

William Pengelly, The Devonshire Association, and 150 Years of Scholarship

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After an introduction to William Pengelly and the foundation and early years of the Devonshire Association, this paper reviews, subject area by subject area, the contribution that the Association has made to the knowledge and understanding of Devon through its publications and the research of its members. It concludes with a discussion of the wider impact of this research, and how this may in future be enhanced.

This paper, introducing both the Devonshire Association's 150th Anniversary Conference and the resulting volume of the *Transactions*, begins with a brief account of William Pengelly and of the Association's early years, but is primarily intended to review the huge contribution which has been made to the knowledge and understanding of Devon, mainly but not exclusively by DA members, through the Association's publications and those to which it has lent support. I have not attempted to cover the great quantity of distinguished research which DA members have published elsewhere; while we may hope that their membership has in some way assisted this research, it is unrealistic for the DA to claim credit. There is in any case quite enough to cover: the *Transactions* alone contain well over 2,000 papers and reports, and there have been many special publications – listed here in an Appendix.

A review of this kind can only be superficial. Major omissions are inevitable, and my own areas of interest will have influenced the choice of material. The exercise has been made immeasurably easier by the published indices by H. G. Hastings Shaddick, R. Pearse Chope and A. A. Fursdon which together cover volumes 1–100 (1862–1968), by a revision of Fursdon's index by Hugh and Mary Bodey in the 1990s, by an index in manuscript by D. A. Perrin covering volumes 101–132 (1969–2000) in the library of the Devon and Exeter Institution, and by the excellent on-line search facility to all volumes from 1862 to 2010 compiled by Mark Brayshay (partly based on a listing by Norman Annett) and accessible from the DA Web site. Each volume, of course, has its own index. The papers and reports referred to are far too numerous to be cited individually, but I have given full references to a selection of the most important – again a subjective exercise.

WILLIAM PENGELLY

There could be no more appropriate place for the anniversary meeting than the Pengelly Lecture Hall in the Museum which Pengelly inspired, in the town where he lived through six decades as scientist, archaeologist and teacher. The Association did not begin in Torquay – the preliminary meeting was in Plymouth and the inaugural General Meeting in Exeter – but William Pengelly (Fig. 1) was its instigator, and the town was central to its early development.

Pengelly's life is well documented in the biography by his daughter Hester¹ which also lists his many publications and includes an evaluation by T. G. Bonney of his scientific work. In the 50th, 51st, and 53rd anniversary volumes of these *Transactions* Hester, then Mrs Forbes-Julian, wrote another biographical account in three parts,² the first brutally curtailed by news of her husband's death in the Titanic disaster; and Anne Born's more recent account of Pengelly's social and scientific circle adds useful further information.³ These sources and others make it clear that William Pengelly was a quite remarkable man. The son of a Cornish seaman, and largely self-educated, he was by his fiftieth year, when the Devonshire Association began, a respected associate and friend not only of leading scientists but also many of the gentry and nobility of the day. Like his fellow Cornishman Humphrey Davy a generation earlier he seems to have crossed the formidable class barriers of Victorian Britain through a combination of intelligence, excellent research, personal likeability and above all brilliant

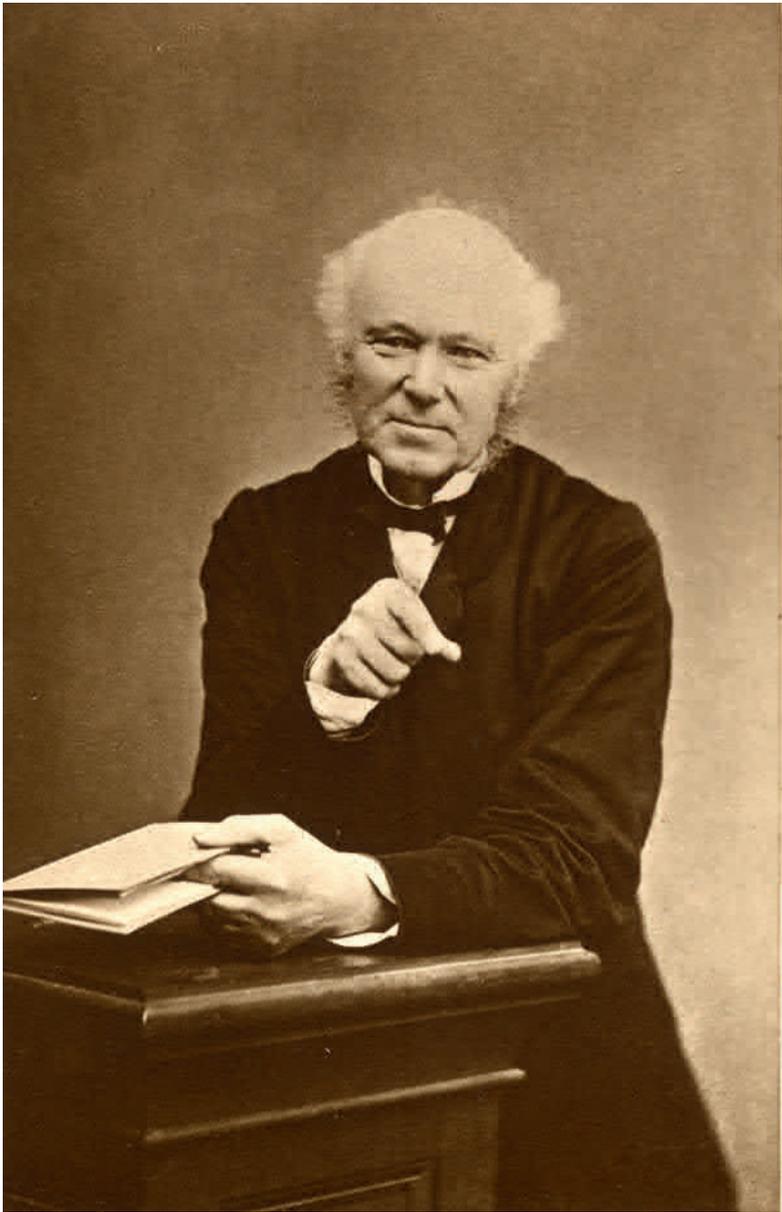


Figure 1. *William Pengelly. Founder, and President 1867.*

teaching and lecturing. Davy's spectacular social and scientific success had been London-based; Pengelly, though he often visited London, preferred to stay in Torquay, and he had many good reasons to do so. Although interested and knowledgeable in mathematics, astronomy and meteorology his principal enthusiasms were geology, palaeontology and increasingly archaeology. Devon's geology is complex and fascinating; Devon and Cornwall are rich in fossils; and from 1858 onwards he became deeply involved in the bone cave research, first in Brixham and then in Kent's Cavern, for which he is best known and which has contributed so much to our understanding of human antiquity – see Professor Hart's paper in this volume.

On moving to Torquay early in the 1830s – the biographies are vague about the exact year – Pengelly opened a school, and began also to take private pupils. These became so numerous that in 1846 he was able to give up the school to concentrate on private tuition, lecturing, and active participation in the cultural and social life of Torquay, as well as his increasingly distinguished research. He had already been a prime mover in 1837 in reorganizing the Torquay Mechanics Institute where he lectured for many years, and had founded the Torquay Natural History Society in 1844. As his reputation grew so did the number and distinction of his students. By 1862 these had included two nephews of Czar Alexander II, and, significantly, Angela Burdett Coutts, heiress to the immense Coutts banking fortune, super-philanthropist, and a central figure in both Torquay and London Society. She became a lifelong friend, and must certainly have extended Pengelly's social circle. His scientific contacts were already extensive, particularly among geologists. He was a regular attender at meetings of the Geological Society, and from 1856 at the annual meetings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. The latter, meeting in a different town each year for the reading of papers and discussion and debate on current scientific issues, provided the inspiration for the Devonshire Association.

THE BEGINNING OF THE ASSOCIATION

In 1912, at the 50th anniversary meeting, the Reverend William Harpley, the youngest of the DA's three founding fathers, gave a brief description of the Association's origin and this is quoted in Hilda Walker's excellent historical account of the first hundred years.⁴ Pengelly first suggested creating such an organisation to Harpley and



Figure 2. *Charles Spence Bate. Founder and President 1863.* © The Natural History Museum.

to Charles Spence Bate in the course of a geology field trip to a quarry at Stonehouse. Spence Bate (Fig. 2) was a leading dental scientist, an authority on Crustacea, and a Fellow of the Royal Society (Pengelly was elected to Fellowship in 1863); Harpley was then Headmaster of Plymouth Grammar School, and later became Vicar of Clayhanger, near Tiverton.

The three friends shared a consuming interest in the Natural Sciences. Science was a major preoccupation among educated, thinking men and women in the mid-nineteenth century. The discoveries of recent decades were seriously challenging traditional perceptions of the world and of its creation. Astronomers were progressively revealing the immensity of the universe and the comparative insignificance of the earth within it. Geologists, particularly James Hutton and Charles Lyell, were presenting convincing evidence that the earth was many thousands, perhaps millions of years old. Fossils were becoming increasingly hard to explain by reference to the biblical Flood or even to a succession of similar, undocumented catastrophes. Most disturbingly, information was accumulating on the antiquity of humankind. This came to a focus in 1859, when a series of presentations to the Royal Society, the Royal Institution and the Society of Antiquaries by Hugh Falconer, Joseph Prestwich and others demonstrated convincingly that



Figure 3. Sir John Bowring. The first President, 1862.

tool-making humans were living among long-extinct mammals at undatable, but certainly remote times in the past. Pengelly's account of his meticulous excavations in the Brixham Bone Cavern was prominent among these presentations.⁵ Then in November came the *Origin of Species*, offering the first well-researched and plausible mechanism for evolutionary change, with a hint that humans too were products of evolutionary processes. Pengelly was himself present at the much-quoted confrontation on Darwinism involving Samuel Wilberforce, Thomas Henry Huxley and others at the 1860 Oxford meeting of the British Association.

It was in this atmosphere of scientific, philosophical and theological controversy and debate that the Devonshire Association was formed, and this is reflected in the early papers and presidential addresses. The first two presidents, Sir John Bowring FRS (Fig. 3) and Charles Spence Bate, clearly established the Association's philosophy, summed up by Bate as follows.

'The greatest enemy to truth is apathy. A calm and quiet contentment in the old ideas and dead opinions of our forefathers cramps the will and debilitates thought, and no greater curse can rest upon a people than a passive acquiescence with unexamined traditions'.⁶

The new DA followed the example of the British Association in meeting annually in a different town with a different President but,

within Devon, its aims were wider: ‘To give a stronger impulse and a more systematic direction to scientific enquiry, and to promote the intercourse of those who cultivate science, literature or art in different parts of Devonshire, with one another, and with others’.

It seems clear that ‘science’ was used here in the broad, Aristotelian sense to mean knowledge of a kind that can be logically and rationally explained. Many of the early papers in the Transactions relate to the natural sciences, but archaeology, folklore, dialect, architecture and particularly history are all prominent, while literature and art *sensu stricto* play a comparatively minor part.

Pengelly’s social circle of notable friends was reflected in the distinction of the early presidents and members, many of whose names are well-known today. Several had retired to Devon after distinguished national and international careers, which was to be a recurring pattern throughout the Association’s history. Bowring, the first President, was a spectacular polymath: statesman, political economist, diplomat, reforming politician, hyperpolyglot, philologist, translator – and coleopterist. His versatility is evident in the academic breadth of the Devonshire Association’s 1992 conference and resulting book celebrating the bicentenary of his birth.⁷ Charles Daubeny FRS (President 1865) was a botanist, chemist and geologist who did much to further the cause of science teaching at Oxford. John, 1st Earl Russell was President in 1866, immediately following his second term as Prime Minister. Pengelly himself (President 1867) was succeeded (1868) by J. D. Coleridge, later Lord Chief Justice; followed by George Parker Bidder (1869), famous in childhood as the Original Calculating Boy but by then an outstanding engineer; by James Anthony Froude (1870) (Fig. 4), one of the leading historians of his day; by Charles Kingsley (1871) (Fig. 5), Christian Socialist, campaigning social reformer, and amateur of history and marine biology as well as poet and novelist; and by Frederick Temple (1872) (Fig. 6), ex-Headmaster of Rugby, presently Bishop of Exeter and later Archbishop of Canterbury. The first Honorary member was Charles Babbage (Fig. 7), one of the country’s greatest mathematicians, and best known today as designer of the Difference Engine, widely recognised as the first computer. James Brooke, the first Rajah of Sarawak and a close friend of Angela Burdett Coutts, was a member. In 1873 Miss Burdett Coutts herself became one the first three woman members, with her friend and companion Hannah Brown, and Lady Bowring.

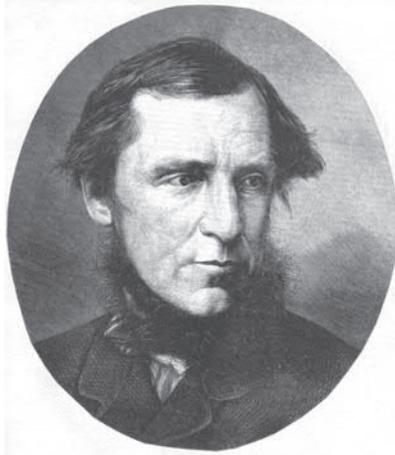


Figure 4. *James Anthony Froude. President 1870.*

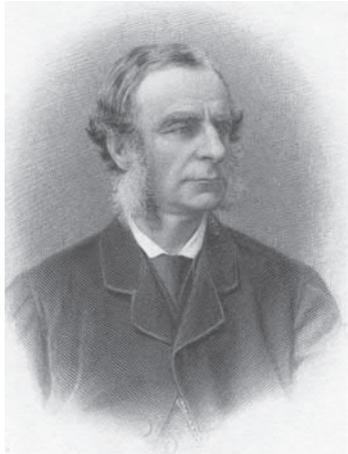


Figure 5. *The Rev. Canon Charles Kingsley. President 1871.*

Interestingly, this list of early Presidents already shows a dichotomy that has continued to the present day. Eminent as they were, Russell, Temple, Coleridge, Kingsley and Bidder were essentially figureheads. Their presidential addresses give fascinating personal insights into contemporary issues and their own preoccupations, but these

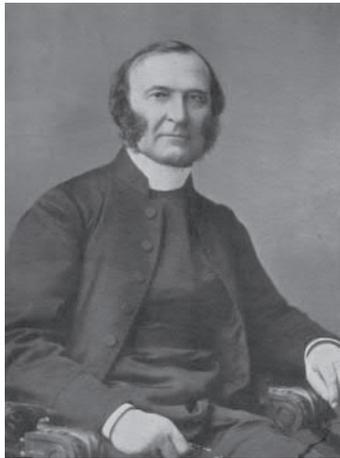


Figure 6. Dr Frederick Temple, Bishop of Exeter, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. President 1872.



Figure 7. Charles Babbage. The first Honorary Member.

celebrities contributed nothing further to the *Transactions*, and their membership, if it continued, was a minor part of their active lives. To Pengelly, Spence Bate, Bowring, Edward Vivian (President 1864) and to many other early members the Association was of the greatest importance both socially and as a means of communicating and

publishing their research and opinions. In his short remaining life Bowring contributed seven typically varied papers to the *Transactions*, including a pioneering article on Devon dialect.⁸ Vivian, almost equally eclectic, contributed thirteen, and Spence Bate twelve, mainly on prehistoric archaeology.

Pengelly himself became the most prolific contributor in the Association's history, publishing 81 papers and five reports in the *Transactions* between 1862 and 1886. Most were on geology, but he also had a keen interest in meteorology, and twenty of his papers deal with rainfall in Devon and in general. His overall output was prodigious – all the Kent's Cavern reports, for example, were published elsewhere.⁹

'A MORE SYSTEMATIC DIRECTION'

The history of the Association falls conveniently into three phases: the early years, 1862–1876; the Committee period, 1876–1928; and the period of Branches, Sections and Recorders, from 1928 to the present day.

In the earliest years of the Association, its stated aim to give a more systematic direction to Devon studies is not particularly evident. *Transactions* articles reflect the widely ranging interests of members, and many, however interesting in themselves, have no particular Devon focus. In 1876, however, it was decided that all papers contributed to the meetings and to the *Transactions* must in future have some relevance to Devon.

The majority of papers in the *Transactions* have always been the work of individuals, but 1876 also saw the establishment of the first of a series of committees designed to investigate specific aspects of the county and to report to the annual meetings. Some, including several of the earliest to be established, operated without a break or with brief interruptions until a major reshaping of the DA in 1928.

By 1928 membership had fallen, and the usefulness of the DA had been questioned: 'a publishing society which met for an annual picnic'.¹⁰ Among the recommendations of a special committee of Council were the establishment of local Branches, and the formation of Sections for the benefit of members specialising in certain subjects. Most of the committees closed, and the third phase began.

Hilda Walker has valuably charted the durations of the 26 committees and the Sections and Branches that were established at various times between 1876 and 1962, the year of her centennial paper.¹¹ After 1928 the subject areas of many of the committees were continued by

Recorders, either operating as individuals or within the progressively developing Sections. These, and the Branches, appeared only slowly over the next two decades, but the new structure was successful in rejuvenating the Association, leading to a steady increase in membership after the Second World War as the DA became less centralised and exclusive and its social role expanded.

PRINCIPAL RESEARCH AREAS

The decision in 1876 to focus exclusively on Devon immediately narrowed the range of available subject areas. The physical sciences and mathematics were now only acceptable in their local applications or in historical accounts of Devon-based practitioners. The earth sciences: geology, meteorology, geography, had obvious Devon relevance. So did botany and zoology; archaeology, buildings and artefacts; history and written records; social studies, including economics, sociology, folklore and dialect; and literature and the fine arts. These now became the exclusive preoccupations of the Association.

Geology

There was no geology committee, but geological papers form a major component of the early volumes of the *Transactions*. When the Association began, geology as we now understand it was still a young field. Classifying the rocks, finding and describing fossils, and interpreting, sequencing and mapping the strata were exciting, popular activities. Pengelly himself was by far the most prolific author, covering a huge stratigraphical range – about 400 million years – from the Devonian rocks of North and South Devon to the Pleistocene bone caves of Chudleigh and Torbay. His presidential address is a useful summary of Devon geology as then understood.¹² Other active contributors included A. R. Hunt, A. Somervail, R. N. Worth, and most importantly W. A. E. Ussher, an officer of the Geological Survey who worked for many years on the geology of the South West, and made a particularly important contribution in establishing the stratigraphic succession in the Devonian and Carboniferous of South and Central Devon.¹³ The proportion of geological papers fell off progressively as the geology of the county became better known, but interest in the subject has never waned, and articles continue periodically to appear.¹⁴ The Geology Section, founded in 1948, has always been active, and well-supported by professional geologists and enthusiastic amateurs.

Meteorology and climate

William Pengelly was the most productive author on meteorology in the early years. A short-lived Meteorology Committee was founded in 1875, and was replaced in 1882 after a brief gap by the Committee on Devon Climate. This continued until the 1920s when its role was taken over by a Recorder. From 1904 to 1950 the recorder was the great Richard Hansford Worth, for whom meteorology came second only to archaeology as a lifelong enthusiasm. Reports on climate are still published, though not every year. The implications of global warming on Devon were discussed in the millennium volume of 2000.¹⁵

Biology

There was never a biology committee as such. A Botany Committee operated from 1908 to 1928 and the Botany Section has existed since 1931, together providing an excellent series of records through more than 100 years. Notably, the work of members and others led in 1939 to *The Flora of Devon: Phanerogams and higher Cryptogams*, edited by the Reverend W. Keble Martin and Gordon T. Fraser. Keble Martin, a long-standing member and Recorder of Botany, became nationally famous in 1965 as author of the best-selling *Concise British Flora in Colour* (Ebury Press and Michael Joseph). The *Flora of Devon* had two post-war supplements, by Mary Parke on marine algae, and E. F. Barnes on mosses and liverworts. In 1984 came *The Atlas of the Devon Flora* by R. B. Ivimey-Cook, again drawing extensively on the DA's botany records. A new Flora of Devon is currently in preparation, led by members of the Botany Section. Books of this kind provide crucial information for local authority planning decisions, and their value cannot be overstressed.

An Ornithology Committee existed briefly in the 1920s, but its work was quickly overtaken by that of the Devon Birdwatching and Preservation Society, founded in 1928. The Society, though independent of the DA, reported annually in the *Transactions* until 1960. H. G. Hurrell (President 1966), and then his daughter Elaine Hurrell recorded mammals between 1959 and 2002.

There have been many individual biological papers. Between 1866 and 1891 Edward Parfitt, a retired gardener, by then Librarian of the Devon and Exeter Institution, published 21 papers on an astonishing

range of vertebrate and invertebrate animal groups as parts of a Fauna of Devon, and ten others on subjects from Devon earthquakes to the origin of life, with excursions into geology and archaeology. Turning to botany in later years, he published on lichens and freshwater algae; and died leaving 12 manuscript notebooks on the fungi of Devon, illustrated with 1,530 of his own watercolours. Inevitably his expertise over such a wide area is suspect, but the overall extent of his work is remarkable. His 75-page paper of 1876 on the Birds of Devon, though far from flawless, is the most important nineteenth-century account.¹⁶

Other authors of zoological papers were G. C. Bignell, a respected general entomologist who also wrote most of the insect sections in the Devonshire volume of the Victoria County History; and C. W. Bracken (President 1940), another competent entomologist with a particular interest in Diptera (flies). Bracken, who also published papers on the history of Plymouth, was for many years secretary of the Committee for Scientific Memoranda, founded in 1875, which served as a catch-all for brief reports, comments and anecdotes on a wide range of subjects, many of them animal-related. Scientific memoranda continued to be published until 1983.

In 1948 came the Entomology Section, and formal recording of insects began. Devon has many thousand insect species, most of them in difficult groups. Competent specialists in these are rare, and the records of most orders are inevitably discontinuous. The exception is the Lepidoptera (butterflies and moths), always the most popular insect order, records of which have been published without a break by a succession of Recorders until the present date. S. T. Stidston was the first, and in 1951 the DA published his *Lepidoptera of Devon. 1. Introduction and Macrolepidoptera*. Part 2, on the much more challenging 'microlepidoptera' never appeared, but an outstanding microlepidopterist, Robert Heckford, has produced meticulous records annually since 1983 and over 160 papers and notes elsewhere, and a list of Devon microlepidoptera is on the Web.¹⁷ DA records contributed extensively to C. R. Bristow, S. H. Mitchell and D. E. Bolton, *Devon Butterflies*, published by Devon Books in 1993 with Devonshire Association sponsorship, and to *The Moths of Devon*, written and published by Roy McCormick in 2001, and covering the 'macrolepidoptera' and several 'microlepidoptera' families. Both Bristow and McCormick have been long-standing DA Recorders.

The Section has had excellent recorders of other groups – far too many to name individually. One should, however, mention G. M. Spooner (President 1979), a specialist on Crustacea with the Marine Biological Association, who was a founder member of the Section and an authority on Diptera and Hymenoptera, both of which he recorded assiduously until shortly before his death in 1990. Devon is fortunate in its entomologists, and the Section currently has competent recorders in all major groups.

Archaeology, Buildings and Artefacts

Archaeology has always been a popular study area for DA members. Pengelly was a pioneer of Palaeolithic archaeology. C. Spence Bate, G. W. Ormerod, Robert Burnard (President 1911) and notably Peter Orlando Hutchinson each contributed several papers in the early decades, and there were many other individual articles.

The principal early committee was the Barrows Committee. This was a family affair, led from its inception in 1879 until 1896 by R. N. Worth (Fig. 8), and thereafter by his son, Richard Hansford Worth (Fig. 9). Both contributed many other papers to the *Transactions*, R. N. Worth on geology and history as well as archaeology, R. Hansford Worth on archaeology, geology, history, rainfall and above all on Dartmoor, on which he became the preeminent authority in his time. The Barrows Committee reports of 1902 and 1937 are particularly richly illustrated accounts each summarizing the findings of the preceding 25 years, and are landmark papers in Devon archaeology. After the Committee closed, Hansford Worth continued as Recorder of Barrows until his death in 1950. Both father and son rank among the Association's most productive and distinguished scholars. Both were Presidents: R. N. Worth in 1891, R. H. Worth in 1930.

Dartmoor's importance and special character were recognised from the beginning. The Committee for the Exploration and Preservation of Dartmoor was among the first to be created. Beside the barrows, other monuments on the moor later came within the scope of the Ancient Monuments in Devon Committee, founded in 1913. With many individual papers on aspects of Dartmoor published over the years, the Association's contribution to our overall knowledge of the Moor has been considerable and peaked in 1953 with the publication

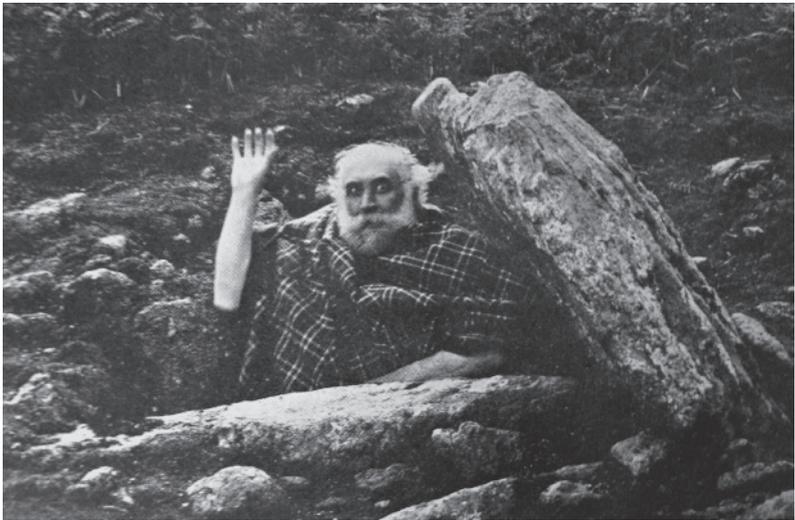


Figure 8. R. N. Worth, *President 1891*? This delightful photograph is simply labelled 'Drizzlecombe 1889', but the text, in R. H. Worth's *Barrows Committee report*, refers to it as 'your first Secretary'.

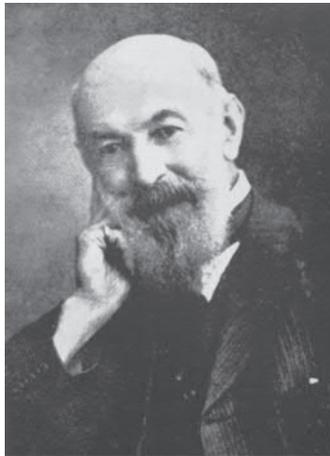


Figure 9. R. Hansford Worth, *President 1930*.

of R. Hansford Worth's *Dartmoor*, compiled from his published works by G. M. Spooner and F. S. Russell of the Marine Biological Association at Plymouth, both long-standing and eminent DA members, and published by Worth's executors. All profits from sales came to the Association. An interdisciplinary symposium volume on Dartmoor was published in 1964, and research on the moor continues to be a fertile field. Among recent work the papers of T. A. P. Greeves on the archaeology of mining on the moor deserve particular mention. Exmoor, sadly, has had less far less attention.

An Archaeology Section was founded in 1928, but in the same year the Devon Archaeological Exploration Society, later the Devon Archaeological Society, was created, and the Section closed in 1931. The DA and the DAS became affiliated and have shared many members, and the DAS sent annual reports to the *Transactions* for many years, but the DAS Proceedings came progressively to be the preferred medium for archaeological papers. However C. A. Raleigh Radford (President 1947) published several papers in the *Transactions*, and Aileen, Lady Fox, the foremost Devon archaeologist of her time, was an active contributor from 1949 onwards and she and subsequently J. Barber reported on Ancient Monuments and on Archaeology and Early History until the early 1970s. An Industrial Archaeology Section existed from 1970 to 1975, and a new one has been launched this year.

DA members have made very many important contributions to the knowledge of Devon churches, great houses, farmhouses and vernacular buildings of all kinds, and also of furnishings and artefacts. Deserving individual mention as examples of comparative studies are Frederick Bligh Bond's two lavishly illustrated accounts in 1902 and 1903 of Devonshire rood screens and rood lofts,¹⁸ precursors to his major two volume monograph with Dom Bede Camm on screens and lofts nationally; Kate M. Clarke's series of papers between 1907 and 1922 on baptismal fonts;¹⁹ those of G.W. Copeland between 1949 and 1968 on church houses;²⁰ of Mrs J. M. Crowley between 1954 and 1961 on sundials;²¹ the six papers on Devon farmhouses variously by N. W. Alcock, S. R. Jones and C. Hulland between 1968 and 1984;²² and Roger Perry's 2010 account of ash houses.²³

The present Buildings Section was formed in 1988 and has been carrying out excellent systematic research since that time, documented annually in the Section's reports.

History, and Historic Documents

Since the foundation of the Association, history has been by far the most popular field of study among members, and it is impossible to summarise satisfactorily the huge range of papers, by innumerable authors, on the many aspects of the subject. The indices list accounts of the history of towns; villages; families great and small, reputable and disreputable; events; industries; political movements; religious sects, divisions and observance; individuals and celebrities – a Committee on Devonshire Celebrities existed from 1876 to 1889 – and many other aspects of the County.

Among the more frequent contributors may be mentioned: the Reverend J. F. Chanter (President 1925) (1870 to 1838); the Reverend J. M. Hawker (President 1876), from 1874 to 1885; P. Q. Karkeek, (1874 to 1896) mainly on the Stuart period; E. Windeatt, (President 1920) from 1878 to 1920; T. N. Brushfield (President 1893), a specialist on the Raleigh family, from 1885 to 1908; Frances Rose-Troup (President 1942) from 1888 to 1938; R. Pearse Chope (President 1926) from 1891 to 1938; Ethel Lega-Weekes from 1901 to 1940; H. R. Watkin (President 1918) from 1911 to 1945, mainly on South Devon; Beatrix Cresswell from 1911 to 1938, mainly on church history; J. J. Alexander (President 1932) from 1912 to 1942, particularly on Saxon history and place names; J. J. Beckerlegge from 1934 to 1968, on the Plymouth area; Hilda Walker, from 1961 to 1968, mainly on Torquay; and N. I. Orme (President 2011) between 1977 and the present time, predominantly on ecclesiastical and educational history. Many others could be quoted.

Several committees were concerned with history and historical documents. The Committee for Devon Records – later Manuscripts and Records – was established in 1889 and reported at first regularly and then more sporadically. There was still a Recorder of Manuscripts and Records, H. Tapley-Soper, previously Exeter City Librarian, until 1950. He rarely reported in the *Transactions* but was very active in archival work elsewhere in Devon, particularly in the Devon and Cornwall Record Society which he had helped found in 1904. He was also a major contributor to the Reichel Papers Committee, described below.

Other committees were established at various times to carry out specific, finite tasks. By far the most ambitious of these, and the Association's first major enterprise, was the transcription, translation from mediaeval Latin and publication of one of the Cathedral Library's

greatest treasures, the Exeter or Exon Domesday. This is believed to be a preliminary draft for the south western counties of the definitive Exchequer Domesday, and relates to Devon, Cornwall, Somerset and rather more than half of Dorset, with a single Wiltshire entry. It contains some information absent from the Exchequer Domesday, with details of villagers' land and livestock and more precise dates of manor values and holdings. The manuscript also includes the 'geld accounts' or tax returns for the five counties, and some other details of changes in land tenure.

The committee of seven was established in 1877, with Robert Dymond chairing and Joshua Brooking Rowe (Fig. 10) as secretary. An interim report appeared in 1880, and the work itself appeared in nine parts between 1884 and 1892 as extra volumes to the *Transactions*, and was eventually combined in two volumes in 1892. The arrangement was interesting, with the Latin and English texts of the Exon Domesday on the left-hand pages and the corresponding texts of the Exchequer Domesday on the right-hand pages, allowing direct comparison. Though in some ways convenient, this arrangement presented problems in that the sequence of the originals were changed, and this obscured the identity of many of the places whose names occur several times in the county, since neither the Exon nor the Exchequer versions gives the hundreds in which the manors are located.



Figure 10. *Joshua Brooking Rowe, President 1882.*

The Geld accounts provided assistance here; and from 1894 until his death in 1923 the Reverend Oswald Reichel, who had not been on the committee, published 36 papers in the *Transactions* on the early history of the Devon hundreds, significantly clarifying the identity of the problematic Domesday manors, and providing much other information. The first – and so far only – volume of the Victoria History of the County of Devon includes Reichel's own translation of the Exon Domesday with a useful introductory section and a map of the Devon hundreds. Much of his work was still unpublished at his death and in due course the Reichel Papers Committee was created to publish the remainder, which appeared as supplementary volumes to the *Transactions* between 1928 and 1938, with a full index volume in 1942. Reichel's formidable body of work is still regarded as an authoritative, if uneven source – though to be 'used with caution'.²⁴

Brooking-Rowe too was involved in the development of the Devon volume of the Victoria County History, though not entirely happily.²⁵ He ultimately wrote only the section on mammals.

Two other major enterprises stand out. In 1915 was established the Committee for compiling a Bibliography of Devon, to include works of persons born or resident in Devon; works printed in Devon; works written wholly or partly in Devon; and works relating wholly or partly to Devon and Devonians.²⁶ The Committee included Tapley-Soper, Pearse Chope, Beatrix Cresswell, and Reginald Burnet Morris, a DA member since 1909 who had already started gathering material on his own initiative in 1914. The Committee was dissolved in 1923, but Burnet Morris continued alone as the Recorder of Bibliography, reporting regularly in the *Transactions*, accumulating information and storing it on index slips until retiring in 1940, when the total number of cards had reached a million. He added 7,300 further slips in retirement, and there have been later additions, drawn from his reports. The Burnet Morris Index, effectively a single-handed achievement now housed in the West-country Studies Library in Exeter and available for study on microfiche, is a quite extraordinary resource for local historians.

The final major initiative to be described came from the Parochial History Section: a programme to publish histories of the Devon parishes. This was never completed – unsurprisingly, as Devon has 422 civil parishes plus Lundy and those of Exeter, Plymouth and Torbay;²⁷ but accounts of 18 parishes were eventually produced. The first five appeared before the war as independent volumes, but money was

short when activity resumed post-war, and the descriptions of the other parishes were much slimmer. Parts 6 and 7 were published as independent volumes as before, but the rest appeared as papers in the *Transactions* between 1954 and 1962, and offprints were offered for sale. A series of files, including cuttings, notes and details of many of the parishes, including some that never saw publication, were deposited with Devon Library Services and are currently in the Westcountry Studies Library in Exeter. The Parochial History Section became the History Section in 1971.

Folklore, ‘Verbal Provincialisms’ and Dialect

Documenting Devon folklore, customs and speech has been a major preoccupation of the DA throughout its history, and the resulting body of information is outstanding. Sir John Bowring wrote on both folklore and dialect in the early volumes. The Folklore Committee and the Verbal Provincialisms Committee were among the first to be created, and both reported annually from the late 1870s onwards, accumulating a huge – and probably unique – store of dialect words, phrases, anecdotes, legends and customs. A few names stand out. R. Pearse Chope (President 1926) (Fig. 11), an expert on Hartland, and with many other interests, was Recorder of Folklore from 1925



Figure 11. R. Pearse Chope, President 1926.

to 1936 and in 1929 published his *Index to the Folk-lore in the Transactions of the Devonshire Association, volumes I-LX*. The most distinguished of later folklorists was Theo Brown, who was Recorder of Folklore for 40 years until her death in 1993. She wrote many papers for the *Transactions*, and her archive, in the Library of Exeter University, includes among much else five boxes of references on Black Dog legends. T. Elworthy (President 1906) and Charles H. Laycock, both folklore enthusiasts, reported on Verbal Provincialisms from 1881 to 1905 and from 1909 to 1942 respectively. Laycock, an interesting eccentric with a passion for traditional Devon, left a remarkable collection of farm furniture and implements to the Torquay Museum, where it forms the core of a gallery. His contributions include one of the few papers on folk music to be found in the *Transactions*²⁸ – and a well-informed account of social wasps! Outstanding among dialect recorders was R. Murray Laver (President 1990) (Fig. 12). A Plymouth-born electronics engineer and pioneer of computing, as Recorder of Dialect from 1986–1995 he actively collected and tape-recorded Devon speech around the county, resulting in the publication of two cassette tapes, later transcribed to CDs: ‘Devon Voices’ and ‘Devon Dialect’. Most remarkably and valuably, he collated the previous dialect records from the *Transactions* and drawing on many other



Figure 12. F.J. Murray Laver, President 1990.

sources produced in 1990 a Devonshire Word List, in manuscript, with 17,362 entries including words, phrases, and comments on punctuation and grammar; an astonishing achievement.²⁹

Literature and the Fine Arts

Although literature and the arts (originally ‘art’) are part of the Association’s title, they have provided a tiny component of the DA’s publications. A Committee on Works of Art operated from 1876 to 1902, and reports on the art works of specific Devon buildings appear in the *Transactions* until 1887, but thereafter papers on the fine arts and literature are very scarce until the last three decades. Exceptions are J. R. Chanter on early Devon poetry, T. N. Brushfield’s presidential address on Devonshire literary works and their authors, and H. R. Hicks on Devon miniature artists.³⁰ An Art and Literature Section ran from 1946–52 and from 1969–87, and was almost immediately succeeded by a Literature Section, instigated and until recently chaired by Anne Born, a poet, translator and local historian whose obituary is in this volume. Since then several papers have appeared: poems, accounts of Devon writers, and a review of twentieth-century Devon writing;³¹ and *Leaves*, an anthology of new poetry mainly by DA members was published in 1991. Art and crafts still attract few contributions. Recent exceptions are an account of Samuel Palmer in Devon and a review of contemporary artists in the millennium volume.³² The Literature Section has now widened its coverage, becoming the Literature and Art Section in 2011.

The DA has, curiously, paid even less attention to Devon music. A review by Sam Richards in the 2000 volume suggests future directions for study, and the creation of a Music Section this year gives promise of future research activity and performance.³³

Other Areas

Dividing the Association’s published research into subject areas, as I have done, is not entirely satisfactory. Disciplines are not discrete – or shouldn’t be – and interdisciplinary fields are often among the most fertile and fascinating. Many of those which I have been unable to discuss – industry, agriculture and forestry, fisheries, tourism, social issues, economics and ecology – are interdisciplinary in nature, and the *Transactions* have included many papers in these areas. The DA’s

eclectic nature allows it to organise and publish multidisciplinary symposia like those on Bowring, Dartmoor and the Exe Estuary, and also special issues of the *Transactions* focusing on specific areas, such as volume 132 on contemporary Devon and the present one on Torbay. Publications of this kind can include useful broad reviews and so provide a lead into earlier primary material.

WIDER IMPACT

The work reflected in the Devonshire Association's publications over 150 years is immense, and the full run of the *Transactions* is believed to be the greatest single source of information on Devon. What, though, has been the DA's influence on scholarship as a whole?

The impact of a body of published research depends above all on three factors: quality, visibility and accessibility. I believe there is no reason to doubt the overall quality of the DA's published work. A succession of editors and referees appear to have maintained standards at least equal to those of comparable journals over the same period, and many of the contributing authors have had high national, even international reputations. Visibility – how far research workers elsewhere are aware of the existence, extent and content of the DA's publications – is harder to assess. While any competent researcher working specifically on Devon must know of the *Transactions* and should be expected to make the effort to locate papers relevant to their work, I am less sure that a student of – say – Bronze Age barrows in continental Europe or elsewhere in Britain would necessarily be aware of the Barrow Committee's excellent records; and similar concerns apply to most of the other long series of reports and records conscientiously published through the decades, and potentially so valuable in documenting change in changing times. Compilations, like the Devon Floras and the books on Devon's butterflies and moths, are extremely important in bringing attention to the recorded data – because they are published, and widely accessible. Murray Laver's Devonshire Word List and the Burnet Morris Index are superb compilations, but neither would be publishable in conventional form. Digital technology brings new possibilities for making such works available to scholars, and for compiling other series of records to increase their accessibility. This, surely, is an area which the DA should explore. Fortunately most issues of the *Transactions* to 1920 and the two

volumes of the Exon Domesday and Geld Inquest are now available online and accessible from the Association's web page. It would be a slow, but very worthwhile exercise to digitize the rest.

Indices are crucial. The published indices extend only to 1968, and have not been digitised. A revision of these early indices made in the 1990s is not generally available, and D. R. Perrin's update to 2000 for the Devon and Exeter Institution exists only in manuscript. Mark Brayshay's online search facility covering the *Transactions* to 2010, linked to the DA web page, is an invaluable resource, and must be maintained and continually updated. There is much for the Association to do in the digital age.

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NOTES

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APPENDIX Devonshire Association Publications

1. *The Devonshire Domesday and Geld Inquest: extensions, translations, and indices.* 2 volumes, 1884–1892.
2. *A guide to the Reports and Transactions of the Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science, Literature and Art.* Volumes I to XXX. (H. G. Hastings Shaddick, 1909).
3. *Key to the Transactions of the Devonshire Association.* Volumes I to LX. (R. Pearse Chope, 1928).
4. *Index to the Folk-Lore in the Transactions of the Devonshire Association. Volumes I to LX.* (R. Pearse Chope, 1929).
5. *Frithelstock Priory.* (R. Pearse Chope, 1929).
6. *General Indices to the Transactions.* (A. A. Fursdon, 1952–1969) Vols 1–60 (1862–1928)
 Vols 61–70 (1929–1938)
 Vols 71–80 (1939–1948)
 Vols 81–100 (1949–1968)

7. *The Hundreds of Devon*. (O. J. Reichel, ed. F. B. Prideaux, 1928).
 - I. *Tiverton*
 - II. *Hemyock and Halberton*
 - III. *South Molton and Roborough*
 - IV. *Axminster and Axmouth*
 - V. *Black Torrington*
 - VI. *Plympton and Ermington*
 - VII. *Colyton and Clyston*
 - VIII. *Braunton, Shirwell and Fremington*
 - IX. *North Molton and Molland*
 - X. *Shebbear* (ed. by W. H. Rogers)
8. *Index of personal and place names in the 'Hundreds of Devon' contributed to the Transactions of the Devonshire Association by O. J. Reichel*. (J. J. Alexander, W. H. Rogers and H. Tapley-Soper, 1942).
9. *Calendars of Devonshire Wills and Administrations in the Probate Registry of the Bishop of Exeter*, (ed. by E. A. Fry. Published in conjunction with the *British Record Society*, 1908, 1914)
10. *Parochial Histories of Devonshire*. The first seven parts were published as separate volumes, the remainder as offprints from the *Transactions*.
 - I. *Okehampton*. (E. H. Young, 1931).
 - II. *Holsworthy*. (Earl Stanhope. 1934).
 - III. *Kentisbeare*, and IV. *Blackborough*. (E. S. Chalk, 1934).
 - V. *Dartmouth, I: Pre-Reformation Records*. (H. R. Watkin, 1935).
 - VI. *Hatherleigh*. (J. Manaton, 1952).
 - VII. *Alphington*. (W. J. Harte, 1953).
 - VIII. *Kingswear*. (P. Russell, 1953).
 - IX. *Moretonhampstead*. (G. W. G. Hughes, 1954).
 - X. *North Tawton*. (H. F. Fulford Williams, 1954).
 - XI. *Ideford*. (H. F. Fulford Williams, 1954).
 - XII. *Coffinswell*. (W. Keble Martin, 1954).
 - XIII. *Lympstone*. (E. Scott, 1956).
 - XIV. *Sampford Courtnay and Honeychurch*. (H. F. Fulford Williams, 1957).
 - XV. *Broadhempston*. (H. R. Evans, 1958).
 - XVI. *Satterleigh and Warkleigh*. (J. H. B. Andrews, 1960).
 - XVII. *Woodland*. (H. R. Evans, 1960).
 - XVIII. *Chittlehamholt*. (J. H. B. Andrews, 1961).
 - XIX. *Chittlehampton*. (J. H. B. Andrews, 1962).
11. *The Flora of Devon: i. Phanerogams and Higher Cryptogams*, (ed. by W. Keble Martin, and Gordon T. Fraser, The Devonshire Association and T. Buncl & Co Ltd., Arbroath. 1939).

12. *The Burnet Morris Index* (prepared by R. Burnet Morris between 1914 and 1940, containing approximately one million records arranged originally in three sections relating to *Devon Persons*, *Devon Places* and *Devon Subjects*. 1940).
13. *The Flora of Devon*, ii: *Marine Algae*. (Mary Parke, 1952).
14. *The Flora of Devon*, iii: *Mosses and Liverworts*. (E. F. Barnes, 1958).
15. *The Lepidoptera of Devon*, I: *Introduction and Macro-Lepidoptera*. (S. T. Stidston, 1951).
16. *The Good Town of Totnes*. (Percy Russell, 1963; reprinted with an introduction by E. N. Masson Phillips, 1984).
17. *Dartmoor Essays*, (ed. by I. G. Simmons, 1964).
18. *Essays on the Exe Estuary* (ed. by G. T. Boalch, 1980).
19. *The Atlas of the Devon Flora: Flowering Plants and Ferns*. (R. B. Ivimey-Cook, 1984).
20. *Leaves*. (an anthology of poetry prepared by Anne Born and the Literature Section, 1991).
21. *Poor Relief in Devon*. (ed. by H. Bodey, 1991: *Abbotskerswell*, Susannah Wheeleker; *Totnes and Dudley*, Sarah Eyles).
22. *Reactions in Devon to Invasion*. (ed. by H. Bodey, 1992: *The Roman occupation of Devon*, R. Whitehead; *The Norman conquest*, D. Brazier; *Wartime evacuation to Torbay*, J. Whitcher).
23. *The Building Stones of Devon*. (A. W. Gale and members of The Geology Section with advice from R. C. Scrivener, 1992).
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25. *The Devon Dialect Tapes*. (F. J. Murray Laver, 1994: 1. Devon Dialect; 2. Devon Voices. Since re-issued as CDs).
26. *Family Holidays Around Dartmoor*. (Dorothy and Theo Brown, with an introduction by Hugh Bodey, 1995).
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