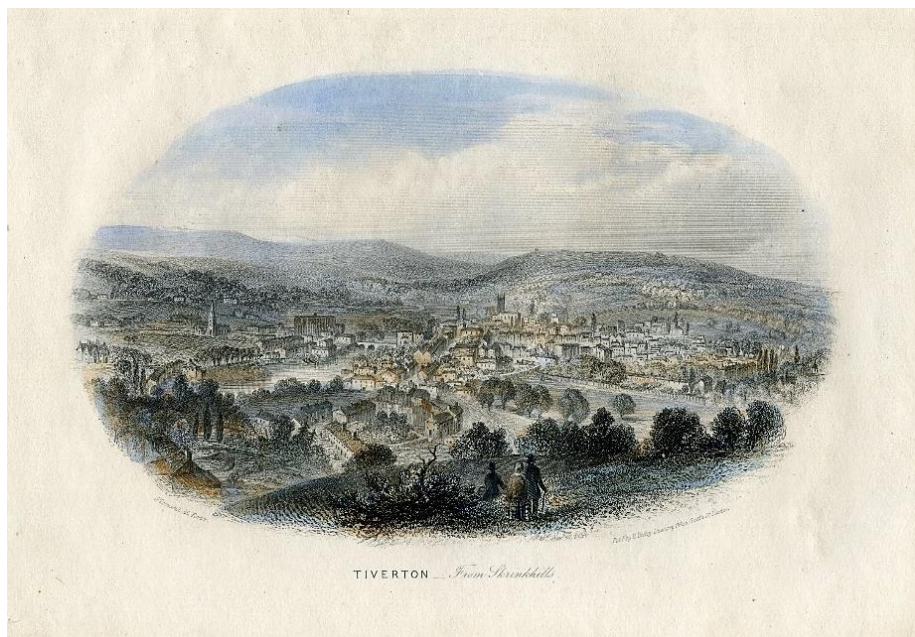


TIVERTON CIVIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Reg. Charity 1043675

No. 99

May 2023



Victorian Tiverton viewed from Shrinkhills

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

CONTENTS	Page
Chairman's Introduction, <i>Jeremy Salter</i>	3
Collipriest Part IV, <i>Mary Toft</i>	7
Warnicombe House 1808-1838, Exeter & Plymouth Gazette <i>Geoff Clarke</i>	10
Camelford, Tiverton, and the 1832 Reform Act, <i>Fern Clarke</i>	11
Victorian Tiverton, <i>Pippa Griffith</i>	22
John Cann (1821-1895): Tiverton's Pioneer Photographer, <i>Peter Maunder</i>	24

Committee Members and Members with Special Responsibilities

Janet Rendle	President
Jeremy Salter	Chairman and Treasurer
Dennis Knowles	Vice Chairman
Fern Clarke	Hon. Secretary & Newsletter Editor
Randall Thane	Membership Secretary
Alison Gordon	Outings Organiser
Anne Davies	Heritage Open Days, Walks and Refreshments
Mike Sanderson	Planning; link to CPRE
Mary Cross, Frank Connock, John Rendle	

Contact for membership enquiries: randallthane@gmail.com /01884 258389

Our thanks to Fax and Files for printing this newsletter.

Our thanks to Pippa Griffith for the title page photograph of Victorian Tiverton

Congratulations to William Saunders who won the under 10s section of the 2023 London marathon. His father Andrew grew up in Tiverton and was a keen member of Twyford Spartans football club.

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

Chairman's Introduction

I recently enjoyed a long and productive meeting with Michael Lodge, who has taken over as Chairman of Wiveliscombe Civic Society. He and his committee are planning the way forward, and they are carrying out a consultation with local community organisations, businesses, and individuals. The meeting demonstrated that our two societies have much in common. Wiveliscombe is a much smaller town than Tiverton, but it has a strong sense of community. The Wiveliscombe Civic Society, founded in 1997, has a largely elderly membership of 70, and a small, but active committee. They run popular monthly meetings which are well attended by members and others, and they regularly comment on planning applications and other developments in the town. However, only a small proportion of the membership are proactive, so they are urgently asking for more volunteers and committee members, so that they *'will be able to address the needs of our community in the future and have the management and volunteers with the skills and enthusiasm to do this.'* Wiveliscombe has no local newspaper, and communication is a problem, so they are exploring the use of social media, and Michael was very interested in the fact that we have a website, which is well-used.

The national picture is very similar. A recent poll of all member societies carried out by Civic Voice found that an average of only 14% of members are proactive. Tiverton Civic Society and many others, including that at Wiveliscombe, urgently need an increase in active committee members and volunteers if we are to become more involved in the local decision-making which is at the heart of government reforms. Both our societies want our towns to be places where people are proud to live, ensuring that, as well as protecting our local heritage, we enable today's residents have access to good housing, to good retail, educational and medical facilities, and to live in

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

countryside undamaged by pollution. Members of Tiverton Civic Society work on all these fronts, not only to ensure that existing good facilities in the town are retained, but also to improve them and to bring any failing facilities up to standard. The Society supports efforts to replace the ageing Tiverton High School buildings with new modern facilities appropriate to education today, a lobby embraced by our new MP Richard Foord who spoke at our meeting on 21st April. Several members work hard to reduce litter in the town. The Society also has concerns about the inadequate waste water and sewage disposal facilities for the town which are unlikely to cope with large-scale new housing developments on the eastern edge of the town.

Targets for new housing in Tiverton

The Society recognises that there is a national housing crisis, and encourages local housebuilding if this fulfils the objectives, set out on 5th December 2022 by Michael Gove, the Minister for Housing, Levelling Up and Communities. He states, *"We have an urgent need in this country to build more homes so that everyone – whether they aspire to home ownership or not – can have a high-quality, affordable place to live."* He goes on to say, *"Our planning system is not working as it should. If we are to deliver the new homes this country needs, new development must have the support of local communities. That requires people to know it will be beautiful, accompanied by the right infrastructure, approved democratically, that it will enhance the environment and create proper neighbourhoods. These principles have always been key to our reforms, and we are now going further by strengthening our commitment to build the right homes in the right places and put local people at the heart of decision-making."*

Some very significant recent developments are taking place, both nationally and locally, which are threatening to affect the pace of new housing completions. A rebellion against proposed planning reforms by a large group of 'Blue Wall' Conservative Members of Parliament following the remarkable

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

Liberal Democrat victory in the 2021 Chesham and Amersham by election (with a swing of over 25% from Conservatives) has continued to have wide repercussions. Both the Prime Minister and Michael Gove have now announced that mandatory housing targets and the need to demonstrate a five-year housing supply, to provide local plans, and to designate land for development, will be scrapped in the forthcoming Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. 55 Local Authorities, including East Devon, have already abandoned their plans, and it is likely that many more, perhaps including Mid Devon, will follow. The government states that they wish to maintain the present target of building 300,000 new homes nationally every year, but it is difficult to see how this can now be achieved; in fact, developers have announced that 77,000 fewer houses could be built annually because of these changes, which have been widely condemned in the national press, including all traditionally Conservative-leaning newspapers. Many others have expressed similar concerns.

River Pollution

For some time there has been growing concern about the polluted condition of many of Britain's rivers, and BBC's Wild Isles series has amplified these worries, showing how stocks of salmon and other fish have plummeted. Most of the pollution comes from agriculture and water companies. Every day sees river pollution from chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and slurry, with water courses impacted by run-off from both soils and hard surfaces. Many waste water and sewage treatment works, with inadequate infrastructure to deal with increasing demands, discharge large amounts of raw, untreated, sewage into rivers. A particular concern is the large increase of nutrients in the form of phosphates and nitrates. Nutrient pollution damages the environment and harms water quality. Algal blooms consume large amounts of oxygen that fish, shellfish, and other organisms need to survive. Algal blooms can make water cloudy, reduce the ability of aquatic life to find food, and clog the gills of fish.

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

Natural England, the government's advisory body for the natural environment in England, consider that pollution levels have reached a point where up to 20,000 planned new houses cannot go ahead, including all proposed developments in the Axe Valley in South-East Devon. Natural England have told planning departments in 42 Local Authorities to halt all developments until they are able to guarantee, if necessary by mitigation, that they are 'nutrient neutral', i.e. they can demonstrate that they will cause no overall increase in nutrient pollution. In addition, new housing schemes across large parts of a further 74 Local Authorities are now required to demonstrate nutrient neutrality before building can commence or resume, the result being that an estimated 120,000 new homes are now delayed.

Increasing concerns have been concerned about the river Exe catchment area, although DEFRA estimate overall pollution levels to be moderate. On 23rd February this year Exeter City Council unanimously approved a motion which included the statement that they *'recognise that there is clear evidence of poor water quality in the Exe due to cumulative impact of multiple sewage discharge events or "sewage overload"'*. The Council have requested South West Water to create a database recording water quality based on an assessment of the cumulative impact of sewage discharge on ecological river health. They have also urged South West Water to monitor the impact of polluted water on wildlife and biodiversity along the banks of the river. The situation is potentially serious, specific concerns in Tiverton focusing on the capacity and performance of the Tiverton Wastewater Treatment Works at the southern end of Collipriest Lane. Unless there is considerable improvement, this issue has the potential to impact on future housing development in the town.

Jeremy Salter

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

Collipriest Part VIII. The Carew Family

Following the death of James Hay in 1820, Collipriest House remained unoccupied for several years and was still on the market in 1822. The estate probably reverted to the Executors of Sir Thomas Phillips. A branch of the Carew family had resided at the manor house of Bickleigh [Bickleigh Castle] since the early 15th century and the incumbent of the parish was John West Carew, a younger son of Sir Thomas Carew of Haccombe (near Newton Abbot). From 1782 to 1821 he was Rector of both Haccombe and Bickleigh. On his death, his nephew Thomas followed him as Rector of Bickleigh.

Thomas was born at Haccombe in 1788. He was also a younger son. Through his great grandmother, Dorothy, he was a direct descendant of Peter West, former Lord of the Manor of Tiverton. Dorothy West had married Sir Thomas Carew of Haccombe in 1727. When she inherited the Manor of Tiverton from her father, it passed through her from the West family to the Carews. This relationship between the Carews of Haccombe and those of Bickleigh may have influenced the decision to appoint Thomas Rector of Bickleigh in 1826.

In 1820 Thomas married Holway, daughter of Robert Baker of Cullompton. They needed a residence within reach of Bickleigh. As Collipriest was being advertised for sale at the time, Robert Baker offered to buy the estate of about 330 acres if Thomas Carew would buy the house and some of the land. According to records in the County Records Office, Baker and Carew became joint owners in 1823. When Rev^d Thomas became Rector of Bickleigh, he was given permission to reside in his own house as there was no suitable dwelling in the parish and Collipriest was within three miles of the church.

The Baker and Carew families jointly occupied Collipriest House, together with a retinue of servants. Oddly enough, there is no mention of them in the Voters List of 1831, but Robert Baker was known to be living there in 1836. The Rev^d Thomas and Holway Carew had three sons born in 1821, 1824 and 1826. Thomas and his youngest son (recorded as a day boy at Blundells in 1837) both died at Collipriest in 1848 followed by the death of Robert Baker in

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

1849. Rev^d Thomas was succeeded as rector of Bickleigh by his second son, Robert Baker Carew, who remained in post until his death in 1899.

The census of 1851 showed Holway Carew, widow, and her two surviving unmarried sons resident at Collipriest House with six servants. Holway died in 1857. Her elder son Thomas continued to live at Collipriest House. He was a magistrate 'of independent means', and Master of the Foxhounds from 1852 to 1855. A stone building in one of the orchards in the combe behind the Collipriest buildings housed the Carew pack of hounds. It was certainly there until World War II.

On his death in 1880, Thomas was succeeded by his nephew, Charles Robert Sydenham Carew, son of the Rev^d Robert Baker Carew and Augusta Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Daniel of Stoodleigh Court. He was born in 1853, and in 1891 married Muriel, a member of the Heathcoat-Amory family. They had five children, and are recorded in the 1901 census at Collipriest House with eight servants, and outside staff. It is doubtful whether they had sole occupancy of the house throughout the period, for the census of 1891, taken during the year in which Charles was married, recorded Carmen de la Casas, widow, with her four sons, all born in Cuba and all 'living on their own means' at Collipriest House with six servants. There was also a coachman with two children and his wife at the Coach House, and a gardener, his wife, and an undergardener at the cottage in the walled garden. No mention is made of any Carews at Collipriest House, but they may have been temporarily away from home at the time the census was taken.

It is believed that the crippling death duties forced Charles and his father to dispose of much of Collipriest House. From the time that Baker and Carew had purchased the estate of 324 acres following the death of James Hay, Captain Francis Hole had held the Barton and lived in the dwelling house on the site of the house now known as Collipriest Cottage. His name appeared in various Land Tax assessments and Census forms between 1823 and 1850 as landowner, alderman, JP and in 1844 as Mayor of Tiverton. However, he is not

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

mentioned again after 1850, and it is possible that the holding was divided up after that date, either on his death or his retirement, and the proceeds used to meet death duties.

In 1902 Charles Carew and his family left Collipriest House and moved to Warnicombe House. The house belonged to the Heathcoat-Amory family, related by marriage to Charles Carew and an indenture is recorded, dated 6th August 1904, between Sir Ian Heathcoat-Amory and Charles Robert Carew, followed by a Deed of Gift dated 7th December 1938 - presumably in connection with Warnicombe House.

Mary Toft

Warnicombe House



This picture of Warnicombe house is shown in colour on the Tiverton Civic Society website under listed buildings. It reveals an elegant Georgian gentleman's residence dating from 1808. It was built for John Weech of Tiverton.

It is now a Grade II listed house with 5.2 acres. In February 2022, Warnicombe House went on the market with Knight Frank, Exeter office, priced at £3,375,000. By April 2023 the price had been dropped to £2,950,000. A feature article in *Country Life* magazine written on 8th February 2023 by Penny Churchill reveals that it has four main reception rooms, a large country kitchen, seven bedrooms and four bathrooms on three floors. The outbuildings have been converted into an office, workshop, gym and stores. The land includes a walled garden, orchards and woodland. The house has good views over the surrounding countryside. The close proximity of Blundells School to the property is listed as an asset of the house. Penny mentions its frequent changes of ownership.

Editor

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

Warnicombe House 1808 – 1838, *Exeter & Plymouth Gazette*

Unlike some grand houses, Warnicombe House has had a chequered history of owners and tenants. The problems began from its inception. John Weech died before the house was completed in 1808. It was left to Weech's grandson, Thomas Forwood. From 1827, the house was let rather than sold.

On 13th October 1827, the *Exeter & Plymouth Gazette* advertised the property to let with immediate possession. It had two walled gardens, the choicest fruit trees, a potato garden, an orchard, a coach house, stables, and a granary, together with seven acres of meadow. In the same paper, the household furniture, three horses and a carriage were advertised for sale. Thomas Forwood died in 1832 while making a speech from the window of the Angel Inn addressing an immense crowd of electors, encouraging them to select his cousin as a prospective M.P. for Tiverton in the election that followed the passing of the Reform Act in June 1832. He left a wife and six children. His estate was apparently left to his eldest son, Thomas, aged 12 years.

On 16th August 1834, the *Exeter & Plymouth Gazette* advertised Warnicombe House for let with prospective residents asked to apply to Mrs. Forwood in St. Peter Street, Tiverton. The premises were described as a spacious house with stabling, coach house and gardens, currently in the possession of W. Morgan Esquire. A feature of the premises was the beautiful and extensive views from the house which was a suitable residence for a 'genteel family'. The taker would be accommodated with 'any quantity of land'. It was taken by Thomas Bartholomew who died in 1836. The house was advertised to let three times in 1836, 1837 and 1838 by the *Exeter & Plymouth Gazette*. These advertisements highlighted different aspects of the attractions of the property, including 'a good pump of water', a harness room, a greenhouse and sporting rights over 180 acres. The house contained a water closet. Each advertisement states that it had lately been the residence of the late Thomas Bartholomew. A time limit of 3, 5, or 7 years was placed on the letting.

Geoff Clarke

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

Camelford, Tiverton and the 1832 Reform Act

Mary Toft's article 'Collipriest Part VII' (Newsletter October 2022) stated that Thomas Winslow inherited the estate of the Recorder and briefly MP for Camelford, Jonathan Phillips, and that Winslow took the surname Phillips. Jonathan, born in 1725, was the son of John Phillips and his wife Elizabeth (daughter of Charles Pomery of Trenay Manor, St. Neot, Cornwall).

Thomas Winslow of Collipriest (also described as being 'of Twickenham, Middlesex') married Catherine Reynolds. They had five children of whom the eldest son, Thomas junior, was born around 1765. Their third son, John Elliot Winslow, born in 1771, was living at Collipriest in 1790, and a third generation of Winslows into the 1800s. Thomas Winslow junior married Elizabeth Pomery Carpenter (*d.*1800; *bur.* Tiverton), eldest child of Christian, sister of Jonathan Phillips. Winslow took the surname Phillips in 1798, on becoming heir to Jonathan Phillips. Christian died in 1802. Sir Thomas Phillips died in 1833.

Mary briefly describes the eligible voters for the two parliamentary seats for Camelford which included the heads of the Dinham and Penhallow families. As members of Camelford Corporation, they were among the select group of voters before 1832. The borough was controlled by the Phillips family. The families were inter-related: Charles Dinham, six times Mayor of Camelford, was the seventh child of William Dinham and his wife Mary Pomery (sister of Elizabeth Pomery who married John Phillips), of Tressiney manor, Advent (by Camelford). William's sister Ursula married Nicholas Phillips, Gentleman. Two of Charles Dinham's sons, William and Charles, long-time members of the corporation, became Mayor of Camelford (William 5 times and Charles 6 times).

Camelford, a 'rotten borough'

'Rotten borough' was a term describing a borough with a tiny electorate. In Camelford this was due partly to depopulation and partly to limited eligibility to become an elector. Before 1715, the borough was controlled by its

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

Recorder, Francis Manaton, who owned about 75% of the tenements in the borough. In successive general elections the borough returned two Tory MPs.

In the early eighteenth century, Thomas 'Diamond' Pitt (*d.*1726), a self-made entrepreneur and colonial governor, bought an interest in one of Camelford's parliamentary seats through his steward, John Phillips (grandfather of Winslow's wife), the attorney and Deputy Recorder of the borough. Pitt made his fortune in India, becoming President of the East India Company and then of Madras (1698-1709), and was known as Governor Pitt. He purchased Boconnoc in Cornwall in 1691 after selling the Regent Diamond, acquired in India and sent to England in his eldest son Robert's shoe. After being cut, this diamond was sold to Phillippe II, Duke of Orléans, Regent for Louis XV.

Governor Pitt made further land purchases giving him control of the rotten borough of Old Sarum, for which he became MP, and an interest in the Okehampton seat. These purchases underpinned the Pitt family political fortunes. His son, Robert (*d.*1727), MP successively for Old Sarum, Salisbury, and Okehampton, was the father of Thomas II (*d.*1761) and William (*d.*1778; Prime Minister). Thomas II's only surviving son, Thomas III, became Whig MP for Old Sarum (1761-8), Okehampton (1768-74), and Old Sarum (1774-84) before being raised to the peerage as Baron Camelford of Boconnoc.

John Phillips was Mayor of Camelford several times. By 1734, he had gained a controlling interest in the second parliamentary seat for the Pitt family.

Following Francis Manaton's death in 1735, John Russell, 4th Duke of Bedford, a Whig politician, purchased his property. Also in that year, Governor Pitt's grandson, Thomas Pitt II, became Recorder for the borough. Control of the borough was disputed between Thomas Pitt II and Bedford, both Whigs.

In 1747, John Phillips was succeeded as steward for Thomas Pitt II by his son, Charles. By 1751, Thomas Pitt II had become bankrupt and mortgaged his boroughs to the Treasury, which then negotiated with Bedford on parliamentary representation for Camelford. Charles Phillips, who had become Recorder, was the decisive third party in the discussions, aligning

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

himself with the Treasury interest. Charles Phillips gradually gained complete control of the parliamentary interests of Camelford, making the borough an appanage of the Phillips family as patrons of the corporation. He became one of its two MPs. He died on 16.10.1774 shortly after being re-elected as MP.

In 1775, Charles was succeeded as Recorder and steward of the Treasury interest in Camelford by his brother Jonathan, a former naval surgeon. Their eldest nephew, John Phillips Carpenter, who inherited Mount Tavy, Tavistock, was the Camelford attorney. Jonathan became MP for Camelford in 1784, elected unopposed, but relinquished the seat for a Treasury candidate three months later. In the 1796 general election, the Treasury interest was challenged by Francis Russell, 5th Duke of Bedford, the largest property owner in the borough. The Bedford candidates for election were disallowed, not having been nominated by the freemen of the borough. On 10.11.1796, the House of Commons redefined the electorate in Camelford to include all those paying 'scot and lot' (taxes). Bedford agreed terms with Jonathan Phillips. Charles Carpenter (brother of Elizabeth, wife of Thomas Winslow Phillips) became attorney in place of his older brother, John. Jonathan Phillips had planned to pass on the Recordership to John, but was pressured to resign it in September 1797 to Bedford who made Charles Carpenter his Deputy Recorder. Charles continued as attorney. Phillips died on 12.9.1798.

In 1800, the Phillips estate was sold to Bedford (patron of the borough of Tavistock) who became patron of the borough of Camelford as well. In 1802, Bedford was succeeded by his brother John Russell, Whig MP for Tavistock. In 1810, the Bedford candidate, Henry Brougham, was elected an MP for Camelford, but lost the seat when, in 1812, Bedford sold the patronage of Camelford for £32,000 to a patron who disliked Brougham's political views.

From 1814-32, the patron of Camelford was the Earl of Darlington (William Vane; Whig). The 1818 general election was fought under the patronage of Darlington against the Earl of Yarmouth (Francis Charles Seymour-Conway, Lord Warden of the Stannaries; Tory) who leased land from Darlington to

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

house his supporters. The election was so corrupt that the result, which went in favour of the Whig candidates, was declared void. A new poll was ordered. The by-election in 1819 returned two Tory candidates. Again, the election was declared void. All four candidates were barred from sitting for any constituency for the remainder of the parliament for violating the Treating Act (offering material incentives to electors to gain their vote). Camelford's writ was suspended. Despite this, in 1820, Mark Milbank (a Whig MP elected in 1818) and Lord Yarmouth (Tory) were elected to hold the two seats.

In 1822, Yarmouth succeeded his father as 3rd Marquess of Hertford and had to relinquish his Commons seat. At the ensuing by-election, Sheldon Cradock (Whig) gained the seat. The build-up to the 1823 general election saw Lord Darlington, who owned mining rights in the area, drive an adit under new houses built by Lord Yarmouth on land leased from Darlington. Gunpowder placed in the adit reduced the houses to rubble! The constituency returned two Whig MPs until it was abolished under the Reform Act of June 1832.

Tiverton, a 'pocket' borough

Like Camelford, Tiverton was a town in decline in the early nineteenth century. It suffered economic problems at the end of the Napoleonic wars when the mainstay woollen serge manufacturing business of the town, which supplied cloth for the army, collapsed. The town's economy was reprieved in 1816 by the arrival of John Heathcoat who relocated his Loughborough machine lacemaking business, wrecked by Luddites, to an almost new but empty factory in Tiverton, originally designed to manufacture cotton cloth.

Before 1832, Tiverton's electorate was not much bigger than Camelford's but its population was larger. The franchise for Tiverton was limited to members of the corporation. The mayor, elected annually by the members of the corporation, was the returning officer for parliamentary elections. The corporation consisted of eleven capital burgesses and twelve assistant burgesses who held their offices for life. When a capital burgess died, a new one was elected from the assistant burgesses, and when a vacancy occurred

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

among the assistant burgesses, the corporation elected a new one from the freemen of the town. As in Camelford, members of the corporation were related to each other by marriage. From 1794, no new freemen were admitted to the corporation and many members lived outside the borough.

Tiverton was a pocket borough, one that was in the 'pocket' of its patron. The Tory patron of Tiverton was Dudley Ryder, 1st Earl of Harrowby, whose family had been connected politically (but not in terms of residence) with Tiverton since 1734 when his grandfather, also called Dudley Ryder, was elected MP for Tiverton. Dudley senior was a prominent London barrister who came from a nonconformist family of tradesmen (merciers) in London. He became attorney-general in spring 1737 and was knighted in May 1740. He became Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench in May 1754. Dudley's only son Nathaniel was MP for Tiverton from 1756 to 1776 when he was created Baron Harrowby of Harrowby, Lincs., and entered the Lords. Nathaniel married Elizabeth, daughter and co-heiress of Richard Terrick, Bishop of London. They had three children, Dudley, who became Baron Harrowby in 1803 and was created 1st Earl of Harrowby in 1809, Richard and Henry (Bishop of Gloucester 1815-24, and Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry 1824-36). These descendants maintained their interest in Tiverton until the passing of the Reform Bill.

Dudley Ryder (1st Earl of Harrowby) was Tory MP for Tiverton (1784-1803), and Recorder from 1795, returning both members for the borough, himself and his brother Richard (Home Secretary 1809-12). His political control of the borough was achieved through patronage and loans to local tradesmen suffering from the decline in the woollen industry. By the early 1800s, non-residence of the small electorate in Tiverton had grown to such scandalous proportions that Harrowby started exerting pressure for change on the burgesses, with little success. When John Heathcoat set up his business in Tiverton in 1816, he was unable to gain any influence on the political scene.

In 1820, Richard Ryder and Viscount Sandon, Harrowby's eldest son, were elected unopposed as Tory MPs for Tiverton despite a strong Radical element

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

among the town's population which ranged from 'Philosophical' Radicals to 'Popular' Radicals. The former wanted reform of the parliamentary electoral system to include representation from commercial and industrial interests. The latter wanted reform to include freedom of the press and relief from economic distress, as well as electoral reform.

In 1820, the various Radical groups united by linking their cause with that of Queen Caroline who was fighting her estranged husband George IV's attempts to divorce her. His chosen method to annul the marriage was by means of the controversial Pains and Penalties Bill. In Tiverton, the Radicals were led by an attorney called James Partridge who circulated a leaflet in support of Queen Caroline's cause. In November 1820, the Pains and Penalties Bill, which had narrowly passed in the House of Lords, was withdrawn before being presented in the Commons. There were celebrations in Tiverton. However, Queen Caroline died less than a month later, and the various Radical groups lost their figurehead, their unity and, for a time, their national prominence.

The cause for electoral reform was not dropped in Tiverton. From 1820, a retired Tiverton merchant, George Coles, worked with James Partridge to demand the removal of non-resident burgesses as the sole electorate for the borough's two MPs, and their replacement by a larger electorate of freemen paying 'scot and lot' who were resident in the town. Coles himself had been refused admission to the corporation by the burgess oligarchy.

In 1824, the threat from Coles led the burgesses to suggest that John Heathcoat, by then the largest property owner in Tiverton, should be elected as a burgess but nothing was done to implement this. Early the following year, Coles stepped up his campaign, publishing a pamphlet re-iterating his complaints against the corporation. He claimed that Tiverton's electorate had originally comprised freemen resident in Tiverton and paying taxes.

In the summer of 1826, parliament was dissolved and an election called. Two London barristers, James Kennedy and George Heath, were invited by the Radicals in Tiverton to stand against the Tory incumbents, Richard Ryder and

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

Viscount Sandon, who were again the candidates for election favoured by the burgesses. The Radical party had the goal of asserting local householders' rights to elect their MPs. As many of them were businessmen, they espoused free trade, a goal they had in common with the Whig party.

At the 1826 election meeting, Partridge demanded that local householders should have the right to vote, but this was rejected by the Recorder. Coles proposed Kennedy and Anderson as candidates, seconded by Partridge, but this was declared out of order, and the only votes permitted were those of the burgesses. Ryder and Sandon were nominated and elected.

Another prominent political issue of the time concerned the emancipation of Catholics. Of the two elected Tory MPs, Richard Ryder was against Catholic emancipation while his nephew Sandon favoured it. The people of Tiverton retained a strong anti-Catholic bias, many supporting Richard Ryder's view. More importantly, the burgesses were against Catholic emancipation. By 1827, Richard Ryder had become ill, and the Earl of Harrowby (who favoured Catholic emancipation) proposed his son Granville Ryder as Richard's replacement. Granville was rejected by the burgesses because he favoured Catholic emancipation, and the ailing Richard Ryder remained in post. Civil strife in Ireland, which threatened to evolve into civil war, led prominent members of the Tory government, including the Prime Minister Arthur Wellesley (1st Duke of Wellington) and Home Secretary Robert Peel, reluctantly to support Catholic emancipation. In 1829, the Catholic Relief Act was passed, enabling Catholics to become MPs.

In July 1830, parliament was dissolved once again due to the death of George IV. Richard Ryder informed the burgesses that he would not be standing for election to the next parliament. As the question of Catholic emancipation had been settled, Granville Ryder was accepted as a candidate by the burgesses and elected with Sandon to represent Tiverton. Electoral reform became a major campaign issue in the election. The Tory party narrowly won the election, but the Prime Minister, the Duke of Wellington, was so unpopular,

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

even within his party, that in November 1830 the new King William IV asked Earl Grey, who led the Whig party and favoured electoral reform, to form a minority government.

Lord John Russell, MP for Devon County, brought forward the 1st Reform Bill on 1.3.1831. This disenfranchised 60 of the smallest boroughs and reduced the representation of 47 others. Seats were redistributed to enfranchise growing suburbs in London, new industrial cities, the counties, and parts of Scotland and Ireland. The bill standardised and expanded the borough franchise, increasing the size of the electorate by around half a million people.

On 14.3.1831, the people of Tiverton held a meeting, organised by Coles, to petition parliament in support of the Reform Bill which enfranchised £10 householders, allowing the borough to be better represented. The petition requested that local freemen as electors would be included in the proposed bill for reforming the electoral system. The petition was presented to the Commons by Sandon, who was by then part of the government, on 17.3.1831, and to the Lords on 21.4.1831 by Henry Brougham, Lord Chancellor, who had recently been raised to the peerage. However, the bill encountered difficulties as it passed through its stages in the Commons. Parliament was dissolved.

Early in March 1831, Sandon had written to Tiverton's corporation offering to resign his seat as the corporation were strongly opposed to the Reform Bill. Although his resignation was not accepted, he did not stand for re-election later in the year. The corporation reluctantly agreed to his replacement by the anti-reformist Spencer Perceval, eldest son of the Tory Prime Minister Spencer Perceval (assassinated 1812). He stood with Granville Ryder who also opposed electoral reform in the 1831 election. Again, Coles claimed the right to vote as a local householder paying taxes, but was refused by the mayor, John Barne, who declared Ryder and Perceval elected.

In contrast to the mayor and corporation, the people of Tiverton supported the Reform Bill overwhelmingly. They booed and made threats against the mayor and corporation when the results of the 1831 election were

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

announced. When Perceval left the election hall, he was pelted with fish and had to take refuge in the Angel Inn. Among the leading local advocates in favour of the Reform Bill at this time were John Heathcoat and Rev^d John Spurway. The 1831 general election gave the Whig party a landslide majority.

A second Reform Bill was introduced to parliament on 3.10.1831. The people of Tiverton petitioned the Lords, who were known to be against the bill, for a speedy passage of the bill through the House. Coles sent an address to King William IV through the prime Minister, Lord Grey, signed by at least 1,500 people in Tiverton. It urged him to meet the people's desire for electoral reform by exercising his prerogative to overrule the Lords' vote should it go against reform. The Reform Bill was passed in the Commons by a majority of over 100 votes. It failed to pass in the Lords by 41 votes. The Commons passed a motion of confidence in the Grey government and William IV prorogued parliament since the bill could not be re-introduced in that session.

A new session of parliament began in December 1831, and a third Reform Bill was brought forward in which minor adjustments were made to the previous bill which had failed in the Lords. The Radical Party had achieved some elected MPs who allied with the Whig party to achieve the passing of the Reform Bill. It passed in the Commons in March 1832 by an even larger majority than the previous bill. The Lords delayed the bill by putting forward amendments that prevented the 'rotten' boroughs from being disenfranchised. Prime Minister Grey advised William IV that the only solution to break the political *impasse* was for the king to create many Whig peers, which he refused to do. Grey resigned and the king invited the Tory Duke of Wellington to form a minority government. This caused riots and public protests, and calls for the abolition of the nobility and the monarchy. Wellington was unable to form a government, and Grey was recalled. Wellington advised the opposing peers to abstain rather than oppose the Reform Bill when it returned to the Lords, which they did, and it finally passed, receiving royal assent on 7.6.1832.

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

On 28.6.1832, the people of Tiverton turned out *en masse* to celebrate with a grand procession. Around 2000 poor people of the borough were given a free dinner, after which there was a firework display. The boundaries of the parliamentary seat remained as before, but after the bill was passed, there were 462 registered electors instead of 24. Nineteen of these were members of the corporation. The borough was permitted to continue to return two MPs. Selection of parliamentary candidates took place in July 1832 when Thomas Forwood was asked to stand. Due to ill-health, he proposed his cousin Henry Burgess who was not favoured by the freeholders of the borough. Parliament was dissolved on 3rd December 1832. A general election took place, with the new parliament summoned to meet on 29th January 1833.

John Heathcoat (Whig), James Kennedy (Radical), Benjamin Wood (Whig), and Charles Chichester (Whig) stood as candidates in the December 1832 general election for the two seats. Harrowby was advised that the people of Tiverton were strongly anti-Tory, and that it would not be safe for any member of his family to come to Tiverton, let alone stand for parliament in the borough. John Heathcoat (376 votes; 51.1%) and James Kennedy (265 votes; 36%) were elected. About 80% of the enlarged electorate turned out to vote.

James Kennedy's election was challenged on the basis that he did not have the correct residency qualifications. At a by-election on 4.5.1833, he was re-elected. In 1835, he vacated the seat for Henry John Temple, 3rd Viscount Palmerston (Whig), who later became Prime Minister (1855-8; 1859-65) and oversaw the evolution of the Whig party into the Liberal Party, representing Tiverton until his death on 18.10.1865. Heathcoat represented Tiverton until 1859. Representation of Tiverton by two MPs was reduced to one in 1885.

Fern Clarke

Note: The information on Tiverton is largely drawn from an article by Terry Jenkins available at History of Parliament online. It is published in *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1820-1832*, ed. D.R. Fisher 2009.

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter



Left: Dudley Ryder MP for St. Germans 1733-4; MP for Tiverton 1734-54, Solicitor General 1733-37; Attorney General 1737-54; Privy Councillor and Chief Justice of the King's Bench from 2.5.1754 until his death on 25.5.1756 aged 64.

Right: Dudley Ryder (grandson), MP for Tiverton 1784-1803; Vice President of the Board of Trade 1790-

1803 and Paymaster of the Forces 1791-1803; succeeded to his father's barony of Harrowby 1803 with a seat in the Lords; Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs 1804; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster 1805; created Viscount Sandon and 1st Earl of Harrowby 1809; Minister without portfolio 1809-12; Lord President of the Council 1812-27; 1827 refused to serve as Prime Minister under George IV. Close friend of assassinated Prime Minister Spencer Perceval and pallbearer at his funeral.

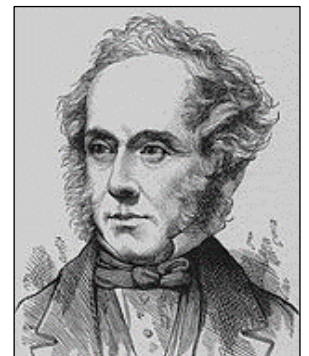


Right: Dudley Ryder (great grandson), Viscount Sandon (1809-47); MP for Tiverton 1819-31; Lord of the Admiralty 1827; Secretary to the Board of Control 1830-1; MP for Liverpool 1831-47; 2nd Earl of Harrowby 1847-82; Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Privy Counsellor 1855; Lord Privy Seal 1855-1858. Created KG 1859.



Left: John Heathcoat, Industrialist, MP for Tiverton 1832-1859; served on parliamentary committees.

Right: Henry John Temple, Viscount Palmerston (Irish peerage which did not qualify him to sit in the House of Lords). MP for Tiverton 1835-65. Created KG April 1856.

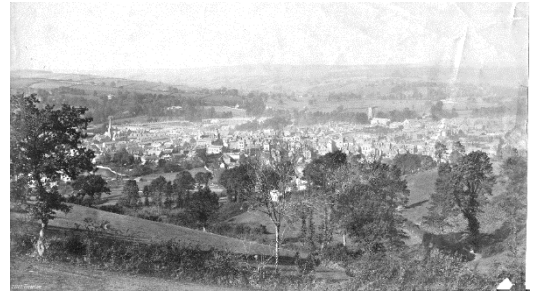


Prime Minister (Whig) 4.2.1855 - 21.2.1858; (Liberal) 12.6.1859 - 18.10.65. Liberal party formed from the Whig party on 6.6.1859. State funeral.

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

Victorian Tiverton

Tiverton Museum of Mid Devon Life's current temporary exhibition is Victorian Mid Devon. This period (1837-1901) saw much change to the towns of Mid Devon, especially Tiverton.



White's Devonshire Directory of 1850 provides a picture of the town:

'Tiverton is now one of the cleanest and best built towns of its size in the West, and its inhabitants have long been characterised for social intercourse: assemblies and concerts are often held, and many friendly societies, clubs, &c., have been formed for mutual benefit. The town has a Lodge of Free Masons, a Lodge of Odd Fellows, and an Agricultural Society. A spacious Market Place, with convenient approaches, was built in 1830; and over the entrance from Fore street, were built at the same time large Subscription Rooms, for assemblies, reading, billiards, &c. The reading room is well supplied with newspapers and periodicals; and in the same street are commodious rooms, occupied by the recently formed Literary and Scientific Institution. There is a small Theatre in Peter street.... The manufacture of serges, druggets, drapeens, and other woollen goods at Tiverton, began to decline about the year 1740, though in 1790 there were in the town and vicinity 1000 looms and 200 wool combers. Here are now only two blanket, serge, and flannel manufactories; but in 1815, a large woollen mill, was purchased by Messrs. Heathcoat and Co., who, by extensive additions, converted it into an immense Lace Manufactory, which, now employs about 1500 men, women, and children.'

The idea of Tiverton being one of the cleanest towns is somewhat contradicted by Thomas Rammell's report of 1851 'Preliminary Inquiry into the sewerage, drainage and supply of water, and the sanitary condition of the inhabitants of Tiverton' which notes:

'The general aspect of the town, meaning the principal streets in the old part of it, is cheerful and prepossessing, so much so, indeed, that the stranger could

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

hardly expect to find the masses of filth and corruption which a closer inspection of the back quarters where the poorer portion of the population dwell, would bring to his view. Indeed, this is a distinctive characteristic of the place.'

Several major buildings were built in the town in this period. The workhouse was rebuilt and opened in 1837 on Belmont Road, following the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act. The 1840s saw the new gaol built on St Andrew Street, and the creation of the Assembly Rooms on Fore Street (later known as the Athenaeum and then the home of the Art and Technical School). A public holiday celebrated the opening of the new Town Hall in May 1864. The Palmerston Hotel was rebuilt following a fire in 1868 which destroyed a good part of Bampton Street. People's Park was established in 1887 to celebrate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee.

Tiverton's health care improved, first with the establishment of a dispensary at Kiddall's Court (off Fore Street) in 1852 as a facility for the poor who did not receive poor relief. Premises were purchased to build an infirmary in 1856, and the first out patient was treated in 1868, and the first in patient in February 1869. Caroline Brewin, John Heathcoat's daughter, played a major role in founding the infirmary and enabling the purchase of the premises on Bampton Street. It was maintained thanks to donations and contributions from local people. The dispensary moved to the new infirmary so that the town's healthcare was centralised in one location. The infirmary meant that any unfortunate people who suffered accidents no longer had to travel all the way to Exeter to seek treatment.

The museum's exhibition on Victorian Mid Devon continues until the autumn; entry as part of normal admission. There is an illustrated talk to accompany the exhibition on Thursday 25th May, 3pm. Tickets are £6 (£5 for members), and are available through the events page on the museum's website.

Pippa Griffith

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

John Cann (1821 – 1895): Tiverton's Pioneer Photographer

In September 202 I gave a presentation entitled "*Images of Tiverton, 1700 – 1900*" to the Society. Part of the talk concerned early photographs of the town and although I said it was still very much work in progress, my preliminary conclusion was that John Cann was the only nineteenth century Tiverton-based photographer who took pictures out of doors.

Back in September, I said that after almost two decades of searching, I was aware of about fifteen photographs which Cann had taken of local views. However, as often happens in such circumstances, a collection of no fewer than six photographs (three of them new to me) from a single album appeared for sale a few weeks after my talk. This prompted me to consider writing a follow-up article focusing on John Cann and to illustrate it with some of the newly-emerged images of Tiverton.

John Cann was born at Newton St Cyres, a village about four miles south-east of Crediton on the road to Exeter. His parents were Michael Cann, a butcher, and his wife Susannah (née Lang) who were married in the village on 15 March 1812. John was baptised at the parish church on 18 November 1821. We know nothing of his childhood, but presumably he was educated locally. Perhaps because he was not the eldest son, John did not to follow his father's profession, instead becoming a baker and relocating to Exeter. He was living in North Street at the time of his marriage to Ellen East at St David's church in Exeter on 26 May 1848. Neither butcher nor baker were John's true vocation however; his lifelong profession was to be the making and retailing of boots and shoes. He most probably owed this line of work to his father-in-law, Samuel East, a shoemaker based on Fore Street Hill in Exeter.

Shortly after their wedding, the young couple moved to Tiverton. Sadly, John Cann's personal life was destined to be marred by repeated tragedy. His wife Ellen died in 1849; as was only too common in those days almost certainly due to complications giving birth to their daughter Ellen, who also sadly died shortly afterwards. John Cann was now alone, a widower at the age of just 28.

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

John moved into lodgings in Fore Street in the household of Hugh Risdon, a grocer and baker, where he is described in the 1851 census as an “assistant”, cordwainer. Another member of the household was Hugh’s daughter Emma, then aged 15, who would go on to become John’s second wife. They married at St George’s church in Tiverton on 21 May 1854.

The year 1854 proved to be a turning point in John Cann’s career. Newly married, he had a chance encounter with a man called Lacey. Described as a ‘strolling player’, Lacey may have been in Tiverton for one of the town’s fairs, perhaps at Lammas or Michaelmas. He was a photographer who took daguerreotype portraits. Cann had his photograph taken, and paid Lacey to teach him the process – he was smitten. From that moment, John Cann was a photographer as well as a boot and shoemaker.

Cann’s obituary in the Tiverton Gazette in December 1895 comments that ‘rapid advances were soon made in the comparatively new art of photography, and Mr Cann took the tide at the flood ... business came thick and fast and all who could afford it had their photograph taken by the new process.’ The ‘rapid advances’ which the newspaper mentions were the widespread adoption of the ‘wet plate collodion’ process, which quickly superseded the daguerreotype making it much easier for the professional photographer to take pictures, together with the introduction of the *carte de visite*. So popular were these small photographs, stuck onto pieces of card of a standard size measuring 2½ x 4 inches, that having your portrait taken became a craze which was dubbed *cartomania*. At the height of the craze, between 1861 and 1867, it has been estimated that over 300 million *cartes de visite* were sold annually in the UK. Unlike the expensive daguerreotype, the carte was cheap, easy to reproduce in multiple copies and because of its standard size could be collected in specially manufactured albums. Portraits of friends and family, as well as royalty, politicians, local and national celebrities would be kept in the album which was displayed in the parlour as a talking point between friends and neighbours. Photographic studios were established in every town in England, and in Tiverton it was to John Cann’s premises in

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

Gold Street that the crowds flocked. In 1864, no less a figure than the Prime Minister himself, Lord Palmerston (1784 – 1865), who was also MP for Tiverton, sat in John Cann's studio for his *carte de visite* portrait. Without doubt, this boosted Cann's business and Palmerston's local reputation to boot. Cann's 1895 obituary tells us that he had 'the [photographic] monopoly in Tiverton for many years, gaining a wide reputation as a successful operator.'

In the 1870s Cann relocated his shop from Gold Street to the more prominent position of 29 Fore Street, but always as a boot and shoe retailer as well as a photographer. By the 1880s, other photographers had become well-established in Tiverton, notably Mudford, also based in Fore Street, and it seems that once he felt the bite of competition eroding the monopoly which he had so long enjoyed, Cann's photography business declined rapidly and he reverted just to retailing boots and shoes, now with a sideline in taxidermy. John Cann died on Saturday 30 November 1895, at the age of 74. His second wife, Emma, had pre-deceased him in 1877, and of his sixteen children, only six outlived him.

Throughout his career John Cann was assisted in his business by Mary Ann Hoare (1839 – 1921) who lodged with the Cann family for many years. Mary Ann, the daughter of a 'postboy', had been born in Exeter but her parents moved to Gold Street when she was an infant. Her father died when still a young man, and her widowed mother made a living as a cook. Mary Ann obtained a position as a housemaid with the Cann family when they were living in Twyford Place, but presumably as the cartomania craze took off she was seconded into the business, where she became indispensable. An assistant was necessary to work in the darkroom preparing the plates and developing the negatives and Mary Ann would also have taken some of the photographs herself. In his will, John Cann left a house to Mary Ann off Fore Street as well as the boot and shoe business which she carried on until at least 1911 before retiring to Teignmouth.

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter

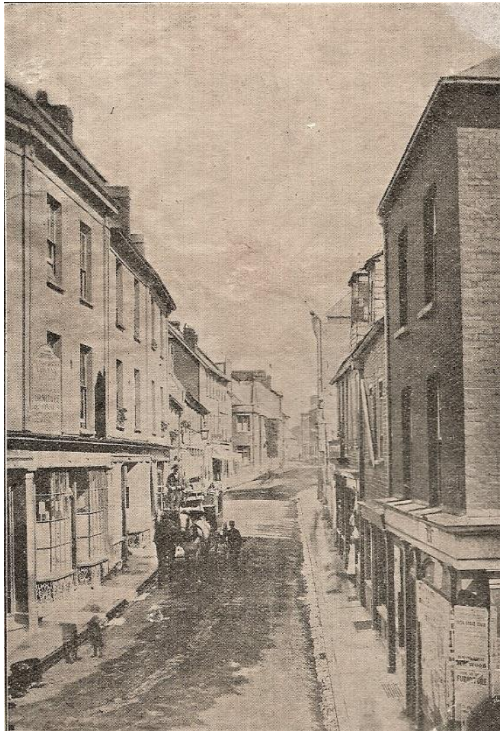
Although Cann undoubtedly took thousands of portrait photographs in his studio over a career which spanned three decades, a mere handful have so far come to light which he took out of doors. No images are known by any of the other Tiverton photographers until the last few years of the 1890s.

Why are there so few? The answer to this lies in the technology of the day. The wet-plate collodion process which Cann would have used through much of his career was cumbersome. The photographic negative had to be developed in a darkroom before the chemicals dried on the glass plate, no more than 15 minutes after the picture was taken. If the camera was positioned any significant distance from the studio a temporary darkroom would have to be set up. Exposure times were lengthy necessitating the use of supports to stop people moving as they posed for their photographs. In the studio lighting conditions could be controlled, but outdoors lighting was unpredictable, and if people were in the image the photograph would inevitably be blurred. The dry-plate gelatin process, introduced in the 1870s, reduced exposure times, but many of the other issues remained, and for these reasons Cann rarely took his camera outside his studio, and evidently none of the other Tiverton photographers appear ever to have done so.

Cann's outdoor images of Tiverton were taken between the mid-1860s and the early 1880s, in a period of less than 20 years, almost all of them at carte de visite size. Most of these would have been sold from Cann's shop as cheap keepsakes to visitors to the town. A few were commissioned to be used in promoting a business and in the latter part of his career Cann occasionally recorded some notable local event for posterity. Selling these photographs was evidently a very small sideline because today any outdoor photograph of Tiverton take by John Cann is a very rare find indeed.

Peter Maunder

Tiverton Civic Society Newsletter



Bampton Street pre-1873

Outdoor photographs taken by John Cann



Fore Street looking east c. 1870



Fore Street looking west c. 1870

Heathcoats Factory c. 1870

