

# Stone Upon Stone

*By Clifford Trethewey*

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# STONE UPON STONE

## An Introduction

### The story of JOHN TRETWEY Granite Merchant and the Cheesewring Quarry in the parish of Linkinhorne on Bodmin Moor in Cornwall 1839 - 1853

From the moment I discovered John Trethewey's name in the pages of Michael Messenger's splendid history of the Liskeard & Caradon Railway in the early 1980s and was able to link it directly with our family living in Plymouth, JT has become legendary. This story covers the last 14 years of his working life, but although it gives a fascinating insight into the working of one of Cornwall's endemic industries, it has also posed endless questions that have defied explanation.

Until 1839, when JT was already 50 years old, he had little to show for his life beyond his children, and that life will be covered in another book, but 1839 found him on Stowes Hill on the south side of Bodmin Moor contemplating the unusual number of moorstones scattered all over the area. What brought JT to this part of the moor and why he thought that he could compete with the most astute mineral agents of the Victorian period is beyond comprehension.

These were men like William and John Freeman of London who already had 10 years experience in dealing in Cornwall's granite. These brothers led by John Freeman would eventually dominate the whole of Cornwall's granite extraction industry and they would even benefit from JT's Cheesewring Quarry when he could not. William Hosken was a local merchant of some significance and considerable success who would soon be supplying all the stone needed for the new Keyham Steam Dockyard. Joseph Treffry was a wealthy Cornish landowner whose influence spread into every conceivable corner of Cornwall's industrial development in the St. Austell area, from china clay to stone extraction together with railway and harbour building.

How was it possible for an insignificant farm worker from St. Dennis to believe that he could succeed when faced with such formidable opponents? Did he know these men? Did they know him? Where did JT gain the knowledge that caused him to focus so much attention on that windswept Stowes Hill?

This book would not have been possible without the fastidious research and accumulated knowledge of two dedicated historians, one of whom has willingly engaged in an extensive correspondence with me.

I must begin with Michael Messenger and his book about the Liskeard & Caradon Railway which first published the name of John Trethewey and set me on a path of discovery to the Cheesewring Quarry and beyond. I must then express my gratitude to Dr. Peter Stanier, who must be one of the leading authorities on Cornwall's granite industry. His knowledge is encyclopaedic and our correspondence is almost a research facility in its own right. Without his willing help, my text would be the poorer.

Finally in the late 1990s I heard of the work of the Cornwall Archaeological Unit whose detailed study of the Minions and Cheesewring area was published in 1993 and added considerably to my understanding.

## STOWE'S HILL and the CHEESEWRING



The jet-black clouds gathering to the west of Craddock Moor looked menacing as they were driven along by an increasingly boisterous wind. Grey, wispy, lace curtains hung beneath them, catching the faint orange glow of the sun that still shone over the English Channel, as they reached down to the moor itself. Suddenly the rain began. It came down straight and hard. In no time it was running off the hard surface of the track in thick, muddy streams, twisting and turning in its dash to the bottom of the hill. There was no shelter from such rain on the open moor. There was no protection that any clothing could give. This was the Cheesewring at its worst. Yet barely a mile away the sun still shone. As the squall passed on toward Caradon Hill, the wind dropped and the rain stopped as if turned off at the tap. Slowly the sun reclaimed the moor. The ferns drip-dried in the warmth and there was time to stand once again and stare at the view.<sup>1</sup> It

was one of Grandfather Trethewey's favorite places. He loved the long, distant view from the Moor to the sea. I can still see the immaculate SWIFT rolling along the pot-holed track that once carried the railway from the quarry floor. I can still see the terrace of empty cottages where I explored the cold, bare rooms, still bearing signs of their previous occupants.

That terrace has long been demolished (1960), but the quarry will never disappear. This was the mystical place where my young imagination ran free. I could tiptoe along the narrow, iron railway track and traverse the points. I could try to swing the solitary derrick and pretend that I was its driver. I could clamber up the spoil heaps that spread their long fingers down the eastern side of the hill and look for gemstones. Or I could shout at the great stone face and listen for the quarrymen to shout back.

This is not an attractive place, as some parts of Cornwall are. It is a moody and inhospitable place for a great part of the year, yet I have always had an inexplicable affinity with this part of Bodmin Moor. I wonder why?

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<sup>1</sup> Weather encountered during a site visit on Wednesday 8 August 2001 with the U3A Family History Group

John Trethewey was in his fiftieth year when he could be found gazing over this harsh and unpredictable place. The year was 1839 and it was not the view that had brought him to this windswept moor – it was the moorstones laying in profusion in every direction,

*"of a quality unmatched in the United Kingdom."*

The production of Cornish Granite in large blocks for engineering, architectural and monumental purposes played an important role in the development of 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain. It was for engineering works such as bridges, docks and lighthouses that the granite of Cornwall was sought in large quantities, but when John Trethewey arrived that was still in the future.

A great number of surface rocks, locally known as moorstones, had been taken for local purposes for centuries. They had been put to an enormous number of uses far beyond the usual house and wall building. They can be found standing as religious monuments close to Minions like the 'Hurlers' or the Minions Cross, nicknamed 'Long Tom,' that stands a half a mile down the road to St. Cleer. They can be found as gateposts, milestones, boundary marks, grave headstones, millstones, water troughs and many, many more roughly shaped, but enduring utilities. True quarrying did not begin until well into the first half of the nineteenth century, when steam power became available to lift, cut and dress the stones to a much greater size and quality. The legacy left by those 150 years of activity was more than 300 quarries in Devon and Cornwall of which less than ten remain at work. Granite quarrying was an important extractive industry, which became much overshadowed by mineral mining and china clay working and its history in Cornwall has been poorly documented.



Stowe's Hill and Rillaton Common, then known as Smith's Moor, lies two and half miles to the north east of St Cleer Parish Church. Its attraction to the casual visitor is the remarkable pile of stones, which seem to defy the laws of nature. These stones overhang their base so much that the astonished observer is left wondering how they sustain their position. This natural curiosity is at its broadest, on the top, about 34 feet across, whilst its base is less than half that measurement.<sup>2</sup>

A little farther to the north, on the top of the hill, is a piece of level land enclosed by an extensive loose stone 'hedge'. This is still known as Stowe's Pound, but its original function is lost in the mists of antiquity.

The 1250ft altitude of the hill presents a breathtaking panorama to those with time to stand and gaze towards the tors of Dartmoor in the east and the waters of the English Channel to the south. Its wild attraction is enhanced by the rugged grandeur of its neighbouring Sharptor dominating the tiny community of Henwood that is named after a descendant of Daniel Gumb, a name inseparable from the story of the Cheesewring



<sup>2</sup> At the bottom RHS of the photo Fig.1, three smaller stones inserted by quarrymen act as a precautionary prop.

## Moorstones and the Mountain Philosopher

Daniel Gumb was born into a poor Stoke Climsland family in April 1703, but his boyhood genius for mathematics and love of astronomy eventually led him to seek the isolation of Stowe's Hill where he could contemplate the meaning of the universe whilst earning a few coppers as a stone-cutter. On the isolated hilltop he cautiously excavated a cave beneath two huge slabs near the Cheesewring Rocks. Beneath these slabs, measuring almost 30 feet by 12 feet, he formed very small cells to create separate living and sleeping quarters, complete with stone benches for both a communal bed and a table. He surrounded his dwelling with a turf enclosure that some suggest formed a rudimentary garden to help feed a dependent family.<sup>3</sup>

Although he became another of the hill's curiosities, not everyone came to stare. William Cookworthy is known to have visited him on at least one occasion and there were others who sought out his mathematical skills, for he is known to have occasionally surveyed and mapped the estates of the Gentry of the County. He certainly left his mark around his immediate area and a diagram etched into the rock that roofs his fictional dwelling, seems to illustrate an odd geometrical form. Another rock is inscribed with his name and a date alleged to be the date of his marriage to a local girl who shared his eccentricity.<sup>4</sup>

### 'D GUMB 1735'

John Trethewey must have been acquainted with the folklore surrounding this legendary 'Hermit of the Hill' for he was charged by the Duchy of Cornwall with the protection of the remains of his dwelling. It was his successors that carry the blame for destroying an historic curiosity. By 1868 it was reported to be in 'an appalling state' and in 1873 it is recorded as having been 'destroyed' by the quarrymen.<sup>5</sup> Certainly the pathetic pile of stones we see today does not replicate or even represent Daniel Gumb's retreat. The kindest thing that we can say about them is that they retain some of his most famous carvings.



Fig. 4

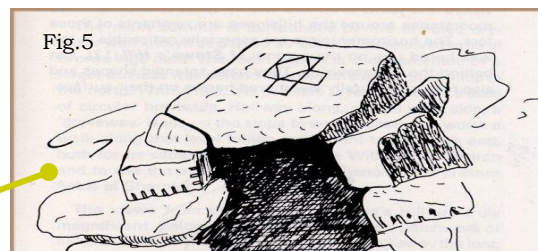


Fig. 5

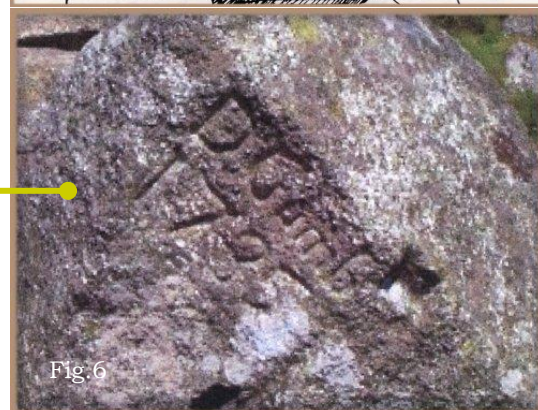


Fig. 6

Allen's History of Liskeard concludes this episode as follows: -

*"Death, which seizes alike on the philosopher and the ignorant, at length found out the retreat of Daniel Gumb and in 1776 lodged him in a house more narrow than that which he had dug for himself"*

<sup>3</sup> MINIONS – An archeological survey of the District by the Cornwall Archeological Unit 1993 – page 197

<sup>4</sup> Reference 3 suggests dates for his three marriages as 1723, 1726 and 1743 – also on page 197

<sup>5</sup> Journal of the Trevithick Society No.12 1985 page 49 – Contained within an article by Peter Stanier.

## The Prospectors search the Moors

It would be wrong to continue the story of the Cheesewring without first describing the explosion of frenetic activity that afflicted the moor in the late 1830's. The existence of tin deposits on Rillaton Common had been known and exploited for nearly four hundred years. There were five parallel lodes north of Minions that extended for more than a mile from west to east. These were accessible from the surface and the largest and richest of them - 'Stowe's Lode' - was the closest to the Cheesewring. By 1804 and then again in 1824 digging on these lodes was becoming a serious business as the adventurers established Stowe and Clanacombe Mines together with Wheals Prosper and Jenkin, but their operation was erratic with long periods of idleness. Then in 1836 the Cornwall Great United Mines Company was formed to amalgamate the various workings under the leadership of Captain James Clymo. An office was set up in Webb's Hotel in Liskeard, but James Clymo's real interest was focused elsewhere.

Experienced mine adventurers had long predicted that valuable deposits of minerals must lay undetected beneath Caradon Hill. To the experienced eye, all the signs were there and small groups of miners had repeatedly driven short adits into the south and west of the hill to test its potential, but none had found anything of significance. The lease of the sett was passed from hand to hand, sometimes for as little as half a guinea, until it was eventually taken up by two local mining families, J & P Clymo and T & R Kittow, who re-tried the working in 1833.

In 1836, three years after beginning their exploration of Caradon Hill, James Clymo and his partners finally struck a copper bearing ore that they instantly recognised. It was a rich ore. Immediately, James left Liskeard on the London coach, but his attempts to raise capital to develop the mine met with no success. On the return journey to Cornwall he shared the coach with a prominent mine adventurer and his offer to sell half of the mine's 64 shares for £5 each met with a disinterested refusal. So the family syndicate decided to persevere alone and within a very few months they had struck the main copper-bearing lode.

The 'West Briton' reported in its 'Mining Intelligence' column<sup>6</sup> that,

*"a rich copper lode has been discovered and is now working on the Caradon Hills, just east of Linkinhorne. It is our opinion that this area, hitherto little explored except by the ancients, will ultimately become the seat of mining in the county."*

How right they were! Before 1836 was out, the shares had soared to £2000 each! During 1837, 130 tons of ore were raised and the £1198 it fetched enabled the partners' debts to be paid in full. From then on the South Caradon mine remained self-sufficient and its story has become the most romantic tale in Cornish mining. A tale in which the ordinary working miners 'struck it rich' and remained to exploit their discovery and make their fortunes.

The repercussions of this great wave of excitement at the newfound fortune were two-fold. First it had a detrimental effect on the neighbouring hill as the Cornwall Great United Mine Company collapsed before the end of 1837 throwing almost 200 people out of work.<sup>7</sup> Secondly there was a frantic search around Caradon Hill for the continuation of the lode. In 1840 John Allen's West Caradon mine looked promising when a very rich ore was encountered only 17 fathoms down, but it fell far short of all expectations. At the same time Edward Crouch<sup>8</sup> was searching the Tokenbury area to the east for the same lode, but without the same success.

This wave of excitement must have reached John Trethewey for he realised that the Caradon Mines would soon be in need of engine houses, surface buildings and even tramways. These would all need stone, local stone shaped from the moorstones on Stowe's Hill. Its movement would also add to the ever-increasing traffic on parish roads that were incapable of accommodating it, but John Trethewey's shrewd intuition that the mine owners would eventually turn to him for help proved to be correct. This was an opportunity not to be missed.

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<sup>6</sup> *West Briton* 25<sup>th</sup> November 1836

<sup>7</sup> The CGUM Company was reported as employing 197 people 'later in 1837.'

The Clanacombe Mine later found success as the PHOENIX UNITED MINE although names frequently changed.

<sup>8</sup> This gentleman seems to have been an 'Adventurer' for his name later appears associated with John Trethewey.

## From Moorstone to Building Block

It was amid this colourful backdrop of mineral exploitation that John Trethewey (*or JT as I will refer to him from now on*) became entangled in the complex story of the locality, just three years after the first copper strike. Although a lease has never been found it is generally accepted that the Duchy of Cornwall granted him permission to remove the granite of Stowe's Hill, beginning on Christmas Day 1839. This initiative occupied his thoughts and his efforts for the next fourteen years and the quarry which he eventually began remains to scar the hill forever.

Granite quarrying was not commonplace in 1839, yet his decision to begin working this ruggedly beautiful corner of Bodmin Moor placed him among the first to do so and transformed him from a Stonemason into a Granite Merchant. His name, his face and his work would become well known in the area and the highest nobility in the land would eventually admire the results of his craft. He would become an employer of men instead of being a mere employee. All eyes would be upon him.

It is unlikely that JT excavated a recognisable quarry until very much later in his career and contemporary descriptions of much of his work do not appear to exist. Neither is there any record of the destinations of his handiwork. All that can be said is that the evidence of stonecutting is widespread. Most of the activity can be pin pointed to the gentler ground at the foot of the steep western slope, which was particularly well endowed with loose rocks.

The method of stonecutting used in the 19th century was the '*plug and feather*' method so let me describe this method in the words and dialect of a late 19<sup>th</sup> century quarryman.

*One man would put a red line on where 'ee wants to cut 'er. Then 'ee'd 'ave what they call a 'jumper,' that was a metal thing with a big swell<sup>9</sup> in the middle, an' at one end was what they call a 'big bit' that was slightly bigger than the other end. So 'ee'd mark these 'oles 'bout three inches apart – right back through. 'Ee'd put 'is foot across the line, like my shoe, an' the drill would be goin' down just besides 'is shoe. When you'd first started at this game, you'd put it thru' yer boot very often. But 'ee marks 'em right back thru' an' then there's about six men all get on the stone in a line. Then number one strikes an' number two strikes an' before you'm finished you've got a ring o' bells. Lovely rhythm, lovely. When they've got the 'oles down some three an' half inches, then 'twas time to put a plug down with two feathers each side of 'im – like you make a 'V.' Up would come a special man for the next job an' 'ee'd 'ave a big sledge (hammer). First go, 'ee'd tap 'em down quietly, an' next time 'ee'd go a little bit 'arder, the third time a bit 'arder again and the fourth time. Then 'bout the fifth time 'er'd split, right along the line. Why 'er almost does 'erself.<sup>10</sup>*

Once the stone was split into its approximate dimensions, it was 'scrappled' with a pick to square it, and a 'patent axe' was used to give the stone its finer dimensions. Several roughed out and partially fashioned blocks can be found lying on the moor today, but the more interesting specimens are those which have been almost finished before some flaw or mishap rendered them useless. It was only when the supply of likely looking boulders on the surface began to dwindle, that the stonecutter began to cast his eyes among those stones that were only partially visible and those that formed the tors themselves. The casual observer may not notice immediately but the granite is layered with convenient horizontal and vertical splits and it was the exploitation of all aspects of this durable stone that eventually led downwards into the moor itself.

However, it was the surface moorstones that made up the first loads of granite to leave Stowe's Hill for destinations which have so far remained undiscovered. Once loaded onto horse drawn carts, the granite blocks had to be dragged seven miles to the head of the Liskeard and Looe Union Canal at Moorswater. The parish roads were never in a good state of repair and the constant heavy traffic created by the new mining operations rendered them almost impassable at times, especially in winter. The parishes could not cope with the strain on their purses so the local mine adventurers began to look for their own solutions.

<sup>9</sup> This was a large spherical weight 'welded' half way along the jumper. It acted as a hand hold as well as a weight

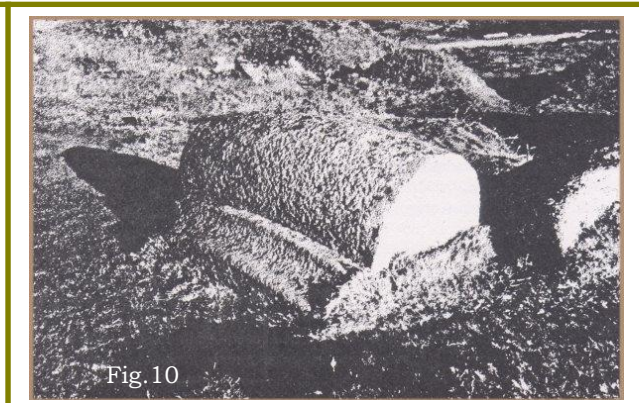
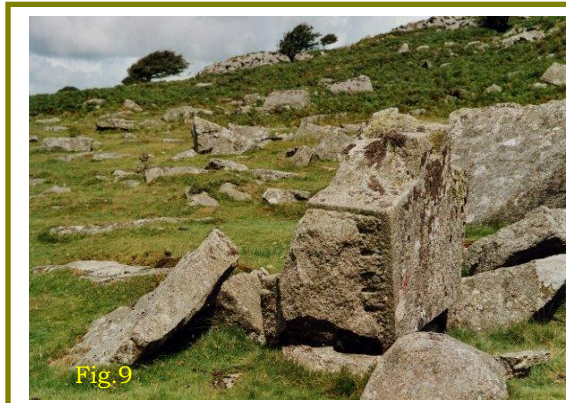
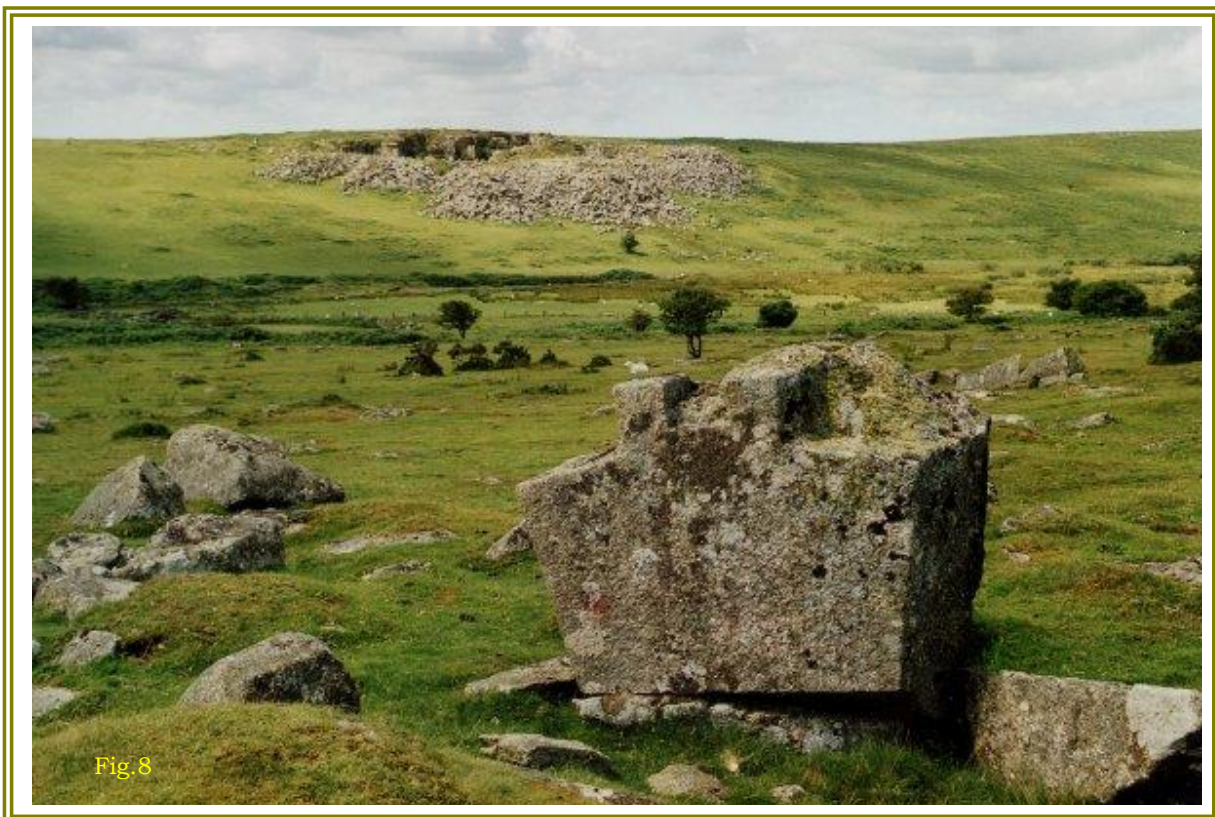
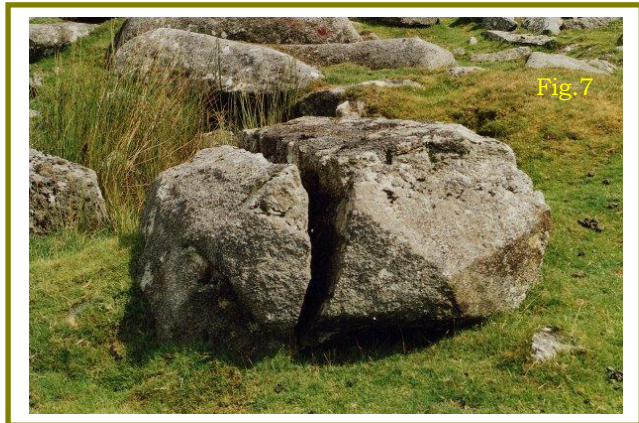
<sup>10</sup> Transcription of an oral interview published in '*MINIONS An Archeological Survey*' on page 25/26

# Moorstones

A stone that didn't split in a straight line (Fig.7).  
Marks of holes at right angles can also be seen.

The famous 'lighthouse stone' (Fig.8) with its  
distinctive locking shape, but why was it  
abandoned so close to its finished form?

The Goldiggings Quarry above the  
Witheybrook dominates the horizon.  
Five full depth jumper holes can be seen clearly  
on its side (Fig.9), whilst a finished piece of an  
arch lies forgotten and unwanted (Fig.10).



All the colour photographs on this page (Figures 7, 8 & 9) were taken on Wednesday 8 August 2001



## The LISKEARD & CARADON RAILWAY is built

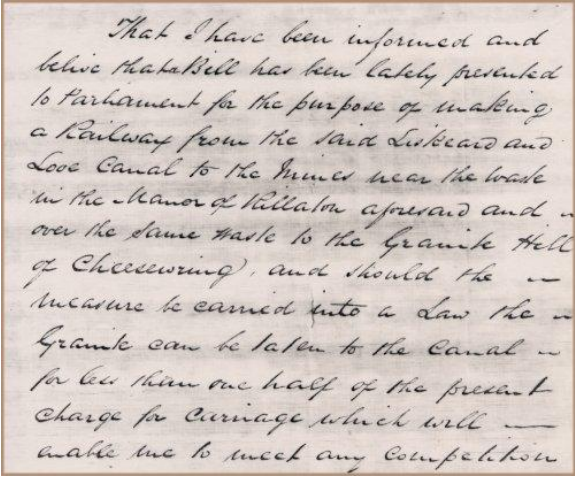
The Liskeard & Looe Union Canal Company was a reasonably successful enterprise that had begun in 1824 from the vision and hard work of two Cornishmen – Robert Coad and Richard Retallick. Eighteen years had passed since their winning scheme had been adopted and Robert Coad was still employed as its Resident Engineer at the age of 63. His reputation was such that he was asked by the Caradon mine owners to investigate the feasibility of building a railway that would link the canal at Moorswater to the mine workings on the Moor. This investigation must have brought him into conversation with John Trethewey concerning the potential output of granite from the Cheesewring. He presented his report to a meeting in Liskeard on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> June 1842. During that presentation he assessed JT's output to be an astonishing 8000 tons of stone each year, a figure that was far from realistic.

On Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1842 Captain W. Moorsom, who was surveying the route of the Cornwall Railway, was invited to give his opinion of the proposed L&C Railway. He was glowing in his praise. He said,

*"It is rarely that any portion of country for seven miles continuously will admit to a uniform inclination being given to any kind of Road without considerable cuttings and embankments. But in this instance Mr. Coad has succeeded with very little cutting or embankment and without any curves that involve serious objection, in laying out a good practical Road for traffic both up and down which I am quite satisfied will work well and economically."*

He further offered to find the Company a contractor who would build the railway for £12000 taking 20% in shares, but he thought it might be cheaper if they built the line themselves.

Eight months after the initial prospectuses were sent out, something impelled John Trethewey to commission a letter to be sent to the Duchy Office on the 24<sup>th</sup> February 1843 declaring his support for the Railway Bill which was currently laid before Parliament. He pointed out that it was costing eight shillings to transport each ton of granite to the canal when the railway would cut this cost in half and so improve his output that the Duchy would directly benefit from an increased income. From the figures he quoted, he ambitiously implied that his output would rise to a level corresponding to the tonnage estimated by Robert Coad in the previous year. Retrospectively, the historical evidence tells another story, but the document supplies us with the earliest facsimile we have of JT's signature.



That I have been informed and believe that a Bill has been lately presented to Parliament for the purpose of making a Railway from the said Liskeard and Looe Canal to the Mines near the bridge in the Hamor & Killaton aforesaid and over the same track to the Granite Hill of Cheesewring, and should the measure be carried into a Law the Granite can be taken to the Canal for less than one half of the present charge for Carriage which will enable me to meet any competition

24<sup>th</sup> February 1843 - John Trethewey

So with JT's support and no voices raised in opposition, Parliamentary approval for the Liskeard & Caradon Railway was given on the 26<sup>th</sup> June 1843 in which the Company was empowered 'to make a railway from Lamellion Bridge to Tokenbury Corner, with a branch from Crow's Nest to Cheesewring.' The first eight Directors were named and it is immediately noticeable that John Trethewey's name is NOT among them. They had been listed earlier in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* (Friday 19 May 1843) as follows,

Rev. George Poole Norris of Rose Craddock Villa St. Cleer  
(Mineral Lord of South Caradon Mine) - £1000  
Peter & James Clymo of Liskeard (Partners, South Caradon Mine) - £375 each  
Edward Geach and Samuel Abbott (Liskeard & Looe Union Canal) - £250 & £150  
John Allen of Liskeard (West Caradon Mine) - £250  
Robert Taylor of St. Cleer (interest unspecified) - £100  
Benjamin Hart Lyne of Wadham House Liskeard (Solicitor) - £1200

Sixteen days later, on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July, a circular was printed and distributed to landowners and tenants along the length of the route advising them that the Directors were now in a

position to proceed and that Robert Coad was marking out the route. The Duchy's officers soon noted that *'there was some deviation from the original plan.'* This was not surprising when one looks at the 'authorised route' on a modern Ordnance Survey map. Coad's otherwise impeccable surveying seems to have gone awry around Polwrath where the Cheesewring 'branch' would have been too steep to have been workable, nevertheless, construction of the line began at the Cheesewring early in February 1844 on a new alignment (Fig.11).

The great gaping hole that forms the quarry today distracts the eye from the contour of Stowe's Hill that would have existed in JT's time. His stonecutting activity was initially confined to the moorstones on the surface of the hill and I cannot over emphasise this point. Modern writers, however, persist in describing the site as if the quarry has always been there. It is NOT correct to say that the railway was built to serve the quarry or even that its building began at the quarry, but it DID begin at the Cheesewring, the question to ponder is 'where?'

Modern visitors to the site often walk into the quarry along the path cut by the standard gauge railway whose metal tracks are still just visible in places, but they invariably fail to notice the original alignment higher up the hill. Curiously this track ends abruptly at the lip of the quarry, some 30 feet above its present floor. Even Messenger's thorough work is confusing at this point,<sup>11</sup> although Stanier was much more circumspect. During our correspondence in 1988 he sketched the situation that he believed existed on the hill in 1844 and the Cornwall Archeology Unit later detected this prognosis on the ground.<sup>12</sup> The line that ended so dramatically on the southern edge of the great granite abyss could be discerned on the far side making its way around the eastern side of the hill towards a tiny 'diggings' near the hill top and close to Stowe's Pound. So did work on the railway line begin here? Who knows?

The one thing that we do know is that it began in the vicinity of the Cheesewring because it made practical sense. The granite setts or sleeper blocks, as some prefer to call them, were readily to hand and the first half mile or so down towards the road to Upton Cross could be cleared, laid and fenced relatively easily and this was completed by March 1844.

It is somewhat ironic to me that a railway line instigated by the Caradon mine owners should run directly to the Cheesewring as its 'mainline terminus,' after 8¼ miles whilst the South Caradon Mine found itself sited at the end of a half a mile long branch to the 'mainline.'<sup>13</sup>

The railway reached Tremabe in November 1844 and it is interesting to speculate whether or not John Trethewey was present at the rather grand ceremony which was held there on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November and reported in the 'West Briton' as follows: -

*"A long train started from the upper terminus (presumably the Cheesewring) and arrived safely at the present completion of the line, where the party was entertained by partaking of a 'déjeuner,' the workmen employed were also regaled with roast beef and strong beer....."*

The railway still had three miles to go to reach the canal at Moorswater, but progress had reached a stalemate with the Duchy of Cornwall over access to High Wood. After so many liberties had been taken with the 'waste' moorland, they were reluctant to give permission for work to continue over good land which did not have an agreed selling price, whilst the Railway Company considered that the Duchy's price was too high for their rapidly diminishing funds.

Throughout the months of protracted wrangling, the railway was of little use to John Trethewey or the mine owners. There is no evidence to suggest that the mineral ores and granite blocks were brought to Tremabe to be loaded onto carts for the final leg of the journey to the canal, so the railway must have seen barely any use until its completion in March 1846.

The railway had cost £27000 and at £3200 per mile was very modest, but this was of little comfort to the Directors as the £11000 overspend did not have Parliamentary approval. Within a very few months of its opening the L&CR was facing a financial crisis. A new Act of Parliament and a rise in tolls was necessary to redeem the situation. The railway as it was built included no tunnels and neither was there a branch to Tokenbury, but its winding gradient was so gentle that traffic could run by gravity all the way to Moorswater in relative safety.

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<sup>11</sup> When describing the original alignment Messenger says on page 90 – *'This is the original route into the quarry'*

<sup>12</sup> 'MINIONS An Archeological Survey' - page 100

<sup>13</sup> John Trethewey is not known to have been one of the 38 local subscribers who put capital into the L&CR

# The Horse Tramway

## The Liskeard & Looe Union Canal

Showing the canal head at Moorswater before and after the arrival of the railway (Figs. 13 & 14)

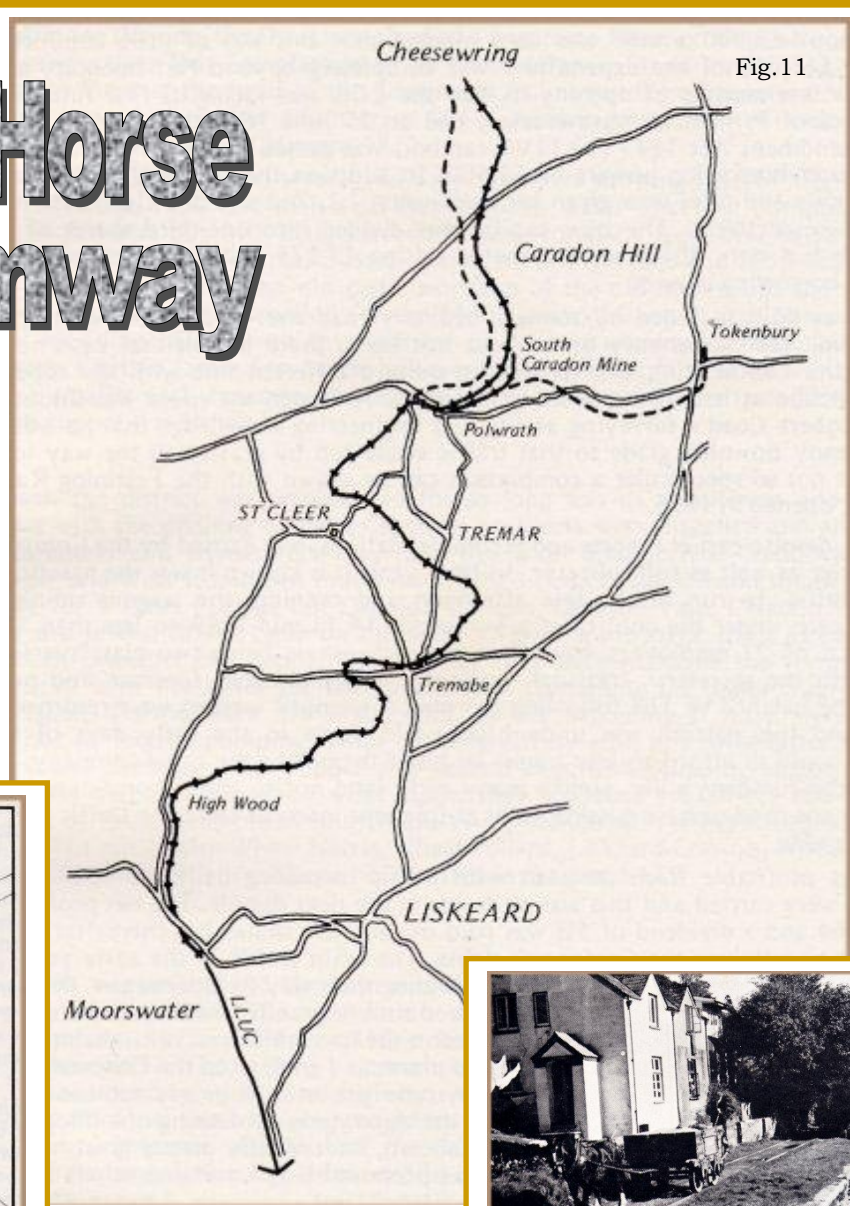


Fig. 11

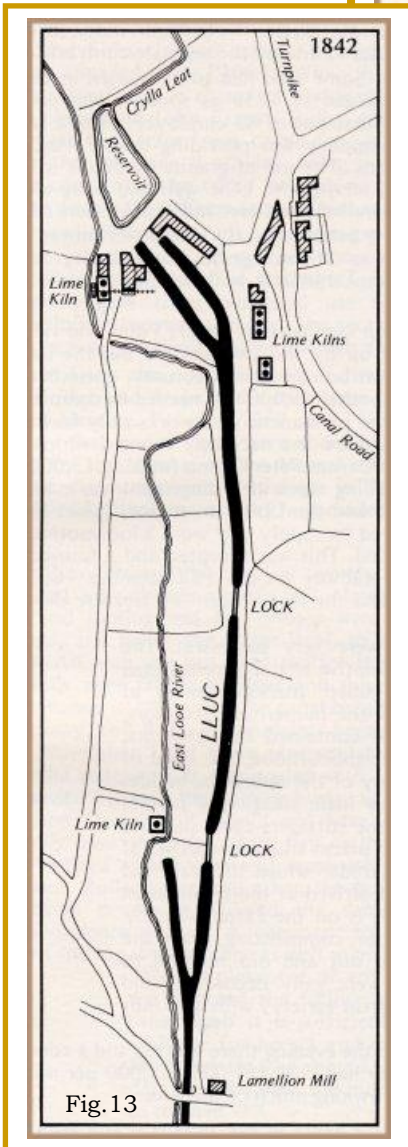


Fig. 13

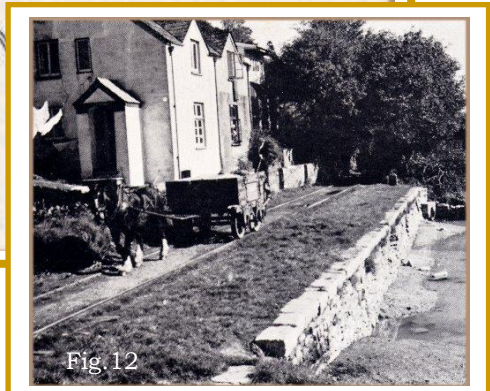


Fig. 12

If there were any photographs of the operation of the L & C.R. in the early years, then so far none have been published.

This type of tramway was in common use during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century for industrial transport and even the one way gravity system was not unique to the L&C. R.

The photograph (fig. 12) shows a leisurely journey, typical of the time, on the Lee Moor Tramway at Crabtree beside the River Plym. The line began life in 1823 as the Plymouth & Dartmoor Railway, built to carry granite from the quarries near Princetown.

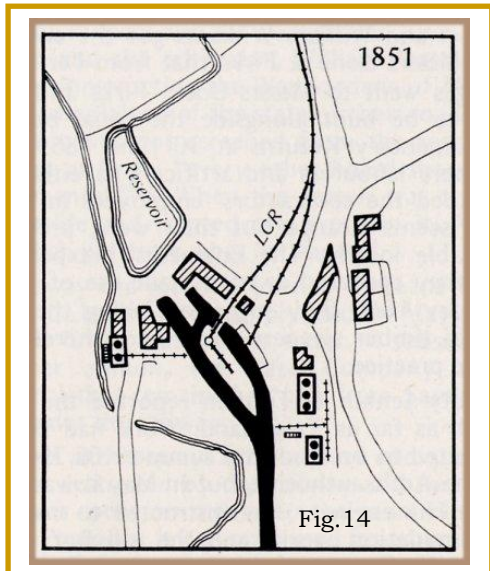


Fig. 14

## Trucks, Tracks and Tramways

The Liskeard & Caradon Railway was ready to carry its first loads to the canal at Moorswater on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March 1846. Twelve days later it was reported that<sup>14</sup>

*“there were several carriages on the line, one on eight wheels of a very superior construction and heavy loads of granite have been brought down.”*

It is believed that a very large block weighing 11 tons was being contemplated at this time for works in Devonport's Naval Dockyard and eight wheels would have spread the load on the flimsy track work. Undoubtedly this wagon would have been unusually long and bogies would have been necessary to convey the extra length around the tight curves of the track.

This statement aside, we do not have any accurate knowledge of the number or nature of the wagons which JT would have needed to carry his stone upon the railway. We do know that by 1854, there were only 19 wagons available for both him and the mine operators to use. The earliest reference to wagons in the railway company minutes appears in 1855 when two copper ore wagons were ordered from Nicholls, Williams & Co.'s foundry in Tavistock. These wagons were specialised cauldron type wagons that would carry 2 – 3 tons of ore. This leads me to the opinion that the wagons were NOT interchangeable between the mines and the 'quarry' and the account books of the railway company seem to support that opinion. They suggest that JT supplied his own vehicles and motive power, for he only paid fees appropriate to the toll levied for the use of the railway line. In 1858 the minute book again records a tender being sought for 'two single granite waggons and one double granite waggon,' from the Tavistock foundry, but by then five years had passed since JT had left the moor.

These few snippets of contemporary description only serve as an impression, unlike some other similar railways where detailed plans survive. A specification from the Plymouth & Dartmoor Railway that was also carrying granite from the moor to the sea describes a very rudimentary wagon that was so precise that a draughtsman would have no difficulty in reproducing it.<sup>15</sup>

*It consisted of two strong, frame beams measuring 6 inches by 3 inches and 9 feet long that were connected together by cross-beams. The iron axle seats lie in thick wooden blocks under the beams. The upper side of the frame is then covered with planks 2½ inches thick on which are laid iron bars 1¾ inches wide and ¾ inch thick, thus forming a sturdy platform 8½ feet long and 4¾ feet wide. The cast iron wheels are 29 inches in diameter with a tread 4½ inches wide. They are flanged with nine spokes and the wheel centres are 41½ inches apart. The brakes are cast iron and fixed to a long wooden lever that can turn about a pin on the wagon frame. Frequently wagons have a brake on both sides so that all four wheels can be retarded. Wagons can be coupled together with connecting links 15 inches long and they can carry a load upto 80 cwt (4 tons).*

Turning now to the question of the railway track that was laid from the Cheesewring and in particular its gauge, a contemporary writer<sup>16</sup> observes that *it was built to the usual narrow one of 4 feet 8½ inches*. Yet the detailed analysis by the Cornwall Archeological Unit (CAU) arrives at a different and more puzzling conclusion. Michael Messenger in his history of the L&C.R. seems to avoid making any reference to the gauge of the track in his text and this is most unusual in a book dedicated to the history of a railway.

The CAU noticed that every sixth 'sleeper' had not one, but three sets of holes in it (Fig. 16) and it was not until two rail bearing chairs were found still in place near Stoves Shaft (Fig.15), spiked to the sett by square sectioned nails, that the answer became apparent. The line engineer was uncomfortable with the idea of allowing heavy loads to pass along a track that was only supported by chairs every 4 to 5 feet, so he compromised on this unique method (Fig.17). This would also have saved a great deal of money as chairs were bought by weight.

<sup>14</sup> 'West Briton' newspaper 20<sup>th</sup> March 1846

<sup>15</sup> 'Plymouth & Dartmoor Railway' by H.G. Kendall page 40

<sup>16</sup> Allen's 'History of Liskeard' published 1856 - page 401

Approaching the existing quarry, the line turns to the right and ends abruptly only to be rediscovered higher up the hill on the far side. The left turn of the track may have been the line of the tramway.

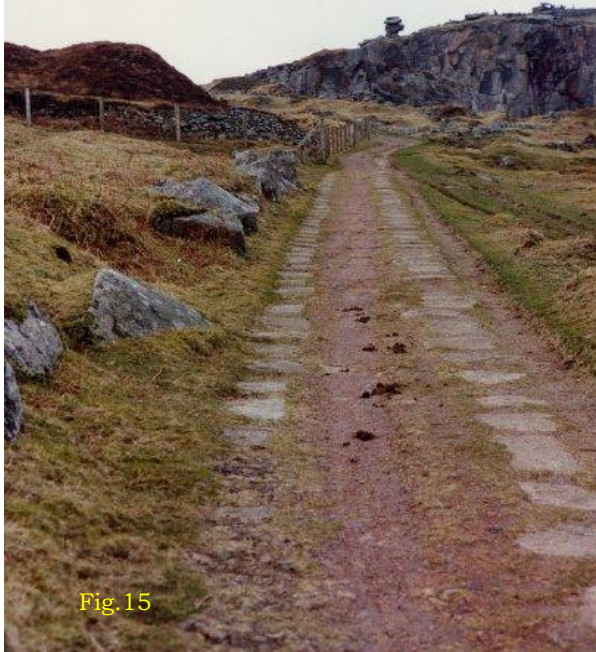


Fig.15

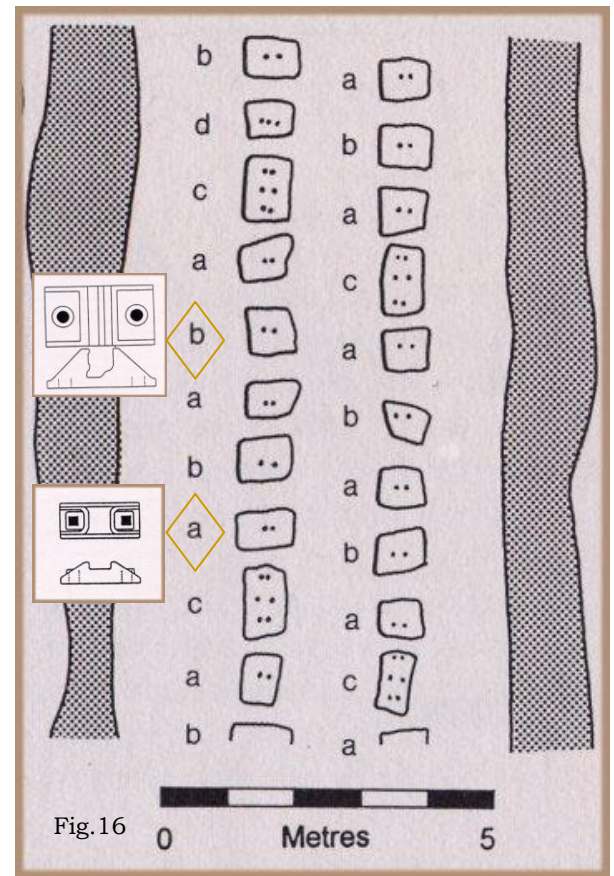
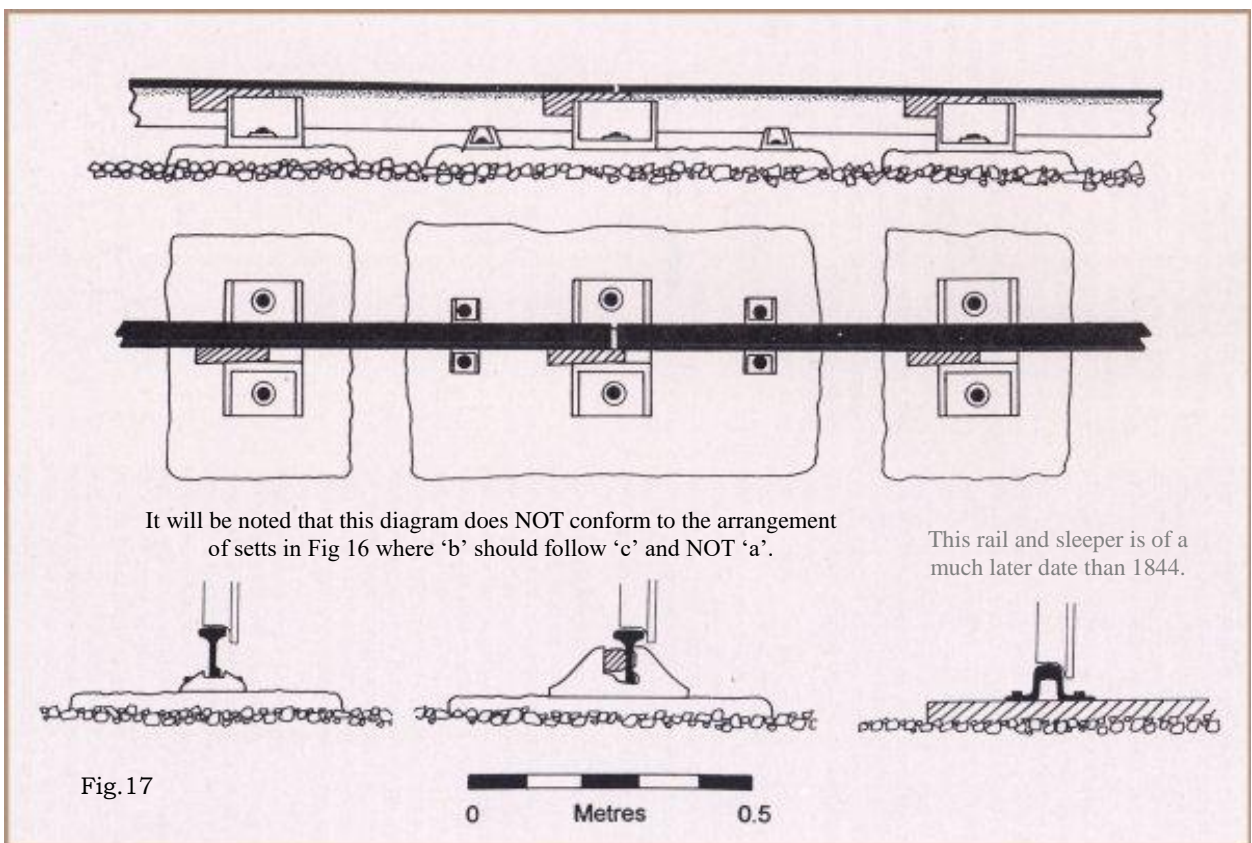


Fig.16

A single chair suitable for mounting on 'b' type setts was discovered in use as a boot scraper in Minions. The 'c' type setts clearly mark rail joints giving an overall rail length of 18 feet. The type 'a' setts were explained by the discovery of two rail bearers whilst the 'd' type sett was only found near Gonamena. All are illustrated in Figs 16 & 17.



It will be noted that this diagram does NOT conform to the arrangement of setts in Fig 16 where 'b' should follow 'c' and NOT 'a'.

This rail and sleeper is of a much later date than 1844.

Fig.17

the rail joint probably occurred within the large rail chair. However, another disturbing problem emerged from the mass of measurements that were taken of track width along this early track and that was the problem of 'GAUGE.' This clearly varied between 59 inches (4 feet 11 inches) and 61 inches (5 feet 1 inch) and must be indisputable evidence that the track was NEVER laid to 'standard gauge' or anything resembling it.

The CAU discovered no less than 12 different rail sections among the lengths that were found discarded around the present day quarry, but they were of the opinion that the earliest rail probably came in 18 feet lengths with either an 'T' or a 'T' cross section. A length of rail would have weighed either 120lbs, 150lbs or 210lbs, very light by modern standards, but exactly in keeping with a horse railway of the period.

And so I return to the question I posed earlier. Where did the construction of the line begin? The reason for the question stems from the belief that JT must have had some form of tramway on Stowe's Hill within the confines of his working area, but did it come before the L & C.R. or as a consequence of it? The only written evidence for the existence of a tramway is contained within a letter held by the Duchy of Cornwall and dated 14 January 1844. I have not seen this letter, but Michael Messenger infers from it that the very existence of a tramway suggests that it was serving a quarry and not just surface workings.<sup>17</sup>

Certainly the south and west sides of Stowe's Hill are marked by alignments that suggest some form of manmade track as it uses levels and curves that would make for the easy working of a tramway. The track ends at a small 'diggings,' but on the way, there are at least three constructions that could be interpreted as loading ramps. There is also the inclined plane that leads straight up the hillside to three 'dumps' and is strewn on either side by stone that is no better than rubbish. (*See Figs. 18 to 21 following*). Is this from the same date, or is it later?

There are several anomalies and contradictions that need to be considered, however, and the first of these is the apparent lack of any granite sleepers (*clearly visible in Fig.21*). If JT had used horse drawn carts around his site, the sheer weight of the loads would have created deep ruts that would have survived to this day, yet there are none. So let us take this as evidence that a tramway existed. The letter alluding to its existence is dated in January 1844 coincident with the date alleged to have been the start of the construction of the L & C.R. So does that mean that the tramway was already there. If it was already there this would explain the difference in gauge between the two tracks that seems to be apparent, but where could JT obtain the material to build such a tramway? The answer is often all too simple.

A public auction was advertised in July 1840 that was due to take place at the West Delabole Slate Quarry in Tintagel. It was a sale of the machinery and raw material output from SIX quarries from the Trebarwith area and included '*upwards of 500 yards of tram roads, tram waggons and machinery for loading vessels.*'<sup>18</sup> This would have been EXACTLY what JT was looking for. I wonder! Opportunities like this would have arisen in the area far too frequently as the fortunes of mining see-sawed with the prices on the mineral markets.

The problem that would have been created by two different gauges on the site cannot be ignored. A large stone block hauled on a tramway wagon around to the L & C.R. would have to be transhipped from one wagon onto another. That would have required space for both tracks and room for a lifting device. The most common of these in use at the time was the simplest form of lifting device called a 'sheerlegs,' but as I look around the area where the two tracks would have met, I cannot visualise any such arrangement.

So in concluding this discussion concerning the existence of a tramway within the confines of JT's working area, I must admit defeat. We will never know more than I have written and I must leave this topic with one final thought. The surveyors for the 25-inch Ordnance Survey map did not reach Stowe's Hill until nearly thirty years after John Trethewey had left the moor. The result of their survey did NOT include any evidence for the existence of a tramway. In a sentence, they didn't see it!

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<sup>17</sup> 'Caradon & Looe' by Michael Messenger – page 90

<sup>18</sup> 'West Briton' Newspaper 10 July 1840

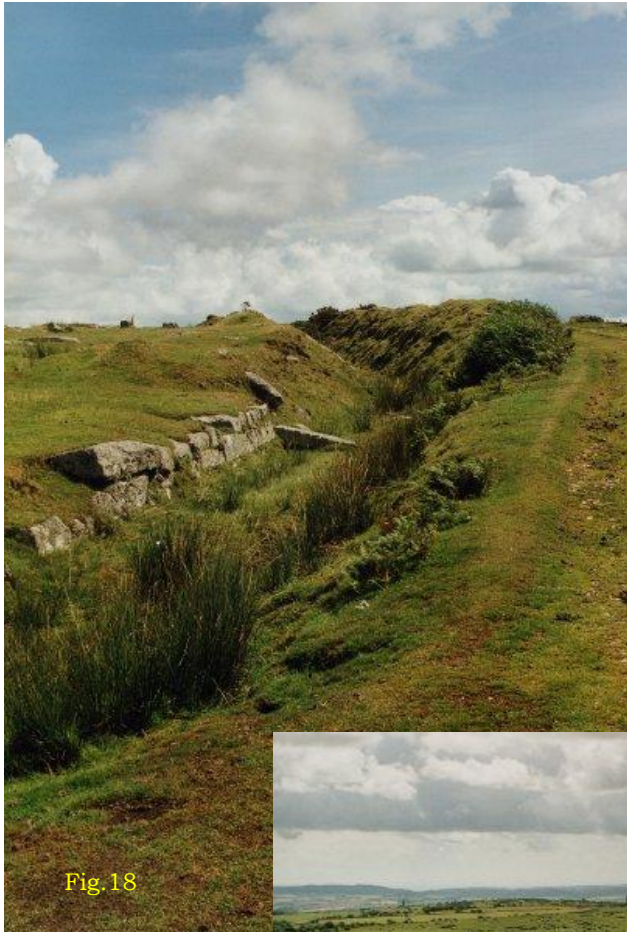


Fig.18

This is undoubtedly a cutting intended to maintain a near level alignment (Fig.18), but it barely seems wide enough at the bottom to carry a tramway. The worked moorstones laid neatly to one side appear to be just the right height to form a loading platform. In the views below (Figs.19 & 20), an inclined plane can be seen ascending the hill at right angles from the track just as it emerges from its cutting



Fig.19



Fig.20

## Signs of a Tramway?

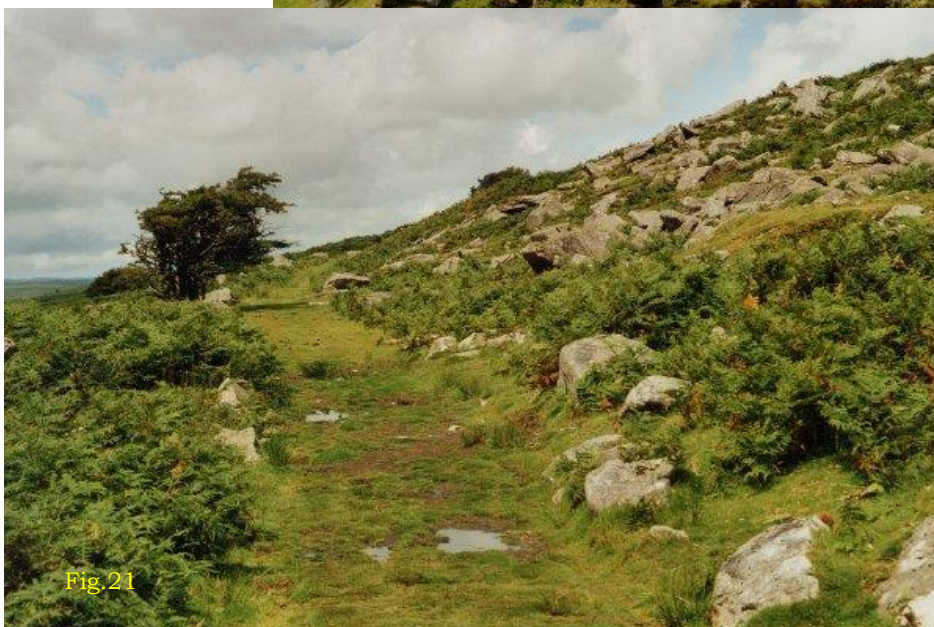


Fig.21

Looking down on the western slope of Stowe's Hill from the summit, (Fig.20) the track can be clearly seen emerging from the cutting on the LHS. The moorland ferns refuse to grow over it as it passes beneath the lone windswept tree and heads northwards. At that tree, the view looking northwards (Fig.21) shows a track that seems to be narrower than the track of the main line nearby and is devoid of any granite sleepers.

## From the Moor to the Sea

The appearance of the railway line has changed almost beyond recognition since it first came into use in the mid-1840's, particularly on the lower agricultural sections. Its description would have little relevance to our story and any attempt to illustrate the route beyond that of its map (Fig.11) would be futile. Minions, at the top end of the line, did not exist in 1846, whilst Moorswater was a thriving industrial complex with neither trunk road nor railway viaducts to interfere with its activity.

However, let us embark upon an imaginary journey from the Cheesewring to the quayside at Looe and for the first part of that journey we climb upon a four-wheeled railway wagon and stand beside its bakesman. It is tempting to sit astride the great slab of grey granite in front of us, as we commit ourselves to the laws of physics – gravity and friction – and set off down the line for seven miles at 1 in 60, whilst grasping our only means of safety – the brake. Robert Coad said of the declination that it *'would move the carriages down with facility without the aid of any power.'* What an understatement. It must have been a fearsome sight. It was as exciting as a modern bob sleigh run with the wagon racing ahead of a great stream of sparks like a comet racing through the heavens. The noise was dreadful as the metal on metal contact screamed its way down the hillside, whilst the brakesman endured a mixture of fear and elation at retaining his balance and surviving each twist and turn.

There were 14 'brave souls' employed as brakemen in 1859, the same year that we learn something of the operating practise on the line, a practise that almost certainly had changed little since its inception in 1846. The downward traffic began in the late afternoon and evening with the wagons running down the hill individually. On the following morning these wagons were marshalled into a train and returned up the hill by teams of horses. Of course, the numbers of horses used would depend on the state of the wagons, as they were not always empty. Sometimes coal or building materials would be destined for the mines, but with ore being carried in specialised wagons, what wagons did they use? In the days when industry relied on the horse for its motive power, it is very surprising to learn that these had to be hired, as the Railway Company could not afford to buy them. Yet amid all these complications there exists the suggestion that JT was NOT relying on the L & C.R., but was looking after his own movements. He too would have needed to hire horses, but I just wonder if JT was shrewd enough to offset the cost by hiring his empty wagons to the mines for a return load.

Half an hour after setting off, the arrival at Moorswater met with a very different scene as a set of points divided the track and sent the wagons towards two destinations. The westerly route took the line through a terrace of buildings where a cottage had been demolished to allow the line to cross one arm of the canal onto a newly created island with a simple turntable. This allowed barges to moor on either side whilst the copper ore could be tipped into them from either side, an arrangement that allowed two barges to be loaded simultaneously. However, I doubt that granite was loaded in this fashion. The easterly track appears to end at a yard and there is evidence that a yard was rented by the 'CHEESEWRING GRANITE COMPANY'. In this yard there might have been further finishing work done to the blocks as they were checked and numbered into a consignment awaiting the arrival of a ship at Looe.

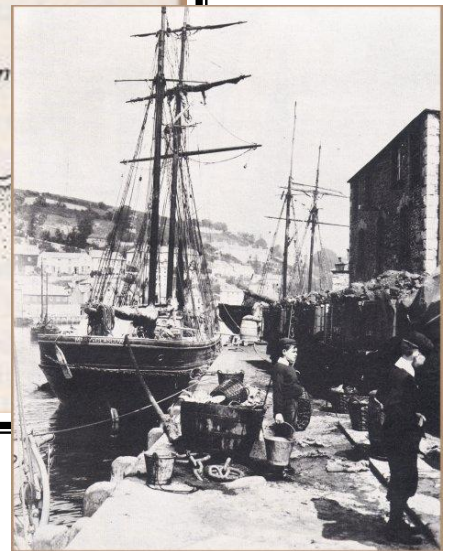
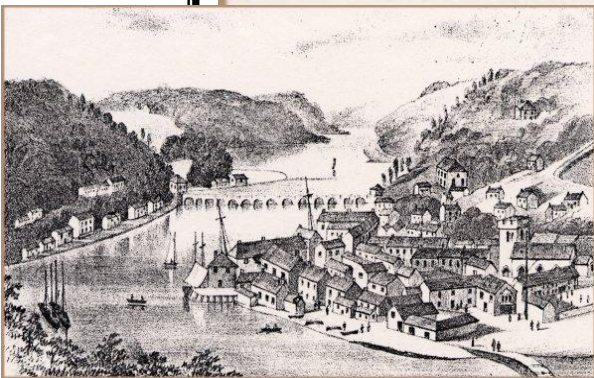
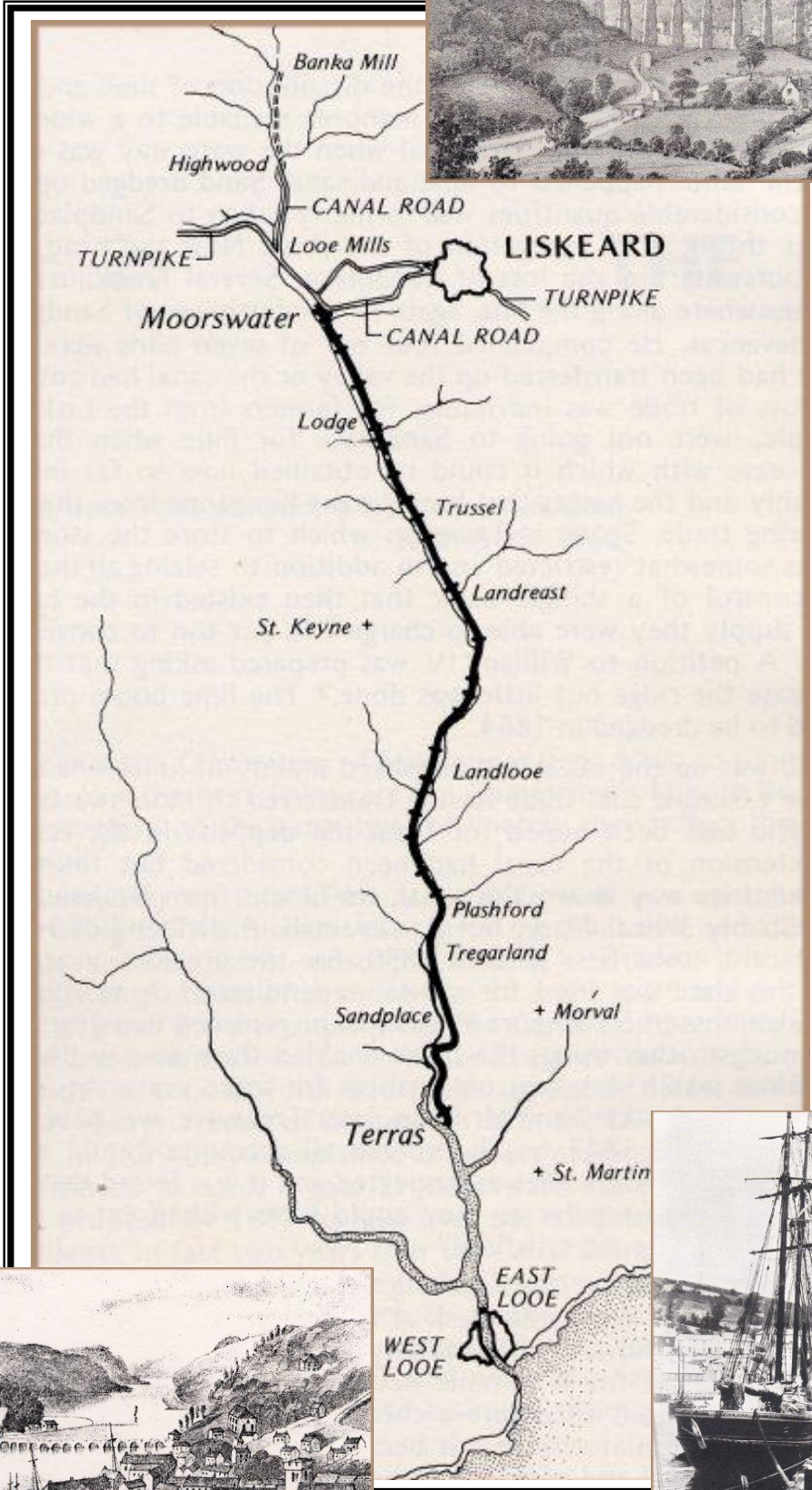
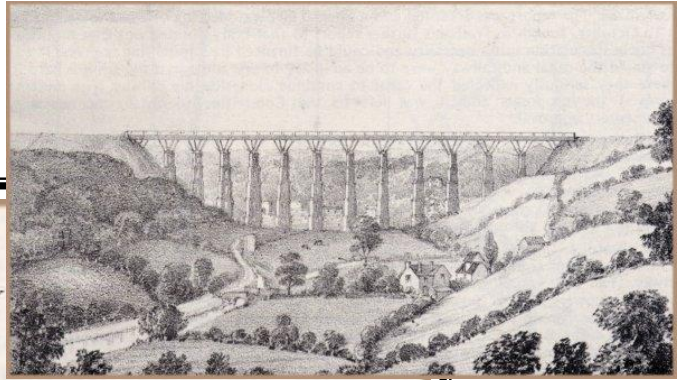
The canal had been in operation for seventeen years when the railway arrived, so its operating practise was understood by all that used it. It had been built with a *'towing path of sufficient width for a gentleman's carriage,'* but this had little effect on the time the six-mile journey took to accomplish. Basically the canal only operated during the hours of daylight. From March until October it was open from 4 a.m. until 9 p.m., but in winter this was reduced to twelve hours from 6 a.m. So before we embark on that journey I am going to open a debate that has not been properly addressed by the 'experts' and it begins with the barge itself.

In 1849 it is known that there were thirteen barges available to the Company and each was restricted to a load of 16 tons above Sandplace and these barges were horse-drawn in the usual manner. However, once the barge had reached the entrance/exit to the canal at Terras, what happened then? Messenger in his text, glosses over the situation by saying,

*'Eight hours were taken for the 7-mile journey to Looe Harbour and for the negotiation of 24 locks.'*



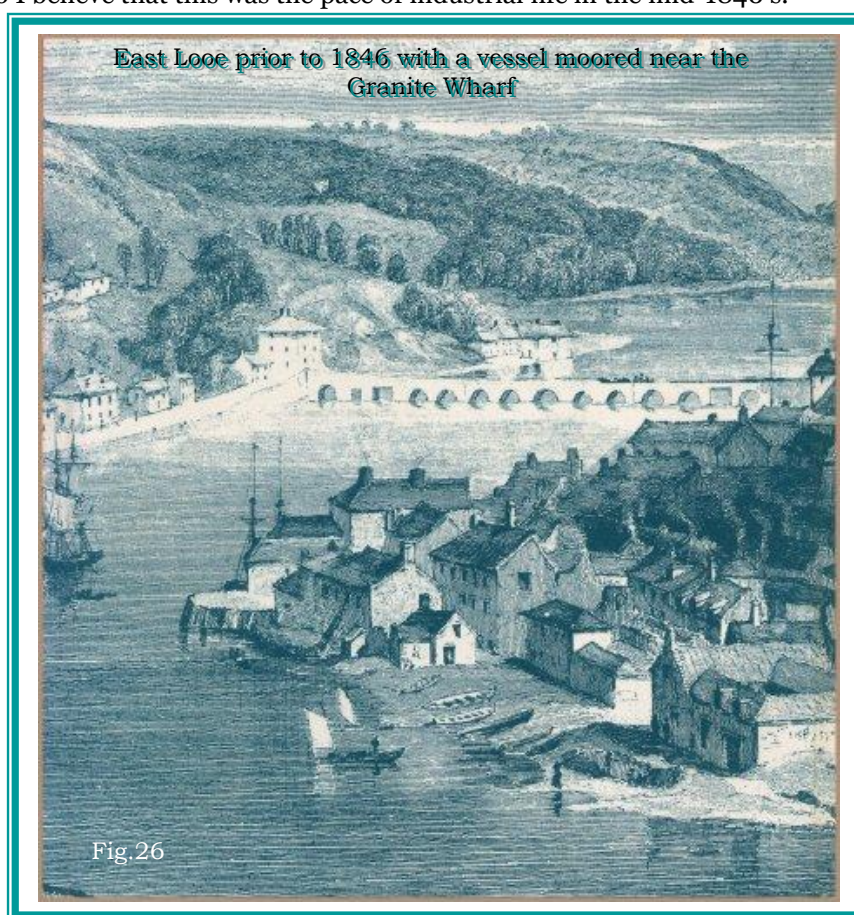
# Liskeard & Looe Union Canal



For that statement he cites the LLUC Engineer's Report of 30 September 1857 that apparently includes no reference to the motive power. Do we assume therefore, that the horse-power was in place all the way to Looe Harbour? Somehow I cannot believe that this was possible.

The East Looe River flowed into a significant tidal estuary and the first thing that strikes me is that I have never seen any reference made to the effect of these tides on the entrance to the canal at Terras. Neither has there ever been any suggestion that the eastern bank of the estuary was adapted for horse towing. On the contrary, the wooded terrain is far from level as it meanders down towards Looe Bridge, passing on its way south the inlet that leads upto Morval. This topography would have been beyond the scope of any canal horse whose canal towing rope would have been a fixed length. Even the bridge across the estuary might have been an obstacle. So, if the barge was without steam power and could not be rowed because of its weight, it certainly could not be poled like a punt as the depth of water and muddy bottom would have ruled against it. What alternative remains? The first and most obvious is sail, yet masts would need to be short and very easily dismantled, or perhaps there was a steam tug!

Whatever the answer to my question may have been, I still find it surprising that the journey to the harbour took ONLY eight hours. TWENTY FOUR locks on the canal represents four locks every mile for six miles, which in turn represents four locks every hour for six hours, or ONE LOCK EVERY FIFTEEN MINUTES. I do not believe that this pace was practically attainable, neither do I believe that this was the pace of industrial life in the mid-1840's.

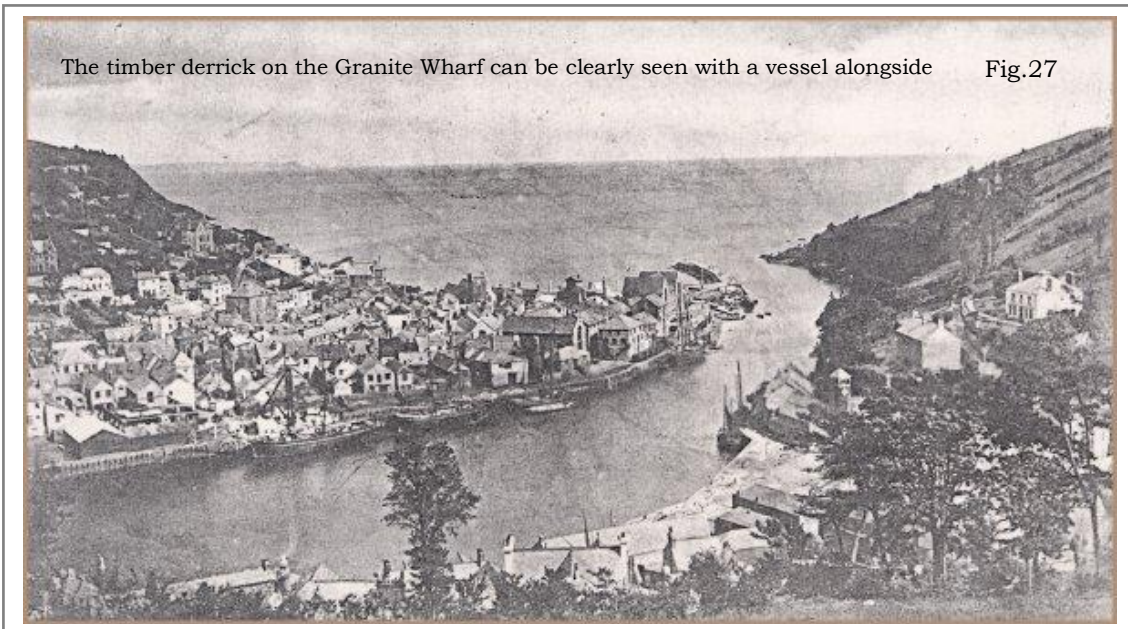


And so, Looe is in sight, or at least it will be once the barge has passed through the arch of the bridge. The bridge we see today is NOT the bridge that was there in JT's time. The bridge of the 1840's was in a shocking state. It was said to have been built in 1411 and in 1695 it was described as *'having fourteen arches'* not unlike the bridge illustrated (Fig. 26). However, it is worth noting that two of the arches at either end of the bridge are drawn as square. Did the building of the canal cause this modification for its barges, or was there some other reason? Either way, JT was to see this dilapidated bridge for the last time in the early 1850's for the 'new bridge' was built about 100 yards further upstream and was opened in 1853-56.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> I have been unable to get a consistent date for this opening.

The barge has now reached the wharves that lined the east bank of the estuary. Coal and copper ore stood in neat conical piles adjacent to one another as the tough little schooners made the return journey to the smelting works in South Wales. There was no room for the fishermen in those days. Their cellars were in the west bank and there they stayed until the industrial fortunes of the port turned with the century. However, that was a long way off when nature took a hand and changed Looe to the one we see today. In the autumn of 1846, just six months after the opening of the railway, the sea defences of East Looe were devastated by a severe storm. The damage was widespread and it required such urgent and drastic action that it seemed to be beyond the ability of the Town Council to respond. So inept were they that John Buller took it upon himself to mastermind a comprehensive rebuilding plan for the waterfront. This plan not only included the restoration of the sea wall at Churchend, but also the construction of a pier-cum-breakwater. It was also an opportunity to deepen the riverbed and to build new quays as well as extending the old ones. However, John Buller was not in any position to oversee this work himself as he was the Member of Parliament for Exeter and owned a large estate around Morval, so the Looe Harbour Commissioners were formed with their initial objective being the supervision of the construction work along the harbourside.

Once their overseeing work was done, the Commissioners began to keep extensive records in 1848 of the movement of cargo and vessels in and out of the port and this is the one record that I regret not having made more effort to see. Those who have seen them were not interested in John Trethewey's tiny operation. It was the copper mines and their output that attracted attention, but we must also remember that not every ton of granite that was dug out of the Cheesewring was exported through the Port of Looe. So where was the Granite Quay? Four hundred yards down river from the bridge, the wharf was sited just behind the SALUTATION INN near the point where the river makes a turn to the east. Although no illustration has come to light that pre-dates the 1880's the granite wharf was known to have had a very large sheerlegs crane straddling it in 1864<sup>20</sup> and this triangular timber structure became a dominant landmark that is easily seen in any later photograph of the harbour.



Now that the barge is tied up alongside the Granite Wharf and the work has begun to lift the 16-ton load up onto the quayside, the question can be posed, *'what has the journey cost John Trethewey?'* In 1843 the toll on the L&C.R. was intended to be 4d per ton-mile, but that increased to 5d in 1847 when the real cost of building the line was realised. The toll on the L&L.U.C. was simply stated as 1 shilling per ton for granite. If my calculations in 'old money' are correct then the final cost would have been £2-13s-4d on the railway and 16s on the canal – a grand total of £3-9s-4d. However it is suspected that by 1852 JT was paying no more than £1-1s-4d to the railway whilst the canal charge had remained unchanged.

<sup>20</sup>The new crane was erected by the Freeman Bros. to replace the rather poor crane of the Cheesewring Granite Co.

## Output, Customers and Competition

Cornish granite was prized in the early years of Victoria's reign for the simple reason that it could be supplied in very large blocks for constructions that were described as '*engineering works*.' These were structures like bridges, docks and lighthouses where the stone was much more than simply architectural or decorative. The stone produced by the Cheesewring has been described as stone of '*the finest quality*,' but not being a merchant or a geologist I cannot elucidate that statement. I can only say that John Trethewey was NOT the only one to place his confidence in that quality, but he was the first and in so doing he attracted the attention of other interested parties, who began to watch his activities very closely.

There is little doubt that JT began his work with the loose and scattered moorstones, for that was the grant of approval that was given to him by the Duchy of Cornwall, yet within two or three years his attention had shifted to the production of larger blocks for more specific construction works. It might be said that the transition from one to another began with the railway itself and the contract to supply the stone for the rail sleepers. This contract required relatively small blocks, but it was a simple, volume task that was quickly achieved. The CAU suggested that there were ten blocks laid every five metres and the initial eight miles would have required over 25,000, but that was not where the potential for a quarry was to be found. The two small 'quarries' at the extremities of JT's two tramways were trial excavations and the one on the west side was large enough to demand the erection of a crane. However, the 'experts' suggest that it did not yield more than a few large blocks. It was the same on the east side, only less so, as the excavation here was even smaller.<sup>21</sup> So we are inevitably led to the conclusion that serious quarrying began somewhere in the general area circumscribed by the quarry we see today.

In 1842 Robert Coad suggested that JT should be able to produce 8000 tons per annum for carriage on the prospective railway, but that was totally unrealistic.<sup>22</sup> The railway did not start operating until 1846, so until that time there are no statistics concerning JT's output, which was dependent upon a horse-drawn cart to move it. For more than six years JT was faced with a seven-mile journey to Moorswater on roads described as '*appalling*'. These difficult journeys probably limited the overall output of the quarry to no more than 200 or 300 tons per year.

It must also be remembered that this was a business and a successful operation is always dependent upon matching the supply of the product - in this case granite - with the demand for it. The demand for granite in the 1840's was spiralling, so there was enormous scope for a man with local knowledge to develop a network of contacts within both the building and the quarrying industries. John Trethewey described himself as a **Granite Merchant** and we might assume that this would have involved him in travelling to the major urban centres to establish his credentials with the Mineral Agents. Perhaps he should have done so, but did not, or perhaps he did, but they were unimpressed. Whatever the reason, this facet of the business was singularly lacking in the first years of the quarry's existence and the very low output was indicative of a lack of customers.

Another business component that is missing is the lack of any records for the 'company' in its various guises. It is known that he used a solicitor to write letters for him, but they only survive because of the archives of the recipients. Who this solicitor was remains a mystery and as a consequence no records of contracts survive and it is almost impossible to state with any certainty which public constructions actually contain JT's own handiwork.

One piece of information that has come to light as this book was being revised in 2018 was published in a local government document assessing the historical value of properties in Liskeard and referred to granite from the Cheesewring Quarry being used in the modernising of the town in the 1840s.<sup>23</sup> An appendix lists eighteen streets that have granite kerbs some of which are unusually wide and states their source as the Cheesewring Quarry. There is no doubt that the paving of the streets began during the early 1840s, with the demolition of three buildings at the centre of the town. A local historian describes the situation as follows;

<sup>21</sup> 'MINIONS' by the Cornwall Archeological Unit - Page 274/275

<sup>22</sup> This figure was exceeded only twice in 50 years and both 1864 and 1869 were within Freeman ownership.

<sup>23</sup> Liskeard Conservation Area Character, Appraisal and Management Plan 2012 - Appendix B

In 1811 the White Horse and two cottages jutted across the Parade leaving a very narrow road to join the Parade with Barrel Street. In 1812 the inn was demolished but the two cottages were not pulled down until 1841 thus opening up the Parade which had already acquired a new centerpiece – Webb’s Hotel – in 1833.<sup>24</sup>

This move was probably due to the involvement of a local architect named Henry Rice who began work in the town from about 1835 and was responsible for creating the character of the Town that exists today.

The re-modelling of the Parade in 1841, brought granite for the alignment and paving of the street from the Cheesewring Quarry which eventually spread to other, adjacent streets, as the Minutes of the Town Council testify.

This led in turn to its use on one of Rice’s new buildings, the East Cornwall Bank ( Fig 28 now Barclays Bank) sitting on the opposite corner to the Webb’s Hotel which was



Fig 28

built in 1851 almost entirely using granite from the Cheesewring, but this building comes during the period of JT’s first reorganisation which follows this section.

In 1840, Queen Victoria turned 21 years of age and Britain was growing in confidence. The coming of steam was making things possible that previously could not have been contemplated. Railways were proliferating, ships were growing ever larger, lighthouses could be built in locations hitherto impossible and all of these needed stone blocks. Cornish granite was the first choice, so inevitably there were a handful of entrepreneurs in the County caught up in this surge of enthusiasm. One reputed local Granite Merchant was called Richard Hosken and he was already busy with contracts to supply the building blocks for the Docks at Ramsgate and Portsmouth in 1840.<sup>25</sup> In that same year the Freeman Brothers from London secured a contract to supply granite to the new ‘*Keyham Steam Yard*’ at Devonport Dockyard. At this point I must pause and summarise the effect that these two gentlemen, John and William Freeman, had on Cornwall’s granite industry, for it was prodigious. Their interest initially began in Scotland, but by 1840 Cornwall was their main source of granite and in 1863 the Cheesewring was finally drawn into their net. Their name first appeared in a London Directory for 1829 where they were described as ‘*stone and marble merchants*’ of Millbank Street, Westminster. John Freeman was the brother who did all the travelling and his role was simply to find a source of stone to supply the needs of the construction industry. He was, in a word, a middle-man. Following a modest expansion during the 1830’s into a ‘*wharf and yard*’ at Millwall, they acquired their first quarry in 1839 and this one was a very specialised quarry in Yorkshire. However, the success in gaining the contract to supply the huge work at Devonport Dockyard demanded so much stone that John Freeman had to spend almost all of his time searching for sources in Cornwall. This brought him to focus his operation on Penryn and eventually he came to live in the vicinity of Falmouth in the mid-1840s. It also brought him to realise that quarries and NOT moorstones were the only source of the large blocks that

<sup>24</sup> *Liskeard and its People* by Bernard Deacon 1989 Page 4

<sup>25</sup> *Journal of the Trevithick Society* No.13 1986 page 7 – article on the Freeman Brothers by P. Stanier

the industry was beginning to demand and these could not be transported very easily on the roads of the day. The quarry had to be near the sea and easily reached by ship.

By 1844, he had discovered the quarrying empire of Joseph Treffry in the Luxulyan Valley with its superbly efficient transportation system and in the five years from 1845 until 1850 John Freeman exported 31,445 tons of granite through the little harbour at Par. In 1849 the Freemans opened their own quarry in the cliffs of Lamorna Cove and by 1858 they had an interest in 90 quarries in the Lands End district. In that same year the Cheesewring managed to 'export' over 5,110 tons<sup>26</sup> and John Freeman could not ignore this quarry as a source of competition. I am sure that he would have visited the works at the Cheesewring in JT's time and there can be little doubt that he was astute enough to know exactly what the possibilities were at that quarry. He had also cast his eye over the situation on the south-western slopes of Dartmoor at Pew Tor, but neither site attracted him because of its distance from the sea.

Freeman was content to look elsewhere, whilst the output of granite during JT's tenure remained low. During the seven years, 1839–1846, (*for I will use 1846 as a watershed*) this very low output was always considered to be disappointing by all those who had an interest in the area and it was as early as 1843 that Benjamin Hart Lyne noticed the weakness in JT's business.<sup>27</sup> As an influential Liskeard solicitor, he had publicly declared his intention of joining with others to develop the granite trade more successfully and this gentleman was well placed to mount a challenge to JT's efforts. He was one of the eight Directors of the Liskeard & Caradon Railway Company and they were quick to voice their disappointment at the low level of traffic generated by the quarry for the Railway Company.

Fortunately for our story, this potential threat passed with Lyne's premature death in April 1844<sup>28</sup> and JT was able to retain control over his quarry, but the lesson had been learnt and JT's business would undergo a change, but not before I reveal another brief glimpse into JT's activities that has recently come to light (*April 2019*).

On the 15<sup>th</sup> October 1844 Richard Olver was brought before the magistrates in East Looe accused of assaulting James Trethewey on the previous evening. Olver had been seen by Trethewey riding with another boy on *a waggon on a rail road built by his father at Churchend*, at the seaward end of the town. Other boys were pushing the wagon to and fro, but Olver ignored Trethewey's instruction to get off, so Trethewey told one of his father's workmen, James Osborne, *to knock him off the waggon*. This led Olver to punch Trethewey in the mouth, or so it was alleged, but Osborne said that he had not seen anything as he was busy *taking the wheels off the waggon*, presumably to prevent any further interference and Olver denied the accusation of assault to the magistrate.<sup>29</sup>

This is a very revealing item as it is well known that during the 1840s Looe Harbour was in a very poor state of repair as was the bridge over the river to West Looe, much to the frustration of the influential Buller Family who had represented both towns in Parliament for centuries. So-called improvements to the jetties and slipways on both sides altered the flow of the river and during bad weather conditions, vessels moored on either side of the harbour were damaged. Complaints from ship owners led to friction between the two councils and nothing was done, until the complaints reached the ears of the Government and an Admiralty inspector was sent from London in 1846 to report on the situation.

However this tiny altercation between James Trethewey, who was 15 years old and Richard Olver, who was possibly 18 years old,<sup>30</sup> reveals the presence in East Looe of John Trethewey. He had probably been engaged by the town's mayor to repair or rebuild the wharfs and a fundamental item to any wharf or dock was its granite coping stones, whilst a tramway had been built to move the stones around the site of the work.

This work undoubtedly brought him to the notice of two local residents who will feature prominently in the next section.

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<sup>26</sup> Duchy of Cornwall Accounts Royalties, Dues & Rents of Mines & Quarries. Trevithick Society Journal 12/1985

<sup>27</sup> Diary of William Pease 10 March 1843 – Caradon & Looe by Michael Messenger page 34

<sup>28</sup> He was buried in the Liskeard Parish Churchyard on the 16<sup>th</sup> April 1844 aged 44 years.

<sup>29</sup> *Trevithick Society Journal No 42* of 2015 by Michael Messenger

<sup>30</sup> 1841 Census HO107 Piece 153/12 Folio 21 Page 6 – Fore Street – Mariner aged 14

## Part 2

### A New Company Emerges

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The apparent absence of any documentation that would throw light upon the 'Grants of Permission' that John Trethewey was given by the Duchy of Cornwall to remove moorstones from Stowe's Hill during those years when the railway did not exist has been rather frustrating. Those who have used the Duchy Library in search of 'primary sources' hint that it is a 'less than ordered place' and suggest that the documentation is there – somewhere!

The impression that I have gained is that JT sought and was given two three-year 'grants' that covered the years 1839 to 1842 and then again from 1842 until 1845, but the development of the railway compelled him to consider a more serious extraction business. This required a long-term tenure of his chosen moorland. Up to this point in time, he had been attempting to run the business virtually single-handedly without any significant business acumen or financial backing. Only ten years previously he had been summoned more than once for the non-payment of rates and his poor wife had been forced to plead with Plymouth's mayor that he was a 'stonemason unable to work.'

Yet, here he was, in the 1840s probably employing stonemasons and other labourers and seeking access to horses from the neighbouring Stowes' Mine. However, all the evidence suggests that up until June 1845, when his second lease was due to expire, there had been no significant quarrying and no major contracts requiring granite to be sent any great distance from its source. He must have been well aware that his lone efforts were being carefully monitored and it must have dawned on him that his reluctance to involve others in his venture would lead to failure. He needed to talk with the Duchy Agent regarding a new lease so support had to be found if he was to continue in business.

The new lease was a long time in the making and much of the 19 months that elapsed between the expiry of the second lease and the signing of the new one, cannot be adequately explained. Perhaps this was quite normal for the times, as solicitors and their clerks worked at their own pace and there was no such thing as the Penny Post delivering mail on the following day. The lease was also different. It was a 21-year lease that was signed and sealed on the 29 January 1847, but backdated to the 25 June 1845. It included the names of the two men who had been persuaded to stand with him as partners. They were JOHN CLOGG, a Gentleman of West Looe and JAMES SYMONS, an Innkeeper from East Looe and the new partnership is thought to have been known as,

#### TRETHEWEY, CLOGG & Company <sup>31</sup>

The census for 1841 reveals not one, but two men by the name of 'John Clogg' in the vicinity of Looe and neither of them can be ignored. The elder of the two was 60 years old and resident, with his wife Philippa, in Treworkey, a small hamlet about two miles north of the town and close to the canal at Sandplace. The fact recorded about this John that is pertinent to the story is that he was 'of independent means,' – in other words 'a gentleman.' The second John Clogg was a much younger man. He lived with his wife Mary next to Fore Street, West Looe in a house described as '*The Mount*' and at 30 years of age he was 'a merchant.'

At the beginning of 1847, work was underway to repair the extensive damage done to the town during the storm of the previous October and John Clogg was one of the fifteen Harbour Commissioners newly appointed to oversee the efficient operation of the harbour. He was also described as a 'Shipowner,' and from this piece of information it might be inferred that his business interests and his local influence were critical to the 'exporting' of granite from the quays of Looe. It might even be anticipated that John Trethewey's cargoes were destined for John Clogg's ships. This would have redressed the criticism levelled at him a few years earlier. Unfortunately I am not able to comment on the size of the fleet, neither do I have any of the names of the vessels, but John Clogg's involvement inevitably dictated that **his** name should be included in the Company cipher.

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<sup>31</sup> Trevithick Society Journal No.12, 1985 – Article by Peter Stanier page 37

|   |       |   |                 |    |    |           |      |
|---|-------|---|-----------------|----|----|-----------|------|
| Doc 2.1   | Mount | 1 | John Clogg      | 30 | -  | attendant | 50/1 |
|   |       |   | Mary do         | -  | 25 |           | 50/1 |
|   |       |   | Thomas do       | 4  |    |           | 50/1 |
|   |       |   | Elizabeth Clogg | -  | 20 | F S       | 50/1 |
|   |       |   | Mary Lunden     | -  | 20 | F S       | 50/1 |
| 1841 Census HO 107/153/17 Folio 41 Page 20 Above – Below HO 107/153/12 Folio 23 Page 10 |       |   |                 |    |    |           |      |
| Doc 2.2   | do    | 1 | James Symons    | 35 |    | Publican  | 6    |
|   |       |   | Ann do          | 40 |    |           | 6    |
|   |       |   | Mary do         | 7  |    |           | 6    |
|   |       |   | Henry do        | 2  |    |           | 6    |
|   |       |   | Susanna Wacker  | 20 |    | F S       | 6    |
|   |       |   | Ann Finch       | 15 |    | F S       | 6    |

James Symons was also very easy to locate in the 1841 Census and he too, lived in Fore Street, but this street was a namesake in East Looe where James was ‘a Publican.’ It is a pity that the inns were not specifically named in the Census Return, but it seems to be very probable that this is James Symons of the *SALUTATION*. Their household is recorded with only a druggist or chemist between them and another publican, but that was typical of Looe – full of places to drink. He was 35 years old and with his older wife Ann, they had two children Mary (7) and Henry (2).

As the second partner named in the Lease, the exact nature of his involvement in the Company is not plain to see although a contemporary statement has been found that suggests that the family

*" who run the old but comfortable SAL are the family who built the Looe schooners."*

As I cannot directly link this statement to the name of James Symons, I will focus attention upon the location of the Inn. Most of the inns in East Looe are separated only by a short walk, but the ‘SAL’ was literally on the spot for it backed almost onto the area that became the Granite Quay. This close proximity to the quay probably made it the natural meeting place for all those who wanted to discuss the granite trade over a tankard of ale.

It would be wrong to assume that John Trethewey had been coming to Looe since 1840, as the current evidence does not support the notion that JT was ‘exporting’ to other ports around the coast. In fact the research seems to indicate that he was only supplying stone to builders in the immediate vicinity of Liskeard and Looe was an obvious place to look for work especially as it had sustained a damaged harbour in 1846. This situation may have been the catalyst that introduced JT to both John Clogg and James Symons.

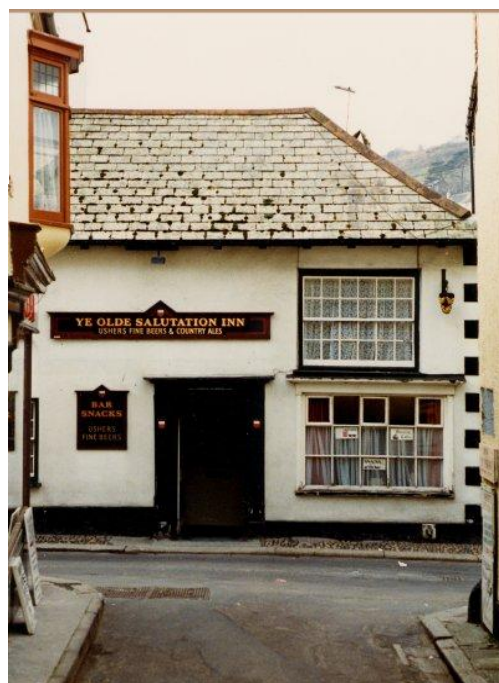
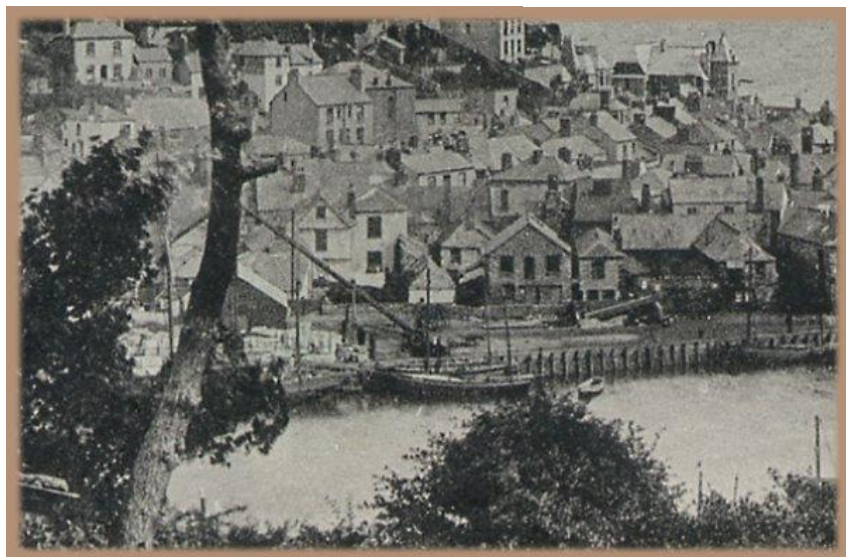
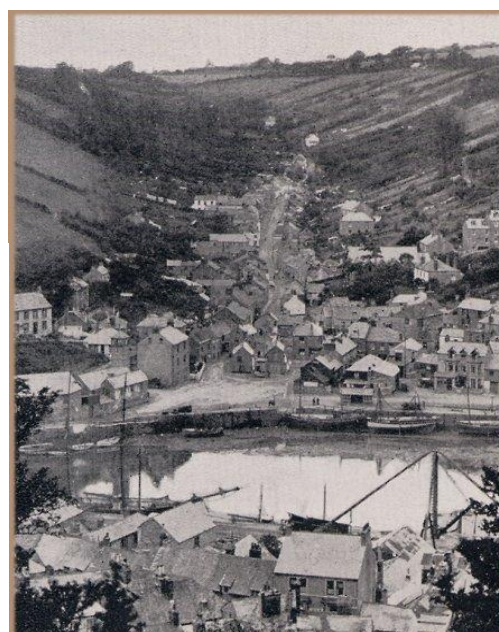
At this point I can easily imagine JT as a quiet, contemplative man who might walk around a site deep in thought concerning the pros and cons of a particular situation. It is clear that he was overly cautious in his decisions and he probably listened more than he spoke, but an inn was a place where people gathered and was a source of local gossip and it also offered a bed and a meal and if JT had begun to use the ‘SAL’ regularly it is not unreasonable to assume that a friendship developed between James Symons and John Trethewey, to the point where they agreed to become partners in an expanding venture. A room in the tavern was then the obvious place for ‘official business’, as there were no other appropriate venues in those days. John Trethewey was no longer alone in the business. There were now three partners and the need must have arisen for a more formal and perhaps regular meeting to discuss and review the state of the business. So let’s take a look around.



The SALUTATION and the Granite Wharf were at the heart of East Looe. These old postcards from the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century show working warehouses lining the quaysides and granite blocks piled high awaiting loading on the waiting vessels, but this was the harbour as it was rebuilt in the 1850s and although the 'SAL' was there before that, the wharf almost certainly was not

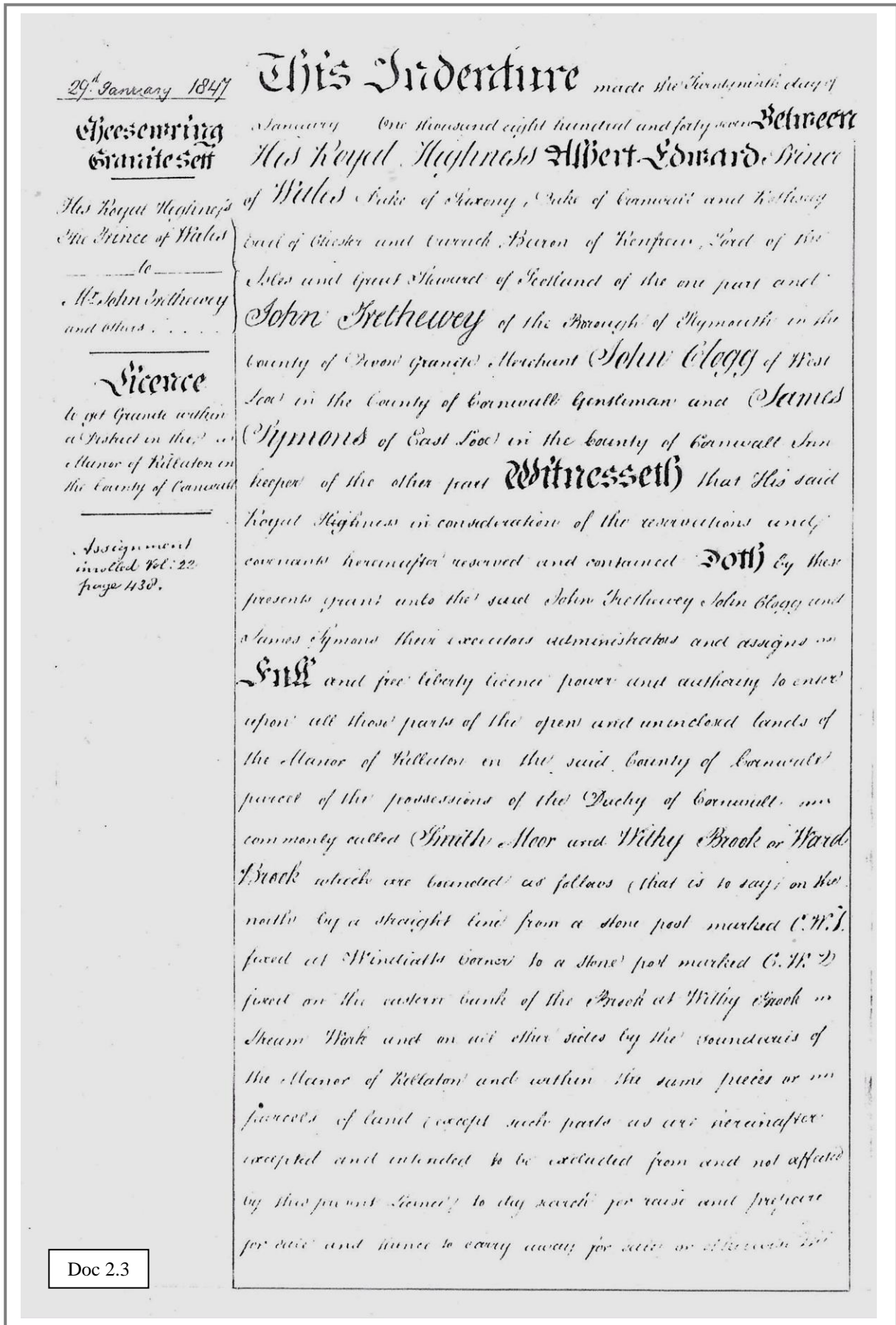


The SALUTATION and the Granite Wharf were at the heart of East Looe and are easily located by the enormous sheerlegs used for lifting granite blocks aboard the coasting barques and schooners.



# The New Lease of 1847




This new arrangement which put JT in the role of 'Operations Manager' is incorporated into a beautifully written 10-page document, the first and last pages of which are reproduced here.



Doc 2.3

assignment shall at any time be made of this present our  
 Indenture or of the License powers or authorities intended to be  
 hereby granted or any of them without the consent of His said  
 Royal Highness his heirs or successors being first obtained and  
 that every assignment which shall be made with such consent  
 as aforesaid shall be enrolled among the Records of the Duchy  
 of Cornwall at the expense of the said John Hethcote John  
 Blegg and James Symons their executors administrators or  
 assigns within the space of six calendar months next after the  
 date of such assignment and in default of such consent or  
 enrolment every such assignment shall be void and the License  
 powers and authorities hereby granted shall immediately cease  
 determine and be forfeited **Provided also** that if the said  
 yearly rents of Twenty five pounds and Fifty pounds or the said  
 Annuities due hereby reserved or made payable or either of them  
 or any part thereof respectively shall at any time hereafter be  
 in arrear for the space of forty days next after either or any of  
 the days or times upon or at which the same respectively ought  
 to be paid as aforesaid or if any default shall be made or occur  
 in the observance or performance by the said John Hethcote  
 John Blegg and James Symons their executors administrators or assigns  
 of any of the covenants or agreements hereinbefore contained then  
 and in any or either of such cases and immediately upon the  
 happening of the same respectively the License powers and  
 authorities hereby granted shall cease determine and be forfeited.

**In witness** whereof the Privy Seal of His said Royal  
 Highness in right of His said Duchy hath been duly affixed and  
 set here and the said John Hethcote John Blegg and James  
 Symons have respectively affixed their seals and subscribed their names

John  Hethcote  
 John  Blegg  
 James  Symons

*(Seal of the Duchy of Cornwall)*

It is interesting to see that JT's signature with a seal, sat alongside that of the Duke of Cornwall.

This was a surprise as Arthur Edward Prince of Wales was only 5 years old having been born on 9 November 1841.

Having admired the document, however, it is necessary for the story to extract and transcribe its contents to see exactly what it was that JT and his partners had agreed to abide by and there were no less than 15 conditions.

### He was allowed to;

- A Enter into the open and unenclosed lands in the Manor of Rillaton known as Smithy Moor and Withy or Ward Brook.
- B Dig, search for, raise, prepare for sale and carry away granite stone found upon or under the said parcel of land.
- C Erect and construct buildings, machinery and other works and to form and repair roads and any other act necessary to the good course of quarrying.
- D Extract granite, not exceeding 857 tons per year in the first two years and 1714 tons per year thereafter. Excess tonnage would be charged at the rate of 7d per ton.

The grant is for TWENTY ONE YEARS from 24 June 1845 at £25 per annum for the first two years and £50 per annum thereafter. Rental payments are due half yearly on the 24 June and 25 December.

### He was responsible for;

- E The payment of all taxes, levies, assessments and impositions in respect to the parcel of land.
- F The keeping of proper Books of Account at the Counting House within the limits of the land, which must be available at all times for the inspection of the Duchy Agent or Bailiff.
- G The recording of weights, quantities, dates and other facts necessary for the calculation of tonnage dues.
- H Delivering the half yearly statement to the Duchy Agent within 30 days following the dates agreed for payment.
- I Placing all granite raised in a convenient place near the Counting House for measurement, if requested in writing by the Duchy Agent and not to remove it without 7 days notice from JT
- K Fencing and keep fenced the diggings to protect cattle and other animals from injury.
- L Refilling any holes created by the raising of granite to the satisfaction of the Duchy Agent.

### He must NOT,

- M Injure or deface the Druidical remains or natural curiosities on the Cheesewring Hill or elsewhere on the common.
- N Erect any dwelling house, cottage or place of residence without the consent of HRH

### He is reminded that,

- O The Licence does not extend to any part of the Cheesewring Hill which lies within the line drawn around the summit and marked by a series of small circles each containing a cross which are cut into certain conspicuous granite rocks and is distant from the outer foot of the mound of stones which encloses the summit by about 40 yards to the west and north, 20 yards to the east and 44 yards to the south of the Cheesewring Rock. The area is marked in red on the map and

includes the small spot of ground enclosed by a low embankment and known as Gumb's House.

P If any payment remains unpaid for 40 days beyond the appointed day, the Bailiff is empowered to impound not only the granite raised, but also any or all machinery, apparatus, wagons, wains, carts, carriages, horses and other animals, implements, ropes, utensils, materials or any other thing used for quarrying within the limits of the agreed land. These will be impounded for 5 days and if payment remains unpaid, they will be offered for private sale or public auction and any surplus monies will be returned to John Trethewey.

He was commanded that,

Q At the end of the 21-year term, all apparatus, machinery and fixtures are to be offered to HRH for a sum agreed. If a sum cannot be agreed, an Arbitrator must be appointed for each Party. If none is appointed within 14 days, or he fails to act, then the sum will be determined by the one Arbitrator alone.

THE LICENCE WILL CEASE IF ANY OF THE CONDITIONS ARE IN DEFAULT.

There are a number of points within this document that I will highlight in the furtherance of this story and two of them have already been raised. The first was the amount of stone he was allowed to raise (D) seems relatively small when other interested onlookers suggested that JT should have been producing much more. The figure in the lease vindicates JT and negates the opinions of the others. Secondly there was the controversial question of Daniel Gumb's house which is known to have been destroyed, but when and by whom has never really been established and no responsibility was placed upon JT for its protection.

Of course the document included an essential map, as the text highlights the marker stones of the prohibited area, but where exactly were they?

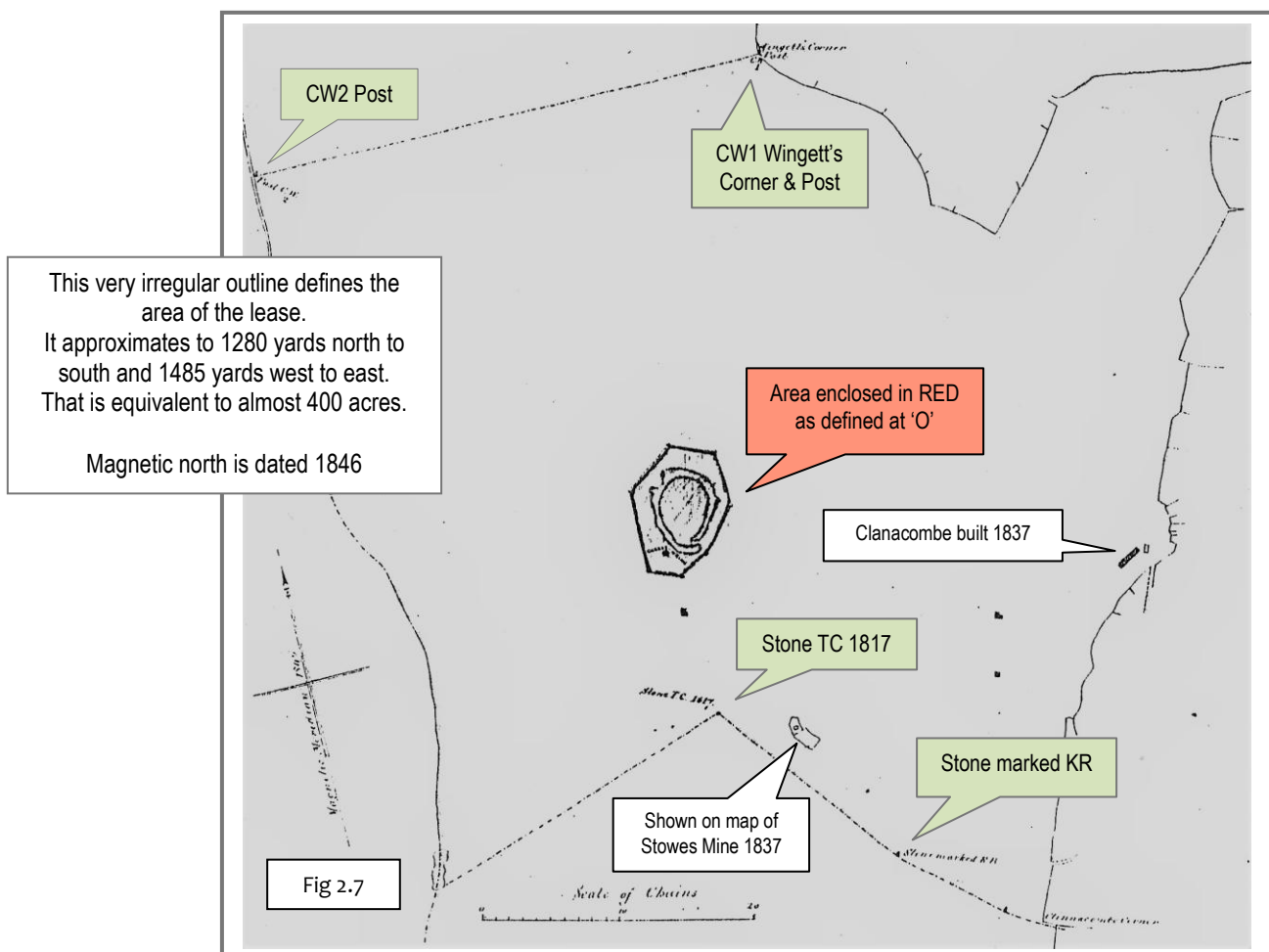


Fig 2.8



This modern aerial view of the ancient feature now commonly referred to as Stowe's Pound and the focus of the plan on the previous page shows how modern quarrying had brought the 'cliff face to the very tip of the 'tear drop' and encroached into JT's forbidden area. However I also want to introduce the panel that was at the top of the plan and reveals John CLOGG'S business address in London – 66 UPPER STAMFORD STREET, Lambeth.

*Signed Sealed and Delivered by the within named  
John Metheway, John Clogg and James Symons in the presence of  
(John Clogg, No 66 Upper Stamford Street  
Lambeth Surrey.  
H. M. Customs - London)*  
**Witnessed** *30<sup>th</sup> January 1847.*

Doc 2.4

# A House Called STOWES

The aspect of this story that had always fascinated me was the fact that JT took on this daunting enterprise whilst living in Plymouth at 27 Cambridge Street. He did not live in the local village at Linkinhorne or even Liskeard and neither was he a young man, for in 1847 he was rapidly approaching 60 years old. It is too easy to conclude that this work was just a simple matter of dividing his time. Weekdays at the quarry and home at weekends, but had he done so where did he live during the week?

All the evidence I have points to the fact that JT was a resident of Plymouth throughout the 1830s and his intimate knowledge of the moorstones on Stowes Hill and the Cheesewring has always puzzled me. All the documentation that has been retrieved from the Duchy of Cornwall Office shows that correspondence between the Duchy and JT was always addressed to Cambridge Street in Plymouth. However, the first opportunity for an independent source of information came with the 1841 Census.<sup>32</sup>

The entry before Stowes Cottage is Well Jenkin. Clanacomb (ombe) comes between Stowes and Stows. Eight unnamed cottages follow, before Stanbear Corner and Knowl(e) are reached, showing that the Enumerator's spelling is dreadful.

Wheal Jenkin and Clanacombe were both tin mines that were amalgamated in 1846 to become Wheal Phoenix and this is demonstrated by every entry from Jenkin to Stanbear Corner being either a tin or copper miner

before changing to farmers and agricultural labourers at Knowle and beyond. The one exception is Henry James, a stone cutter, who just happens to live in STOWES with his family.

The Enumerator had come southwards from Upton Cross and made his way over to Minions, a group of cottages he called Mutton Corner, before he reached 'Well Jenkins' which was east of Minions and now marked by the lonesome engine house, so Stowes Cottage must have been close to and associated with the Stowes mine, which is spelt correctly. Henry James's cottage was therefore probably closer to Stowes Pound and the area being worked by JT and in all probability James was one of JT's small band of workers.

However, the Linkinhorne Baptism Register reveals that Henry and his wife Susanna<sup>33</sup> baptised three sons from their home at Stowes Mine between October 1828<sup>34</sup> and November 1834 where Henry was a labourer. As there were no further children baptised it would seem that Henry had left the mine for the fresh air of the open moor, but as my previous text suggests, he could not cut moorstones alone. Two men and more were required for that process to be successful.

So, the census shows that there were two habitable cottages close to the workings at the Cheesewring which may have belonged to the mine, but it least one of them could have been available to JT to use as a lodging, especially if Susanna could be enticed to provide a hearty breakfast for a few extra coppers.

|                |                  |    |              |   |
|----------------|------------------|----|--------------|---|
| Stowes Cottage | 1 Samuel Beccomb | 30 | Tin Miner    | 2 |
|                | Mary Do          | 35 |              | 2 |
|                | Mary Susan Do    | 16 |              | 2 |
| Clanacomb      | Ann Ellen Do     | 4  |              | 2 |
|                | James Do         | 3  |              | 2 |
|                | Samuel Do        | 1  |              | 2 |
|                | Susan Pitts      |    |              | 2 |
|                | Charlotte Martin | 14 | 7            | 2 |
| Stowes         | 1 Henry James    | 35 | Stone cutter | 2 |
|                | Mary Do          | 35 |              | 2 |
|                | Elizabeth Do     | 12 |              | 2 |
|                | John Do          | 8  |              | 2 |
|                | Richard Do       | 6  |              | 2 |

<sup>32</sup> 1841 Census HO 107/134/6 Folio 38 Page 15

<sup>33</sup> Henry JAMES of Linkinhorne married Susanna AVENS of St. Germans at Golant, near Fowey, on 9 Oct 1824

<sup>34</sup> 12 October 1828 Elijah Evans JAMES and not Elizabeth – another enumerator error?

It is twenty one miles from the Torpoint ferry to Minions by way of Menheniot, Merrymeet and Crow's Nest. It is the shortest route according to 21<sup>st</sup> century technology (my iPhone). I am certain that the road was there in the 1840s as was the Torpoint ferry, which was built to take horses and carriages and entered service in 1835. If I decided to make the journey by bicycle it would take me 2 hours and 18 minutes, but it would not be an easy ride. So, how did JT make the journey during those years more than 150 years ago? It was too far to walk even by the stamina of the day when ordinary folk knew no other way to travel long distances. One way JT might have chosen was on horseback, but again, it was a long way even when walking gently uphill and trotting down the other side and such a journey could easily be equated to a modern cycle ride, but JT was no longer a young man. In this period a man in his 50s was lucky to be alive, so perhaps he would have preferred to ride in a dog-cart or a trap, as the thought of a carriage would have been dismissed. That was too pretentious, but where would he buy a horse and how much would it cost?

During the 1840s advertisements in the Cornish newspapers for the sale of individual horses were very rare. One that was found in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* for the 3 October 1844 described a 7-year-old gelding standing 15½ hands which was *a safe, quick hack and quite fresh on his legs*. More common were the occasional auctions of liquidating businesses where anything up to fifteen horses together with carts, carriages and tack were being advertised three or four times a year. The place to buy a horse was at one of the frequent horse fairs which were held all over the county at different times in the year, and many reports included an overall impression of the fair concerning the quantity and quality of the horses on offer. It is, however, exceedingly difficult to put a price on a horse, but it was not cheap and as a consequence horse stealing was a major crime punished by transportation.<sup>35</sup> If a figure is possible then a riding horse could be £15 - £18.

Surprisingly, there was a third option listed in *Piggott's Directory* for 1844 – stage coaches. The RUBY ran from *The Bell* in Church Street to Devonport and Plymouth on alternate days Monday to Friday, but the TELEGRAPH left Webb's Hotel every day at 2.30 p.m. for Devonport and Plymouth, but continuing to Exeter and London. What a journey that would have been and expensive to ride inside. A cheaper method was the carrier and five men advertised their services to Plymouth leaving either *The London Inn* in West Street or *The Fountain Inn* on the Parade. Three of them only ran once each week on different days, but two of them William Kellow and Hugh Kelly left their respective inns daily (the former *The London* and the latter *The Fountain*). This situation continued throughout JT's time at the Cheesewring and although there were changes and 'improvements' JT still needed someone to bring him or meet him at Liskeard's town centre.

Of course my reader must not forget that in the 1840s the southern slopes of Bodmin Moor were no idyllic leisure playground. There was an industrial revolution happening locally with mining in the ascendancy and JT's operation at the Cheesewring was in competition with a number of tin and copper mines and they all shared the same parish – Linkinhorne. If there were no lodgings on the moor then the place to look was in the village and Linkinhorne seems to have had two inns as both Cornelius Rickard and John Brown were innkeepers close to the Vicarage, but neither of them had any boarders or visitors when the Enumerator called.

As a consequence my attention must revert to a cottage on the moor, but before I do it has to be re-stated that Henry James was the only stonemason in a parish of 1519 people. There were about six masons, but that was only to be expected with the several mines in need of buildings in all shapes and sizes, but a stonemason was a very specific occupation and infers that he worked with the moorstones. In June 1841, at the time of the Census, JT was still relatively new to the moor, but Henry James was not. His change of occupation suggests that he must have worked for and with JT and at that time they must have been working on their own. Yet Henry continued to live in the same cottage which must have been the responsibility of the tenant of the land on which it stood and that seems likely to have been the mining company. The Duchy of Cornwall was the owner of the moor and they decreed what should and should not happen on their land and that is the line of argument that will emerge as the story progresses.

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<sup>35</sup> The death penalty for horse stealing was abolished in 1830 by Sir Robert Peel.



Six years pass before a rather vague situation concerning a cottage named STOWS becomes the subject of a written document and that document was the Lease of January 1847. Two different situations are described in the text and both are enigmatic. The first states in two separate conditions (F & I) that not only must Accounting Books be kept at the Counting House, but also that any granite raised should be placed near the Counting House for the Duchy Agent to measure, but where was this Counting House and why has it not featured in any subsequent historical research? It was customary for the mines to follow this practice, but it has never been clear whether or not they were also used as residences.

A second condition (N) categorically forbade JT to erect a dwelling house, cottage or place of residence without the permission of HRH the Prince of Wales and I can imagine that this was a reaction to the proliferation of 'miners' hovels' that had been observed by a number of more affluent and social minded gentry. But that is exactly what JT did. He built a cottage and in 1849 he retrospectively applied to the Duchy Office for land to form a smallholding for its benefit.



From the note written vertically up the right hand side of this accurate plan it must be inferred that it was supplied by JT to the Duchy Office who were satisfied that it was *good enough to mark out the line of Mr. Trethewey's allotment*.

It shows both the cottage and the smith's shop to the east of the Cheese Wring. The cottage was 187 yards almost due south of the most southerly tip of Stowe's Pound and in a position that is difficult to reconcile on later and more modern plans and photographic material as we shall see. It seems that JT was attempting to segregate a long strip of land amounting to about 10 acres whilst identifying the Lots that he was 'quarrying.' However it is difficult to interpret a document in isolation with little other supporting information. I can say that the smith's shop was 140 yards NNE of the cottage and seems to have survived.

The only other information available is a rough format, which looks as if it was rejected by the Chief Clerk after being put together in the Duchy Office so that a Lease for the 10 acres could be constructed for signature. It is full of mistakes and additions, but JT's signature graces the bottom of the page. On the other hand it could have been a document compiled by the local Duchy Agent following an approach by JT and their subsequent discussion. This would explain JT's signature in acquiescence.

*Description insufficient*

Doc 2.7

| <i>Name of Lessee.</i> | <i>Residence.</i>                   | <i>County.</i> | <i>Occupation &amp;c</i> |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| <i>John Trethewey</i>  | <i>27 Cambridge Street Plymouth</i> | <i>Devon</i>   | <i>Granite Worker</i>    |
|                        |                                     |                |                          |

*Description of Property.*

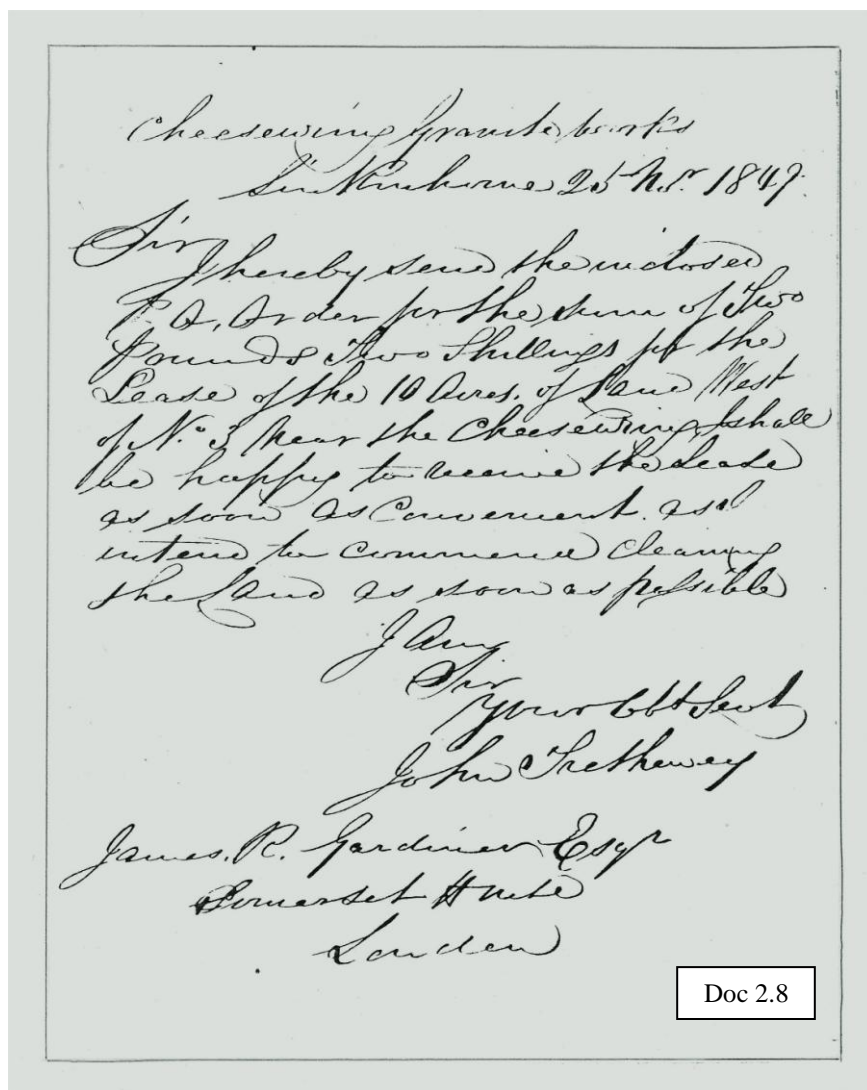
*A piece of Land containing about 10<sup>ac</sup> on the Waste of Rillaton near the Cheese Ring bounded on the South by Lymy to the Westward of the Allotment N<sup>o</sup> 3. on Mr. Coomes's Plan, and including the cottage recently built by me the said John Trethewey, and now in the occupation of William Bennett*

A piece of land containing about 10 acres on the waste of Rillaton near the Cheese Ring lying to the westward of the allotment No.3 on Mr. XXX's plan and including the cottage recently built by me, the said John Trethewey, and now in the occupation of William Bennett

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <i>Commencement and duration of Lease.</i>   | <i>Michaelmas 1849 — Term 3/ years</i>  |
| <i>Rent.</i>   | <i>Three shillings per acre —</i>   |
| <i>Particular circumstances in respect of which Special Covenants may be required.</i> | <i>To enclose — and keep the boundaries and Fences in repair</i><br><i>John Trethewey</i> |

It was Sunday on Bodmin Moor. It was the 25<sup>th</sup> November 1849 and most people in the surrounding moorland had set off for the chapel. JT had been left alone in the cottage, but only on condition that he kept an eye on the liveliness of the fire under the pot containing the stew for dinner. Jane Bennett was not a woman to be ignored, but he had work to do. He had been in to Liskeard and bought a Postal Order for Two Guineas and he now had to send it with a covering letter to James Gardiner at the Duchy Office in Somerset House. He didn't like writing, but it had to be done. He wanted to make a start as soon as possible on clearing those 10 acres. If it was going to be of any use to him, NOW was the time to do it.

I wonder if he had any idea of the person to whom he was writing and the place to which it was addressed.



It was no surprise to find that James Robert Gardiner was a barrister as well as being a Master of Arts from Cambridge University. It was a surprise to find that he lived on the job. In fact, the 1851 Census<sup>36</sup> showed that 84 people were resident in Somerset House in all guises from three watch keepers to messengers, housekeepers, head clerks, porters and many more. Whole families with children grew up there amid the books and documentation of four learned societies,<sup>37</sup> as well as the Inland Revenue, the Admiralty and the Audit Office. Yet, Gardiner had no family. He was unmarried and had been born in Scotland in 1812 and he was one of three important people to enjoy their own rooms in such a grand establishment at St. Mary le Strand. I have no doubt that he enjoyed an occasional evening dinner with fellow barrister C. Meld and his wife Anne in the rooms of the Royal Society, or John Ackerman and his wife Emma at the Antiquarian Society. But for JT on Bodmin Moor on that November day it was mutton stew with potatoes enjoyed in the company of tin and copper miners.

Impetuosity was not an attribute that would have found favour in 1850 as daylight dictated the working hours and distance controlled the speed of communications. London was nearly 300 miles from Bodmin Moor and the Duchy of Cornwall had more complex issues to deal with than 10 acres of waste moorland. Four months elapsed before the Duchy Office sent the new lease for signature on the 15<sup>th</sup> March 1850 and they sent it, quite rightly, to JT's address in Cambridge Street, Plymouth. As a consequence it had probably gone from JT's mind that he had a Lease outstanding and it may have taken some time to find him. Whatever the situation, JT did not return it and its absence prompted another letter from the Duchy Office dated 4<sup>th</sup> June 1850.

<sup>36</sup> 1851 Census HO 107/1511 Folio 199 Page 3ff

<sup>37</sup> Royal Astronomical Society, Geological Society, Antiquarian Society and the Royal Society.

This second letter was *to request that no further delay may take place in returning it to this office.* Its' tone was stern. The process was incomplete. The grant of the Lease was still to be made. No money was changing hands. This was not good enough.

I am very tempted to suggest that JT had good reason to be distracted from this minor piece of bureaucracy, but the Duchy was his 'master' and they could easily remove what had already been given. I have not reproduced the letters themselves as they are 'office copies' and very roughly written and the purpose of this section is to focus upon the cottage that was mentioned within the Lease.

June 1850 left our story within nine months of the weekend of the 30/31 March 1851. It was the weekend on which the second census took place and gave the best opportunity so far to investigate STOWES in some detail. The result, however, was unexpected and posed more questions than answers with ELEVEN people in the house.

| Parish or Township of                                    |  | Ecclesiastical District of   |  | City or Borough of         |           | Town of |        | Village of                      |                   |
|--|--|--|--|----------------------------|-----------|---------|--------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Name of Street, Place, or Road, and Name or No. of House |  | Name and Surname of each Person who abode in the house, on the Night of the 30th March, 1851 |  | Relation to Head of Family | Condition | Age of  |        | Rank, Profession, or Occupation | Where Born        |
|  |  |  |  |                            |           | Male    | Female |                                 |                   |
| 95 Stowes  |  | William Bennett  |  | Head                       | Mar       |         |        | Miner                           | Do Cantons        |
| Total  |  | Jane Bennett   |  | Wife                       | Mar       |         |        | Miner's wife                    | Do Netherton      |
| 28   |  |  |  |                            |           |         |        |                                 |                   |
| 272  |  |  |  |                            |           |         |        |                                 |                   |
| Howellin Lane  |  | Mary Jane Bennett  |  | Servant                    | U         |         |        |                                 | Howellin, Cantons |
|  |  | William Henry Bennett  |  | Son                        | U         |         |        | Miner                           | Do Do             |
|  |  | Mark Smith Bennett   |  | Son                        | U         |         |        | Labourer                        | Do Lutterbome     |
|  |  | Elizabeth Ann Bennett  |  | Servant                    | U         |         |        |                                 | Do Do             |
|  |  | John Theobald  |  | Visitor                    | Mar       |         |        | Granite Merchant                | Do N. Dennis      |
|  |  | John Northcott   |  | Visitor                    | Mar       |         |        | Miner                           | Do Plympton       |
|  |  | Ambrose Harris   |  | Visitor                    | U         |         |        | Miner                           | Do West           |
|  |  | William Bassett  |  | Servant                    | U         |         |        | Labourer                        | Do London         |
|  |  | William Weeks  |  | Servant                    | U         |         |        | Miner                           | Do Allington      |

Doc. 2.9

Before I discuss the people who were present let me write a word about its location. The Enumerator's district was *that part of the parish of Linkinborne west of the River Lyner* and this included Darley, Darleyford, Upton and Netherton and this latter hamlet of three cottages immediately preceded Stowes. As I scrolled through the pages I gained the impression that there were anonymous cottages dotted around on small farms of 30 to 60 acres. The Enumerator had visited Dunsley Cotts (modern spelling Dunslea) and found a yeoman farming 50 acres with four cottages occupied by miners. He then visited Netherton where a farmer had two cottages occupied by three mining families on his land, before calling at STOWES. There then followed two unnamed residences the second of which was occupied by Samuel Secombe a Mine Agent from Calstock and we have met the Secombe's before in the 1841 Census when the house was called Stowes Cottage and Secombe was a mere 'tin miner.' This house from 1851 – or its successor - may still be there as it is known to have been a Mine Captain's house and is beside the lane immediately below the eastern waste tips of the Cheesewring Quarry.

The large number of people in 'our' house and their mix of ages and relationships suggests, in modern terms at least, a house of four bedrooms or sleeping rooms as they were more commonly called at the time, but did the house have a square appearance or was it long and narrow, which was more in keeping with the rural style of the time and it is clearly very different from the house named STOWS in the 1841 census which housed only five people.

In a letter written to me by Dr. Peter Stanier on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1988, he enclosed a roughly drawn map based on Fig. 2.10 shown earlier. On it he had 'scribbled' some notes for my benefit which

specifically focused upon the buildings that were known in the immediate locality even if they did not survive.

He highlighted two terraces built by the Cornwall Great United Mine in 1837 and one of them named Clanacombe is shown on the map and on the Census document Doc. 2.5. The second terrace is not on the map, but was known as Stowes Terrace. He also highlighted a cottage and enclosure shown on the map and stated that this feature also appeared on a map of Stowe's Mine dated 1837 and this could have been the cottage occupied by Henry James in 1841. JT's cottage was no more than 100 yards away to the north-west and on this point – the identity of JT's house – Dr. Peter Stanier was quite clear. He writes in the Trevithick Society magazine as follows,

In about 1849 John Trethewey had built a cottage and cleared a small parcel of land near his early quarry, but accommodation was increased in 1864, when the Freemans built a row of seven slate-roofed cottages for their workers. In addition the Freemans also undertook to enclose 4 hectares (about 10 acres) of moorland within stone walls ..... This land now forms part of Cheesewring Farm beside the quarry to the east. John Trethewey's house and the 1864 cottages were in place until after the Second World War, but were demolished by 1960.

I can vouch for the existence of the cottages after the Second World War. They figure clearly in my young memory, as the Cheesewring was an occasional destination in the period 1948-50 for my parents in our old ROVER 10HP. It was also popular with my Grandparents in their SWIFT 10HP and I recall meeting them there. Usually, I was left to my own devices and as a 10-year-old boy, that terrace of derelict cottages was tailor-made for exploration. Yes, they were empty, but they were not vandalised and destroyed. They were simply abandoned. It was easy to find the occasional household item and even a Victorian penny or two and I distinctly remember that the garden allotments still had some form to them. However, my mind is totally blank concerning a separate house. I would say, with some certainty, that there was no house there.

Forty years later – in 1993 – the Cornwall Archeological Unit arrived to assess and record the site as a part of our industrial heritage and this is that record, but I have re-aligned it to lay approximately in the same direction as the original plan (Fig. 2.10)

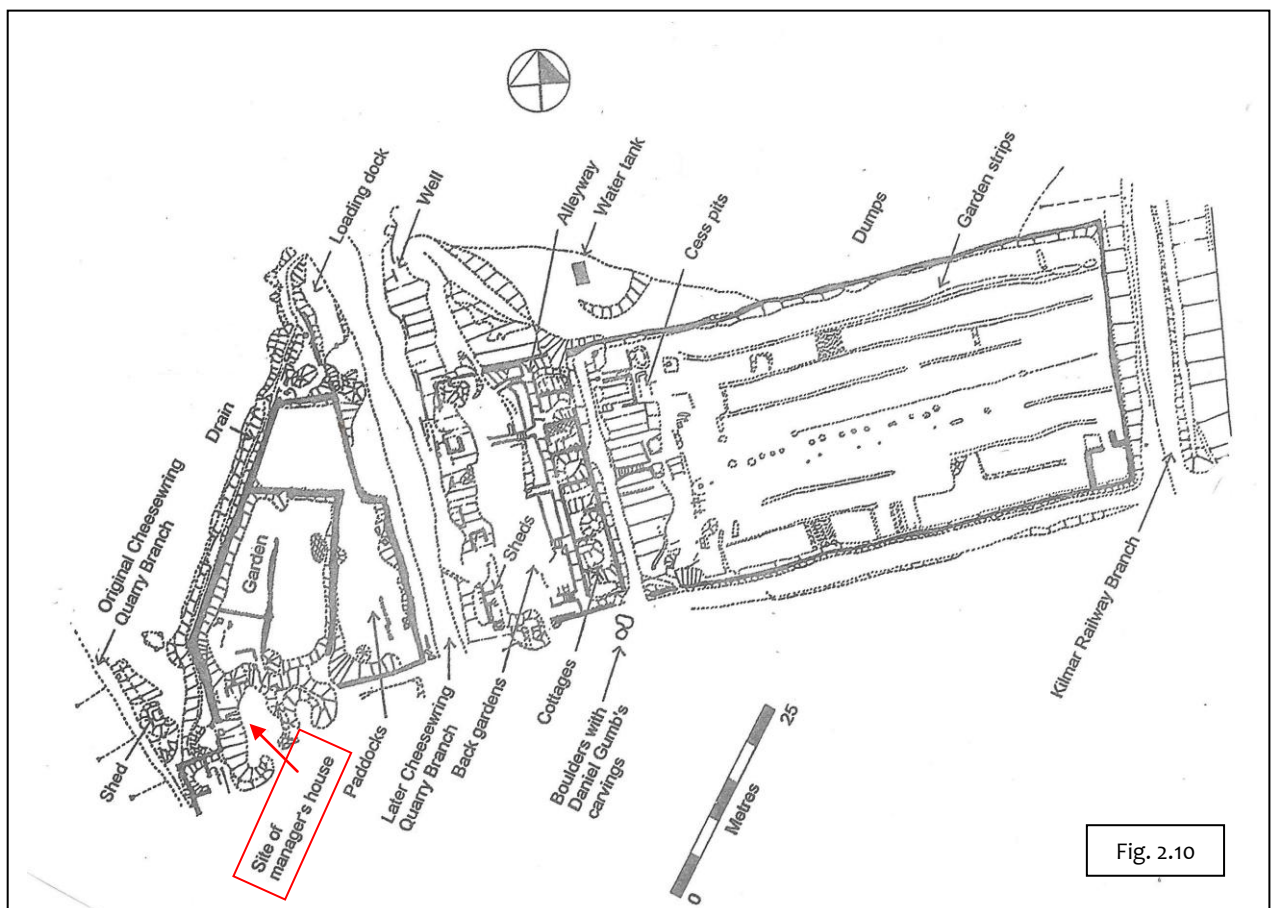


Fig. 2.10

The weakness in their meticulous and all embracing assessment by their own admission was that it relied heavily on previous academic texts and the best available text for the Cheese wring was that of Peter Stanier which had been published in the Trevithick Society Journals about eight years previously. Concerning the cottage they wrote,

In 1849 John Trethewey , who was then part owner of the quarry, and presumably its manager, built a cottage and cleared a small parcel of land near the quarry.....but the house and cottages, although occupied until after the war, became increasingly derelict and were demolished in the 1960s on the orders of the Duchy Land Steward.<sup>38</sup>

However there is another curious piece of information that now rests within the ‘Oral Record’ – the modern practise of finding people with a close or intimate knowledge of a situation and recording what they say about the subject from their own experience and recollection. When asked about the terrace and houses a witness named Jasper (surname) said,

*There was a lovely row of houses, but Stanier, see what ‘ee done. ‘Ee ‘ad a go and ‘ad it tore down. The buildings all tore down. ‘Ee said ‘ee weren’t goin’ to leave it there because, you know, people go in there an’ live in there and ‘ee wouldn’t be able to get them out again.....*

The obvious question that jumps from the page must concern the identity of Stanier. Is it the same man who wrote so knowledgeably and eloquently to me and the Trevithick Society? Was it Dr. Peter Stanier that ‘*ad it tore down*? If it was, then there must surely be no doubt of its origin.



This aerial view of 2009 bears direct comparison with the CAU’s diagram on the previous page and the various outlines of terrace cottages and garden together with JT’s paddock and garden with the railway and tramways threading through them, can be clearly seen.

<sup>38</sup> MINIONS An Archeological Survey by the Cornwall Archeology Unit 1993 Page 129

Throughout this investigation into JT's 'cottage' it has become clear that it survived into 'modern' times and as a consequence it is a disappointment that no photographic image of the property has ever surfaced. Photographs must exist, as workers were resident there with their families until the mid-1930s when cameras became cheap and popular and the ubiquitous family 'snap' was tossed into the sideboard drawer. Photographs of the interior of the quarry exist from the mid-1890s even if they are scarce and as the 'cottage' was so very close to the workings, I would be surprised if none of them had accidentally captured just a glimpse of a small part of a 'cottage.' The CAU during their investigation uncovered aerial photographs taken by Cambridge University in the 1950s and as a consequence they were able to add the following information.<sup>39</sup>

The manager's house seems to have been an impressive 2-storey house aligned across the slope with a lean-to extension to the north, chimneys at the centre and rear of the house and a well maintained paddock to the south with a series of small enclosed gardens to the east.

This is exactly in line with my own conclusion on an earlier page displaying the 1851 Census and its occupants. It must have had four sleeping rooms upstairs with a fireplace in each one and this was replicated on the ground floor with one of the rooms being a large or double kitchen and the lean-to was a scullery for the laundry. A centre chimney suggests that the roof line was pitched four ways, like a shallow pyramid and if the lean-to was to the north then the house had its back to the cold winds sweeping down from the East Moor and Altarnun.

So an image emerges that does not reflect that of a humble cottage and another 'oral witness statement' given by two men named Bleakman and Moyse, ends with the following sentence,

*Then you see, there was the big house, higher up from the cottages. It used to be the Captain's house. That was a lovely house.*

Mary Jane Bennetts gathered the empty pails together for her last chore of the day outside the house as the sun set over the open moor beyond Sibley Back. She had only just come inside after shutting the chickens into their hen house for the night and she had spent a little time fussing Mr. Trethewey's horse in the paddock, whilst her mother cleared the pots and pans from the evening meal and had used the last of the water. That water came from a well just a short distance from the house, but Mary Jane disliked having to go there in the dark. It was not a deep well, but the water always seemed to be just below the thin granite lid that was kept over the top of it to keep the water clean.

As she forced the first bucket beneath the surface, it occurred to her that it was Saturday night. She had forgotten that. All the men were home from the mine and would not be doing very much tomorrow. If it was a fine day there might be a walk across the moor. Sometimes the lads were so worn out they might stay in bed 'til dinner time. On a wet afternoon there might be a game or two to amuse the younger children Mark and Elizabeth, but Mary Jane kept a close eye on Ambrose Harris. Whatever he did, then Mary Jane did it too. After all they were engaged to be married.

That wedding was approaching fast. Mary and her mother would be going to the Parish Church tomorrow. The Banns were being read. Ambrose should come too. He was the groom. The wedding was set for Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April and tomorrow was the 'first time of asking' as the Vicar would solemnly declare after reading their names to the congregation. Mary Jane felt a faint shiver run down her back as she thought of it.

She had been working on her trousseau for what seemed to be months, but she daren't gather together too much. They would not be living in a cottage close by the Cheesewring. Ambrose had decided that life as a miner would be better in Australia and Mary Jane wanted to go with him. Her mother didn't like the idea and had said as much, but her father had surprisingly agreed. Mary Jane was still only 17 years-old, but if her father had said 'yes' then her mother could not change it. His word was the last word on the subject. Yet Jane Bennetts knew that Ambrose was a good lad. He had promised to look after their daughter.

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<sup>39</sup> CUCAP/HS 84, 85 & 87, QC 55

# Let's Get Back to Work

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As I work through this revision of my original work I find it hard to accept that more than 30 years have elapsed since those first sentences were put down on paper. Not only has the technology changed beyond recognition, but I have also changed (beyond recognition) in my perceptions, intuitions and experience of family history research.

My incredulity at finding that my ancestor JT was responsible for initiating a landmark that was very familiar to me, gradually gave way to an understanding and acceptance that there was nothing special about JT. In fact I can now detect an amateur streak, even a naiveté in his actions that was seen by other contemporary 'adventurers' as his eventual demise later proved.

I can remember being taken aback on finding that William Bennetts was a 'miner' whilst living in JT's house at Stowes, but why was I so shocked? Why did I convince myself that there must have been a mistake? There was no mistake. William Bennetts WAS a miner and I will demonstrate the proof of that in a moment. I had also wrongly, elevated the status of JT in my mind when all the evidence suggests that at worst he was a granite worker and at best a granite merchant, but even with that latter 'hat on' he was no match for Hosken and the Freeman Brothers.

I now believe that most of JT's meagre output, during his first ten years, was directed towards local customers and the ones that I now know were the L&C Railway and the Liskeard Town Council's paving scheme which was later followed by the building of the East Cornwall Bank. There may even have been stone sent down to Looe Harbour to facilitate the re-building of the quays in the late 1840s. So this begs the inevitable question concerning his workforce. He couldn't work alone, so how many people did he employ?

Before attempting to answer that question I need to return to William Bennetts – miner. He was baptised in Camborne on the 20<sup>th</sup> July 1811 to Christopher Bennetts and his wife Mary and he was still in Camborne on the 9<sup>th</sup> June 1833 when he married Jane Vincent. At that wedding he said that he was a MINER. When the 1841 Census<sup>40</sup> discovered William and Jane at Upton on the eastern slope of Sharp Tor and close to the Cheesewring, William was again a MINER.

Upton was a mile and a half east of the Cheesewring and its proximity to Samuel Secombe, the captain or agent for the Marke Valley Mine cannot be ignored and I would go as far as to suggest that JT and Samuel Secombe were working acquaintances and virtual neighbours once JT had completed his 'cottage.' It is therefore reasonable to suggest that William Bennetts also worked at the Marke Valley mine and may have been a shift captain demonstrating his sense of responsibility.

Between 1839 and 1849 it is not known where JT lodged during his visits to the moor, so a cottage of his own was a necessity, but he did not intend to live there permanently and neither could he afford to employ a resident 'captain' for his quarry, so the solution to his dilemma was to seek a tenant who could look after the house in his absence and as it was a large house, to allow him, in his turn, to take in lodgers, but on one condition – that there was always a room and a meal available for him when he was working at the quarry. It was a simple solution and provides a simple explanation for the situation encountered at Stowes in 1851.

Having eliminated William Bennetts from JT's imaginary workforce, my question then becomes more ethereal. Is it possible to determine the size of JT's workforce and who might have been a part of it and where better to look than the 1851 Census? During my lengthy correspondence with Dr. Peter Stanier in the mid-1980s it transpired that he had already done that, but as I re-read his letters, I feel that I would adopt a slightly different position. He assumed that anyone who stated 'mason' as his occupation worked at the quarry, but that was a rash and ill-considered prognosis for two reasons.

Firstly there were in every parish two or three masons needed to keep abreast of the repair, alteration and additions to cottages and farm buildings. Walls were frequently in need of repair or

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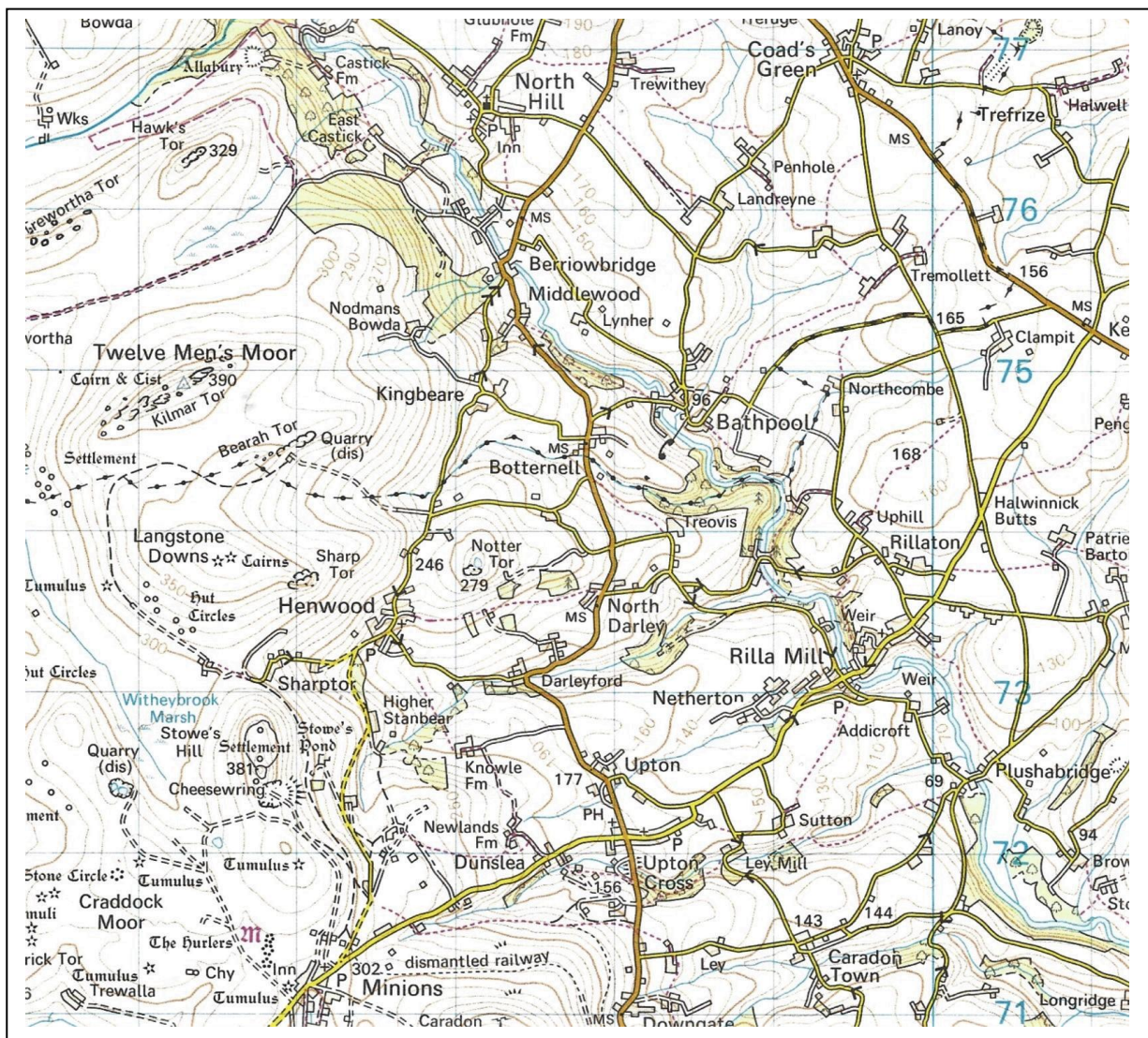
<sup>40</sup> 1841 Census HO 107/134/6 Folio 35 Page 10



renewal and the cemetery with its rows of headstones must not be forgotten, although not everyone could afford the services of a stonemason. Linkinhorne, like most parishes, had at least one important stone road bridge whose maintenance was crucial and we will visit at least two of them. Secondly, in the 1840s the parish had been invaded by several new mining enterprises and each mine needed any number of stout buildings to enable the various processes to function. This work would have attracted masons to the parish until the work ran out.

When looking closely at the Enumeration District that encapsulates the Cheesewring it occupied 59 pages and approached 1180 names with fewer masons among them than I would have expected. Masons would have been essential workers for JT as his customers would expect to see their stone dressed to shape and size. Even a humble kerb stone had to be flat on the top, front and at each end even if it was left rougher on the other two surfaces.

There were only two masons living close to Stoves (95)<sup>41</sup> and the one that was closest was lodging in Henwood (50). **William Parker** was 38 and had come from Hampshire and he was close to two other men who were undeniably granite workers, who we will meet in a moment. The second mason was **Thomas Hicks** aged 46 years-old who lived near Netherton where there were two farmers (91 & 92). Thomas lived next to one of them (93) and close to Stoves, but he shared his cottage with a widower with a name that tingles the spine - **Richard GUMB** Labourer. What more can I say? Could he be Daniel Gumb's descendant? Did he work for JT?



<sup>41</sup> The numbers in brackets show a position in the Census Return so that their proximity to one another can be seen.

Throughout the parish, all the individually named 'places' were no more than 2 to 5 cottages and half a mile west of Rillaton is Starabridge. This was an ancient granite clapper bridge around which was clustered a small group of cottages. In one of them were Henry and John Martin (9) a father and son born in the parish and working together as masons. These two were very likely to have had their own little business working for the local community.

Further down the River Lyhner was Plushabridge (117, 120 & 129) a much larger community with a shop and an inn and here we find the extended Mitchell Family of three working as masons with a fourth working as a blacksmith. The three masons were John aged 60, John junior aged 29 and James aged 26 together with William, the blacksmith, aged 36 and all of them worked where they had been born – in Linkinhorne. But again I would be reluctant to suggest that they found their employment at the Cheesewring nearly four miles away to the west.

Workers in this period were quite used to walking to and from their place of work as it was generally the only way to travel between two points. However, I do not believe that distance was totally ignored as we are all human and seek to avoid any unnecessary effort. After all, it was not a pleasurable stroll. The moorland lanes of the 1840s were not metalled, but rough, muddy tracks and it was nearly as unpleasant walking across moorland paths in wild weather, so the only compromise was to shorten the distance. A working day at that time was simply sunrise to sunset and walking home in the dark after labouring for 8 to 14 hours was no joke. As a consequence I believe that it was acceptable only to walk for an hour at most and that means 2½ miles at best. It is for this reason that I discount the Martins at Starabridge and the Mitchells at Plushabridge.

The stone or granite mason was the last person in the process and the only one to have had the benefit of an indentured apprenticeship coupled with years of experience, but he was dependent up the stone cutter who also relied upon years of experience, but was not considered to be a tradesman. **Henry James** was a granite cutter when he lived at Stowes in 1841, but his whereabouts in 1851 is not known despite a sweeping search for him.

After leaving Stowes and stopping at Samuel Secombe's house, the Enumerator visited the Barnacott Family at Mutton Corner (98). This was a group of five cottages somewhere near Minions and Charles Barnacott and his wife were paupers. Their two sons had chosen different occupations with the eldest going down the mine, but 19 year-old **James Barnacott** preferred the open moor to the risks and foul air below grass so he was content to be a 'granite worker.'

The Enumerator had already encountered two other 'granite workers' when he visited Higher Stanbear, a group of six cottages on the road from Henwood to Minions and in the lee of Sharp Tor. **Richard Crabb** (62) was 60 years old and born in St. Ive and **Richard Pooley** (59) was nearly half his age at 32 years old and both of them had a foot in each camp with lodgers in their homes who worked in the local mines. This may also suggest that being a 'granite worker' for JT was not particularly well paid.

Nevertheless, SIX workers have been identified who were very likely to be a part of JT's workforce if not the whole of it, but there is one trade missing – a blacksmith – to work the forge in the smith's shop that is known to have been there and may still be there. However, blacksmiths were another trade in high demand at the mines and the nearest blacksmith to the Cheesewring had a name with a ring of coincidence about it. It was **Gersham Crabb** (109) aged 32 who had been born in St. Ive and was living in Upton, a community of nine cottages. A neighbour of Gersham Crabb was William Wickett who at 43 was also a blacksmith, from Egloskerry. However, I suspect that only one of them worked for JT and that was Crabb. It is a bold statement to make, but the name Gersham, with variations, is prominent in St. Ive over several generations and although I have been unable to link young Gersham with the older Richard, my instinct tells me that they were related. Gersham learnt his trade with John Hill of Pool in North Hill, a neighbouring parish, where he was a journeyman in 1841.<sup>42</sup> Curiously there were two boys with two different spellings - Gersham/Gershon - baptised in St. Ive in 1817.

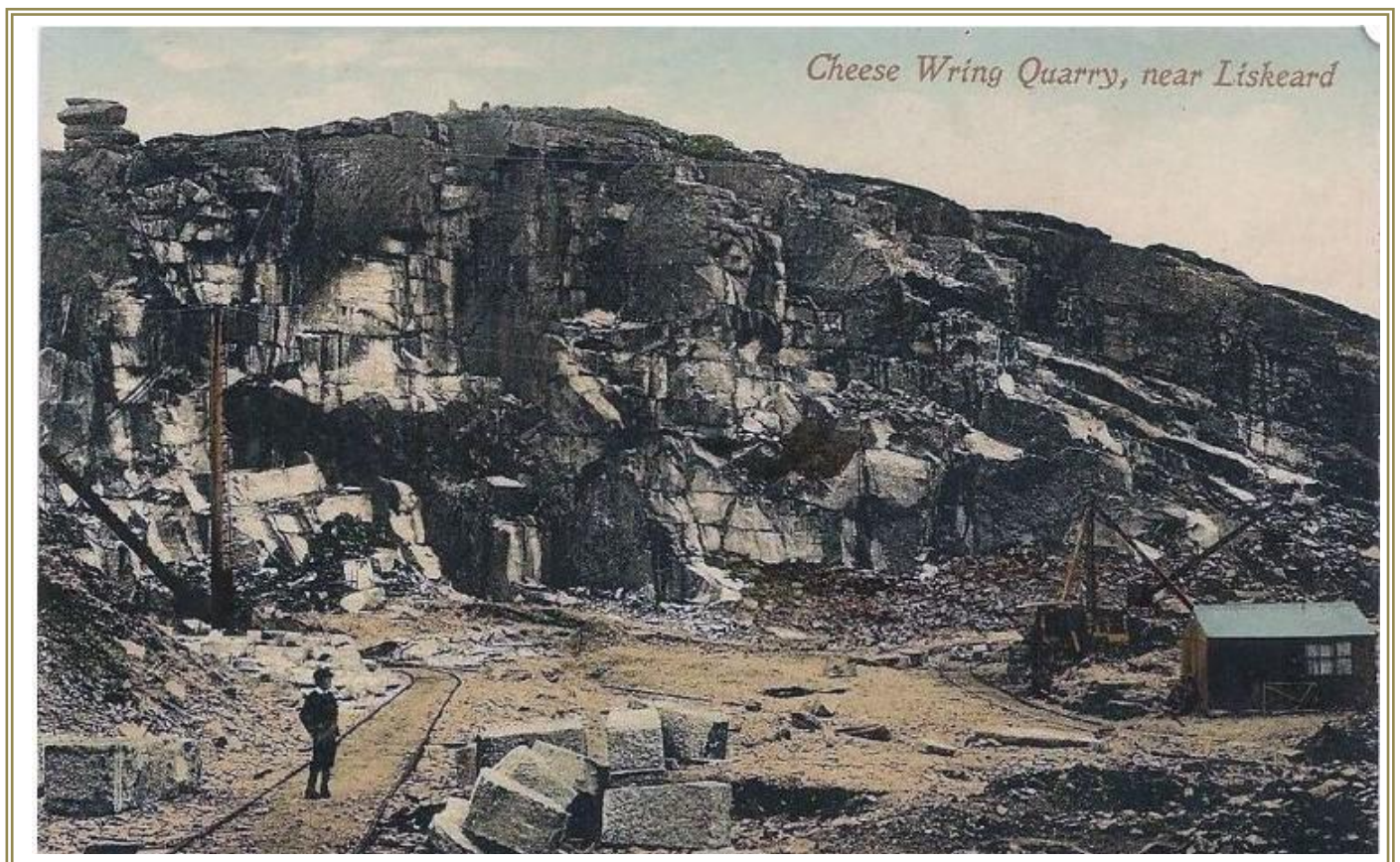
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<sup>42</sup> 1841Census HO 107/134/7 Folio 27 Page 15

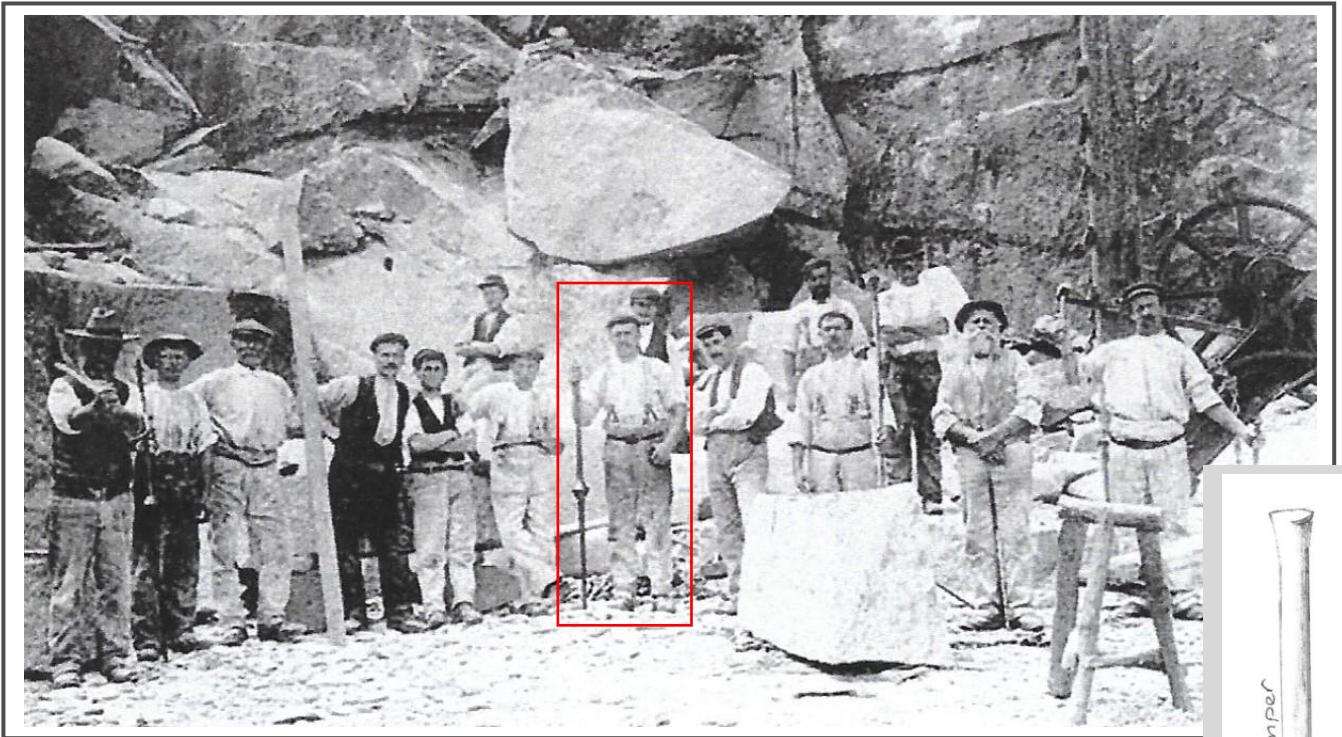
It was a similar situation with Richard Gumb. He had been baptised on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 1793 in Linkinhorne Parish Church to John Gumb and his wife Jennifred. However I was unable to link Richard directly back to Daniel Gumb, except to find that his eldest son was also called Richard and was baptised in 1746. When he married Martha Nicholson on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 1768, he said he was a mason, but I was only able to find a single daughter born to the couple, so much deeper research would be needed. As a consequence I can only suggest that the later Richard (1793) could be descended through Daniel's other two sons Daniel (1748) and William (1758). Nevertheless, no matter how uncertain his relationship would seem, I am sure that he would be drawn to follow his forebears and work on the moor and although he is described in the Census only as a labourer, JT NEEDED a labourer.

So, the imaginary workforce that I have assembled is based on both fact and intuition, yet it has a good chance of being near the truth. It would not have been a large workforce, but it needed to be viable. I believe that the EIGHT names I have highlighted represented the minimum number that JT would have needed to survive and that small number was reflected in his apparently meagre output criticised by so many onlookers 'who knew better.'

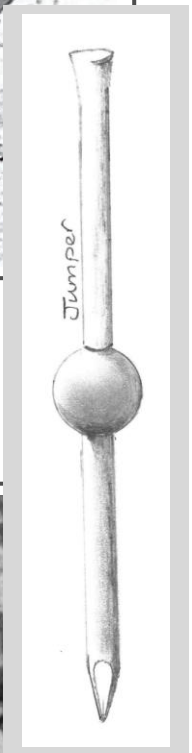
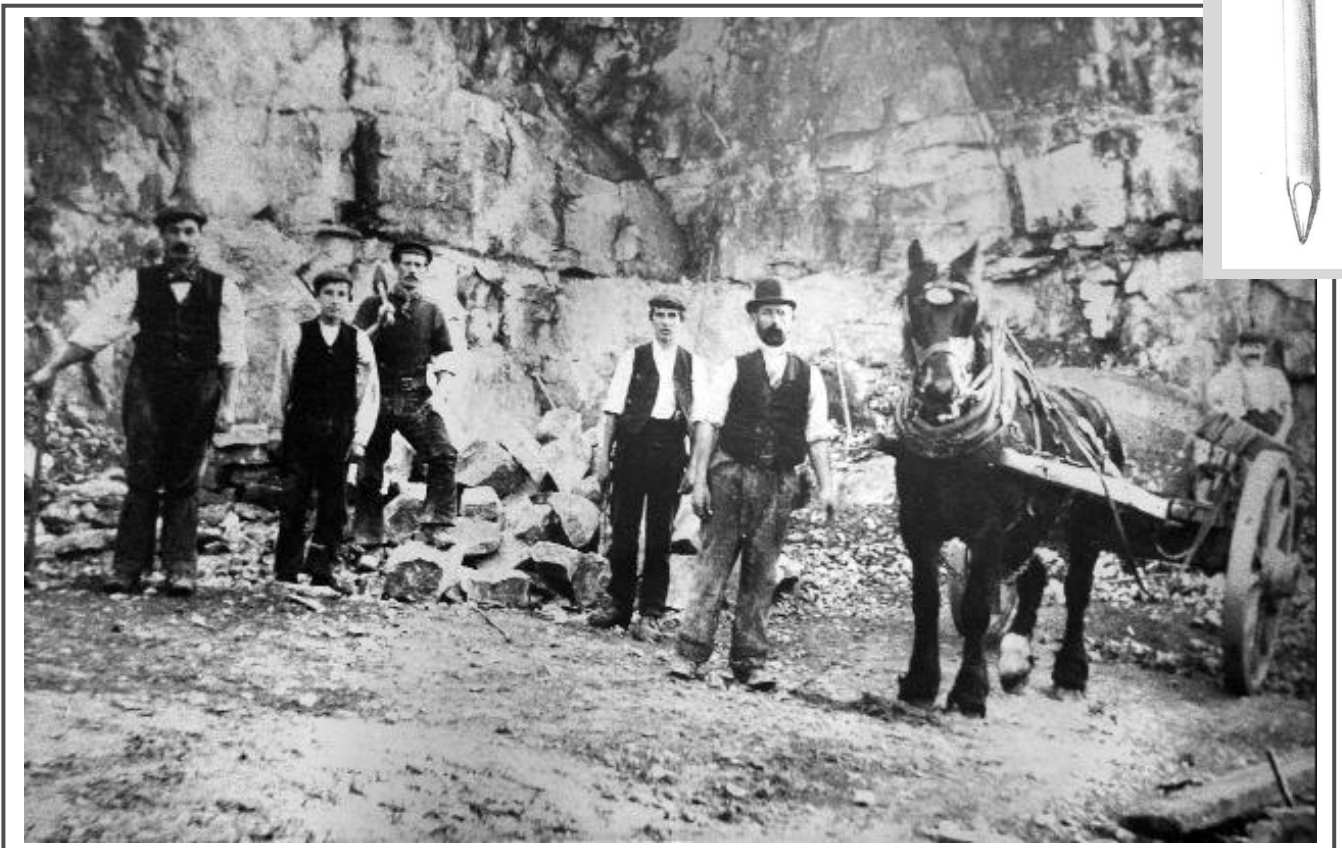
The excellent postcard below shows the aftermath of the work begun by JT and his tiny workforce with a cliff face exposed to reveal the fact that half of Stowes Hill had been removed by the late 1890s leaving the Cheesewring apparently teetering on the edge. The Freeman Brothers were excavating granite in thousands of tons by the late 1860s and it makes me reflect on the conditions listed on JT'S Lease of 1847 which forbid him from *working to within 40 yards of the Cheesewring Rock and included the small spot of ground enclosed by a low embankment and known as Gumb's House*. It then went further and stated that *no act shall be done which injures or defaces the Druidical remains or natural curiosities of the Cheesewring Hill*. Looking at the inevitable damage inflicted by the later extraction on an industrial scale, one wonders whether the Duchy was being reasonable or realistic with its constraints on JT. Somehow, I feel that JT and his workers respected those conditions especially with Richard Gumb watching for the ghosts of his ancestors.



The following images are not images of the Cheesewring workforce, but intended to give a flavour of their working conditions and I hope that they succeed in conveying that impression.



The worker at the centre of the picture above is holding the jumper, the essential tool used for boring the initial holes into which would be inserted the feathers that would eventually play their part in splitting the rock along the chosen line. The two men on the left have their sledges over their shoulders and they would strike the jumper alternately creating an impressive rhythm.



## Events and Discoveries

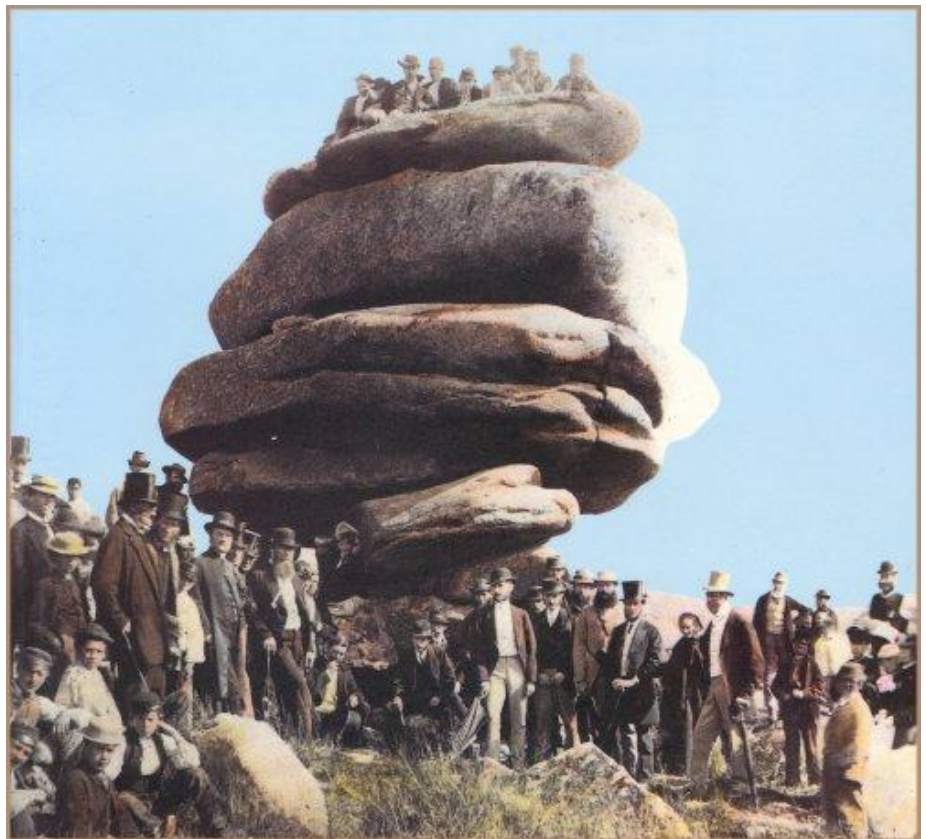
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It is June 1850 and it is an opportune moment to remind ourselves of the progress so far. JT has a lease for working Stowes Hill under the name of Trethewey, Clogg and Co. and he has two partners in William Clogg of West Looe and James Symons of East Looe and that partnership is now five years old. He also has a second lease for ten acres that has provided him with a garden and paddock to enhance the cottage he built sometime during or prior to 1849, but his tenant, William Bennetts, does not work for him. The size of his workforce remains conjecture and any contracts he might have had for the supply of granite are little known.

The newspapers for 1850 contained only two references to the Cheesewring and neither of them can be ignored for the information they contain and the first article was headed **Teetotal Festivities**. It describes an outing of the Liskeard Teetotal Society which took place on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 1850 and paints a glorious word picture of the day and the place as the teetotalers were determined to have a 'gay day,' underlining how much the meaning of the phrase has changed in 150 years. It continued,

Mustering above 250, they started from Moorswater at 9 a.m. in seven carriages belonging to the Liskeard & Caradon Railway Company drawn by 17 horses. They were divided into 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> classes with each carriage having suspended on its exterior, flags inscribed with appropriate mottoes. Numerous other parties from the neighbouring parishes also proceeded to the same destination on foot and in gigs and carts, so that there could not have been less than 2 – 3000 persons assembled there in the course of the day.

The weather was beautiful; the sun shone brightly and a pleasant breeze played constantly over the moors. The day was spent inspecting the curiosities for which the neighbourhood is celebrated. The South and West Caradon Mines, the Hurlers, Sharp Tor, Kilmar rocks, all engaged the attention of the visitors, besides viewing the Cheesewring, the special object of the journey. This pile of rocks, upwards of 30 feet in height, is composed of eight stones placed one above the other with the largest being uppermost. Another curiosity there is, or was, Daniel Gumb's house, which



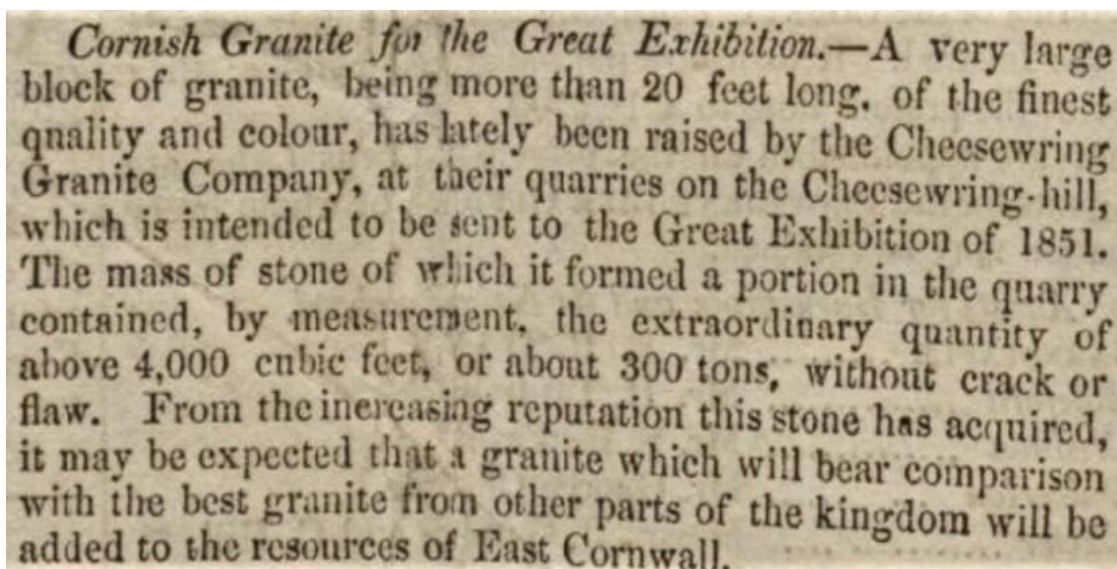
we were exceedingly pained to find has been nearly destroyed. The stone bearing the initials 'D.G. 1745' could not be found anywhere. We suppose it has been converted to ready cash by some granite-hearted speculator. Where there are so many masses of stone lying scattered everywhere around and a quarry at work adjoining, we think that such an old relic might well have been spared. The quarry is carried on by the Cheesewring Granite Company, which is now fully occupied in producing large blocks which are conveyed to Liskeard and used in building the new East Cornwall Bank.

The heat was so intense that many taking advantage of the demand for the ‘cup that cheers but does not inebriate’ realised a handsome sum in dispensing water at a penny a pint. A quantity of beer and other liquor was also disposed of, notwithstanding the emblem inscribed on one banner to – beware the cup of strong drink – and more than one individual was fuddled.

The day past off very pleasantly and after the departure of the railway train at 7 p.m. the immense concourse of people gradually dispersed.<sup>43</sup>

This light-hearted description embraces several facts that are extremely important to our story for three reasons. The first was the mention of Daniel Gumb’s house as its destruction has always been controversial and until now I had gained the impression that it had occurred in later decades when the quarrying and stone extraction had reached an industrial scale and it was thought that the restoration of the monument, if that is the right word for it, had taken place in the 1870s. Secondly, this is the first occurrence of the name being changed to the Cheesewring Granite Company, a change which was known to be impending and one which will be dealt with in detail a little later. Finally the article contains evidence for the date at which the East Cornwall Bank was built and corroboration for the source of the stone highlighted on an earlier page.

The included picture (coloured retrospectively) dates from the 1850s if not that exact year<sup>44</sup> and it shows clearly the holiday atmosphere created on the excursions so beloved of the Victorians. However, it is interesting to note that it took place on a Tuesday when JT’s workmen would have been inundated by a very large crowd. From the text in the article it was clear that a quarry had already emerged, as the search for granite of the right size and quality led JT ever deeper and it was this quest that prompted the next article in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* for the 27<sup>th</sup> December 1850. However this is the extract from the *North Devon Journal* of the 9<sup>th</sup> January 1851 which was almost identical.



*Cornish Granite for the Great Exhibition.*—A very large block of granite, being more than 20 feet long, of the finest quality and colour, has lately been raised by the Cheesewring Granite Company, at their quarries on the Cheesewring-hill, which is intended to be sent to the Great Exhibition of 1851. The mass of stone of which it formed a portion in the quarry contained, by measurement, the extraordinary quantity of above 4,000 cubic feet, or about 300 tons, without crack or flaw. From the increasing reputation this stone has acquired, it may be expected that a granite which will bear comparison with the best granite from other parts of the kingdom will be added to the resources of East Cornwall.

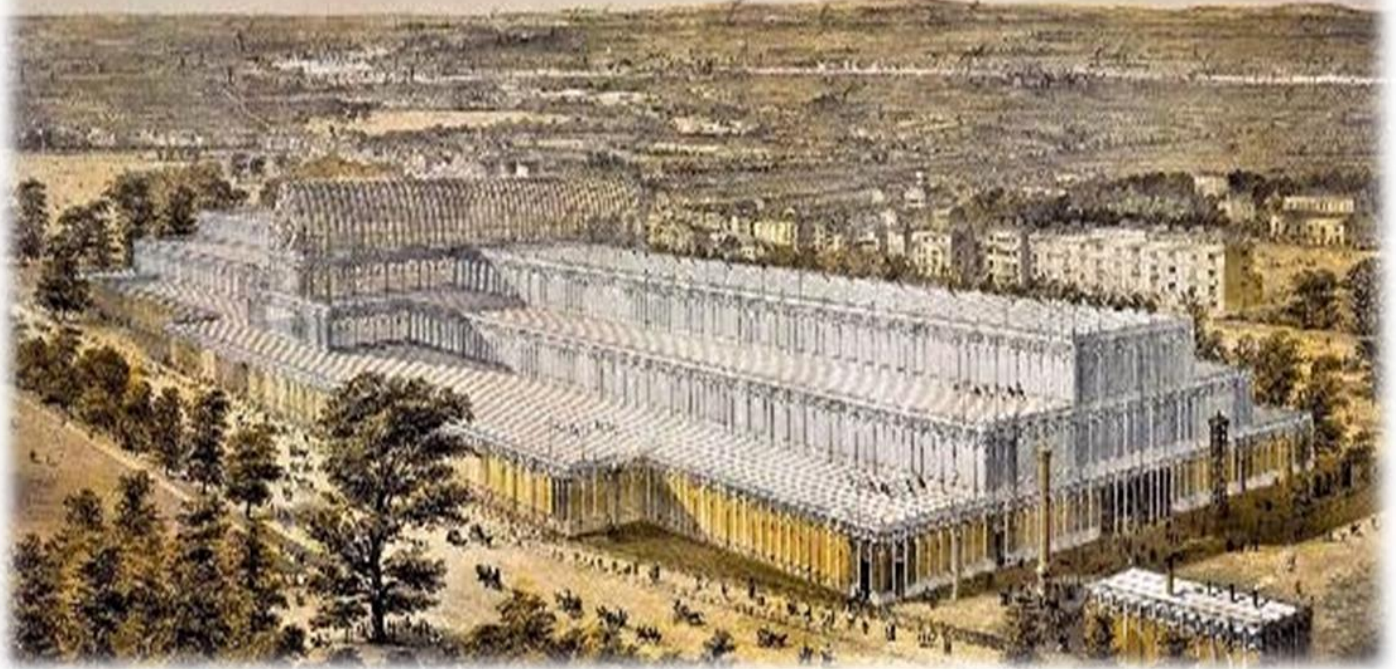
This stone was raised during December, but it was probably found some months before and it sets the scene for the next phase of the story of the Cheesewring. It is apparent that there has been a change in the Company’s composition and the new Cheesewring Granite Company needs to be investigated, but first we will explore the pinnacle of JT’s achievement with an exhibit at the **Great Exhibition of Industry of all Nations** – the Crystal Palace at Hyde Park in London.

A fictionalised version of the events at the quarry during 1850 that led to the exhibit at the Great Exhibition can be found entitled *Exhibit Five*.

<sup>43</sup> *Royal Cornwall Gazette* Friday 28 June 1850

<sup>44</sup> Cover Picture of *100 Years on Bodmin Moor* by E.V. Thompson 1984

# *The Great Exhibition*



## PART 3 - Hyde Park 1851

### *Conception & Preparation*

The Great Exhibition of the Industry of all Nations was largely inspired by the success of a series of annual industrial exhibitions begun by the Royal Society of Arts in 1847. These grew in popularity so quickly that the event in 1849 attracted a crowd of over 100,000 visitors and led to a decision to work towards a great National Exhibition in 1851 modelled on the successful French pattern.

Following a visit to the Paris Exhibition in 1849 and the discovery that the French also preferred a National theme, the question concerning the scope of the embryo exhibition had to be posed. After a little thought HRH Prince Albert said,

*"it MUST embrace foreign productions - yes, International CERTAINLY!"*

And so on the 29 June 1849, in Buckingham Palace, the stage was set for the very first International Exhibition the world had ever seen and John Trethewey was to be a part of it.

The first news of the intended Exhibition must have begun to reach the general public in the early weeks of 1850 as the organisers agreed on the basic principles and attempted to entice the business community into financially backing the enterprise as well as advertising for exhibitors to fill the vast halls with their work.

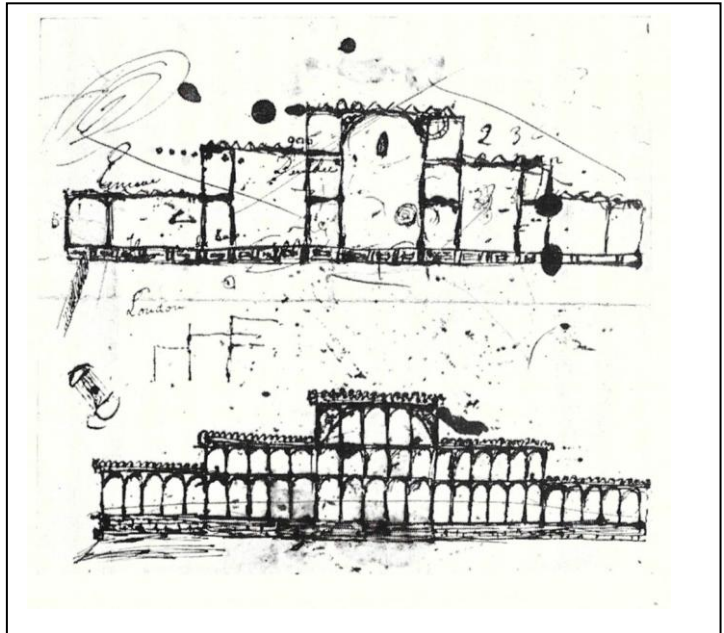
Prince Albert said of the Exhibition that it *"was to give a living picture of the point of development at which the whole of mankind had arrived and a new starting point from which all Nations will be able to direct their further exertions"*.

One of the first detailed tasks of the organisers was to decide the Categories of the Exhibition into which the exhibitors would be classified and the method of their selection. It was decided that the British exhibits were to be sifted and chosen by about 330 Local Committees, but the idea of monetary prizes was abandoned in favour of medals for the award winning exhibits. Two kinds of Medal were to be given - the larger 'Council Medal' and the smaller 'Prize Medal' which was awarded for a *"certain standard of excellence in production and workmanship"*

All applications for exhibitors had to be received by the last day of October 1850, but we are not sure exactly when the sifting process began. JT's entry would probably have been entered in Class XXVII for 'Manufactures in Mineral Substances used for building or decoration as in Marble, Slate, Porphyries, Cements etc.' but it could have just as easily have been Class I for 'Mining, Quarrying, Metallurgical Operations and Mineral Products.'

All the original 245 building designs submitted in competition had been rejected and in May 1850 there was no approved design for the Exhibition Hall except the 'official' design derived by the Committee in spite of the opening day being set for a year hence. Then, on the 7<sup>th</sup> June 1850 Joseph Paxton, who was concerned that the Committee's own design would be a failure, was taken by a friend to meet Henry Cole, the prime mover of almost everything. Paxton learned from him that the Committee would consider any proposal provided it was submitted complete with detailed drawings within two weeks.

Paxton had begun life as an undergardener, but he had taught himself to be an architect and was well known for his innovative designs for the Duke of Devonshire at Chatsworth for whom he latterly worked as his estate manager. His response to Henry Cole's reply was to accept the challenge and say that he would return with the drawings in nine days time.



He couldn't start work immediately, but on the 11<sup>th</sup> June, at a railway board meeting he doodled this sketch on his blotting paper. True to his word, after working night and day, his drawings were completed on the 20<sup>th</sup> June. On the morning train to London he travelled with Robert Stephenson, the great engineer and Committee member and he was probably the first man to see the full conception of the building that *Punch* eventually christened the CRYSTAL PALACE and it won from him a rare and enthusiastic praise.

But although they didn't reject it, neither were they enthusiastic. Instead they told Paxton that it would be accepted provided that it could be built cheaper than the 'official' design and gave Paxton a week to fully cost the building.

He immediately contacted a firm of building contractors called Fox & Henderson of Smethwick and the Chance Brothers of Birmingham, who were the only firm capable of producing the enormous quantity of glass the building would require. Their reputation had been built upon long experience in designing and making lanterns and lenses for lighthouses and there was no one to match their capability.

Paxton's idea, based upon the doodle above, visualised the building in module kit form and after a week of long, oil-lamp burning nights it was decided that there were 3300 iron columns, 2150 iron girders, 900,000 square feet of glass made into 293,655 individual panes and 205 miles of sash bars to fit them and that was just some of the items required. The final figure was £150,000, or less than one penny per cubic foot. However, Fox & Henderson offered to build the whole thing for £79,600 provided they could keep the material when the Exhibition was over.



The Committee was in turmoil, not sure whether this revolutionary design, reliant on so much glass would solve their problem or prove their undoing. The dithering and indecision was too much for Paxton and he went over their heads and approached the *Illustrated London News* to publish his design. This was a bold step and he was the first man to realise the possibilities of a newly established picture press. When it was seen on the 6<sup>th</sup> July, the public loved it and a week later, on the 15<sup>th</sup> July, the Committee sent a telegram to Paxton. *The plan has been approved by the Royal Commission.*

The Committee were bowed and submissive, but they insisted upon ONE alteration. It had occurred to them that as the building was an enormous glass house, there was no need to clear the jealously guarded elm trees that stood at the heart of the site that had caused so much derision and criticism in the press. That alteration was so striking that it gave the building its most distinctive feature.

## Construction

From that point onwards the project took off at breakneck speed. The construction company took possession of the 26 acre site in Hyde Park on the 30<sup>th</sup> July to begin preparing the foundations of a building which would cover no less than 19 of those acres, including the fully grown elm trees. Six weeks later they were employing 39 men and even as the foundations were being laid there erupted a storm of pessimism from even the professional classes, predicting the disaster that must inevitably ensue from the hand of an unqualified charlatan like Paxton. By the 26<sup>th</sup> September when the first column was raised, the workforce had risen to 400.

Every column and girder that arrived on the site was lifted from its wagon, weighed, fixed into a testing machine, proved, released and lifted clear in four minutes, followed soon afterwards by its painting. The entire construction process became, of itself, a well-oiled machine.

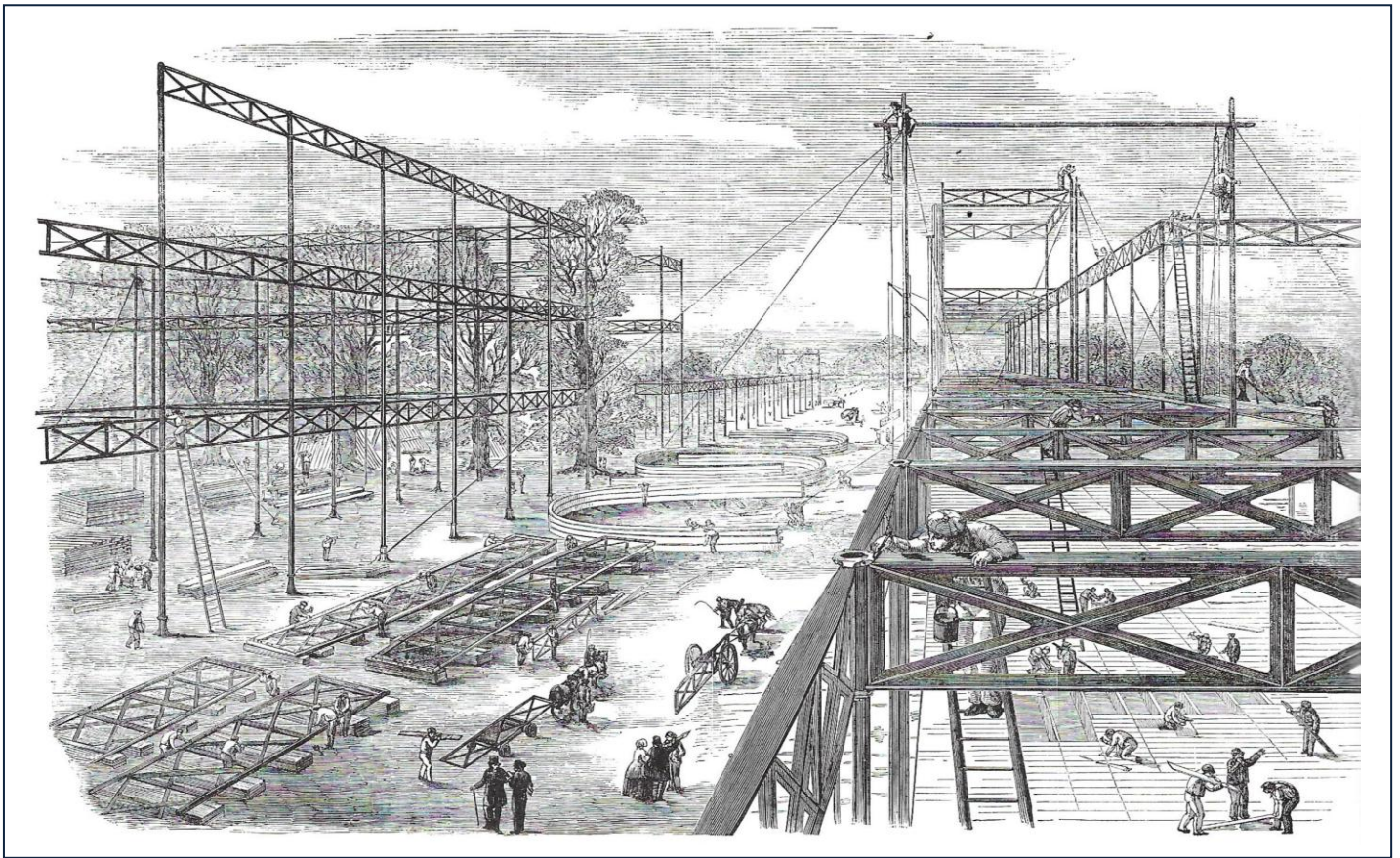
From the end of November until the following April there were never less than 2000 men on the site with a peak of 2260 being reached in December.

The manufacture of sheet glass was a process still relatively new to England having been introduced only in 1832 and it was achieved entirely by hand. When the skeleton of the transept was in place and complete the glazing of the roof was begun in December 1850 using a gang of 80 men working from ingenious, mechanical glazing wagons. They were putting in upwards of 18000 panes of glass each week and each pane measured 49 inches by 10 inches and the final tally was 293,655 panes.

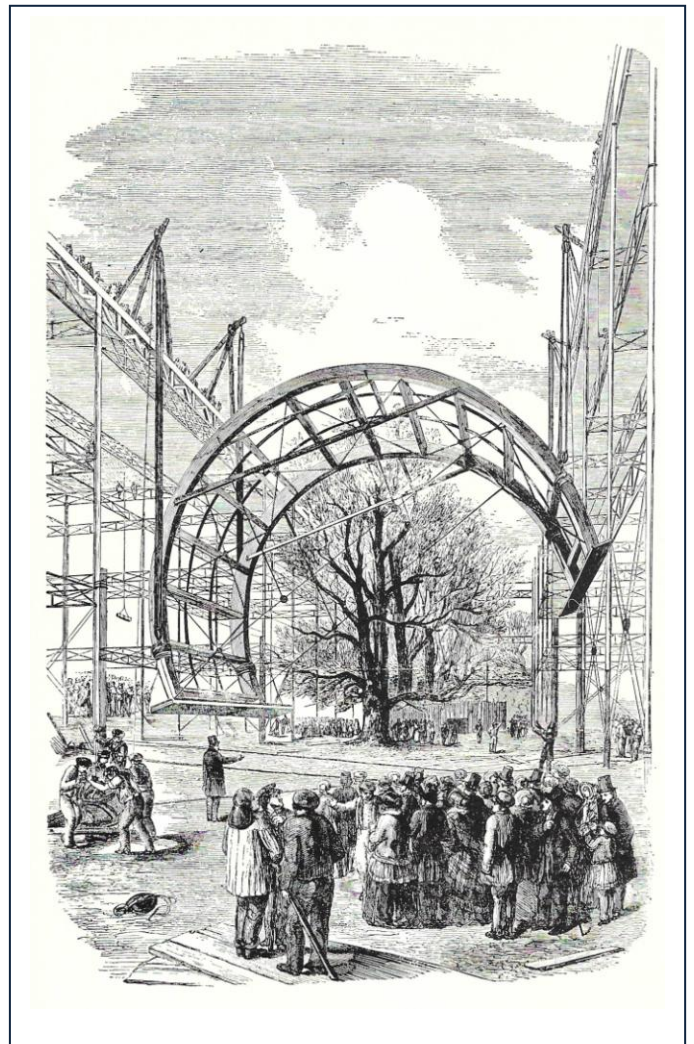
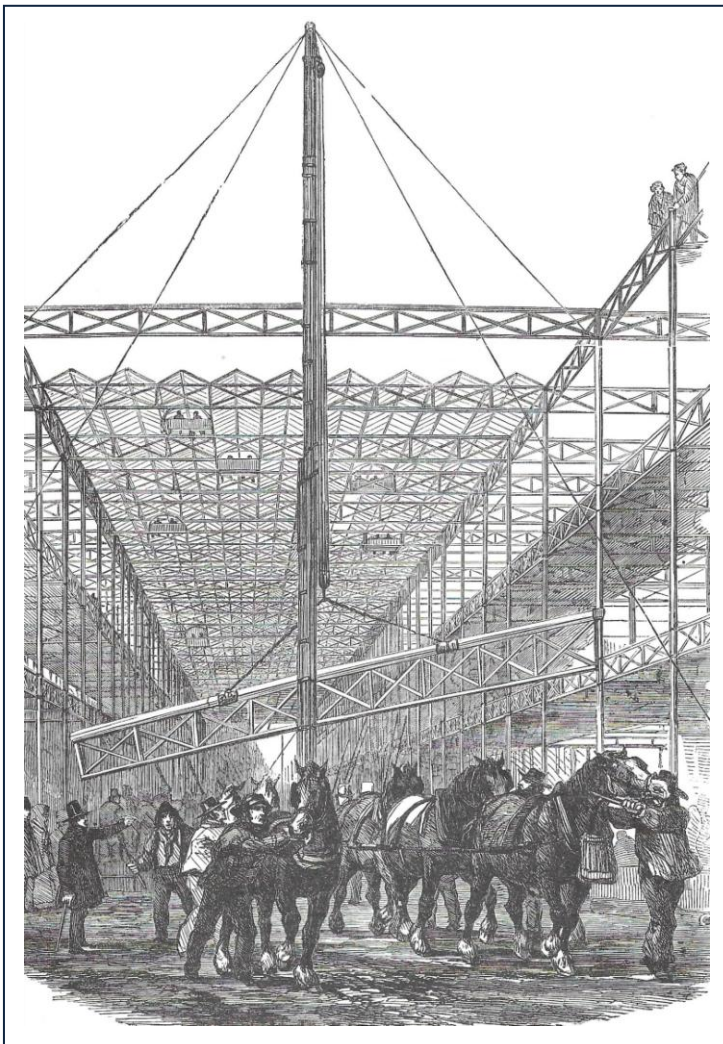
The galleries were sufficiently advanced by the 12<sup>th</sup> February to allow the reception of exhibits to begin and six days later Queen Victoria made one of her many visits to the site. She wrote in her diary:-

*"After breakfast we drove with the five children to look at the Crystal Palace..... it really now is one of the wonders of the world.....many of the exhibits have already arrived".*

It is not surprising that exhibits had already begun to arrive as there were literally thousands of them, many of them quite small, but if the Queen had had a look outside the west end on the 18<sup>th</sup> February then she would not have seen JT's granite column. It did not leave the Cheesewring for another two months and only reached its allocated position just days before the Official Opening.



*The base of the transept arch was wider than the transept so one side of it had to be 35 feet higher than the other as it was lifted.*



## Exhibit Five - From the Cheesewring to Hyde Park

From the moment that I discovered JT's involvement in the Great Exhibition with his own exhibit, it has been a journey of discovery and I have a distinct feeling that I have not uncovered all that is available. The most recent discovery shattered a premise that has been held for 30 years that the exhibit had been taken to London by sea. This original supposition was confirmed by my 'mentor' in quarrying practise - Dr. Peter Stanier - and he repeated this assertion to the Gloucestershire Society for Industrial Archeology as recently as the year 2000.

It was the obvious mode of transport and the very reason that the Cheesewring and the mines had been connected to East Looe via the railway and the canal, but there was an ever present risk as was sadly proved on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 1849. The inhabitants of Seaton, near Looe, had been kept awake by the noise of a south-easterly wind that had quite suddenly freshened into a gale, just as the Plymouth sloop *Caroline* was approaching Rame Head with a heavy cargo of Freeman's granite destined for the new works at Devonport Dockyard. Captain Atwell stood little chance of being able to bring his ship around the headland and her wreckage was found at dawn with the four bodies of her crew, strewn along the rocky shoreline of that seaside village.<sup>45</sup>

That could so easily happen to any unsuspecting ship with the precious column on board and JT must have been acutely aware of the risks encapsulated in incidents such as this, but was it really possible to send this heavy load another way? Imagine my astonishment when a recent random search located this small insertion in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* for Friday 18<sup>th</sup> April 1851.

**LISKEARD.— The Ionic column contributed by the Cheesewring Granite Company, to the Exhibition at the Crystal Palace, was forwarded in a large wooden box from this place on Tuesday last, by wagon to Plymouth, thence by railway. When about a mile from Liskeard, the wagon on which it was placed broke down, and another was obliged to be procured. The company very liberally invited the public to inspect the column previous to its being sent off.**

This paragraph of 76 words encapsulates snippets of information wrapped together with numerous questions that currently defy an answer. Chronologically speaking this is the first reference to JT's exhibit and its description can leave no doubt as to its exact nature. Of course JT's name is never linked directly with the exhibit as a contributor. That is assigned to his company and this is the earliest occurrence of this particular name – **The Cheesewring Granite Company**. It is a new name that suggests a change in circumstances which will be investigated later. It is also worth noting the use of the name Crystal Palace, as at that time, it was an unofficial nickname that later became the name of the district in south London to which the structure was moved in the following year. The large wooden box was 'forwarded from this place' meaning Liskeard on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> April 1851, but how did it arrive at Liskeard?

This column is known to have been 30 feet in length and as such would have weighed in the region of 20-25 tons.<sup>46</sup> Its' loading, unloading and further trans-shipment would require the availability of a significant crane and these were rare enough to occur only at specific sites. The Cheesewring Quarry would have acquired one during the preparation of the exhibit, but once the box was lifted onto the wagon it could not be lifted off without a similar facility. So, was it a road wagon or a railway wagon? I do not believe it was the latter. The *West Briton* newspaper published a description of the Liskeard & Caradon Railway on the 20<sup>th</sup> March 1846 and it included the

<sup>45</sup> *Royal Cornwall Gazette* 14 December 1849

<sup>46</sup> Max dimension based on the size of the pedestal is 4x4x30= 480 cu ft x 167 lbs/cu ft = 80160 lbs or 35.8 tons. This is reduced by the reduction in dimension of the circular column

suggestion that the railway had a truck – *on eight wheels of a very superior construction* – for carrying large pieces of granite.

In his book on the History of the L & C R, Michael Messenger embellishes this information with the opinion that it must have been a bogie wagon that would enable long pieces of stone to negotiate the sharp curves and to spread the weight over more axles, but it was also a gravity railway and a valuable exhibit such as this column would not have been subjected to a very real risk of derailment. Additionally, the nearest the railway came to Liskeard was Tremabie and it seems unlikely that the box could be transferred from the truck to a horse drawn cart at that place. As a consequence a road wagon was the only choice and its destination was PLYMOUTH.

Today, as drivers speed along the A38 dual-carriageway from Trerulefoot towards Liskeard I doubt whether they give a second thought to the gently undulating road that conducts them to their destination. I recall the days when it was not a fast and largely straight carriageway, but in truth it has not wandered far from its original path and it has left several glimpses of its old self in the occasional layby. It was not like that prior to 1826 when the Turnpike Act of that year determined the route that JT's wagon would have taken to Torpoint.

The road from Torpoint had to deviate at Anthony towards Craffhole due to the creeks of the River Lynher and even St. Germans was isolated, but all that changed after 1826 when large sections of new road were created and I quote from the Act. It said,

And whereas a New Line of Road from Tresulgan Lake to Trerule Foot, in the Parish of Saint Germans, by the said Act directed or authorised, to be made, has been commenced, and a considerable Part thereof has been made, and the making and completing of the whole thereof is now in progress : And whereas the Road comprised in the said Act, leading from Liskeard to Torpoint and Cremill Passage, is in some parts narrow, steep, circuitous, and incommodious, and it would be of much convenience and advantage to the public if certain new Pieces of Road were to be made on the line of the said last-mentioned road; (that is to say), a new Piece of Road diverging from Antony Green, through Brockhole, along Whacker Lake, Trethill, Kerslake, and Shevioc, to join the present road near Stump Cross; a new Piece of Road diverging from Polscove by the side of Scanner Lake, through Trewin and Scanner (*this name is probably perpetuated in the Sconner Inn at Polbathick*), and along the side of Polbathick Lake, to join the present road near Polbathick Lime Kilns; and a new Piece of Road from Polbathick up the Valley, through Treskelly, to join the present Road at Trerule Foot; and a new Piece of Road diverging at or from near Tresulgan Bridge up the valley, and through North Trevido, to join the present road near the Quarry on the Eastern Side of Cartuther.

It does not make for easy reading and it has to be followed in reverse, for JT's wagon must have broken down somewhere near Cartuther, the last place mentioned in the paragraph and it is near here that the newest road, the Liskeard By-pass, dives down the hill to Moorswater. Of course not all of the old names survive on modern OS maps, but the ones that can still be seen on OS 201 have been underlined.

When the replacement wagon arrived (and I doubt that it was the 1 Hour service we expect today), the first challenge was to shift the enormous weight of the box from one to the other without mishap and I have already pointed out how difficult this would have been. It must have taken some time and probably attracted a crowd of onlookers, but eventually it was ready to move only for it to confront the next set of obstacles – the toll gates.

The eighteen miles of road passed through four parishes, but Liskeard seemed to be the controlling agent when it came to tolls as they dispensed money to the other parishes for the upkeep of the road. The toll houses have long past into oblivion with one exception at Sheviock (right) and like the toll houses, the toll charges have not been located, but what is curious is that there were summer and winter charges that were linked to weight restrictions. That restriction was 80 hundredweight in winter (4 tons) as the roads were more vulnerable to damage caused by heavy carts during the winter months. It is almost certainly for that reason that JT had left it so late to begin his journey to Plymouth. It was a simple fact that he was not allowed to travel on the turnpike.



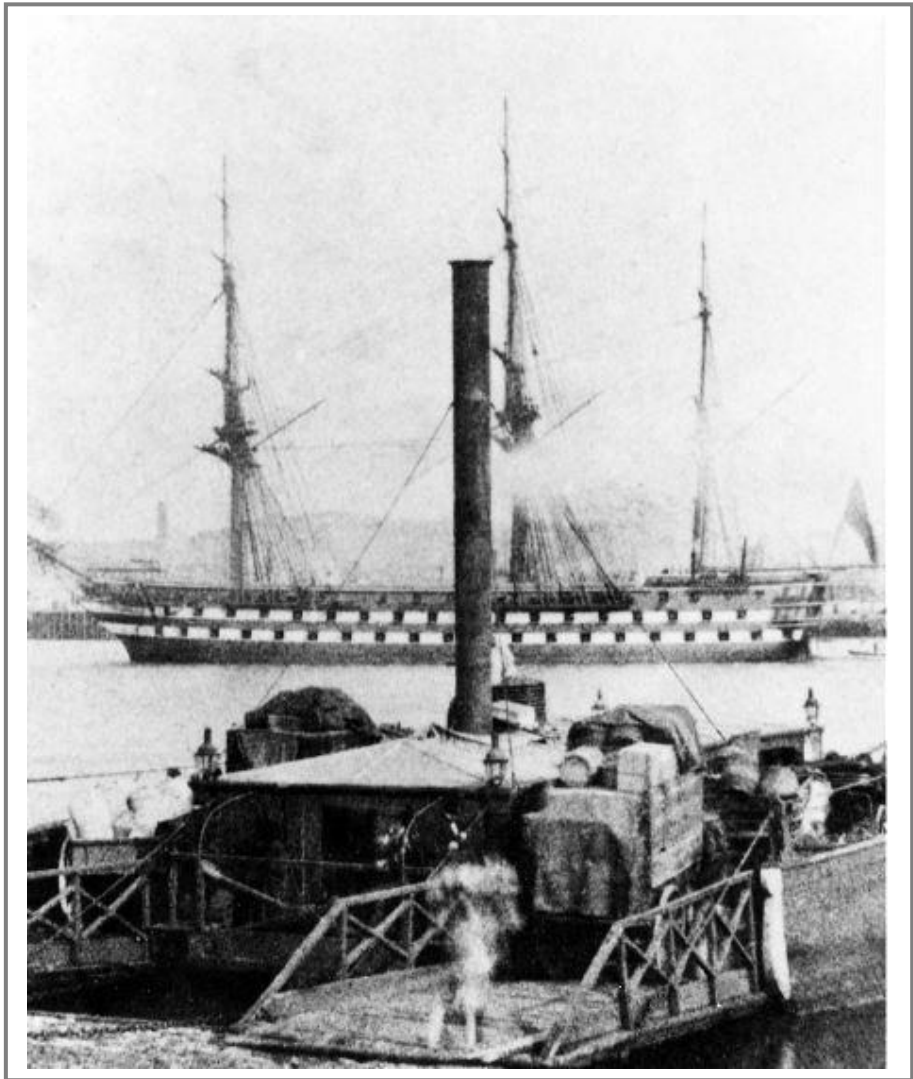
The next consideration was the horsepower that was required to make this journey and that led me into an unusual area of research including videos of gargantuan feats in the forests of South America where it was still just another working day hauling massive tree trunks along rough ground that could easily equate to JT's granite column. As a result I am certain that within the soft society in which we now live it is very easy to underestimate what was probably a normal daily activity. Of course, my opening few words in this paragraph relate to a horse, but it must not be forgotten that both mules and oxen were widely used to drag and carry heavy weights, but for this essay I will retain the concept of horsepower.

A medium sized draft horse was a common sight in the mid-1800s weighing about 1700 lbs and standing about 17 hands in height. It is well documented that one such horse could easily pull its own weight and if working with another as a team that are used to one another, they can achieve THREE TIMES their combined weight. The arithmetic of that statement arrives at a weight of 4.68 tons or 93 cwt. So it can be seen that it was no accident that the figure of 4 tons or 80 cwt had been set as the maximum weight on the turnpike in winter. The videos clearly showed that on every occasion when a wheeled cart was used someone had to walk beside a rear wheel with a very large wedge that was dropped in front or behind the wheel on any slope when the horses stopped. Common sense really, something we seem to have lost. But it was also very clear that their handlers did not expect the horses to work a heavy load up any incline in one continuous movement. The horses needed to stop for breath or re-adjust their footing as the harnesses needed to be in the right position to exert a direct pull.

How long the journey took is the next question that is difficult to answer. It is said that mules can pull their own weight continuously for 25 miles. Stage coach teams needed to be changed every 15 miles, hence the proliferation of coaching inns in every town. It was also dependent upon the quality of the road surface which must be assumed to have been reasonable as it was a turnpike. However, the stamina of the horses cannot be ignored and the numbers involved are also unknown, but it is reasonable to suggest that in April it might have been accomplished within one day's daylight and that would bring them to Torpoint and a night's rest for all concerned. It would have been an early start the next morning and I would also suggest – a high tide!

Anyone who has used the Torpoint Ferry regularly will appreciate that statement and recall that a good, high, Spring tide could almost eradicate any incline on the ferry slipway and make it almost level with the road, but were they able to use the ferry with such a large load? (*see right*),

The two Rendel Ferries, as they were known locally, were introduced in 1835 and built to the design of a marine engineer called J.M. Rendel. He had already installed his designs on the Higher Ferry at Dartmouth and Saltash Passage, but neither was as successful as those installed at Torpoint. They had been built locally by Hocking's of Stonehouse Pool and they were essentially two pontoons bridged by the



machinery deck and covered accommodation for pedestrians. In theory, a pontoon can support an almost limitless weight, depending on its surface area and the traffic deck was 55 feet long and 11 feet wide. There seems to have been no authorised weight restriction and the only evidence for loadings comes from Rendel himself, when he noted in 1843 that one ferry was carrying *three 4-horse carriages, one 2-horse carriage, seven saddle horses and 60 passengers* – a significant load.



The lower picture on the previous page shows the view from Torpoint towards Devonport with a hulk moored between the ferry and the Gunwharf (now known as Morice Yard), but what would have happened to JT's load once they had landed on the Devonport side? This was not particularly straightforward and because of that there may have been another solution that is not as crazy as it might seem and I will explain.

In April 1851 the construction of the Keyham Steam Yard was still 2½ years from completion. Both of JT's main competitors, Hosken and Freeman, were supplying large quantities of granite to the works. One of their ships could easily have been alongside the river wharf as JT crossed on the ferry and there would have been facilities to lift the stone from the holds of those ships. The huge No.3 Basin with its three dry docks had been fashioned from a large, shallow inlet of the river called Moon Cove and when once the perimeter of the basin had been defined there remained a cut which retained the name of Moon Cove and led to the Tamar Brewery. Even in my time this cut still existed and was occasionally used by small vessels including lighters, but there were other possibilities shown on this map from the 1860s.



Moon Cove cut is unnamed, but on the opposite side is Tamar Canal and further south is Ferry Canal. Between these latter two sits the Pottery Quay and together with the cement works, there were often vessels berthed at the jetties with some form of lifting arrangement available. The line of New Passage Hill has breached the fortified lines opposite William Street, but was probably too steep for JT to consider even if it existed in 1851.

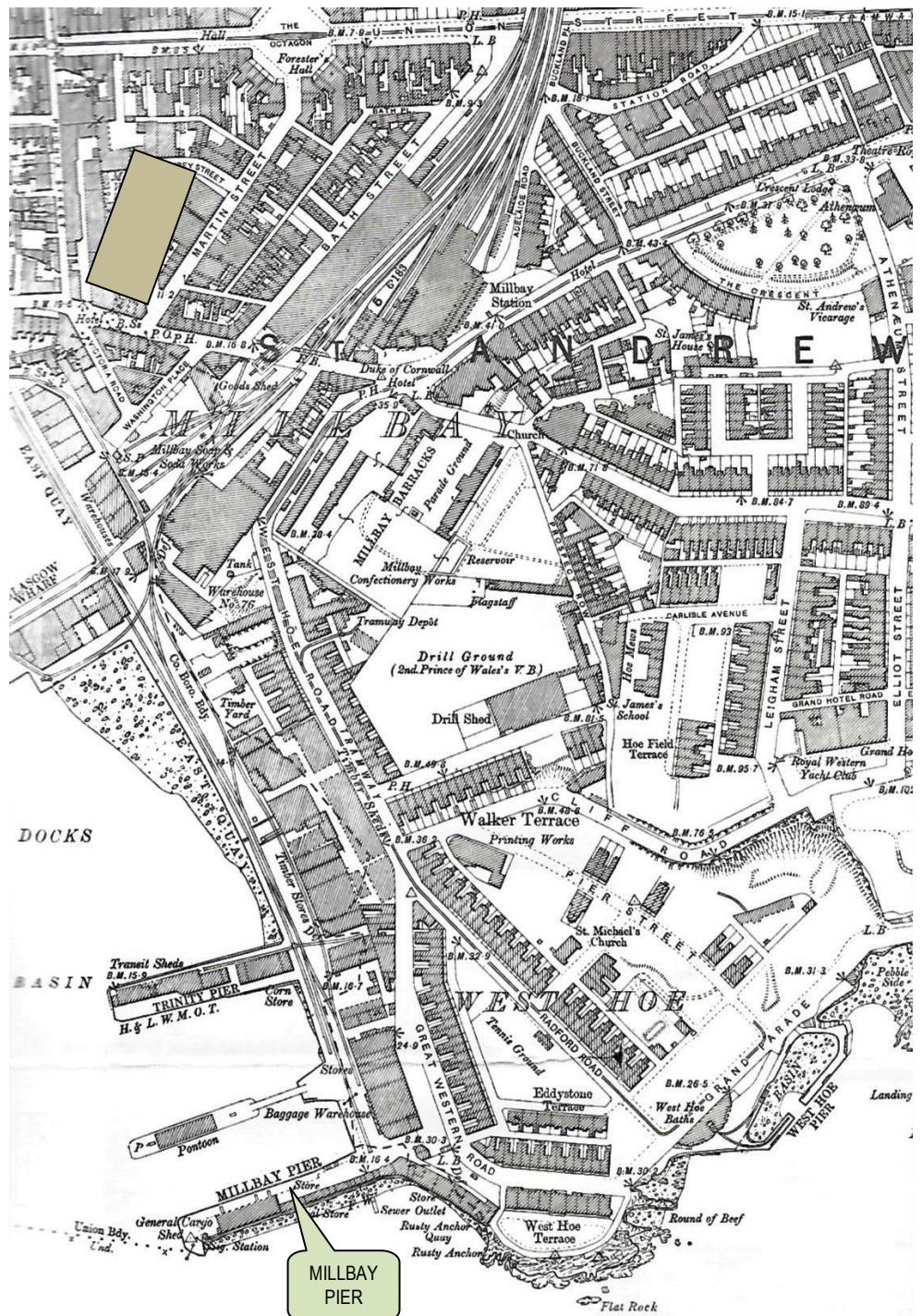
As a consequence, my theory begins with JT's wagon accessing one of the jetties beside the ferry slip. It was level and only a short distance from the ferry, where the great box was transferred from the wagon to a lighter. The crossing had just been made on a high tide, so this was the

easiest solution, as the alternative road journey would have been a trial. The only way out from the ferry was to turn left into William Street and then right into Navy Row (now called Albert Road). This was a seriously steep hill of considerable length until the Tavistock Road was reached, with no direct route to Millbay Station goods yard that was reasonably level. A circuitous route backtracking to Fore Street, Devonport, Cumberland Street, Stonehouse Bridge with its toll house and Union Street was the only way, but it was a long way with a lot of local traffic.

A journey by water offered an efficient and time saving solution, but what would have happened at the other end and where was that? The answer in part was Millbay Docks, but my sceptical reader will need that explained.

When the steam tug that had been hired for the day brought its charge around Western Kings and steered for the entrance into Millbay Docks it was not the dock with which I was familiar in the 1970s. It was not even as well developed as it is shown in 1893, so I will have to rely upon a word description. The original Union Dock appeared on a map of the 1830s owned by J Meadows Rendel (who designed the ferries) and two others named Derry. It was located in the vicinity of the green box.

In 1840 an Act of Parliament was passed allowing Thomas Gill to build a pier 500 feet long at the entrance to Millbay, which he completed in 1844 and was always known as Millbay Pier. Gill was the owner of the land at West Hoe and was quarrying away the limestone cliff there much of which was fed into his nearby lime kilns and he had already built quays near the new pier for the export of the lime.





The *S.S. Great Britain* used the pier on her maiden voyage in 1845, to the delight of the 15000 visitors to the ship and shortly afterwards the Great Western Docks Company was formed during 1846 and I.K. Brunel employed to design a new and comprehensive dock installation. Meanwhile, Gill had excavated a small dock in his quarry and built a short canal which entered the Millbay about 130 yards north of his new pier. So when the South Devon Railway reached Plymouth in 1848 and opened its terminus at Millbay in the following year, it didn't take them long to build an extension into the docks that bridged Gill's canal and terminated at the Millbay Pier. This was in place only months before JT's journey and the focus of my discussion.

So the newspaper cutting that began this section and revealed that JT was on his way to the railway at Plymouth when his wagon 'broke down,' has provided a description of a possible journey that is set in a contemporary scene. It is pure conjecture, but many of the component parts were available to achieve it. My convoluted description clouds the fact that it spirited away the difficulties that JT would have faced in getting his precious, but exceptional load through Devonport and East Stonehouse to the South Devon Railway at Millbay.<sup>47</sup>

It might also be said that there was another possible route that might have been even easier and would have avoided the need to use the Torpoint Ferry. I refer to St. German's Quay, a short distance from Polbathic. Here JT might have found one of the Tamar's ubiquitous sailing barges and there might have been a facility there to lift his exceptional load. The truth of the situation is unlikely ever to be known, but the assumption must be made that he reached the South Devon Railway's goods yard behind the new Millbay Station and he was then in the hands of railwaymen expert at moving whatever object that had been put into their charge.

The railway was still a novelty and a source of amazement and incredulity among JT's generation and Queen Victoria had only made her first journey by train in 1842, but the railway had not yet joined Cornwall with Plymouth and that was the reason for JT's epic journey. At Millbay the great box with its label destined for the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park would be taken by three railway companies – the **South Devon Railway** to Exeter, the **Bristol & Exeter Railway** to Bristol and then the **Great Western Railway** to Paddington, but this was not the Paddington we know today. In 1851 it was a temporary passenger station, but it already had an extensive goods shed and yard at the site. When Brunel was finally asked to design a permanent terminus for the GWR Company he had been greatly influenced by his time on the Committee of the Great Exhibition and by some of the innovative architects that he had met. As a consequence his glorious train shed, especially its roof, is clearly influenced by Paxton's design for his crystal palace, the ultimate destination of JT's box.



At the time of writing little has been published relating to the early broad gauge freight operations of the GWR beyond the knowledge that there were two classes of goods locomotive that had been built at Swindon in the period February 1846 to July 1848. The first was a class of 12 locomotives known as the Premier or Fury Class and the second was a class of 6 locomotives called the Pyracmon or Caesar Class which were a slightly more powerful version of the first dozen. BURY from the second class

rests in a goods yard after bringing JT's ionic column to London for its exhibition. I wonder

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<sup>47</sup> The explanation of the Torpoint Ferry comes courtesy of the Torpoint Archive and Dr. Kenneth Trethewey together with correspondence with Alan Kittridge and his book *The Rendel Ferries*. For the detail concerning Millbay Docks I have used the book *Millbay Docks* by Martin Langley and Edwina Small pages 2-6 who also wrote the very useful book *Estuary and River Ferries of the SW of England* pages 76-77, Torpoint Ferry.

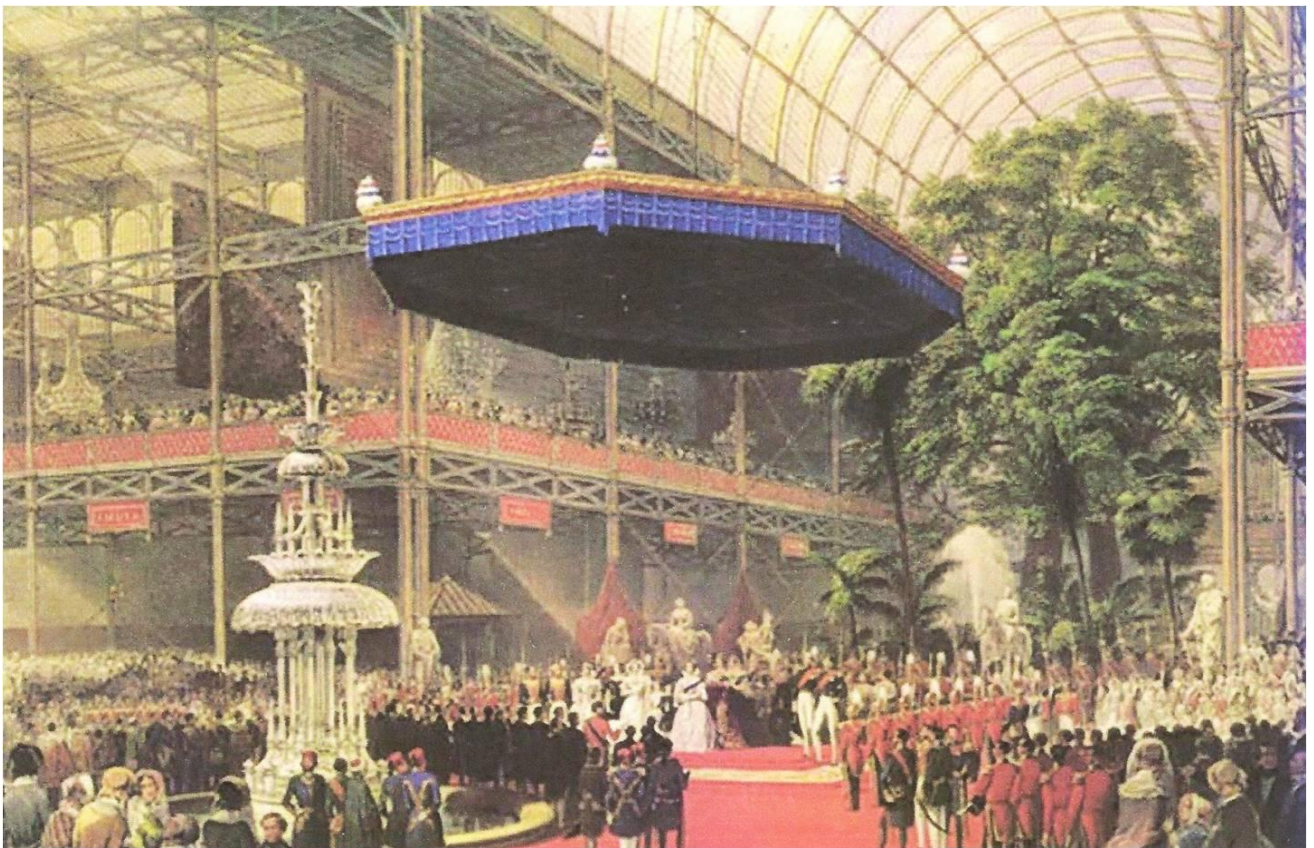
# The Whole World comes to Hyde Park

On the day that JT's waggon broke down just outside Liskeard, Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> April, an immaculate carriage drove out of the gates of a splendid residence in London, turned up Constitution Hill and entered Hyde Park. It was shortly after 5 p.m. and Queen Victoria was on her way, with two of her girls, to see the progress of the Crystal Palace. Prince Albert was already there attending a meeting of the Commissioners several of whom joined the royal couple for a 'walkabout.' That evening the Queen wrote in her diary that *'we walked for 2 hours and must have walked quite 6 miles. The building has got on immensely.'*

Two weeks later the Queen's diary records that she was there again and walked *'the whole round of the galleries'* with her girls and the Prince and Princess of Prussia and their two children, but she added that *'my poor Albert is terribly fagged'* with so much still to be done for the opening ceremony in two days time.

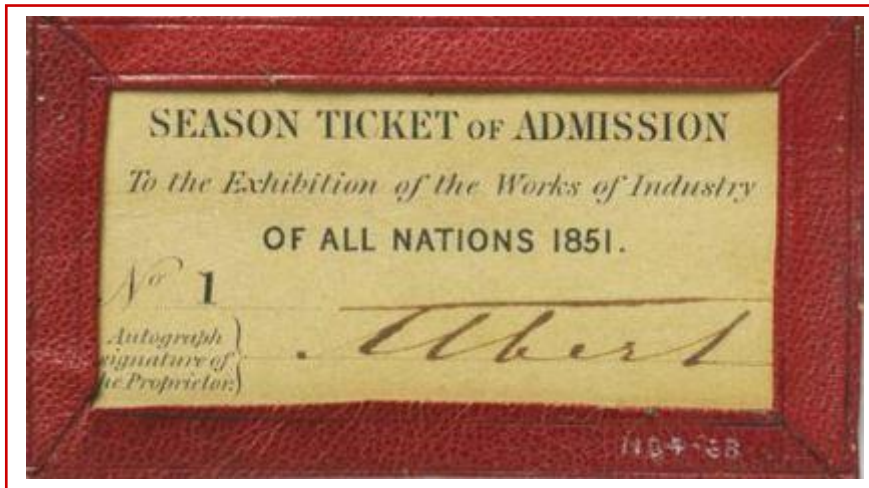
Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May 1851 was a day to remember. The procession and opening ceremony was a lavish affair. Queen Victoria wrote;

*The park presented a wonderful spectacle with crowds streaming through it quite like the Coronation, when at half past eleven the whole procession of nine state carriages was set in motion. I never saw Hyde Park look as it did, being filled with crowds as far as the eye could see. A little rain fell just as we started, but before we reached the Crystal Palace, the sun shone and gleamed on the gigantic edifice upon which the flags of every nation were flying.*



When the Queen held a council with her Prime Minister five days later, he reported that there had not been a single accident, nor recorded crime during the whole day in spite of an estimated 500 to 700, 000 people being present in and around Hyde Park on that memorable day.

# A Glimpse of the Exhibition



This unique ticket now rests in the archive of the Victoria & Albert Museum built on the 87 acres of land that was bought in South Kensington with some of the profit enjoyed by the Great Exhibition. Had the ticket been bought by an eager admirer it would have cost Three Guineas for a

gentleman and Two Guineas for a lady, but it entitled the holder to visit on every one of the 141 days set aside for the Exhibition. However, the organisers made strenuous efforts to ensure that the Exhibition was accessible to everyone with a very curious, yet variable hierarchy of charges.

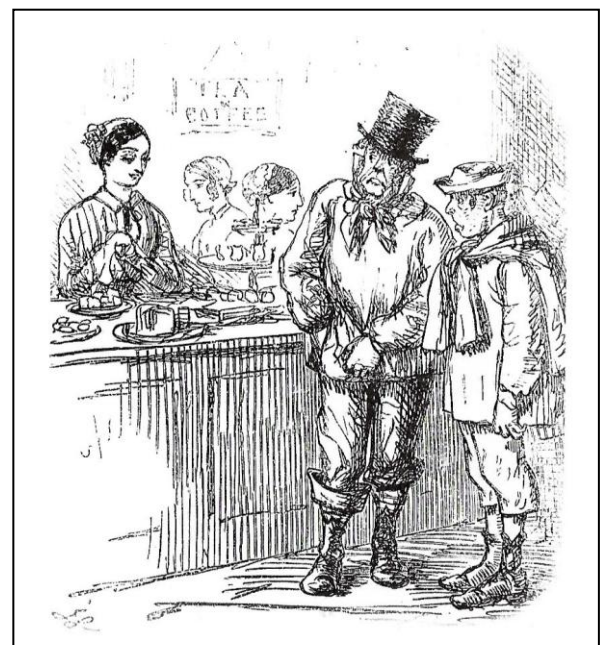
On the two days following the opening ceremony – Friday and Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> May – entry cost £1. The Exhibition was not open on any Sunday, so from Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May to Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May, it was 5 shillings. Beginning on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> May the charges settled into this following pattern; Monday to Thursday, 1 shilling; Fridays it was 2/6d and on Saturdays it was again 5 shillings, but from the 9<sup>th</sup> August this charge was halved to 2/6d.

Exhibitors were not given any special, privileged access and there were no corporate tents, but on the last two days of the Exhibition – Monday and Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> October – only the Exhibitors and their families were allowed in and the entry was FREE. This was followed on the Wednesday by a very brief Closing Ceremony and the final statistics could then be analysed.

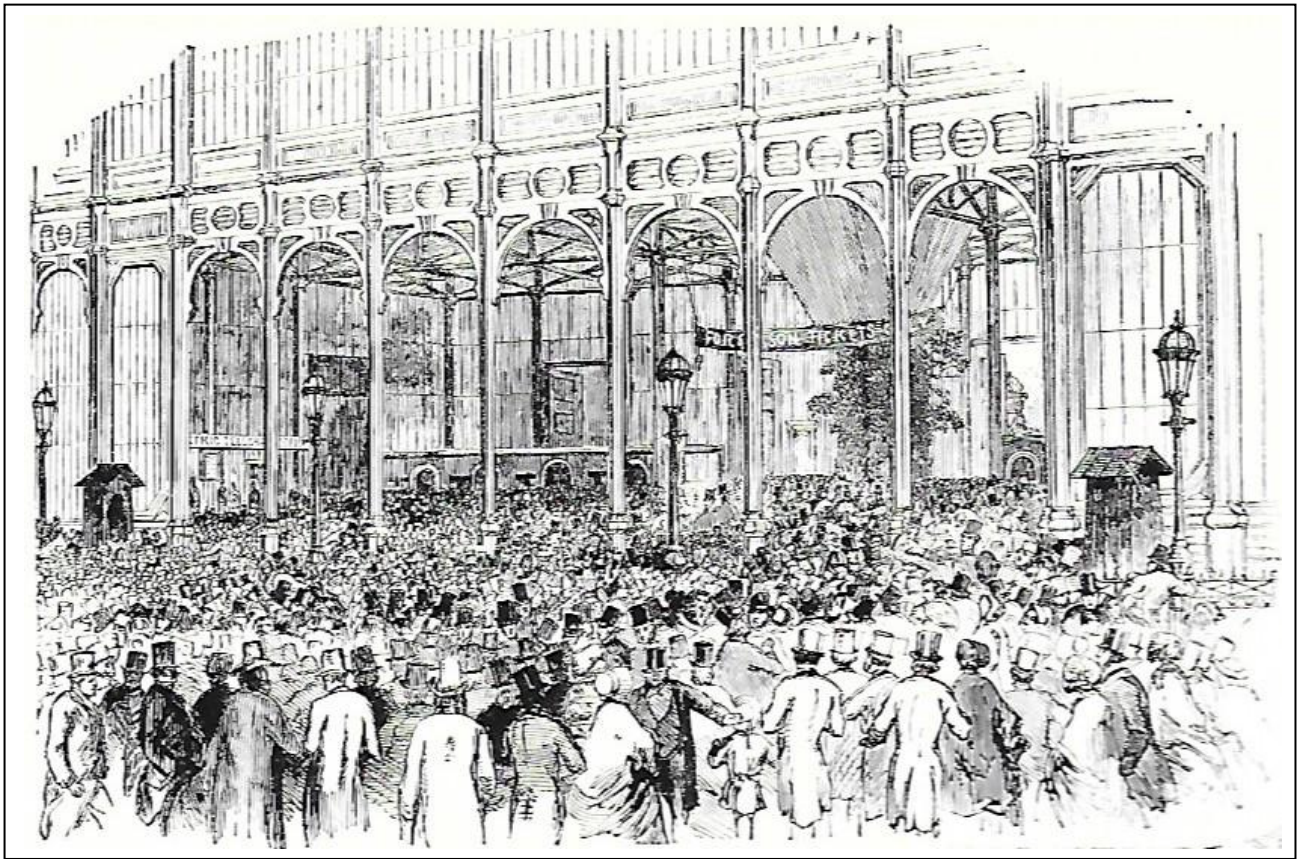
There had been just over 6 million visitors. More than  $\frac{3}{4}$  million visits had been made by the 25000 season ticket holders. Queen Victoria came 34 times (12 visits during May) and just over 1000 people paid £1 for entry on the two May days following the opening, so they must have had the huge galleries of the Crystal Palace almost to themselves. Nearly 4½ million people took advantage of the 80 days that cost 1 shilling. The average daily attendance was 42,831, but the largest crowds descended on the Palace during its last week when more than 93000 people were in the building at the same time and 109000 visited it during that one day – Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> October.

It was said by many observers that London had never been as crowded as it had been throughout that summer and autumn of 1851. The total receipts for the Exhibition exceeded £522,000 and left a generous profit of more than £186,000, but what was it really like inside? What did the visitors think of it? Did John Trethewey pay a shilling at the door or did he visit it with his family when the entry was free?

Every facet of the Great Exhibition was illustrated in the medium of the day – an etching – and I have included the scene from a refreshment room as an example of the vast number of cartoons and comic images that the Exhibition attracted to itself. The scene outside the Main

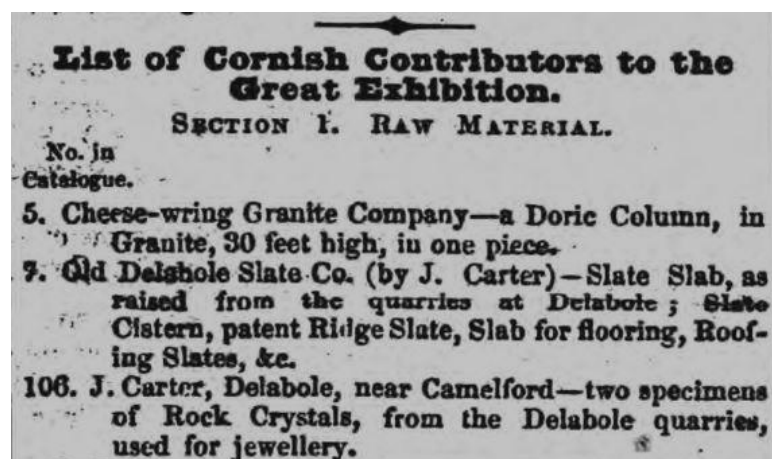


Entrance of the South Transept on one of the 'One Shilling Days,' is a busy, yet orderly scene which by some contemporary accounts was very far from the reality of the day and once inside the visitor had to contend with tens of thousands of other visitors all competing for space and refreshment. Over one million bottles of mineral water were sold by Schweppes from their four refreshment rooms accompanied by nearly two million buns of the plain or Bath variety.



Of course, every visitor hoped to find a written guide to the Exhibition when he bought his ticket. *The Popular Guide* cost 2 pennies, but he could have a catalogue in a single volume for a shilling. This was not the full and official catalogue which ran to four volumes and was illustrated by a new innovation – a photograph, but it would have been of little value or interest to the casual visitor even if he could have afforded to buy it. It is of interest to me as that is where we find the entry of the Cheesewring Granite Company and the following extracted photocopies were supplied to me by the Victoria & Albert Museum in answer to my enquiry of 1991.

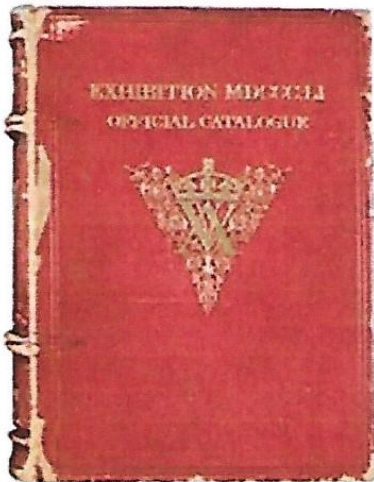
However, the excitement of seeing the first tangible evidence of John Trethewey's work was tinged with disappointment that his name was never directly associated with his magnificent column, unlike the names of his competitors. The *Royal Cornwall Gazette* illustrates this point graphically in the publication of their list of Cornish Exhibitors.



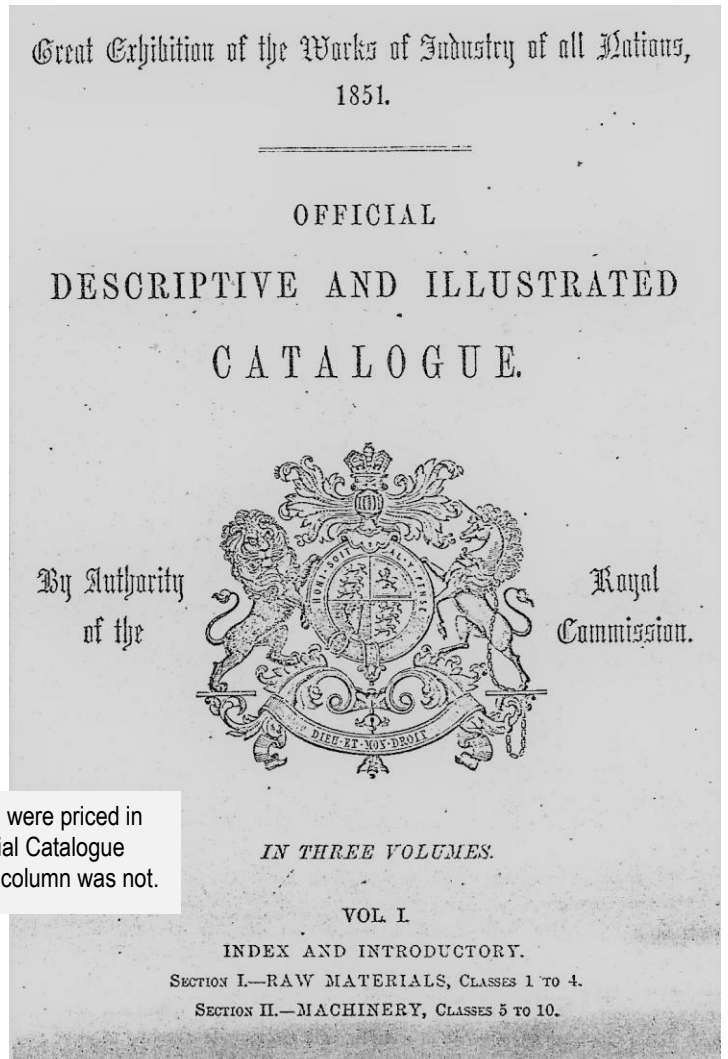
John Trethewey's journey to London began with his letter to the Secretary of the Local Committee James Jago detailing his intention to enter a granite column and requesting space for its inclusion. The Liskeard Committee was one of over 330 Local Committees and James Jago was Liskeard's Town Clerk. At 47 he lived in Dean Street with his much younger wife Burma (32) and their family.<sup>48</sup> The committee's task was not an onerous one as they accepted only three entries from their area before the process closed on the 31<sup>st</sup> October 1850 and they forwarded just £10 in fees to the National Committee.

The national decision to accept entries from the entire world was a bold decision, but to then offer them half of the space when that space was completely unknown might today seem tantamount to lunacy. Yet the end result was over 100,000 exhibits from nearly 14,000 exhibitors in a building the like of which had never before been seen.

The ionic column of the Cheesewring Granite Company (not Doric as quoted by the RCG) was entered into two categories in the Catalogue – SECTION 1 for Raw Materials Item 5 and SECTION XXVII for Mineral Manufactures for Building Item 54.



Although some items were priced in the Exhibition Official Catalogue Advertiser, the granite column was not.



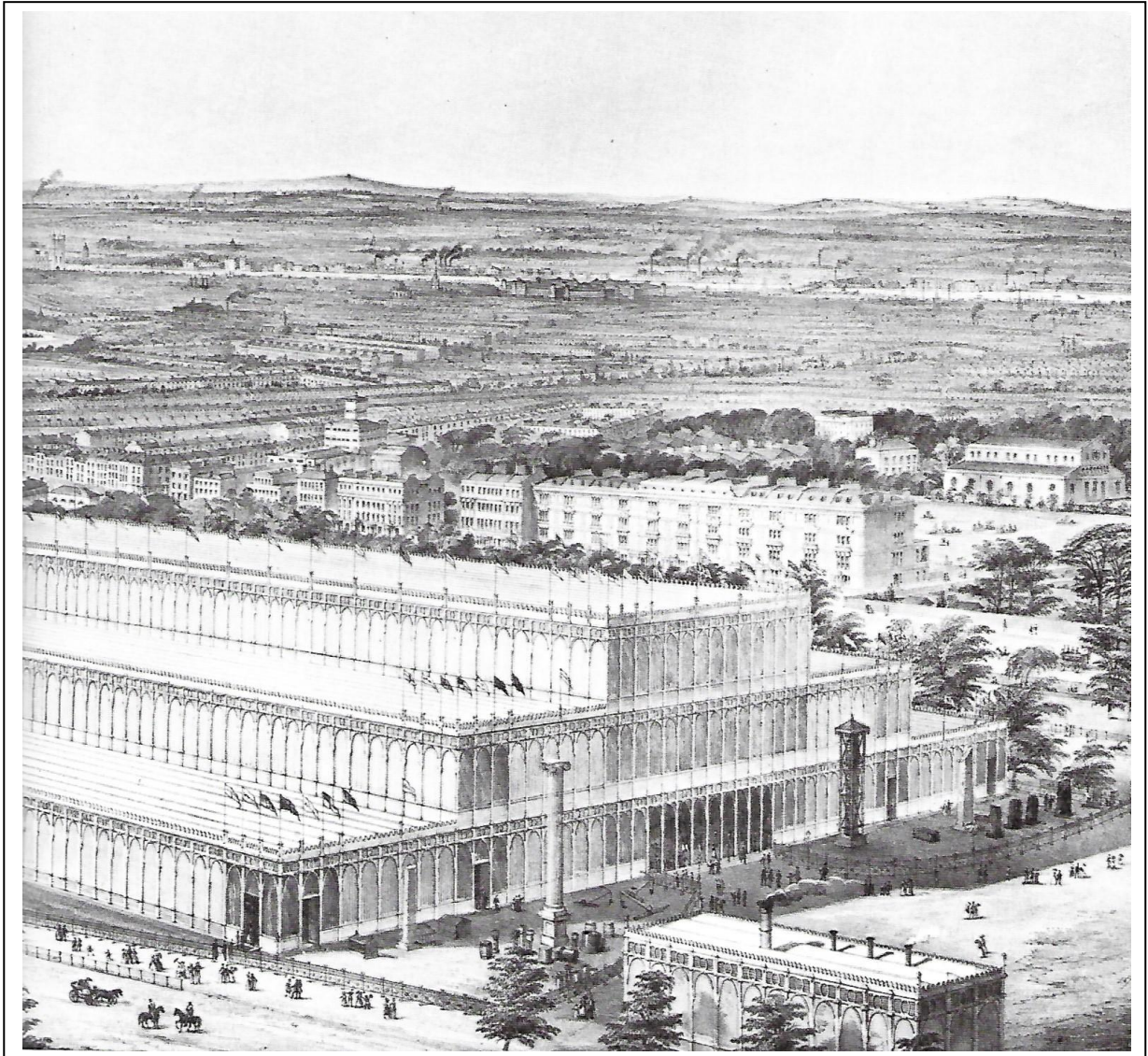
| ixiv ALPHABETICAL AND CLASSIFIED LIST OF ARTICLES   |  |
|---|--|
| Clark, 190. Cumming, 195. Falmouth & Peuryu Local Committee, 163. Freeman, W. & J., 160. Jamieson, 25. Maxwell, 134. Riddell, Sir J. M., 55. Ross, 51. Rossmore, Lord, 112. Sim, 137. Sparks, 151. Canada, Logan, 1. Wilson, 2.                                 | GUALDA DYE—Spain, Gisbert, 137.  |
| France, Colin, 1361.  | GUANO—I. Gill, 38.   |
| Jersey and Guernsey, Clugas, 25.  | South Africa—De Pass, 59. Searight, 37.  |
| Portugal, Bonnet, 59, 103-105.  | United States, Dix, 131.   |
| Sweden and Norway, Kullgrin, 118 (Eastern End, Outside). Turkey.  | Van Diemen's Land, Milligan, 255.  |
| Van Diemen's Land, Milligan, 256, 257.  | GUERIDON, A.—France, Comolera Madame, 1741.  |
| GRANITE COLUMNS, OBELISKS, &c.—Western End, South Enclosure (Outside), Freeman, W. & J., 14. Western End, North Enclosure (Outside), Cheesewring Granite Co., 54. Hosken, 75. Eastern End, Kullgrin, 100. XXVII. McDonald & Leslie, 74. Pearce, 75. Wright, 43. | GUIPURE—Belgium, Establishment of St. Joseph, 322.   |
| GRANITE (Small Articles in)—I. Hutchison, 161. Jamieson, 25. XXIII. Ellis & Son, 12.  | GUITARS—X. Church, 514. Dobrowski, 524. Panormo, 525.  |
|   | Austria, Bütner, 144. France, Husson & Co. 835.  |
|   | India, X.  |
|   | Zollverein (1), Rhumann, 90. (3), Glier & Son, 29. Klemm, 18.  |
|   | GUITARRA HARPA—Spain, Gallegos, 272.   |
|   | GUM-PASTE FIGURES—XXX. (Fine Art Court). Wood, 174.  |
|   | GEMS—II. Jennings, 99. London Druggists, 117. Picciotto, 33. III. Colman, 117. Tucker, 121. iv. Coovey, 70. Gillman, 44. Halliday & Co., 73. Res 116 |

WES AND SOXS, PRINTERS;  
BOS.  
BLACKFRIARS.

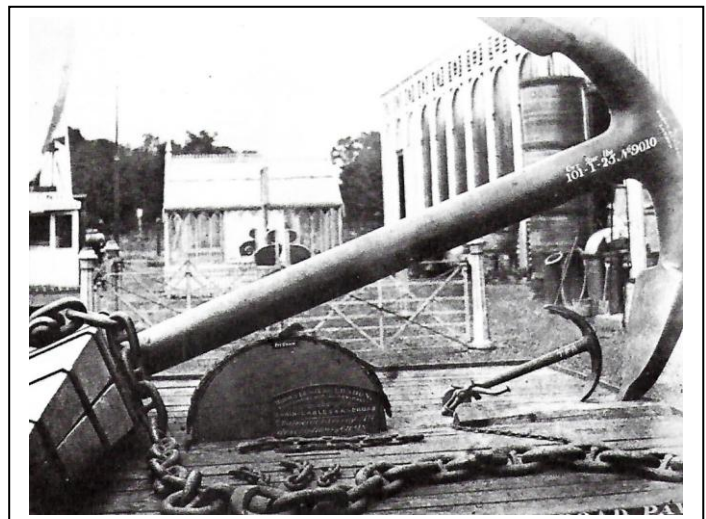
<sup>48</sup> 1851 Census HO107 Piece 1902 Folio 232 Page 20 - James JAGOE

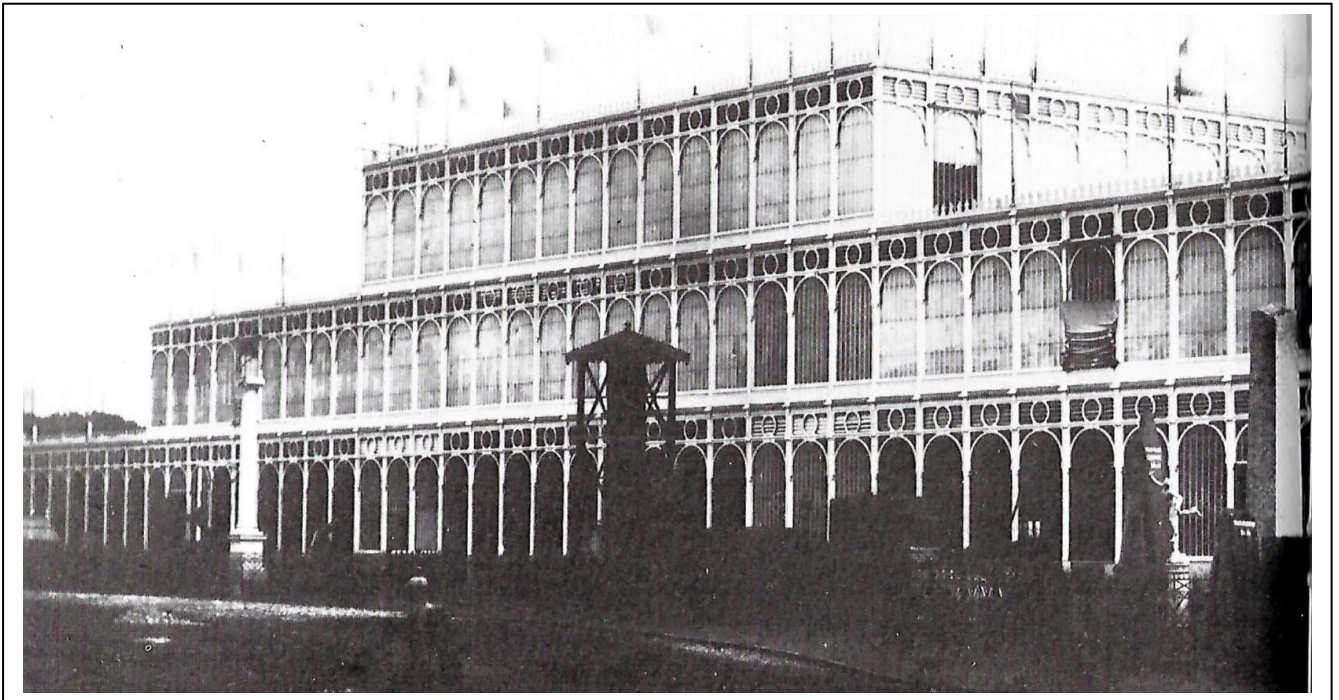
# Where can I find the Ionic Column?

The best and most descriptive illustration of the position of the column is, unsurprisingly, a black and white etching, but it incorporates considerable inaccuracy into its artistic license. It shows the west end of the Exhibition Hall viewed from the north-west corner, but it has two significant faults related to the column. The first is that its height has been exaggerated (a bonus for us) and its position is too far to the north. There was a large anchor to the north of the column, but this is only vaguely suggested on its south (right) side.



We are fortunate, however, in benefitting from attempts at early photography and because of these photographs the detail can be seen more accurately. On the right is an image of that anchor and on the following page are two photographs, the first taken from the northwest corner at ground level, which would have been difficult to achieve with the decorative 'kiosk' positioned as shown in the etching, whilst the second photograph is from the south west corner.





As I have already said, Queen Victoria visited the Exhibition no less than 34 times, sometimes staying for several hours and often engaging the exhibitors in earnest discussion about their exhibits. I have also seen it written that she is thought to have visited and viewed EVERY exhibit at least twice and if this is accurate then she must have walked along the outside of the west end from Freeman's Lamorna granite obelisk and that from Hosken's Penryn Quarry (in the strange wooden cage) and stood gazing up at the ionic column from the Cheesewring Granite Company.

Joseph Nash has captured the scene I describe and I believe that he has placed the Queen and Prince Albert in the right foreground. She probably made her visit in May and I am certain that she would have recorded what she saw. If it is possible to uncover the date of that visit and to read of her impressions, then that would be the 'icing on the cake.' It might even record to whom she spoke. Was it John Trethewey?

Of course this highlights a dilemma for JT, as the whole purpose of the exhibit was to make their work better known, but for that to be successful someone needed to be on the spot to talk with prospective customers. John Clogg was the obvious choice, but he could not have done it alone.



The first time I saw this picture it was small and grey and unattractive.

It was not until I encountered it in full colour that I understood its' importance. It exuded the atmosphere of a builder's yard with its stone, slate and marble together with the mammoth piece of Welsh coal, yet only the column was a finished piece and must have attracted attention

Queen Victoria and Albert commissioned a large series of 49 watercolours of the Exhibition with the intention of creating chromolithographs. 43 of those paintings were executed by Joseph Nash and the official book was published in 1854 with the title *Dickinson's Comprehensive Pictures of the Great Exhibition 1851*.

*They all reside in the Royal Collection*







This ionic column by the Cheesewring Granite Company was not the star exhibit of the show. How could it be whilst the Koh-i-Noor diamond and the incredible Crystal Fountain shared the same audience? But it is the centre piece of this story with its prestige further enhanced by a photograph taken 168 years ago (1851-2019) allowing me the privilege of presenting it to my readers and to cherish it for the family record. It has been said that there was a descriptive notice at its base displaying the feathers of the Prince of Wales together with information about the Company. Note the shank of the large anchor behind the column's plinth which accurately places its position.

# Was it Worth it?

When the Great Exhibition closed to the public on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October 1851 there must have been a collective sigh of relief from the hundreds of people involved in its organisation, but there was one final act that was required of the Commissioners. They had to award the Committee's medals. It is not known how or when this was done, but the Monday and the Tuesday preceding the closing ceremony was set aside for the Exhibitors to enjoy an 'Open House' as the guests of the Committee, so it seems appropriate to suggest that this was the occasion.

Every Exhibitor received the small Commemorative Medal as did Jurors and anyone else who was considered to have given a valuable service. Prize Medals were awarded to objects attaining certain standards of excellence whilst Council Medals were awarded to an object with an *'important novelty of invention or application combined with a great beauty in design.'*

The results for the Cornish Exhibitors were published in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October 1851 and shows that John Trethewey had achieved his ambition, but it was ironic that he had not overcome his competitors. The Freeman Bros. and Hosken had each received a medal when they had invested nothing approaching the skill and the thought to their obelisks that JT had done to his ionic column. It would not be surprising if JT had felt just a touch disappointed.

| <b>MINERAL MANUFACTURES. CLASS 27.</b> |  |
|--|--|
| <b>54</b>                              | <b>Cheesewring Granite Company, granite column. (<i>Prize Medal</i>).</b>  |
| <b>14</b>                              | <b>Freeman, W. and J., granite obelisk (<i>Prize Medal</i>).</b>   |
| <b>75</b>                              | <b>Hosken, R., granite obelisk (<i>Prize Medal</i>).</b>   |
| <b>85</b>                              | <b>Organ, J., font, Obelisks, &amp;c., of serpentine marble, from the Lizard, Cornwall (<i>Prize Medal</i>).</b> |
| <b>75</b>                              | <b>Pearce, W., Cornish granite and serpentine goods (<i>Prize Medal</i>).</b>                                    |
| <b>8</b>                               | <b>Delabole Slate Company, Old, by J. Carter, slate cistern (<i>Honourable Mention</i>).</b>                     |

These medals were not in the idiom of a military medal with ribbons. Instead they came in a presentation case and they still change hands at auction today and are eagerly sought by specialist medal collectors. The case illustrated below shows ALL the medals minted, but why it was awarded to a Lieutenant in the Royal Engineers is unknown. It is an impressive memento and the collector's eagerness to acquire such a thing can be easily understood.



The medal at the bottom of the case is like the medal that JT would have received on behalf of Cheesewring Granite Company. The Prize Medal (77mm) is smaller than the Council Medal (89mm) at the top, but they both have Queen Victoria AND Prince Albert on them, unlike the Exhibitor's Medal which has only Albert's head on the obverse, similar to the one below.



This medal was awarded to exhibit No.67 in Category 27 and JT's exhibit was No.54 in Category 27, so whoever he was, he was just 13 exhibits from JT, but it was not necessarily a large item consigned to the outside area of the west end. However, the medal's presence on the auction circuit within the last 20 years makes me wonder about the whereabouts of JT's medals.

If JT had been just a little disappointed then he need not have been as there were only 1244 Prize Medals awarded to British Exhibits in all thirty categories and JT's Category 27 was included with those of 26 to 29 in which there were 142 British Prize Medals (against 232 Foreign medals) and this is what he would have received.



The Closing Ceremony on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> October was a brief and unpretentious affair, albeit in front of more than 40,000 people. The Queen wrote that it was 'a very wet day' and she fretted that she would not be there because Albert had said that she could not go as a mere spectator. The removal of the exhibits began as soon as the Exhibition Hall had been cleared of those guests inevitably reluctant to accept that it had finally ended.<sup>49</sup> The ionic column of the Cheesewring Granite Company was no exception. It had to go, but it didn't return to Cornwall. More than twelve months later it was still in Hyde Park, but we have not yet heard the last of it.

<sup>49</sup>

All the text from this section has been derived from two significant sources  
*The Great Exhibition 1851* by C.H. Gibbs-Smith pub by HM Stationery Office for the V&A 1950 & 1981  
*The Crystal Palace* by Patrick Beaver 1970 pub by Philimore 1986

# The Cheesewring Granite Company

John Trethewey had only one thing in mind when he decided to enter an exhibit in the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park in 1851. It was to make the high quality stone from his quarry at the Cheesewring more widely known. There were a small number of very complimentary reports in the widely read London newspapers drawing attention to the fine granite available in Cornwall, but he could never shake off his main competitors who traded in their own names and commanded a much more sophisticated network of business contacts.

The *Illustrated London News* had a very large and discerning readership and the columnist wrote on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 1851 that *the column exhibited by the **Cheesewring Granite Company** and erected on the right hand side of the west entrance is a beautiful instance of the colour, texture and sharpness of a granite well worthy of note. The shaft is a single block admirably worked and faultless in quality and is interesting as being from a quarry only recently opened.*

There was no shortage of praise for their work and this was made even more tangible for the award of a PRIZE MEDAL and again the name of the **Cheesewring Granite Company** featured in the London editions of the *Morning Advertiser* on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> October and the *Illustrated London News* on the following Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> October that were devoted to listing the names of the medal winners.

The Exhibition had been open to the world for more than five months. An astonishing six million people had visited it. JT must have felt that he had achieved some success, but the question that soon surfaced within the London trade circles was, *who is this little Cornish Company and who are the people behind it?*

The work that JT began at the Cheesewring in 1839 was a gradual evolution. He seemed to work alone until sometime after 1845, when the formation of the partnership in 1847 in the name of **TRETHERWEY, CLOGG & COMPANY** was retrospective to that earlier date. But it is now apparent that 1850 was another milestone in their evolution prompted by the national debate around Prince Albert's concept of a Great Exhibition. JT, and possibly others, felt that it was imperative that something should be submitted for inclusion in that event without having any clear idea of the form it should take. However, they did realise that it could not be undertaken on a shoestring, so it was decided to reconstitute the 'company' in the name of the **CHEESEWRING GRANITE COMPANY**, but does that mean that new shareholders were sought? That is difficult to answer. The initial financial burden may have fallen solely on John Clogg as I don't think that either JT or James Symons were financially viable or attractive to bankers, in spite of being partners.

However, the need for shareholders was becoming inevitable and there are eight names known to have been shareholders<sup>50</sup> and I will introduce them at this point because of the prominence of the name change. Yet the Duchy Office continued in the belief that the Company traded in both names.<sup>51</sup>

It is not known when each interested party was issued with shares or how many shares each party was given and I will show evidence of that in a moment.

The Shareholders were,

|          |         |              |           |
|----------|---------|--------------|-----------|
| CAMPBELL | James   | of Plymouth  | Gentleman |
| CAMPBELL | Thomas  | of London    | Gentleman |
| CAMPBELL | Phoebe  | of West Looe | Widow     |
| CARSWELL | John    | of Liskeard  | Gentleman |
| ELFORD   | William | of St. Cleer | Yeoman    |

<sup>50</sup> Letter from Dr. Peter Stanier to Clifford Trethewey 8 March 1988

<sup>51</sup> In 1853, at the transfer of the lease to Tregelles & Crouch, the Duchy Office stated that the company traded under both names with the three partners being Trethewey, Clogg and Symons,

|        |          |              |                |
|--------|----------|--------------|----------------|
| JENKIN | Sylvanus | of Redruth   | Civil Engineer |
| LOBB   | Richard  | of East Looe | Merchant       |
| SOBEY  | Richard  | of Liskeard  | Gentleman      |

With the exception of the first two ‘gentlemen’ the Cornish Shareholders were relatively easy to find in the 1851 Census which, not unexpectedly, revealed superficial links between them. This then leads to thoughts of the discussions that took place in the sitting rooms and parlours of the County after reading the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* or the *Cornish Times* and it is quite sobering to realise just how well informed some sections of Cornish Society were on the events of the day and how willing they were to make an investment in JT’s Cheesewring Quarry.

**Phoebe Campbell**, for example, was a visitor to the farm of John Clogg of Havenford Lane, West Looe. Phoebe was a widow as described, but she was a 69 year-old annuitant with money to invest. Her host farmed 230 acres and was 43, but there was more to this situation than was apparent when it was found and I will elucidate my findings a little later.

**John Carswell** junior (for there were two of them in Liskeard Parish) was a very near neighbour to **Richard Sobey**. Both considered themselves to be ‘gentlemen,’ but in reality both were farmers. Sobey at 56 years old worked 200 acres at Pensipple<sup>52</sup> whilst Carswell was a 32 year-old bachelor with a modest 42 acres at Trewen, It seems probable that they were sufficiently acquainted to have discussed the merits of an investment in the Cheesewring Granite Company, but how did they learn about it and what gave them the confidence to put money into it?

**Richard Lobb** was a 60 year-old general merchant at Higher Market Street in East Looe and I can imagine him being a regular customer at the SALUTATION where James Symons was the landlord and that was the ideal place to discuss anything of local interest over a pint of good ale.

Lastly **William Elford**, yeoman of a 60 acre spread at Trethevy in St. Cleer, seems to have been the only person, who was an independent thinker, and there are always people like him who are interested in the financial markets and looking for a shrewd investment and at 47 he was keeping a wary eye on his future. He may also have been influenced by the building of the *Liskeard & Caradon Railway* which passed through the parish and claimed **Sylvanus Jenkin** as its engineer.<sup>53</sup>

As the curtain was drawn down on the Great Exhibition, leaving the crowds to disperse to their homes and the exhibitors to carry away all their precious objects, the Crystal Palace was abandoned as an empty monolith in the charge of one solitary police sergeant. *The Morning Advertiser* continues, the large Swedish stone cross still remains at the eastern entrance, whilst at the other end may be seen the coal specimens, some slate, two granite columns (wrought and unwrought) and one of the large anchors whose companions have already gone.<sup>54</sup>

It was an anticlimax. No one was interested any longer and no one was quite sure what the longer term benefits had been. There was no suggestion that the **Cheesewring Granite Company** had filled its order book for the year ahead, or that they had attracted any new work at all. Instead, the Company seemed to lapse into the doldrums and it is for that reason that I hesitate to attribute shareholders to the Company. This reluctance is further endorsed by the appearance of a significant advertisement in London’s *Morning Post* in July 1852<sup>55</sup> appealing for a capital investment of £20,000 through a share issue.

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<sup>52</sup> East of the modern railway station at Causeland on the Looe branch from Liskeard

<sup>53</sup> Sylvanus was born to Alfred Jenkin a Quaker Steward of Redruth and baptised by the Friends on 24 July 1821.

<sup>54</sup> *The Morning Advertiser* 20th January 1852

<sup>55</sup> *The Morning Post* 7<sup>th</sup> July 1852

Inevitably the Company had to present itself and its achievements in the best possible light. Today, we would say they were 'marketing themselves,' but it is full of interesting detail and is well worth reproducing here for its revealing content.

The Quarries of this Company are situated on the Cheesewring Hill, near Liskeard, in Cornwall, at the terminus of the Liskeard and Carradon Railway, a branch of which runs into them, and are held at a moderate rent, under a lease from his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall. They have been in operation about 4 years. Upwards of 7,500*l.* have been expended in opening the Quarries, in the erection of Machinery, in the construction of a Tramway, and other requisites for their economical working.

The Quarries contain an inexhaustible supply of the finest quality of Granite, and, from its position and excellent cleavage, the cost of raising it is very small, and the price of conveyance to the Port of Looe is so moderate that it can be delivered in London and elsewhere at a price which will defy competition.

The splendid fluted column of the Ionic order, which still remains at the west end of the Crystal Palace (the shaft 20 feet high), one solid piece of stone, obtained the prize medal at the Exhibition of all Nations, in 1851.\*

Granite has already been supplied from these Quarries for the erection of the East Cornwall Bank, at Liskeard, and the Post-office at Plymouth, also for Yarmouth Bridge, now in course of construction by Messrs. Grissell, under the superintendence of Messrs. Walker and Burges, civil engineers. Other large contracts would be immediately available were the present capital sufficient to justify their consideration. It is now proposed to extend the undertaking to 20,000 shares, 1*l.* per share, paid up; an agreement having been made with the present proprietors for the transfer of the property on highly favourable terms.

The profits to be derived from this undertaking must, under any circumstances, be very considerable. The demand for granite of a superior quality, annually required for Government and other public works, is very large; and assuming that the quarries produce only 10,000 tons yearly, and that the price realised is greatly below that at which any other company can possibly render their granite, there would be a balance of profit over 25 per cent. on the capital employed, after deducting all expenses.

Active preparation is now being made to complete the Cornwall Railway, which will pass within a few hundred yards of the southern terminus of the Liskeard and Carradon Railway, and these works will, it is anticipated, require large quantities of granite to be used in their construction.

The Company will be conducted on the cost book principle, as being the most simple and inexpensive; and meetings of the shareholders, for the audit of accounts and its general management, will be held every two months.

Prospectuses, with the report of the engineer, Mr. Jenkin, C.E., on the quarries, can be had from the stockbroker, T. C. Munday, Esq., 75, Old Broad-street; or from the Secretary, at the Office of the Company, 12, Parliament-street, Westminster; to either of whom applications for shares in the annexed form are to be made.

(Copy.)

To the Committee of Management of the Cheesewring Granite Company.

In his comprehensive article describing the Cheesewring Quarry operation published in 1985,<sup>56</sup> Stanier states that the Company was run on the 'Cost Book System' which was a peculiarly Cornish system used by adventurers mainly in the mining industry. The system required shareholders to subscribe for shares in multiples of 8 and any single holding was limited to 64 shares. Regular meetings of the shareholders were held at which the accounts were presented and any profits paid out as a dividend and in this case the meetings were at bi-monthly intervals. However, if the operation was losing money a 'cost call' could be made on the shareholders to make up any deficiency. Therefore it is quite significant that the prospectus includes the statement that 'no further call will be required,' a bold and possibly foolhardy statement. ALL expenditure was charged to the Revenue Account, but no allowance was made for reserves. This system suited speculation, but could also bring about an easy and rapid collapse.

Several times during this text I have referred to the emerging fact that John Trethewey was never mentioned by name and there is a statement in the prospectus that attracts my attention (starred). It says that *an agreement has been made with the present proprietors for the transfer of the property on highly favourable terms*. But there is a second clue. The Manager of the quarries is named as J.J. TRATHAN and NOT John Trethewey.

The first statement must have referred to James Symons AND John Trethewey as PARTNERS (proprietors?) in the business for which the lease was issued in 1847. It is the transfer of that lease that is being highlighted and they were being bought out, whilst John Clogg remains to be co-opted onto the 6-man Management Committee.

James J Trathan lived in Castle Street, Liskeard. He was 28 and unmarried and described as a 'Railway Superintendent.'<sup>57</sup> This could only be the Liskeard & Caradon Railway and he must have been appointed to the role in charge of the Cheesewring Quarries at the behest of his contemporary, Sylvanus Jenkin who was the engineer to that railway and sometime shareholder in the Cheesewring company.

Perhaps I am a little sensitive, even prejudiced, but this situation has the hallmark of business snobbery. John Trethewey – a granite merchant and James Symons – an innkeeper, were not considered to be suitable people for such a business syndicate. There is no acknowledgement that the work had existed before 1847. What possible knowledge and experience could James Trathan have that John Trethewey did not? And what of John Clogg? Do we really know what made his pedigree so 'acceptable'?

**CHEESEWRING GRANITE COMPANY,**  
**CORNWALL,**

On the "Cost Book" Principle (under which no deed is necessary).  
 In 20,000 shares, 1*l.* per share, paid up.  
 (No further call will be required.)  
 Office, No. 12, Parliament-street, Westminster.

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT.

James Simpson, Esq., C.E., Great George-street.  
 C. I. Brandling, Esq., 10, Gloucester-place, Portman-square.  
 T. Gybbon Monypenny, Esq., 16, Lansdowne-crescent, Kensington-park.  
 C. Shaw, Esq., C.E., 6A, Whitehall-yard.  
 John Clogg, Esq., West Looe, Cornwall.  
 Richard Sobey, Esq., Liskeard, Cornwall.

BANKERS.

Messrs. Williams, Deacon, and Co., Birchin-lane.  
 Messrs. Robins, Foster, Bolitho, and Co., Liskeard.  
 SOLICITOR—R. W. Child, Esq., 47, Coleman-street.  
 STOCK BROKER—T. C. Munday, Esq., 75, Old Broad-street.  
 MANAGER AT THE QUARRIES—Mr. J. J. Trathan, Liskeard.

In 1840 John Clogg was just 32 years of age, but he was already known in the county well enough to be quoted in an agricultural magazine called *The Champion*. In its' edition dated the 19<sup>th</sup> January the '**mildness of the season**' was being discussed and the writer began his column by saying;

There is now in the garden of Mr. John Clogg of West Looe a gooseberry tree in full bloom and several young gooseberries set thereon as large as peas.

<sup>56</sup> *Trevithick Society Journal* No.12 Page 37 1985, Dr. Peter Stanier

<sup>57</sup> 1851 Census HO107 Piece 1902 Folio 194 Page 20

Irrelevant as this may seem, it was barely six weeks before his marriage in the parish church of St. Martin by Looe. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1840 he married Mary Ann CAMPBELL, a gentlewoman from East Looe. John Clogg was described as a merchant of West Looe whose father was William Clogg, yeoman. Mary Ann's father was Thomas Campbell a Post Captain RN and he signed the Marriage Register as a witness. This immediately points to 'Thomas Campbell of London' a shareholder in the CHEESEWRING GRANITE COMPANY. So how was Phoebe Campbell, a visitor in John Clogg's house?

On the 11<sup>th</sup> October 1812 at an undisclosed location in the parish that included Looe, Mary Anne was privately baptised by the Rev. Richard Cory to Thomas CAMPBELL and Phebe (as spelt). When the minister entered the baptism into the Register of St. Martin's by Looe, he added that she had been born on the 28<sup>th</sup> September – two weeks earlier. So, Phoebe Campbell was not just a visitor with John Clogg, she was his mother-in-law - his wife's mother. Yet he didn't describe her as such in the census although he should have known that he was obliged to do that.

However, when John Clogg became involved with JT and was named as a partner in 1847, it was suggested that he was not only a merchant (and not a farmer), but also a ship owner and a Looe Harbour Commissioner with a London address in Lambeth at 66 Upper Stamford Street. It would seem that he conveniently ignored his yeoman stock to become an 'adventurer' with a diverse portfolio of business interests to which he had added the Cheesewring Quarry within the last five years.

So, it is beginning to look as if 1852 was not the 'new beginning' that everyone had hoped for, but a near catastrophe that was fraught with financial worry and anxiety, but what were these concerns? Are there any clues?

It was June 1850 when the Liskeard Temperance Society made their annual excursion to the Cheesewring. They noted with interest and some concern that a quarry had been begun that would ultimately destroy the hill. That observation is given added weight by the admission in the prospectus that *£7500 had been expended in opening the quarries, erecting machinery and constructing a tramway*. It was a very considerable sum of money and was very likely to have been a loan.

The three contracts that were identified in the prospectus were all recent contracts and the Yarmouth Bridge (*it was not known as Great Yarmouth at this time*) was still in the course of execution and was not a significant contract as it was an iron railway bridge built in a box profile. Known locally as Vauxhall Bridge, it was built between 1848 and 1852 to replace a bridge that had collapsed into the river in 1845.

Comment upon the prospectus published two days later suggested that Company representatives were in discussions concerning the renewal of Westminster Bridge, but this is somewhat misleading. Yes, it is true that the future of the bridge was under discussion, but it was included with all the other Thames crossings as they were evaluated for their usefulness and condition. The discussions had been drifting on in Parliament for at least two years and many wanted to see an entirely new bridge sited a quarter of a mile downstream from its present position. However, it seems that there was a real belief among some people that the Cheesewring Granite Company could win the contract for the supply of granite and the clues to that belief included the existence of a possible wharf on the Surrey bank close to the bridge.

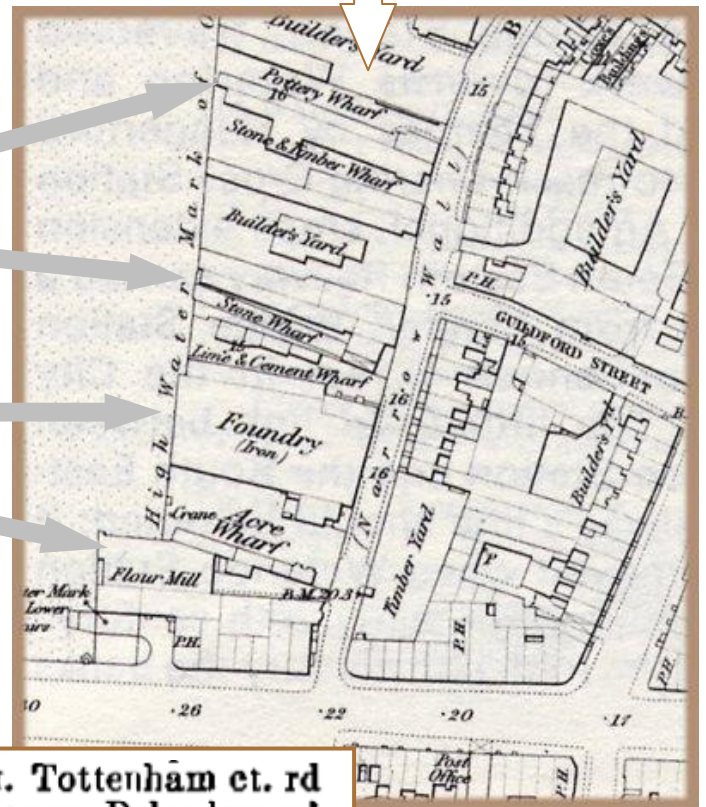
The heading for the company's prospectus advises that the Company's Office is at 12 Parliament Street whilst two of the committee members gave addresses in Great George Street and Whitehall Yard. All three addresses were close to each other on the Middlesex bank adjacent to Westminster Bridge and two of them, including the Company Office, were later swept away in the redevelopment of what is now the Foreign Office. Whitehall at that time was a divided street and Parliament Street was an island with a road passing on each side of it.





**BELVEDERE ROAD — continued.**

Robinson H. sawing mills & wharf  
 Langton & Robinson, timber mers  
*Aylesford Pottery Company*  
 Holland Henry & Richard, builders  
*Cheesewring Granite Co.* E. Turner, ag  
 Lucas Brothers, builders  
 Myers George, builder  
 Gladdish W. & T. Nunn, lime mers  
 Maudslay, Sons & Field, engineers  
 Cossar W. & Son, timber merchants  
 Sinmonds & Morten, millers



The coloured map is Cross's New Plan of 1850 and the map below it dates to about 1852. The Directory extracts are also 1852 and can easily be aligned with the later more detailed map. Within those two years the Narrow Wall (Street) and Belvedere Row have been consolidated into Belvedere Road.

**Cheesewright Josph. oilman, 52 Goodge st. Tottenham ct. rd**  
***Cheesewring Granite Co.* Ed. Turner, mangr. Belvedere rd**  
**Cheesley David, dairyman, 11 Cumberland row, Islington**

In January 1847 when John Clogg signed the lease for the Cheesewring granite quarry he gave an address at 66 Upper Stamford Street. That street can be seen on the right of the coloured map as a continuation of York Road and is only a short walk from the assumed quay. Also a short walk over Westminster Bridge from the quay is Parliament Street, the Company's Office and Great George Street shown by the yellow arrow, whilst Whitehall Yard may be in the vicinity of Whitehall Stairs in the centre of the map.

The existence of a wharf and quay used by the Cheesewring Granite Company in the early 1850s is critical to this story, but a much more precise date is needed. That date might be found in the papers of the Pedlar's Acre Estate in the Lambeth Archive.<sup>58</sup> This was the charity that owned most of the wharfs along the Belvedere Road. The date is critical because it drastically affects one aspect of the story - the transportation of the ionic column from Cornwall to Hyde Park.

A theory was promulgated by Dr. Peter Stanier in the 1980s and repeated again in 2000 that the column had arrived by sea at the mason's yard in Lambeth to be finished there before its final assembly at the west end of the Crystal Palace. It is a very reasonable and plausible theory to which I acquiesced until the crucial newspaper insertion was found that told of the journey to London being accomplished on the railway. Until an accurate date for the tenancy of the wharf is known, it has to be accepted that the Company was present in 1852, but NOT in 1851. Yet even here I hesitate, as the Post Office Directory was assembled at the publisher in November 1851 in time for its release in January 1852.

However, in 1852 there seems to be little doubt that the Cheesewring Granite Company was positioning itself to take advantage of the long anticipated 'rebuilding' of Westminster Bridge, a contract that will not concern this story, but the lack of which was just one element in an unfolding financial disaster.

As the year moved towards its end, it was clear that very little stone was leaving the Cheesewring Quarry. Receipts for the granite on the Cheesewring branch of the Liskeard & Caradon Railway were very low - a mere 210 tons for the entire year of 1852 which provided the railway company with a pitiful 2d per ton mile and that was only the toll. JT was paying for his own carriage and that suggests that he was still using his own wagons.<sup>59</sup>

The two active partners must have been feeling the strain and if one of them - John Trethewey - had already agreed to stand aside in the autumn of 1852 to make way for a new manager, then that burden was being carried by one man - John Clogg.

**At West Looe, suddenly, on the 2nd inst., John Clogg, Esq., merchant, universally respected, aged 44 years.**

*The Royal Cornwall Gazette* for Friday 5<sup>th</sup> November 1852 published this death announcement, but curiously no corresponding burial has been found in any Cornish Burial Register. The whole unstable 'house of cards' was about to come tumbling down.

It may have been no coincidence that on the following Monday 8<sup>th</sup> November London's *Morning Advertiser* carried the following announcement.

Exhibition of 1851.  
**MR. LEREW** is honoured by authority of her Majesty's Commissioners, to Sell by Auction, on the site of the Great Exhibition building, To-morrow, Nov. 9, at 12, 21 specimens of COAL (about 70 tons), granite columns and obelisks, 4 blocks of gypsum flagging, 2 large grindstones, slate slabs, cistern, &c. To be viewed; Catalogues may now be had on the premises; at the office of the Royal Commission, Marlborough-house, Pall-mall; and of Mr. Lerew, Auctioneer, Cardington-street, Hampstead-road, near the Euston station.

Yes, the column that had carried the hopes and aspirations of John Trethewey and those who had worked with him and for him had become an embarrassment to the Company. The auction was the final act in the story of the ionic column at the Great Exhibition. Did it accelerate the death of John Clogg? How can we know? But one thing we now know is that it was not the last we have heard of JT's column.

<sup>58</sup> Accession P4/5 - Reply to an enquiry ref no. A/FG/JN/3902L(1)/EB

<sup>59</sup> *Caradon and Looe* by Michael Messenger pub 1978 page 34

## The Cheesewring Granite Company has a new owner

As the calendar turned from 1852 to 1853 John Trethewey passed his 64<sup>th</sup> birthday. It was not an occasion that was celebrated in those days and JT had scant cause to do so. It was with a mixture of relief and regret that he left that wild, but beautiful corner of Bodmin Moor for a more permanent residence at his home in Cambridge Street, Plymouth.

Whilst John Clogg's solicitor in Liskeard was searching for those with a debt on his estate, the word had circulated around the mining community that a new opportunity had presented itself on Stowe's Hill. It reached the ears of Edward Anson Crouch at his home in Higher Lux Street, Liskeard and after a little thought he penned a letter to his mineral agent, Nathaniel Tregelles at his office at 57 Fenchurch Street, London.<sup>60</sup>

Cornish Directories suggest that Edward Crouch was the Purser of at least nine local mines between 1844 and 1859, but it is interesting to note that his path was crossed by that of James J. Trathan who was onetime Secretary to the South Phoenix mine adjacent to Stowes. Edward Crouch was also contemporary with Nat Tregelles as they had both been born in Falmouth (1801 Crouch, 1803 Tregelles) and Tregelles was a Quaker businessman, who lived in Church Road, Tottenham.<sup>61</sup>

This was the kind of network that JT had always lacked. He was at ease with his granite, when cutting and shaping it, but he was out of his depth trying to persuade others to buy it. The new operation put together by Crouch soon put JT's efforts to shame once it had settled into its new situation. The eminent Liskeard historian John Allen wrote in his *History of Liskeard* in 1856,

In 1853 another company succeeded to the quarries and is now doing a large and increasing business. The carriage of granite down the railway (the L&CR) in 1854 amounted to 3364 tons and is likely to be greatly increased for supplying the new Westminster Bridge and Portland Breakwater.

The re-assignment of the licence to Tregelles & Crouch for the extraction of granite occurred in 1853, but the precise date of its transfer is unknown. In that document the Duchy of Cornwall stated both previous names used for trading purposes and named all the existing 'partners' previously described in this text as 'shareholders.' However, there is a further document in the Duchy of Cornwall Archive dated 19<sup>th</sup> July 1853 which also re-assigns JT's land near the Cheesewring to Tregelles & Crouch. It states - *£110 paid for the purchase of the leasehold land, tenement with cottage some time since erected and built by J Trethewey.*<sup>62</sup>

Following 1854, the output from the Cheesewring Quarry never fell below 4000 tons as contract after contract came their way. On the 27<sup>th</sup> August 1858 the branch railway line to Kilmar Tor was ceremonially opened when at 4.30 p.m. four wagons loaded with granite and two wagons filled with the Directors of the Cheesewring Granite Company and their guests made their way to the Cheesewring for a celebratory tea for 200 stone cutters and labourers. It was an occasion enjoyed by everyone and the stone cutters responded by ringing a peel with their jumpers so melodious that it could easily have been a mistaken for a peel of hand bells.

On Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1860 Edward Crouch died. Four days later John Freeman noticed the announcement in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*. He sent a note of condolence to Mary Crouch. It was only proper. Three years later John Freeman received an unexpected note from Mary Crouch asking if he would be interested in purchasing her significant holding in the Cheesewring Granite Company. It was a better proposition than the one he had seen 20 years before – YES, he would buy it.

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<sup>60</sup> 1851 Census HO107 Piece 1902 Folio 172 Page 54 and 1852 PO Directory.

<sup>61</sup> 1851 Census HO107 Piece 1702 Folio 435 Page 6. Born 20 Aug 1803 to a Falmouth merchant Samuel & Rebecca – he was twinned with Rachel. He married Frances Allen in Liskeard in 1847 and died there in 1887. He was buried in the Quaker Burial Ground on 3 Feb 1887. He lived at Derwent Hill, Liskeard

<sup>62</sup> Letter from Dr. Peter Stanier to Clifford Trethewey dated 8 March 1988

# In a Gloucestershire Field

Although it was previously advertised to take place on the 9<sup>th</sup> November 1852, this insertion in the *Morning Advertiser* suggests that the column was finally sold on the 11<sup>th</sup> November and the auctioneer had struggled to excite any real interest in the items to secure a respectable price for their owners.

The hammer price for the 'very beautiful, chiseled Column and pedestal' equates to 48 Guineas, but who was its buyer and new owner and where was it destined to go?

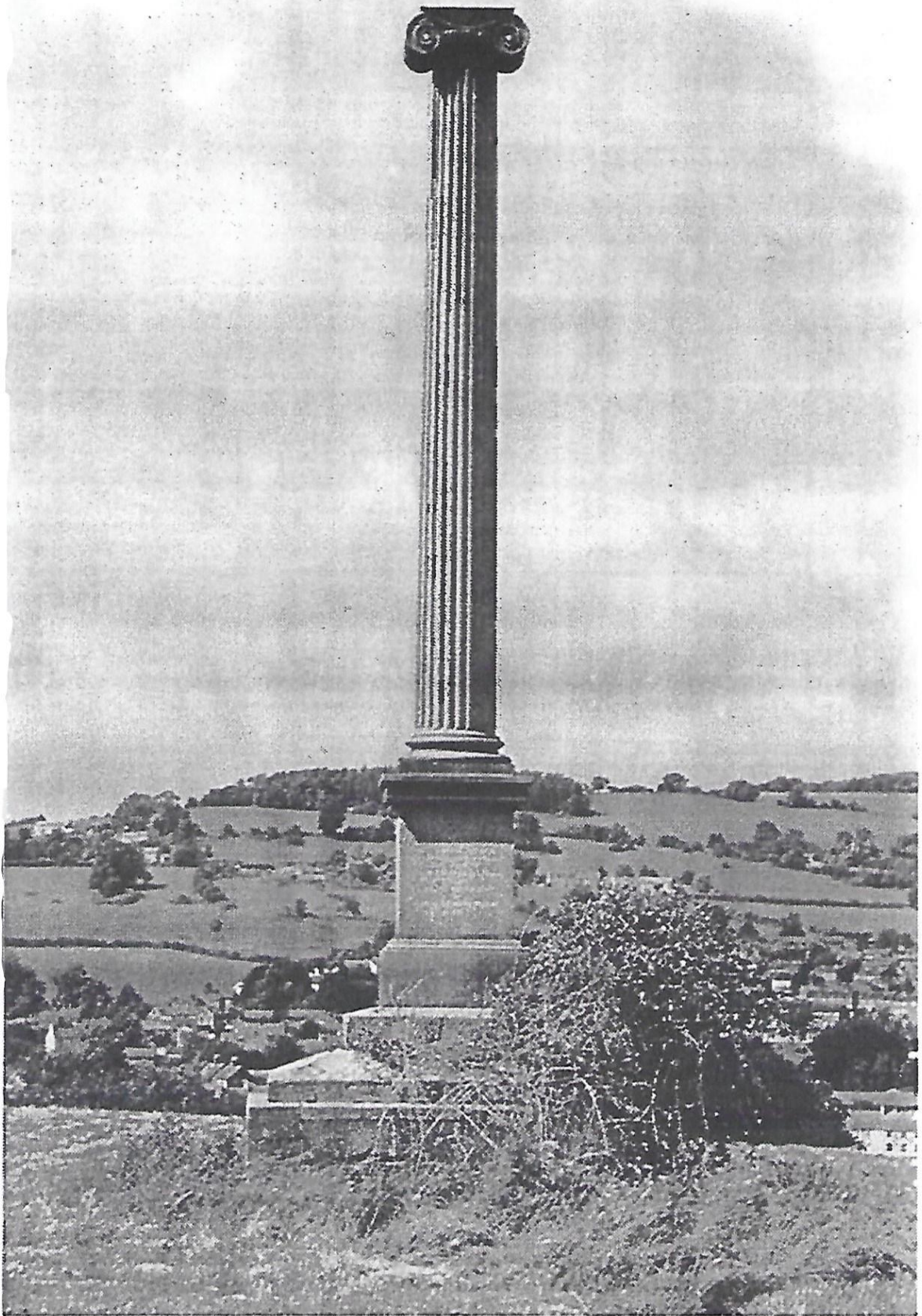
Samuel Stephens Marling was a Gloucestershire mill owner and woollen cloth manufacturer and he lived in Ebley in the parish of St. Matthew's, Stonehouse in 1851<sup>63</sup> surrounded by mill workers from his Ebley Mill and others. At sometime there were fourteen mills scattered along the River Frome and in 1845 Marling acquired Branscombe Mills and leased it to one of the great manufacturing families. Although the census suggests otherwise, it is said that in 1850 he bought the estate of Stanley Park, just a little south of Stroud and close to a small village named Selsey. He may not have been living there in 1851 as it is said that the manor house was extensively rebuilt at that time. It was to his new estate that he brought JT's column and re-erected it in a field where it still stands today in the shadow of the parish church he erected in the 1860s. No one, it seems, is clear why he bought it and how it was transported to its chosen location, but the GWR was already running through Stroud, Ebley and Stonehouse to Gloucester from Swindon.

**THE "VERY LAST" OF THE CRYSTAL PALACE OF 1851.**—Yesterday afternoon the last sale took place on the site of the late Exhibition in Hyde Park, which consisted of the immense blocks of coal, granite columns, &c., which are now the only vestiges left of the Crystal Palace. The sale was well attended, and the lots sold at very low prices. The auctioneer, in his remarks, said that one of the largest pieces of coal, weighing from 50 to 60 tons, cost in sending to the Exhibition nearly 50*l*.; when, after some competition, it was knocked down for 14 guineas. The block of South Staffordshire coal, which stood at the western entrance of the building, showing the different working seams as they exist in vertical sections in the mines, sold for 7*l*. A very beautiful chiselled granite column and pedestal, from the Cheesewing Granite Quarries, sold for 50*l*. 8*s*.; and other lots sold equally low. The whole are to be removed immediately, and the ground made level with the other portions of the park—when little evidence will remain to show where stood the glorious Palace of 1851. The beautiful scene will then have passed for ever from our eyes; and, "Like the baseless fabric of a vision, left not a wrack behind."



In 1952 the estate was sold – 100 years from the date of purchasing the Cheesewing Column.

<sup>63</sup> 1851 Census HO107 Piece 1964 Folio 112 Page 21



#### ONE FINAL THOUGHT

In 1860 John Trethewey was long gone from the Moor when John Freeman looked again at the Cheesewring. Its circumstances had changed. A railway line had been built between Moorswater and Looe and steam locomotives could now access the whole length of the line. In that same year the present owner of the Cheesewring, Edward Crouch, died and by 1863 the Freemans had bought most of the shares and gained a controlling interest in the quarry. It was now a part of the extensive Freeman 'empire.' They had removed a rival and gained an established quarrying and dressing business, the same business that had been begun by our ancestor John Trethewey.