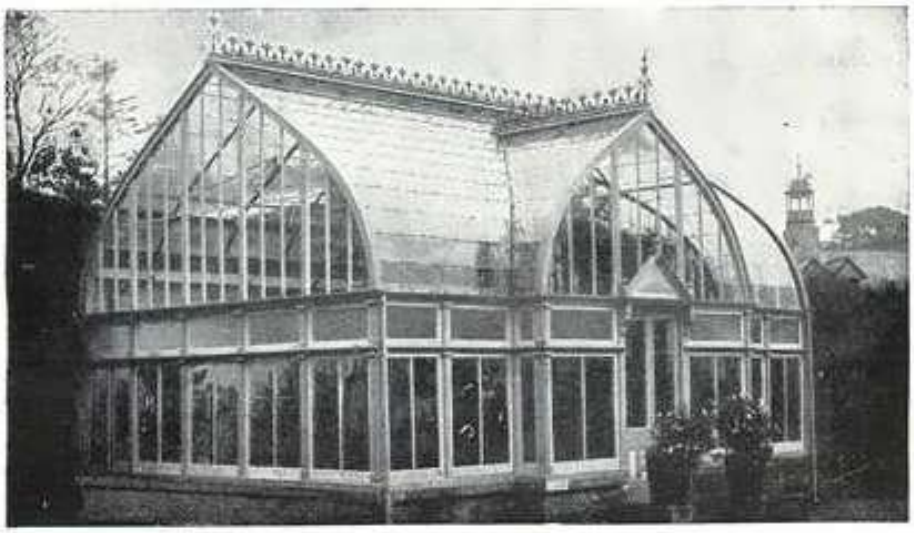
IRON FRAME ROOF! NO PUTTY! IMPERISHABLE!

. . . CURVED ROOF, WITH STRAIGHT GLASS! . . .

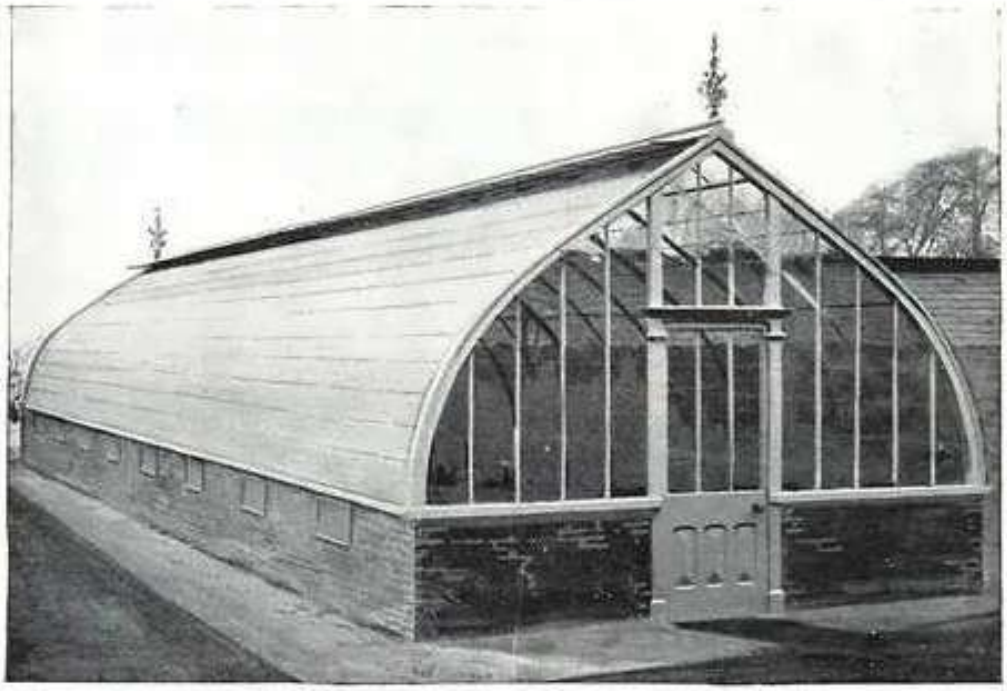
4,000,000 FEET ERECTED. Satisfaction Guaranteed.

'BOARD'S PATENT' GREENHOUSE BLINDS (Inside) A SPECIALITY.

Heating in all Branches. Boilers, etc. Plans, Estimates, and Catalogues Free.



Conservatory, erected for H. MILES RADCLIFFE, Esq., Summerlands, near Kendal.



Erected for Earl of Crewe, Crewe Hall, Crewe.

SKINNER, BOARD & CO. *Horticultural Builders & Heating Engineers,* **BRISTOL.**

Figure 11. Skinner, Board & Co. wire-tension greenhouses.

superintend and… instruct my men. [I know from practical experience how difficult it is to obtain competent men. But, in confidence, this is what occurred. Your letter [stated] one man would leave Bristol by the first train on Thursday morning. The [first train] leaves at 6.30 and your man could easily have arrived at Bow by 9.38. This train I met with carriage so that he could have started work at 10 am. And I had a man ready to assist him. I met the next [train] also without result. About 3.30 pm he arrived at my building. He began work on Friday, I supplying an experienced carpenter. [For] starting to fit wall plate certain necessary… handrail bolts were not [supplied] and I had to send to the blacksmith and have them made before he could proceed. The side rafters with ridge was then fixed, and I came [to inspect and asked] why he wasn't fixing the ridge in the centre, it being three feet nearer one end than the other... . Later, the hip rafters appear to fit badly when screwed up. I asked to see the working tracing, and discover your competent man has got his plan reversed. All four… rafters [had been fitted] wrongly [and had to change places. Then some of the] rafters are found to be unmistakably short some two or three inches – I [measured] this myself.

As your man confessed he could not proceed not having any tools to drill…, I considered it best for him to return and report to you rather than work him here. Accordingly I arranged to take his tools and himself to Bow by the first up train 8.27 am and he [should] have been at Temple Meads station by 11.53 am. His tools were taken, …, but I found he went on a later train [and took the whole] day to get back. Comment unnecessary.

Notwithstanding the problems with the lantern, by 20 May the Vulcanite roofing was finished. Always with an eye to a bargain, he wrote to the company asking to purchase the furnace:


THE WEST END CLOTHIERS CO., LTD.

Established over Quarter of a Century.

THE PIONEERS of HIGH-CLASS TAILORING at POPULAR PRICES. Over **300,000 Customers** on our Books, which number is increasing daily. This wonderful record has been achieved by our always giving the HIGHEST POSSIBLE VALUE, and never asking a Customer to keep a garment that failed to give satisfaction.

SPÉCIALITÉ.

LOUNGE SUIT, to order - - - $12.50

TROUSERS, to order - - - - $3.25

The Celebrated

"MITCHELL-PROOF" RAINCOAT,

To order or ready to wear - From £2 2 0 ($10.50).

WE EMPLOY THE BEST CUTTERS IN THE TRADE.
WE GIVE THE HIGHEST VALUE AND GUARANTEE SATISFACTION.
WE ARE THE LARGEST BUYERS OF CLOTH IN THE RETAIL TRADE.

LONDON:

71 & 72, Strand, W.C.; 37, Ludgate Hill, E.C.; 66, Regent Street, W.; 395, Oxford Street, W.; 1 & 2, Poultry, Cheapside, E.C.; 65, 66 & 67, Gracechurch Street, E.C.; 4, Oxford Street, W., corner of Tottenham Court Road.

PROVINCIAL BRANCHES:

LIVERPOOL—33 & 35, Castle Street; MANCHESTER—39, Market Street; EDINBURGH—3, North Bridge; DUBLIN—College Green; and at LEEDS, BRADFORD, SHEFFIELD and GLASGOW.

THE WEST END CLOTHIERS CO., LTD., beg to take this opportunity of thanking their large American and Canadian clientèle for their past kind patronage, and beg to solicit a continuance of same.

Figure 12. Advertisement for West End Clothiers, 1908.

As probably I may be using some more of your roofing material … please say what you want for your portable Vulcanite boiler (which is decidedly the worse for wear) in case I should care to retain it rather than return.

Over the next month or so the lantern and verandah (also from Skinner, Board & Co.) were erected.

His wedding was due to be celebrated on Tuesday 30 July, and with pressure evidently growing he began ordering by telegram. By the last week in May he was ordering window frames from the Okehampton Joinery Works and skirting boards from Thomas Gabriel, Timber Merchant, at Exeter.

On the 25 May 1901, with his honeymoon in prospect, he requested patterns for a light summer lounge suit from West End Clothiers in London.

Matters were still unresolved with Skinner, Board & Co.

7 June 1901 Skinner, Board

There now remains the question as to what proportion of your men's costs is due for me to pay. Undoubtedly a serious and unaccountable blunder occurred in the length of the metal ribs or rafters of the lantern, one rafter being more than a foot short, and eight being some two inches short so that all four hip rafters had to be taken to the blacksmith to be redrilled …. measuring the [sill] diagonally there is a difference of 3/8" to 1/2", …. And your first man who fixed the wood sill was under the impression he had it quite square.

I have no wish to press the matter unfairly, and shall be glad to hear what you think equitable. Of course I am ready to pay [the] costs for glazing ,….

He added a postscript to say that he would be willing to meet a representative of the firm on site.

Shortly afterwards, perhaps predictably, there were problems in erecting the verandah.

In the middle of the month ventilators were ordered, not of course ordinary ventilators, but Hayward Silk Flap Outlet Ventilators from Hayward Bros. & Eckstein. Work was sufficiently advanced for plasterers to be on site, and a Hubbard No. 1 range was ordered for the kitchen, with a high pressure boiler for the hot water system, again after considerable thought and enquiry with the supplier. Timber for the staircase was also ordered from Gabriel at Exeter, with a detailed cutting list. The staircase was to be 4ft wide, with treads 13" deep and risers 5¼" high, all in pitch pine.

On 17 July 1901 he wrote to the minister of Bow Congregational Chapel objecting to use of the Church of England marriage service for his forthcoming wedding, preferring something much simpler. Three days later he booked his honeymoon: a four day trip to Lucerne departing on 1 August, and preceded by two nights at the Adelphi Hotel in London – *as nice a bedroom as you can.* He normally stayed at the Adelphi when in London, and the honeymoon was booked through the travel agency run by Henry Lunn, which organised tours with a religious emphasis.[15] He prudently insured Reeve Castle before he left.

Perhaps predictably, the first few days after his return from honeymoon were spent in chasing up items which had not arrived, including the kitchen range (which fortunately for domestic harmony arrived two days later) and window frames from Okehampton Joinery Works.

However, the end of the construction phase was in sight, and Carter Pedler could now concentrate on fitting out and furnishing the house. During the remainder of August he ordered bentwood furniture from Thonet, doors from Okehampton and a white marble fireplace for the drawing room from Henry Sawry in Plymouth. He also enquired about fibrous plaster cornices from George Jackson of Rathbone Place, London: *Please indicate what you have in stock and can deliver at once as required.*

September was occupied in fitting up some of the principal rooms. On the 3rd he ordered six window blinds made of dyed window Holland fabric from Okehampton Joinery, possibly for

Figure 13. George Jackson & Sons advertisement.

the drawing room, and also sent designs for leaded lights for the blue and green bedrooms to Mitchell & Son in Exeter. There were to be six lights for each room, the predominant colour matching the scheme for the room. This suggests that the en-suite bathroom shown on the plan connecting with the blue bedroom was originally part of the bedroom, but it is not clear how the wall on the north side was arranged. It also suggests that the glazing for the other bedrooms followed a similar colour coding. The following day he ordered an Eagle grate from Henry Sawrey to go with the marble fireplace already ordered. The Eagle grate had hinged cheeks which could be closed across the fireplace when not in use; a piece of ingenuity that could not fail to appeal to Mr Carter Pedler.

Figures 14 and 15. Eagle grates open and closed. The Antique Fireplace Restoration Company.

On 10 September he sent an urgent SOS to Mitchell for delivery of five hand-painted lights, one semi-circular light and five lancets for the drawing room, as visitors were expected in ten days time. Maples in London were chased for delivery of a carpet, overdue by several weeks, and to Henry Sawrey: *I want that Eagle grate at once; please hurry it up.*

From letters to Mitchell, it is apparent that the doors to the drawing and dining rooms had leaded lights; at the end of the month he wrote: *I hope to forward working design of Dining room windows tomorrow. With respect to the three door panels rather than have them sent on before the cement has had time to harden I am fixing paste board panels in the doors.*

… two drawing room door panels are… blue predominantly in the central figure, and …. has green. In the latter … you will recollect I was afraid the deep brick red would be too heavy, and you agreed to substitute a lighter brownish red tint. I think I should prefer claret or purple to this if you have not got too far, and can get the colours to fairly balance each other.

Attention now moved to the dining room, the largest room in the house. It was intended as a combined living and dining room, for which the two large bays and the adjoining conservatory and verandah gave ample flexibility.[16] A Devonshire marble fireplace was ordered from the Victoria Marble Works at Torquay.

None of the original window glass seems to have survived, but photographs suggest that the upper parts of the windows were glazed with rectangles or lozenges in a similar fashion to the windows of the Bow Congregational Church.

Early in October the drawing room carpet arrived from Maples, and arrangements were made with Mrs D Smith (proprietor of a long-established music shop in Exeter) to move his Blüthner grand piano from Higher Burston.[17] It appears that the drawing room was virtually complete, or at least useable.

Figures 16 and 17. Windows at Bow Congregational Church.

Work continued in the rest of the house; flooring was ordered from Gabriel, patterns for floor tiles were requested from Minton Hollins, and correspondence was begun with the Okehampton Joinery Works about the construction of a kitchen table. It is characteristic of Carter Pedler that, while most people would simply order a kitchen table, he designed it in minute detail. One wonders if the Cook General had any say in the design.

On 21 October 1901 he sent designs to Mitchell for stained glass panels for the dining room doors, to be greenish yellow or straw colour, and purple. He also chased delivery of the glass for the external windows. Five days later he was again chasing: five lights for the dining room octagonal bay, and similar for the Blue bedroom above, and also for the porch. Mitchell's then admitted that they had lost the cartoons for the windows; the octagon was to have five windows of the same pattern but different colours.

In November there were problems with the kitchen range, which would not roast; this was fixed by a man from the Hubbard Syndicate later in the month. Carter Pedler ordered tiles from Minton Hollins for the Octagon (which remain in situ) and also ordered seat cushions for the drawing room bay from Mr Philips of the Devon Serge Warehouse at North Tawton; again designed and specified in exhaustive detail. He also ordered curtains from Philips, enclosing paper patterns, which suggests that the curtains were designed to fit the arched shapes of the windows. More ominously, in view of later developments, he had to order more glazing clips for the lantern over the hall. It was still not satisfactory, and recent high winds had destroyed many panes of glass.

The stable block was evidently nearing completion, and Carter Pedler ordered more roofing material from Vulcanite for use with the furnace that he had previously bought from them. He also offered to send them a photograph of the roof of the house for use in their publicity, an offer which was accepted. There

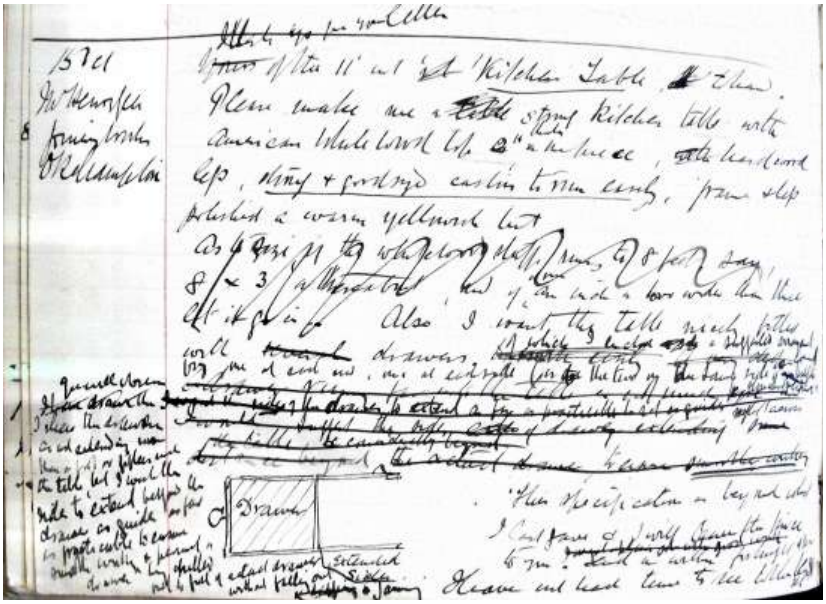
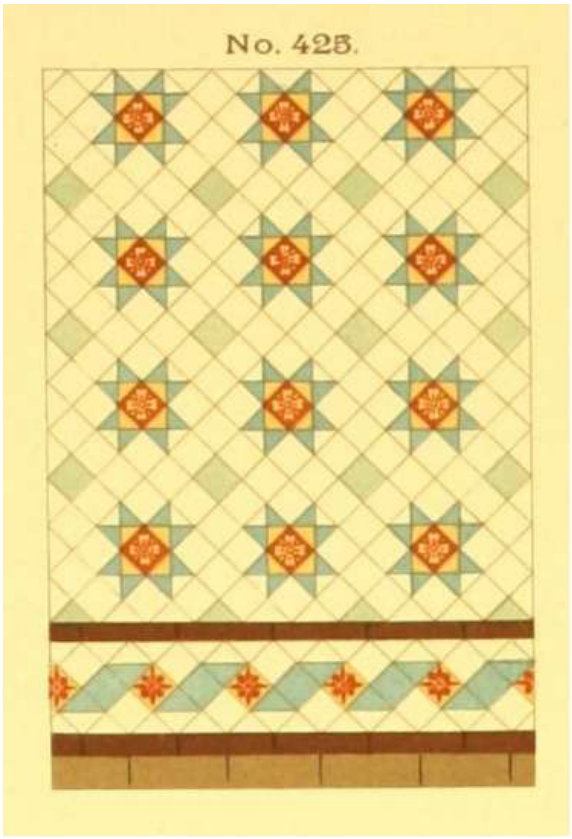


Figure 18. Design for kitchen table from the letter book. Devon Heritage Centre: 317M/F7



Figures 19 and 20. Tiled floor of the Octagon, above, and Minton Hollins pattern 425, right.

is perhaps a chance that copies of this photograph might still exist.

Around the turn of the year, floor tiles for the lavatories (there were two, for ladies and gentlemen) and the verandah were obtained from Minton Hollins The lattice-work pattern for the lavatory floors was designed by Carter-Pedler using Minton Hollins standard tiles: *the interior pattern is an attempt of my own to imitate lattice work by way of novelty.*

The lantern was continuing to give problems and in January, Skinner, Board & Co sent a man down to discuss what needed to be done. On 11 January he ordered 9 balusters to support a handrail from Garton & King in Exeter, and two months later handrail for stairs and gallery from the Okehampton Joinery Works.

9 March 1902 marked another construction milestone: Carter Pedler wrote to the Marland Brick Co. to state that he would not be sending them any more orders, but they were welcome to come and inspect the house. *I have used such a large proportion of your moulded brick for the doubly*

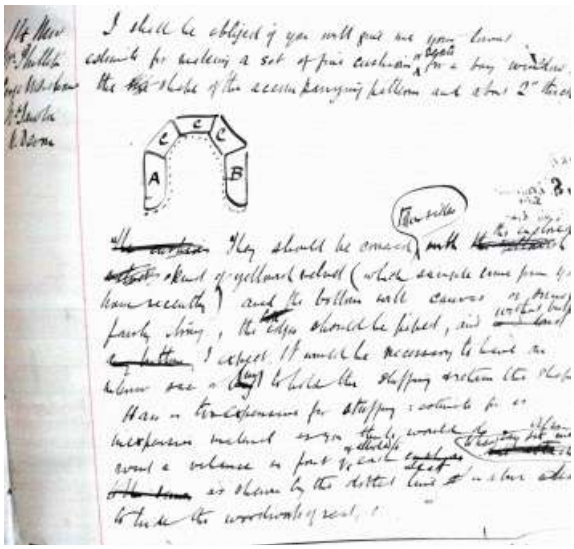


Figure 21. Design for window seat cushions. Devon Heritage Centre: 317M/F7

Figure 22. Tiled floor of cloakroom; pattern designed by Carter Pedler.

recessed arches of doors and windows and thus the architectural effect is very distinctive. He also ordered sanitary fittings from Shanks & Co.; ever with an eye to economy, he said that he might transfer the bath from Higher Burston rather than buy new. On 17 March he sent the promised publicity photographs to Vulcanite, for which he charged half the cost! (Admittedly, he had to erect scaffolding in order to obtain a suitable picture.)

From mid-April he began sending out change-of-address notifications, and one can assume that he and his wife were effectively living full-time at Reeve Castle.

The lantern gave more trouble in May, when three panes of glass blew off, and Carter Pedler was dubious about ordering a conservatory from Skinner, Board. One also gains a tantalising glimpse into his family relationships at this time: he replied to the manager of the Drouet Institute in Regent's Park Road, London about a forwarding address for his sister-in-law, which curiously he was unable to provide. The Drouet Institute was a disreputable 'quack' outfit that claimed to be able to cure deafness, and the manager was Dr Hawley Harvey Crippen, later to attain fame in another sphere altogether. What the connection was between the Institute and Miss King remains obscure.

During the spring preparations were taking place all over the country to celebrate the coronation of King Edward VII, and Carter Pedler ordered fireworks. Reeve Castle, now effectively complete, was also assessed for rates. In a rather acrimonious letter to the Vicar of Zeal Monachorum on 18 June he linked the two:

As this parish at [a] Parish meeting appeared to be indifferent to holding a local celebration, I made arrangements for celebrating it myself here with a Bonfire etc according to the programme of the National Bonfire Committee at the expense of several pounds, and further, I had determined to give a shilling to each person in the parish in receipt of parochial relief, which would amount to a [total sum] of 7/-. In view of this and more especially of the recent attempt to rate my house excessively, I prefer to have nothing to do with the Public celebration, But the committee, if it feels disposed, is welcome to dispose, IN THE MANNER I PURPOSED, the 7/- above mentioned.

The Coronation was postponed from 26 June until 9 August because of the King's illness; one hopes that the fireworks were not wasted. The dispute over the rateable value of Reeve Castle rumbled on for some months afterwards.

In June, Carter Pedler enquired about obtaining slate slabs from Delabole Quarry for roofing a large water storage tank in an outhouse. In a typical reply to their quotation he wrote: *The price you give (11d) is no use whatever as I can get my job done cheaper [using] iron and concrete*. He eventually ordered at a much reduced price. But he was prepared to spend money when necessary; over the summer he made various enquiries about hand-painted tiles for the hearths and cheeks of the drawing room and dining room fireplaces.

On 5 September he ordered pots and pans for the kitchen; rather late, given that he had been living in the house for some months. It may be connected to the engagement of Mary Fry as cook general on 18 September.[18] He also requested a catalogue of electric bell fittings from F C Allsop of London. Presumably these were to be operated by battery, as there was no electrical supply for many years. On 7 September his daughter Edith Mary was born, and no doubt he had plenty to occupy his mind, particularly as his father, Robert Pedler, was now in poor health. In November he advertised for a nurse to look after his father, and arranged to meet the chosen applicant, Nurse Furze, at St. David's Station; *I shall be wearing spectacles, a low white hat, and light overcoat.*

Robert Pedler died on 4 December, and William was preoccupied with arranging his funeral. It was still the practice at this time for the deceased's family to provide black gloves for the undertakers and servants, which were kept by the recipients as 'perks'. Accordingly he ordered gloves from the

Devon Serge Warehouse: *I shall require 9 pairs of black mens gloves, assorted sizes (for 6 bearers, 2 ?drivers, and undertaker, the [quality]usual on such occasions. Also three pair better quality for two domestics and nurse, respective sizes 7 3/4, 7,7. Also I want a pair to give to Mr Palmer (our Minister) fairly good quality, but I do not know his size, please send a few assorted sizes, and perhaps you had better send a DOZEN of the mens gloves, and I shall return those not required.*

That seems to place Mr. Palmer fairly precisely in the social hierarchy.

Between October and February he was also corresponding with Minton's about dado tiling for the Octagon; thus on 27 October 1902 *I require a dado 18" or 19" high in keeping with the floor and of the BRIGHTEST description and fairly rich.* By 22 January he had decided that a low dado under the windows would not work, and that a higher of 33-36" would be better, cut into by the windows. By 3 February he had made his mind up: *I select the 'A' pattern with bright green skirting and cornice. The frieze in olive green tones well with the whole I think but I should prefer something BRIGHTER… the general arrangement, or say the orange band toward the bottom … In respect of this possible alteration I leave the matter in your hands; I am anxious to attain the utmost brightness …'*. It is worth noting, and characteristic of his treatment both

Figure 23. The Lantern and Conservatory.

of Bow Congregational Church and Reeve Castle, that he was always seeking vivid colour and brightness. The juxtaposition of orange and bright and olive greens in the octagon dado, together with pea green and terracotta glass, would have given any unsuspecting visitor a strong foretaste of what was to come in the rest of the house. The letter books give no information about paint or wallpaper; it is probable that Carter Pedler chose these in person, or gave verbal instructions.

In February he provided the Vulcanite firm with a somewhat cautious testimonial: *The patent Vulcanite with which your men roofed my house has proved quite* [‘*perfectly*’ crossed out] *satisfactory*. Perhaps perfection was not of this world. He also enquired about Newellite glass bricks for the cloakrooms and Lincrusta for the drawing room.

On 24 February 1903 disaster struck. Carter Pedler wrote to Skinner, Board & Co.: *A storm today (and still blowing) has PRACTICALLY WRECKED ALL GLASS WORK, and when the storm abates and the rain comes in I expect my central hall to be flooded.* One must assume that he managed to get the hall covered in and weather-tight quite quickly, and, never one to waste money, two weeks later he requested Skinner, Board to re-erect the lantern as a greenhouse in the garden. Even more remarkably, given his less than happy relationship with the firm, he wrote to compliment them on the greenhouse*: nothing I have yet seen equals them in elegance and lightness of effect*.

In April he wrote to Minton’s saying that he had used one of their 12” friezes in his dining room, and contemplated doing the same in the drawing room. And on 13 May, after much enquiry, he placed an order with Henry Hope of Birmingham for a replacement lantern for the staircase hall. It is probable that this is the lantern that exists now, although reglazed. He also ordered the conservatory from them, which also still exists.

Carter Pedler ordered more Newellite glass bricks for the cloakrooms, in pink, blue, celadon and red. It is not clear how these were used, but most likely for glazing the windows. The house was essentially complete by this time, and thereafter the letter books record only replacements and repairs. Attention was instead focussed on the garden, with large purchases of tree and shrubs, and bridges in the water garden below the house. The development of the garden is another story. But in September we have some indication of the difficulty of obtaining suitable servants in the country. On the 9th he wrote to the Hubbard Syndicate: *I have one of your “No. 1” ranges (ordered on 16 July 1901) and through the misfortune of having a fool for a cook, the range has been grossly ill used …. And the cast iron circular ash grid which forms the bottom of the fire has been broken. I cannot conceive how this could have occurred short of wilful malice as the casting is strong and not in the least eaten away. I shall be obliged if you will at your earliest convenience ….’* The ‘fool of a cook’ was Clara Clark, who lasted from 6 August to 22 October. Mrs Carter Pedler is said locally to have been a difficult mistress, and certainly the Domestic Wages ledger shows a remarkably high turnover of staff.

On 7 November 1903 William Carter Pedler wrote to Henry Hope: *The work is today completed.*

Furnishing Reeve Castle

In about 1906 William Carter Pedler made an inventory of the furnishings in the house. The listing is comprehensive, particularly for the reception rooms, and gives some idea about how the house was used. The dining room, for instance, contained not only dining table and chairs, but also two Shannon revolving roll-top desks (one for him and one for his wife), armchairs, couch and sewing machine.

Figure 24. Shannon Revolving Roll-top Desk.

To give some idea of the depth of detail, here is a transcription of the dining room inventory, without the associated valuations:

Dining table mahogany telescope 5 leaves
Sideboard. Mahogany Plate glass back 6ft
Dinner wagon mahogany
Couch mahogany morocco
Arm chair mahogany am[erican] leather
6 chairs mahogany morocco
Arm chair mahogany American leather
Reading stand mahogany
Reading stand walnut
Rotary desk walnut Shannon File Co.
Desk chair walnut revolving screw
Work table walnut
Davenport
Folding chair walnut imitation leather
Sewing machine walnut Singer
Library Table Oak (pollard) (Fallapit House)[19]
Silvered Plate [mirror] oak polished. Bev[elled]. Mantel
Silvered Plate [ditto] over desk
4 Silvered Plates. Black bead, Octagon bay
Amer. Folding Chair cane seat Ash
Brass fireguard wire
Coal Scuttle
Bamboo Table
Carpet Axminster (felt below)
Curtains 2 pair green silk
Curtains lace 2 pair
Table cover
Window blinds roller 10
Brass door porter
Galvanometer
Letter weights mahogany and brass
Clock. Marble and bronze figure Julius Caesar
2 Statuettes. Bronze Carvings, Milton, Shakespeare
Two marble stands
Tobacco jar and cover. Polished Porphyry
2 Statuettes. Parian. Ruth and Esther
2 Brackets. Carved oak
Japanese vases, set of 8, Dining and Drawing room
Oil Painting. 2 Portraits. Mr and Mrs Hooper[20]
Oil Painting. Setter dog
Oil Painting. Cattle drinking
Oil Painting. Pair river scenes
Oil Painting. Landscape
Steel engraving, Poet and |Players[21]
Pair letter boxes mahogany (desk)
Lamp Duplex
Rotary Desk Mrs L F C P. Shannon
Pair Bronzes “Don Cesar and Don Juan”
Vase (Desk)
Desk lamp (Gas) Brass

The Blue and Green bedrooms, over the drawing room, seem to have been the principal bedrooms, and next to the Green bedroom was Carter Pedler’s octagonal dressing room. Other bedrooms were listed as pink, yellow, red, West, and white (former nursery), all much less lavishly furnished. The turret room opening on to the roof, although apparently reached only by ladder from the dressing room, had a bed and chest of drawers. Carter Pedler’s office contained table, chairs, filing cabinets, drawing board, tee square and set squares, but also a bagatelle table and, until it was given to the Bow Congregational Sunday School in 1908, a harmonium. The conservatory housed a 10ft billiard table.

The most expensive item in the house, however, was the organ. This was installed in the central hall in 1905 at a cost of £325, a couple of years after the completion of the house, and to fit it in under the gallery required a great deal of ingenuity, with removal of the coving and ceiling under the gallery and excavation into the floor. If the organ was planned from the start it is remarkable that no structural provision was made for it. It was built by a rather obscure organ builder called Henry Potter who was based in North London, and who, perhaps as a result of Carter Pedler’s influence, built organs at Zeal Monachorum parish church, and Bow and Lapford Congregational churches. Although full details do not survive, it seems to have been a fairly modest three-manual instrument of perhaps 15-20 stops. The following year the water tower was completed, a wind engine and pump installed to pump water to the top of the tower, and a hydraulic blowing engine for the organ was installed in the cellar.

Figure 25. Billiard table in the derelict conservatory.

Figure 26. Inscription over the front door of Reeve Castle.

Later History

The house was possibly lit with oil lamps at first; Carter Pedler bought an oil tank from a hardware supplier in Plymouth which leaked. But in 1909 an acetylene gas plant was installed in the engine room below the terrace, valued at £163/10/-. This room was linked to the cellar of the house by a tunnel, and the engine room itself opened onto the face of the quarry, apparently in case of explosion. By 1916 the acetylene plant had decreased in value in his annual deadstock valuation to £2, and then disappears altogether until 1924, when it is referred to as the old gas plant. But not until 1934 did he consider buying a Kohler petrol-powered generator, and an electric blower for the organ.

Figure 27. William Carter Pedler with bicycle and dog outside Reeve Castle.

William and Lizzie's first child, Edith Mary, died 20 November 1903 at 14 months old. Their second daughter, Lovedy Mary, died 16 September 1908, aged 4½. Both are buried in the Congregational church yard in Bow, together with William's parents. Their son, Robert Dennis, was born 11 May 1908, and his parents must have been distraught when he fractured his skull in a car accident in 1929. However, he survived. William Carter Pedler died on 20 April 1941 at the age of 86, and was buried next to his daughters and parents. His widow, Lizzie, lived on at Reeve Castle. During the war servants were increasingly difficult to find, and by August 1942 she was advertising for a domestic help; 'mother with school age child considered'.

Lizzie died in a nursing home in Exmouth on 3 October 1956, leaving Reeve Castle to be held in trust by her son Robert Dennis and Dr James Finlay of Witheridge, to be maintained and insured, and to be passed to Robert's children on his death. But by 1976 the house was very thoroughly derelict. It is said that through a chance meeting between Robert (Bobby) and Harold Morley-Sharpe the property changed hands without being advertised on the open market. The Morley-Sharpes carried out a considerable amount of restoration and ran the property as a restaurant for some years. Successive owners have continued the work of restoration and maintenance.

Conclusion

William Carter Pedler seems to have been a complex character. In many ways he was a text-book member of the landed gentry of his time – active as a JP, in local government and a host of other organisations – a leader of local society and pillar of the community.[22] He was said to have been self-opinionated but kind. But there was obviously another side to him. Imaginative and creative, with particular interests in music and architecture,[23] he was fortunate to have the means to realise his ideas in bricks and mortar, tiles and coloured glass, and the longevity to be able to enjoy the result for almost 40 years. Far from seeking to create the gothic gloom so beloved of newspaper columnists, his objective seems to have been light and colour. He created a house full of light: outside from the white bricks walls, and inside from the many windows and the central roof light, and a house which is apparently still a delight to live in. But the years of dereliction and changing fashions have removed much of the vibrant, even discordant, colour from the interior of

the house; if only one could travel back in time to see the drawing room with its tiled frieze and lincrusta paper, or the entrance octagon with its pea-green and terracotta glass and matching tiles. This approach to colour was quite at odds with contemporary trends in interior design, whether the well-bred pastels of nascent neo-Georgian or the more quirky Arts and Crafts or Art Nouveau of C R Macintosh and Hugh Baillie Scott.[24] It is worth noting also that the books he bought in connection with the building of Reeve Castle were all on practical subjects. There were none on 'architecture' in the sense of design or planning. He evidently felt no need for such guidance.

The music has left less evidence; the organ, of course, but of the musician and composer we know very little. He does not seem to have published any compositions, and there are very few mentions in the newspapers of him playing in public. It is perhaps significant that his cousin William's wife, the novelist Margaret Pedler, trained as a singer and pianist at the Royal Academy of Music, and published several songs. Was William the original link between them? The only reminder of his interest in Greek is the biblical inscription over the front door from Matthew 5, 7: 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy'.

Nigel Browne

Acknowledgements
The members of the Gent family for very generously allowing me to take photographs of Reeve Castle.
Paul Cleave (Figure 3)
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Edmund Browne (Figure 2)
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Bow and District Historical Society (Figure 25)

Endnotes

1 *Western Morning News*, 6 May 1966.

2 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1325836, accessed 22 March 2018.

3 Reminiscence of Betty Vicary, Zeal Monachorum, kindly transmitted by Erica Eden.

4 Catalogue reference: 317M series.

5 Sir Frederick Pedler, *A Pedler Family History* (Chichester: Phillimore, 1984).

6 James King died 7 October 1888 at the County Lunatic Asylum, Wivelsfield, Sussex.

7 In fact William Carter Pedler donated £455 4s 10d and his father £45 11s out of a total cost of £893 10s 4d. See 317M/F13.

8 317M/F7.

9 These books included: W Jones: *Heating by Hot Water* (1894), J P Allen: *Practical Building Construction* (1897), S H Brooks: *Rudimentary Treatise on the Erection of Dwelling-houses* (1896), P Buchan: *Plumbing* (1897), G Field: *A Grammar of Colouring applied to decorative painting and the arts* (Revised ed. 1896), E W Tarn: *Mechanics of Architecture* (1892), J W Facey: *Practical House Decoration. A guide to the art of ornamental painting and elementary Decoration* (1886), J Eldridge: *The Gas Fitter's Guide* (1891), F C Allsop*: Practical Electric Bell Fitting.*

10 See Jill Franklin, *The Gentleman's Country House and its Plan 1835-1914* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981) for Victorian examples. She also observes (p147) 'By the end of the century, new houses with a top-lit central hall had become very rare'.

11 See 317M/E18 Domestic wages ledger.

[12] A.W.N.Pugin, *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture* (London: John Weale, 1841), p58.

[13] Compare with, for instance, the houses illustrated in *Recent English Domestic Architecture*, edited by Mervyn McCartney (Architectural Review, 1911), where the styles vary between neo-Georgian and Arts and Crafts.

[14] 317M/E15 Daily wages ledger.

[15] The firm eventually became part of the travel agents Lunn Poly.

[16] Sufficiently large that luncheon was provided to about 90 members of the North Devon Congregational Union on 3 October 1906, using all three spaces.

[17] Which he had bought in 1891.

[18] 317M/E18 Domestic Wages ledger.

[19] Fallapit house changed hands in 1863 and 1893; it is possible that the table was acquired at a sale on such an occasion. See Hugh Mellor*, The Country Houses of Devon*, Vol. I (Crediton: Black Dog Press, 2015), p.394.

[20] Elizabeth Hooper was William Carter Pedler's aunt.

[21] Probably from the original painting by Daniel Maclise.

[22] *The Register of Mill Hill School* (1926) lists J.P, County Councillor, Rural District Councillor, Chairman and Clerk of the Parish Council, Governor of the Crediton Secondary Schools, Chairman of the Crediton Board of Guardians, Chairman of the School Managers (possibly of Bow School), Commissioner of Income Tax and Land Tax, Honarary Secretary and Treasurer of Bow Congregational Church, Treasurer of the North Devon Congregational Union.

[23] *The Register of Mill Hill School* (1926) lists his interests as Greek, music and domestic architecture.

[24] See for instance the coloured illustrations in M H Baillie Scott, *Houses and Gardens* (London: George Newnes, 1906).

The Carriage and Wagon Repair Shop, Newton Abbot

Some months ago, the Devon Buildings Group submitted an objection to Teignbridge District Council (TDC) in respect of the proposed demolition of the former Great Western Railway (GWR) Carriage and Wagon Repair Shop, Newton Abbot, which was built c.1893. The proposal was submitted by Aldi, who wanted to build a supermarket on the site. The DBG's concerns were one of many voiced to TDC by heritage groups including their own conservation officer, SAVE Britain's Heritage, the Victorian Society, the Association for Industrial Archaeology and many individuals both local and from far afield. Many of these were interested in the historic environment of Devon and Britain, others had a particular knowledge of Newton Abbot's history, and some had an in-depth knowledge of Britain's railway heritage. Many local residents also raised objections. Despite this, TDC granted consent for the demolition.

Campaigners fought and ultimately lost a long battle, including seeking and winning a judicial review, resulting in the original planning permission being quashed by the Courts. This was a major victory for those campaigning to retain the building. The Save Our Shed campaign (SOS) ensured that the building was recognised as a local heritage asset and added to the Devon Historic Environment Record.

However, Teignbridge District Council planning officers remained steadfast in support of this damaging proposal, and took very slightly revised plans back to the Planning Committee just 14 days after they announced that the original permission was overturned. Officers consistently ignored their own conservation officer's comments, the concerns raised by a significant number of local and national amenity groups – including DBG – the many letters of objection, the concerns of some TDC councillors and the Save Our Shed (SOS) campaign and its petition which raised over 1700 signatures in just days, in advance of the planning meeting (and continued to attract support long after the decision was made).

In a final effort to halt the demolition, another application to Historic England was made to try to get the building listed. The application was based on extensive research and compiled with the help of leading railway experts. This research confirmed the importance of Newton Abbot as a railway town and identified that the “Shed” as a nationally very rare type of railway building and that it represented a GWR period building which no longer survived at the main GWR Swindon works. It also formed part of a railway complex which was of conservation area quality. Sadly, however, Historic England considered the building did not meet the very strict criteria for listing of such late railway buildings.

The planning permission included a condition requiring a written statement of investigation to ensure the building and the wider site were recorded as part of the development. However, this only extended to a photographic record of the building and a watching brief over the ground works. As the planning file did not include any “as existing” drawings, the SOS campaign tried to ensure that the recording brief was extended to include measured drawings of the building but sadly this was also resisted.

Aldi took many months to submit all the documentation required to meet the many conditions but just before demolition was about to start, the building was the subject of an arson attack. The resulting fire was one of the most serious in Devon, requiring 10 fire crews who fought the blaze over some 48 hours and it caused the evacuation of residents of the adjacent houses.

Arson attack Sunday 21st October 2018.

Demolition works have now started. Newton Abbot's historic built environment, its character and senses of place will be the poorer for the loss of the Shed.

The Save Our Shed campaign would like to thank the Devon Buildings Group and its members for all their support in trying to save the Shed from demolition, to make way for an Aldi supermarket.

Val Harrison, November 2018

Exwick Chapel

In 1842, the newly-built chapel of Exwick was described as 'The best specimen of a modern church we have yet seen' in the *Ecclesiologist,* the Journal of the Cambridge Camden Society, founded in 1839 'to promote the study of Gothic Architecture, and of Ecclesiastical Antiques'.

Why was this apparently unassuming little chapel considered the 'best modern church' yet seen? It was not even a parish church when built, but a chapel of ease to the church of St Thomas, sited at the west end of a large working class parish south of the River Exe. The parish church was close to the south end of the Exe bridge. When first built, Exwick consisted only of a chancel, a nave with a west end bellcote, a south porch and a north-east vestry (Figure 1).

When it opened in 1842, Exwick chapel was a key building in an important strand of Devon history. This saw the diocese of Exeter, which covered both Devon and Cornwall until 1877, in the forefront of both a national architectural revival in church architecture and a national Anglican reform. This vanguard position has left Devon with an important legacy of cutting edge Gothic Revival church architecture, designed for reformed Anglican worship – Exwick chapel being a very early example.

The Anglican reform of the 1830s and 1840s is sometimes called 'the Oxford Movement' – several of its leading lights being associated with the university – or 'Tractarianism', after a series of key publications Tracts for the Times, published 1833–1841. In the 19th century it was sometimes called 'Puseyism', usually used as a derogatory term, after one of its leading individuals. Today it is sometimes simply called the High Anglican Revival. Amongst the Oxford figures at its heart were John Keble, John Newman, Edward Bouverie Pusey and Richard Hurrell Froude. *Tracts for the Times* put forward the idea that the Anglican Church, the Roman Catholic church and the Orthodox church were all branches of a single Christian faith with a shared history. They argued that there was a continuous line of Christian authority in all these churches that could be traced

Figure 1. Exwick chapel from the south shortly after construction in an engraving of 1842 by C F Williams, displayed in the church.

Figure 2. Cartoons published in *Punch*. On the left an Oxford student is shown with a papal tiara under his mortarboard, Vol.19, 261. On the right, Mr Punch gets a slippery answer from a Bishop to his good Protestant question: what was the difference between Puseysim and popery? The Bishop replies 'Whichever you like, my little dear.' Vol.20, opp.p.14.

back to the apostles, 'apostolic succession', and they recommended a restoration of liturgical and devotional customs which borrowed from pre-Reformation traditions.

There were divided views about Tractarianism amongst churchmen. Some diocesan bishops, including Bishop Henry Phillpotts of Exeter (bishop 1830–1869), were considered to be supporters, others were critics. There were court cases about the authority of individual clergy and bishops, about nice points of theology and even scuffles between clergymen in churches over whether candles were permissible on an Anglican Communion table. It was not only churchmen who disagreed; everyone, it seems, had an opinion and something to say about the High Anglican Revival. The subject was as pervasive and divisive as Brexit is today. At a folk level there was a gut Protestant hostility in some quarters to Roman Catholicism, or 'popery', or simply 'superstition', as Roman Catholic practices were dubbed by detractors. The belief that the Anglican Church with the monarch at its head was an integral part of national identity was seen as under threat from practices in church and church architecture that were influenced by pre-Reformation models. Passions ran high over what we might consider trifles. In Exeter in 1845 the surplice riots at St Sidwells, Exeter, made the national news. One of the riots involved an estimated 800 people protesting when the incumbent wore a surplice in the pulpit, as recommended by Bishop Phillpotts.

Cartoons in *Punch, or the London Charivari* capture the anxieties of the period (Figure 2). The re-introduction of confession in some churches produced a frisson of horror at the thought of innocent Protestant heiresses whispering their sins, un-chaperoned, to some young upstart cleric from Oxford. The creation of Anglican orders of monks and nuns was particularly controversial. *Punch* cartoons illustrated the anxiety that young women of wealth might be seduced into handing over their inheritance, take the veil and fail to produce heirs (Figure 3). An Anglican order of women, The Society of the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Trinity, was established in Devonport in the late 1840s, the second institution of its kind in the country and very active in working with children in an impoverished area. An aesthetic that delighted in colour and ornament was regarded with

Figure 3. 'The Kidnapper—A Case for the Police. Kidnapper. "There's a beautiful veil!!! Give me your parcel my dear, while you put it on." ' Vol.20, opp.p.138.

Figure 4. Punch cartoon. 'To prevent mistakes, the unilluminated are advised that this is simply the letter A.' Vol.21, p.164.

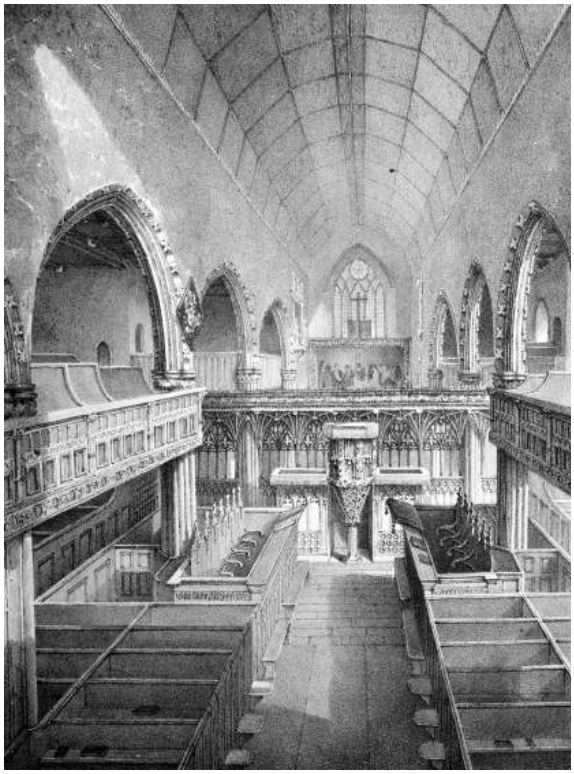


Figure 5. Spreat's engraving of the interior of Dartmouth, looking east, from *Picturesque Sketches of the Churches of Devon*, 1842. Seating arranged around the centrepiece of the pulpit.

suspicion. Medievalising decoration was seen as a distraction of the senses that obscured plain meaning (Figure 4).

Before this dual revival, many pre-Reformation churches had been adapted for services where the pulpit and preaching took pride of place, with inserted galleries and box pews for the audience (Figure 5). The medieval chancel was often functionally redundant, communion being a rare event. The plan of new churches built in the 1830s reflected their 'preaching box' function with short chancels and purpose-built galleries. Windows were often large pointed lancets omitting expensive tracery (Figure 6).

Exwick chapel brought together the two strands of revival and produced a church building revolutionary for the time. It looked medieval externally, drawing on an informed understanding of the medieval style of church architecture. Inside it recreated, in Victorian guise, the feel, fittings and richness of colour and materials of a medieval church, very different from the plain aesthetic of earlier preaching box interiors.

Figure 6. All Saints, Sidmouth, 1837 by J H Taylor in a lancet style. It has lost what were outsize pinnacles.

The chapel was the creation of two young men in their thirties, the Reverend John Medley (1804–1892) who had been vicar of St Thomas for four years and John Hayward (1807–1891) who had been practising architecture in Exeter for seven years. Medley had probably been attracted to the Diocese of Exeter by the presence of Bishop Phillpotts. Unlike many other diocesan bishops, Phillpotts did not object on principle to clergy influenced by the Oxford movement working in his diocese, although he was not a thorough-going Tractarian but rather an old-fashioned high church Anglican. We would now consider Medley a moderate High Churchman (see DBG article in *Newsletter Number 32*, 2014 by Martin Cherry for a summary biography), although some of his contemporaries considered him extreme. A piece published on Christmas Day in 1841 in the *Western Times*, a newspaper with thoroughly anti-High Church views, dubbed him 'A Pusey Priest' and gives a flavour of the objections to the liturgical Anglican Revival:

'He sighs for stone pulpits, raised altars, and stained windows. He is great upon the feasts and fasts of the church, and has delivered a course of lectures to explain all the movements of the faithful in the kneeling, down-sittings and uprisings, performed in the course of the readings of the liturgy. It was also reported that he was an advocate for reverting to a custom generally supposed to have melted away beneath the purifying fires of the protestant reformation, namely the application of "holy ointment" to sick sinners, in order to recover them to health and qualify them for everlasting peace. Here is a considerable step backwards, which... we would not attribute to a divine man receiving the pay of the protestant country, and preaching under the commission of a protestant church – any act so contrary to the general spirit of Protestantism as that of greasing a poor sinner with the ointment either for the purpose of superstitiously leading him to believe that his health will be restored thereby, or his chances of salvation improved.'

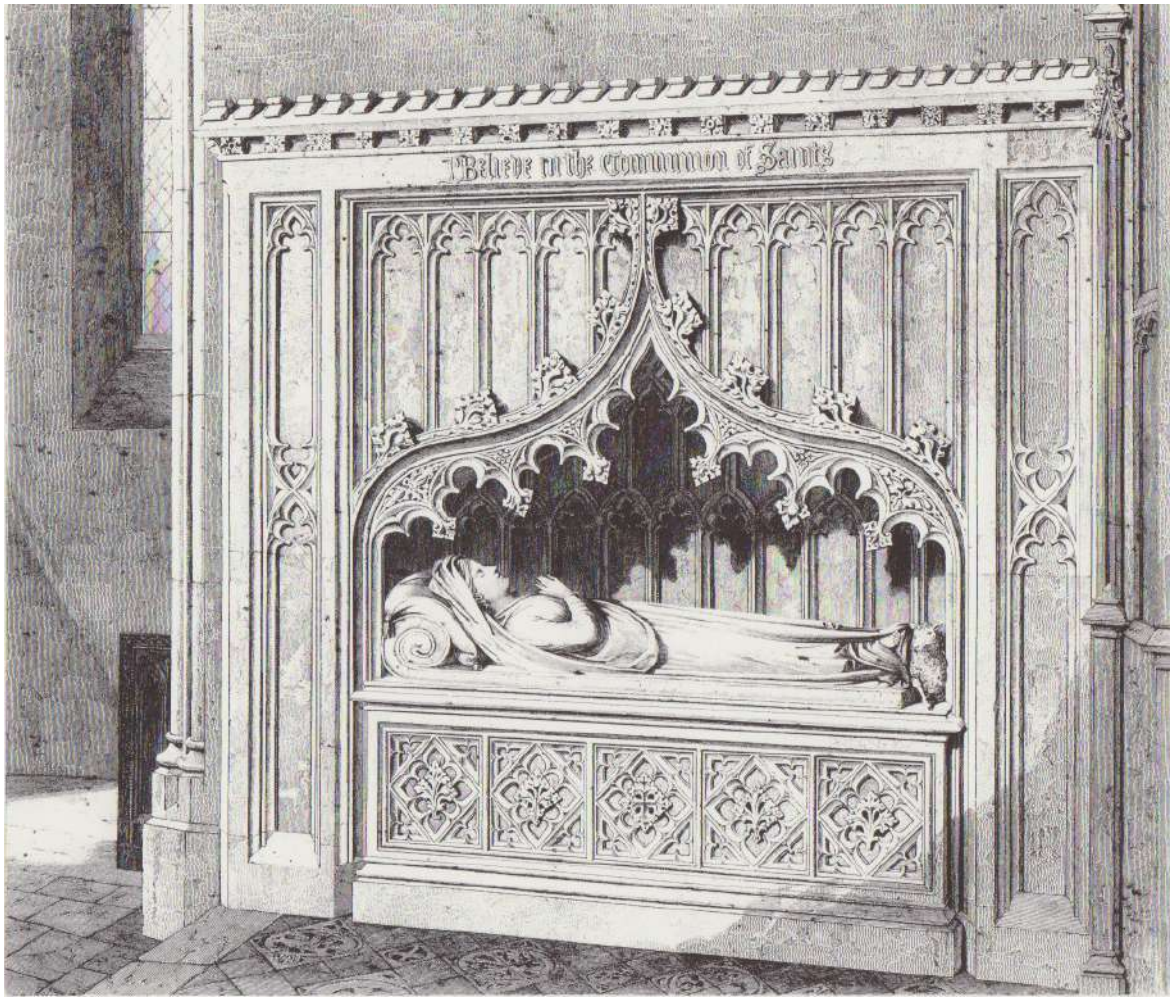
Figure 7. All Saints Blackborough, 1838, to the designs of Hayward (misattributed in Pevsner's *Devon*) for the 4th Earl of Egremont, the spire later. Hayward's earliest new church known to date, demolished. Designed in the lancet style with a shallow chancel. Devon Archives & Local Studies Service, Z19/2/8E/27. Reproduced with kind permission.

Hayward had designed two known new Devon churches before Exwick, both in the lancet style of the 1830s. His church at Blackborough has been demolished (Figure 7) but Tipton St John survives. While Tipton

Figure 8. Tipton St John, 1839–40 by Hayward for the Coleridges of Ottery St Mary: lancet style with a shallow chancel and bellcote.

Figure 9. The interior of Tipton St John, looking west to the rose window and west gallery.

Opposite page. Figure 10, top right. An engraving of Christiana Medley's monument on the north side of the Church of St Thomas. A lifelike effigy designed by her father, the sculptor John Bacon Jnr. in a wall recess with Perpendicular style blind arcading. The monument was praised in journals that supported the Gothic Revival and this engraving was published in Exeter in a pamphlet accompanied by a memorial poem, 'The Sculptor's Daughter' (*Exeter Flying Post*, 22.09.1842). Figure 11, bottom right. A detail of the figure of Christiana Medley by her father. This is in the manner of Chantrey's earlier emotional portrait sculptures. Unfortunately it has been painted grey at some unknown date, like all the masonry of the Medley/Hayward scheme except the altar.


I Believe in the Communion of Saints

St John has a very pretty traceried rose window in its west end, no one would mistake its exterior for a medieval building (Figure 8). It is a box on plan with a very short chancel and large paired lancets in the nave. Inside it has a west gallery and a very un-medieval tie beam roof (Figure 9). Exwick is so different from either Blackborough or Tipton St John that Medley must be reckoned its co-designer with Hayward.

Immediately before Exwick, the two men had worked together on a very personal project of Medley's at St Thomas's church. Medley must have loathed the look of his church when he arrived in 1838. It had box pews, galleries and a shallow chancel of lightweight construction, all the work of the architect and mason Andrew Patey between 1829–30. It was about as far as it could possibly be from the kind of architecture Medley was keen to promote. The rented box pews must have been a particular sore point, bringing social distinctions into a place where a churchman like Medley wanted the congregation to look, and be, equal before God. Judging from the minutes of vestry meetings, he overcame conservative opposition to the changes he made at St Thomas by paying for most of them himself, but in his time as incumbent was able only to make real changes to the sanctuary. His plans for this coincided in 1841 with the death of his wife, Christiana, mother to eight children, aged only 34. Medley combined the refurbishment of the sanctuary of his church with a memorial to his wife with fittings and texts that emphasised faith, communion and resurrection. It included an effigy of Christiana, carved by her father, the sculptor John Bacon Jn., then living in retirement in Exeter. The monument is outstanding historically as the first example of a Gothic Revival monument combining a recumbent effigy and tomb recess in thoroughgoing Gothic style (Figures 10, 11). It is also very personal and moving, its presence felt throughout the refurbished sanctuary. This was treated as an overall design with a stone reredos, stone wall panelling with carved texts, tiling, stained glass and an exquisitely-carved stone altar (Figures 12, 13). The altar was a controversial fitting at the time. In contrast to the wooden communion table, it re-linked Anglican communion with pre-Reformation Roman Catholic mass and its legality was in doubt. As far as this author knows, this was the second post-Reformation stone altar in Devon. The first was provided for Dartington in 1836 by Hurrrell Froude, a key figure in the Oxford movement and son of the Archdeacon of Totnes.

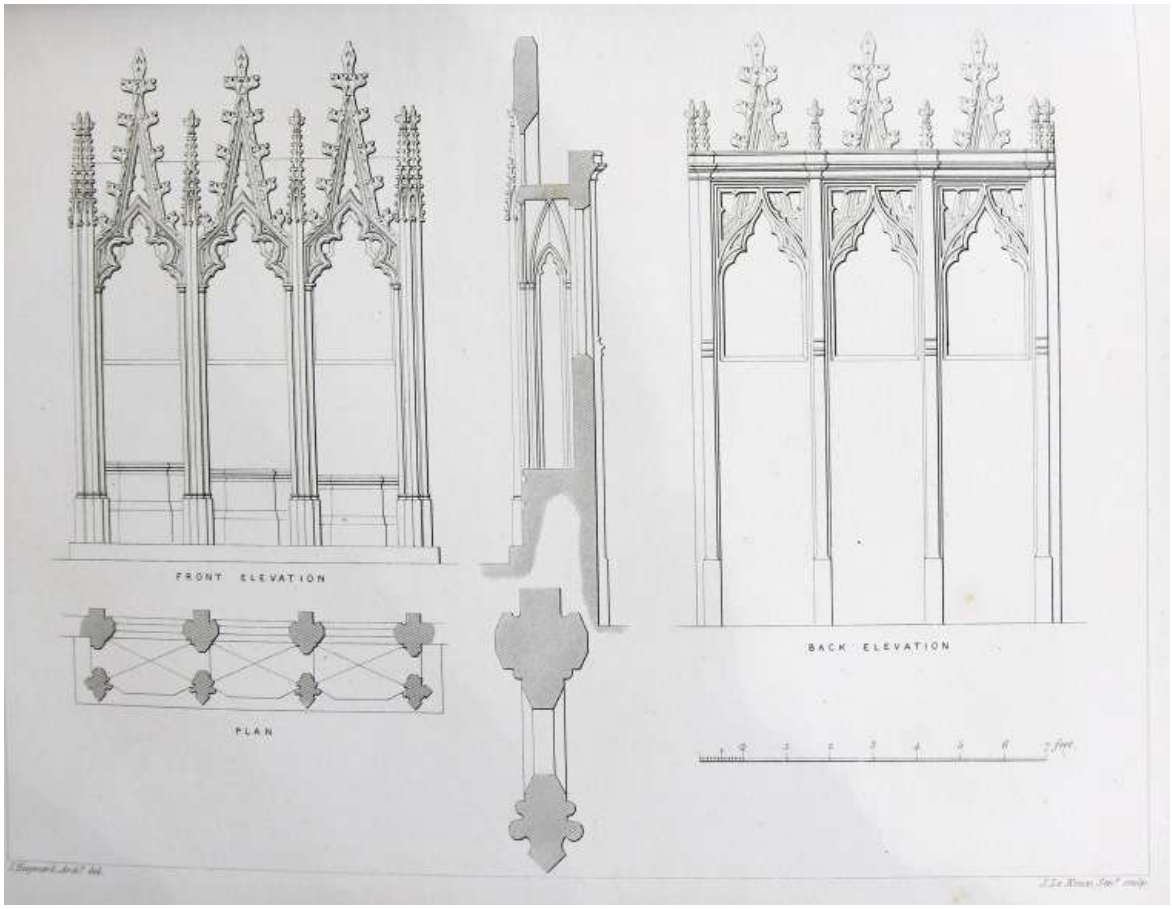
Figure 12. The St Thomas sanctuary, lined with carved stonework and running texts in Gothic black letter style affirming faith and belief in the Resurrection.

Figure 13. The altar and reredos at St Thomas. Diapering under the gables of the reredos has been painted over.

A visitor to St Thomas in 1843 expressed what many conservative Anglicans must have felt: 'furniture and ornaments which have been introduced during the incumbency of the present vicar are in a style corresponding with the pointed architecture, but are derogatory to the simplicity which ought to characterize a Protestant place of worship' (Davidson, 1843).

The new sanctuary at St Thomas's can hardly have been completed when Exwick chapel was begun. Just as important to Exwick was another project in which Medley and Hayward worked together: the establishment of the Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society in 1841. The early history of this society and its membership has been covered in detail by Martin Cherry in the DBG *Newsletter Number 32.* It was the first society of its kind outside Cambridge and Oxford and the first to be founded on a diocesan basis. Medley was described as its 'virtual founder' and was its first secretary. It provided a meeting point for clergy, architects and patrons sympathetic to the revival of Gothic church architecture: some, but not all, were keen Tractarians. If we look at a few samples from the first volume of its transactions, put together while Exwick was being built but not published until 1843, we find Hayward and two of the pupils in his office out and about in Devon making measured drawings of local medieval church fittings. 15 of the 18 plates in the first volume were produced by his office. These included the sedilia at Ottery St Mary and the sedilia in Exeter Cathedral (Figure 14). The plates exemplify the kind of high-class, hand-drawn (of course) church archaeology promoted by the Cambridge Camden Society and, from the early 1840s, providing models of medieval church architecture and fittings that architects could employ, or use as inspiration in new church buildings.

Exwick was built in the Decorated Gothic style. Hayward was the architect, Moore of St Thomas the main contractor. All the stone carving in the chapel was executed by Simon Rowe. Rowe had been appointed Exeter cathedral stonemason in 1833 and was busy about the restoration of the cathedral's west front image screen in 1837–39 (*pers.comm.* John Allan). The walls of the chapel are volcanic stone, the dressings and interior masonry of Caen stone, apart from the altar. Many of the details of Exwick are the product of church archaeology as it was promoted by the



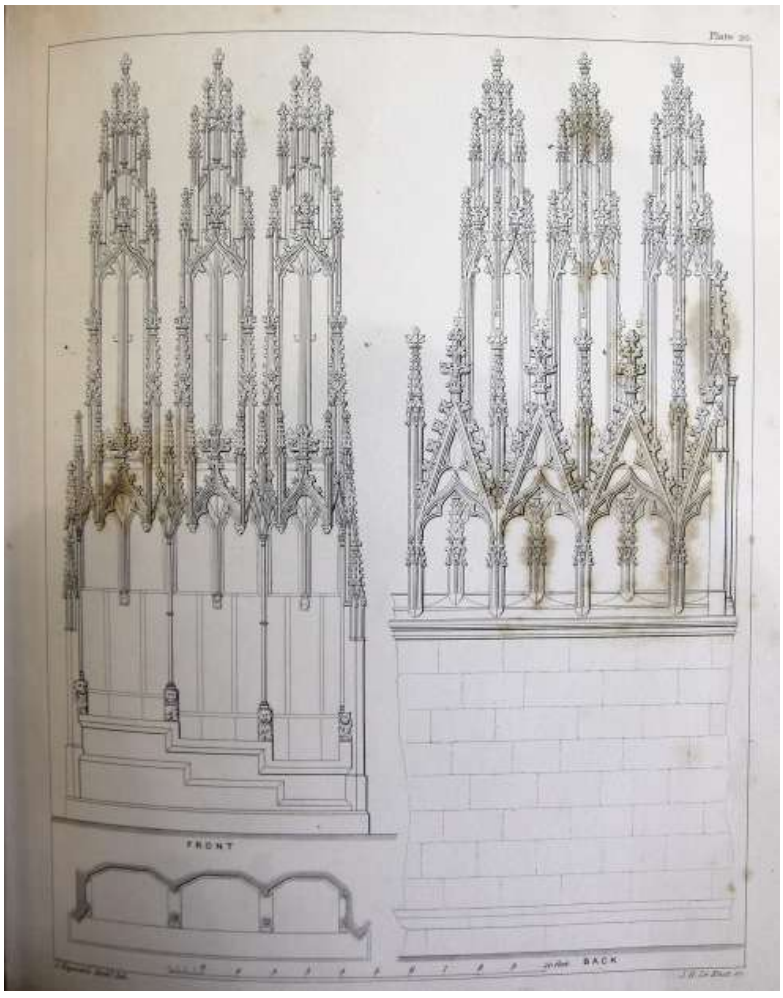


Figure 14. Drawings of the Ottery St Mary, top, and Exeter cathedral sedilia, bottom, measured and drawn by Hayward's office and published in 1843 in the first volume of the *Transactions of the Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society*. The Ottery engraving was presented to the Society as a gift by Hayward. It was drawn by his pupil, Wills.

Figure 15. Hayward's canted wagon roof in the nave of Exwick. The original painted decoration with texts was re-painted in the 1870s. The tie beam was reluctantly included by Hayward on the insistence of a grant-awarding body.

Cambridge Camden Society. Its east window design was adapted from a medieval window design at Broughton church, Oxfordshire. Inside, Exwick has a canted boarded wagon roof (Figure 15) quite unlike Tipton St John. This was redecorated in the 1870s but the original was also painted and decorated with texts. The tie beams were reluctantly included by Hayward as a condition of grant-aid from an organisation which believed then that tie beams were essential, otherwise a church would fall down.

The reredos is a beautifully-carved Gothic frame to panels that originally incorporated texts (Figure 16). In the 1840s, the hangover from the strictures against superstitious images during the reign of Edward VI would have made it impossible to provide figurative sculpture work in the reredos. We can speculate that Simon Rowe's familiarity with the medieval Gothic of Exeter

Figure 16. The 1841 stone reredos at Exwick, carved by Simon Rowe with bays of nodding ogee arches and pinnacles. There were originally texts within the arches, the mosaics are later. Rowe also carved the altar.

Figure 17. The interior of Exwick looking east. The pulpit is accessed from the vestry. The arcade on the left is an addition.

cathedral and Hayward's record drawings of medieval sedilia produced for *TEDAS* were influential in its design. There is an exquisitely-carved Painswick stone altar of 1842, its concentrated and minutely-carved detail very like the altar at St Thomas's. This came in for particular criticism. A newspaper correspondent described it as 'treacherously introduced'. 'The Protestant Church does not admit of the altar at all... and our Protestant forefathers took care that the very word 'altar' should be expunged from the prayer book' (*Western Times*, 08.04.1845). The stone pulpit is firmly relegated to a subsidiary position, entered from the vestry. There are no box pews but open benches and all the seating was free, keeping visible social distinctions out of the church, very important to High Anglicans (Figure 17). The first volume of the *TEDAS* included an article by Medley on 'Open Seats' which explains the choice of free seats in Exwick and his relatively moderate position on this controversial matter. The font, carved by Rowe, like a font installed by Medley at St Thomas, was loosely-based on a late medieval font at Beverley St Mary in York (Figure 18), this one an elongated version. In 1843, the cathedral acquired a similar font

Figure 18. Exwick's font, left, carved by Simon Rowe and loosely based on the late medieval font at Beverley St Mary, Yorkshire, above, but with the proportions re-thought. The idea of medieval 'models' for features and fittings of the 1840s was often a case of inspiration rather than copyism.

(this has disappeared since), also designed by Hayward and carved by Rowe. The bronzed and gilt iron communion rails (replaced in the 1870s) were based on medieval railings placed around the tomb of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey. The oak eagle lectern was loosely-based on the early 14th century lectern made for the cathedral but moved to Medley's church at St Thomas in the 1840s, presumably because he found it neglected (Figure 19).

Figure 19. The oak eagle lectern at Exwick, left. This is not mentioned in the newspaper accounts of the opening of the chapel and may have arrived after the church was opened in 1842 along with texts decorating the chancel walls. The lectern is loosely based on Exeter Cathedral's early 14th century lectern, designed by Thomas Witney, right. This was moved to the church of St Thomas in the 1840s. To date, no documentation has been discovered for this transfer. Presumably Medley, who was appointed a prebendary of the cathedral in 1842, found it neglected and the Dean and Chapter did not object. It has recently been returned to the cathedral.

The east window stained glass was by William Wailes of Newcastle, the leading Gothic stained glass maker at the time and was 'based on an old example from York'. Stained glass in the west window and south windows of the chancel was by a local glazier, Robert Beer. This glass is in the sharp colours of the early revived stained glass made before the Victorians had discovered techniques for producing softer colours. The figures are painterly and shaded to denote three dimensional depth rather than exploiting the flat transparency of the medium (Figure 20) in which later Victorian glass painters became so skilled. Beer provided this glass partly free of charge to showcase what were, at that date, rare local skills in church stained glass. He turned out to be the first of a dynasty of Devon stained glass makers. His near relatives in the later 19th century were the Drake family, Exeter cathedral glaziers and experts on historic stained glass, advising the Victorian and Albert Museum on their collections.

Figure 20. A detail of the surviving Beer glass in the west window, mother and child.

The outer doorway of the south porch incorporates carvings of Queen Victoria and Bishop Phillpotts (Figure 21). Perhaps the representation of the head of state and of the established protestant church, partnered by her diocesan bishop, was intended to convey a message of 'no popery here' to worried or hostile Protestants. Nevertheless, the richness and colour of the interior fittings caused near apoplexy from a newspaper correspondent signing himself Anglicanae Ecclesiae Vindex (Champion of the Anglican Church). The piece quoted extensively from 'Against Peril of Idolatory' from the Second Book of Homilies by Bishop Jewell, published in 1571, describing what were deemed by the 16th century reformers to be false religious practices. Exwick was compared with Ide church:

'...the simple, plain, unadorned, yet clean and commodious Church of the parish of Ide is vastly more in accordance with the doctrine, spirit and precept of the Church than is the finical, gaudy, golden, painted cabalistic enigmatised, sculptured, *idol* chapel of Exwick' (*Western Times,* 13.11.1847).

Figure 21. Queen Victoria and Bishop Phillpotts carved as dripstone terminals to the outer doorway of the porch. The inner doorway retains a text, painted on tin, a survivor of the texts that decorated Hayward's original interior design but have been lost to later alterations.

Figure 22. The Bishops of London, Oxford and Exeter represented getting their fingers burned on the red hot poker of 'Puseyism'. Phillpotts is shown wearing the surplice, a reference to the 1845 surplice riots in St Sidwells which followed his instruction for clergy to wear the surplice in the pulpit. Punch cartoon, Vol.19, opp.p.236.

The ripples of hostility to the 1840s revivals extended far into the high Victorian period. Eventually, Bishop Phillpotts found himself having to draw back from some of his toleration of the Oxford-influenced clergymen in Devon. A *Punch* cartoon shows him as one of three Bishops getting his fingers burnt by the red hot poker of Puseysim (Figure 22).

Medley was appointed Bishop of Fredericton in Canada in 1845. He masterminded the building of a new cathedral there employing an architect trained in Hayward's office, Wills, who had drawn the Ottery sedilia published in the first volume of *TEDAS*. Yet another font based on the Beverley example was installed in the new cathedral. On the strength of Exwick, Hayward was commissioned to build what was considered the first 'correct' (in High Anglican terms) church in Scotland, at Jedburgh and later on, provided Devon with a long list of new churches and restorations in the county and the brilliant Venetian Gothic Royal Albert Memorial Museum. The jury is out on the extent to which he was personally an advocate of the High Church movement, or an able architect/businessman who saw that it provided wealthy patrons. He added new box pews to Whimple church as late as 1845, at the same time as he was rebuilding Sowton church in perfect Tractarian fashion for John Garratt of Bishop's Court, Clyst St Mary, a church which has retained its 1840s interior almost perfectly intact. As Cherry notes, he worked on Pembroke College, Oxford in 1848 for a vigorously Evangelical Master and designed a number of churches in the Channel Islands that were Low Church in character (Cherry, 2014, 30-31).

In 1872–73 Exwick chapel was enlarged as a parish church, the work funded by the Exeter-born guano millionaire, William Gibbs of Tyntesfield. Gibbs was a supporter of the Tractarians and had funded the church of St Michael, Dinham Road, Exeter in 1865–68. Hayward was once again the architect, Moass and Son the main contractor. Tastes in church architecture had changed since the chapel was first built. The Gothic Revival had become more expansive, more open to continental Gothic influences, less preoccupied with the adaptation of medieval 'models' and more lavish and sensuous in its use of materials and decoration. It is interesting to see what Hayward kept and what was altered of his original design, 30 years later. It is also striking to see how the demand for revived Gothic architecture, newly-minted in 1842 had, by the 1870s, generated successful and established businesses in Victorian Gothic fittings, some with an international reputation.

The chancel was enlarged by a bay (Figure 23) – the *Ecclesiologist* had criticised it for being too short in 1842 – but the original reredos frame was re-sited in the east wall, along with the exterior stone plaque recording the primary date of consecration. The texts in the reredos were replaced in 1875 by fashionable glittering pictorial Salviati mosaics made in Murano, Venice (Figure 24). The east window by Wailes was replaced with one by the Hardman Company of Birmingham, who produced windows for churches all over the country. The new window makes use of the subtle colours and accomplished leadwork of the High Victorian period. Hayward enlarged the

Figure 23. Exwick church in 2018. Comparison with the engraving of the chapel in 1842 (see Figure 1) shows that the chancel has been lengthened by a bay, Hayward carefully repeating the style of the original and, inside, re-siting the carved stone frame of the reredos on the new east wall.

building by adding a north aisle with an arcade of lush polished local limestone piers with prettily-carved capitals (Figure 25). All the 1870s stone carving was by Harry Hems of Exeter. Hems had come to Exeter from Sheffield to work as a carver on Hayward's Royal Albert Memorial Museum in 1868 and would go on to establish carving workshops in London and Ireland as well as in Exeter and to exhibit carved work internationally. The roofs were repainted, the chancel roof with delightful illustrations of the Benedicite, 'O all ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord' (Figure 26). The new sanctuary roof was painted with angels. According to a newspaper report, the alleys were re-tiled with tiles from 'Messrs Morris and Co from Breseley'. This is puzzling and may be in error for Maw and Co., Broseley, in Shropshire. The wood carving was

Figure 24. The texts of the original reredos design were replaced by fashionable figurative mosaics by Salviati in 1875.

Figure 25. Hayward's 1873/4 north aisle with an arcade of local polished limestone piers with Bath stone arches and carved capitals by Harry Hems, including passion flowers. The font, pulpit and reredos of the 1842 scheme were retained.

Figure 26. The chancel roof was repainted with panels illustrating the Benedicite, with panels depicting the sun and moon, mountains and hills, winds etc. At about the same time, Farmer and Brindley were using the same source (very differently interpreted) for the theme of carvings on the choir stalls in Exeter cathedral, part of Gilbert Scott's 1870s restoration.

by Mr Sendell, who subsequently worked with Hayward on the restoration of St Michael's church, Alphington, in 1878. William Gibbs would have liked a tower, for which Hayward produced designs (Figure 27), but this project was obstructed by the owner of the strip of land on which it was proposed to build.

It is regrettable that the original Exwick chapel, so highly praised in the *Ecclesiologist* and so passionately criticised in the *Western Morning News*, was altered in the 1870s and so many of its primary fittings and primary decoration lost. Nevertheless, it remains a very important monument to Devon's special role in the national Anglican and Gothic Revivals and to two of its leading figures, who we have to thank for the *Transactions of the Exeter Diocesan Architectural Society*, John Medley and John Hayward.

Jo Cox

Figure 27. Hayward's drawing of the planned tower at Exwick that was never built. Devon Archive and Local Studies Service, 3336A/PW/2e/1. Reproduced with kind permission.

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Castle Primary School – could do better?

Castle Primary school was a handsome two-storey building of 1910, situated in a conservation area in Tiverton, which also contains other buildings of the same period. The school is situated in an area of considerable social, educational and economic deprivation, and formed a unity with The Wilderness and the Central Devon Academy buildings. The school was not listed, but was designated by Mid Devon District Council as an “important unlisted building”.

In 2015, Castle Primary school was selected by the then Education Funding Agency (EFA) as part of a package of redevelopment in the south west of England. A consultation was announced in November 2015, receiving very mixed public feedback over the proposed demolition and replacement of the school. Early in 2016, it was made public that it would be demolished, and a firm of architects had been selected, with EFA finance in place.

I visited the school in the company of the EFA project manager, and Tiverton Civic Society chairman Jeremy Salter. At that time, and subsequently, I remained convinced that the physical condition of the school, such as a leaking roof containing asbestos, high ceilings, large classrooms, distance to toilets and split level top corridor, could be easily solvable by conventional architectural expertise. Having discussed this issue with an architectural technician, I remained

convinced that Castle Primary School could be redeveloped economically and easily, by demolishing all but the visually interesting shell, and rebuilding within that shell so as to suit the educational requirements of primary school-aged children. As an extreme example of that process, I had in mind the former Grant's department store in Croydon, south London, where the Grade II listed façade of a Victorian building had been (largely) retained, and a modern shopping mall and multiplex cinema built within it. A few feet from the school in Barrington Street, the rebuild of the modern Blagdon's Almshouses behind the façade retained after the fire of 1833, demonstrates this principle perfectly.

I spoke at the Planning Committee meeting of Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) to object to the demolition of the old school building, and made my point that my preferred option – demolition but retention of the façade – had been considered by EFA, but the financial case was alleged to be commercially confidential, even if the details were to be sought under a Freedom of Information request (FOI). I battled for over a year, including pressing a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) via a London barrister, to make the case for retention of the façade, with complete demolition and redevelopment of the interior, and for the relative costs of each scheme of development to be revealed. During that year, demolition of the old Castle School building proceeded apace.

Finally in summer 2017, after repeated bureaucratic delays by both ICO and my solicitors, the deputy director of EFA (by now the Education Funding and Skills Agency) revealed the actual costs of demolition and rebuilding the school – those costs which the project manager told the author would under no circumstances be revealed during his visit on 24 May 2016. The corresponding figures for the other development schemes were not disclosed. The total capital cost at first quarter 2016 (excluding ICT equipment) was £5,607,508.00. EFA's incomplete figures do though contain some discussion of the estimated additional costs involved if another scheme were followed – this centres mainly on the cost of temporary accommodation:

> Given that the new build option was selected as the preferred option, we did not develop detailed costs for the refurbishment option. However, we were aware that the cost of temporary accommodation would be a significant factor and added further weight to the argument that a refurbishment option should not be taken forward.

The estimated costs included were £780,000, or 14% of the cost of demolition and rebuild.

By early 2018, the old building had been entirely demolished, and its pupils moved into the new school, built in the former playground. This new school consists of a steel girder framework covered with undistinguished cladding. What now of the process by which this development occurred? By using a FoI request, I was able to obtain the costs of demolition and development. These costs had been withheld by EFA on the grounds of commercial confidentiality, but when the costs were eventually disclosed, they revealed nothing that would recommend such confidentiality. This raises the question of why Mid Devon District Council followed such a dubious assertion.

The objective merits of the various courses of development were not considered in equal depth – in particular the option of retaining the external shell was dismissed superficially. No proper assessment occurred within EFA of the savings to be made by retaining the shell of the old school, versus the additional costs of temporary accommodation. It is in the author's view indisputable that Tiverton has now been deprived of the principal building of architectural interest from the Edwardian period; in its place is a building of no architectural merit whatever, whose financing was rendered opaque by bureaucratic delay and obfuscation. That finance, being derived from taxpayers' money, is public, and thus of legitimate public interest.

John Massey

Castle Primary School, Tiverton: The DBG's Involvement.

The DBG alongside John Massey, the author of the above account, objected strongly to the proposed demolition of the Castle School building. Because Mid Devon's own conservation officer was connected to one of the school governors and could not therefore be considered impartial, Mid Devon took advice from another council's conservation officer. The case for retention of the existing school building was very strong: the conservation area had quite recently

been enlarged specifically to include it; it was a handsome building which unarguably contributed to the character of this conservation area; and had been designated by the council as an Important Unlisted Building; it had very good historical connections with the town having been built as its grammar school; the proposed replacement building was of indifferent quality; and the comparative costs cited for replacement versus refurbishment were considered to be doubtful. All these facts were set out in the report commissioned from the other council and one would have anticipated this would result in the applications being refused, but in the same report – and quite out of context – was included the fatal and quite unjustified sentence: *I would consider this proposal to demonstrate less than substantial harm on the conservation area.*

This was seized upon by the writer of the committee report and enabled the planning committee to allow the demolition of the building. Even without this helpful inclusion, it is likely that the application would have been approved as by the time the application was submitted, the juggernaut had advanced so far that the Education Funding Agency were indicating that there would not be any possibility of using the funding to revamp the existing building – it was a new building or nothing. With that sort of pressure, and with no one else but ourselves and John Massey objecting, it is hard to see a planning committee standing on principle and rejecting demolition; effectively they were blackmailed into agreeing. Proposals for the new building had been mooted a couple of years before the application was made and it might have been possible to flag up an objection at this stage rather than waiting for a formal application. It is regrettable that we did not do this and it is a lesson for the future that one should get involved at the earliest point. It is curious and surprising in fact that Mid Devon themselves, who must have been consulted at this early stage, did not themselves flag up a conservation objection. A subsequent complaint by this Group to the EFA was stone-walled back. It is all too late now and Tiverton has been deprived of a significant, attractive and historic building.

Peter Child

The Victorian Country Houses of Devon

When asked if I would contribute an article on Devon's Victorian country houses, the editor commented that they had been 'rather neglected' by previous DBG newsletters. Curious to know more, a quick trawl through the contents pages of all newsletters since the first was published in 1986 revealed that the subject had been totally neglected! Farmhouses and humble rural buildings from earlier centuries had enjoyed by far the greatest coverage followed by churches and urban architecture, leaving studies of some particular topics related to the country house a long way behind, just ahead of schools, bridges, military establishments and hospitals.

This lack of appreciation is nothing new. In 1952, in his introduction to the first edition of *Devon*, Pevsner selected only three early 19th century country houses – Glenthorne, Lee Abbey and Watermouth Castle, all in north Devon and none of the first rank. From the later 19th century he chose Knightshayes Court, which is dismissed in only one short paragraph in the main text, and two houses by Ernest George – Rousdon and Stoodleigh, each given the briefest of descriptions. Rousdon was also damned for being 'grim Franco-Flemish'.[1] In the main text the only other houses granted more than a cursory two-line description were Eggesford, Fremington, Hall, Huntsham and Stevenstone in north Devon and Blackborough, Flete, Hillersdon, Oldway, Silverton Park and Widworthy in south Devon.

Hoskins, whose great book on Devon was published in 1954, was never a fan of Victorian architecture and his 'life long distaste for unearned privilege'[2] was well known. His unenthusiastic comments on 19th century country houses is therefore unsurprising. The Hon. Mark Rolle, (a popular landlord) he described as, 'The richest man in Devon (who) built himself the ugliest house',[3] a reference to Stevenstone. It was a recurring refrain that he applied to other contemporary houses such as Flete, 'drastically altered… over-rich Tudor',[4] Oldway, 'palatial and opulent'[5] and Rousdon 'rich man's Tudor'.[6] Even Girouard in his trail-blazing book *The Victorian Country House*, first published in 1979, is partly to blame. He listed only seven Victorian houses in Devon (and none in Cornwall!) including two that are long gone – Silverton Park and Winscott, and two that are the remodelling of older houses – Chanters and Flete. That left only Knightshayes and Hall, the latter later described by him as 'dim'.[7]

Redemption finally arrived in 1989 and the second edition of Pevsner's *Devon* with two pages on Victorian country houses in the introduction which include mention of 40 houses either built

Figure 1. Hillersdon House, Cullompton, designed in 1848 for William Grant by the London architect Samuel Beazley whose speciality was the design of theatres. Image from house sale particulars, 1982, Strutt and Parker.

Figure 2. Stevenstone, Great Torrington was the former seat of the Rolle family, photographed here from the south-west in 1907. The 18th century library pavilion, left of the picture, remains. Image from Snell, FJ. Devonshire. W Mate and Sons Ltd. 1907.

de novo or substantially altered. The battle of the styles is described as the common theme, based on the universal Victorian pursuit of historicism in the belief that serious architecture must be inspired by styles of the past. It should be added however that the planning of Victorian mansions also dictated changes from the formality of the 18th century in order to accommodate the exacting complexities of the Victorian household. The house should look impressive while reconciling the owner's private apartment with that of the nursery and guest accommodation besides ensuring the services, no longer crammed into the basement, should be cloistered in a separate wing. Country house architects thus became specialists in the genre.

Two of the most successful, Edward Blore, active 1824 to 1849, and William Burn, active 1817 to 1870, were both represented in Devon but their work has since been victim to fire and rebuilding. Castle Hill was one among 40 houses that feature in Blore's nationwide achievements. There he added a mansard-roofed top storey, new offices and stable wings, a *porte-cochere* and a staircase hall, all in the Palladian tradition. During his long career Burn was even more prolific, at one stage averaging four country houses annually, many in Scotland from where he came. Creedy Park was his only Devon venture, a vast but dull classical-style house equipped with 42 bedrooms. His client was a fellow Scot, Henry Ferguson-Davie.

As the century progressed, the classical style fell out of favour although the Italianate lingered on, for example at Barcombe Hall and Bishopstowe, both built in Torbay, a bastion of Italianate

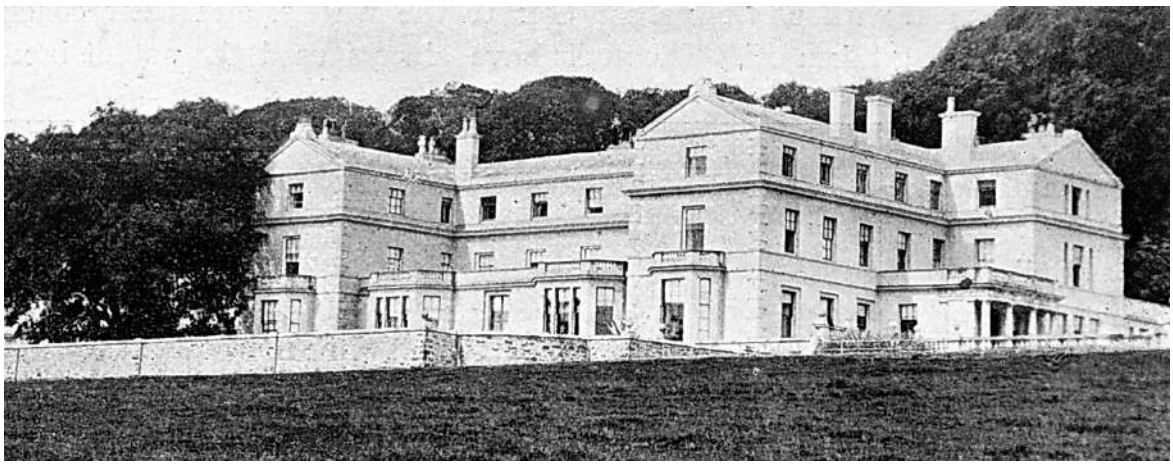

Figure 3. Creedy Park, Crediton was the former seat of the Ferguson-Davie family, designed by William Burn. The building was destroyed by fire in 1915. Image from Snell, FJ. 1907. Devonshire. W Mate and Sons Ltd, lent by Sir W A Ferguson-Davie.

Figure 4. Blackborough House, Cullompton. The 4th Lord Egremont's unconventional house was designed by James Knowles in 1838 and until recently used as a breakers' yard. 2013 (Hugh Meller).

seaside villas, and more extravagantly at the idiosyncratic Blackborough and Marley in east Devon. Most impressive of all was Charles Barry Jnr's Stevenstone, mentioned above, a Franco/Italianate colossus built between 1869 and 1873. It left no doubt that this was the headquarters of the greatest of all Devon landowners – the Hon. Mark Rolle, but its sad decline and eventual abandonment, caused by its remote location and enormous size, has reduced it to one stump of ivy-covered masonry. That leaves Reed Hall in Exeter as the only one of its kind to survive relatively unscathed. Happily, most of its contemporaries in more popular styles have fared better and among them are houses designed by some of the most distinguished Victorian architects.

In the vanguard was George Gilbert Scott whose early designs for workhouses had introduced him to Devon in the 1830s. They may have caught the eye of a local brewer, Thomas Pinsent, who in 1841 commissioned Scott, with his partner William Moffat, to design Pitt House at Chudleigh Knighton. The result was an emphatically Jacobean-style house, quite unlike Scott's later work, and the prelude to several large houses designed by others in the following 50 years with the gothic revival style in the forefront.

William White, a pupil of Scott and with a West Country background, produced the austerely gothic Winscott in 1858 in remote north Devon for the deeply religious Moore-Stevens family. It was followed two years later by his successful remodelling of Bishop's Court with its lavishly decorated gothic interior. Chris Brooks, founder member and Secretary of the DBG, published Bishops Court in 1990 in *Country Life*.[9] Scott himself returned to Devon in 1862 with plans for a new porch and remodelled north wing at Hartland Abbey, this time in uncompromising gothic style.

A.W.N. Pugin's limited influence on Devon's architecture was confined to ecclesiastical subjects apart from an abortive attempt to improve the living quarters at Dartington Hall. However, one architect who knew him well was Benjamin Ferrey. He had trained alongside Pugin and in 1868 he designed Huntsham Court, a stolid gothic house that William Burges may have known when he began work on nearby Knightshayes Court two years later. Knightshayes and Chanters at Ottery,

Figure 5. Winscott was designed by William White in 1858 for the Moore-Stevens family and destroyed in 1931. The lodge is all that remains of the property. 2013 (Hugh Meller).

a rare foray into country house work by William Butterfield, are generally considered the most celebrated of Devon's gothic revival houses but two others should be mentioned.

David Brandon, an architect conversant in a variety of styles, designed the Tudor/gothic Sidbury Manor in 1879 which alone among its peers retains much of its original decoration and furnishings. The other is Rousdon, built at the same time for the Peek family by Ernest

Figure 6. Huntsham Court. The interior of the reception hall photographed in 1907. Image from Snell, FJ, Devonshire in Mate's County Series, 1907, lent by H.L Acland-Troyte.

Figure 7. Rousdon. The south front seen from the walled garden. Designed by Ernest George c1875 for the Peek family. 2012 (Warwick Bergin).

George, a country house specialist and the first of his three houses in Devon. It is unusual for its combination of continental gothic and Old English styles but perfectly illustrates Victorian country house planning with its full complement of reception rooms, a vast array of service quarters and numerous estate buildings in the surrounding 2,500 acres sustained by 600 employees.

Near contemporaries of Rousdon were Broomford at Jacobstowe, and Membland, two houses by George Devey, a leading practitioner of the Old English or vernacular style which became popular

Figure 8. Membland. Architect George Devey's additions, at each end of the 18th century house is distinguished by his characteristic Dutch gables in 1911. Image from house sale particulars, William Gray.

Figure 9. Flete, Holberton. Remodelled in the 1880s by R. Norman Shaw for the Mildmay banking family. 2012 (Peter de Tessier).

as the century progressed. Broomford was built with limited funds, its multi-gabled exterior sheltering unadorned accommodation. Membland, in contrast, remodelled by Devey for the Baring family, included an organ room and a master bedroom decorated in Louis Quinze style.

Another well known champion of the Old English style was Norman Shaw although his remodelling of Flete in a mixture of castellated and Tudor styles is hardly typical of his work. More characteristic might be Twytchen at Mortehoe, described in Pevsner as "A large studiously Old English house".[8] It should be better known since much of the interior survives intact despite the cavalier treatment of the whole property after its conversion into a caravan park. Who designed it remains unknown but descendants of the original owner, George Longstaff, believe it was Shaw, which may be true.

Twytchen was built in 1881, the same year that the Queen Anne-revival style made its impressive debut in Devon with Ernest Newton's Fremington. It was a style rarely found in the south-west where there is no tradition for urban red brick walls and baroque decoration. George's Woodhouse at Uplyme in 1881 and John Belcher's alterations at Tapeley in 1894 are notable exceptions. By then, the Arts and Crafts movement was about to appear in Devon. Edward Prior, who had trained under Shaw, was the architect in 1897 of The Barn at Exmouth employing a revolutionary butterfly plan and building it with local materials. The following year, Daniel Gibson and Thomas Mawson were the creators of Wood at South Tawton which combined the Arts and Crafts house with an exceptional garden.

In 1860, Sir Walter Trevelyan from Northumberland commissioned the Irish architect Benjamin Woodward to design a house above the cliff at Seaton where he owned an estate. It would be an unusual house which, although superficially gothic in style, anticipated the Arts and Crafts preference for local materials which in this case were knapped flint and Beer stone marshalled in a chequer pattern. Before it could be built, however, Woodward was struck down by consumption and it was left to the Axminster architect, Charles Edwards, better known for his ecclesiastical practice, to manage its construction.

Employing a local architect to act as site manager for a principal unable to travel to Devon was not unknown. A journey from London was an arduous undertaking. In the 1830s, at best it took

Figure 10. Fremington is a Queen Anne-revival style house designed by Ernest Newton for Eliza Yeo in 1881. 2012 (Peter de Tessier).

over 16 hours by coach on the main road to Exeter and a further five hours to reach Plymouth. The first steam railway to Exeter was completed in 1843 and to Plymouth in 1848 but north Devon only became accessible by rail at the end of the century. As Hoskins pointed out, distances in Devon were so great that roads, often hazardous, never went out of use. Thus, Richard Gould from Barnstaple supervised the building of Hall, the Chichester family house at Bishops Tawton. It had been designed by Philip Hardwick but he was unable to travel from his London office for heath reasons. Similarly, Paris Singer's choice of architects for the grandiose remodelling of Oldway in the late 1890s were Henri and Achille Duchene who enjoyed a vast practice in France. It was therefore left to J.H. Cooper, a local man, to act as site architect.

There was certainly no shortage of local talent available although their names may now be unfamiliar. In 1850, William White's Devonshire gazetteer listed 10 architects in Plymouth, nine in Exeter and four in Torquay. By 1890, the number had risen to a county total of 76, reflecting the emergence of architects as a recognisable professional class. (The Institute of British Architects

Figure 11. Hall. The image shows the garden front with the great hall wing to the left. It was designed by Philip Hardwick in 1844 as the Chichester family house. Image from Snell, FJ. 1907. Devonshire. W Mate and Sons Ltd. 1907, lent by Mrs Chichester.

Figure 12. High Bullen entrance front, built in 1879 by William Moore of Exeter, for himself. 2012. (Peter de Tessier).

(I.B.A.) was founded in 1837, becoming the Royal Insitue of British Architects (R.I.B.A.) in 1866). It is a figure not far short of the current total. Moreover, during the Victorian period, about one quarter of over 100 country houses built or extensively remodelled in Devon were designed by local architects. Prominent among them were Edward Harbottle (1844–1927) and John Hayward (1808–91). Both were heavily involved with ecclesiastical commissions but between them, they also produced at least 10 country houses.

Harbottle's work is best illustrated by High Bullen (1879) at Chittlehampton. The house, now a hotel, reveals his preference for the Old English style with a few gothic elements added, as might be expected of an architect who became

Figure 13. Calverleigh Court. Elevations of the east and west fronts designed by George Wightwick in 1844 for Joseph Nagle. Image from R.I.B.A. Drawings, Wightwick Collection, Vol.1, f. 43.

Figure 14. Bishop's Court. The stencilled reception hall, designed by William White for John Garratt in 1860. 2013 (Hugh Meller).

surveyor of Exeter Cathedral. Hayward is remembered for remodelling two outstanding earlier houses, Bradfield and Holcombe Court, in a straightforward neo-Tudor style during the 1860s.

One other local architect deserving special mention is George Wightwick (1802–72). He was educated in London and, for a few months in 1826–7, enjoyed the privilege of working for the elderly Sir John Soane before transferring to Plymouth and a partnership with John Foulston, who was due to retire. The majority of Wightwick's buildings are in Cornwall and Plymouth, designed in a variety of styles reflecting the picturesque tradition. They include gothic churches, classical civic premises and Italianate town houses. The same variety of styles is apparent in his six country houses built throughout the county between 1833 and 1849: Tudor gothic at Hazeldon (Tavistock)

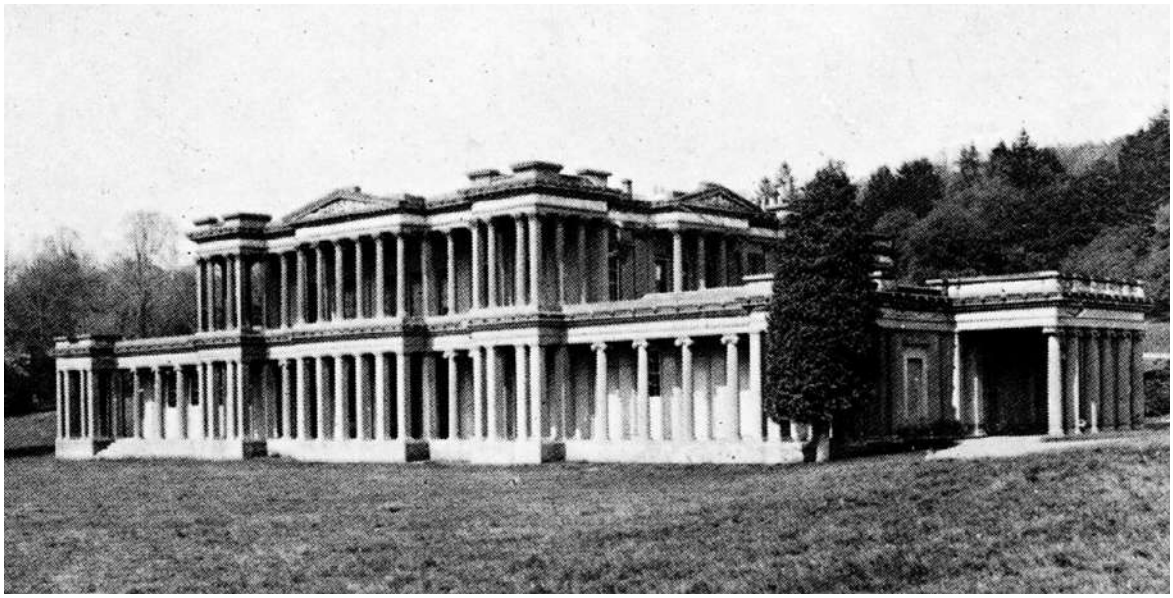

Figure 15. Silverton Park. The unfinished mansion designed in 1838 by James Knowles for the 4th Lord Egremont and dynamited in 1901. Image from Snell, FJ, Devonshire, W Mate and Sons Ltd, 1907, taken c1895.

and Tristford (Harberton), classical at Brixton (near Plymouth), Calverleigh Court (Calverleigh) and Lupton (Brixham) and castellated at Watermouth Castle (Ilfracombe).

Variety also applies to the current usage of the estimated 100 surviving Victorian houses. Perhaps the most surprising statistic reveals that almost half remain as private homes although only a dozen are still owned by the families that built them. The most common alternatives are conversions into multi-occupancy and hotels, and there are approximately 20 of each. A few others have become nursing homes and schools. Knightshayes is owned by the National Trust and is one of three listed grade 1. The other two are Bishops Court and Flete. Twelve are listed grade 2*.

Finally, there is a melancholy list of an unlucky 13 houses now destroyed [as featured in an article by Hugh Meller for Devon Buildings Group Newsletter 29, published Summer 2011]. It would be an exaggeration to suggest that the loss of every one is an architectural disaster but some will undoubtedly be mourned. Who could resist encountering the sheer size of Stevenstone dominating the north Devon landscape or the extraordinary richness of the interiors at Dulford at Kentisbeare and Marley Lodge at Withycombe Raleigh, so alien to the Devon tradition. And for sheer fantasy, there was Silverton Park. Had it not been dynamited in 1901, it could have survived as Devon's equivalent to the Parthenon!

Hugh Meller

Endnotes

1 Pevsner, N. *The Buildings of England, Devon,* 1st. edn.1952, p.252.
2 Hoskins, W. *Devon*, 2nd. edn. 2003, p. xvii.
3 ibid, p. 469.
4 ibid, p. 409.
5 ibid, p. 450.
6 ibid, p. 375.
7 Girouard, M. *Memorandum to the Victorian Society,* typescript, 1971.
8 Pevsner, N. *The Buildings of England, Devon,* 2nd edn. 2003, p.579.
9 *Country Life*, Vol. 184 (7) p. 54–8.

Devon castles, Okehampton castles and the study of regional building
Summary of talk given at Devon Buildings Group AGM, October 21st 2018. Charter Hall, Okehampton

Two limitations of castles as sources for studying medieval buildings in Devon were emphasised. First, at only a small proportion of the castle sites do any buildings survive at all. At the numerous early earthwork sites of timber and/or cob castles, nothing stands above ground. The same applies at most of the later sites built following receipt of a licence to crenellate. The substantial masonry remains at Totnes, Lydford, Okehampton, Tiverton, Bickleigh, Powderham, Berry Pomeroy, Hemyock and Compton were briefly reviewed. Second, these remains are predominantly from around 1300 onwards. Exeter's gatehouse of the 1070s and Lydford's re-built donjon of the mid-later 13th century are exceptions. Thus, our view of the subject is skewed in content and chronology.

The talk included a review of traditional interpretations of regionality in pre-modern building. This emphasises reliance on local materials and craftsmen at vernacular level but allows for progressive release from this restriction further up the social scale with building patrons affording transport of non-local stones and employment of craftsmen with wider experience. This model is used to explain (I) commonly-found regional traits in the style of vernacular secular building and in parish churches and (II) occurrence of traits with non-local origin in manor houses, castles and greater churches. In Devon's castles, this model of explanation is broadly true but is not a comprehensive explanation of the data. First, the distribution of wealth amongst the medieval aristocracy and

gentry was not geographically uniform: thus, in late medieval Devon, for example, the Courtenays were dominant but were not amongst the small group of England's most wealthy families. Second, even where relative wealth permitted transport of non-local buildings stones, there was still a great reliance on local materials. To continue the Courtenay analysis, at Okehampton castle the granite, metamorphic and shale were found adjacent to the site, some materials (aplite and pyroclastic) were from only a few miles west and only the Beer stone of the gatehouse vault was from any longer distance.

While richer patrons and their masons were open to wider influences, it is recognised that medieval castles could show favoured designs within particular regions. In the south west, the popularity of very large mottes, as found at Okehampton, Totnes (Devon) and Launceston, Trematon (Cornwall) has been noted. This is true, but there were also plenty of middling and smaller size. Shell-keeps are also said to be a 'south-western' style, as found at Totnes and Trematon and (in different form) at Launceston, Plympton and Barnstaple. Nevertheless, they did not dominate castle design here and were found all over England. Some evidence of emulation may be seen. The double structure on a 16th century view of Plympton motte *may* have been 14th century Courtenay work (as Okehampton and Tiverton) inspired by the earl of Cornwall's double structure on the motte at Launceston. All these works, financed by the dual Courtenay-de Redvers inheritance of the 1290s, were intended to show Hugh Courtenay's suitability for the comital title which he was eventually granted.

Okehampton castle was described, from its 11th century origin to 16th century decline. Its original design (Baldwin de Meules), it second (early Courtenays) and final design (later Courtenays) were all different: we should talk (as elsewhere) of Okehampton castles (plural), though site topography always influenced the evolving designs. In every phase it had something of note. In the 11th century, a massive motte and unusual stone donjon; in the later 12th, a new (eastern) bailey layout; and from around 1300 onwards, a rebuild of donjon and bailey, with high-quality accommodation including a row of three, first-floor lodgings which were at the fore-front of English developments (cf., later, Dartington). From the north, a curtain wall and gatehouse created a traditional 'castle frontage' to public view. But on the south, donjon, chapel and lodgings had windows overlooking the new park, so that building and landscape design were integrated into a whole for enjoyment of the lavish life.

Bob Higham

BOOK REVIEWS

St Martin's Island

By Todd Gray and Sue Jackson

Gray, Todd, and Sue Jackson. 2017. *St Martin's Island*. Exeter: The Mint Press.

NUMBER 59

In 1973 59-60 High Street was provisionally listed by Historic England as Grade 2 and recorded it as 'elaborate early twentieth-century frontage. Three storeys, four bays, the outer ones set forward. Continuous ground floor is granite, Portland stone above. Sash windows with glazing bars, architrave surrounds. Giant Ionic pilasters. Swags, cornice, balustraded parapet, roof not visible'. The frontages of Numbers 59 & 60 are 39 feet 5 inches.

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59 High Street, owned by the City of Exeter but on long lease to the Tothill family and their descendants after the Reformation, rebuilt in 1912. The building has served as a bank for more than a hundred years.

The current building is the second one on the site since the late 1700s. In 1768 a drawing was made of the façade of the building then standing. It shows the ground floor was two rooms wide, the first and second floors had two sash windows each and there was an attic with two dormer windows. The milliners, Misses Sarah and Mary Spry, are indicated as having the first floor.

Number 59 has been involved in banking, insurance and other financial services since the 1830s. Before then it was occupied by a series of linen drapers including members of the Chamberlain family from the late 1700s through to the 1820s. When Richard Chamberlain died in 1807 he was noted as 'a very respectable linen draper, and one of the chamber of this city; a gentleman so much respected and beloved by his friends and the public, and so well known for his excellent character and amiable manners, that it would be difficult to pass an eulogium on his equal to his worth'.[388] Successors in 1827 boasted that their firm has excelled expectations and suggested one reason was 'the extraordinary attraction of the windows'.[389] The Exeter Flying Post enthused 'the fashionables have long noticed the very great attraction which the windows at 59 High Street in this city have caused during the period that establishment has been conducted by the present proprietors, by

NUMBER 40 The High Street

Left: 135. Elevation of 59 High Street, 1768.

their being decorated with such a superb and splendid variety of fancy articles comprising some of the most elegant evening, ball, dinner and promenade dresses.'[390] A series of milliners had rooms upstairs[391] as did Tycho Pilbrow for his Music Repository.[392]

The Norwich Union Fire Insurance occupied the building from at least 1839 through to 1912. It rented the ground floor (consisting of a front office, a bank office and a water closet, a coal cellar underneath the stairs leading to the underground offices and apartments).[393] The upper floors were rented out for offices[394] including to George Townsend, who described himself as an 'artist, lithographer and drawing master' and a 'lithographic draughtsman and writer for the trade', from at least 1844 to 1848. Upon his death in 1894 he was described as being 'a good and gentle soul' who was 'singularly modest and unassuming'. He had been the local artist for the Illustrated London News. Many of his drawings and paintings of Exeter were collected by Thomas Shapter and given to Exeter City Library. Another journalist noted 'old buildings and antique glimpses found in him a methodical recorder, and he was always proud to exhibit his sketches of ancient houses and scenes which have disappeared in the advance of the improver and the destroyer. His collections will, it is hoped, come into the possession of the Albert Museum authorities. They will be useful to all who try to realise what Exeter once was, and to the future historian of the city will supply precious glimpses'. In 1844 Townsend was one of a number of

136. 56-60 High Street, between 1894 and 1906.

OCCUPANTS OF THE PROPERTY

1745 – 1753	**Henry Wilcocks**, *Druggist*
1759	**William Walker**, *Druggist*
1759 – 1762	**Nathaniel Spry**, *Mercer & Woollen Draper*
1768 – 1780	**Grace Chamberlain**, *Widow, & Nathaniel Spry*
1781 – 1807	**Richard Chamberlain**, *Linen Draper*
1808 – 1812	**Elizabeth Chamberlain, Son & James Pittman**, *Linen Drapers*
1812 – 1817	**Elizabeth Chamberlain & James Pittman**, *Linen Drapers*
1817 – 1826	**James Pittman**, *Linen Draper*
1826 – 1828	**Snell, Pinwill & Please**, *Drapers & Mercers*
1828 – 1829	**Pinwill & Please**, *Linen Drapers, Silk Mercers, Hosiers & Glovers*
1826 – 1827	**Mesdames Snell & Darke** (upstairs)
1830 – 1831	**Twose & Baker**
1830 – 1836	**Tycho Pilbrow's Music Repository** (upstairs)
1832 – 1834	**E. & J. Nash**, *Linen Drapers*
1839 – 1911	**Norwich Union Assurance Company**
1839 – 1855	**Western Annuity Office**
1840 – 1842	**William Norris**, *Surveyor*
1842 – 1843	**A. P. Prowse**, *Public Accountant*
1844	**William Pim**, *Engraver*
1844 – 1848	**George Townsend**, *Lithographer & Drawing Master* (upstairs)
1854 – 1860	**John H. Baker**
1865	**S. Pyne & Sons**, *Brush Manufactory*
1868	**Town Clerk's Office** (upstairs)
1842 – 1970	**National Provincial Bank of England Limited**
1875 – 1877	**I. J. Kennaway** (upstairs)
1875 – 1880	**W. Cotton** (upstairs)
1878	**Edward H. Houlditch** (upstairs)
1912	**Rebuilt** (& 60)
1970 – 2017	*National Westminster Bank* (& 60)

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NUMBER 59 The High Street

Written after the destruction of the Royal Clarence hotel in the devastating fire of central Exeter in October 2016, this study is an engaging narrative of the historical changes of the area.

This excellent book reviews the history of the buildings of St Martin's island – the land surrounding Exeter cathedral which encompasses the High Street, Broadgate, Cathedral Yard and Martin's Lane. Each of the properties forming 'the Island' is treated to a useful historical description of the occupiers and their businesses, as well as an analysis of the building's fabric and main features. The text is supported by the clever and visually attractive blending of pictorial material – comprising of contemporary drawings, photographs, maps, plans and historical documents. These highlight the documentary research of not only the buildings, but the people who lived and worked in them, giving context and an informative historical background to the built fabric of Exeter.

Gray and Jackson's book concludes with a request that the reader learns from the mistakes of the past – particularly the 1960s and 1970s. The book will also assist readers in recognising the historical value of Exeter's old buildings, all of which add considerable quality to the environment of central Exeter.

The book achieves what few academic writers even attempt: it has succeeded in taking rigorous academic research and, by making it visually appealing, communicates the history hidden in/ behind some of Exeter's earliest buildings to the average reader.

Bruce Induni

Buckfast Abbey: History, Art and Architecture.

Edited by Peter Beacham. 312mm, 270 pages, 252 figs, 7 Col. Plates.
(London & New York), Merrell, 2017 ISBN 978-1-8589-4650-4.

This truly magnificent book presents the story of one of Devon's most important monastic sites: its foundation in c1018, its reinvention as a Savignac house in 1136 and subsequent assimilation into the Cistercian family of monasteries, its growth, architecture, decorations, cultural life and its sad dissolution at the time of the Reformation under Henry VIII. This would in itself be a fascinating and moving story – of a sort one would like to see written for other monastic sites in Devon (and elsewhere). However, the volume continues by exploring the perhaps even more remarkable history of the site following the Dissolution. This includes its development as a major industrial complex, as a country estate furnished with a picturesque Gothic mansion and its subsequent re-foundation as a renewed Benedictine Abbey on the footings of the old one, including the rebuilding and reinstatement of the church and the entire monastic complex from the 1880s to the present day.

The book is a somewhat larger in size than is convenient for reading in bed or the bath, but what it lacks in portability it more than makes up for in lavish illustrations of the reconstructed building, its fittings and the major events and persons concerned with the recreation of the Abbey and the Abbey complex. The photographs of the extraordinary artefacts produced during the early 20th century to furnish the church, largely by the Witte workshop of Aachen, are particularly delicious. These objects were inspired by the long-dispersed furnishings of the Abbey church of St Denis, near Paris, and by the works of Nicholas of Verdun and the Mosan school of metalworkers in Gold and enamels in the late 12th and early 13th centuries, and were mostly donated as gifts. In the colour figures they certainly sparkle and glitter in a manner guaranteed to impress any latter-day Abbot Suger with a taste for ecclesiastical bling.

The story of the recreation of the monastic community and its magnificent transitional-style abbey church during the 19th and early 20th centuries is well told and all the more remarkable considering the financial instability and political vulnerability of the Abbey at the time. As an exiled community, occupied largely by French and German monks vulnerable to conscription or internment as enemy aliens, the erection of this enormous church, and its furnishing with such richness during a period of disastrous European conflicts is an outstanding achievement. The work was largely undertaken by the direct labour of the community themselves, under the direction (from London) of their architect, F. A. Walters. This story of 'six monks and a donkey building a monastery' has become one of the most potent myths about Buckfast and is perhaps one of the main sources of their current fame and tourist appeal. One would have liked some more illustrations of cassocked monks riding hoists and clambering up scaffolds and, perhaps also, a few more images of the more private areas of the monastery, which had (still has?) at least one superb painted interior decorated with Romanesque style wall painting, if only to illustrate the contemplative life of the monks in their rebuilt home as well as their commercial and artistic activities.

Besides the commercial success of their honey and tonic wine, many other treasures were created by the monks. The achievements of Dom Charles Norris in the field of the applied arts are also explored here, charting Norris' artistic development from the rich Romanesque-style paintings of the crossing tower ceiling and some of his early stained glass (in the manner of that at Canterbury), to the more aggressively modernist windows produced in the 1960s using the thumpingly crude but effective technique known as *Dalle-de Verre* ('slabs of glass' set in concrete or resin). Norris's finest work is perhaps the Blessed Sacrament chapel at the Abbey which internally has all the vibrant jewel-like colours of Romanesque glass and externally, the feathery, flame-like quality of French 'Flamboyant' tracery. He also produced many hundreds of other works for other churches across England, both Roman Catholic and Anglican. Since many of Norris' windows have recently been destroyed along with the churches which bravely commissioned them in the 1960s

(particularly in Plymouth), to revisit this man and rediscover his art is most welcome and timely.

To complete the story, the book concludes with a chapter exploring the way in which the Abbey faced and met the financial challenges of the later 20th century. This was done, at some cost to the privacy and enclosure of the community, by the acquisition and redevelopment of their monastic precincts to accommodate tourism and commercial activity. Although it has led to some criticism – and the nickname 'Fastbuck Abbey'– this commercial redevelopment was informed both by the Benedictine Duty of Hospitality to visitors and by a responsible attitude to the conservation and the heritage of the site. A programme of archaeological excavation and building recording, much of which has been undertaken by or under the supervision of Stewart Brown, began in 1982 and continues to the present day. This later 20th century reinvention of the abbey site has clearly been a great success. It has allowed the full restoration of the abbey church and continued investment in its liturgy and music. It presents salutary a lesson to those ecclesiastical authorities (both Church of England and Roman Catholic), who still persist in seeing ecclesiastical treasures, including historic buildings, liturgies and artefacts, as a burden on mission rather than an opportunity. After a visit to Buckfast Abbey, one cannot visit the ruined church of the Holy Trinity, Buckfastleigh, on the hill where the whole history of the monastery probably began, and stand in its ruined walls without thinking of what small communities can achieve by sheer determination and effort – '*Is it well for ye, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses while this house lies waste?*' (Haggai, I. 4.).

Richard Parker

Buckfast Abbey: History, Art and Architecture. Edited by Peter Beacham.
Contains contributions by, Nicholas Orme, David M. Robinson, Stewart Brown, John Cherry, Bridget Cherry, Aidan Bellenger, Roderick O'Donnell, Marian Campbell, Alan Powers and Robert Proctor. Abbot David Charlesworth.
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