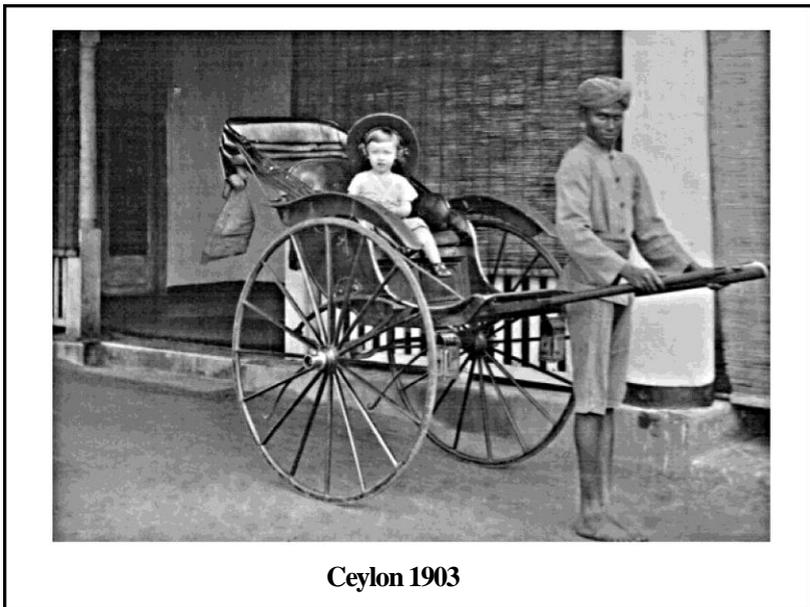


Woodbury Local History Society

2009 Newsletter



What has this photograph to do with Woodbury?

Both are still remembered in the Village. Can anyone add to the story that we have been piecing together for this Newsletter?

This Newsletter contains some varied articles. Carol McFadzean puts Mrs Treadwin to rest. Roger Stokes gives an example of the painstaking work he is doing to make the Woodbury Tithe Map accessible. Gill Selley wonders what our villagers looked like in 19th C. Nigel Tucker, in a most interesting discussion, brings to life his latest metal detector find. Audrey and David Elphick provide a brief account of the history and restoration of St Andrew's Church, Exton. There is some extra-ordinary recent local history behind the above picture. Coming right up to date, David Bowers relates how without intervention we might have lost an ancient village street name. Finally, there is a very brief account of our history of measurements of length, area and position.

THE DIGITISING OF THE 1839 TITHE MAP.

As you no doubt remember, at the beginning of 2008 I received a small grant from the Parish Council to enable me to proceed with the digitisation of the 1839 Tithe Map. For those of you who may not have seen the map before, it is approximately 10 feet square and not easy to handle in paper form. Therefore something more ‘modern day’ seemed appropriate.

Following my talk to the Exmouth History Society in 2007, I was approached by a member who said that he had a copy of the Woodbury Tithe Map at home, and would I like it. To that there was only one answer—YES PLEASE! It had previously been a teaching aid at Rolle College, and was surplus to requirements when the college closed. There were originally only three copies of this map, one in the church, one in the Devon Record Office, and one which was lost by the Inland Revenue! This latter one was the best of the three, and my Exmouth acquisition was luckily a copy of this one. To say that I was in the right place at the right time is an understatement. It could well have been shredded!

This map had however been cut up into six sections, which in the beginning was an advantage, but later posed a few problems. The advantage being that each section would just fit into an industrial scanner in Exeter, with about a half an inch to spare. The disadvantage being that I would have to stitch the six sections back into one large map electronically. Those who know about these things will know that without an overlap this is not easy.

My main reason for wanting to take on this project was to make the Tithe Map available for anyone to look at, at home on their computer. There is also a Tithe Apportionment book which accompanies this map. In this book are all the details of all the landowners, tenants, field details etc., and this has already been digitised by Gill Selley. My ultimate aim is to merge these details into the Tithe Map and make the whole thing fully interactive. For example, when you pass the mouse over each area on the map, the details will show up. Also, with this digitised version there are certain advantages that can be added, in particular colour. Farm units and different crops can be shown in different colours, which brings the original black and white map a bit more to life. Don’t worry, there will still be an original digitised version for you to look at!

So where are we now? The maps have all been digitised and stitched back together again, and I am now approaching the final stages of cleaning and making digital repairs. To be able to add colour, every field and property has to have a ‘watertight’ boundary to it. If there is a minute gap in any line, any fill colour will bleed through into the next, and this is not wanted. In total there are 2,260 fields and properties, all which have been visited many many times over the last year or so, and will all have to be visited again several more times before the job is completed. To say it is painstaking is an understatement. So far I have put in over 500 hours on the project, with probably as many still to go. However, I have enjoyed the challenge, and hopefully it will all be worthwhile.

Roger Stokes

Update on Charlotte Treadwin Lacemaker *extraordinaire*

At our March meeting in 2009, I gave a talk on Charlotte. Later that month the Devon Lace Teachers, (DLTs) of which I am now Chair, for my sins, reached the conclusion of their major project mentioned in the talk....

In early 2008 the DLTs appealed for funds to replace the headstone of Charlotte Elizabeth Treadwin and re-erect and clean that of her youngest sister Emily who was also part of her lace business. Donations arrived from individuals, groups and teachers, local historians and her family to supplement the money raised by the DLTs themselves. After five months the stone was purchased and the additional wording agreed.



March 18th 2009 was a lovely day, when the 40 guests arrived at Higher Cemetery for a brief service; the first event to be held in the newly refurbished chapel. A *résumé* of Charlotte's

life and work was read, plus the reports from the 19thC. newspapers of her death and funeral. Guests then walked in the Spring sunshine to the graveside where Liz Trebble read the Lacemaker's Prayer before the headstone was unveiled by His Right Worshipful, the Lord Mayor of Exeter, Cllr Paul Smith. Caroline Biggins (DLT) then laid a floral tribute before everyone walked to see Emily's grave.

The next part of the event was held at No. 5 Cathedral Close, Mrs Treadwin's lace manufactory, where after a toast to our lace heritage and its future, guests enjoyed tea and cake in the Upper Hall, which was probably the lace workroom, as the light is so good.

Media coverage was extensive with the DLTs making the front page of one local newspaper! The DLTs were all delighted on completing the project of honouring a lady who left us so much.

The old headstone is being attached to the wall in the Devon & Exeter Institution before the end of the year. A job well done!

If you attend the Devon County Show, always visit us in the building where the dairy animals are housed (no comment!) as we always mount a major display of lace.

The result of my research is now produced in a new publication:
'Mrs Treadwin, Lace Maker, Designer & Historian', 144 pp. in full colour, price £20.

Carol McFadzean

FRANCIS HENRY (PODIAN)



*In remembrance of 50 years of devoted and loyal service to the Late
Mr. R.S. Templer and Mrs. F.A. Templer, their children and
grandchildren. August 1901-1951*

In 1947 Woodburians would have been surprised to encounter a black person living in the village. Francis Henry, often known as Podian (pronounced ‘*Pojan*’) lived in Woodbury until his death in 1968. He became a much loved member of the village and he delighted in his English home.

Why did Podian live in Woodbury? The family take up the story.

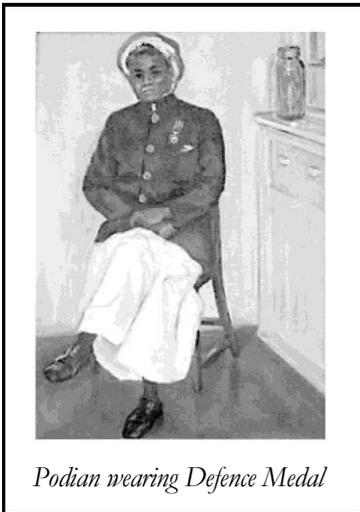
Robert Shaw Templer and his wife Frances Ann lived in Colombo, Ceylon in the latter part of the 19th century. Their children were Cecil Robert (better known as Bob when, as a Brigadier, he came to live at Parsonage House), Henry, Frances and twins Geraldine and Norah. Robert was working for Cumberbatch – a tea company – and spent the winter in Ceylon, taking his summer holidays in Ireland.

One day a seven-year-old Tamil boy arrived at their house asking if there were any jobs that needed doing. He was employed cleaning shoes and looking after their eldest son Cecil Robert (Bob). ‘Podian’ is Tamil for ‘Boy’ and the family knew him by that name until he died.

Four more children were born and Podian was the nursery fetcher, carrier and general factotum. The photograph on the cover of this Newsletter shows Podian taking a very young Cecil (later to become Brigadier Templer) for a ride in Ceylon in 1903.

Things were not going well for Robert Templer so the family returned to England and asked Podian to accompany them and help on the voyage. There was a proviso that he could return to Colombo when he wished. But if he did, he could return to England again if he changed his mind. So, his fare was paid by the family and he returned to Colombo. On arrival he was besieged by his family who were after his money as the 'rich' member returning home. Within four hours he bought another ticket and returned to England! He never went back to Ceylon again. Later, living in England, he had to have a Christian name and on becoming a Roman Catholic, was given Francis as his Christian name and Henry as his surname.

As the family dispersed and married, Podian moved to North Devon to help Granny Templer. Cecil's nephew Maurice has fond memories. 'My first recollection of Podian was at our house in Barnstaple where he acted as traffic policeman in the hall and corridor whilst I, aged three, rode my little tricycle. Next was at Bideford where he lived with Granny Templer. I was started off on my love of gardening by Podian on his patch in the kitchen garden, and feeding his chickens. (He loved young children and animals.)' When his parents were in India, Maurice went off to prep. school and accompanied by Podian, they spent holidays with his aunt Norah and her son George in Wiltshire. Both George and Maurice clearly remember sitting in the kitchen listening to Chamberlain's broadcast announcing we were at war with Germany. Podian said, '*Massa Maurice, that's bad, very bad*'.



Podian wearing Defence Medal

Podian joined the local Home Guard and that must have been quite a sensation. George remembers him saying that he was nearly invisible at night and that was a source of merriment to his colleagues. They called him 'Mr Henry'. He told tales of guarding bridges at night, with not a weapon in sight. He was very proud to wear that uniform and even prouder to receive the Defence Medal from King George VI 'for loyal service' to those who had served from the outset of war.

Leaving Wiltshire, Podian went to live with Maurice's family at Winterbourne Houghton in Dorset where he taught Maurice's mother to cook, and continued to grow vegetables. What an asset in wartime he must have been!

Meanwhile Cecil (Bob) Templer had met Ann and by the beginning of the war they had three children – Hazel, James and Jenny. Their early memories of Podian include times when he entertained them with amusing stories, both real and imagined! He never learnt to read, write or drive but he was often found reading a book upside down to amuse them. He played tricks on the maids, tying shoe laces together, before they went to church.

During the war Bob was posted to Hong Kong in the Royal Artillery with Ann and the children. Eventually they became Japanese prisoners-of-war and were separated. Not until the end of the war did husband and wife discover the other was alive. Maurice remembers the momentous day when the family was finally reunited back in England at Winterbourne Houghton. Podian played a major role in the saga by covering Houghton with Union Jacks and wearing his medal with pride.

Podian rejoined Bob, Ann and their children, moving to North Devon, Gravesend, Sheerness and finally, in 1947, to Woodbury where Brigadier Templer, bought Parsonage House. The family were known to him as Master Cecil (Bob), Missie, Master James, Miss Hazel and Miss Jennifer. The photograph at the beginning of this article shows the presentation of a clock to Podian at Parsonage House in recognition of his long service to three generations of the Templer family.

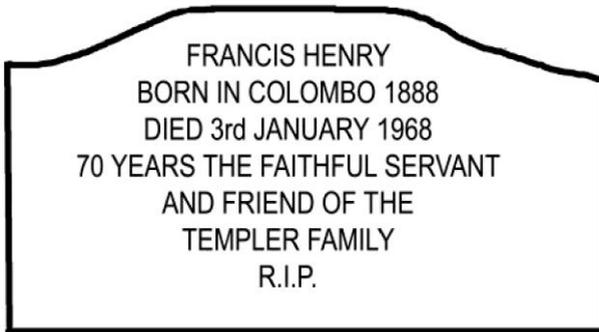
Podian received a salary for his work and spent a lot of it giving generous Christmas presents and buying Premium Bonds both for himself and other members of the family. He checked 'Ernie' regularly and filled in the football pools, circling the numbers in a haphazard fashion and occasionally winning which made him very happy! Podian cooked for the family who loved his Indian curry, rice, popadums and, best of all, Bombay duck. He continued growing vegetables for the family on his own plot. A lady who lived in Rydon Lane, not far from Oakhayes took him to Topsham R.C. church every Sunday. He joined the 'Over 60s Club' in Woodbury very early in its existence, walking from Parsonage House to the Village Hall. He could be counted on to put up the Union Jack on Christmas and Remembrance Days and the Canadian flag when Jenny and husband Fergus returned to Parsonage House from Canada.



Courtesy of R Stokes

He always turned on the BBC News when he went to bed, but as he grew older would often get confused, one day coming down to breakfast to tell everyone that the Pope had landed on the Moon!

Podian was part of the Templer family and well loved by them and the village. He was mourned greatly on his death in 1968. Francis Henry was buried in Woodbury Cemetery in the village that he loved. His heather-covered grave can be found as the main pathway swings right, and looking beyond, up the slope are the green fields of Devon.



With grateful acknowledgments to Jenny, Hazel, Maurice and George for their memories and photographs.

M.J. and M.E. Wilson

A brief history of St. Andrew's Church Exton Daughter church of St. Swithun's, Woodbury From 1864 to 2009



The old Church 1864-1960

The original Church building was a converted thatched tithe and winnowing barn, which had been in existence as such for more than 200 years. The barn was first rented for 2s. 6d. a year and then given outright by the Rolle Estate to Rev. John Loveband Fulford, vicar of Woodbury Parish. The converted barn was then licensed as a church and known as a chapel of ease for the people in the hamlet of Exton. The reason for having their own church was because it was a two and a quarter miles walk across very muddy tracks to St.

Swithun's church and also probably at the bequest of Lady Rolle who had endowed similar rural adapted places of worship. She also gave some dark oak pews which had been in Bicton church. The harmonium, which was given by Rev. Fulford had previously stood in the hall of Woodbury Parsonage. There was also a reading desk and a primitive pitch pine table which was used as an altar.

It was rather dark inside the little church with just a large window over the sanctuary and a smaller one in the left hand side wall as you faced the altar. The church was situated from north to south, next to St. Andrew's hall, which was built in 1910 and is still in use today.

Ten years after re-thatching, the severe storms that had lashed the West Country on 30th September 1960 destroyed the little church. Anything that could be salvaged from the muddy waters was rescued and cleaned by the people of Exton. Several items were and are still being used in the present church.

After much fund raising and help from various generous donations including the gift of land from Lord Clinton, the new church, built of brick and on higher ground was completed and finally dedicated on 28th September 1963 just three years after the destruction of the little thatched church.

St. Andrew's was refurbished between 2003 and 2004. The pews were replaced by chairs allowing for a greater use in the community but remaining essentially a place of worship. With chandeliers and the introduction of colour, the church has a warm and welcoming atmosphere. It is well worth coming to visit this lovely little church and you will always be made welcome.



The new Church 1962-2009

A book researched by Audrey with photographs by David Elphick is now on sale at £5 from them. Telephone: 01392 876909.

Church Stile Lane

When my family moved to Woodbury in December 2005, I checked the Post Office database of addresses and postcodes before having our 'Change of Address' cards printed. The address in the database included the name of the road as just 'Church Stile', which seemed a little strange as the local street map and the road sign by the Arch both read 'Church Stile Lane', but surely the database was correct.....

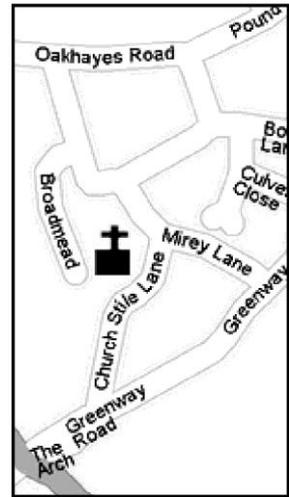
Some time in 2006, mail addressed to our house ceased to have the name of the road included. We, and our neighbours, then found that delivery drivers could not find us because our addresses did not include a road name! And then the road name sign at the Arch mysteriously changed from Church Stile Lane to Church Street.

After some checking in early 2007, it became apparent that the Post Office database now omitted the name of the road, and a copy of a letter from EDDC revealed work had been done in 2006 to re-sign the part of Church Stile Lane between the Arch and the White Hart to Church Street 'to align with the official postal addresses'. EDDC also said the upper part of the Lane – to the north of the church – had never officially been named. So Church Stile Lane had entirely vanished!

Mr Appleyard, then the longest resident of the northern part of the lane, confirmed that it had been known as Church Stile Lane since he moved in 40 years before. Conversations with other long-time residents in the village revealed that it had 'always' been known by that name, and there was a general feeling that the name should be restored.

The residents of the northern part of the Lane were particularly unhappy with the situation. Not only had the village lost a road name unique within the United Kingdom (although there are roads named just ‘Church Stile’, one in Exminster), but from a practical point of view, visitors could not find their houses! It was also discovered that Church Stile Lane no longer appeared on the Emergency Services database, so anyone reporting an emergency in Church Stile Lane, Woodbury might have some difficulty.

Some research at the Archive Room in the Village Hall revealed little about Church Stile Lane. According to Ursula Brighthouse in *Woodbury - A view from the Beacon?*, records show that in 1544 a John Baggewyll was paid 17s 6p to make four stiles for the church, to keep cattle out of the churchyard – so the name may have been associated



with the area for a very long time. Church Stile Farm (now Church Stile Cottages) did not have a street address associated with it in any of the documents between 1819 and 1901; and Church Stile often referred to the estate originally belonging to Church Stile Farm. Detailed OS Maps of 1955 and 2000 did not name the Lane at all, and neither did an EDDC planning map of about 1960. So it appeared that the northern part of the lane had probably never been formally named.

A call to EDDC revealed that a road could be named (or the name changed) by a petition signed by two-thirds of the residents. So a petition was prepared, signed by the residents of the Lane to the north of the church, to name officially the northern part of the lane as ‘Church Stile Lane’. The petition was forwarded to the Parish Council for their consideration in December 2007; they endorsed the petition and requested EDDC to name formally the road and put up name signs.

But EDDC did not see this as a simple task. They replied in February 2008 that they would need to put up no less than four new signs, and they required the residents to foot the bill for three of them – at a cost of £650! The residents reluctantly replied that they would not pay for the signs, and pointed out that so many road signs in a small area seemed quite unnecessary. EDDC counter-proposed that the entire Lane, from the Arch to Oakhayes Road, should be named Church Street because then only one new sign would be required at the junction with Oakhayes Road (which they would pay for). The residents did not agree with their proposal because the point of the petition was largely to preserve the name, so the matter was referred back to the Parish Council, with a request that they find a way forward with EDDC.

At this point, the issue seemed to go quiet for some time. An occasional call to the Parish Clerk revealed that discussions were in progress with EDDC. Eventually the Parish Councillors advised the residents that the entire road, from the Arch to Oakhayes Road, could become Church Stile Lane if the residents agreed; and furthermore, just two signs would be put up, at no charge to the residents. The residents signed a revised petition which was passed to EDDC.

In March 2009, the residents received letters to confirm that the road name was now approved; it would be added to the postal and emergency services databases, and new road signs had been ordered. And, a few weeks later, the signs duly appeared. We had had to persevere, and the outcome was worthwhile; Woodbury had retained a unique road name, with roots going back possibly 450 years, thanks to the efforts of our Parish Council (*Ed.*: and especially D. Bowers.)

David Bowers

Descriptions of earlier Woodburians

We may have photographs of some of our Victorian ancestors, or in some cases paintings of earlier ones, but do these tell us exactly how they looked in comparison with present-day Woodburians?

There are several sources which give statistics of their physical attributes which indicate how much smaller people were in the 19th century – these include military and naval records and descriptions in newspapers.

From the Register of Seamen, held in the National Archives, there are 73 men listed born between 1821 and 1896. Of these I have so far seen the descriptions of 43 of them – another day in Kew will be necessary to complete the statistics. The height of these men varied from 5 ft. 1 in. to one man who grew during his service to reach 5 ft. 10 ins. Many of them entered the service as boys or at 18 years, and I have used the final height they achieved in the records, many of them having grown several inches from their enlistment measurement. The average height for these men was just under 5 ft. 6 ins., with the later entries becoming progressively taller. Another naval record of a man who enlisted at 18 in 1915 showed him to be 5 ft. 3 ins., with a chest measurement of 33 1/2 ins.

I have also seen several records of soldiers over the same period – unfortunately many records do not exist at all or have still to be examined, so the statistics of height are generalizations. These few records give a different picture of the height of soldiers from Woodbury – of nine discharge papers seen the average height on leaving the army was just under 5 ft. 8 ins., the two tallest of the soldiers being 5 ft. 11 ins. who had been born in 1800 and 1811 respectively. A Woodbury-born man, who deserted

in 1825 after three years service in the South Devon Militia, was described as 5 ft. 4 ins.

The difference in heights in the services may be that, because of the cramped quarters in ships, taller men were not so acceptable, whereas the life of a soldier was more fitted to the taller man. It would seem probable, then, that height was the deciding factor in which service you served. Or maybe there was a nautical tape measure! It would appear from these naval and military records that the majority of the men were fair skinned with 31 having blue or grey eyes as opposed to 23 with brown or hazel eyes. Only 11 men are described as having dark brown hair and swarthy skins.

If an apprentice fled from his master an advertisement was sometimes put in the newspaper of his or her description, which was not always flattering. In 1773 an eighteen year old boy called William Cann, who had run away from his master in Exton, was described as '5 ft. 4 ins. tall, with a seam in his upper lip, black hair and a hook nose'. In 1837 an apprentice of Thomas Ware of Sowton (later of Gilbrook) advertised for his runaway apprentice as 'aged 20 with dark hair and rather dark eyes, long features, hollow mouth and sharp chin, stands upright at 5 ft. 7 ins. and rather slight grown'. In 1842 a 17 year old apprentice, Elizabeth Pearse, ran away from her master at Venmore and was described as 'having dark curly hair, left handed and snuffles exceedingly'. The Exeter newspapers also advertised for the whereabouts of three men from Woodbury who had deserted their families in 1801, describing one as '30 years of age, with dark complexion and a wound in one leg'; another as 'aged 28, thinly grown with a stoop in the shoulders'; and the third man as 'aged 30 with a light complexion, flaxen hair, and blind in one eye'.

In 1830 Woodbury had two wrestlers who took part in contests in Devon, one was described as aged 26, 5 ft. 6 ins. tall and weighing in at 8 stone 2 lbs, and the other was aged 30, 5 ft. 7 ins. tall and weighed 8 stone 8 lbs.

The limited picture of the physique of Woodbury men shows them to be small, slight and not over healthy. However, many of the measurements were taken when they were young men, so they may not have been as advanced physically as those of today at their age. It must also be remembered that the statistics are taken from men in the lower social level in the parish, most of them being labourers, so their inadequate diet and harsh life would have influenced their size and growth. The measurements taken at the end of military (or naval) service could reflect the lifestyle and improved diet of the men, though several were invalided out of the service through a variety of debilitating illnesses.

Minié Balls on Globe Hill !

The field behind the Court House on Globe Hill has, over the past thirteen years of detecting, thrown up many exciting and unusual finds, and its use by the local militia as a firing range in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries has been confirmed by the finding of well over 150 musket balls and bullets.

Although I have searched the field on more than eighty occasions, the odd bullet still turns up, and just a few weeks ago I found an example which was new to me. It was a variant of a type known as a Minié ball, which in fact is a conical bullet rather than a ball, and was developed in 1848 by Claude Etienne Minié, a captain in the French army.



*The unfired 0.577 inch calibre lead Minié Ball, showing the four Tamisier grooves, wooden nose plug, and beeswax and clay base plug.
It is just over 1 in. long*

In this country they were fired from P53 Enfield rifles among others, nearly one million of which were exported to Confederates in America at the start of the Civil War. The Unionists used mainly 1861 Springfields, but later also used Enfields, and the Minié bullets were used by both sides. These bullets and rifled bores revolutionised infantry warfare, as they were so much more accurate than the musket ball or solid-based bullets.



*A sectioned ball from Globe Hill,
with no nose plug or grooves*



*The "6" in this cone base identifies the
munition factory of origin. Note the broad
arrows on the skirt*

The innovation which increased their accuracy and eased loading was the tapered hollow in the base. The older, solid-based bullets were a tight fit in the rifled barrel and it took time to ram these down hard prior to firing; this resulted in a much reduced firing rate and often a distorted bullet. Minié's bullets were slightly smaller in diameter, for they relied on the thin skirt around the hollow base to expand and fill the rifle bore on percussion, and three or four rounds could be fired in a minute. The external grooves, invented by another Frenchman named Tamisier, improved the accuracy for they increased the air resistance behind the centre of gravity of the bullet just like the feathers of an arrow, thus ensuring a straight flight. These bullets, fired from a Springfield, had an effective range of 500 yards, and even an average soldier could hit a man at 250 yards. Smooth-bore muskets were very inaccurate – at 300 yards only one shot in 20 would hit a target of 18 square feet! Prior to the rifle/Minié ball combination, massed frontal charges were always worth a try, but they became massacres after this. Unfortunately the commanders in the civil war were slow to react to this change, and death tolls were high – some still hadn't got the message by the first world war! Incidentally, the greasing of the Tamisier grooves with pig fat or beef tallow was reckoned to be a contributory cause of the Indian Rebellion of 1857. The Sepoys of the British East India Company's armies in India objected when asked to bite off the top of the greased cartridge paper.

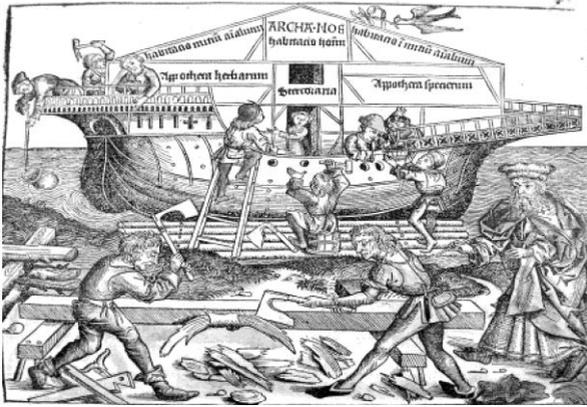
Many forms of the Minié ball were developed, some with iron plugs in the base and others, as used in the American Civil War, had no plug and only three Tamisier grooves. I have found various forms in fields of the parish, some with smooth walls and many with no filling at the base, but this is the only example of a bullet still with a wooden plug in the nose which has survived around one hundred and fifty years in the soil. These were effectively Dum Dum bullets which expanded on entering the body and caused horrific wounds, a form which was long ago banned in war. The absence of rifling marks indicates that it was unfired – probably dropped by an intoxicated volunteer fresh from the Globe Inn in the next field!

Finally, what are the chances of this happening?

The remains of two Minié balls which collided head-on during the battle of Fredericksburg, Virginia in December 1862, one Confederate and one Unionist.

Nigel Tucker

History . . . where and how big?



And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits and the height of it thirty cubits.

Genesis, 6 v.15.

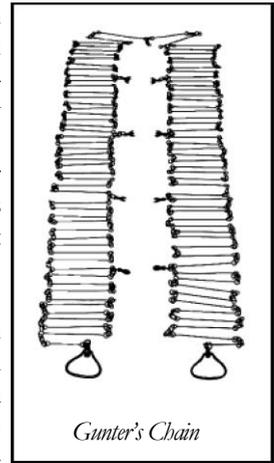
Last year I wrote about **‘When’** pointing out that dating an event may not be as simple as one might think. As well as time, historians needs to consider space – **where** did an event occur and what **size** were the items of interest?

For example, Roger Stokes reports on progress with the Tithe Map – exactly where was a particular apportionment and how big was it? Nigel Tucker describes his latest find – where was it in the field? Gill Selley writes about the height of earlier Woodburians measured in feet and inches – where did those units come from.?

The earliest measurements related to the size of parts of the adult body – the foot, finger’s breadth, cubit, pace etc. The **cubit** was used in the great river valleys of Egypt and Mesopotamia in the third millennium BC by the king’s surveyors to map the fields, and by the royal architects when they planned the palaces and tombs. The cubit was the length of the forearm from elbow to the tip of the middle finger. The **inch**, **foot** and **yard** evolved from these units, the Greeks and Romans adopting the foot from the Egyptians. For longer distances, the Greeks used **stadia** which was the length of a sport’s stadium. The Romans had a **mile** of a hundred double paces. But, for very long distances a **day’s travel** was used. This might be by camel or sail. The distance of a day’s travel or even the length of a sport’s stadium could vary hugely. Consequently the Greeks came up with two very different estimates of the Earth’s circumference. Trust Columbus to choose the wrong one and believe that he was near to Japan when he had reached the Bahamas!

As units could vary greatly, there was a need for standardization for legal and taxation purposes. It is said that the Royal Egyptian Cubit varied across the country by only 0.05%. In the reign of Edward I (1272-1307) three grains of barley, 'dry and round', made an inch. A rod or perch was the total length of the left feet of the first sixteen men leaving church on a Sunday morning. The yard had been defined variously but in 1588 Elizabeth I issued a standard yard which remained the legal British yard until 1824. Then a standard bar of metal was placed in the Houses of Parliament (pity it was destroyed when the Houses burned down nine years later). Since then a new standard has been produced taking into account the factors that may cause it to vary in length. Similarly, France has standard metre. The scientific standard for length now requires an astonishingly accurate measurement of time*.

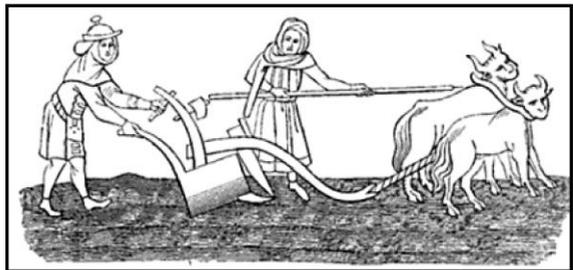
The **Chain** as a unit of length appeared in 1620 when Edmund Gunter, a clergyman and mathematician described his chain for surveying. This became the standard instrument for measuring the length of land and has only recently become obsolete. When stretched out it measures 66 feet. (Who remembers chanting at school: '4 rods, poles or perches make 1 chain; 10 chains make 1 furlong; 8 furlongs make 1 mile?') His other legacy is the length of a cricket pitch: 22yards = 1 chain)



The French, in a burst of enthusiasm, decided to create a unit based on the circumference of the Earth. This required expeditions to be sent to Dunkirk and Barcelona from 1792 to 1799 to measure their latitudes and the distance between them. The **metre** was defined as one forty-millionth of the circumference of the Earth..

Area.

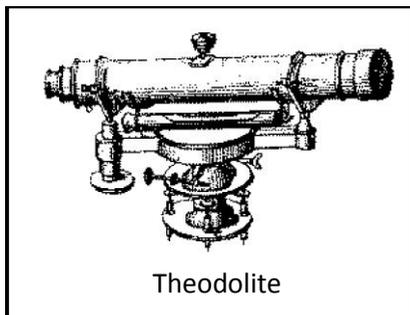
In medieval times an **Acre** was the amount of land tillable by one man behind an ox in one day. It was usually a narrow strip - a compromise - one furlong (furrow) long because of the need to rest the ox and not shorter because of the difficulty of turning.



* The International definition of the metre is now the length of the path travelled by light in vacuum during a time interval of $1/299\,792\,458$ of a second.

It was 4 rods wide – the rod being the length of the stick used to goad the ox, and also used as a convenient measure of width. The length of a rectangular field multiplied by its breadth gives its area. So a field measuring 1 furlong by 4 rods was one **Acre**.

Unfortunately fields are often irregular in shape so the Tithe surveyors probably calculated the area of a field by dividing it up into almost rectangular strips working out their area (length x breadth) and then adding them together to give the total for the field. A mathematical approximation devised by Simpson (1710-1761) might have been used to reduce the laborious calculations.



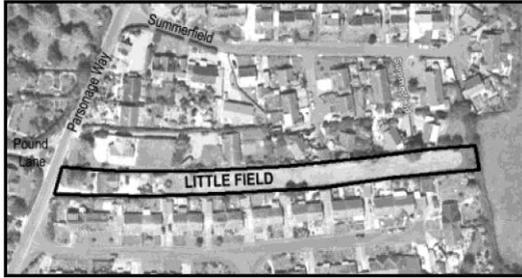
As well as distance one needs to know about **direction** *e.g.* where is the archaeologist's 'find' in relation to the church? Originally this would be guessed in relation to the position of the sun but eventually the magnetic compass would have come into use. A simple version of the modern theodolite was built in 16th C. although it is doubtful if it came into regular use until 18th C. In principle it is a telescope, with a sighting cross hair, mounted so that it can rotate on a horizontal circle graduated in degrees so that

the angle between sightings can be measured.

It becomes tedious to map the position of many points with a chain and theodolite. This is better done by **Triangulation**. Two triangulation points with a good view are chosen. The distance between them is accurately measured using a chain. Then the angle between a point of interest and the other 'trig.' point is measured using a theodolite. The measurement is repeated from the second trig. point. This allows the triangle to be drawn (to suitable scale) on paper. Other points are added in a similar fashion thus producing a map of the area. A network of triangles can be set up to map large areas. Triangulation was required for the accurate mapping of our shores when it was urgently required during the Napoleonic War. Since then it has been the basis of our Ordnance Survey maps. More recently, many of our 'Trig.Points' are in danger of being overgrown and lost as mapping with **GPS** (Global Positioning System) has become the standard method, allowing incredible accuracy and convenience. The principle is simple. Imagine being between two satellites out in space that simultaneously send out a beep. If the time taken for the signal to reach you from each station is the same then you are mid-way between them. If you are nearer one than the other there will be a difference in timing and the size of that difference is a measure of your position.

Michael Wilson

Little Field, Dolly Dell & Josephine



A fragment of Woodbury history has disappeared as two bungalows go up on Little Field. Dolly Dell used to live there with her cow Josephine (and calf Vicky). Dolly is remembered as a very bright and happy person often seen leading Josephine around the village on a halter. She was a most accomplished dressmaker with a sewing room stacked high with materials. Pam Rowsell was delighted with the lovely wedding dress that she made for her. She was also renowned for her delicious clotted cream.



Before that Dolly and her husband lived in a thatched cottage that was demolished after the floods at the bottom of Long Park.



Can anyone add to these memories?

Several contributors

Photos courtesy of R Stokes

2010 Programme

Feb. 4th Annual General Meeting & Social Party

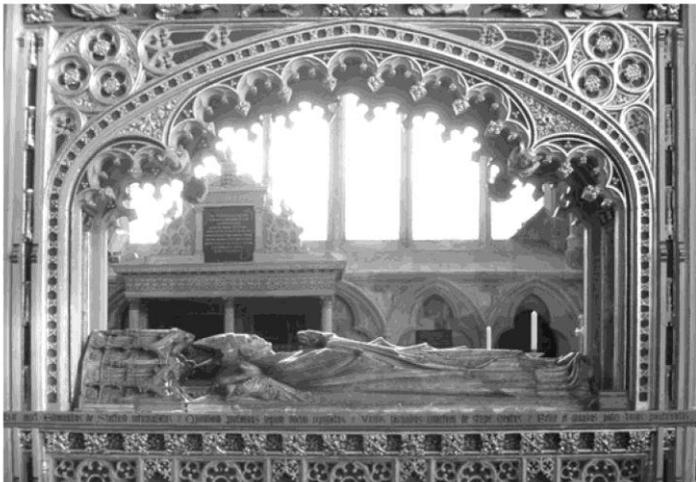
Mar. 4th David Daniel 'Seaside Towns'

May 6th Roger Brien 'Banishing the Darkness'

July 2nd Annual Visit *Cadhay Manor*

Sept. 2nd David Snell 'The Treasures of Exeter Cathedral'

Nov. 4th 'Archaeology of Woodbury Common'
Speaker from County Historic Environment Team.



A Treasure of Exeter Cathedral. Courtesy of D. Snell

We need to collect memories before they disappear forever. How about sharing your memories and queries with us. Think and wonder 'where is so-and-so now?' Discuss these memories with friends, jot down these fragments - be as informal as you like. Send them to us to piece together for the next Newsletter

Editor: Dr. M. E. Wilson
Tel: 01395 232 447

m@madwilson.plus.com