

Historical Notes relating to Bideford's East-the-Water Shore

Volume 3 (20th C. to present)

R. I. Kirby

Contents of the volumes

The contents of the three volumes are as follows:

- Volume 1, Introductory material and Pre-history to 18th C.
- Volume 2, 19th C.
- Volume 3, 20th C. to present.

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Introduction to Part 3

20th Century

1900, the foreshore not as it ought to be

1900 saw Bideford council considering the foreshores and their banks. “The Mayor, Messers Fulford, Braund, and Pollard, were appointed a committee to interview the owners of the foreshore of the River Bank, and discover whether the owners will forfeit their rights if the Council give an undertaking to keep the bank in perpetuity.” A later item considered the East-the-Water foreshore. “Councillor Pollard drew attention to the foreshore East-the-Water. If the Council liked to take the foreshore they were welcome to for him. He claimed and believed all of them East-the-Water claimed the whole of the land across to Bideford quay. Fortunately for those living on the west side of the river, the Board of Trade stepped in and said, “There is your boundary, and the owners of the Foreshore East-the-Water had built walls and wharves. The banks in front of the wharves, however, were not kept as they ought. Some time ago certain owners wrote to the Board of Trade who in turn communicated with the Bideford Town Council, but the latter refused at that time to interfere. The result was that the Board of Trade did not move in the matter. He now decided the Council to recommend to the Board of Trade that all the owners of the foreshore be compelled to make it good.”¹

1900, bullocks run amok on Steamer Wharf

On the 11 Jan 1900 the North Devon Journal reported that “Two bullocks ran amok at Bideford on plunging into the Torridge from Steamer Wharf, swimming down as far as the signal-box, where were captured and brought back to the goods yard slaughter-house.”²

1901, draining East-the-Water and ornamental sewer vents

With new development springing up in East-the-Water the increased runoff was beginning to impact upon the wharves. In November 1898 Mr. Heard raised a complaint with respect to the Royal Hotel, as he believed that the drainage from Torrington Street and Torrington Lane was being discharged upstream of the bridge, rather than downstream by the Co-operative stores (i.e. the Western Counties Co-operative Association Building).³

By July 1899 the state of the drainage in East-the-Water was causing enough concern to prompt the idea of a public petition, and Mr. Heard was suggesting the Surveyor should make more liberal use of disinfectant⁴.

1 “Bideford Urban District Council” The Bideford Weekly Gazette June 5 1900 p5 c3

2 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 11 Jan 1900 p5 c6

3 “Bideford Town Council” Western Morning News 11 November 1898 p4 c6

4 “East-the-Water Drainage” Bideford Weekly Gazette 25 July 1899 p8 c1

In Dec 1901 Messrs. Ellis & Son, of Bideford, were contracted to install a drainage system in East-the-Water⁵. The new sewer scheme, which was intended purely for the prevention of flooding⁶,

In 1911 the catalogue of William MacFarlane & Co. of Glasgow featured a particularly elegant form of ironwork vent, near identical specimens grace various parts of Bideford. MacFarlane & Co were leading producers of decorative ironwork and several of Bideford's vents are now listed as ancient monuments. One may be seen in Torrington Street, nearly opposite the Blacksmith's Arms car-park and another almost opposite the Wooda Surgery in Barnstaple Street. Looking like a lamppost, but with four vents and a crown on top, each has an arrow that shows the direction of the underlying sewer's flow.

1901, two of Baker's boats get swept under the bridge

In October 1901, one of Messrs. Baker's vessels, the *Susanna*, broke loose from her mooring, dragging another, the *Sylph*, with her. The *Sylph* broke a bowsprit as she jammed in the corner of the bridge, whilst the *Susanna* caught in the fourth arch, the tide gradually squeezing her under it until her rails tore off and her mizzen came crashing down. Fortunately, the s.s. *Devonia* was at hand, and, working with men on the shore, managed to drag her clear, before turning their attention to making the *Sylph* safe.⁷ The *Sylph* was 39 tons⁸, the *Susanna* 49⁹.

1902, Bideford celebrates the end of the Boer War

Commencing Oct 1899, the Boer War (in South Africa) dragged on till June 1902, leaving 20,000 who would not return. As the news of peace reached Bideford, shops and schools closed, bunting appeared in the streets and on the ships, bands played, magistrates dismissed their cases, churches held thanksgiving services, rifle volunteers fired a *feu-de-joie*, and a small mortar was discharged from East-the-Water¹⁰.

1902, East-the-Water and the coronation of King Edward VII

In August 1902 Bideford's plans to mark the coronation of King Edward VII came unstuck, for a planned public lunch was cancelled when the Local Board refused to grant a temporary licence so the Market could be used. The residents of East-the-Water, determined not to be deprived of their celebration, felt an independent event was called for. So, with the support of councillors Stanley Heard and J. U. Fulford, it was decided to hold a free cold luncheon for the residents of East-the-Water. Utilizing a loft provided by Mr. Heard, the initial plan was to serve five hundred people, the whole thing being funded and provided by the residents of Shamwickshire, without involving any external caterer¹¹. The Bideford Weekly Gazette reported "The people of East-the-Water kept themselves to themselves, and warned all who were unfortunate (?) enough to live at the other end of the Long Bridge, not to trespass."¹²

5 "East-the-Water Drainage: The Fair-Wage Clause" North Devon Gazette 31 Dec 1901 p8 c1

6 "East-the-Water Drainage" North Devon Gazette 19 Nov 1901 p5 c5

7 "Serious Mishap at Bideford" North Devon Journal 31 October 1901 p3 c7

8 Devon Archives and Local Studies Service (South West Heritage Trust). Ref. 1976/Sylph/19223 - Sylph (19223)

9 Devon Archives and Local Studies Service (South West Heritage Trust). Ref.

10 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 05 June 1902 p8 c5

11 "A Coronation Split at Bideford" Western Times 07 August 1902 p3 c4

12 "The Great Day" Bideford Weekly Gazette 12 August 1902 p5 c1

As those west of the Torridge watched what those “romantics” east of the water were up to, the Local Board’s decision came in for increasing criticism and, on the day itself, a local wag adorned the bridge with signs. Approaching East-the-Water the traveller could read “This way to the dinner,” but travelling westward they were informed “This way to starve.”¹³

On the eve of the great day Railway Wharf hosted a firework display, then, on the day itself Queen’s Wharf hosted over six hundred people, assembled to enjoy the feast. Later in the afternoon, not wishing the younger folk to be left out, the people of East-the-Water provided a free tea for everyone under twenty-one, before the day finally culminated with dancing at Chudleigh¹⁴.

1903, the Barton Kilns change hands

In 1903, I Baker and Son took over the Barton lime-kilns from Mr. W. Turner¹⁵. With the increasing use of superphosphate fertilizers, and the use of lime for construction purposes becoming the more important revenue stream for the lime-burner, such kilns were probably of more use to a builder’s merchant than a farmer. The dramatic decline in use of lime-kilns is illustrated by the progressive reduction in references to them in the local press. Searching for “lime” near “kiln” in a database of Devon newspapers shows the number of references in each ten-year period suddenly halved, between 1870-9 and 1880-9, and by 1910-9 had dropped to around a tenth of the 1870-9 level.

1903, an exceptional September gale

In September 1903 a sudden overnight storm wrought havoc, waves reached a record height (the last train from Bideford to Barnstaple frequently being drenched with spray), and, combined with a spring tide, this did extensive damage. Persistent rain had already delayed the harvest to a critical extent, now fields were flattened, pooks of corn were scattered like chaff and ricks were demolished. Through the effects of wind burn “plants were shrivelled and young shoots blackened” as though by severe frost, and the already poor apple harvest was destroyed¹⁶. Fallen ornamental trees blocked the footpath from the Long Bridge to Torrington Lane and two barges were sunk in the river.¹⁷

1903, terrible October flooding

In October 1903 the area was hit by record rainfall, with Barnstaple recording 85 inches in a single day. Water stood ten feet over the Kenwith marshes and was six or seven feet deep inside the collar factory in Westcombe Valley, the epicentre of the flooding¹⁸. The impact in East-the-Water was not reported, but it seems unlikely that its businesses remained unscathed.

13 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 14 August 1902 p2 c3

14 “East-the-Water Dinner” Bideford Gazette 12 August 1902 p5 c3; “Bideford” North Devon Journal 14 August 1902 p2 c3

15 “Welsh Lime” Bideford Weekly Gazette 9 June 1903 p4 c3

16 “Fearful Gale” North Devon Journal 17 September 1903 p3 c1

17 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 17 September 1903 p3 c4

18 “Floods in North Devon” North Devon Journal 29 October 1903 p5 c6

c. 1904, Devon Trading Company moves to Clarence Wharf

In 1904, after a period of absence, advertisements for the Devon Trading Company once again began to appear in the North Devon press, in which they mention a branch office in Bideford, without stating where it was¹⁹. From this, it seems that the Company had acquired their new premises on Clarence Wharf in c. 1904. The site apparently included the property on the Barnstaple Street frontage.

1905, proposal to build out at Clarence Wharf approved

The North Devon Journal of 16 Mar 1905 reported “It proposed to construct a quay-wall front of Clarence Wharf. East-the-Water, Bideford. for the Devon Trading Co., Ltd.”²⁰

In May 1905 it was reported that the Board of Trade had acknowledged receipt of the councils proposal, i.e. that the proposed new wharf at East-the-Water, to be executed by the Devon Trading Company” be kept back to the line of the Western Counties Agricultural Association²¹.

On 20 July 1905 the North Devon Journal carried the Board of Trade's official notice that a proposal had been received from the Devon Trading Company, Limited, for permission to construct a stone retaining wall (160ft. in length) in front of and about 35 feet from the existing river frontage line of Clarence Wharf, Bideford.” . . . “the southern extremity [of Clarence Wharf] being about 400 feet north of the eastern end of the Bideford Bridge²².

The National Archives have a record in their Board of Trade and successors: Marine Maps and Plans section, dated 1905 and described as 'RIVER TORRIDGE, CLARENCE WHARF, BIDEFORD, DEVONSHIRE; CONSTRUCTION OF STONE RETAINING WALL AND RECLAMATION WORKS BY DEVON TRADING CO.LTD.; assent granted; related to H7326, 3 maps²³

1905, advertising manures from Odam's Wharf

In Jul 1905, the Topsham based firm of Odam's started advertising the supply of manures from Odam's Wharf, East-the-Water²⁴, with products such as “Special Turnip Fertilizer, Vitriolized Bones. Dissolved Bone Compounds. Superphosphates. Basic Superphosphate of Lime. (Hughes' Patent).” They continued to advertise from these stores until 1908. A picture from c. 1890, however, shows Odam's signage alongside that for Steamer Wharf, and a builder's merchant whose occupancy was very short-lived, so, by this point, Odam's had already been operating through an East-the-Water wharf for some time.

19 e.g. North Devon Journal 18 February 1904 p1 c1; North Devon Journal 10 November 1904 p1 c3

20 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 16 Mar 1905 p8 c5

21 “Miscellaneous” Bideford Weekly Gazette - 09 May 1905 p5 c4

22 “Notice. Bideford, River Torridge, Proposed Quay Wall at Clarence Wharf.” North Devon Journal 20 July 1905 p1 c5

23 National Archives Ref. BT 356/9672

24 Bideford Weekly Gazette 4 Jul 1905 p1 c2

1906, Heard's executors sell Queen's Wharf

On the 5 Jun 1906 the North Devon Gazette carried a notice that the property of the late Mr George Heard was to be sold, the properties listed were Queen's Wharf, Grenville House (on the Quay), and 29 & 30 Mill St.²⁵

1907, residents feeling the strain of population growth

In the near-timeless pattern of development outpacing provision of amenities, new development had taken place at Chudleigh Terrace, Grenville Terrace and Clifton Street (over the ten or twelve preceding years), leaving East-the-Water's single post-box to take the strain. The local residents, grieved that they were being so overlooked in the provision of postal services, petitioned the Postmaster-General for a badly-needed second box²⁶.

1907, bullocks on Queen's wharf

In August 1907, whilst the s.s. *Merthyr* was unloading of a cargo of bullocks from Lundy Island on to Queen's Wharf, all went well as they were adroitly slung ashore by steam crane, but once liberated from their slings "more than once the men had to vamoose round a large winch with a pair of wicked horns in unpleasantly close attendance."²⁷

1907, electricity comes to the wharves

The earliest use of electric lighting in Bideford had been in 1887²⁸, when, only months before, the thought had been greeted by some members of the Local Board with incredulity. The possibility, however, was certainly in their mind by 1892²⁹, when they toyed with bringing the East-the-Water gas-works into public ownership, widespread public adoption was still some way off. In November 1907, notices appeared in the Bideford Weekly Gazette: from the Board of Trade, granting powers for the Mutual Electric Supply Co. of Westminster to provide an electricity distribution infrastructure³⁰, and from the Bideford and District Electric Power and Supply Syndicate, announcing that they were applying for a Provision Order for the electric lighting of Bideford District³¹. The scramble was on for the electrification of Bideford.

1908ish, widening of Barnstaple Street

In Jul 1907 the local Board bought up two cottages in East-the-Water for £200, for street widening³².

25 "Bideford" North Devon Gazette 05 June 1906 p3 c2

26 "Local and County" Bideford Weekly Gazette 01 October 1907 p5 c4

27 "Local and County" Bideford Weekly Gazette 6 August 1907 p5 c4

28 When Messrs Tardew introduced it in their High Street store, see "The Electric Light at Bideford" Bideford Weekly Gazette 19 March 1889

29 "The Gas Question" North Devon Journal 14 January 1892 p2 c1-2

30 "Public Notice" Bideford Weekly Gazette 27 November 1906 p3 c6

31 "Public Notice" Bideford Weekly Gazette 27 November 1906 p3 c7

32 "Bideford Town Affairs" North Devon Journal 25 July 1907 p6 c6

North Devon Gazette of 22 December 1908 carried an advertising note in its “Christmas at the Shops” section which noted that “With its widened main thoroughfare and the extension of building to the South-East, East-the-Water is yearly becoming a more important part of the township.”³³

1908, Bideford Motor Works established

In September 1908 a new firm of motor mechanics was established, their opening heralded by both an advertisement in the local press, accompanied by a journalistic piece introducing the business.³⁴ “Messrs. J. Inman Emery, A.M.I., Mech. F. and F. T. Cox” who ran the business, brought to Bideford experience, as motor mechanics, gained in London, though Mr. Inman Emery also claimed “considerable and varied engineering experience in India particularly in the installation of plant for the lighting of large palaces by electricity.” More general engineering work was solicited, including drawing up “designs and specifications for motor boats for pleasure or racing,” and the lighting of country houses³⁵. The pair also stated that they were agents for the plant and system of “The Non Explosive Gas Co. Ltd.” They claimed “A spacious and well appointed Garage will at present comfortably accommodate a dozen large cars and is capable of extension whilst its position alongside the repair works makes for a speedy carrying out of repairs. The all-British “Deasy” was amongst the cars available for inspection.

1909, limestone, cement, and general goods in, clay out

In 1909, when room permitted, the Bideford Weekly Gazette carried a summary of the local shipping news. An entry for February³⁶ showed the *Annie* waiting for water at Mr. Fry’s Wharf on 12th, *Althea*, with manure for Victoria Wharf on 9th, *Clara May* to load Clay on 10th, s.s. *Scotchman*, at Baker’s Wharf with road stone on 12th, and *Devonia* at Baker’s Wharf with general goods on 13th. In the same period almost all cargoes at Bideford Quay were of coal, but one was a part cargo of cement.

A snapshot, taken from three consecutive weeks in Sept. 1909³⁷, paints a picture of ships discharging agricultural supplies, building materials, and general goods at East-the-Water's wharves, whilst clay was being loaded from them. Bideford Quay had more vessels visiting it, most to discharge coal, but some to lay up. The details are presented in the table below.

Date in 1909	Point of arrival	Ship	Reason
Sept. 7th	Bideford Quay	Wolt	To discharge coal
Sept. 9th	East-the-Water	s.s. Devonia	To discharge general goods
Sept. 9th	Bideford Quay	s.s. Hopetown	To lay at quay
Sept. 10th	East-the-Water	Marion	To discharge manure
Sept. 10th	East-the-Water	Naiad	To load clay
Sept 10th	Bideford Quay	Olive and Mary	To load gravel

33 "East-the-Water." North Devon Gazette 22 December 1908 p10 c4

34 Bideford Weekly Gazette 22 September 1908 p4 c5

35 “New Engineering Works at Bideford” Bideford Weekly Gazette 22 September 1908 p5 c5

36 “Arrival of Ships” Bideford and North Devon Gazette 16 February 1909 p5 c2

37 “Local and County” Bideford Weekly Gazette 21 September 1909 p5 c3; “Local and County” Bideford Weekly Gazette 14 September 1909 p5 c2; “Local and County” Bideford Weekly Gazette 28 September 1909 p5 c3

Date in 1909	Point of arrival	Ship	Reason
Sept 10th	Bideford Quay	Wave	To discharge coal
Sept. 11th	Bideford Quay	Thomas	To discharge coal
Sept 12th	Bideford Quay	Humility	To discharge coal
Sept. 13th	Bideford Quay	Maud	To discharge coal
Sept. 16th	East-the-Water	Rainbow	To discharge limestone
Sept. 16th	East-the-Water	Setti	To load clay
Sept. 16th	East-the-Water	Wolt	To load clay
Sept. 16th	Bideford Quay	Susannah	To discharge Coal
Sept. 16th	Bideford Quay	Corn Flower	In ballast
Sept. 18th	East-the-Water	Louisa	To discharge cement
Sept. 18th	East-the-Water	s.s. Devonian	To discharge general goods
Sept. 20th	Bideford Quay	Ada	To discharge coal
Sept. 23rd	Bideford Quay	Edith	To load gravel
Sept. 23rd	Bideford Quay	Purveyor	To discharge coal
Sept. 24th	Bideford Quay	s.s. Hopetown	To lay to quay
Sept. 25th	East-the-Water	s.s. Devonian	To discharge general cargo
Sept. 26th	Bideford Quay	Eliza Murry	To discharge coal
Sept. 26th	Bideford Quay	Sarah Jane	To discharge coal
Sept. 27th	Bideford Quay	Dewm	To discharge coal, then dispatched with coal
Sept. 27th	Bideford Quay	Catherine	To discharge coal

1909, tragic loss of the SS Thistlemer

The loss of 21 lives when the SS Thistlemer foundered in Bideford Bay hit the headlines, not least because the Thistlemer had burned flare lights from midnight, only to have them noticed at 4 a.m., by a coastguard who was then unable to get the lifeboat people on the phone. These events prompted (unheeded) calls to the Board of Trade for an effective coastguard service in the Bristol Channel³⁸. Stung into some response, the people of the local area commissioned Gabriel, the stonemason, to produce a monument, which was then available for inspection at his yard in Barnstaple Street, prior to being erected in Northam churchyard³⁹.

38 "Coast Watching in the Bristol Channel: Cardiff Chamber's Comments" West Somerset Free Press 25 December 1909 p7 c5

39 Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 25 November 1910 p10 c5-6

1909, Fulford at Queen's Wharf

By 20 April 1909 J. U. Fulford & Son's had begun advertising their presence at Queen's Wharf, East-the-Water⁴⁰.

1911, Pollard exploring trips to Lundy

T Pollard of East-the-Water was selling tickets for a limited series of trips to Lundy on the the S.S. *Hebridean*, a ship registered to carry 312 passengers. This seemed to be by way of exploring the possibility of attracting new visitors to Devon by providing such boat trips. The *Hebridean* would offer a mix of trips from Bideford and Ilfracombe⁴¹.

1913, the Pure Chemical Carbon Co. goes up in smoke

In 1911 the Pure Chemical Carbon Company of Dewsbury had established a plant on part of the extensive Bartlett site, producing carbon products from Bartlett's waste wood. The plant contained an engine weighing 300 tons, with a 13 ton flywheel⁴². In March 1913, however, 500 to 600 bags of charcoal within a cast Iron Shed caught light, it was believed through self combustion. With the Fire Brigade unable to do more than contain the blaze, that seems to be the last mention of the company⁴³.

1914, Belgian refugees begin to arrive

From Oct 1914 Exeter claims to have led the way in welcoming Belgian refugees to Britain's provincial cities. They came in their thousands, but the public were initially very supportive and welcoming, as there was a general feeling that, but for the Belgian putting up such a stout resistance to German advance, Paris would have been overrun, bringing the war much closer to home. From an Exeter reception centre groups were distributed throughout the county, particularly to places, like Bideford, that were part of the railway network⁴⁴.

Contingents of refugees came to Bideford, where some worked in East-the-Water's remaining pottery⁴⁵ and at the Kynochs munitions factory⁴⁶. By Nov 1914 there were 45 in Bideford⁴⁷, but this would eventually climb to about 200⁴⁸.

40 "To Ensure a Good Hay Crop" Bideford Weekly Gazette 20 April 1909 p4 c1

41 Mike Davy. 'S.S. "Hebridean" – July, August 1911.' <http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/2012/06/s-s-hebridean-july-august-1911/> accessed 23/3/2016

42 "Occasional Notes" North Devon Journal 29 June 1911 p8 c1

43 Western Times 18 March 1913 p2 c2

44 "Exeter, Devon: The Inspiration Behind Poirot" World War One At Home. BBC Sounds.

Online:<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p022vd3z> Accessed: 20 Nov 2020

45 Alison Grant. North Devon Pottery. Appledore, Devon:Eadward Gaskell, 2005 pg 52

46 Peter Christie. Secret Bideford. Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley, 2015, Pg 80

47 Devon & Exeter Gazette 3 Nov 1914, cited at "Research Diary:First World Belgian Refugees in Devon" Telling Our Stories. War<https://www.tellingourstoriesdevon.org.uk/blog/2019/first-world-war-belgian-refugees-in-devon> Accessed 20 Dec 2020

48 "One hundred years ago – May 1919." Bideford Community Archive. Bideford Buzz.

Online:<http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/2019/05/one-hundred-years-ago-may-1919/> Accessed 20 Dec 2020

A tragic incident from August 1917 allows us to give a name to one of the Belgian Refugees. An eleven-year girl, the daughter of “M. Denys, a Belgian living at Gas Works Cottages, East-the-Water, and employed at the Government Works” was killed by the night mail train whilst trespassing on the line. The Mayor expressed his sorrow that “such an end should have befallen one of the Belgian refugees.”⁴⁹

1915, exceptional hail north of Instow

On Sunday, July 4th 1915, travellers, arriving in East-the-Water from Instow, would have brought news of a freak hailstorm that swept by just north of the community. Slates and upturned buckets had been left pierced “like bullet holes,” whilst six hailstones had been picked up and found to weigh “three quarters of a pound” and at “Leigh one was found to be over five inches in circumference”⁵⁰

1915, Kynochs wood alcohol plant established

With the onset of war in 1914 the demand for cordite shot up, as did the demand for the acetone needed to make it. In 1915 the Office of Woods and Forests, in the guise of Kynochs, established a wood alcohol plant in Bideford⁵¹, which was then placed under the direct control of the Ministry of Munitions⁵². The name of Kynoch's foreshore is linked to this company.

At the outset of the war acetone was produced from wood alcohol and that in turn by fermenting wood to destruction. But the short supply of such wood led to the development of a new process that could utilize a much more readily available crop - maize⁵³. Maize may not ever have been used in the Bideford factory, but today it is still widely grown on local farms, with most apparently used as animal feed. The rapid soil erosion associated with this crop may help explain why the Torridge shore seems to be muddier these days than it was in the past.

The ‘munitions factory proved short-lived, and closed in 1919.⁵⁴

1915, Routley takes over Agricultural Wharf

In 1915 Frank Ernest Routley, a corn, seed, and manure, merchant, acquired the entire of Thomas Fry's business on Agricultural Wharf⁵⁵.

49 “Bideford Fatality” North Devon Journal 02 August 1917 p8 c4

50 “The Great Hailstorm In North Devon: Bideford's History” North Devon Journal 29 July 1915 p7 c4

51 “H. M. Explosive Factories” Grace's Guide to British Industrial History.

Online:https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/H._M._Explosive_Factories#Sites_for_Acetate_and_Acetone_Production
Accessed 25 Aug 2017

52 “H. M. Explosive Factories” Grace's Guide to British Industrial History.

Online:https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/H._M._Explosive_Factories#Sites_for_Acetate_and_Acetone_Production
Accessed 25 Aug 2017

53 “H. M. Explosive Factories” Grace's Guide to British Industrial History.

Online:https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/H._M._Explosive_Factories#Sites_for_Acetate_and_Acetone_Production
Accessed 25 Aug 2017

54 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 10 July 1919 p6 c4

55 North Devon Record Office (South West Heritage Trust), B611, Papers of the Fry and Routley Families” The National Archives. Online:<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/d50d5cbb-6ec4-498a-9775-6d765d7f85d7> Accessed 24 Sep 2017

1917, steam trains on the Long Bridge

In 1916 the engines of the Bideford, Westward Ho, and Appledore Railway were commandeered for use on the Western Front⁵⁶

The North Devon Journal reported that “with the Westward Ho [sic] Railway closed and no entertainments on the river bank or Pill, Monday was probably the quietest Bank Holiday in Bideford since the outbreak of War.”⁵⁷

“On Sunday several hundreds of residents assembled to witness the transference of the Bideford, Westward Ho, and Appledore Railway engines “Kingsley,” “Torrige,” and “Grenville” across Bideford Bridge to East-the-Water, preparatory to their removal on the London and South Western Railway to other spheres of usefulness. Temporary lines were laid across the brigde [sic] and the locomotives proceeded across under their own steam without mishap. The event was unique, even in the history of Bideford's Long Bridge.”⁵⁸

In Feb 1985 Model Railway Constructor magazine carried information about these engines, a summary of which is tabulated on the Minor Railways & Tramways Locomotives page. This suggests that they were 2-4-2T, built by the “Hunslet Engine Co. 1900”, with no.s 713, 714, 715 BWH&A. The page confirms that they went to the Government in 1917, but then adds “(Reputedly lost when SS *Gotterdammerung* [sic] was torpedoed off Cornish coast, in fact they went to Ministry of Munitions factories).”⁵⁹ The *Gotterdammerung* had been seized from its German owners at the outset of the War, hence the unusual name⁶⁰.

It now seems that the *Grenville* and *Torrige* departed from Avonmouth, Bristol, on a vessel bound for France, only for their conveyance to be torpedoed and sunk at the entrance to the Bristol Channel⁶¹. On 22 October 2001 Yorkshire Post carried the news that the wreck had been discovered, the identity of the engines being certain, as only three of their type had ever been built, those being the three engines from Bideford⁶². Robin Jones, of Heritage Railway, confirmed how unique the engines were and that the third, named *Kingsley*, had been scrapped⁶³.

56 Michael Brown “Steam engines from Yorkshire found 150ft down on sea bed” 22 Oct 2011 Online: <http://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/steam-engines-from-yorkshire-found-150ft-down-on-sea-bed-1-2405622> Accessed 11 May 2017

57 “Bideford” The North Devon Journal 31 May 1917 p8 c3

58 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 02 August 1917 p3 c3

59 Mick Field “Minor Railways & Tramways Locomotives” 1 Oct 2017 [sic 2016?] Online:<http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/mickssrsource/tpagesrs/tminorloco.html> Accessed: 11 May 2017

60 Western Mail (Cardiff, Wales), 23 October 2001 “World War I tank engines found on seabed; HERITAGE: Divers plan to raise locomotives sunk by submarine”. (n.d.) >The Free Library. (2014).Online: <https://www.thefreelibrary.com/World+War+I+tank+engines+found+on+seabed%3b+HERITAGE+%3a+Divers+plan+to...-a079367549> Accessed: 11 May 2017

61 Michael Brown “Steam engines from Yorkshire found 150ft down on sea bed” 22 Oct 2011 Online: <http://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/steam-engines-from-yorkshire-found-150ft-down-on-sea-bed-1-2405622> Accessed 11 May 2017

62 Michael Brown “Steam engines from Yorkshire found 150ft down on sea bed” 22 Oct 2011 Online: <http://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/steam-engines-from-yorkshire-found-150ft-down-on-sea-bed-1-2405622> Accessed 11 May 2017

63 Western Mail. Cardiff, Wales. 21 Oct 2001. Cited at *The Free Library*. S.v. World War I tank engines found on seabed; HERITAGE: Divers plan to raise locomotives sunk by submarine..” Retrieved Feb 06 2021 from <https://www.thefreelibrary.com/World+War+I+tank+engines+found+on+seabed%3b+HERITAGE+%3a+Divers+plan+to...-a079367549>

In an article in Model Rail (UK) 9 Feb 2017, the author (name unknown) reported that he had researched the supposed loss at the Public Records Office and found no record of an *S.S. Gotterdammerung* being lost, or of any other loss matching the description at an appropriate time⁶⁴.

These were not the only steam engines to be shipped to the western front, and others ended up sunk of Cornwall, as the sinking of the 2866 ton French ship *Saint Chamond* testifies to⁶⁵. She was torpedoed 14 miles North of Saint Ives Head, on April 28th, 1918, on route from Glasgow to Saint Nazaire, by the German submarine U 60 (*Franz Grünert*). She carried a general cargo, but is known locally as the Train Wreck, as the most interesting part of her cargo is a number of steam engines, of which six or seven remain⁶⁶.

1917, the *Cholmondeley* turns submarine hunter

Restarick's shipyard had been focused on non-military shipping, so it is unusual to find one of his boats serving a fully military function, especially as it was one of his former mission ships. In July 1917 the *Cholmondeley* (a ship of 64 tons)⁶⁷, re-named *George L. Muir*, was converted to serve as *Padre*, as one of the 'Q' ships, armed decoy vessels used to entrap enemy submarines⁶⁸. The fate of another of Restarick's vessels highlights the need for a role like that of *Cholmondeley*, for, on 29 Apr 1918, the *Johnny Toole* was sunk by German submarine U 105, en route from Newport to Ballycotton⁶⁹.

1918, exemptions from military services

In March 1918 Bideford Borough Tribunal re-considered exemptions from military service for East-the-Water based "Wm. John Way, 36, Grade 2, coal merchant, and Frank E. Routley, reduced from Class A to Grade 2, seed merchant." The National Service representative suggested that "there were several firms with these trades in the district, and that by co-operation some of the tradesmen might be released. Other places had found that co-operation could be carried out." Whereupon Mr. J. U. Fulford, another East-the-Water seed merchant, observed "It works all right in big towns, but it won't work in small towns. There is too much trade jealousy." Leaving the representative to observe "It is a discredit to Bideford," before granting temporary extensions for both exemptions.⁷⁰

1918, Armistice signed

On 11 Nov 1918 the armistice was signed, bringing to a conclusion the 'War to end all wars'

64 "My life's works – where are they now?" Model Rail (UK). 9 Feb 2017

65 "SS Saint Chamond [+1918]" Wreck Site Online: <http://www.wrecksite.eu/wreck.aspx?11778> Accessed 11 May 2017

66 John Liddiard "Wreck Tour: 38, The St Chamond" Divernet Online: <http://www.divernet.com/wreck-tours/p301675-wreck-tour:-38the-st-chamond.html> Accessed 11 May 2017

67 "World War 1 at Sea - Ships of the Royal Navy, 1914-1919; WARSHIPS, Part 2, Old Sloops to Assault Ships" (Based on "British Warships 1914-1919" by F J Dittmar & J J Colledge) The National Museum Royal Navy. Online: <http://www.naval-history.net/WW1NavyBritishShips-Dittmar3WarshipsB.htm> Accessed:24 Jun 2017. Duncan Fielder has this vessel as the 64 ton *Bridesmaid*, launched by Restarick in 1882 [Fielder, History of Bideford, 1985, 81]

68 E. Keble Chatterton. Q-ships and Their Story. Keble Chatterton, 2010, 177

69 "Johnny Toole" uboat.net, Online:http://uboat.net/wwi/ships_hit/3190.html Accessed 17 July 2017

70 "Bideford Borough Tribunal" North Devon Journal 21 March 1918 p3 c1

1919, repatriation of Belgian refugees begins

By the end of the war 8,000 Belgian Refugees had been housed in Devon, but their initial welcome to the UK seems to have been vaguely defined, as ‘for the duration,’ and, as the war dragged on, the public attitude had rather cooled⁷¹. Many Belgians were also eager to return (it is unknown how many decided to stay), so a process of repatriation began, with responsibility for its oversight delegated to local Government Boards in Jan 1919⁷². In May 1919 Bideford Town Council were informed that the last of the 200 odd refugees, that the town had maintained since Feb 1915, had now been repatriated⁷³.

1920, re-opening of the anthracite mine is considered

Much later, in 1965, Cynthia Burgess recollected the events of 1920, when a mining engineer, by the name of T. Thornton, looked into the viability of re-opening the mine⁷⁴. Having found samples of anthracite in the local soil, he then looked to open up the tunnel in “Clarence Yard” (formerly Way’s Yard, but, in 2021, a car-parking area opposite Clarence Wharf). This was the tunnel said, according to Cynthia, to run “under the hill from Mines Road and emerging in the higher cellar of Clarence Yard.” The economic slump of the 1920s had left numerous South Welsh miners unemployed, providing a ready source of labour to clear the tunnels, so work was soon underway. The spoil was “loaded into horse-drawn butts and dumped on the riverside near the Goods Station.” Cynthia would recall “plaguing my father Mr. William Way, to take us into the tunnel,” which he eventually did. The miners found considerable quantities of soft anthracite. A pitch-like-substance was also found, and, at his home on Barnstaple Street, Mr. G. Phillips, a manufacturing chemist, turned this into somewhat excessively carbolic soap on a small scale. However, the enterprise eventually folded through lack of funding.

1920, infantry horses boarding on Barnstaple Street

In 1920, Chaplin & Co. of Bideford (near the good's-yard) and John Way and Son. (opposite Clarence Wharf), had both “Boarded-out” light draught horses, suitable for Field Artillery⁷⁵.

1920, *Devonia* collides with *H.F.Bolt*

In 1920 the *Devonia* appears to have been operating out of Brunswick Wharf as the ketch *H.F. Bolt*, delivering coal to I. Baker & Sons., collided with her as she was moored. There was apparently an arrangement between the steamship company and Baker's men that the latter would shift the *Devonia* when the moorings were needed for a delivery.⁷⁶

71 “Exeter, Devon: The Inspiration Behind Poirot” World War One At Home. BBC Sounds.

Online:<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p022vd3z> Accessed: 20 Nov 2020

72 “Belgian refugees 1917 to 1919” Teignmouth & Shaldon Remembers WW1.

Online:<https://teignheritageworldwar.org.uk/index.php/belgian-refugees-1917-to-1919> Accessed 20 Nov 2020

73 “One hundred years ago – May 1919.” Bideford Community Archive. Bideford Buzz.

Online:<http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/2019/05/one-hundred-years-ago-may-1919/> Accessed 20 Dec 2020

74 Cynthia Burgess. “The Labyrinth That Lies Under the Gardens of Bideford” in ???. 1965

75 “Bideford Horse Show” North Devon Journal 05 August 1920 p2 c4

76 Devon and Exeter Daily Gazette 15 September 1920 p1 c6

1921, slump in shipping sees vessels laid up

December 1921 saw twenty-three vessels, mostly large steamers, laid up on the river between Appledore and Bideford.⁷⁷ Postcards from the period show three moored just north of Railway Wharf, off Southcott Marsh.

1921, care of Chudleigh Fort handed to the Council's

On August 24th the War Memorial Committee handed over the care of Chudleigh Fort to the Council.⁷⁸ The entire of Peace Park having been purchased by public subscription as a War Memorial for Bideford's fallen sons.

1922, a steamer collides with the long bridge

On 23 Nov 1922 the North Devon Journal reported that a steamer, leaving her berth, collided with the eastern end of the bridge, damaging the ironwork and the railings of the ornamental garden adjacent to the wharf.⁷⁹

1922, County Council recommend widening the long Bridge

Devon County Council's Bridges and Main Roads Committee adopted a report recommending that the Long Bridge be widened and that the council should contribute toward the cost of so doing⁸⁰.

1923 Brunswick Wharf sees the port's largest load to-date

On 23 March, the Western Morning News carried a picture of the German Steamship *Weser*, moored at Brunswick Wharf to discharge a cargo of superphosphates from Holland, with the suggestion that this was, at that time, believed to be the largest cargo ever landed at the port of Bideford⁸¹. The *Weser* appears to have been a vessel, launched in 1923, of 997 tons grt, and 67.4 x10.5 meter⁸².

1923, Port of Barnstaple bolstered by Bideford's trade

Commenting upon an article in the Western Morning News and Mercury, that noted "a great increase in trade of the Port of Barnstaple," Mr. W. T. Goaman cited testimony, from an Appledore merchant, that there were two or three ships to Bideford for every one bound to Barnstaple. In support of this observation, one alderman noted that his business was based at Northam and Westleigh, but he could only get a small boat up to Barnstaple once a fortnight. Concern was expressed that, as Bideford no longer enjoyed independent port status, the expansion, of the town's maritime trade, contributed to the reputation of Barnstaple as a place for business, rather than to that of Bideford⁸³.

77 "Bideford in 1921" North Devon Journal 29 December 1921 p3 c4

78 "Bideford in 1921" North Devon Journal 29 December 1921 p3 c5

79 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 23 November 1922 p8 c4

80 "Bideford's Historic Bridge" North Devon Journal 23 November 1922 p3 c1-2

81 Western Morning News 23 March 1923 p1 c5-7

82 Tony Allen. "Weser SS (1923~1924) Maas SS (+1944)" 14 April 2014. Online: <http://www.wrecksite.eu/wreck.aspx?248064> Accessed 2 May 2017

83 "Thriving Bideford; Claim to Pride of Place as Port" Western Morning News 27 March 1923 p3 c5

1923, North Devon Farmers Ltd on Barnstaple Street

It is, as yet, unclear how long they were there for, but in 1923, at least, North Devon Farmers Ltd., Agricultural Merchants & Engineers, were on Barnstaple Street (on Newcombe's Wharf)⁸⁴. They were still there in 1953, as, at that time, the Barum milestone was affixed to their wall⁸⁵.

1924, Anglo-American Oil do their bit to beautify Devon

In January 1924 the Anglo American Oil Co.'s North Devon division, based in Barnstaple and with a depot in East-the-Water, led the way in support of a growing movement to preserve the beauty of England by doing away with billboards, becoming the first big concern to take down all of theirs⁸⁶.

1924-5, the long bridge was widened

In 1924-5 the Long Bridge was widened and restored using reinforced concrete, with facing to restore its traditional stone appearance⁸⁷.

In February 1924 a lorry, belonging to the Anglo American Oil Co., and driven by Charles Cloke, an experienced driver, set out on a round from the company's East-the-Water depot, carrying 300 gallons of oil and forty two-gallon cans of petrol. Turning across the bridge it passed under the archway of the travelling crane, but, on coming to the temporarily narrowed section, it broke through the temporary plank side-walk and wire railings to plummet to the bed of the river. The two-ton tanker ruptured, creating a slick on the river, and both the driver and his son (who was assisting him) were badly injured. The injured parties were removed to East-the-Water slipway, beside Pitt's Motor Works, where a doctor was in waiting to treat them⁸⁸.

1924, widening of Barnstaple Street approved

The Devon and Exeter Gazette of 23 August 1924⁸⁹ carried a report a scheme had been approved, for the widening of Barnstaple Street and Station Hill, with the installation of five foot wide footpaths, and the acquisition of property to allow it to happen.

1924, development at Sentry Corner begins

Those who worked on the wharves needed a place to live, so some mention of housing schemes in their hinterland is not entirely inappropriate. Commencing around 1924 four houses had been built at Sentry Corner, though by 1928 only two had sold⁹⁰. Much larger schemes were to follow in 1933.

84 R. E. L. Hookway, draughtsman. "Proposed Widening of Barnstaple Street" 17 Oct 1923 Copy taken by I Baker & Son. Presented for use by Way of The Wharves in 2016 by Baker's heirs.

85 W. Ascott, Random Notes on Old Bideford and District. Bideford: Gazette, 1953, advertisements on the back pages

86 "Local" North Devon Journal 10 January 1924 p4 c7

87 Whiting & Christie, Long Bridge, 2006, pg 17

88 "Sensational Accident at Bideford" North Devon Journal 7 February 1924 p7 c2

89 Devon and Exeter Gazette of 23 August 1924 p5 c5

90 "Bideford Builder's Bankruptcy" North Devon Journal 25 October 1928 p7 c5

1925, passing of the Bideford Harbour Act

A Bideford specific act was passed, incorporating sections of other enabling legislation, e.g. the 1847 harbour docks and piers clause act⁹¹

1927, lightning storm hits Bideford

Following a lightning storm that lasted most of the night, the North Devon Journal reported that “Damager to Bideford was considerable,” listing instances of animals being struck by lightning, chimneys toppled, and streets inches deep in water that left mud and gravel behind. A strip of roof was blown from one of the new houses in East-the-Water, where, elsewhere, a kitchen was washed away when a sewer overflowed⁹².

1928, Barnstaple Street widening behind schedule

By May 1928 the project for widening Barnstaple Street was dragging behind schedule, but needed only the tarmac laying, which, it was hoped, would be completed by the holiday season⁹³.

1928, Bideford re-gains its port status

Thanks, in no small part, to the activities of a local-lad made good, Sir William Readon Smith, Bideford had thirty-three ships registered there, at 271,000 tons, this exceeded that at any of Devon's other ports. A deputation to Winston Churchill, Winston Churchill, persuaded him to reinstate the town as a port⁹⁴. The event was marked by the presentation of a silver galleon to the Borough and the beating of the bounds of the port by the Appledore lifeboat (then celebrating its 100th year)⁹⁵.

1928, Tarka the Otter wins the Hawthornden Prize

Henery Williamson's book, Tarka the Otter, was awarded the Hawthornden Prize for Literature, introducing the book to a far wider audience and securing its fame.

1929, stock market crash in USA triggers Great Depression

On 29 October 1929 (Black Tuesday) a stock market crash precipitated panic on Wall Street. The effects lasted as much as ten years, and it is estimated that international trade slumped by up to 50%⁹⁶. There was probably no part of the UK that failed to feel the Depression's impact, and traders on the wharves would certainly have been effected.

91 Report of Planning and Economy Manager to Bideford Harbour Board Working Group, Harbour and Pilotage Activity Quarter 2, Torrridge District Council, 22 Nov 2018

92 “Great Thunderstorm in North Devon” North Devon Journal 08 September 1927 p3 c2

93 “Road Work: Barnstaple Street Improvement.” North Devon Journal 17 May 1928 p8 c5.

94 Peter Christie. Secret Bideford. Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley, 2015. Pg. 26

95 “Shades of Devonshire Captains Hover Smiling: Bideford a Port Again” Derby Daily Telegraph 29 August 1928 p7 c4-5

96 Robert H. Frank & Ben S. Bernanke. Principles of Macroeconomics (3rd ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill/Irwin, 2007 p. 98.

1930s impromptu pony races on the sands

Following the closure of the once-popular pony racing venue near Abbotsham, known as Shebbertown Racecourse, in c. 1930⁹⁷, perhaps prompted by the depression, there seems to have been a thirst for more basic, cheap & cheerful, entertainment. It is at this period that the tidal sandbanks of East-the-Water were used for impromptu races⁹⁸. Held as a prelude to the annual Bideford regatta, but not a formal part of it, this was not the first time races had been held on the sands, as similar racing is reported from 1882 (see above).

1930, East-the-Water becomes Bideford, East

For centuries that suburb of Bideford on the east of the Torridge had been consistently known as East-the-Water (though the hyphenation often varied), but from about 1930 onwards “Bideford, East” begins to appear in the local press instead⁹⁹, until, by 1940, that new name had almost entirely replaced the old, even though most maps preserved it.

1931, larger vessels laid up in the Torridge

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, it was commonplace for larger vessels that lacked work to moor up in sheltered estuaries and 'sit it out.' The Western Times of 25 August 1932 reported that 30 vessels were laid up in the Torridge, with some having been there over a year, others having left and returned. These were large vessels (1,743 to 7,9006 tons), with the largest being three tankers (Scottish Chief, Scottish American, and Scottish Minstrel)¹⁰⁰, belonging to Tankers Limited, of London¹⁰¹. At least seven of these ships, all Elder Dempster fleet cargo boats, were still there in 1938, when several of them were reportedly leaving¹⁰². Pictures from that period show numerous vessels moored on the Torridge, mostly on the eastern side between Instow and Tapley Park, but some off Westleigh and Windmill Lane. One postcard, with a view taken from Upcott, appears to show three such vessels moored just downstream off Cross Park. In 1933 the owners generously opened several of the vessels to the public, with a 6d entrance fee, and organised a dance on another, the money raised going to the Bideford Carnival fund¹⁰³.

1930-33, developing at Pollyfield

97 The last mention in the press seems to relate to the auction of the grass keep of the racecourse in the Western Times of 17 April 1930 (p1 c3)

98 Fielder, History of Bideford, 1985, 82

99 e.g. see “Properties For Sale” North Devon Journal 23 January 1930 p1 c4, entry for “Sunnyside”

100 “30 Idle Ships in River Torridge” Western Morning News 25 August 1932 p7 c2

101 Nick Robbins. Scotland and the Sea: The Scottish Dimension in Maritime History. Barnsley: Seaforth, 2014. no page numbers.

102 “Ships in the Torridge” Western Morning News 29 September 1938 p4 c2

103 “Idle Ships as Dance Halls” Aberdeen Press and Journal 09 August 1933

The Council already had a site developed at Sentry Corner, but subject to restrictions on the type of housing that could be built. In 1931 they were considering a further site at Pollyfield¹⁰⁴ and in 1932 a site for forty-two new properties at Sentry Corner¹⁰⁵. The building itself took place in 1933, at a cost of between £12,000 and £13,000, and with delivery for tenant occupation within seven weeks being a feature of the project. Planned to be completed within a year, the project looked set to complete in half that time. The developer used by the Council was The Universal Housing Co. Ltd. of Rickmansworth¹⁰⁶. The first 20 houses were opened in April 1933, with rents fixed at five shillings for a two bedroom house and six shillings for a three bedroom one, with 120 applicants for the 42 houses¹⁰⁷.

The scheme was so successful that, in April 1933, with the original scheme nearing completion, the Council decided to apply to the Ministry of Health for the funds to extend it¹⁰⁸.

It is said that, around this time, winning designs for homes were exhibited at the Ideal Housing Exhibition, and that, in 1927, a modest two-storey red brick house, designed by Gordon Allen, was exhibited, subsequently to be erected around the country by the Universal Housing Co Ltd. The source of this is a Wikipedia article¹⁰⁹ that lacks citations, so the information needs verifying, but this might tie in with this Rickmansworth based company building homes in Bideford.

Peter Christie has published two photographs showing these houses under construction¹¹⁰.

1933, plans for a new Mortuary

In Nov 1933 the Sanitary Committee submitted plans to the Local Board for a new Mortuary at East-the-Water at an estimated cost of £380¹¹¹.

Mid 1930s, Mayor of Shamwickshire elections suppressed

In East-the-Water the *Shamwickshire Election*, in which a mock 'mayor,' often accompanied by a 'mayoress' (also male) were elected, amidst satirical speeches and general revelry. As in most places that had such 'mock' elections, they were inclined to become a drunken and unruly affair. Having flourished in the 1920s, the festivities, with their rolling tar barrels, liberal consumption of alcohol, and drunken speeches, gave such offence to the town council that they were suppressed in the mid 1930s.¹¹²

1935, celebrating Empire Day

104 "Bideford Housing" North Devon Journal 21 May 1931 p8 c3-4

105 "Bideford Town Council and Sentry Corner" Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 15 July 1932 p20 c5

106 North Devon Journal 19 January 1933 p4 c1

107 "Bideford Housing Development" Western Times 7 April 1933 p6 c2

108 "Bideford Housing Matters" North Devon Journal 06 April 1933 p7 c2

109 "Ideal House Competition" Wikipedia. Online: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ideal_House_Competition Accessed: 22 April 2017.

110 Christie, Illustrations, 2008, 64-65

111 "Road Improvement Schemes" Devon and Exeter Gazette -Plymouth 17 November 1933 p13 c5

112 Fielder, History of Bideford, 1985, 83

A special tea for about 200 people was organised East-the-Water, with local dignitaries in attendance, including both the Mayor of Bideford and the Mayor of Shamwickshire (Mr. T. Squires), the later appearing in a rather more sober manner than in years of yore, and dutiful paying his respects to Bideford's mayor. East-the-Water always seems to have been rather more inclined to royalist sympathies than the remainder of Bideford, and often seemed more ready to host such royalty-related celebrations. On this occasion the King received a telegram, reading "Greetings of loyalty and affection; we are celebrating Empire Day; from the children of Shamwickshire, Bideford, Devon," to which he replied with thanks.

The Mayor of Shamwickshire would continue to be a part of East-the-Water life, but henceforth his reformed worshipfulness would generally make his appearances at charitable or fund-raising events. Often this would be the local carnival¹¹³.

Combe Martin carnival also seemed to get in on the act, featuring a Mayor of Shamwickshire in 1945¹¹⁴.

These days the mayorship has been revived, but with the mayoral appointment an honorary position, and the Mayor of Shamwickshire appearing occasionally in support of Shamwickshire events.

1936, the *Tetty Boat* was broken up

The *Tetty Boat*, worked at one time by Bob Kivell (aka 'old Bob of all') and subsequently single-handedly by his son Tom (aka 'Royal' Kivell), was finally broken up, having plied the local waters for over a hundred years¹¹⁵. Prior to the outbreak of the first world war, the *Tetty Boat* was often taken to Fremington for clay, navigating Fremington Pill as far as Muddlebridge before loading up to 30 tons, then returning and shooting the Long Bridge to unload at Binney's Slip, opposite Tanton's Hotel. Another frequent run took her from the gravel banks in the estuary to New Kiln, at Annery Brickworks, Landcross¹¹⁶.

1936, Fulford, Trump & Co. formed

The next step in the expansion of the Fulford business empire

1936, mine collapse at Clarence House

A large cavity appeared, following a heavy storm, in "the walled garden of Clarence House." The garden of Clarence House, according to the article, lay behind Clarence Yard, "where the Way family had carried on business as coal merchants for generations." This hole, caused by part of a mining shaft caving in, was of similar in size to one that would appear later, c. 1965, to swallow up Mr. William Way's roses and vegetables¹¹⁷.

113 "Bideford" Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 31 May 1935 p19 c2

114 "Carnival Queens" North Devon Journal 13 September 1945 p7 c4

115 Grant & Hughes. North Devon Barges. Appledore, Devon: North Devon Museum Trust, 1975, 16-17

116 Grant & Hughes. North Devon Barges. Appledore, Devon: North Devon Museum Trust, 1975, 16

117 Cynthia Burgess. "The Labyrinth That Lies Under the Gardens of Bideford" in ???, 1965

1939-1945, World War II

In 1941 the police clamped down on black-out infringements, with those prosecuted and fined including individuals in Glenfield, Old Torrington-road, Bideford East, Sunnyside, Bideford, and Torridge Street, Bideford East¹¹⁸.

The Bridge Trust, then owner of the two small areas of garden beside the eastern end of the bridge, allowed water tanks to be installed, for the use of fire-fighters¹¹⁹.

An air-raid shelter was constructed in the playground of the Torrington Street school, whilst at the East end of the bridge and in the churchyard at St Peter's public further shelters were constructed¹²⁰.

In event of invasion, bridges and their approach roads became strategic targets. To defend Bideford's several measures were taken: Pollard's wharf gained a machine-gun post; the steam lorry fleet of the Devon Trading Co. stood ready as a mobile roadblock, to be deployed at the junction of Barnstaple Street and the Old Barnstaple Road; a mortar pit was installed above the cemetery.¹²¹

Older residents remember the Americans concreting over an area behind the ship-on launch, but most were, at the time, probably of an age to be more interested in the sweets they recall were given out by "the Yanks" at Victoria Wharf.

The Ketch *Bessie Clarke*, built by Restarick in 1881, found a new life as a mooring point for a barrage balloon.¹²²

10 Jul 1940, start of the Battle of Britain

10 Jul 1940 is seen as the point at which Hitler turned his attention to the conquest of Britain¹²³.

1942, the invasion of East-the-Water

In September 1942, East-the-Water found itself invaded at daybreak, not by Hitler, but by a platoon of the 24th Battalion, from Torrington, as part of a Home Guard exercise¹²⁴.

1944, the Royal Hotel a hub for D-day planning

The Green Room in the Royal Hotel was used for meetings by senior military officers involved in the preparations for D-day and taking significant strategic decisions¹²⁵. Following the war, one general, referring to the Royal Hotel, noted "More secrets have been discussed in this room than probably any other hotel in the country."

118 "Black-out Fines" Western Times 26 September 1941 p8 c5

119 Peter Christie. *Secret Bideford*. Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley, 2015. Pg 11

120 Peter Christie. *Secret Bideford*. Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley, 2015. Pg 88

121 Peter Christie. *Secret Bideford*. Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley, 2015. Pg 87

122 "Bessie Clarke; 30-3095 " Braunton Museum. Ehive.

Online:<https://ehive.com/collections/4561/objects/167486/bessie-clarke> Accessed:28 Nov 2017

123 "Battle of Britain timeline" Online:<https://www.rafbf.org/battle-britain/about-battle-britain/battle-timeline#040640> Accessed 24 Nov 2020

124 "H.G.'s Big Weekend" North Devon Journal 1 October 1942 p4 c2

125 The Royal Hotel; A Brief History of the Royal Hotel. Bideford:Royal Hotel, 2016 (electronic manuscript printed on demand), 12.

1944, rocket ships at railway wharf

A picture¹²⁶, probably taken in 1946, (but possibly in April 1944), shows two naval vessels at Railway Wharf. Both were Landing Craft Tank (Rocket) Mk, or LCT(R)3 vessels, a type of rocket barge (known colloquially as a “rocket ship”). Based on the design of a landing craft normally used for carrying tanks, these were specially adapted for use on D-day. Each was fitted with batteries of “beach rockets,” capable of a salvo of up to 1,064 rockets, depositing about 17 tons of explosive over an area of 685 by 145 m, from a two mile range. After reloading once the launchers were then jettisoned and the vessels served as ferries¹²⁷.

One of the vessels shown in the picture is the American LCTR 425. The American’s LCT(R)3s were based at the US Navy’s European ‘Base II’, in Roseneath, Argyll and Bute, Scotland, but in preparation for D-day these formidable weapons needed to be moved to the south coast. On 20 Mar 1944 a convoy (comprised two LCFs, three LCTRs, and three LCGs) set sail, bound for their new home in Dartmouth, from which they would take part in training for D-day in South Devon. LCTR 425 accompanied this convoy, which is known to have visited Appledore on route, before reaching Dartmouth on 4 April 1944¹²⁸.

1945, the crash of Wellington “P” Peter

On 7th March 1945 a Wellington bomber, “P” Peter, of 407 (Demon) Squadron of the Royal Canadian Air Force’s Coastal Strike Command, crashed in a field near Round Hill¹²⁹. A simple monument stands beside the Tarka Trail to recall the event. The squadron, part of which were based at Chivenor from Dec 1943, regularly flew sorties against German shipping and helped protect friendly vessels from u-boat attacks¹³⁰. The Squadron’s Operation’s Record Book (ORB) recorded that ‘F/L Ernie Duckworth J.25370 Pilot and Captain of “P” Peter, taking off shortly after 20.00hrs on a routine SE Homing Flight under perfect conditions, was unable to gain height because of engine trouble and crashed into a field near Bideford some minutes later.’¹³¹ The ORB goes on to mention that the Wellington, with its crew of six¹³², skidded through a stone and scrub hedge-bank in the process, three of the crew died and one was seriously injured. The names of the casualties being Flt/Lt E. V. Duckworth, P/Off. J. K. Andrews, P/Off C.J. Butler, and Fg/Off A. Izenberg (injured).

126 Bideford Buzz February 2011. Page 9

127 Mitch Williamson “Landing Craft, Gun (LCG) and Landing Craft, Tank (Rocket) (LCT(R))” Posted 25 Oct 2015 at Weapons and Warfare. Online: <https://weaponsandwarfare.com/2015/10/25/landing-craft-gun-lcg-and-landing-craft-tank-rocket-lctr/> Accessed 24 Feb 2018.

128 Carr. “US Navy Landing Craft Tank (Rocket)” Combined Operations. Online: <http://www.combinedops.com/US%20LANDING%20CRAFT%20ROCKET.htm> Accessed 24 Feb 2018

129 Text of monument on the Tarka Trail near Kynoch’s Bank, visited personally in 2016.

130 “No. 407 (Demon) Squadron Royal Canadian Air Force” The Wartime Memories Project. Online:<http://www.wartimememoriesproject.com/ww2/allied/royalairforce/sqview.php?pid=558> Accessed 12 Oct 2017

131 Public Records Office document ref AIR 27/1795 quoted by Brian Lacey, of Sentry Corner, quoted by “Tango Alpha” in “Some memories of World War 2 in Bideford.”, posted on 01/04/2013 at Bideford Buzz. Online: <http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/2013/04/some-memories-of-world-war-2-in-bideford/> Accessed: 12 Oct 2017

132 The wellington usually had a crew of five, but could be fitted with an extra pilots seat and dual controls for training. See “Vickers Wellington” Wikipedia Online:https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vickers_Wellington#cite_ref-1 Accessed 20 Nov 2020, citing “Andrews 1967, p. 7.”

Eyewitness testimony from an elderly resident of East-the-Water suggests that the bomber came down across East-the-Water, for, as a boy, he watched it fly low across Nuttaberry Hill, between Gas House and the gas retort, before finally crashing in the fields beyond¹³³. To raise the stakes even higher, the land south of the gasworks housed a munitions dump. One can only imagine the struggle Duckworth had to avoid coming down on the gasworks and what might have happened had his aircraft done so.

First on the scene appears to have been Walter Johns, a plumber and fitter at the nearby Gasworks whose bravery would subsequently earn him the British Empire Medal (Civil Division). Johns, a member of the Bideford Auxiliary Unit¹³⁴, closely followed by an airman called Paddon, arrived to find the forward part of the plane a mass of flame. One airman had been thrown clear, so Johns and Paddon dragged him to safety. The airman confirmed that there were three still inside, so Paddon & Johns returned to search for further survivors. Hearing cries for help, Johns crawled beneath what was left of a wing and entered the plane through a hole. There he found a trapped airman, suspended between the engines and the stays. Releasing the man, Johns was carrying him out on his shoulders when the floor beneath them collapsed, his feet touched the ground, losing his balance the two fell to the ground. Sliding the casualty onto his back, he was then able to work him out until Paddon and another rescuer could take the man's feet and drag him out. The three then carried him clear. Thankfully the plane had no bombs on board at the time and an engine shielded the rescuers from the small arms ammunition that was exploding¹³⁵.

1946, landing craft along the Torridge

Visitors returning to the area for the summer season were greeted with scores of landing craft along the shores of the Torridge and at Instow. Westward Ho! was still under military control and the decision had been taken to set up a training ground for Combined Operations in the Taw/Torridge estuary¹³⁶.

1940s, gravel barging restricted

For much of the preceding half-century gravel barges had been a familiar site in East-the-Water, with the Kivell barging dynasty based there and gravel routinely landed at the wharves, initially for potteries and later for builder's merchants. By the 1940s, however, it had become apparent that so much gravel had already been removed that it had effected the hydrology of the estuary, making navigation more difficult (through shifting the Bideford Bar and making navigation channels shallower and more prone to change), destroying the mussel trade, and removing the protection given through gravel banks acting as natural breakwaters¹³⁷. Grant and Hughes suggest that the measures taken were too few and too late to stop this decline¹³⁸.

133 David Fulford (former Mayor of Bideford), 2016, personal communication.

134 "Medal for a WW2 Bideford Auxiliary unit Member" Posted by Bideford 500 at <https://blog.bidefordheritage.co.uk/category/category4/> By Fri, September 20, 2013 13:51

135 "Central Chancery of the Orders of Knighthood" London Gazette, 31 Aug 1945, quoted at "Awards for Gallantry" Durham Mining Museum. Online: <http://www.dmm.org.uk/galantry/z459.htm> Accessed 20 Nov 2020. Original statement given to the police by John Walters read by Peter Christie at the 75th Anniversary commemoration of the crash Bideford Commemoration of Canadian Wellington crash on 7 March 1945. Online Accessed 20 Nov 2020.

136 'North Devon "Invasion"' Western Times 09 August 1946 p4 c2

137 Grant & Hughes. North Devon Barges. Appledore, Devon: North Devon Museum Trust, 1975, 21

138 Grant & Hughes. North Devon Barges. Appledore, Devon: North Devon Museum Trust, 1975, 21

1950, a checkpoint on the bridge

For a weekend in August 1950 the Ministry of Transport announced that drivers could be stopped on the eastern end of Bideford Bridge, their aim being to solicit views on the future pattern of trunk roads in the area. This was one of four check-points which were active in the area¹³⁹.

1950, tender for shops at Barton Tors

Acceptance of a tender for £6,628, for four shops at Barton Tors, was recommended to the Ministry of Health, by the Council¹⁴⁰.

1954, White Funnel Lines resume cruises from Bideford

In 1954 the White Funnel Line celebrated their centenary, as part of which they announced their first trip from Bideford since 1924 would be on Friday, 4th June. Their proposed itinerary included cruises along the coast toward Clovelly, round trips to Ilfracombe, and day trips to Swansea¹⁴¹. On that first excursion for thirty years the wharf-workers witnessed the *Cardiff Queen* cruising past, a twin funnelled vessel, built in 1947, and capable of carrying over a thousand people at speeds of up to 18 knots¹⁴².

1956, private wharves at their busiest since the war

In March 1956 a local press report suggested that Bideford's private wharves were at their busiest since the war¹⁴³. The article inferred that some of the wharves had been deepened to take coastal vessels, the latest of which being that of Messrs I Baker and Sons Ltd. An accompanying picture showed m.v. *Celebrity* discharging cement at Baker's, and m.v. *Stan Woolway* discharging gravel at the Devon Trading Co Ltd. The correspondent noted "If need be, Bideford, including its municipal quays, can now accommodate five vessels of aggregate tonnage 3,500 at the same time. Bideford (including the private docks) handles sea-cargoes averaging 2,000 tons weekly."

Shortly after this, in June 1956, the m.v. *Stan Woolway* would become possibly the first of the local sand dredgers to be fitted with radar¹⁴⁴.

1963, exceptional winter ice on the Torridge

The Torridge froze over and the severe pressure of ice building up against the bridge was a cause for concern¹⁴⁵. Scaffolding was erected to reinforce the bridge against the pressure.

139 "Bideford Check for Minister" North Devon Journal 10 August 1950 p5 c3

140 "Applications for Bideford Houses" North Devon Journal 21 September 1950 p8 c3

141 "Sailings from Bideford (Town Quay) by the Steamers of the White Funnel Fleet" poster for 1954 season. P. A. Cambell, 1954

142 Brian Keitch. "Favourite ports and paddlers" posted 18 Feb 2017. The Barry GEM. Online: <http://www.barry-today.co.uk> Accessed 11 Jan 2019

143 "Bideford's Private Wharves Busier" Bideford Weekly Gazette. 29th March 1956. Clipping reproduced by Bideford Archive. Online: <https://www.bidefordarchive.org.uk/featured-articles?id=488> Accessed 3 Mar 2021

144 "First Sand Dredger To Have Radar Fitted?" Bideford Weekly Gazette. 29th June 1956. Clipping reproduced by Bideford Archive. Online: <https://www.bidefordarchive.org.uk/featured-articles?id=489> Accessed 3 Mar 2021

145 Frank E Whiting & Peter Christie. *The Long Bridge of Bideford Through The Centuries*. Bideford: Bideford Bridge Trust, 2006, pg 19. "Bideford Bridge in Winter, January 1963; 1963; 130" photograph held by Burton Art Gallery and Museum. Published on sHive. Online <https://ehive.com/collections/4566/objects/159564/bideford-bridge-in-winter-january-1963> Accessed 5 Sept 2017

1963, East-the-Water features on a matchbox

In 1963 Bideford Bridge (and with it East-the-Water's wharves) featured as one of only four designs in the Old West Country Series of matches, produced by the Two Counties Match Company of Honiton.¹⁴⁶

1965, last passenger service on the railway

27 March 1963 marked the publication of Beeching's report "The Reshaping of British Railways," which made the closure of the rail line to Bideford one of its recommendations. Thus, 2 October 1965 saw the last regular passenger service leave Bideford Station, severing a major artery into the town¹⁴⁷. Occasional passenger excursions, however, continued to use the line from time to time. As some demand remained for occasional freight specials, the odd train still used the line, primarily for the transport of clay. These too would cease, but not until 1982.

1966ish?, Zoo animals arrive by train

Derek Barnes recalls animals for Bideford Zoo arriving by train. This Zoo was only open between May 1966 and Oct 1970¹⁴⁸.

1968, part of Bideford bridge collapsed

On 9th Jan 1968 the two western arches partially collapsed. Vital services links survived, but were threatened by any further deterioration of the situation. There was also the danger of a gas explosion if the main was severed, though this was avoided¹⁴⁹. The bridge also carried the transatlantic telephone cable, which leaves our shores in Cornwall. That, unfortunately, was severed¹⁵⁰. Yet that was only temporarily, and when the telephone link via the Long Bridge was finally closed in January 1981, it had linked the countries for 150 years¹⁵¹.

The need for people to continue to get across the Torridge became a pressing issue and various means were deployed to get those without cars across the river, including: travel via Great Torrington; a "Salmon Boat Ferry" operated by the towns Salmon fishermen (using three boats); the use of military amphibious vehicles operating from Instow¹⁵².

1968, station buildings demolished on the west of the track

Peter Christie has published a picture from 1968, of the demolition work in progress.¹⁵³

146 "Old West Country series." Old Cornish Mine Matchbox Labels. Online:http://old-cornish-mines.co.uk/?page_id=145 Accessed 7 Jan 2018

147 "History of the Railway to Instow and Bideford" Bideford Railway Heritage Centre. Online:www.bidefordrailway.co.uk/line-history/ Accessed 11 May 2017

148 "Zebras arriving by train?" Bideford Buzz, Nov 2010, pg 9

149 Frank E Whiting & Peter Christie. The Long Bridge of Bideford Through The Centuries. Bideford:Bideford Bridge Trust, 2006, pg 21-22

150 Fielder, History of Bideford, 1985, 85

151 Fielder, History of Bideford, 1985, 98

152 Personal communication from Derek Barnes, a former Salmon Fisherman

153 Christie, Illustrations, 2008, Pg 85

1971, Western Counties Agricultural Co-Op. Assoc. wound up

In 1971 the Western Counties Agricultural Co-operative Association was wound up¹⁵⁴. and it was probably at about this period that the Association's mill on Victoria Wharf was demolished as it is marked as a mill on O.S. mapping from 1963. It does not, however, appear on the 1:2,500 O.S. map of 1973.

1975, public consulted concerning a new bridge

With the growth of traffic the Long Bridge was increasingly a bottleneck. Several proposals for a new route that bypassed the town to the north were put to the public in 1975, with responses required by 4th August. The exercise considered several approach roads and two crossing locations, as well as the possibility of bridge clearances of 32, 52, or 78 ft, or even an opening bridge.

1976, looking for a change of use for the Lion Store

Planning use history indicates that a change of use to become a retail outlet, was refused in 1976, at which time the previous owner are given as 'Fulford Trumps.' It looks as if the application was refused because a similar one had been approved elsewhere.

1980s, gasometers demolished

The gasometers were finally removed in the 1980s¹⁵⁵.

1980, construction of Ethelwynne Brown Close approved

Designed by London Architects Herber Percy & Parker, the company responsible for the 2021 design for the redevelopment of Brunswick Wharf, Ethelwynne Brown Close is listed on the UK Modern House Index, a database of modern British houses of architectural interest¹⁵⁶. Planning permission for Ethelwynne Brown Close was sought in 1979 & 1980. Thereafter, it was built in two phases. Duncan Fielder's History of Bideford included a picture of the recently completed development dating from July 1984¹⁵⁷ and in 1986 the development was awarded a commendation in the Civic Trust Awards for that year¹⁵⁸. The close is named after a former mayoress, who was organist at the Bank End mission chapel¹⁵⁹. At the time of her appointment in 1865, Etheleyenne Brown was only the second female mayor of Bideford in the 392 years since the towns charter was granted¹⁶⁰.

154 National Archives, Board of Trade papers, Ref. BT 31/43307/14088, catalogue description.

155 Peter Christie. Secret Bideford. Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley, 2015, 80

156 UK Modern House Index. Online:<http://ukmoho.co.uk/html/building/15743.html> Accessed 17 Feb 2021

157 Duncan Fielder. A History of Bideford. Chichester, Sussex: Phillimore, 1985. Fig. 28.

158 "Ethelwynne Brown Close" Built Environment Network. Online:

<https://www.civictrustawards.org.uk/benet/schemes/ethelwynne-brown-close> Accessed 17 Jan 2021

159 Communication from Joyce Eastley posted by Rose Arno, Bideford Buzz, 2011, June Edition, page 9.

Online:<http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk>. Accessed: 13 Jun 2013

160 Newspaper clipping with date but no citation, "Bideford" Bideford & District Community Archive. Online:

<https://www.bidefordarchive.org.uk/bideford?id=335&Itemid=111> Accessed 24 April 2018

1980, U. B. M. Devon Ltd. at Clarence Wharf

In 1980 United Builders Merchants Devon Ltd. appear to have moved onto Clarence Wharf (as, at that date, they sought planning permission for a new sign¹⁶¹. Later U.B.M. seem to have sold the site, which included land needed for the Woods Surgery, to Torrridge District Council, then leased back part for themselves. Sub-letting sections of it to other organisations such as Bridge M.S.C.

1982, final trains through East-the-Water

In 1982 the final freight trains rolled through East-the-Water, laden with ball-clay from Meeth¹⁶². A final passenger excursion train was run on the railway line on 6th November 1982¹⁶³

1984, work started on the River Torrridge New Bridge

Contractors Edmund Nuttall Ltd. commenced construction of the new bridge, to relieve the strain on the Barnstaple Street/Long Bridge route across the river. The new bridge was to be 650m long, with 8 spans, and constructed from 250 prestressed segments, 'glued' together¹⁶⁴.

1985, rotting boats cleared from the eastern Torrridge shore

In 1985, prompted by the accumulation of abandoned, rotting, vessels on the Torrridge's eastern shore, Torrridge District Council intervened to clear the worst of the mess.¹⁶⁵

1985, planning permission granted for the Wooda Surgery

Planning permission, originally granted for an application submitted in 1982, was re-submitted in 1985, and again approved. It detailed a Surgery/Health Centre, with parking spaces, on part of the land of UBM Ltd, and part of the old Goods Yard¹⁶⁶.

1985, the railway tracks lifted

The railway tracks were lifted in 1985, as work began to clear the line for the Taw/Torrridge Country Park (now the Tarka Trail)¹⁶⁷

1985, redevelopment of the old wharves announced

On 16/5/1985 the North Devon Journal announced plans to redevelop the Brunswick Wharf area of

161 Torrridge District Council, Planning Application no. 1/0785/1980 (1/1489/80/8/483), received 22 Aug 1980

162 "History of the Railway to Instow and Bideford" Bideford Railway Heritage Centre.

Online:www.bidefordrailway.co.uk/line-history/ Accessed 11 May 2017

163 "History of the Railway to Instow and Bideford" Bideford Railway Heritage Centre.

Online:www.bidefordrailway.co.uk/line-history/ Accessed 11 May 2017

164 British Architects in Europe First day cover issued by Edinburgh:British Philatelic Bureau & Leicester:Thought Factory, 12 May 1987

165 Christie, Illustrations 2, 2009, Pg 176

166 Torrridge District Council, Planning Application 1/0484/1982 received 26 May 1982, also 1/0171/1985 (1/484/82/8/483) received 1 May 1985.

167 "History of the Railway to Instow and Bideford" Bideford Railway Heritage Centre.

Online:www.bidefordrailway.co.uk/line-history/ Accessed 11 May 2017

East-the-Water.'s old wharves¹⁶⁸ Nothing was to come of these.

1986, the world's largest electronic organ

On 19/6/1986 the North Devon Journal reported that Wyvern Organs, Bideford, had produced the world's largest computerised electronic organ.¹⁶⁹ Wyvern were based on the old School site in Torrington Street

1986, J.H. Bennet at Brunswick Wharf

In Jan 1986 planning approval was sought for change of use at Clarence Wharf¹⁷⁰. The accompanying plan marks a coal yard at Brunswick Wharf.

A development brief, dated August 1987, identifies J. H. Bennets Ltd. [sic] coal/solid fuel distributors as present on Brunswick Wharf¹⁷¹. Other, occupants of the wharves at this point included:

- Fuelserve Ltd, coal/solid fuel distributor;
- Bideford Martial Arts Club;
- R. Harris & Sons, builder's store;
- C.S. Taylor, carpenter/joiner;
- Riverside Resprays, vehicle body repairs;
- Community Programme.

1987, Torridge District Council publishes a brief

With Torridge District Council now owning a substantial site on Clarence Wharf, and the owners of Queens and Brunswick wharves all indicating a willingness to sell, the Council drew up a Development Brief, in an attempt to set the agenda for future developments¹⁷², for example, by indicating that housing would not be considered a key element of future development (which was seen as being more a mix of homes, offices, shops, and craft industrial units), by highlighting the need to retain a sense of the history of the site, by identifying the need to preserve a walkway alongside the river front at Clarence Wharf, and by pointing out potential issues, such as the possibility that expansion of port activities might depend upon retention of facilities on this shore.

168 Peter Christie. "Further Items from Peter Christie's 'Looking Back' Column" GENUKI. 2017.

<http://genuki.cs.ncl.ac.uk/DEV/DevonMisc/NDJ-LookingBack5.html>. Accessed 18-8-2014

169 Peter Christie. "Further Items from Peter Christie's 'Looking Back' Column" GENUKI. 2017.

<http://genuki.cs.ncl.ac.uk/DEV/DevonMisc/NDJ-LookingBack5.html>. Accessed 18-8-2014

170 Torridge District Council, Planning Application no. 1/1545/1985 (1/1545/85/8/483), received 14 Jan 1986

171 Brunswick, Queens, & Clarence Wharfs Development Brief Bideford East. Torridge District Council. August 1987

Ref. GT/LSP/LOCAL PLANS/AUGUST 87

172 Brunswick, Queens, & Clarence Wharfs Development Brief Bideford East. Torridge District Council. August 1987

Ref. GT/LSP/LOCAL PLANS/AUGUST 87

1987, Bideford bypass and Torridge Bridge opened

1987 saw the completion of the new Bideford Bypass that would carry the North Devon link-road past congested Bideford¹⁷³. From an East-the-Water perspective, the new road brought some much-needed relief of the congestion in Barnstaple Street, but also made it easier for tourists to bypass Bideford's traders. Central to the bypass was the construction of a the bridge across the Torridge.

The new bridge was built of box segments, pieced together as a series of balanced cantilevers. The original specification, using only Portland blast-furnace slag cement, set too slowly to keep to schedule, so the mix was changed to include a proportion of ordinary Portland cement, each section containing a slightly different ratio, thus blending the colour change across the bridge. The finished structure, designed to look attractive, yet capable of resisting the impact of a 2500 ton displacement vessel (travelling at six knots with a 2.5 knot following tide) in conjunction with 60mph wind gusts, won the overall award in the The Concrete Society 's 1988 awards competition.¹⁷⁴

On Sunday 10 May 1987 local people were allowed to walk across the new Torridge Bridge, and also through it¹⁷⁵.

1988, Queen's Wharf merged into Brunswick Wharf

In June 1988 planning approval was sought (subsequently granted) for the open area at Queen's Wharf, then being used for car parking, to be used as an extension of the Brunswick Wharf coal-yard, providing it with a safer entrance¹⁷⁶. The applicant was J. H. Bennetts Limited, of 72 Market Jew Street, Penzance.

1988, the *John Adams* arrives on the Torridge

Whilst the *Kathleen & May* is, perhaps, the best known historic vessel associated with East-the-Water, she is not the only noteworthy vessel to have graced the eastern wharves in recent years. The *John Adams*, launched in 1934, and used as a dockyard tender by the Irish navy¹⁷⁷, was sold on to a private owner in 1988 and brought to Bideford. In 2011 she was in the hands of Peter Herbert, who began her restoration. She was designed as a steam coaster, but as steam was becoming obsolete by the time she was launched, she was fitted with a diesel engine¹⁷⁸. Unfortunately, Peter Herbert died before he could finish the restoration work, but he remains one of Bideford's enduring characters¹⁷⁹. He is credited with having sailed around the world by the age of 17 and with remarkable feats of single-handed sailing, such as:

173 Derek York. "Bideford Bypass and the New Torridge Bridge" Pages 52-59 in Highways and Transportation (The Journal of the Institute of Highways and Transportation & HTTA). May 1988 No. 5 Vol. 35. Pg 52.

174 "Award Winners in England: Torridge Bridge combines aesthetic Excellence With Construction Economy." The Aberdeen Group. 1989. N.p. Online:http://www.concreteconstruction.net/_view-object?id=00000153-8bae-dbf3-a177-9fbfb7900000 Accessed:25 Sept 2017.

175 Christie, Illustrations 2, 2009, Pg 13

176 Torridge District Council, Planning Application no. (1/1126/88/8/1067), received 10 June 1988

177 "John Adams" National Historic Ships UK Online: <http://www.nationalhistoricships.org.uk/register/244/john-adams> Accessed 27 Aug 2017

178 Michael Lee "The John Adams" The art of Michael Lees. Online:<http://www.artlees.com/paintings/109%20The%20John%20Adams.htm> Accessed 27 Aug 2017

179 Michael Lee "The John Adams" The art of Michael Lees. Online:<http://www.artlees.com/paintings/109%20The%20John%20Adams.htm> Accessed 27 Aug 2017

- bringing a ninety-foot vessel over the bar, in a force ten, whilst suffering from a broken leg¹⁸⁰;
- bringing a 300-400 ton vintage First World war freighter into Bideford and, unaccompanied, manoeuvring and mooring her¹⁸¹.

1989, an upgrade to the sewage system

New pumping stations were constructed by South West Water in East-the-Water to feed sewage to a new fine screening plant¹⁸².

1990, Clarence Wharf becomes a “temporary” car-park

In August 1990, planning approval was granted for Clarence wharf to be used temporarily as a car-park¹⁸³

1990, a needlework & tapestry manufacturer moves in

Planning history indicates the approval, in 1990, of a change of use for the Torridge Auctions site, from Lion Stores warehouse to manufacture of craft, needlework, product, office and store. The proposal was submitted by A & S Deighton, Quality Needlework & Tapestry Manufacturers.

1991, the Tarka Trail opens

In 1987 the Taw/Torridge Country Park was established using the disused railway line between Barnstaple and Bideford, the line having been purchased from British Rail for £515,000¹⁸⁴.

On 21 May 1991 the linear Taw/Torridge Country Park between Barnstaple and Meeth is said to have opened to the public as the Tarka Country Park¹⁸⁵.

A Tarka Project plaque, on site at Bideford Station, identifies that a ceremony took place nearly a year later, when H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, officially opened the Tarka Trail on 28 May 1992¹⁸⁶.

Elsewhere Tarka Project documentation states that the Tarka Country Park only finally adopted its Tarka Trail identity in 1994¹⁸⁷.

180 “Our Nautical Heritage” Bideford Buzz, undated. Online: <http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/history/our-nautical-heritage/> Accessed 27 Aug 2017

181 Michael Lee “The John Adams” The art of Michael Lees. Online: <http://www.artlees.com/paintings/109%20The%20John%20Adams.htm> Accessed 27 Aug 2017

182 Water Services, Volume 93. Fuel & Metallurgical Journals, Limited, 1989. Page 6.

183 Torridge District Council, Planning Application no. 1/1417/1990, received 15 Aug 1990

184 "Recreational Infrastructure: Tarka Trail". Tarka Project. Tarka Country.

Online: <http://www.tarka-country.co.uk/tarkaproject/recinfra.html> Accessed 31 July 2009

185 "Recreational Infrastructure: Tarka Trail". Tarka Project. Tarka Country.

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186 Photograph taken by R.I.Kirby on 8 May 2013.

187 "Recreational Infrastructure: Tarka Trail". Tarka Project. Tarka Country.

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1994, Torridge Auctions opens

Planning history indicates a change of use of the Torridge Auctions site to an auction room was permitted in 1994

1996, public support a new plan for Brunswick Wharf

Unimpressed by designs for a 9 million pound complex drawn up by leisure consultants Thorburns, Verona Tammes, of Westward Ho!, launched a somewhat smaller-scale counter proposal, including a shopping mall, science gallery, motel, and restaurants. A petition supporting the proposal soon gained five hundred signatures and a model of proposed development was displayed in a High Street shop¹⁸⁸.

21st Century

2001, the Kathleen & May re-launched

The last few sailing coasters to grace our shores all operated out of the Taw and Torridge ports. Of these, the last trading schooner was the Bideford registered, 136 ton, *Kathleen & May*¹⁸⁹. After ending her working life in 1960 and then passing through a succession of other owners, she was eventually bought by Bideford businessman Steve Clarke, who, with the help of considerable local support, lovingly restored her¹⁹⁰. Re-launched in 2001¹⁹¹, she moored at Brunswick Wharf functioning as a tourist attraction¹⁹², and becoming something of a symbol of the community. Eventually, amidst considerable local disappointment that the wherewithal was not forthcoming to keep her in Bideford, she was sold again and moved to Liverpool. Her legacy lived on for a while in the logo of the local primary school¹⁹³, and still does in the naming of the developments at Kathleen Grange and May Court.

2001 Manteo Way, an Industrial Link Road, opened

The opening of Manteo Way on 17 May 2001¹⁹⁴, combined with the decline in Bideford's port activities, paved the way for the focus of industry to migrate away from the wharves, by offered far better road access and more modern facilities for businesses.

188 Undated clipping from the North Devon Journal, c. August 1996 (including picture ref F290A/18)

189 "Kathleen & May" in Paul Brown, *Britain's Historic Ships: A Complete Guide to the Ships that Shaped the Nation*, Bloomsbury, 2017, N.p.

190 "Kathleen & May" in Paul Brown, *Britain's Historic Ships: A Complete Guide to the Ships that Shaped the Nation*, Bloomsbury, 2017, N.p.

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192 The sign advertising here presence was still there in 2016

193 In 2014 the ship logo was on display outside the school, but on the website of June 2017 the logo had changed

194 Plaque sited at the eastern end of the road. 20

2002, UNESCO North Devon Biosphere Reserve expands

In 1976, Braunton Burrows, one of the finest dune systems in the northern hemisphere, was designated a biosphere reserve under the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme. The reserve was then significantly expanded in 2002, to become the first of series of "new style" biosphere reserves in the United Kingdom¹⁹⁵, reserves that acknowledge, study, and interact with the changing patterns of human activity in their hinterland. The East-the-Water shore, part of a Site of Special Scientific Interest that covers the whole of the Torridge up to Bideford Bridge, falls within the buffer zone, or second tier, of the reserve¹⁹⁶.

2009, James May's *Toy Stories* takes over the Tarka

In 2009 the TV program *James May's Toy Stories* featured an attempted to reconnect the site of Bideford station with Barnstaple Junction, using OO scale models. Unfortunately, the last train, the Hornby prototype model for the production models of a Class 395 "Javelin", and - burnt out at Instow at 12:18am the day after the trains left Barnstaple at around 3:00pm. In 2011, May returned to complete the challenge with the help of the German model railway attraction Miniature Wonderland, racing several model trains over the 9.89 miles from Barnstaple to Bideford. The first train to arrive at Bideford was a Hornby Intercity 125, followed by a hydrogen-powered train and finally, May's own model of LNER 'Pacific' 4472 Flying Scotsman.¹⁹⁷

2016, changes to the gas supply infrastructure

Use of directional drilling to lay a new gas-supply pipe-line under the Torridge, to support the level of new development in the area (and presumably reduce the vulnerability of the supply line that runs under the bridge)¹⁹⁸.

2021, planning permission for development on the wharves

Granted to developer Red Earth (headed by Simon Friend). After revision to reflect input from Historic England, the design considered was somewhat less modern than the original proposals, and lower in height next to the Royal Hotel. Features included:

- multi-story apartment and studio blocks, inspired by late Victorian mills and stores (Victoria Wharf, Queen's Wharf);
- setting back existing building line opposite to the Royal Hotel;
- raising the level of the site to counter flooding whilst hiding car-parking underground;
- demolition and re-building of the 'Baker Building' next to the bridge approach;
- restoration and reinforcing of the attractive original stonework of the quayside so that it could be retained.

195 "North Devon Biosphere Reserve" UNESCO UK Man and the Biosphere Committee. Online: <http://www.unesco-mab.org.uk/north-devon-biosphere-reserve.html> Accessed 24 April 2018

196 http://www.northdevonbiosphere.org.uk/uploads/1/5/4/4/15448192/_6903360_orig.jpg Accessed 24 April 2018

197 "May Day!" Hornby, 26/02/2016, Online: <https://www.hornby.com/uk-en/news/simonsays/may-day/> Accessed: 14 July 2017. Andy Keeble. 'Picture special: James May's Tarka train race.' in *NorthDevonGazette*24. North Devon Gazette, Tuesday, April 19, 2011. Online: <http://www.northdevongazette.co.uk>. Accessed 10 Jun 2014.

198 Reported in pamphlets sent out to local residents, including the author, by the contractors.

- Public plaza, with cafe, restaurant and retail units.

Plans were approved by a majority of 8 to 1.

Un-dated and/or uncorroborated events

Some fairly recent events are a matter of local-knowledge, so are worth recording. But those who recall the story often do not recall the date, or necessarily the correct facts. Further research is usually able to corroborate (or correct) their accounts. However, for some events that proves impossible. This section is for events such as that, which seem worthy of record, but would benefit from a date or from further supporting evidence.

Wilson's fall

Whilst overseeing a hoist, to the top floor loft at Victoria Wharf, workmen had to lean out over the significant drop, and, whilst doing so, were secured by a strap around their waist. A man named Wilson was engaged in this task when the harness broke and he fell, landing in a lorry below. Fortunately, he landed on a load of empty sacks, which saved his life, even though he still broke his leg.

Appendix 1, Quays or wharves?

Whilst both wharves and quays are structures built out into the water where ships berth parallel to the shore, the original distinction was that a wharf was built on pilings, whereas a quay was built on fill. Hence, older records refer to quays on the East-the-Water shore. Latterly, the distinction seems to have been more closely related to the presence or absence of storage buildings, such as warehouses or cellars on the structure, with those with such structures being deemed wharves, even when they are built on fill. Hence, as they developed and were incrementally built upon, East-the-Water's quays became wharves.

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