

**SKETCHES OF OLD
CASTLES AND
OTHER ANTIQUITIES OF
SOUTH DEVON**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649250769

Sketches of old castles and other antiquities of South Devon by R. King

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.


Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

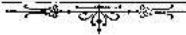
www.triestepublishing.com

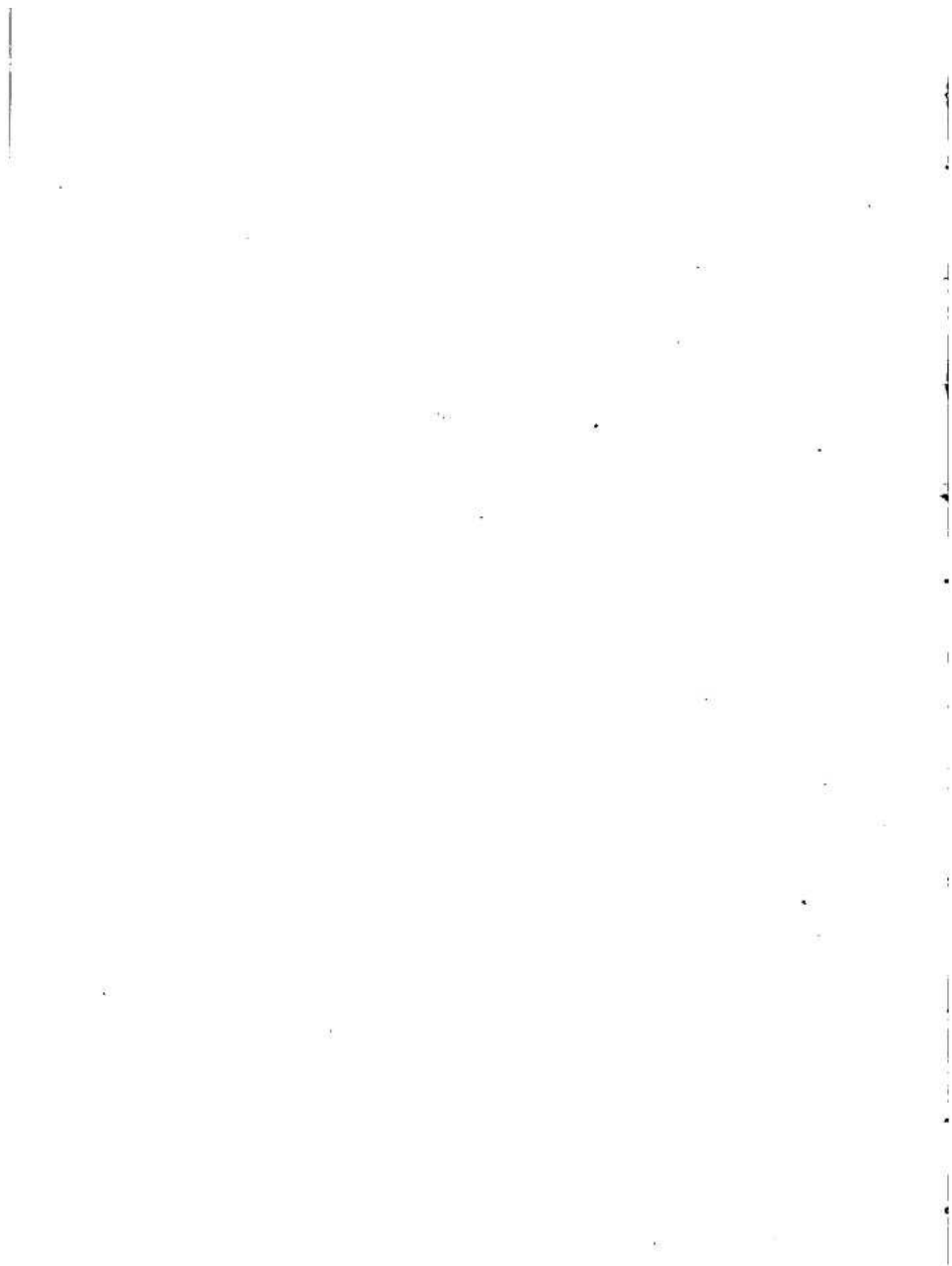
R. KING

**SKETCHES OF OLD
CASTLES AND
OTHER ANTIQUITIES OF
SOUTH DEVON**



SKETCHES OF
Old Castles and other Antiquities
OF SOUTH DEVON.





SKETCHES
OF
Old Castles and other Antiquities
OF
SOUTH DEVON.

BY
R. Q KING.



PLYMOUTH:
W. BRENDON AND SON, GEORGE STREET.
MDCCLXXXIV.

Dr 3838.1
~~8443.5.2~~

Gift of
Prof. L. L. Kittredge



Old Castles and Seats of South Devon.

Berry Pomeroy Castle.—The ruins of Berry Pomeroy Castle are situated about two miles east from Totnes, in a thick wood, beyond the village of Berry Pomeroy. There are signs of the ruin in the neighbourhood. An ivy-mantled wall stretches in fragments across the fields, and an aged tree here and there remains as a memorial of the ancient deer-park. The interior of the castle displays the usual grass-grown courts, mossy walls, old chimnies, broken arches, and crumbling steps, descending into so-called dungeons and underground passages. The body of the building is the ruin of a sumptuous mansion, begun by the Protector Somerset. The original castle is said to have been erected by Ralph de la Pomeroy, to whom the manor was given by the Conqueror. The Pomeroyes resided in their castle here until the reign of Edward VI., when Sir Thomas Pomeroy engaged deeply in the Devonshire Rebellion of 1549. His estate, however, suffered most severely, and it soon passed into the hands of Lord Seymour of Sudeley, brother of the Protector, Duke of Somerset. In the reign of James II. Sir Edward Seymour, the famous leader of the Country Party, lived here in great splendour, and the ruins still belong, with the manor, to his descendants, and are in the possession of the present Duke of Somerset.—MURRAY'S *Handbook*.

Hayes Barton.—On the skirts of the Moor near Ivybridge are Blachford (Lord Blach-

ford) and the old farmhouses of Fardell and Cholwich-town, the former anciently the seat of the family of Sir Walter Raleigh, the latter of Cholwich. Raleigh's father removed from Fardell to Hayes, near Budleigh Salterton, where the statesman was born in 1552.—MURRAY.

Plympton Castle.—Plympton Maurice or Plympton Earl—in commemoration of its Norman lords, the earls of Devon—an old stannary and borough town, returned M.Ps. from the 23rd of Edward I., to the time of the Reform Bill, but is more famous as the birth-place of Sir Joshua Reynolds, our greatest portrait painter—born 16th July, 1723. It contains the ruins of a castle built by Richard de Redvers (Henry I.), Earl of Devon, and first dismantled when his son Baldwin, the second earl of that race, was defending Exeter against Stephen. It was soon afterwards restored, and, to step at once over four centuries, it was the head-quarters of Prince Maurice during the siege of Plymouth, 1643. In the following year it was taken by the Earl of Essex. The extensive site of the ancient building is encompassed by a moat, and now forms an agreeable promenade; and a fragment of circular wall crowns a mound, which commands a view of the town and neighbouring hills. The house in which Sir Joshua Reynolds was born closely adjoined the Grammar School. A new scheme for the management of the school was issued by the

Charity Commissioners in 1868. Under their superintendence the old house was removed altogether, and a new house has been erected, set back at a right angle with the school, displaying the frontage of the latter, with its cloister and granite columns, to great advantage.—MURRAY.

Widey.—About three miles from Plymouth, near the village of Egg Buckland, is Widey Court, the head-quarters of Prince Maurice when he besieged Plymouth in 1643, and visited by the King in 1644.—MURRAY.

Dartmouth Castle.—This picturesque building is situated at the extreme point of the promontory which bounds the entrance of the harbour, mounting guard at the very edge of a shelving rock of glossy slate, and washed by the sea at high water. It consists of a square and a round tower, the latter of which is the elder, and supposed to date from the reign of Henry VII. Edward IV., in 1481, covenanted with the men of Dartmouth to pay them £30 yearly from the Customs of Exeter and of Dartmouth on condition of their building "a stronge and myghtye and defensyve new tower, and of their protecting the harbour with a chain." The round tower of the castle is now a magazine, but formerly no doubt received the iron chain which was stretched as a defence across the mouth of the harbour, and was here drawn tight by a capstan.—MURRAY.

Buckland Abbey.—A seat of Sir Francis F. Drake, Bart., representative of the "old warrior," Sir F. Drake, is situated on the Tavy, about four miles from Tavistock. It was founded for Cistercians. It was colonized from Quarr Abbey, in the Isle of Wight, in the year 1278. The existing house was adapted by Sir F. Drake from the fabric of the church. The ancient belfry and a noble barn, 180 feet in length, are perfect. The mansion contains a portrait and some relics of the great circumnavigator; viz., his sword, his

ship, drum, and the Bible which he carried with him round the world. Delightful grounds encircle the house, and near it is the Abbey orchard, which, according to the tradition, was one of the very first planted in Devonshire. It is, however, probably to the zeal of the monks in procuring the choicest grafts from Normandy, and the careful management of their trees, that the county is indebted for its pre-eminence in the matter of cider.—MURRAY.

Buckfast Abbey.—Buckfast Abbey, near the village of Buckfastleigh. The church of Buckfastleigh, standing on the summit of a limestone hill, belonged to the Abbey of Buckfast—leigh or lea denoting meadows lying fallow after a crop. The leigh of Buckfast was the long strip of meadow running up the valley, one of the first monastic foundations in Devonshire, having been established for Benedictine monks some time before the Conquest by a certain "Duke Alfred," so says Leland. The house seemed to have been plundered by the Northmen, for Canute gave to it sundry manors; but the site had been abandoned when, in 1137, the monastery was refounded for Cistercians by Ethelwerd de Pomeroy. There now remains little more than an ivied tower close to the present mansion of Buckfast Abbey, and the spicarium or barn, a building about 100 feet long, at the Grange. A part of the Abbey site is occupied by a large woollen factory. The woollen trade in this place is of great antiquity. The Cistercians were all wool traders. The modern Buckfast Abbey stands on ancient vaulted foundations of Early English date.—MURRAY.

Crowndale.—Near Tavistock the canal passes Crowndale, celebrated as the birth-place of Drake, the "old warrior," as he is called by the country-people, and more recently known for a smelting establishment now abandoned. Beyond Crowndale the subjacent valley unfolds a picturesque scene—the Tavy entering a defile of wooded hills

which are rugged with rocks, and have the engine-house of a mine here and there peeping from the foliage.—MURRAY.

Compton Castle.—Compton Castle, one mile and a half from Torquay, belongs to the Rev. T. A. Bewes, but is used as a farmhouse. In the reign of Henry II. it belonged to Sir Maurice de la Pole. It went from his descendants to the Comptons, who held it for seven generations, and in the reign of Edward II. passed by marriage to the Gilberts of Greenway, who sold it about the commencement of the present century to the Templers. Behind it are the formal walks of the old gardens or pleasure. The castle dates from the early part of the fifteenth century. The chapel is tolerably perfect, with a room over it—perhaps the priest's. It had originally a floor in the western part, dividing it into two rooms. The buildings originally surrounded a small quadrangle, had a square tower at each corner, and were enclosed by a wall twenty feet high. The postern gate at one end of the front, and the principal entrance in the centre, had both a portcullis. The strong defences of Compton were rendered necessary from its being so close to the shore, on which landings of the French frequently occurred. Sir Humphry Gilbert, the discoverer of Newfoundland, and the half-brother of Sir Walter Raleigh, lived for some time at Compton.—MURRAY.

Cookworthy's China Factory.—Plymouth was the seat of the manufacture of the first true porcelain made in England; and to the founder of the old Plymouth pottery is Cornwall indebted for the discovery of her great mineral resources in china-clay and china-stone, the development of which has added so much to her prosperity. William Cookworthy, a member of the Society of Friends, was born

at Kingsbridge in the year 1705. When he arrived at manhood he removed to Plymouth, and engaged in the drug business in a house in Notte Street. In the year 1745 an American directed his attention to the materials used in the manufacture of porcelain, by showing him some specimens of the kaolin and petunse of the Chinese potters. This led Cookworthy to make investigations in the neighbouring county, where at length he discovered what he sought, according to Polwhele, in the burrows or refuse heaps in a mine near Helston. This event is believed to have taken place about the year 1755. Not long afterwards, about 1760, he established his pottery works in High Street, Plymouth. At this place they were carried on for some years with fair success; but at length Cookworthy, who died in 1780, transferred his patent right to Mr. Champion, of Bristol, who removed the manufacture to that city. There it failed, and eventually the patent passed into the hands of Staffordshire proprietors. Cookworthy is said to have procured a painter and enameller from Sevres for the decoration of his ware; and Bone, the celebrated enamel painter (a native of Probus), learnt his art and was brought up in the manufactory. While the pottery was at work, there was such a demand for the china that it could hardly be made fast enough. Wood was the principal fuel consumed, and from fifty to sixty persons were engaged in the various processes. Plymouth china is much valued among collectors, and fine specimens fetch very high prices. Its distinctive mark is the character used in astronomy to denote Jupiter. Almost continuously from the days of the China House until now earthenware of various kinds has been manufactured at Plymouth, and there is still a pottery at which coarse ware is produced.—*WORTH'S History of Plymouth.*

