

THE HISTORY OF MODBURY

Collected by Mr. & Mrs. W. A. Major,
with the generous assistance of Plymouth City Library,
and their Staff.

Copies Deposited with:-

MODBURY PARISH COUNCIL and PLYMOUTH CITY LIBRARY

March, 1959.

The following pages are a collection of historical notes written at various periods concerning the Town and Parish of MODBURY during the last thousand years.

We have reproduced them word for word, and our only additions are certain dates and references.

We have kept the various accounts separate as we found them, and the similarity of the facts gives the whole story considerable validity.

MODBURY

By George Andrews Cawse.

My native town, thou hast still the power
To charm me, as in boyhood's far-gone hour!
Years have flown on - "change, change," have passed over me
Since last I gamboll'd on thy peaceful lea; -
Time has flown by - and from the oft trod brow
Of the old green, I gaze upon thee now! -
And, tearful, mark each scene, so known, so true,
The very picture which my memory drew.

CARRINGTON.

Among the beautiful spots for which our native land is so remarkable, none present more picturesque scenery and fame of its ancient possessors, than the South Hams of Devon.

Rich in historical recollections, and glowing with beautiful landscapes, Modbury stands boldly forth, and claims her place as having sent forth from her time-hallowed Burg, Warriors, Statesmen, Physicians, Lawyers, Courtiers, Divines, Merchants, and Manufacturers.

The parish is about six miles from East to West, and three from North to South; is very pleasant, and healthily situated in a fertile part of the South Hams.

LEWIS, in his Topography, states that Modbury, called in ancient records *Motberia* (Latin), was in the possession of Wado, a Saxon Prince and General (of gigantic stature, being upwards of seven feet in height, and of enormous strength) in the time of Alfred the Great.

RISDON says, Modbury, a place for multiplicity of ancient houses, and fertility of soil inferior to few in this country.

The town is evidently of great antiquity; it is remarkably situated, and occupies the bottom and declivities of a valley; it is well sheltered, the air salubrious, and abundantly supplied with excellent water. It was built in the massive style of early days, of most durable materials, mostly stone. The door and window dressings of wrought granite, and others of framed carpentry of oak and chestnut, with overhanging stories both quaint and picturesque, and extensive offices, fitting residences of powerful and warlike families. Indeed, at the present day, few towns possess so many noble mansions and residences, well built, and which are occupied by opulent and wealthy families.

Numerous remains, in ruins, of extensive dwellings in Church Street and Brownston Street, existed so late as the eighteenth century, known

by the name of old walls, of which tradition is scant. However, to establish (if possible) its early foundation, I have collected the following as having occurred in the neighbourhood, which, with the fact of its rich manors existing before the Conquest, and given by the Conqueror to his followers, I hope will be sufficient.

POLWHELE believes the first known settlers in these parts were from Armenia (the then seat of refinement in Asia), a country set down in ancient geography as nearly between the Caspian and Euxine seas, and thinks the name Ermington is corrupted from a word directly founded on the name of the country whence they came.

Geoffrey of Monmouth states that Brutus, great grandson of *Aeneas* (Greeks), landed at Totnes, 1100, B.C., and established a government in the country. Also, 71, B.C., the Roman Emperor, Vespasian, landed at Torbay, to war with Arviragus, sixteen years after Caesar landed, and was defeated in Kent.

438, Ambrosius, a powerful British Prince, landed at Totnes with ten thousand Armonicans (Gauls) to aid the Britons against the Saxons.

851, the Danes were defeated near Totnes by Ethelwolf (his chief residence and palace being at Yealmpton.)

875, the Danes arrived in the Exe, spoiled the city of Exeter, and were subsequently routed by King Alfred.

876, the Danes, landing from thirty-three ships, were defeated by Wortiger, Earl of Devon, their chief, Ubba, and nine hundred men slain, and their standard taken at Kenwith Castle, near Kingsbridge, and now called Hennaborough.

We may naturally infer from the preceding, that Modbury contributed her share in the struggles that surrounded her, and was, from its being the centre of supply, its markets, fairs, &c., more ancient, or at least coeval with Yealmpton, Ermington, Kingsbridge, Totnes, &c., and from its proximity to the coast, and otherwise eligible situation, was made choice of by its founders as most fitting for commerce, and from its markets and fairs, for supplying the surrounding country with necessities and even luxuries in those early times, hence its wealth and importance among the early towns.

The Parish is in the Deanery of Plympton, St. Mary, and in Stephen's reign contained a cell of Franciscan Monks.

To the Abbey of St. Peter, sure dive in Normandy, to which it was given by Ruan of Exon, dedicated to St. Gregory, and about £70 per annum value. It appears from Grove, that on the accession of Henry V to the throne, he began to think of recovering what the English had lost in

France, and commenced war with that country, in which he was greatly incited by the Bishops; and as a preliminary, at a parliament held at Leicester, in March, 1414, all the Alean Priories were given to the King, with all their lands, revenues, &c. and Henry VI gave Penquit and other lands belonging to the Modbury Priory, to Eton College, which he founded. It was one of the earliest religious foundations, and called an Alean Priory, for Monks of the Franciscan or French order.

Tradition assigns the site of the above, adjoining the higher part of the Churchyard. There were some remains, at least, of an ancient edifice, with large arches walled up, and converted into a barn, called Scotland, which almost effaced every appearance of antiquity. However, the two fields on the other side of the road are called Priors Parks to this day.

Leland says that in 1540, the site of the priory could be distinctly traced on the north side of the church, which is most probable, as in digging graves in the new ground they frequently come to old foundations.

Dugdale says the name William occurs as Prior of Modbury before the time of Henry II, 1150.

Vincent de Fulchis	July 21,	1275
Nicholas de Causes	Sept. 21,	1321
William de Warren		1334
John de Fovea	June 14,	1345
John Galtevus	June 9,	1349
Robert de Courcey		1351
Phillip de Furnavus	April 1,	1362
Gilbert de Billeyo		1375
John Mychell		1385
John Roper		1398
Richard Loycester		1406
William Franchillon		1415
Adam Prideaux	July 18,	1423
William Bouselyn	March 18,	1430

The church evidently underwent great alteration in former times, as it consisted, at the destruction of the priory, of the nave and part of the south aisle, so far as the Chapel of the Virgin Mary, and a lower tower, but the addition of the north aisle, and the continuation of the south part to the S.E. corner, and greatly beautifying the interior by the Champernoun family, made the Church of Modbury a noble and handsome structure, once forming a portion of the Abbey of Franciscans. It is very ancient, the south part considerably more so than the north (which, according to tradition, was built by the Champernouns) it is now very bare of monumental decorations.

The only one of any degree of elegance was erected to one of the Sweet family, who died 1690, a bachelor of twenty-five. However, from several niches and mutilated remains of statues (especially one of the Champernouns in complete armour), which appear to have lain in state, it is evident the church was once more pompously ornamented.

The church, no doubt, suffered greatly in the troublesome times of Charles I, and that Cromwell's soldiers laid their sacrilegious hands on every thing of value. They did not leave even a square of stained glass in the windows, nor a monumental brass in the floor, but mutilated and destroyed every remnant of our ancestors' piety and taste.

Tradition has it that they made a barrack of the Church for the troops, and a stable for their horses, and wantonly destroyed every object of devotion and antiquity.

This noble fane, now stripped of a great portion of its ancient character, magnificent in decay, was built for defence as well as worship. Evidences still exist of its early birth in the warlike character of the south part. In those early days, Ecclesiastics were wont to gird the sword as well as the cassock, and were the architects and preceptors of all degrees of learning then known. In those ancient and troublesome times they were frequently obliged to assemble their establishments and retainers to resist the encroachments of some powerful neighbour. The porch and parapets of the church were crenelated or battlemented, and turret stairs (now existing) leading from the porch to the roof, from whence they could hurl their means of defence, as the thunders of the church by the prior, stones, arrows, boiling water, and stones, heated, and cast from iron slings by the vassals. The windows were also guarded by massive iron bars, rendering the churches of those early days, castles of defence.

Such was the state of our ancient church in the time of the first Edward, when he caused the manor, &c., to be vested in the great founder of the Champernoun family in Modbury. The abbey then existed in prosperity, and received great augmentation from the piety of its newly established lords.

The steeple is worthy of particular attention, being carried from the base to the vane without any projection, and is a masterpiece of construction, one hundred and thirty-four feet in height, the upper part built or added (the tower being coeval with the church), and supposed to have been designed by Sir Arthur Champernoun about 1621. It has a musical peal of six bells, being the recasts, in the eighteenth century, of five original ones, which had the name and arms of the Champernouns - Campo Arnulphi - on them, and which the ancients thus eulogized:-

Hark to Modbury bells,
How they do quiver:
Better than Ermington bells
Down by the river.

The five original bells belonged to the abbey, and were of Norman origin, long waisted, and in ringing could only be swayed; they were of exquisite tone, but could not be rung up as the present set of musical bells can be. The old-fashioned Norman shaped bells, and the mode of ringing, exist in some parts of France to the present day.

The noble old church was restored, 1859, 60, chiefly by the exertion of the late lamented Vicar, Rev. N. Oxenham.

The parish was distinguished into Great and Little Modbury, and contained many manors possessed by ancient and powerful families. The chief manor was the Vaultorts, Barons of Harberton, whose towering castle was Tremarton, on the River Tamar, in Cornwall, which they built, and which Roger de Vaultort conveyed, with other lands, to Sir Alexander Okerton, Knt., who had married Joan, the widow of Ralph Vaultort, by whom he had issue, Sir James Okerton; he dying without issue, Modbury and the whole of the lands formerly granted to Sir Alex. Okerton were conveyed, by command of King Edward I, 1272, to Sir Richard Champernoun, a distinguished soldier of the Cross under that warlike Prince (a branch of the valorous house of Champernoun of Ilfracombe), who married a daughter of said Joan, by Richard, Earl of Cornwall, King of the Romans, &c. (a younger son of King John), whose mistress she had been, and whom Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, called sister in a grant made by him to the said Richard and Joan of the Assize of bread and ale, 12 Edward I.

Other branches of this noble family accompanied the gallant Edward to the Holy Land, where they greatly distinguished themselves, and added to the glory of their name.

Sir Richard, for his services, was rewarded with the hand of Joan, as before stated, thereby allying himself to Royalty, and grant of the Manor of Modbury, and other lands. He was greatly favoured by his noble patron, and accompanied him in his expedition into Scotland.

Carew, in his survey, says that Richard Champernoun took upon himself Royal attributes from his marriage with the daughter of the King of the Romans, from a deed which he (Carew) had seen, running thus:- Ego, Richardus de Campo Arnulphi Rex. Romanorum semper Augustus.

From Sir Richard, of Court House, North, and of Modbury Town, descended a most noble race, most of whom were knights, and matched into divers great houses, as Fortescue, Valletort, Kitley, Dawbury, Hele, Bonvill, Courtney, Carew, Mountjoy, Popham, Crosker of Lynam, Willouby, Lord Brook, &c., from which, branched abroad, have planted themselves at various places, as Bear, Uंबरley, Dartington, Bigbury, North Tawton, &c., and who in ancient evidence are written Campo Arnulphi, most of whom greatly distinguished themselves in the service of their country.

Levis states that in 1280, Sir Richard Champernoun obtained Royal License to fortify his manorial residence; the house was castellated, and adorned with towers and outworks, strongly built according to the then mode of warfare, with ditch, parapet, posterns, and drawbridge, to render their stronghold impregnable. They were assisted, no doubt, in carrying out the works, by the monks of the adjoining priory (Franciscans), who, according to Froissart, far excelled the English in the military architecture of that early time.

In 1570, 12 Elizabeth, we find Henry Champernoun, son of Sir Phillip, of Court House, enrolling a band of one hundred gentleman volunteers from Modbury and the neighbourhood, which Queen Elizabeth permitted him to command and transport to France, free of expense, for the service of the Protestant Princes, and bore on their standard this motto: *Finem det mihi virtus* - thus (Let valour decide the cause) they were well received by the Queen and Princes of Navarre, but neither French or English historians give any particulars of services performed.

A noble and singular instance of patriotism and devotion to the cause of the Reformed Church, which will scarcely find a parallel in any age or country, worthy the great and ancient name they bore. Among the above was Walter Raleigh, afterwards the celebrated Sir Walter, then a youth of seventeen, nephew of the commander, son of Walter Raleigh, Esq., of Fardel, in the Parish of Comwood, and Katharine a daughter of the House of Champernoun of Modbury; she was also mother of the celebrated Sir John, Sir Humphrey, and Sir Adrian, Gilberts (by her first husband, Otho Gilbert, Esq., of Compton), all celebrated as soldiers and men of enterprise in discovery and colonization in the service of their country. In Sir Humphrey originated the idea of a North West passage; he wrote elaborately on navigation and mathematics, was intent on the discovery of the remote regions of America; his great aim to convert the heathenish inhabitants to a knowledge of Christ, and was the first of our glorious band of pioneers in the spread of the Gospel.

Sir Adrian fitted out an expedition to search for the passage under Captain John Davis, which was not successful, but the discovery of the Straits which bear his name (Davis Straits) was the result.

Modbury was highly favoured in giving the early impulses to the Gilberts under the eye of their mother and the warlike Champernouns. Raleigh, also, following in their steps, made his first essay in arms, and received the rudiments of a refined education there, and could almost be called a Modbury man.

The Modbury families were greatly favoured by Queen Elizabeth. Mrs. Ashley, another daughter of the House of Champernoun, was one of the gentlewomen to the Queen; she introduced her nephews, the Gilberts, to Her Majesty, who, from the nobleness of their presence, their

gallant conduct, learning, and courtly address, bestowed the honour of Knighthood on the three brothers. She took a great interest in the expeditions in which Sir Humphrey (particularly) was engaged, as the following letter to Sir Humphrey from Raleigh will show:-

BROTHER, - I have sent you a token from Her Majesty, an anchor guided by a lady (a golden anchor, with a large pearl at the peak), as you see; and further, Her Highness willed me to send you word that she wished you as great good hap, and safety to your ships as if she herself were there in person, desiring you to have a care of yourself as of that which she tendereth, and therefore for her sake you must provide for it accordingly. Further, she commandeth that you leave your picture with me. For the rest, I leave it to our meeting, or to the report of the bearer, who would needs be the bearer of this good news, so I commit you to the will and protection of God, who sends us such life or death as he shall please or hath appointed.

Richmond, this Friday morning,
Your true brother,
WALTER RALEIGH.

Raleigh also, in time, came under Her Majesty's favour; was rewarded with the guerdon of the Brave; was knighted by Her Majesty's own hands.

Queen Elizabeth was very partial to Devonshire people (being connected with Devonshire families, Prince says, her mother being of that county, no doubt biassed her inclination); was pleased to extol the good and virtuous conduct of the ladies and of the gentlemen; she could not bestow a greater or more flattering encomium, than that they were born courtiers, and a credit and pattern to her Court.

In those spirit-stirring days, when the chief employment was arms, the streets of the ancient town resounded with the martial sound of mail-clad knights, and the stately tramp of war-horses from the estates and manors of their warlike possessors to head-quarters, ready to do battle in a foreign land, in the cause of the oppressed. Their motto most characteristic; worthy only high and chivalrous soldiers.

The war-note of the trumpet also was often heard; for in Edward 1, 1272, we find (by Prince) a herald going through the country summoning by sound of trumpet and proclamation, knights and gentlemen to attend in arms, with esquires and men-at-arms, the King's service into Scotland.

How picturesque and exciting the scenes - so noble, so chivalrous, and so different from anything we have ever witnessed - the air filled with the clink and clatter of the armourer; the bustle and hum of preparations, and leave-taking of stately dames and love-sick maidens.

See how the barbed and richly-caparisoned war-horse, with reined-in neck and heavy tramp, clangs through the streets to the war-cry of a Champernoun or a Fortescue, and the silver note of the clarion. There, firm as a rock - a tower of strength - sits the gallant mail-clad knight; his armour coldly gleaming in the sunbeam, and his plume waving with the wind. Near him his younger fellow, with sword as yet unstained, advancing to his first battle-field - gayly stream his silken and embroidered pennon - proudly and eager for fame beats his heart, as he looks on his richly-wrought scarf, the favour-token of some beauteous maiden.

A gallant spectacle! a truly noble array! as the valorous and chivalrous soldiers wind their way from the time-hallowed town: esquires with watchful eyes, bold hearts, and ready hands, stout yeomen, with gleaming bills and well-strung bows, ready to do good service in the bloody strife so prevalent in those early times.

Sir Arthur Champernoun, brother of the above Henry, was an eminent commander in the Irish wars. Was knighted for his valour and good conduct there by the Earl of Essex, and added greatly to the honour of his name.

Sir Richard Champernoun, eldest brother to Arthur and Henry, married a daughter of Chief Justice Popham; (Lord Campbell, the present Lord Chancellor, states, in his LIVES OF THE CHIEF JUSTICES, that Sir John Popham, in his younger days, was the intimate and constant associate of the most profligate and desperate characters, in company with whom he obtained his living by robbing travellers of their valuables at Shooter's Hill and elsewhere. Sir Richard marrying a daughter of Popham, makes one think they were birds of a feather; for tradition says the Champernouns were not very particular, and were guilty of similar practices.) and by his splendid retinue and sumptuous way of living, greatly exhausted his estate. Their tastes for music, especially singing (according to tradition), was remarkable, being themselves great proficients, and which was, in many cases, very disastrous to them. For in Edward I, during the war with Scotland (Miss Porter states that), one of the Champernouns being Governor of Ayr, was surprised by WALLACE while giving a concert to his officers and friends, and the whole were destroyed by fire and sword. To carry out their propensity, they did not scruple at mutilating the boys of the choir (to retain their primitive voices). And in Queen Elizabeth's reign, Sir Richard being at Court with a host of attendants and his splendid band, attended Her Majesty on her pleasure trips; at which she was greatly delighted, and begged Sir Richard that when he left for the West he would leave his music with her. Sir Richard told Her Majesty he was sorry he could not oblige her, as it was a fancy of his, and he hoped she would allow him to indulge in it; which so greatly incensed Her Majesty, that she sought by every means to show her resentment; and on its being intimated to her the means made use of with the singers, she ordered actions to be brought against Sir Richard, which cost him twenty five manors of land, and greatly reduced the family;

but Sir Richard dying without issue, the remainder of the estates came to his brother, Sir Arthur, who, on his return from the wars, settled at the ancient residence, and, by a happy marriage (with Amy, heiress of John Cruckern of Childhay), did in some measure restore the same. Sir Arthur was not only skilled in the art of war, but in many other ingenious arts, particularly architecture, as may be inferred from a model of a pleasure-house for the Dartington improvements, which Mr. Carew tells us (in his survey) he had from him, and where this author is pleased to bestow this character of him, that he was a perfectly accomplished gentleman. He died at Modbury, and lies interred among his ancestors there, without any funeral monument, about the beginning of the reign of James I, the family holding Modbury more than five hundred years.

This noble and wealthy family, in Henry IV's reign, possessed no less than twenty-four knights fees in Cornwall, besides what he had in Devon; when, in King Henry IV, Champernoun of Modbury, was no less than £300. in the subsidy book; and in Henry VII was possessor of twenty-seven manors of land.

The noble Palace Court-house, the princely residence of the Champernouns, in Modbury, was a magnificent structure (its site, the upper part of Church Street); it was castellated in the 13th century by royal licence, and fitted up with that splendour as it made a marvel to behold, and of which scarcely a vestige remains.

In its noble halls royalty were entertained, princes feasted, and bards sang; and scenes of the greatest splendour and revelry were enacted by the once powerful family.

SMOLLET tells us, that the King of the Romans resided in these parts, but does not state where particularly: probably at Kingston and gave the name of Kingstown to the place.

CAMDEN states, that Richard Plantagenet, King of the Romans, the father of the first Lady Champernoun, of Modbury, was the richest prince in Europe (the revenues at that time, from the coinage of tin, &c., being enormous), and that he was a powerful, religious, valiant, and prudent prince.

He was crowned King of the Romans at Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1257; chosen unanimously by the electors and princes of Germany, and by the sacred Roman empire. The electors (needy) knowing he was wealthy, and anxious to be elected, well fleeced him. The following verse was made on his having purchased his way to the dignity:— My money wedded Cornwall unto Rome. Again, he was obliged to spend the golden oil to maintain the light of his imperial lamps.

His residence in Cornwall was at Tintagel on a peninsula, at the end of a lofty hill; with posterns of iron, gates of brass, drawbridge

(seen in Leland's time, 1550), and every appliance to render the ancient castle of the Earls of Cornwall impregnable. Here the Kings of the Romans lived in regal splendour, and his son Edmund after him. But after Edmund's death the castle was soon neglected, and what was once so noble, soon became a heap of ruins:-

On a steep rock, within a winding bay,
A castle stood, surrounded by the sea;
Its thunder shook around the trembling hill:
Tintagel of old 'twas call'd - now, Tintagel.

SPEED says, to be elected and crowned King of the Romans was the ancient mode of providing an emperor elect, or heir apparent to the empire of Rome, and required great ability, wealth, and influence, to be made Roman Emperor.

LEWIS states, that during the wars between Charles I and his parliament, the noble residence of Court-house was stormed and taken, with great slaughter, by parliamentary soldiers from Plymouth and a company of club men.

In February, 1646, Sir Nicholas Stanning surrounded the castle with two thousand royalist soldiers, to prevent, if possible, further destruction; but he was attacked with terrible impetuosity by the club men, and after a severe engagement of several hours, the Royalists were complete routed, and almost all cut up. The destruction from assault and plunder to the venerable pile and surrounding works were deemed irreparable, so that the palace of the once mighty Champernouns in Modbury soon fell into decay.

The Dartington branch is all that remains of this once noble and ancient house; their possession of which is as follows:-

On the suppression of religious houses in Henry VIII's time, one of the Champernouns (Sir Philip, of Modbury House), then great at court, seeing some courtiers on their knees to the King, begging something, and thinking they would not ask anything to their prejudice, knelt among them. Their suit being soon granted, they denied Champerhoun any share of the boon, saying, he did not belong to their Company. He appealed to the King, whether he was included in the Royal Bounty; when Henry declared he was, and granted him the Abbey of Polstro, near Exeter, which Sir Philip gave to his youngest son, Sir Arthur, who exchanged it soon after with a gentleman named Aylsworth, of London, for the more noble seat of Dartington, near Totness, where they continue to reside in the noble and ancient house, on a rich and extensive domain, greatly beloved be all around; dispensing benefits with a liberal hand; attending particularly to the wants of the poor and labourers on the estate, in the comfort of suitable residences; and great attention by the ladies of the family in sickness and provision for the aged in

cottages in the style of almshouses, designed and carried out by the late venerable Archdeacon Froude, Rector of Dartington and Lord of Edmonton, in our own parish, under whose able direction the late worthy owner greatly improved his estate, and partially restored the ancient residence; was also erecting a church, to accommodate his distant tenantry (the ancient church being a great distance from some parts of the parish), two columns of which were exhibited at the Universal Exhibition in Hyde Park, London, 1851; they were beautiful specimens of marble, the produce of his own domain, and exquisite specimens of art, and attracted universal attention; the prosecution of which was suspended for a time by the death of the noble proprietor, who died in London while in attendance on the Exhibition, in all the pride of youth, leaving a numerous family to deplore his loss.

The extinction of the old stock of Champernouns of Ilfracombe I here insert for the gratification of the curious:-

Elizabeth, daughter and heiress of the late Sir William (whom Prince, in his WORTHIES OF DEVON, calleth a frolic lady), wedded three days after her father's death to William Poleglass, and had a son and daughter - Richard, an idiot, and Margaret. Poleglass dying, Elizabeth remarried to John Sergeaux within two days of his death. Richard Poleglass, her son, dying of the plague at an abbey in Yorkshire, where he was privately conveyed, his sister Margaret became heiress, and married Sir John Hearle, who became possessed of all the Champernoun's inheritance about 1316; and, after numerous descents, became attainer to the Crown.

LITTLE MOBBURY, in Henry III's reign, was the dwelling of Sir Ralph de la Rouse (or Ralph the Red). Of this race was Sir Robert de Rouse, a valiant captain in Cherbourg, in Richard II's reign, and whose ancient name inherited the land for many generations. It is now divided into several small estates, possessed by different owners.

YARNACOMBE, the dwelling of the De la Harts until of late years, when it was purchased by William Mackworth Praid, Esq.

BROWNSTON was, in Henry III's reign, the property of Ralph de Morvel (being given him by Reginald de Valletort, Lord of Modbury), whose son, Adam de Morvel, granted it to Baldwin de Wayford, who gave it to the Abbey of Buckfastleigh, and is now broken up into small farms, and occupied by different persons.

ORCHARTON, a very ancient seat and manor; formerly the residence of considerable families of that name, until about 1176, when the Lady DOROTHY ORCHARTON, heiress of that ancient name and manor, brought it and other lands by marriage to Herden Prideaux, son of Nicholas, Lord of Prideaux, in Cornwall.

PAGANUS DE PRIDEAUX was Lord of Prideaux Castle, in Cornwall, where

he resided before the Norman Conquest. In 1169, Nicholas, Lord of Prideaux, dying, left his lands in Devon, which he greatly increased by marrying the heiress of Orchardton, the Lady Dorothy. His descendant, Sir John Prideaux, of Orchardton, who killed his kinsman, Sir William Bigbury, at Five Crosses, near Modbury, to obtain his pardon, parted with the manors of Culm John, Newton, Popplesford, Halcomb Dean, Godford, Storkinghead, and Conninghambhead; yet left Orchardton and Allington to his son, which continued for thirteen descendants, and now belongs to John Bulteel, Esq., of Fleet.

OLDAPORT, a most ancient manor and residence, near Orchardton. In elder ages it was a castle of defence, and had inhabitants of the name, and of great repute. The place was called formerly De la Port, and is now the property of Lord Ashburton. Many ancient spear or arrow heads have been found on the grounds, and are now in the possession of Mr. Pearse, the present occupier.

EDMENTON had anciently lords of that name. The last of the family left Alice, who was married to William le Rouse, second son of Ralph le Rouse, of Little Modbury. The property now belongs to R. Froud, Esq., son of the late Venerable Archdeacon R. H. Froude, Rector of Dartington, in whose family it has been for many descents.

EAST AND WEST LEIGH, formerly Leigh Challons. The first of that name was Hardwinus, son of Earl Challons, who married the Lady Florence Leigh, the lady of the land; of whose family were divers knights. After divers descents, this land fell away by females in marriage to Sir John St. Aubin, Dennis of Combraleigh, and Reginald Trethurf, and is now in the possession of many small farmers. Henry Challons, of this house, made a voyage with Sir Walter Raleigh for the discovery of Virginia and New England, and was inhumanly handled by the Spaniards.

SHILSTON, or Shilverston according to PRINCE, the lands and dwelling of John de Shilverston, whose daughter, Eleanor, married to Sir Richard Brancheim; secondly, to John de Ashley. The said Richard had issue - Joan, married to Sir Richard Ruish, whose son, Sir Richard, in Edward I's reign, did contend with the said John Ashley for the said lands. Afterwards, Robert Hills, the judge, settled his dwelling here until 1614, when the estates were purchased by the elder branch of the Savery's, who were merchants of Totnes, possessed of considerable wealth, and of great antiquity; in whose family it still remains. RISDON says, the Saverys were originally from Brittany, and lived at Willing (their country seat), in the parish of Rattery. Divers descents enjoyed fair possession, and are allied to worshipful Houses.

Christopher Savery was made a Knight Banner in Queen Elizabeth's reign. He married a descendant (sole heiress of the lands) of William Servington, Esq., who was Sheriff of Devon, 40 Edward III. In 1614, his son, Christopher Savery, purchased Shilston of Robert Hills, Esq., and Edward, his son. Charles Savery was Sheriff of Devon, 18 James I.,

his son, Charles Savery, was colonel of a regiment of Foot in the Parliamentary army, time of Charles I, and paid his quota, £50 a month, towards the maintenance of the forces, as appears by receipts now in existence. In the eighteenth century, Christopher Savery, Esq., built a new, commodious house on the estate. Tradition states, that the old house at Shilston was a splendid specimen of the Baronial style, and that its noble hall, and minstrel gallery, and extensive offices, were quite in keeping with the requirements of the powerful and warlike families that formerly were its possessors.

TRAIN, originally the seat of a family named Scoos, whose name became extinct about Henry VIII's reign, when the Svete family (an ancient race from Upperton, in South Mitton), acquired it by descent, and became connected with the Heles, Saverys, Champernowns, and Archers of Cornwall. It continued in the name for numerous descents until 1771, when it became the property of the Rev. John Tripe, of Ashburton, by entail, and who assumed the name of Sweet.

Train House is pleasantly situated, and commands a delightful prospect of the town and surrounding country. The Svete have been great benefactors to the town and parish. In 1684, John Svete, Esq., gave the ground whereon the almshouses were built, top of Galpin-Street; and in 1708 Adrian Svete built the best conduit in Brownston-Street, to which the principal supply of water (then lately purchased) was conveyed; he also, by will, bequeathed £40, to purchase a handsome silver flagon (gilt), now constantly used at the Communion. The estate was purchased in 1853 by John Andrews, Esq., whose ancestors were residents of Modbury for many descents, and of great repute.

WIMPSTON. This manor, Burke states, was granted to Sir Richard de Fort, a person of extraordinary strength and courage, and a distinguished soldier, who accompanied William, Duke of Normandy, in his expedition to England; bearing a strong shield before the Duke at the battle of Hastings, against King Harold, he was exposed to great danger (having three horses killed under him), greatly contributed to his master's preservation. From that signal event were assumed the name and motto of the family: the word scutum in Latin, and e'scue in French (a shield), being added to Fort, composes the name of Fortescue; and the motto, Forte scutum salus ducum (a strong buckler is the safeguard of the leader). In this battle his son, Sir Adam, was likewise a principal commander, and behaved so well, that for the good services his father and he had done, the Conqueror gave him Wimpston, or, anciently, Wimondestan, in the parish of Modbury, with divers other lands in Devonshire, which were confirmed by charter, the 10th John, to Sir John Fortescue.

Numerous scions of this noble house are branched abroad, which have produced many worthy personages, whose names (as Hollinshed has it) are deduced from the strength of their shields. This tribe, according to Prince, have been famous for feats of arms and justice. Sir Henry

Fortescue was a worthy commander under the illustrious King Henry V, who made him Governor of MEAUX, in Berry. Another, Sir Henry, Lord Chief Justice of Ireland (from 10 Henry VI to the death of that monarch), and many other valiant and honourable men, worthy ancestors of the illustrious house of Fortescue, of Castle Hill in Devon, and Ebrington, in Gloucestershire. From the reign of Elizabeth, Wimpston has frequently changed owners, from the Fortescues' to Stowbridge, Champernoun, Jepson, Paul Treeby Treeby, and ultimately it became the property of Walter Prettyjohn Esq., who built a new house on the manor, and is now, 1860, the property of J. Pitts, Esq.

The noble family of Fortescue have always been foremost in all endeavours to reform and advance the government of this country, and improve the condition of the people. In 1721, Hugh Fortescue was summoned to Parliament as Lord Clinton, 1746, created Baron Fortescue, of Castle Hill, and in 1782, Hugh, the third Baron, was Viscount Ebrington, and Earl Fortescue. Hugh, the present peer, has filled many important trusts; was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 1829, is Custos Rotulorum of Devon, &c. In 1855, nearly eight hundred years from the founding of the family at Wimpston, Parish of Modbury, Hugh Fortescue, Viscount Ebrington, M.P. for Marylebone Parish, London, offers a premium of £20 to the son of a farmer of Devonshire who shall pass the best examination in the English language, the geography and history of the British Empire, and practical mathematics; still continuing their laudable efforts to improve the condition of the people. May they long continue ornaments of their great and ancient name, and ever possess the means of rewarding merit.

In 1860 he was summoned to the upper house as Baron Fortescue, during his father's lifetime, but sorely afflicted by the loss of his sight, brought on by over-exertion in his public capacity.

After the Conqueror was firmly established, Sir Richard de Fort left this country to end his days in Normandy, leaving his son, Sir Adam, in possession of Wimpston, from which honourable house sprung all the Fortescues of this country.

Among the distinguished men of the place (I find by PRINCE and SMOLLETT), Captain John Burley, born at Clanicombe, in this parish, a Captain in Charles I's Army, a gentleman of good education, and the first to endeavour the rescue of that monarch from imprisonment in Carisbrooke Castle, Isle of Wight. He was at this time Captain of Yarmouth Castle, and a deep sense of the King's captivity so affected Capt. Burley, that he caused a drum to be beat up at Newport, Dec. 29, 1646, for God and King Charles, intending to gather a force sufficient, if possible, to rescue the captive King out of their hands. The attempt failed, and Capt. Burley was taken, tried, and found guilty of high treason, and condemned for the then unpardonable crime of loyalty, and was executed Feb. 10, 1647, at Winchester, a martyr for his King and country, sealing the cause with his blood.

NICHOLAS TRIST was Lord of the Manor of Modbury, 1708. Among his benefactions to the inhabitants were two of the conduits, which are supplied with excellent water.

JOHN DREW, Esq., Sergeant-at-Law and Recorder of London, a resident of Modbury, bequeathed (in the 4th of Edward IV) certain messuages to John Rouse, of Edmeston, in trust, in this parish, and his heirs, that they provide, out of the rents of the said messuages, a fit chaplain, of honest and good fame, to perform divine service in a certain chapel of the Holy Trinity, the blessed Virgin Mary, and St. John the Baptist, situated in the south part of the Parish Church of Modbury, and there to pray for the souls of John Drew, and Joan his wife, Sir Richard Champernoun, and Catherine his wife, and divers others, as fully appear in the deed of that date. - PRINCE.

SIR JOHN HILL, of Shilston, an eminent Lawyer, who prosecuted his studies, and was so assiduous in his profession that he soon succeeded to the highest degree of the Long Robe, viz. King's Sergeant-at-Law, Henry IV, 1400, and in 1409 was constituted one of the Justices of Common Pleas; in 1414 received the honour of Knighthood from Henry V, and was continued in the same high office of Common Pleas to the end of that reign. King Henry VI also continued him in the same office. PRINCE says, that one man should be thus advanced, and continued in so high places and honourable situations (which are generally slippery places) by three successive Princes is sufficient to establish his fame for ability and integrity, outdone by none. PRINCE says the following may be truly applied to this reverend person:-

A better man, or one more just,
There never was in any trust.

POLE says he settled his habitation at Shilston, whether by marriage or purchase from John de Goneton (whose it was in Henry IV's time) I cannot say, but it is certain he got a great estate. No doubt, in the way of justice and honesty, which he left to his posterity, and who flourished there above nine generations, and is a good confirmation thereof, for we may truly say of all ill-gotten wealth:-

'Tis very rare
To see it come to the third heir.

BURKE states that in 1578, Moyses Hill, Esq., a younger son of the House of Shilston, went to Ireland under Lord Grey, of Wilton (a Volunteer to assist in quelling the Rebellion in Munster, under the Desmonds), where he greatly distinguished himself, was knighted, and at the suppression of the rebels was rewarded with an extensive grant of land, and no doubt he formed one of the band of Volunteers, 1570, but we have no record to that effect. His descendant, William Hill, Esq., 1662, was created Viscount Dungannon for his signal gallantry in wounding Oliver Cromwell at the Battle of Marston Moor, and his

descendant, Arthur Hill, inherits the estates in Ireland and Berkshire; as Viscount Downshire and Baron Hill in Ireland, and Viscount Fairford and Baron Harwich in the Peerage of England.

In 1614, Robert Hill, and Edward, his son, having wasted their estate, sold Shilston to Christopher Savery, Esq.

Although no stone is found to the memory of this Venerable Judge, yet in the Parish Church of Medbury (where is the dormitory of the family, and he supposed to have been buried there) there is one to the memory of the sixth in descent from himself. It is a large flat stone, once forming the top of a tomb, and now fixed against the wall at the East end of the Church, near where the tomb once stood, having this inscription around the edge as a border:- "HERE LIETH MASTER OLIVER HILL, ESQ., WHO DIED DECEMBER 26TH, IN THE YEAR OF CHRIST, 1573" - and in the middle an Acrostic of his name, OLIVER HILL, OF SHILLESTON:-

O wandering waight whose way lies now to pass by this same tomb,
L et stay your steps, survey this verse, and think on time to come;
I nclosed in chest his carcase lies that erst inclosed a mind,
V nto's appointed race that fled, whose like were hard to find
E mong the massye multitude of mortal men that be,
R egarding righteousness so much, and loathing vice as he.

H aving a will in all respects to make his word his deed;
I n friendship fast, no man more frank to aid his friend at need.
L earn you to leave your lawless lusts, and fancies fond to fly;
L earn by his godly life to live, and quiet death to die.

O f ancestors he did descend that famous were for skill,
F or judgement just, for wit, for wealth, their glory groweth yet
still.

S uch hap had Hill, such to succeed, and princes praise possess;
H is pains in court, and toyle in wars, deserve indeed no less.
I t's hard for men to leave their lust-possessing wordly pelf,
L o! yet did Hill renounce them quite, and quite forsake himself;
L ong looking for a better life, by faith in Christ to take;
E ach reader, too, I wish the like, by death exchange to make.
S ith riches fade, and form and strength, and honour eke and lust,
T were best by life a place provide, ere thou return to dust.
O mortal man, that canst not 'scape death's darting stings,
N or certain know'st (uncertain life), where certain end it brings.

The FERRINGS were inhabitants of the town for many generations, one of whom, Peter, in the eighteenth century, was a merchant and member of the council of Madras. JOHN, a judge in Bengal. JOHN, the first Baronet, was a Merchant and Alderman of the City of London, was created a Baronet in 1808, and succeeded by his son John in 1831, who, dying unmarried, 1843, was succeeded by his brother Phillip, the present

Baronet, who married Frances Mary, only daughter of late Henry Rowe, Esq., of Gnaton. They were connected with many worshipful houses and have produced many worthy characters, but are nearly extinct in Modbury, the present Baronet being seated at Membland, in the Parish of Holbeton, which Manor was purchased by the former Peter, of the council of Madras.

RICHARD KING, Esq., a native of Modbury, whose family were ancient inhabitants of the town in the nineteenth century, built and endowed an institution in Brownston Street, its object, the cultivation of science among the inhabitants. The library is extensive, and contains a choice collection of valuable works, which are accessible under easy restrictions; a lasting memorial of the munificent donor, who is reputed to have made a great fortune in America.

February 9, 1722, was born in Modbury, George Baker, afterwards celebrated as Sir George Baker, M.D., President of the Royal College of Physicians, and author of many valuable medical works. His family were of considerable reputation in the town, and of great antiquity.

Modbury is a borough by prescription (from ancient custom), having also a charter granted by Henry II, 1155, by which the citizens claimed their freedom and privileges, independent of the barons, and owning no superior but himself.

These charters (which were granted to the most considerable towns) were the groundwork of English liberty; and the first efforts of our fathers to free themselves from feudal bondage, a new order was created; the more opulent of the people began to claim a share in the administration, as well as the nobles and clergy. Thus the feudal government was at first impaired, and liberty began to be more equally diffused throughout the land,

Also, 12 Edward I, 1280, a grant was made of the Assize of bread and ale (to regulate the price and quality) to Sir Richard Champernoun by Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, whose sister Joan, Sir Richard married.

The town never was incorporated, but sent two members to Parliament from the earliest ages, and was exempt by petition, on account of the expense, about 1300, Edward I. A Court Leet is held twice a year; and at the Michaelmas Court are elected a Portrieve, two constables, an ale-taster, and other officers, from the free-holders of the borough, and are entitled to several privileges, as not paying toll at the fair, nor for weighing at the Town-beam, &c. It is said there was anciently a Guildhall and prison, which seems probable; it also appears that the borough court did, within the last century, take cognizance of actions for debt under 40s. Palm Cross - Green, at the head of Church-Street, is the customary place of holding the court.

The town lies about a mile to the westward of the parish, and contains about three hundred houses and two thousand inhabitants; it is

peculiarly and healthily situated in a complete dell, two hundred and seven miles from London, and twelve from Plymouth; and consists principally of four streets, meeting at right angles in the market place. Three of these streets, viz. Brownston-Street, Church-Street, and Galpin-Street, are broad and spacious, and have a great declivity to the Cross; Galpin-Street more so than the others, being difficult for a loaded cart to be drawn up it; Poundwell-Street, continuing the inclination of Brownston-Street, forming an outlet from the town for drainage, &c., towards the coast. These four streets form the thoroughfare; Brownston-Street to Exeter and London; Church-Street to Plymouth, Cornwall, &c., Galpin-Street to Kingsbridge, and Poundwell-Street to the coast, &c., in three of these streets are large conduits, built of wrought granite; the largest, in Brownston-Street, the gift of Adrian Sweet, Esq., and the other two by Nicholas Trist, Esq., lord of the borough in the year 1708, and supplied with excellent water from a spring in a field belonging to Train, called the Silver Well; also, at the bottom of Poundwell-Street is a smaller conduit, more ancient than the three former ones, supplied from another source, with two copious streams of excellent water continually running, which adds greatly to the comfort of the inhabitants and the purity and healthfulness of the place; so that PRINCE may well call Modbury a sweet and pleasant market town. There are several streams passing through it; the principal, Tucker's Brook, which, as its name implies, is celebrated for its cleansing properties, and much used for tanning, washing wool, &c., driving the old mill in its course - Swanner-Bridge, Cotlass, Orcharton, &c., which are most ancient and picturesque, evidently coeval with its abbey and original inhabitants. At the junction of the four streets was held the market; that for corn and yarn in an open building, called the Round-house; octangular, and peculiar in its construction, having a massive granite column and base in the centre, and oak pillars supporting a high, pitched roof, with the market bell on top. Here, in ancient times, all proclamations were made in summoning knights, &c., to arms; punishments of stock and pillory inflicted; the fair proclaimed by charter to the lords of the borough, and hoisting a glove and bouquet. There is a Thursday's market; and, originally, two fairs on St. George's and St. James's days, which in early times was of great importance, and held for nine days, it being the only means of supply to the town and neighbourhood; the only trade then being carried on by periodical fairs.

RISDON says, the fairs being well furnished with necessaries, are well frequented; and somewhat the more, for that the town is noted for its nappy ale, and which WESTCOTE describes as the best in the country - nothing like it - and attributes the longevity of its inhabitants to the free use of it, being meat, drink, and almost clothes; and Henry of Avranches, an arch poet in Henry III's time, wrote thus of the celebrated drink:-

Of this strong drink, much like to Stigian lake;
 Most term it ale; I know not what to make;
 Folks drink it thick, and p.... it out full thin,
 Much dregs, therefore, must needs remain within.

Says Jose to Roger, the ale so good,
We sure must have another jug;
I second that start, says Roger to Jose;
We then shall be able to toast our host.

The fair host was not to be bought in that way,
Nor by all the tipling gallant Roger could say.
Jose comes to the rescue - the ale makes him bold -
And swears if he'd enough (ale) he ne'er should get old.

The lady gave way, for who could withstand
The language they both had at their command?
They toasted the host, and vowed they'd be happy,
As long as could get Mrs. Taylor's ale that was nappy.

Opposite the Round-house, and bottom of Church-Street, stood a large building, in the earliest style of town and municipal architecture, massively constructed of oak and chestnut, on a granite base, called in modern times Shambles, and used as a meat market, and the town-beam kept. The upper part most probably used in former times as a Guildhall, or place of meeting of inhabitants in choosing officers, and other business of the town. In the first quarter of the nineteenth century the town was greatly improved by taking up the old paving (the channel being in the centre of the street, and the paving inclining to the same, making it difficult for cattle with heavy loads, &c.), and relaying the same, each side forming foot-paths, and macadamizing the centre and making new roads, &c.; done chiefly by the instrumentality of Mr. Richard Andrews. The shambles and round-house taken down, and site laid open; also an ancient and extensive hostelry opposite the shambles was demolished, and a spacious hotel erected on its site by John Bulteel, Esq., of Fleet, the lord of the manor, and called the White Hart, and where the market is now held. The Rose and Crown is also an original structure; the others are more modern, as the Bell, the Dartmouth, Plymouth, and Maltman's Arms, the London and Exeter Inns, &c.

The inhabitants of the town were always celebrated for their great musical talents and adventurous spirit; they were also in former times well known for their attachment to the early sports of wrestling, bull baiting, (there were females, also, that used to take great delight in bull-baiting, and would run with their strong aprons held out to catch the dogs as they fell, after being thrown by the bull) and cock-fighting &c. &c., which are now only known by name, the Modbury men having higher and more chivalric objects in view. They have also greatly contributed, with Sir W. Raleigh and others, in the discovery and colonization of foreign countries, and always formed a complete nursery for the army and navy. The names of several of Raleigh's captains, viz, King, Whidden, and Davis, were familiar in the town up to a very late period.

There are three places of worship for Dissenters, and the town is also well supplied with schools for the poorer inhabitants. The trade carried on in the town was also much more extensive than at present, which consisted in the manufacture of hats, baskets, leather, plush, serges, &c.; the latter, up to the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, employed from three to four hundred persons, chiefly women, in weaving, besides those employed in preparing chains, yarn, tucking, dying, packing, combing, &c.; carried on with great spirit by the family of Perrings, and produced 15,000 pieces of serge yearly for a great number of years for the East India Company.

In 1860, nearly three hundred years from the first volunteers we have a record of, in Medbury, the town again puts on a martial appearance. The young men of the parish and neighbourhood forward come with alacrity to form a band of Rifle Volunteers. Their success in the formation of the soldier has been immense, as a finer or more warlike body of men cannot exist; and their noble, manly bearing and soldierly appearance, on attending the noble old church in the summer of 1860, received a deserving meed of praise. The meeting weekly for drill, &c., with their splendid band, is quite cheering to the peaceful inhabitants of the venerable town, and characteristic of their ancient propensities.

Modbury, first mentioned in Domesday Book as "Motberia", is one of the oldest market towns in the west country. It used to be a place of some importance, and in the reign of Edward I (1272-1307) returned two representatives to Parliament. This may be an exaggeration of its importance, as it may have referred to the whole district, and not only to the borough itself. It was later exempted from this on the alleged plea of the poverty of the inhabitants, which prevented them from paying the representatives, as was the custom of that age.

It was a walled town, the Baptist Chapel being built on part of the site of the old wall. In Poundwell Street there is also a granite buttress, probably part of the old wall, to which a gate may have been attached.

The borough was distinguished as Great and Little Modbury, and in the old days was composed of many manors, Trayne, Penquit (not now included in the parish, Orcheston, (originally Orchardstown) Shilston, Brownston, Oldaport, Wymptone, Spriddlescombe, Leigh, Yarnacombe, Edmeston, etc.

The first known owners of the Manor of Modbury were the Valletorts, and from them it came to the Champernowne family (originally Campo de Arnulphi) who held it from the reign of Edward II (1307-1327) when it was conveyed to Sir Richard Champernowne, until 1700, nearly 400 years, at which time Arthur Champernowne sold the property to Nicholas Trist.

The manorial residence stood at Palm Cross Green. Permission was given by the king, either Edward I or Edward II, to fortify it, and it seems to have had a moat and drawbridge, and to have been an imposing building.

The Champernowne family flourished until Tudor times, and lived in magnificent style. Especially were they famous for their band of minstrels which is reputed to have been the cause of the family's downfall.

Mr. Champernowne is reputed to have taken the band on the River Thames in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and she was so delighted that she asked Mr. Champernowne to lend it to her for a month. He knew he would probably never see it again, so refused his consent, asking that he might be allowed to keep his fancy. This so infuriated the Queen that she found occasion to sue him at law, and to ruin him, by obliging him, in order to meet the cost of the proceedings, to part with nineteen of his manors.

This story is substantiated by the fact that records show that the manors certainly were sold about that time and that, at the end

of the seventeenth century the possessions of the family were considerable.

Notwithstanding this, the family continued loyal to the Crown, and played an important part in the Battle of Medbury during the Civil War.

In this struggle the chief towns of the West all declared on the side of the Parliamentarians, but Medbury remained staunchly Royalist. A band of trained soldiers and volunteers, numbering some thousands was raised under one Sir Edmund Fortescue, and would have attacked Plymouth, but the Parliamentarians, forestalling them, and making a pretence to attack Tavistock, wheeled south and fell upon Medbury.

Taken by surprise, the trained band immediately fled in disorder down what is still called "Runaway Lane", and the battle was won by the Roundheads.

However, Sir Edmund Fortescue and his friends garrisoned the castle of the Champernownes, and continued to hold out for some time, until the Parliamentarians fired the castle. After that resistance was impossible and Sir Edmund Fortescue and many leading Royalists were taken prisoner and sent to Dartmouth, and thence to London.

The great damage done to the castle in this siege probably accounts for the fact that nothing at all remains of it now, although one record of the early nineteenth century mentions one wing still standing, containing what was supposed to have been the drawing room, the mantle-piece of which is still to be seen at the back of Palm Cross Green.

Many lesser manors were held by important families:-

Whympton - was given by King John to the Fortescue family, but after the reign of Queen Elizabeth they ceased to reside there, and the Sir Edmund Fortescue of the Civil War, came from Fallapit.

Orcheton - belonged to the Prideaux family until 1386, when the then lord, Sir Thomas Prideaux, is said to have murdered his kinsman, Sir William Bigbury, at Five Crosses, and after this the family declined. Eventually, the heiress married one of the Heles of Flete, and it passed into their hands, and still forms part of the Flete property.

Shilston - was originally Shivalston, and belonged to a family of that name, from whom it passed to the Saverys, merchants of Totnes.

Oldaport - "Oldport", gave their name to the De la Ports, and is very ancient, though little is known of its origin with certainty. It is generally supposed to have been connected with the export of tin from very early, perhaps Saxon days, and it is suggested that the Romans may have taught the inhabitants improved methods of smelting there. It

is known that there was a fine harbour at Saltacrease, close by, and records show that goods used to be delivered there by barge in the last century.

Trayne - originally Tre-Inn, from the wooded nature of the land, was the seat for many years of the Svete family, from about the time of Henry VIII (1509-1547), and Old Traine, dating from the fifteenth century, is the oldest bit of Modbury that remains. The name of Adrian Svete is commemorated on the conduit in Brownston Street, which he gave to the town, and he also gave the site of the Almshouses at the top of Galpin Street, formerly known as Workhouse Terrace, and now Traine Terrace. He also gave a silver gilt flagon to the church which is still used at festivals.

The dedication of the church has caused great controversy and it was variously contributed to St. Mary; St. Peter; and St. George.

The decision that the last is correct is upheld by the fact that the Great Fair of Modbury was held on St. George's day.

In the reign of King Stephen (1135-1154) the Priory of St. Mary was founded by an ancestor of the Champenownes, as a cell to the abbey of St. Peter Sur-Dives in Normandy. After the religious houses were suppressed, Henry VI (1422-1461) gave the living to his newly founded college of Eton.

The Priory of St. Mary was a small foundation, and seems to have caused trouble, as the Plantagenet Kings (Henry II, 1154 - Richard II, 1377) were always seizing it during the French Wars, in order to prevent tithes being sent to France. The Priory buildings have completely disappeared, and it is now only commemorated in the name of Priors Park, the fields to the West of the church.

The same nineteenth century record that speaks of part of the Manor House still standing at that time, also talks of a building in Scots field, then used as a barn, but this also has disappeared.

No vicar's name appears before 1338, but application was made by Bishop John the Chanter between 1186 and 1191, and Bishop Grandison mentioned in 1331, that John his predecessor, had given the Rectory with all its appurtenances, to the Abbot and Convent of St. Peter Sur-Dives.

The west end is the oldest part of the church, and the Holy Water stoop, inside the south door, is one of its oldest features. There was probably a wooden screen across the Chancel, parts of which are thought to be preserved in the pews now by the belfry.

There are records of there having been alters dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary; the Holy Trinity and St. John the Baptist, as well

as that of St. Peter in the North Transept. This from the fourteenth century had belonged to the Prideaux family, and is still known as the Orcheton Aisle. It contains the Prideaux family tomb, with fragments of two figures.

On the south side of the church are two more arches, with fragments of figures, so mutilated (possibly at the time of the Reformation or the Civil War) as to be quite unrecognisable. As there are four figures and only three arches to contain them, it is probable that one of them, that of the knight, was originally on a high tomb. It is thought that it may have been that of Sir Thomas Champernowne, who was lord of the Manor in 1474, to which period the dress of the knight shows him to belong.

It would seem that some tombs and memorials to the Champernowne family must have been destroyed, as there is only one remaining, in spite of the very long period during which they were lords of the Manor. The one remaining memorial is that now in the south of the side altar, to Sir Philip Champernowne and his daughter Margaret, 1684.

Outside the vestry door is preserved the tombstone of one William Collins who, though not ordained as a priest, was "intruded" to the living during the brief period of Parliamentary rule between the reigns of Charles I and Charles II (i.e. 1649-1660).

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the church was twice restored, and lost much in the process. Two galleries were added at the west end, one of which was in existence as recently as 1860. The Norman font was replaced by the present Georgian one, and the original one was taken to Brownston.

Earlier than this, in 1621, the spire was rebuilt. The first mention of bells seems, from the records, to have been in 1553, but it is probable that these bells were the original ones, formerly belonging to the Priory. It is recorded that they were rung several times when the rebels were defeated, during Monmouth's rebellion. The present bells were installed in 1807, the old ones being cracked and useless. They came from Collumpton, and were first rung on April 3rd of that year by the Aveton Gifford ringers.

After that various teams of ringers from other parishes visited Modbury to ring the new bells. The old Modbury Ringers Rhyme:-

Hark at the Modbury Bells,
How they do quiver,
Better than Ermington Bells,
Down by the river

may not be unique and is probably claimed by many other parishes.

The Great Fair of St. George is a very old institution, dating from 1310, when the then Bishop of Exeter, seeing a chance of a source of revenue, proclaimed two yearly fairs at Ashburton and one at Modbury.

It was held originally on St. George's Day, which before the change of the calendar, fell on May 4th. The Fair was and still is proclaimed on May 3rd, then St. George's Eve. The town crier solemnly proclaimed the Fair, and the Glove decorated with flowers was hoisted, for a witness that, during the time of the Fair, the people had the right of Free Trade.

According to the statute of King Edward III (1327-1377) it was to last for nine days, and all were urged to do their utmost to preserve the peace. Provision was made for settling differences by a special court.

The lord of the borough was required to appoint a Toll Taker and one was named to collect toll for all horses, cattle, etc., sold during the Fair.

Originally all might sell liquor during the Fair, and a holly bush hung out of a private house did duty for an excise licence. This custom lingered after it ceased to be legal, and Modbury is probably one of the last places in the West where the saying "Good wine needs no bush" had any association in custom, as a bush hanging from a house has been seen here within the last hundred years.

The Fair of St. George is closely associated with the Court Leet, which was the local government of ancient days. This form of government is known to have existed in Saxon times, as William the Conqueror gave a charter to the English people recognising their right of self-government, but taking the precaution of making the lord of the borough responsible to the king in person for the good conduct of the borough.

Modbury became entitled to a court for the administration of its own laws, by reason of it being not one manor but two - Great and Little Modbury. This gave the town importance in olden times.

In Modbury there were three yearly courts, and a special one, the Pie Powder Court, which was held by the steward during every fair or market to settle differences. The name is supposed to have originated from the fact that it was said that, in this court "Justice is done as speedily as dust can fall from the feet".

The three annual courts were the Court Leet, held at Easter, for the purpose of good government during the Great Fair of St. George, a Fulfilling Court at Michaelmas, when officers were elected, and another Court Leet a few days later, when the officers assumed office.

The Easter Court Leet was most important, and its formality was

preserved in Modbury until 1908, at which time the procedure was almost identical with that of 1593, when John Sweete was Portreeve, and a Champerneve Lord of the Borough.

Modbury records of courts do not go beyond this, but it is interesting to note that the officers duties then, were the same as at the last court held here.

There is a record as late as 1818 of a view of the bounds of the parish being taken before the Fulfilling Court.

Before a Court Leet, which was originally held at the house of the lord of the manor, a writ of summons was issued by the Lord to the Portreeve, or Steward, and he gave notice of it to the tenants and residents, and summoned the jury. After being opened by the Crier, the jury and officials were sworn and the business proceeded.

The Court dealt with all manner of crimes and misdemeanours, but as is the case in a modern police court when any crime was punishable by death, the case was only presentable and enquirable there, and had to be certified at a higher court.

In olden times the Court was in a sense a gathering of the family of the borough. After the business of justice was done, all deaths of Freemen were declared, and the lord of the manor received a toll in this connection. All new residents in the Leet took the oath of allegiance to the crown, and the proceedings ended with a dinner.

Modbury produced in the person of Katherine Champerneve, the mother of four of the great explorers of Queen Elizabeth's day, for not only did she marry Walter Raleigh of Fardel Manor, Cornwood, and become the mother of Sir Walter Raleigh, but also by a former marriage was the mother of Sir Humphrey, Sir John and Sir Adrian Gilbert. (Sir John, the eldest, was Vice Admiral of Devon. Sir Humphrey founded the first English Colony of Newfoundland. Sir Adrian, known for his skill in mines, operated silver mines in Combe Martin).

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Modbury must have been a flourishing and progressive town. The Barracks were built, and used as a training ground for the Militia. In 1730 a scheme was set on foot to establish a Charity School, and subscriptions were collected for that purpose. Richard King, a native of Modbury, who had grown rich in America, returned home and founded the Literary and Scientific Institute in Brownston Street, in 1840.

The Modbury Harriers, originally a pack of beagles, were founded by Dr. Southmead Langworthy during the nineteenth century.

There were flourishing trades, such as the Serge Industry, which have died out completely.

From a record of 1838 there were twelve inns in the town, and two watchmakers, and five mills working in the parish.

From this brief list of the activities in Modbury it would appear that in those days, the inhabitants were more enterprising than they are today. This of course is largely due to the fact that in those days the interests of the population were centred in their home town, and as the facilities for travel were developed, so the people went further afield for their recreation.

Perhaps one of the few good results of this war (1914 I presume) may be, through inevitable confinement to their own locality, to stimulate the people to take an interest in the history and activities of the past, so to awake that sense of responsibility for, and interest in their own community, which was one of the best features of bygone days.

HISTORY OF MODBURY

by the late Florence Pearse and Frank Brown.

MODEBURY (12 miles from Plymouth) was an ancient walled township or borough which consisted, not of one manor, as is usual, but two, Great and Little Modbury. Thus Modbury became entitled to a court for the administration of its own laws, and this fact gave the town an important position in early times.

The Folk Moot, and later the Court Leet or Parliament was held in the Town Hall with Hall Chamber above, the site of which is known to have been at the bottom of Poundwell Street, and dates back to 1100. During alterations to this building in 1930, a stone dated 1118 was discovered.

The original name of "Mootbury" probably came about through the Folk Moot being held there.

In the reign of Edward I (1272-1307), Modbury sent two Members to Parliament. The numbers of inhabitants has varied, being about two thousand in 1821 and about eight hundred and fifty in 1953.

Streets were paved with cobblestones with a drainage channel in the centre. Many houses over hung the sidewalks on pillars, the last to be removed were at Nos.5 and 6 Broad Street in 1870.

There was a Pound for cattle near the top of Church Street, and Markets for corn and yarn held on Thursdays. A Round House and Shambles stood in the centre of the town and was used as a Mart and Butter Market.

Yarn was spun by the householders and brought to the market for sale to the factories.

White Ale was brewed in Modbury, and was supposed to contain eggs. A story relates that the landlady of the Tanners Arms saved the egg shells from other uses, and on brewing days threw them into the street so that the populace might see the quantity of eggs she used in brewing.

The ancient custom of selling excisable liquors without a licence on payment of a fee to the Lord of the Manor lasted the nine days of the fair.

Originally there were two fairs, at the festivals of St. George and St. James. Now only St. George's fair is kept. The ancient custom of ringing the old and original bell, and proclaiming the fair in the streets is still kept up. The bell is now placed on the old Bell Inn, but in olden days it was hung in the Round House.

In the reign of King Stephen (1135-1154) a priory was founded at Modbury, sited West of the church. The present church (1307) formerly St. Peters, now St. George, is outside the old borough boundary.

The Exeter Inn at the time of the Civil War was a rendezvous of the Royalists operating against Plymouth in 1640.

Modbury House or Castle was castellated by licence in 1334 in Edward III reign and was destroyed by Cromwell in 1642, also mutilating the effigies in the church where they stabled their horses. Runaway Lane near the church, where the defeated Royalists escaped after the battle of Modbury (1643 in the fields at the top of Galpin Street), still exists.

Modbury possessed a famous band of musicians who were invited to play at the Court of Queen Elizabeth I. The queen was so impressed with their ability that she summoned them to play on a second occasion. This the band refused to do, as their expenses were not paid on the first visit. The Sovereign shewed her displeasure at being refused by confiscating certain lands from the lord of the manor.

The site of a Loper Hospital is known, near the Modbury Harrier Kennels west of the town. Cholera ravaged the parish at one time, and the part of the churchyard where the victims were buried was left derelict for a long time for fear of infection.

Borough officials were - The Portreve, Pig Drivers, Ale Tasters, Leather Sealers and Scavengers.

THE CIVIL WAR
and the
END OF THE MODBURY LINE

From: THE HISTORY OF THE CHAMPERNOWNES
(Plymouth Library)
by C. E. Champernowne.

Henry, the son of Sir Arthur of Modbury and of Amy Crukern, was born 1590, and married on February 29th, 1611, at Hanwell, Oxfordshire, Mary, daughter of Sir Antony Cope. He is spoken of as of Penquit in Modbury parish; and Sir William Pole, writing about that time, says that he had a lease of Penquit from the "College of Windsor", i.e., Eton College, which owned the ancient property of the Priory of Modbury. No doubt he lived there during the lifetime of his uncle Sir Richard, who died in 1622.

In 1614 there was some trouble about a ship taken by one Mannering, a pirate, in which case Champernowne and others were taken into custody.

It is not clear what part he played in this, whether as part owner of the ship, or as sailing in her. It might even be that as there is a mention of a Richard Clark of Chichester, this may refer to a member of a distant branch, as we have a Charles, Canon of Chichester in 1573, who has not been satisfactorily accounted for.

The reference is from the Acts of the Privy Council, dated 19th May, 1614:

"Upon contemplation of letters directed to his Majesty from the State of Lubeck on the behalf of Joachym Wardman, master of the ship called the "Golden Lyon" of Lubeck, which in August last, being freighted in Ireland for Spain was taken and spoiled upon that coast by one Mannering, a 'pyratt'; it is this day ordered, whereas Richard Williamson, a clerk of the Court of Admiralty, John Blagedon, gent, Henry Champernowne, gent, and Richard Clark of Chichester, merchant, are now under custody until satisfaction be made unto Valentine Blake of Galloway, merchant, for such goods as were freighted in the said ship and taken by the foresaid Mannering, that the foresaid Williamson, Blagedon, Champernowne and Clark shall continue restrained and under safe custody until they make satisfaction unto the said Joachym Wardman for the loss of his ship."

On the 19th June Williamson and Blake were set at liberty, and Henry Champernowne and the others were discharged.

In 1625 Henry joined with his cousin Arthur of Dartington in the sale of Dodbrook to Henry Tothill (see under "Arthur Champernowne of Dartington").

Westcote tells us that:

"The South had a regiment of trained soldiers under selected and choice trained gentry of the County, who are their Colonels and Captains. Among others in June 1633, there is a company under Henry Champernowne's command."

In the Civil War Henry fought on the Royalist side. His name, Colonel Champernowne, occurs in a list entitled "Names of Lords and Chief Officers of Prince Charles's Army in the West".

There are several accounts of the attack on Modbury late in 1642, and a later attack early in the next year; and it seems that the people at Modbury were very unprepared.

In Sir Ralph Hopton's "Diary of the Campaign in the West", we read:

"Then Mr. Fortescue (since, Sir Edmund Fortescue) being newly sworn High Sheriff of Devon and other of the well affected gentlemen of the County then with the Army at Plympton, thought it necessary for the furtherance of their good intentions to have a Posse summoned at Modbury which, within a few days afterwards, was done accordingly, and at the time appointed Sir Ralph Hopton, Sir Nicholas Slanning, and other gentlemen went over to Modbury to see the progress of that business, hoping to find it like they had seen in Cornwall, consisting of regiments of foot well armed, though far greater numbers, wanting foot to besiege or block up Plymouth; but they found it far otherwise, for though there appeared a great concourse of people, yet it was rather like a great fair than a Posse, there being none but the gentlemen who had any arms or equipage for war; insomuch as Sir Ralph Hopton (endeavouring to gather together as many men as would serve to make a convenient guard for that night) forewarning them often of the danger that might and indeed did ensue, could not procure above twenty men armed, nor so much as a patrol of twenty horse to ride out, all the gentlemen being so transported with the jollity of the thing, that no man was capable of the labour and care of discipline".

In the introduction it is pointed out that it was rather a common failing among the Cavaliers to make too light of their adversaries.

From "Barnstaple during the Civil War" by Richard W. Cotton, we get the following account of the attack:

"At Modbury in the rear of Hopton's army, the Sheriff of Devon, Sir Edmund Fortescue and a party of Royalist gentlemen were

raising the 'Posse comitatus'. In the first week of December Colonel Ruthven with about four troops of horse and about 100 dragoons sallied out of Plymouth, and avoiding a Royalist post at Plympton, swept round by Ivybridge, to Modbury. The trained bands and volunteers, described as 'naked men' (i.e., merely unprovided with weapons) dispersed at the first alarm, leaving their officers with Sir Edmund Fortescue, Sir Edward Seymour of Berry Pomeroy, Mr. Edward Seymour his son, Squire Arthur Basset of North Devon 'a notable malignant' Master Sheptoe (Shapcote, Clerk of the Peace for the County) Master Bayley of Barnstaple a 'Papist' and others to take refuge in the Court House, an ancient mansion of the Champernowne family, at the west end of the town, where they were at once besieged. Ultimately after the building had been fired they surrendered and were marched to Dartmouth, put on board the Cresset frigate (i.e., the Crescent of 167 tons carrying 12 guns) conveyed to Plymouth and thence to the Parliament in London."

It seems probable that there were no regular Cavalier troops present on this occasion but merely the trained bands, and consequently men very subject to a panic such as took place.

Rushworth, in his "Collections", says that at the approach of Colonel Ruthven, the Scottish officer:

"the country fled and left their commanders in one Mr. Champernowne's house where they awhile stood on their defence, but being environ'd upon the firing of an outhouse, they yielded and were brought by sea to London" - (he gives the names) - "who were committed some to Winchester House, others to Lambeth House, which places at that time were both used as prisons.

"There were also taken with them several ensigns, and one which had for its device a cannon with this motto issuing from the mouth of it: 'O Lord open Though my lips and my mouth shall show Thy praise'."

Cotton tells us that much care has been necessary in discriminating between the circumstances hastily reported by the inexperienced journalists or 'intelligencers' as they were called, of that time.

The purveyors of news were so eager to satisfy the cravings of the Londoners for the glorification of their model army, that the seizure of Canonteign by the Parliamentary Forces was referred to in one Diurnal as that of a "considerable town", and in another as that of a "very strong fort" - "one of the bulwarks of Exeter", then held by the Royalists.

He speaks of Vicars, the Parliamentary chronicler, as a "noisy fanatical compiler" who had neither the opportunity nor the wit to be accurate. Perhaps the description of the captured ensign is due to one of these "intelligencers".

There are two letters written by one "R.B." on the Parliamentary side, and quoted from by Vicars; the second, dated December 9th, 1642, giving the fullest account:

"Master Stock and Loving Friend,

"Since the writing of my letter, a friend is come hither upon purpose from Exeter, to bring us tidings of a brave exploit done by the Plimmoth forces, worthy to be chronicled a neat and true relation, and fit for the Presse is as follows:

"Upon Tuesday last at night being the 6 of this instant, the commanders of the garrison at Plymouth entered into consultation concerning what was fit to be done, and having intelligence that the Sheriffe lay at Modbury, where the trained bands by virtue of his Posse Comitatus met that day, and the next, the Cavaliers chief quarters being at Plymouth within three miles of them, thereupon they framed their designs.

"Very early in the morning Captain Thompson, Captaine Pym and Captain Goold and so me others, with 500 horse and dragoons, marched away very privately northward towards Roubard (Roborough Down) as if they meant to goe to Tavistock and then wheeled round toward Ivie Bridge, on Plimmoth Road and so went to Modbury, wherein Master Champernon's house, and in the Towne they found the Sheriffe with Divers other gentlemen of quality; and 2,000 trained souldiers and voluntiers; presently on their approach the trained bands crying out, The Troopers are come, run away, many of them leaving their armes behind them.

"The house was beset, and the Sheriffe stood up their defence, until it was fired, and then the assailants breaking in, possessed the house and took divers prisoners, to the number of 20 or thereabouts amongst which were those that follow:

"Sir Edmund Fortescue, High Sheriffe, Sir Edward Seimor, Baronet Master Edward Seimor, Knight of the Shire, Master Basset, Captaine Champernon, Captaine Pomeroy, Master Barnes, Master Sheptoe, Clerk of the Peace; after which they marched away towards Dartmouth with their prisoners, where that night they safely arrived bringing good store of armes with them.

"This good news, I could not but write although 10 at night. I conceive, nay I hear they will there ship these prisoners for London. I wish them a fair wind to bring them into Winchester House or some such place. Master Hill understanding the ways of the march, will say it is as brave an exploit as hath been attempted a long time, unto whom, with all my good friends who shall be at the reading hereof, I pray remember him who is always ready to serve you". R.B.

The Parliament treated their first haul of eminent prisoners with sufficient consideration. They were brought by sea to Gravesend "and then taken to the prisons of Winchester House and Lambeth House; barges with musquetiers being sent to Gravesend to bring them safely to the prisons aforesaid that no incivility might be offered to these persons" (Cotton).

There was a second attack on Modbury in the following February, in which the ruin of the splendid mansion of Sir Richard was finally completed.

Cawse's "History of Modbury" says that Sir Nicholas Slanning surrounded Modbury House, or Court House as it was called, to prevent if possible, further destruction, but his force was completely cut up and routed, and the damage to the house was deemed irreparable so that the place shortly fell into decay.

Sir Nicholas, here mentioned, one of the Royalist leaders, was grandson of Nicholas who married Margaret the daughter of Henry Champernowne, the father of Sir Richard. He and Sir John Trevanion were slain at the siege of Bristol soon after, "both young, neither of them above eight and twenty, of entire friendship to one another and to Sir Bevil Grenvil"; which beloved leader was also slain in the battle of Lansdown Hill.

Of this second attack there are three different accounts, all printed in contemporary tracts, bound up in one of the volumes of the King's pamphlets in the British Museum (otherwise Thomason Tracts).

Some particulars also come from "Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy", from which the following are quoted. Here we find a mention of Hutton Bridge, evidently Aveton (or Auton) Giffard:

"As it appeared in 1643 it was a narrow causeway, raised above the meadows at the head of the tidal estuary.

"It was here that the Royalists had at first intended to dispute the advance of their apponents. Mr. William Lane had been lately appointed Rector. He had had much trouble in Plymouth and still had two of his sons imprisoned there... 'all which time' his son says, 'my father was active with Sir... Champernon and other gentlemen in those parts for raising succours for his Majesty; and was raising a fort on a Hill' (Part of the glebe of Aveton) 'which commanded the Bridge leading to Kingsbridge: But before it could be finished the King's Party were destroyed'."

Henry Bagley, Vicar of Modbury, had also been in trouble, and the same book says:

"He was driven from his living by the Parliamentary Army at which time he betook himself to his Majesty's forces, with whom he retired into Cornwall. He had at that time a wife and seven children who were turned out of doors by a Party of Horse and might have lain in the field had not Colonel Champernowne afforded them lodging in Modbury House...

"The concerted attack by the Parliamentary Forces had been arranged to take place early in the morning of the 21st of February". (the battle is described and the place of it) "The Royalists seem to have retreated fighting, field by field, and through the streets of Modbury to the Court House. This they defended during part of the night until compelled to evacuate it."

"This party of ours which was at Modbury", wrote Sir Bevil Grenville to his wife, "indured a cruel assault for 12 hours against many thousand men" (Clarendon's "History of the Rebellion").

And of this second attack, Vicars the Parliamentary writer says:

"And in Feb. 1643, this noble Earl (Stamford) with his forces fell upon about 2000 at the least of his Cornish enemies at Modbury, where Sir Ralph Hopton had strongly entrenched them, but out of which their trenches (with the help of the Devonshire Clubmen) most bravely beaten and forced to fly, leaving behind them at least 100 dead on the ground and twice as many wounded, where they took 5 pieces of ordnance, about 100 muskets, near 80 prisoners and at least 40 horses."

An old tradition says that on the firing of the houses, the defenders retreated by a secret passage to the Church, but it is not known whether there is really any foundation for this.

It is clear from Mr. Williams's notes that in 1860, when a grave was dug, a passage was found leading from the direction of the Court House to the Church, though it was not explored; and that within the site of the old mansion there was a deep well with a drive or passage half-way down in the direction of the church, which also has not been explored.

In 1302 an agreement between James de Okeston and the Prior shows that an arrangement had been made for James to have a way of access to the church, and James pointed out that he had already cut down much timber for the purpose. Was this way made underground?

Although the house was mostly destroyed, one part of it remained until about 1885 or the following year, surrounded by farm buildings, and no doubt used as such.

Britton and Brayley's "Beauties of Devonshire" (1803) describes a large arched chamber said to have been the diningroom and doorways and chimneypieces ornamented with carving, and the window-frames of granite or moorstone. This book also says that at a small distance was a large deer park now converted into a considerable farm, but still retaining the name of Modbury Park.

Cavase's "Modbury" (1860) says that two fields across the road by the churchyard were still called Priors Park.

Arthur Champernowne and Mrs. Champernowne visited the place from Dartington when it was proposed to take this part down; and, wishing to have more particulars and to obtain some relics, it was agreed that it should stand over until they should come again in a short time; but, perhaps through some misunderstanding, the building was pulled down before they came.

The present writer can well remember their disappointment. The carved oak beams had been taken down. He, however, bought them, and a granite chimney-piece, intending to use them at Dartington but this was only a short time before his death, and nothing was done. The chimney-piece remained in the "Old Kitchen" at Dartington, and the oak in the tower rooms until the sale in 1921.

A small drawing remains, however, made in 1794; also a water-colour sketch by Miss de Ludbrook Bartlett, who lived near by and gave it to Mrs. Champernowne. We were also told that a large stone forming the edge of the pavement outside the Exeter Inn at the bottom of the steep street, was a chimney-piece from the house, turned on its face.

Henry, taken prisoner at the first assault on Modbury, must have been freed on an exchange of prisoners, and the next mention of him that has been found is in the accounts of the battle of Lostwithiel in August, 1644, when he was badly wounded.

From a "Diary of the Marches of the Royal Army", kept by Richard Symonds (from the original MS in the British Museum and published by the Camden Society) we find:

"Friday, 23rd August. On Sir Richard Grenville's side, Colonel Champernowne of Devon, Colonel to the Prince Maurice leading up his foot near Trinity Castle, was shot in the neck. His men took off his sword and cloake and left his body, which the enemy tooke. Since by a drummer we hear that his wounde is not mortall."

And from a Parliamentary source, Vicars' "England's Worthies":

"Then the King's whole army, Maurices and Grenvile were drawn into the field in battalia, in number about 20,000 men neare Lostithiell (Lostwithiel), where his Excellency" (Earl of Essex, Parliamentary General) "daily skirmished with them, killed many, took prisoners Colonell Champernoone, who was sore wounded, and divers more many lying 6 or eight in a heap, and upon desire his Excellency granted them leave (at a parly) to bury their dead."

It was not long after that Henry died, perhaps as a result of his wound, and his burial took place at Modbury, December 21st, 1644. There is, however, another version of his death, which may or may not be true: an item in the "Perfect Diurnal" of January 28th, stating:

"From the West we have also the news that Skellum Grenville had, upon a discontent, pistolled Colonel Champernoone and his brother";

this being also found in Webb's "Civil War in Herefordshire", as follows:

"The difficulty of enforcing subordination opened a door to severities, even among those who had a common cause, and quarrels led to assassination. Sir Richard Grenville is reported to have pistolled Colonel

Champernon in the presence of his brother; and to have run that brother through the body, who sought to avenge his death."

Sir Richard Grenville, who was made General of all the King's Forces in the West after his brother's death at the battle of Lansdown in 1643, was so obnoxious to the Parliamentary Party that he was perpetually the subject of abuse to their journalists, who seldom spoke of him except as "skellum Grenville", and this may be an echo of that hatred, as it seems strange otherwise that there should be no other mention of it, and no tradition handed down.

In any case, Henry had no brother, the only other Champernowne traceable in the Civil War having been his son, Philip, who lived for many years afterwards.

Daphne du Maurier has brought this into her novel, "The King's General", in which the members of the family are rather pilloried, the brother is called Edward, and the quarrel with Sir Richard is largely due to a love affair!

It is probable that Henry Champernowne married a second time, his wife having died in 1653, as we have the baptism of an Alexander, September 22nd, 1637, a son of Henry and "Winifred". We have no other trace of this Winifred, but Alexander married Joan Mill on November 26th, 1658, at St. Minver, Cornwall. Of course, Henry might have had a son Henry, but there is no record of his baptism and no funeral of a Henry except of the Royalist Colonel in 1644.

His other children were:

Arthur baptised at Broad Windsor, 1613;

Ann baptised at Modbury 1614, died unmarried 1680;

Philip baptised at Modbury 1617;

John baptised at Modbury 1619.

Arthur must have died before 1637, as in the will of Elizabeth, Lady Champernowne, widow of Sir Richard, she mentions Henry "my nephew" and Philip his son and heir. She also mentions Amy Champernowne, probably identical with Ann, since John Crukern in his will, calls his daughter Amy "Ann". She is no doubt the Mrs. Amy Champernowne, buried 1680; the "Mrs." being by courtesy.

The son Philip entered as Gentleman Commoner at Exeter College, Oxford, 18th August, 1634, matriculated in November, aged 16, and continued there until 1637; after which he was at the Middle Temple. He was a Colonel in the Civil War, of which we find some details in the Royalist Composition Papers, thus:

"His delinquency was that he was in arms against the Parliament, and was at Truro at the render thereof, as appears from a pass from General Fairfax, which is given in full: 'Col. Champernowne with his servants 4 horses and necessities', dated 18th March at Truro".

(Another note says that at the capitulation of Truro, 100 of Colonel Champernowne's troops deserted to Fairfax.)

He took the Covenant and negative oath before the Committee of Devon, 16th April, 1647, and was to pay a fine of £39. In the particulars given as to his means, he said he was seized in fee of a rent out of the Borough of Modbury, certain lands in Broad Windsor, Dorset, out of which there is an annuity of £10 to his brother John. The rent in Modbury is liable to a judgment of £600 against his father Henry in 1629.

Mention is also made of an annuity of £32, payable out of the Manor of Berry Pomeroy to his cousin Edward (of Dartington, who married Elizabeth Swift). Perhaps this accounts for Daphne du Maurier's "Edward".

In January 1648 he petitioned "and allegeth that he lay lamed of a shot in his thigh and supposes his estate to be under value, and therefore forebode to execute his composition, and praiseth that may be taken into consideration";

and in the record that he had taken the negative oath, it is certified that "the said Mr. Champernoon received a wound in his thigh before Plymouth whereby he is maymed and cannot as we conceive travayle to London without danger to his health".

He married, on the 4th November, 1646, Margaret Hele at Modbury, and died in 1670, and was buried at Modbury, July 30th. His widow survived him five years, her funeral taking place also at Modbury on October 8th, 1675. Their children were:

Philip baptised December 8th, 1647;
Warwick baptised August 22nd, 1650;
Henry baptised February 24th, 1651, buried 26th April, 1652;
Margaret baptised May 9th, 1653;
Walter baptised June 17th, 1654; buried at Modbury 27th July, 1719;
(another, apparently Honor) October 3rd, 1655;
and Mary baptised August 12th, 1661, buried, May 5th, 1663.

Philip the eldest son, matriculated November 29th, 1667, and was at Exeter College from 30th March, 1668, to 6th June, 1669, in which year he married his first wife, Elizabeth Swete who died in 1676; and later he married Sarah Calmady, daughter of Edward Calmady and widow of John Gubbs.

By the first wife there were two sons, Arthur, baptised at Modbury January 12th, 1671, and Henry, March 17th, 1673. By the second wife there was one daughter named Margaret, baptised 1683, who died in 1715.

In 1680 correspondence between the Bishop of Exeter and Archbishop Sancroft shows that the financial affairs of this, the senior line of the family were by now in a very parlous condition.

Philip's estate was "not above £200 per annum and clogged with debt

and some small children; he was about to leave the country, and going to sea with a brother of his who is a merchant".

This probably refers to Warwick, for no further details concerning him have come to light.

In 1695 (after Philip's death) in the Chancery Proceedings a case shows that the estate was heavily encumbered with debt. It is a claim by Richard Hillersdon and others, including a relative of Philip's first wife, concerning the trust estate which was in the hands of Walter Avent, an intimate acquaintance living near, who was trustee and guardian of Philip's two children and administrator of his estate.

Philip died in 1684. A large stone, formerly on the floor of the Church, with coat of arms with many quarterling, and crest, now placed against the south transept wall records:

"Here lieth the body of Phillip
Champernoun Esq. oblit 26 July 1684
and Margaret Champernoun his daughter
in the year of her age 30
of Our Lord 1715"

In 1698 his widow Sarah earnestly requested the site of the Court House, which had been sold to Henry Legassick by her son, Arthur, from him; but it appears that in 1705, instead of returning it to Legassick, she sold what remained of the old place for the materials.

She died 1717, funeral July 20th, and her will says that her funeral is to cost £50 - £80, and that her residence is to go to her son-in-law (i.e. step-son) Henry Champernowne.

Of this Henry we only know that he is spoken of as "of Plymouth" and that he died, childless, in 1731, and thus was the last of the long line of Champernownes of Medbury.

Philip's eldest son, Arthur, married in 1693, Ann, daughter of Richard Hillersdon of Membland; and after her death, Mary the daughter of John Wise; the marriage settlement being dated 1698. After his death, the widow married Joseph Sawle. (In the family deeds John Sawle of Penrice, Cornwall).

Davidson's "Devon Churches" mentions a stone on the floor of the Church of Stoke Gabriel, inscribed:

"Here lieth the body of Richard Full
the son of Lewis Full, who departed this life
the 12th day of July Anno Dom 1674.
Also here lyeth Arthur Champernown Esq.
who died 7 Nov. 1700"

This inscription cannot now be traced, there being many floor stones with inscriptions so worn as to be more or less undecipherable. There is, however, a wall memorial on the south side of the Sanctuary, which reads:

"In memory of
Arthur Champernown
of Modbury, Esq., who
Died ye 7th day of Novemr.
1700: in ye twenty
ninth year of his age"

The entry in the Register reads: "1700 Nov. 10th. Arthur Champernon Esq."

The connection of Arthur with the name Full can be traced in Prince's "Worthies", where it states that his second wife, Mary Wise, was sole heir to her mother, the daughter and one of the heirs of Lewis Full of Stoke Gabriel, gent.

Prince, who was writing in 1699, says of the family, "which now flourishes at Membland in this County"; so Arthur must have been living at or near the home of his first wife.

He left no children, and so we come to the end of the story of the Champernownes of Modbury in the County of Devon.

Some notes on the Priory and Church.

This Priory was a "cell" to the Benedictine Abbey of St. Pierre sur Dive, in the diocese of Seez in Normandy, not far from Falaise, called the "Monastery of the Blessed Mary de Spineto of St. Pierre sur Dive". No charter of foundation has been traced on either side of the Channel, but the records go back to the 12th century. It was not large, indeed there seem never to have been more than two monks besides the Prior, and in 1328 a complaint was made by a "noble man Lord Richard de Campo Arnulphi Knt" and "repeatedly impressed by our ears" wrote the Bishop to the Abbot in Normandy, that though the Prior and two monks from Normandy, approved by the Bishop, were to be admitted from Normandy, one monk, contrary to the intention of the Founder had been newly added, and hospitality could not be kept up, and the Priory had not sufficient means - so Brother Nicholas de Curcy was conducted back to Normandy.

The nomination of the Prior normally belonged to the Abbot in Normandy, but during the wars with France, Modbury, being an alien priory was taken into the King's hands, who also presented during the minority of Champernownes, who were the true patrons.

The Priory, which was dedicated to St. Gregory, was certainly founded by the Valletorts, and the patronage later came to the Champernownes. It was later annexed to Eton College, and among the deeds at the College there are about forty connected with Modbury, from which most of these notes are taken.

Early 12th Century, probably about 1140.

A grant by Roger de Valletort to the Priory of Modbury of a tithe of the wheaten bread of his inn (hospicio) and of his demesned in the counties of Devon and Cornwall.

He also confirms the grant to the Abbot and Convent of St. Pierre sur Dive of the Church of St. George of Modbury, which his ancestors had given to the said Abbey and Convent, and says that the Priory had been founded by his father and his uncle.

He also makes a grant for the benefit of the soul of his father Reginald and of his own and his wife's to the monks of Modbury and the Abbey of St. Pierre sur Dive of the Church of Chirchton near his castle of Trematon.

There are many other grants during the following years (one of a rivulet).

1270 - 3. An Agreement made between William de Corcy, Prior of Modbury and Alexander de Okeston and Joan his wife.

(Joan's first husband has been Ralph de Valletort who died before 1257. By her second husband Alexander, she had a daughter Joan, who married Richard Champernon before 1284. There was also a son Sir James de Okeston, who died without issue about 1323, having in 1315 settled Modbury and other lands given him by Roger de Valletort, brother and surviving heir of Ralph, on Richard Champernon's son Richard, by command of Edward II. This shows the connection with the Champernovnes.)

1302. Sept. 16. An Agreement between James de Okeston and the Prior of Modbury.

There seem to have been some questions that had to be settled. An arrangement had been made for Okeston to have a way of access to the Church, and James points out that he had already cut down much timber for the purpose.

(Was this perhaps made underground, for which there is some evidence?)

There is an early mention of the Vicar in 1250, when there is a grant by Ivo, Vicar of Modbury to the Church of St. George of a burgage in that vill. The Church, usually called the Parish Church, had been given over to the Abbot in Normandy, but not the appointment of the Vicar, and in 1331 we have -

Declaration of John Bishop of Exeter pronouncing the Abbots of St. Pierre sur Dive the rightful possessors of the parish church of Modbury, saving always the Bishop's right of appointing the Vicar.

1289. July 23. An Arbitration held by the Archdeacon and Sub-Dean of Exeter. An Ordinance was made concerning the times of opening the door of the Chapel of St. George at Modbury, and the keys therof. Mention is made of the Church of the Blessed St. Mary in which the parishioners usually attend Divine Service.

"Many of the parishioners being present" the door was to be opened on solemn and feast days, the small tithes to be brought by the parishioners. But on other days on account of the honesty of the monkish order, and to avoid suspicion, to be always closed, except when the patron was present, before which we wish the door to be opened in reverence of the patron, when for the sake of devotion he wishes to enter. Provided always no approach to the Chapel, so that the parishioners should be more diligent in the Church.

(This seems clearly to show that the Chapel of St. George and the Church of St. Mary were part of the same building, and that the words Church and Chapel were interchangeable, as we have in other places the Church of St. George.

It was also agreed that one third of the offerings made in the Chapel of St. Leonard should go to the Vicar.

The Ordinance continues...

An exit was to be made before all Saints in the said chapel between the door of the same and the steps of the dormitory. All doors to have two locks, one key with the Vicar, and one with the Prior.

(Is this the origin of the underground passage which has been traced between the church and the priory, of which a description is given later?)

1336. An order prohibiting the burial of any bodies in the north part of the churchyard of Modbury. (Perhaps because of the underground passage?)

1377. Letters of Thomas, Bishop of Exeter, in a dispute between John Michell, Prior, and William Dalton, Vicar of the Church of Modbury as to whose duty it was to strew the said church with straw, in which he awards the third part of the duty to the Vicar, and two thirds to the Prior.

During the Hundred Years' War the temporalities of the alien priories were often seized into the King's hands, and so in 1345 the new Prior was nominated by Thomas de Campo Arnulphi, and duly presented to the Lord Sovereign, by the selfsame Thomas, the true patron of the Priory. Similar references occur in 1349, 1351, and in 1362, when he is called "that noble and powerful person Thomas de Campo Arnulphi, Lord of Modbury". We find also in 1377 the King as Patron "recione guerre" nominating the new Prior to Thomas, the true patron. The King also appointed the Vicar in 1375 "racione guerre".

By Letters Patent of Nov. 13. 1399 the Prior was restored to John Roger, Prior, who was to render yearly to the King during the war with France the apport due in time of peace to the chief house in the parts beyond the seas that the preceeding Prior had been rendering to the Crown for the Farm of the Priory.

However, by Letters Patent of July 1st 1409 the revenues were granted inter alia to the King's consort Joan, and the grant was renewed by Henry V in 1414. But Queen Joan fell into disfavour, was suspected of witch craft, and her lands forfeited. Modbury became the subject of various grants, but was restored to Queen Joan on May 8th, 1431, who continued to enjoy a yearly revenue of 23l. 13s. and 4d. till her death in 1436. On October 22. 1431 she had demised the custody of the priory to William Benselyn the Prior, Laurence de Fourmyer, monk, and Thomas Hill. After her death it was leased for seven years to John Fortescu, Henry Drev, John Offord and Richard Brouste on Feb. 12th 1438. (called the farmers).

The last Prior of Modbury, William Benselyn was instituted in 1430, shortly before which an enquiry was held as to the right of patronage and of nomination, the Rectors and Curates-in-charge of the Deanery of Plympton attending and taking the oath. It was found that the patronage for this time belonged to the Abbot in Normandy by reason of an

agreement formerly made between the Abbot and Convent and the predecessors of Hugh. This ends "Given in the Parish Church of Modbury".

Shortly after Prior Benselyn was appointed, the Bishop issued a licence for him to perform Divine Service in the Chapel of St. Margaret at Modbury.

1433 and 1434. Notarial protests by William Benselyn, the Prior, against molestation, and in 1433 there is the appointment by the Prior and the monks, proprietors of the parish church there, of John Marschall as their proctor in legal causes and other business.

The Eton College papers give an original letter from Sir Philip Courtenay to his "welbelovyd Frend the Prior of Modbury", not dated, but of the 15th Century....

"Welbelovyd Sir, y commaunde me to yow, certyffing yow that y am enformed by the paryshoners off Modbury that the Vyker yntendyth as to morn to say the hygh masse, otherwyse than hyt hath ever heretofore so don or so sayn, But only soche as hath ben Pryors hath ever pryncypall days don the servyse to the honure of God and all so to the plesyre off the lord and all so to all the paryashe: and Sir, Forasmuche as ye well understond this ye pray yow to contynue as ye wyll lke to have my gode wyll and all so off your pore neyghbores. For els hyt wyll afftar my mynd unto grete truble as God deffend and Jhu have yowe yn his keepyng.

"Wrytyn at Maleborwe (Malborough) Chyche on Sonday in hast by Sir Philippe Courtenay."

It looks as if there was some disagreement between the Prior and the Vicar; this happened at Dunster in Somerset, though somewhat later, in 1500, and the church was divided, the Priory having the Chancel, and the parish the nave, divided by the beautiful screen.

About 1437 the Priory was in a bad state, and there is a.....

Petition by William Benselyn, the Prior, to the King, setting forth that the said Priory was a "celle" of the Abbey of Seynt Pier upon Dyve in Normandie to which it used to pay 40/- yearly but that the successive priors were "perpetuely institue and not dativus nor removabilus". In consequence of the war of the late King against his adversaries the Priory had been seized into the King's hand, and "leten to ferme" for 24/- a year "where thourgh the said Resecher hath not sufficiante of lyvelode to kepe & to susteyne divyne service, hospitalite & almyssis yn the same Priorie acostomyd, but the housis of the same Priorie for lacke of newe byldyng biith so olde, rotid & feble that wyth ynne schort tyme here after, but yf grete cost ben doon uppon them, as welle the chirche there of, which is of the gloriouse Martir Seynt George, as alle other housis of the same Priorie, biith lyke to falle downe and be destruyed for ever more".

Inasmuch as peace was made in the 18th year of the King's father, the Prior begs that he may receive 22s a year from the "fermors" until the end of their term, for the "edification and amending of the chirche, housis and closis of the same Priorie".

So in 1438 there was granted to the Prior 16 marks a year for the reconstruction of the church and the buildings of the priory, to be paid by the King's farmer, John Fortescue, Henry Drewe, John Offord and Richard Brouste, to whom the Priory had been leased by letters patent for seven years, and a grant to the Prior for his life, after the expiry of seven years, of the Priory for a yearly rent of 20 marks.

In 1441 Henry VI granted Modbury Priory to Eton College. The dissolution of the Priory implied in the grant was not violent, and the Prior became lessee for life. But the connection with the Abbey does not seem to have been completely severed, and as late as 1470 a monk was sent over, presumably to console the last years of the aged Prior.

There was a short period at the beginning of the reign of Edward IV when Eton College lost Modbury, which was granted by Letters Patent in November 1466 to the Abbey of Tavistock, but the property was restored to Eton in July of the next year. The presentation to the living is still in the hands of the College.

In the Devon and Cornwall Notes and Gleanings of 15th March 1889, one of Prebendary Hingeston-Randolph's articles on the dedication of Devon churches shows that he considered that the dedication of Modbury church was not to St. George but to St. Peter, and he thought that the Modbury folk had at some time adopted the other dedication; and he also said that Dr. Oliver had corrected the mistake in his Monasticon of the diocese, and that the authority was unimpeachable, as follows - In the north transept there is a beautiful tomb of Sir John Prideaux, of Orchardon in the parish, and he quotes from a copy of his will, dated 6th June, 1463, in which he directed that his body should be buried in the Transept (or Wing-"ala" aisle) of the Blessed Peter of Modbury - "Beati Petri de Modbury". Hingeston-Randolph thinks it could not be imagined that one of the principal parishioners could be in ignorance of the dedication of his parish church.

But surely, apart from the fact that it is called the Church of St. George about 1140, if one part of the church could be called the Church of St. Mary, does this not give the name of the Transept, not at all applying to the whole church. The dedication would be in accord with the name of the abbey in Normandy, in fact in one quotation the dedication joins the name of St. Peter with the Blessed St. Mary.

Another chapel was that of the Holy Trinity, the Blessed Virgin and St. John the Baptist, situated in the south part of the parish church, mentioned in a deed of 1401, providing for a fit chaplain to perform divine service and to pray for the souls of many persons, including Robert Hill (of Shilston) "son of Robert Hill, formerly Judge of our Lord the

King" and Margaret his wife - who was a Champernowne.

The question has arisen as to whether it was the parish church, or the Priory Church. These extracts show that though the church belonged to the Abbey, it was still the parish church. We read of the Church of St. George, and the Chapel of St. George, the latter being that part used by the monks, probably the chancel; the Church of the Blessed St. Mary, probably the nave, the part used by the parishioners; and the chapels of St. Leonard, of St. Margaret, of the Holy Trinity, the Blessed Virgin and St. John the Baptist, and probably the Transept or chapel of St. Peter; but there seems to be no strict rule about the words Church or Chapel.

Note

Dr. Oliver and others say that the priory was founded by the Champernownes, very likely because in the complaint by the Bishop to the Abbot in 1328, (quoted on page 41) the Bishop says that the priory had the distinction of being founded by the ancestors of Sir Richard; but the grant by Roger de Valletort about 1140 (page 41) clearly shows that it was founded by the Valletorts (who were of course ancestors through the Okestens).

Dr. Oliver quotes Leland as saying "I take it that Ruan (i.e. Rohant) or Oxton were founders of it" and goes on "this account is very imperfect. It is certain from the registers of this See that the honour of the foundation is to be ascribed to the Champernour family".

Underground passage at Modbury

The following account is copied from a notebook of the late James Frederick Williams, who collected an immense amount of material for a history of the Champernownes.

"The Priory buildings stood a little to the north of the church, and a high wall ran between the priory grounds, now included in the churchyard, and the church. This wall, it is said, was demolished early in the 19th century.

"In enlarging the churchyard in the year 1911 the foundations of the priory were found, and are now within the churchyard. A well built subterranean passage extended from the Priory to the church, and in digging a deep grave about the year 1897 for the interment of Sarah Watts, Samuel Perry, parish clerk at Modbury says:- at a depth of four feet from the surface he came upon a large flagstone four feet wide, covering a passage six feet deep, and three to four feet wide; at the bottom of this passage were cobblestones, just as in the path from the Vicarage. The sides were of large stone slabs, set on edge, and without mortar.

"Samuel Perry also stated that in 1897 he dug the grave of James Shepherd, (on which there is now a marble cross). On reaching a depth, the whole of the grave and coffin of William Lyndon, buried in 1861, fell into his excavation, and exposed the wall of this same passage between the graves of William Lyndon and Robert Lyndon, and he would say that the passage came through the grave of Robert Lyndon, and probably through the grave of the Rev. Nutcombe Oxenham, buried 1808. It is quite possible that the passage may have been used by the monks to secrete their valuables during troubles with France, when all alien priories were temporarily confiscated."

(However it looks more as if this second passage led from the Court House, and I think there is a suggestion that when the house was fired in the Civil War they retreated to the church by an underground way. C.E.C.)

Mr. Williams continues - "Of the Champernowne mansion nothing now remains, with the exception of a few carved granite pillars and mantelpieces now used for various purposes.

"William Crocker informed me that there is a very large and deep well, within the site of the old mansion, (which adjoined the churchyard) and that halfway down the well is a drive or passage, on the side next to the church, which passage has never been explored.

"Dr. Miles' house and a row of villas and cottages, one of which is named Champernowne House, are now built on the spot. There is one old wall of immense thickness included in Dr. Miles' house."

Attached is a drawing of the last portion of the house, traced from a drawing made in 1794. This was taken down not long before 1887, when Arthur Champernowne brought some of the old oak timbers, and a granite chimneypiece to Dartington Hall, intending to make use of them, but he died shortly after.

C. E. Champernowne.

MODBURY
CHURCH

ANCIENT CHURCHYARD

This part taken into
churchyard and old
wall R to S destroyed c.1840

Wall
R to K
taken
away
and
this
part
added
to
church
yard
1911

PRIORY

Present Gates

Dr. Miles' Garden

Direction of
"Court House"

- A Grave of James Shepherd 1897
- B Grave of W. Langdon 1861
- C Grave of Robert Langdon 1851
- D Grave of Rev. N. Oxenham
- E Grave of Sarah Watts 1897
- F Grave of S. & B. Sambell 1860
- N Niche with Prideaux effigy
- G to K Bank and hedge
- H Trench dug 37 ft. long
- S to T Present wall

Prince gives the deed of John Drew referred to on page 45 -

"John Drew esq, Sergeant-at-law and recorder of London, a resident of Modbury, bequeathed (in the 4th Edward IV) certain messuages to John Rouse, of Edmeston, in trust, in this parish, and his heirs, that they provide, out of the rents of the said messuages, a fit chaplain, of honest and good fame, to perform divine service in a certain chapel of the Holy Trinity, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and St. John the Baptist, situated in the south part of the parish church of Modbury, and there to pray for the souls of John Drew, and Joan his wife, Sir Richard Champenoun and Catherine his wife, and divers others, as fully appears in the deed of that date".

.....

The exact position of the Priory itself is a debatable point, John Leland (1535-43) says "the site of their mansion is yet to be seen on the north side of the church".

Britton and Brayley's Devonshire (1803) says "the side of the Priory seems to have been at a place called Scotland adjoining to the western part of the churchyard. Some remains of an ancient building, with large arches, filled up, are still existing there, and till lately were inhabited, but are now converted into a barn. Two large fields, on the opposite side of the road are still called Prior's Parks".

Cawse's Modbury (1860) says that in digging graves they frequently came upon old foundations.

Mr. Williams has placed a building on the north side as can be seen in his plan, and says that when the wall shown was taken down in 1911, foundations were found as shown in plan. In 1910 when he was first there, the men would be more likely to remember and describe these points than anyone in these days.

Of course, it will be realised that in addition to the Priory itself, there must have been farm buildings used by the monks.

The completely different construction of the two passages is noticeable, or could it have been two parts of the same passage? It hardly seems likely.

Perhaps some further investigation may throw light on these questions.

A note in Britton and Brayley's Devonshire says of Modbury church - This structure has a considerable deviation from the usual east and west position; and perhaps may in some degree confirm the received opinion, that the founders of churches took that point for the east, where the sun was seen to rise on that saint's day to whom the church was dedicated. The head of Modbury church is within three quarters of a point of the north-east.

The Priors of Modbury, from Dugdale's Monasticon.

William occurs as Prior of Modbury before the time of Henry II.

Vincent de Fulchia	adm. 21st July, 1275.
Nicholas	confirmed 21st September, 1321 (but see attached from Patent Rolls No.1)
William	1334
John de Fovea	14th June, 1345.
John Galterus	9th June, 1349.
Robert de Curceyo	1351.
Philip de Furnnariis	5th April, 1362.
Gilbert de Billeys	died 1375
John Mychel	Succeeded
John Roger	1398 (by the free resignation of John Mychel (Brooking Rowe)). See below 2.
Richard Leycestre	1400
William Franchillon	1415
Adam Prianho or Prideaux	18th July, 1423.
William Benselyn	el. 18th March, 1430 (on the free resignation of the former prior) The last prior of Modbury.

Note. The Patent Rolls give...

1. May 16 1345. Nomination of brother John de Fovea, monk of the Abbey of St. Mary, St. Pierre-sur-Dives, to Thomas de Campo Arnulphi for him to present the said John to John Bishop of Exeter as prior of the priory of Modbury, in his diocese, which is annexed to the Abbye aforesaid, the priory being now void by the resignation of brother Nicholas de Barbe the last prior; with mandate to Thomas to present him by the letters patent The right to nominate a monk of the Abbey to the said Thomas for him to present him as prior to the diocesan pertains to the King by reason of the temporalities of the priory being in his hands on account of the war with France.

2. July 8, 1398. (Nottingham Castle). Nomination of Richard Chambernawn of John Shrewsbury of Totneys, monk of the Benedictine order for presentation in the King's right by reason of war.

And in February 1398 - 9 (i.e., 1399). John Roger. Void by the free resignation of John Mychel. (Brooking Rowe).

So it would appear that John Shrewsbury did not get it.

ADDITIONAL NOTE (C.E.C.)

Of course, Mr. Williams may have been wrong in the exact position for the Priory (or one of its buildings), but it is clear that one wall of it was found when the wall was taken down in 1911 and the further part added to the churchyard.

It may be also noted that Cawse's Modbury (1800) says that foundations were often found when digging graves; this can hardly apply to the ancient churchyard, which by then must have been full, making the addition necessary which was added in 1840. (I wonder whether the passage came to the surface and the monks entered the church by the lovely little door close to the Prideaux tomb?) If the passage was entirely to the Court House that would be the way that the Patron would enter.

COPY OF LETTER FROM MR. NOEL BLACKISTON OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE.

8.10.52.

It seems definite from the Bishop of Exeter's letter to the Abbott of St. Pierre sur Dive, of 13th January, 1328 (printed in Exeter Episcopal Registers, Grandisson, Vol. II & 104B) that two monks together with the Prior seem to have been the maximum at Modbury. Many of the so-called alien priories did not support conventual life at all. In many cases there was simply one agent of the French Abbey, who was called Prior, but was in fact not the head of a subordinate religious house, but rather the Steward or bailiff or land agent for the English possessions of the French house. See David Knowles "The Religious Houses of Medieval England" (1940) p.127, where Modbury is not included in the list of conventual priories. I do not think it at all likely that monks would have been recruited locally.

WADO. 1042-1066.

Saxon prince of great stature. Owned much property in South Devon in the time of Edward the Confessor (1042-1066). Amongst his lands was SILVESTENE now Shilston.

Ref: Devonshire Domesday.

A Saxon Prince and General (of gigantic stature being upwards of seven feet in height and of enormous strength) in the time of Alfred the Great (871-901).

Lewis - Topography of Devonshire.

COUNT OF MORTAIN. 1086.

Norman Count granted lands in South Devon by William the Conqueror.

Richard Earl of MORTAIN holds the earl of SILVESTENE. Wado held this in the time of King Edward the Confessor, and it paid for half a hide (measure of land enough to support a family, about 120 acres).

There is land for three ploughs, In demesne is one plough and two serfs, and four villeins, and three bordars, with one plough and half an acre of meadow.

Formerly it was worth twenty shillings. Now it is worth tenshillings.

Ref: Devonshire Domesday.

King Edward the Confessor 1042-1066.

JOHN de SHILVESTON. 1230.

Norman Knight from whom Shilston acquired the present name.

The lands and dwelling of JOHN de SHILVESTON, whose daughter, Eleanor, married Sir Richard Brancheim, and secondly to John de Ashley.

The said Richard had issue, Joan, who married Sir Richard Huish, whose son, Sir Richard, in Edward I reign (1272-1307), did content the said John Ashley for the said lands.

Ref: Prince. Worthies of Devon. p.59.

JOHN de ASHLEY (Ashleigh, Ashlegh) 1272-1307.

Norman Knight. Inherited the property by marriage to daughter of John de Shilveston, Eleanor. Ashley was her second husband.

Ref: Prince. Worthies of Devon.

Sir John Hill settled his habitation at Shilston, whether by marriage or purchase from John de Goneton. (Whose it was in Henry IV's time, 1399-1413).

Ref: Pole.

Sir JOHN HILL. 1413-1614.

Sir John Hill of Shilston, an eminent lawyer, who prosecuted his studies, and was so assiduous in his profession that he soon succeeded to the highest degree of the Long Robe, viz. King's Sergeant at Law, Henry IV, 1400. In 1409 he was constituted one of the Justices of Common Pleas.

In 1414 he received the honour of Knighthood from Henry V, and was continued in the same high office of Common Pleas to the end of that reign.

King Henry VI (1422-1461) also continued him in the same office.

That one man should be thus advanced, and continued in so high places and honourable situations (which are generally slippery places) by three successive Kings is sufficient to establish his fame for ability and integrity, outdone by none.

The following may be truly applied to this reverended person:-

A better man or one more just,
There never was in any trust.

He settled his habitation at SHILSTON (anciently Shilveston) which had owners so called in the days of King Henry III, 1216-1272, in the parish of Modbury, in the South Hams of this county.

Whether he had it by match or purchase from John de Goneton (whose it was in the time of Henry IV, 1399-1413) is not known.

This gentleman got a great estate, no doubt, in the way of justice and honesty, which he left to posterity, that flourished there for about nine generations after him, and is very good confirmation thereof. For we may truly say of ill-gotten goods:-

.....'Tis very rare,
To see them come to the third heir.

His eldest son, Robert Hill, of Shilston, esq; was an eminent person also, both for estate and command. He was high-sheriff of the county of Devon, in the seventh year of King Henry VI (1422-1461) 1427; and an hundred and twenty pound lands in the subsidy-book, in the fourteenth of the same king.

He married Margaret, daughter of Sir Richard Champernon, of Modbury, knight, and had issue Richard; who had issue John; who had issue Richard, who by Jane his wife, daughter to Andrew Strechley, of Strechley, esq, had issue Robert; who by his wife Elizabeth, daughter

of John Denham, of Wortham, in the parish of Lifton, in this county, esq; had issue Oliver; who by Agnes, sister and co-heir of Roger Budokshed, of Budokshed, near Plymouth in this county, esq; had issue Robert and others.

Robert Hill of Shilston Esq; married Ursula, daughter of Thomas Southcot, of Indeho, in this county, Esq; and had issue Edward and others.

The said Robert, and Edward his son, wasted their estate, and sold Shilston unto Christopher Savery, Esq; in which name it still flourisheth.

What particular year of our Lord it was in which this reverend judge expired, I do not find; nor yet the place where; although most probable it is, that he died at his house at Shilston, and lieth interred in the parish church of Modbury, which hath since yielded a dormitory to his family, as they there, we hope, fell asleep in the Lord.

Although there is no stone laid, or pile raised, to the memory of this venerable judge that I can hear of; yet in the parish church aforesaid is one found, in commemoration of the sixth in decent from himself, Oliver Hill Esq; it is a flat large stone, having this inscription round the edges:- Here lieth Master Oliver Hill, Esquire, who died the 26th day of December, in the year of Christ 1573.

In the middle thereof is found this large epitaph, being an acrostick on the name of the defunct; which, for the serious strain thereof, as well as the rareness of the poetry for those times, I shall here offer my readers perusal.

O wandering wayght, whose ways lies now to pass by this same tomb,
L et stay your steps, survey this verse, and think on time to come.
I nclos'd in chest his carcaise lies, that earst enclosed a mind,
V nto's appointed race that fled; whose like were hard to find,
E mong the massye multitude of mortal men that be,
R egarding righteousness so much, and loathing vice as he.

H aving a will in all respects to make his word his deed,
I n friendship's facts, no man more frank to aid his friend in need.
L earn you to leave your lawless lusts, and fancies fond to fly;
L earn by his godly life to live, and quiet death to die.

O f ancestors he did decend that famous were for skill;
F or judgement just; for wit, for wealth, their glory grow'th yet still.

S uch hap hath Hill such to succeed, and princes praise possess;
H is pains in court, and toyle in wars, deserve indeed no less.
I t's hard for men to leave their lust, possessing worldly pelf;
L ol yet did Hill renounce them quite, and quite forsake himself.
L ong looking for a better life, by faith in Christ to take;
E ach reader too I wish the like, by death, exchange to make.
S ith riches fade, and form, and strength, and honour eke, and lust,
T were beat, by life, a place provide, e're thou return to dust;
O mortal man! that canst not 'scape death's dreadful darting stings,
N or certain knowst (uncertain life!) when certain end it brings.

Ref: Prince. Worthies of Devon. p.496-7.

Extract from Devonshire by Westcote, p.503

Hill of Shilston in Modbury.

Arms.

Argent, a chevron between three water bougets sable, a mullet difference.

Richard Hill Esq, married Jane, daughter of Andrew Strechley, of Holbeton Esq, and had issue Robert, John, Margery, and Elizabeth married to Walter Northcot.

Robert married Elizabeth, daughter of John Dinham, of Wortham, Esq, and had issue Oliver, Francis, Humphrey, Philip, Robert, Richard, Elizabeth (married to Thomas Prideaux, of Orcheston, Esq.), Katherine (married to Cole of Colehanger) and Florence.

Oliver married Agnes, daughter of Roger Budockside, Esq, and had issue Robert, Arthur, Elizabeth, and Florence.

Robert married a daughter to Thomas Southcot of Shillingford, Esq. and had issue.

Extract from Burke's History.

In 1578, Moyas Hill, Esq, a younger son of the House of Shilston, went to Ireland under Lord Grey, of Wilton (a volunteer to assist in quelling the rebellion in Munster, under the Desmonds), where he greatly distinguished himself, was knighted, and at the suppression of the rebels was rewarded with an extensive grant of land, and no doubt he formed one of the band of volunteers in 1570 but we have no record to that effect. His descendant, William Hill Esq, 1662, was created Viscount Dungannon for his signal gallantry in wounding Oliver Cromwell at the battle of Marston Moor, and his descendant, Arthur Hill, inherits the estates in Ireland and Berkshire; as Viscount Downshire and Baron Hill in Ireland, and Viscount Fairford and Baron Harwich in the peerage of England.

CHRISTOPHER SAVERY (1614 bought Shilston) died 1622.

Robert Hill and his son Edward, having wasted their estate sold Shilston unto Christopher Savery Esq; in which name it still flourisheth.

Ref: Prince. Worthies of Devon.

The estates (Shilston) were purchased by the elder branch of the Saverys, who were merchants of Totnes, possessed of considerable wealth, and of great antiquity; in whose family it still remains.

The Saverys were originally from Brittany, and lived at Willing (their country seat), in the parish, of Rattery. Divers decents enjoyed fair possession, and are allied to worshipful houses.

Christopher Savery was made a Knight Banner in Queen Elizabeth's reign (1558-1603). He married a descendant (sole heiress of the lands) of William Servington, Esq, who was Sheriff of Devon in 1367, during the reign of Edward III (1327-1377).

In 1614, his son, Christopher Savery, purchased Shilston of Robert Hills, Esq, and Edward his son.

Charles Savery was Sheriff of Devon in 1621, and his son, Charles Savery, was colonel of a regiment of foot, in the Parliamentary Army in the time of Charles I (1625-1649), and paid his quota, £50 a month, towards the maintenance of the forces, as appears by receipts now in existence.

In the eighteenth century, Christopher Savery, Esq, built a new commodious House on the estate. (Present house.)

Tradition states that the old house at Shilston was a splendid specimen of the baronial style, and that its noble hall, and minstrel gallery, and extensive offices, were quite in keeping with the requirements of the powerful and warlike families that formerly were its possessors. (Old house built at 1600.)

Ref: Risdon. History.

John Savery removed to Butcombe Court near Bristol early in the 19th century. Copeland.

Invention of the Steam Engine 1700.

THOMAS SAVERY. b.1650 d.1715.

Newcomen and Savery formed a pioneering partnership in 1700, and invented the Atmospheric Steam Engine, which Watt perfected nearly a hundred years later.

Newcomen adapting the piston in a cylinder to the engine Savery had already invented and patented, and the two of them, working together, discovered how to chill and condense the steam by an injection of cold water.

Savery, a Modbury man who came from an old Devon family—an Elizabethan ancestor had lived at Totnes Castle, and Saverys represented Totnes in Parliament for nearly forty years—was a military engineer who had spent most of his spare time experimenting on different inventions, including a paddle-boat worked by a crank, in which however the Admiralty was not interested, and several steam pumping engines used in the drainage of Cornish mines.

Various tales are told of the trivial but lucky chance by which Savery discovered the fact of the expansion and condensation of steam, and of atmospheric pressure, which was the first step towards his construction of the steam engine.

His work had however come to a standstill, when he was approached by Newcomen, a Dartmouth ironmonger who had for some time been experimenting in secret, and had now reached conclusions which carried him a stage beyond Savery's present position. The latter (Savery) had already obtained a patent for his steam engine.

Now the two men went into partnership; and by 1720, Newcomen was erecting powerful and efficient steam engines at Wolverhampton, Newcastle and Leeds, as well as the Cornish mines. There was hardly a tin or copper mine in that county which was without one; and one of them built in 1791, was being used right up to 1918 (127 years!)

A single Newcomen engine could replace a plant worked by twenty men and fifty horses.

Watt carried the work through to its final stage by introducing the separate condenser of the steam which Newcomen had condensed in the cylinder itself.

Appropriately, Newcomen's memorial in his native Dartmouth is beside the river where, from the 1820's onwards, the steam packets which were the development of his invention began to ply.

Father of Horse Power.

THOMAS SAVERY. b.1650 d.1715.

Thomas Savery was born at Shilston about 1650, was a natural inventor, a contriver of machines for polishing plate glass, and of a system of propelling ships against wind and current by means of external paddle wheels, and mechanism worked by hand inside the craft. He was bitterly aggrieved at the official prejudice which prevented his substitute for sails from being put to use.

His fame rests, however, on his steam engine. The tin mines of Cornwall were all in danger of flooding as soon as the deep and valuable lodes were tapped; and to pump them dry was costly in money and exhaustive and wasteful in labour.

Savery was the first to apply steam to this task. After years of experiment he made an engine utilising the already known principle of forcing a column of water to a height by the direct pressure of steam brought to bear on its surface.

His engine consisted of a boiler and two chambers. Each chamber was charged in turn with steam. On the application of cold water to the outer wall of the chamber the steam instantly condensed and formed a partial vacuum, and into this vacuum atmospheric pressure forced water. On steam being readmitted into the top of the cylinder the water was forced through a pipe which rose perpendicularly into the air. By these means pumping was first done by steam.

His engines were not powerful enough to pump water from a deep mine at a single lift; he required three arranged 80 feet above each other to raise water a distance of 240 feet but, as the maximum efforts of manual labour could lift water only 18 feet at a stage, the improvement was impressive.

Much work was done by this beginning of the age of steam, but the little engines were over worked by the pressure required, and bursts and other accidents were frequent in the Cornish mines. There was, however, the inauguration of a revolution, and when Newcomen arrived with his improvements Savery joined hands cordially with him.

His calculations for his tasks were all worked out in what he first called Horse-Power, and his term, like his fame, abides. He died in London in 1715 after seeing his engine successfully installed for the control of water supply at Hampton Court.

SHILSTON BARTON at PRESENT TIME.

The present house was built on a site a little way to the North of the late 16th early 17th century predecessor, in the late 18th early 19th century. The earlier house stood on lower ground. It would appear that the existing house was never finished, as only the S and E fronts of a rectangular block were completed.

The open classic porch, on the S side, is to a later doorway which appears in part to have replaced a window. On plan the building is mainly L shaped, and the wooden framed windows are characteristic of the rebuilding period.

Of the earlier house, externally, there now remains only part of the basement, on the rough lane which is a continuation of the drive. This basement consists of three rooms, approached by a flight of stone steps down into the W most of these rooms. All three have segmental arches on the lane; the dividing walls are pierced N and S by low segmental headed doorways; and at the rear of the W room is a water-supply, which still functions, though uncontrolled. This supply is through a stone spout, with a dripping ledge, the latter cut through by the action of the water.

At the rear of the middle room is a stone trough, with an anti-splash device incorporated in the trough itself, and under a chamfered segmental arch. At the W of the middle room, is a corresponding but cruder, segmental-headed recess; and E at the rear, are steps leading to a long underground passage, with a pointed stone vault.

In this passage is a rectangular wall recess, and North, in a semi-circular recess, is a well. It is generally held that this passage, etc., was a cooling device for foodstuffs, butter, etc.

The rear buildings of the present house look older than the latter but are probably not so. Included in the outbuildings, to the East, is an embattled wall, with two plain round headed archways therein, over one of which is a datestone inscribed C.S. 1819 for Savery who probably added these pseudo-medieval buildings.

Likewise the square embattled garden house, at the end of a kind of terrace, on the N side of a walled garden, W of the house.

A fireplace lintel of early 17th century type, used as a gatepost at the house end of the drive, is clearly a relic of the earlier house.

A number of mounds and depressions SE of the house, appear to be the remains of fish ponds, which are known to have existed.

Remains of a former pound house (for the manufacture of cider) are represented by the very fine example of a pound stone. This pound stone of monolithic granite, is considered to be among the largest and best of its kind in the country. Some of the cider mill remains.

Within the house, the panelled room is the finest relic of the old manor, a lofty room whose walls are lined with elaborately carved woodwork of somewhat Italian Renaissance character. This has been ascribed to the mid 17th century, but in parts it looks earlier. All this work is, of course, not in situ, and was adapted for the present apartment.

Its outstanding features are; the boldly moulded entablatures (top of a column); the well carved frieze, interrupted by richly carved pilasters, their bases carved with scrollwork and tree-like devices; the panelling, with armorial bearings, over the doorway; the rich square panels in the window embrasures, with grotesque figures, etc., in high relief; and the architrave, cornice and lower wainscote moulds. The fireplace is surrounded by an insertion of later panelling.

Off this room is a curious little square vestibule, with fanlights; and the staircase is contemporary, as are other details with the reconstruction.

For a full account of Thomas Savery and his steam-engine, see Vol. 45, of the Transactions of the Devonshire Association, pages 345-367.

LIST OF OWNERS AND APPROXIMATE DATES FROM THE
SAVERYS TO THE PRESENT TIME, 1959.

1820	Collingsplatt.
1870	Samble.
1919	Coleman.
1920	Fairweather.
1948	Marsh and Bankier.
1951	Major.

Devon County Council
County Planning Department

M O D B U R Y

A STUDY - 1954

I N T R O D U C T I O N

The study which follows is an attempt to measure the state of a community, and, as with all such assessments where no precise standards can be established, no absolute conclusion can be reached. Particular aspects of a society can be analysed and a qualitative assessment made. Its population can be growing or declining, and one can speak of increasing opportunity for employment or of a decrease of social activity. In all these respects one can be definite, but it is not possible to be equally definite about the community as a whole. In any community a number of complex forces are always interacting and from them over a period of time one can perceive changes in such aspects as size and function, but it does not seem possible to discover the particular combination of changes from which one can conclude that the community as an entity is declining.

It is therefore probable that when it was said that "Modbury is declining", (the statement which provoked this study) it was a particular aspect of the social organisation which was in mind. To be more authoritative about the community as a whole, however, requires an objective appreciation of a number of factors.

The value of such a report as this, which assembles a number of relevant facts, is that it provides at least a basis for an objective assessment, as long as it is appreciated that opinions may vary about the standards adopted as a measure or indication of decline.

The whole social order, and the material and economic background have probably changed more in the past fifty years than in the preceding three hundred. In some respects this is a change which we do not appear to have assimilated, but with the virtual disappearance of the abject poverty which afflicted the lives of so many in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, (and as the researches show Modbury was no exception) we have made a great social advance.

As well as this such factors as the motor-car, the cinema, the wireless and now television, have completely altered our mental horizons. This in itself is important, for whereas until the first Great War Modbury was the very centre of the world to the people who lived in it,

it has become, as has every place, the place where one lives and works, the place known best to its inhabitants but part of a much wider horizon.

For a thousand years from its inception, probably in Saxon times, Modbury was the local centre of a self-contained rural world, the communal hub drawing to itself the crafts and traders necessary to serve that world. Then for a brief spell of about two centuries, manufacturing industry, primitive by modern standards, grew to a considerable importance and then disappeared. But the town has retained its old-established service role, perhaps now less vital than in the past, for the physical horizons have changed, but of sufficient force to maintain a community there, a community intimate in size, rich in its history, and set in a place of great natural charm; the possessor of so many advantages over similar sized sections of urban communities. If a feature of its community life, for example the Institution, should disappear, it is not necessarily indicative of decline, but might merely mean that with modern developments, and in this case with so many opportunities for assembling knowledge now available, it has become unnecessary in itself.

To the outside observer there appears to be every opportunity for the full enjoyment of modern life in Modbury. The Parish Council betokens active communal interests and a pride in traditions, a number of social groups flourish and if some die others will take their place. All modern public services are available and schemes for improvement of amenities are in hand. The tendency for the development of a dormitory role and an extension of retired settlement is probably a trend which will continue and may be of some considerable benefit. Minor improvements to the town are obviously required, some housing is poor, and the road system is promising to become a veritable nightmare. These and other problems will be solved.

MODBURY

This survey was undertaken as a study of the development and present position of Modbury, a small country town, which seemed to be an example of a declining rural settlement.

The decline of a community is not easily measured. All social organisations change over a period of time and it would be erroneous to draw absolute conclusions from changes in number, for a community is far more than a mere collection of people, and the structure of the population, the industry, trade, employment and social activity, are all of importance. Furthermore, it must always be born in mind that what appears to be a decline in the short term may have a different aspect over a longer period. Changes in number do however draw attention to possible variations in the state of the community and merit close examination.

The figures for the number of people enumerated in Modbury parish at the various National Censuses provide a reliable basis on which to assess overall change. The Census was first held in 1801 and at ten-yearly intervals thereafter, except for a twenty-year interval between 1931 and 1951. It should be noted that the figures relate to the civil parish and not to the town.

At present, with a parish population of some one thousand and eighty five it appears that between eight hundred and eight hundred and thirty live in the general town area. It is probably justifiable to assume that over the last fifty years the proportion of town to parish population has shown little change.

Over the period of one hundred and fifty years for which we have census data, it can be seen that Modbury had reached its peak population by 1821, when the total number of persons enumerated was two thousand, one hundred and ninety-four, and has declined since then by about one-half to a population of one thousand and eighty-five in 1951. Graph A shows that the population decline was erratic although a clear downward trend can be observed. After 1881 the rate of decline was checked and only in the two ten-year periods in which Britain was engaged in major wars (1891-1901 and 1911-1921) did the number fall by fifty or more. A slight increase was shown between 1921 and 1931 followed by a drop of only twenty-five in the twenty succeeding years.

The greater part of the population decline in this period seems to have taken place in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, and had it not been for the Boer War, the 1914-1918 War and the last War 1939-1945, the population might have declined more slowly after 1891 and might even have started to increase. A number of men were recruited from Modbury and the surrounding hamlets to fight in the Boer War but no figures have been found to indicate how many were lost. The War Memorial

records the loss of twenty-eight men in the 1914-1918 War, and although proportionately this is near the average for the whole country, it is relatively high for a rural area.

The large drop in the population between 1891 and 1901 may have been influenced by two epidemics, both of which caused the school to close, first in 1896 for two weeks for fever, and later, in 1900 when it closed for three weeks in December for Diphtheria. These are reflected in the number of burials for those two years, but the figures for baptisms, burials and marriages, which were obtained for the years 1876-1953, are subject to considerable fluctuations in the short term and by their very nature cannot be regarded as a reliable guide to the births, deaths, or marriages for individual years. They do, however, give a useful indication of the long term trend of each of these factors, and they show that while the general level of marriages has been fairly steady and the burials show only a slow decline the number of baptisms has fallen at a faster rate, most noticeably in the period before 1920. More precise information is not readily available as the figures of actual births and deaths would only be issued for Registration Districts and Sub-Districts, and the Registration Sub-District of Modbury (which existed until 1937 when it was amalgamated with four other Sub-Districts to form Kingsbridge Sub-District) consisted of four other parishes besides Modbury itself. The material would not in any case warrant the detailed and lengthy study that would be required to obtain such information, which might be useful, but is not essential. The falling birth-rate has of course been a national feature and Modbury is therefore no exception in this respect.

A more reliable guide to the population side of Modbury's development can be found in the number of families in the parish and the number of houses occupied, both listed in the Census (see Appendix A. Table 2), and also in the average size of family, which can be derived from the Census information. Unfortunately this material is not available for the whole period. Figures for the number of families are only available for 1811 and 1871-1931 inclusive, and those for the number of inhabited houses are available for 1811 and 1841-1951 excluding 1911, and of course 1941. Over the later period (i.e. 1871 onwards) these two sets of figures show the same downward trend reaching its lowest point in 1901 before turning into a fairly slow but steady increase. At every point the number of families exceeds the number of inhabited houses, but the difference is much greater for the earlier figures, declining from eighty-five in 1811 to thirty-five in 1881 and from there to nine and then five (in 1901) before increasing slightly again. An interesting coincidence is that the 1931 figures for both families and inhabited houses are exactly the same as those for 1891, while the total population shows a drop of nearly three hundred. Since 1901 the number of families and houses occupied show a clear upward trend whereas the total population did not begin to stabilize at its present level until 1921. Therefore, while the total population was still falling, the number of families was actually increasing, with a consequent drop in average

family size from 4.6 in 1891 to 3.6 in 1931. (The last year for which figures are available.) However there seems to be a general pattern in all these figures which would give 1821 as the peak with a fairly rapid decline after 1831 which in 1901 is turned either, in the case of the total population graph, into an ever slower decline with a tendency to stabilise or become a slow increase, or, in the number of families and houses, to turn immediately into a gentle upward curve. It is reasonable to assume that had it not been for losses in the last three wars the total population curve might similarly have started to rise.

Unfortunately statistics for the age distribution of the inhabitants of the parish in the past are not available and it is doubtful if any research could produce figures which would offer a reliable basis for comparison. It has however been possible to obtain from various sources a reliable estimate of the age-distribution in Modbury town at present, and this is shown in the following table, which also gives figures for the Rural District, County, and country for comparison.

% Proportion of Total Population

Age-groups	Modbury (Town Area)	Kingsbridge (Rural District)	Devon (County)	England and Wales
0 - 14	20.2	20.2	19.8	21.9
15 - 59/64	60.2	61.4	61.2	64.4
60 - 65 and over	19.6	18.4	19.0	13.7

It is particularly interesting to note that almost one in five of Modbury's population are retired persons. This is a far higher proportion than the national average of about one in seven, and is slightly higher than the average for the county. It is even more significant that the proportion of retired to total population in Modbury is greater than in Kingsbridge Rural District. Since both Devon and the South Hams are noted for the number of people who choose to retire there it is quite clear that Modbury must have considerable attractions as a retirement district, both for its own inhabitants and for people from other parts of the country.

Although Modbury has a lower proportion of population within the working-age groups than the other areas for which figures are given, it has a proportion of children equal to that in the rural district and higher than that in the County, but still appreciably below the national average.

Details of the average size of family in Modbury can only be deduced for the years for which information on the total number of families is

available (i.e. 1811 and 1871-1931 inclusive). In 1811 the figure is 4.76 and is only slightly lower in 1871, after which the general trend is one of decline, accelerating at the turn of the century but slowing down again soon after, with an abnormal (and as yet unexplained) drop in 1881 rising again to a normal level on the curve in the succeeding census year.

All the population figures show symptoms of a decline, which started between 1821 and 1831 and has become relatively unimportant since 1911. Comments in the Census indicate that the decline in Modbury's population in the mid-nineteenth century was due to emigration, or migration in search of employment or better wages (particularly to Plymouth). However, there was an increase in population in 1871 and the Census attributes this to "its convenience as a place of residence, and the general prosperity of the neighbourhood". Unfortunately no further informative footnotes appear, but there is other evidence to show that migration for work and emigration were part of Modbury's decline until the 1914-1918 War. This was collected during the course of a week's stay in Modbury itself (in December 1953) and much of it derives from interviews with local inhabitants, and is supported by extracts from a collection of press cuttings relating to Modbury and the district. It was not possible to get any precise dates or figures but several of the people interviewed remembered that there had been a considerable amount of emigration in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, and cited friends and relations who had gone with their families to Canada and Australia in particular. In some cases nothing more had been heard of them, not even whether they had in fact arrived, but in others news of their success and well-being came back to Modbury. The most colourful of these emerges from a press-cutting dated 1903 (presumably from a New Zealand newspaper) describing the 'fabulous success' of the Pinhey brothers who had emigrated nine years previously and started up a Livery and Bait Stables which are described as being 'one of the largest and best equipped stables in Australasia' and not excelled in any of the big cities in Australia. Other emigrants came back on holidays to visit friends, and one wrote to the local paper from New York. But as far as can be remembered there were no years in which there was an extraordinarily large number of emigrants. They left at a fairly steady rate which was checked by the 1914-1918 war, after which there seem to have been only a few men deciding to emigrate instead of the whole families that had gone in the pre-war period.

In the course of conversation the older people mentioned the number of empty houses that they remembered seeing when they were younger, and one of them said that though he had several times gone away to work, he had always been able to get a cottage to live in when he came back to Modbury. They could all list houses which had once been unoccupied, but after being empty for a few years had become derelict and uninhabitable. The Census confirms these statements as it gives figures for the number of uninhabited houses in the parish for

the years 1841-1891 inclusive, and these rise from twenty-four in 1841 to nearly fifty in 1861 before falling again to eleven in 1891. Even more startling is the fact that over this period the total number of houses listed in the parish dropped by nearly one-quarter. Although in Modbury today there are several ruins and derelict buildings to bear witness to these changes they cannot possibly account for such a large number of houses. One of the older inhabitants however volunteered the information that she remembered several of the cottages being converted and made into larger ones, particularly the old rows of narrow cottages, two or three of which would be grouped to form bigger ones. She was able to cite various houses which had once been several cottages, and some of these alterations are quite apparent to the casual observer.

Coupled with this topic were recollections of local industries which were no longer in operation. One person could remember when a larger number of men were employed in the town itself. He said that there used to be four wheelwrights, each employing about six men, (there were two in 1902 and 1906 but only one since 1910) and a tannery which ceased production at least twenty years ago. All the available information on these small local industries or crafts showed them to be declining with the introduction of factory produced goods and as the old families died out. In this respect Modbury's decline is due primarily to external factors affecting the whole country, namely the extension of modern industrial methods and the growth of new centres of industry. However it is interesting to note that some of the firms were able to adapt themselves to the changing times, like the family of coach-builders who turned their horse-bus into a motor-bus, one of them learning to drive it when he was turned fifty. The family still own a garage in the town.

Other symptoms of decline may be seen in shops and business enterprises, and information about the number and type of enterprises in Modbury town was obtained from trade directories covering the past fifty years, and from local sources. The total number of business and professional enterprises only fell from seventy-one in 1902 to sixty in 1953, and the bulk of the decline took place before and during the first world war. The number fell to fifty-five in 1919 but rose again slowly, with the exception of a sharp drop from sixty-two in 1930 to fifty-three in 1935. The number of shops concerned solely with the retail trade has remained fairly static at around twenty, though it fell slightly around the 1914-1918 war. The service trades and producer-retailers fell by a quarter between 1902 and 1919 but thereafter remained stable with only a slight fall in 1935. The professional group, which varies from one sixth to one tenth of the total number of enterprises is the main cause of the large drop in the total figures in 1935, as the three solicitors (two of whom were in partnership) had ceased practicing during the previous five years, and only one doctor was in practice although there had been three in 1930 and were four in 1939. The figures given (and quoted in full in Appendix B) are, it must be remembered, only those of people listed in the directories, and are therefore liable

to error and a tendency to understatement (since they may not record all the smaller businesses, and it is known that some facilities which existed in 1939 were not in fact recorded in the trade directory for that year, as for example the builder and the music teacher.)

Certain types of enterprise cease to appear in the directory during this period, and this may be associated with the development of road transport, which made distant markets more accessible to the inhabitants of the Modbury districts and, by the use of regular delivery vans, brought Modbury into the orbit of the larger market and shopping centres for a much wider variety of products. For example the coal merchant was recorded as trading from a Modbury address in 1906 and was not listed in 1910 or any subsequent year. A road contractor and a seed manure and corn merchant were similarly recorded, and by 1919 the printer and stationer had stopped selling books, fancy goods, and guns and ammunition, while the tailor was no longer also described as a hatter. By this year the tea dealer and the millwright had also ceased to operate, and the ironmonger is not specifically listed any more, although in this case, like certain others, the service may have been continued in conjunction with another section of the retail trade. Over the period a number of shops can be seen to have changed their scope slowly, some specialising more in certain branches and others extending the range of articles handled.

Although some of the services (professional and trading) which within the past fifty years have been not only available but directly provided in Modbury (for example the coal merchant, the bus company, the solicitor, the agricultural implement maker and the monumental mason) are now obtained from external sources and in some cases have taken a valuable source of employment away from the town, this represents a trend which has been general in small market towns which have not by their situation attracted any natural expansion (industrial or commercial). The loss of local employment which has resulted, has led, with improved transport facilities, to increased daily travel to work rather than to the migration which marked the nineteenth century, although within living memory many of the young people have always had to look outside Modbury for employment. One of the older inhabitants who was interviewed, (aged over eighty-five) said that when he was young most of his friends went into the Royal Navy, and he was only prevented from going with them by his family responsibilities (a widowed mother and younger brothers and sisters) but, although he worked locally at first, he went away to find better work after a time sending money home to his wife; but he returned to Modbury again when work became scarce. He said that most of the people who went away to work came back to Modbury in the end and that there were a lot of naval pensioners living in Modbury at the present time. A number of other people encountered in Modbury had been away for much of their lives and had come back to Modbury in later life. The church records confirm this tendency, as both in the register of baptisms and the register of burials a number of entries give a home address outside Modbury parish and even outside the County.

Modbury therefore has almost a tradition of migration, which can be traced back at least to its connections with the Devon Woollen Serge Industry, which reached its highest level of prosperity at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century.

The bulk of the County's woollen trade was in serges, and Modbury was quite clearly an important town in the serge industry. Its name can be found in almost any list of the main towns in the industry and in 1700 it was on a line of trade running out through Dartmouth to join the general flow of finished goods to Spain and Portugal.

In the course of the eighteenth century the markets for West Country serges altered, and the trade started to decline in the first part of the century, recovering in the second half. By the end of the century, Exeter's side of the trade was declining badly. Apart from a certain amount of importing and distribution of the raw material, Exeter had concentrated on the finishing processes, but London became a serious competitor in this sphere, and Exeter's woollen industry collapsed. The County was saved from similar industrial distress for a time by the fact that the bulk of its trade was with the East India Company, which was placing expanding orders for serges for their China trade (via London) despite the fact that they were being sold at a loss in China and unsold stocks were piling up. A public enquiry was later held into the company's affairs in the eighteen thirties, when, amongst other things, it was said that this state of affairs had continued because of the need to protect the people of Devon from severe unemployment. This policy had indeed averted the crisis for some years, but it could not do so for ever. When the trade with the East India Company stopped there was found to be little or no market for the serges elsewhere, though there had been several European sources in the eighteenth century; and out-of-date methods prevented the serges competing with the new worsteds from the North, which were lighter and finer and more to the public taste than the heavy old-fashioned serges.

This must have caused a severe shock to the woollen towns, few of which could hope to adapt themselves to the modern methods of industry required for the economic production of the new types of cloth. The woollen industry in the South West had rested on the domestic system of production, and in the early nineteenth century at least, had employed a considerable amount of female labour. In Modbury itself the Census returns show a persistent excess of females over males of between forty and sixty persons, but in each of the Census years 1801-1831 inclusive this excess was greater than one hundred, the highest being one hundred and eighty in 1821. Since the total population was also rising in these years, this relative increase in female population suggests that during that period there may have been a considerable immigration of female labour.

In a short local history of Modbury (published in 1860) George

Andrews Cawse writes that trade in Modbury had once been

".....much more extensive than at present, which consisted in the manufacture of hats, baskets, leather, plush, serges, etc. - the latter to the first quarter of the nineteenth century employed from three hundred to four hundred persons, chiefly women, in weaving, besides those employed in preparing chains, yarns, tucking, dying, packing, combing, etc., and produced fifteen thousand pieces of serge yearly for a great number of years for the East India Company."

In a paper written for the Society of Weavers, Fullers and Shearmen of Exeter it is stated that in 1789 the East India Company purchased one hundred and twenty-one thousand pieces of serge which were made in six Devon towns of which Modbury was one, but in 1839, when it is recorded that there were thirty-nine woollen mills and more than three thousand looms distributed through the County, Modbury is not included in the list of nine towns, giving their respective numbers of looms which add up to well over three thousand.

If further indication were needed of the importance of the serge industry in Modbury and the effects of its collapse on trade and the economy, one could cite, *inter alia*, the case of Richard Perring, a banker, serge manufacturer and dealer who was declared bankrupt in 1826, owing Joseph Flashman, a woolcomber, also a resident of Modbury, £100 in money lent and advanced. He had been trading for about ten years and the loss was said to have been incurred in the normal course of trading and appears to have accumulated over a fairly long period. Details were found of the sale of property owned by Perring in Modbury and two of the parishes adjoining it (Ermington and Aveton Giffard) and he appears to have been quite prosperous at some time, owning several dwelling houses and cottages of various sizes, two stables, two separate gardens, a malthouse, a field near the town with a willow plot, the land-tax on a tenement in Modbury and some shares in the "Charlborough Pilchard Fishery" at Ringmore.

Time does not allow of a detailed historical study of Modbury before the nineteenth century but it is quite clear that Modbury was important as a market town from very early times and that, although now it turns towards Plymouth, its ties were once with Exeter. It was mentioned in the Domesday Book and its Church has very early associations. The annual fair (of ancient charter) is held on St. George's Day, and used to last for nine days. According to the replies to a questionnaire sent out in about 1753-1756 (and available in MSS. in the Bodleian Library) the fair was mainly responsible for the sale of cattle and a market was held every Thursday. In more recent times the weekly market is reported as being mainly for butter and eggs, and cattle and stock were sold at the monthly market. The fair no longer lasts for nine days and is now only a small amusement fair, although an annual 'fair Market' is still held, at which there are reported to have been three hundred

to four hundred head of cattle in the last two or three years. It is reported in the schoolmistresses' logbook of attendance for 1892 that in that year the school was closed for only one day's holiday instead of the usual week for the fair, and it seems probable that this was the year in which the duration of the fair was shortened. The weekly butter market has not been held as such for about thirty years and the monthly cattle market has also lost its importance in the neighbourhood since the war. It had been held in the main street from time immemorial but at least since the advent of motor traffic the site had not been popular or convenient. As early as 1922, when it is also recorded that there was a record supply of cattle at the market one week and that other animals also sold well, the 'Kingsbridge Observer' carried a leading article on Modbury's Market Place, condemning it as both inconvenient for householders and those attending the market, and undesirable on grounds of public health. The Village Green was suggested as a suitable site and other possibilities were referred to. Nothing seems to have come of this however, and in 1934 the matter was once again being discussed. At a meeting of South Devon Farmers it was decided to remove the market from the main street, and a report as to a suitable site in Modbury was to be prepared and circulated for consideration in a month's time. Unfortunately the collection of newspaper cuttings do not carry any mention of this report, which must have induced a negative decision, since the market remained in the main street until 1940. There was some suggestion in 1934 that the tradespeople might not welcome such a change lest it should prove harmful to their trade. However in 1940 wartime exigencies caused the removal of the market to a nearby field, and it has never returned to the main street. It has certainly decreased in importance since pre-war days, and this may also have been influenced by the Market Committee's decision in 1940 not to install a weighbridge on grounds of expense. With the introduction of wartime standards and regulations most of the cattle were sent to Newton Abbot to market, and it is thought that not only the farmers but their wives also preferred the new arrangement, offering as it did a wider selection of shops than would be found in Modbury as well as an opportunity of meeting more people.

The development of the transport system has also played its part in Modbury's changing status, linking it more closely to Plymouth and enabling it to fulfil a 'dormitory' function for those inhabitants who otherwise would have had to move away completely in search of work. It is impossible to assess what would have been the effect if Modbury had been connected to the railway system in the mid-nineteenth century. It may well have then maintained in some degree the industrial activity which at that time was dying out. It is difficult for us now, with flexible and rapid road transport available to appreciate the impact which the introduction of rail transport made on both economic and social life, and the advantages which a rail link gave to any industrial enterprise, when the alternative methods of transport were by boat or pack-horse or a combination of the two.

The South Hams were virtually untouched by the railway which ran from Totnes to Plymouth through South Brent and Ivybridge, with a branch line down to Kingsbridge. The area was important only as a farming district and a potential holiday area which could not be exploited until it was made more accessible. There was much talk of a South Hams Railway but by 1919 it was still no more than a dream, although a meeting of the Devon Farmers' Union passed a resolution to ask for support from the public authorities and the local M.P.s for the proposal to connect Dartmouth with Plymouth by rail (to quote a report in the press),

"via Strete, Torcross, Kingsbridge and Modbury.....

The district would be developed and Slapton Sands would become an up-to-date seaside resort - the Brighton of South Devon."

One of the M.P.s at least lent diplomatic support to the proposal, pointing out the obvious difficulties of high overhead and capital costs which were unlikely to be covered by the amount of traffic, but hoping that they could be overcome because of the need for such a service. However the scheme was never put into practice, and Modbury has had to content itself with a motor-bus service to Plymouth which seems to have been very satisfactory since its inauguration in 1904. Before that the journey had to be made by carrier, or by horse-bus to Ivybridge and from there by train.

The Great Western Railway were first in the field, running a motor-bus service between Modbury and Brixton Road, via Flete, Dunstone and Yealmpton. The journey was scheduled to take fifty to sixty minutes, and the engine was a 20 h.p. Mills Daimler. Competition soon came from a local company, the South Hams Motor Carriers Ltd., also running between Modbury and Plymouth, but this company existed for little more than a year before it was decided to wind it up, and to accept an offer from the Great Western Railway for the motor buses and loose plant. It was suggested that mismanagement had been the reason for this collapse, and suggestions were soon made for another motor bus service. For Modbury itself the important thing was that it was now more closely linked to Plymouth, and a newspaper (or parish magazine) article which appeared in 1904 stresses this fact and is worth quoting for its general summary of the position:

"The Development of the Town. - With the advent of increased travelling facilities and better means of communication with the larger centres of population many of the inhabitants of Modbury are looking forward to a fresh era of prosperity for the town. Recently there has been evidence of the increased popularity of Modbury as a residential resort, and it is gratifying to note that whereas one or two years ago there were more than twenty houses vacant, today there is hardly one unoccupied. The town will shortly be in possession of two excellent services of Motor Buses, which will be running to

and from the town and Plymouth and Brixton Road eight times a day, and in addition to this there is also the old established coach from Ivybridge which makes two journeys daily."

Modbury is well served by public transport today. It is on two bus routes, one (service 92) running between Plymouth and the coastal area of Ringmore, Kingston, and Bigbury-on-Sea, and the other (93) covering the Plymouth, Modbury, Kingsbridge and Dartmouth route. The journey between Modbury and Plymouth takes approximately three-quarters of an hour, and on week days there are about twenty buses a day in each direction, running at intervals which rarely exceed one and a half hours. They are most frequent running into Plymouth in the morning and out in the early evening; and the first bus leaves Modbury as early as 5.38 a.m., while the last one leaves Plymouth at 10.30 p.m. These figures are taken from the winter timetables and while more buses are no doubt run in the summer they are said to be crowded with people going out from Plymouth to Bigbury and the coast.

An investigation early in 1954 showed that about two hundred and eighty-five of the total population of Modbury town were engaged in gainful employment and of these about seventy-five worked outside Modbury itself. About fifty of these were adult and nearly half of them work in Plymouth, about one-fifth in Kingsbridge and one eighth in Newton Ferrers, while one or two go as far afield as Torquay and Newton Abbot. A certain amount of seasonal employment is available in Bigbury in the summer, mainly for women.

Of the young people under twenty-one who go out to work, twenty-one were recorded as working in Modbury town or its surroundings, and twenty-three leave Modbury each day, ten of them going to Plymouth and eleven to Kingsbridge. Just under one-half of the people who travel into Plymouth each day take advantage of the limited journey tickets on the early morning buses, the others presumably travel on later buses or by private transport.

It is impossible to assess, without a direct enquiry, for which time was not available, just how many of the people who work away from Modbury are resident there because they are unable to find accommodation near their work; but the proportions do not appear to be out of the ordinary for a small town near to a large city, and the attractions of Modbury as a place to live may well outweigh, for most of those who travel some distance to work, the inconvenience of a long daily journey.

The fact that about two hundred and ten people can find employment in the town of Modbury itself or on the nearby farms, and that almost all these are employed in small enterprises, whose individual fortunes may vary but which collectively should continue to offer much the same employment opportunities, emphasises that element of stability which is indicated by the information already quoted on the population and business aspects of Modbury today. Obviously an increase in employment

in Modbury itself would be to the general advantage of the town, but equally obviously Modbury cannot offer opportunities for employment in every type of work, and there will always be people who have to leave the town, either daily or for longer periods.

Modbury may no longer be of any significance as a market town, but its importance as a trading centre has if anything increased since the last war. This is not primarily due to any major developments within the town itself, but to the increasing popularity of the coastal area which it serves. According to the bank manager, business has definitely increased in the last four or five years, but the expansion has come mostly from outside the parish, particularly the seaside area. The number of commercial travellers visiting Modbury has also increased, with a corresponding rise in the amount of money banked in Modbury, though no doubt this would have been collected over a larger area.

Modbury contains a variety of shops, capable of serving every need, either directly from stock or on order. The main shops have a considerable service area, and an investigation into the area covered by the normal trading of various types of business showed a surprising measure of agreement and gave a clear indication of Modbury's sphere of influence. It is largely determined by physical factors, the sea to the South, and the rivers Erme and Avon to the West and East. This is illustrated on the map showing the trading area of five individual enterprises, a baker, a bank, a chemist, a grocery and general store, and a store selling hardware, furniture, gardening tools and a variety of similar products. The lines representing the baker and grocer show an approximate outside limit to their delivery rounds, the chemist gave the outer limit of the area for which prescriptions are made up, and the bank manager described the area from which customers come in regularly, that is to say at least once a week.

It seems reasonable to suppose that as a minor shopping centre with very adequate facilities Modbury will continue to attract trade from the neighbouring parishes and to serve the summer visitors, who pass through or stay in the nearby seaside villages. It is a pleasant and attractive country town, served with electricity, water, drainage, and street lighting, suitable as a residential area both for people who have retired and for those who wish to live in the country but must of necessity seek their work in the town and are prepared for a certain amount of daily travel. Its social facilities may seem limited to the newcomer or the outside visitor, but the events which are organised are well attended and lively. The school is at present a comprehensive one, serving a fairly wide area and keeping the children at home in their town unless they attend the Grammar School in Kingsbridge; although the projected education plans envisage the conversion of Modbury School into an infant and junior school (with ultimately a nursery section taking children from three to five) and the older children will go to a new Secondary Modern School which is to be built at Ivybridge. At present levels the school would then cater for about one hundred children

in Modbury and its surrounding hamlets. It is hoped that a playing field can be acquired for the school fairly soon, and the building has already started on the new Village Hall.

To summarise the position, Modbury certainly declined in population and industry during the second half of the nineteenth century, but in the last fifty years the situation has changed. Since 1901 the population has been virtually static showing an overall decline of only one hundred and fifty-seven, while in the last thirty years it has only fallen by eighteen. On the other hand the number of families has increased by about fifty since the turn of the century, which can only be explained by an increase in retired settlement in the parish and possibly by a further extension of its dormitory role.

Modbury's problems today are those which face any small country town within the orbit of a larger business centre, but with its own functions to fulfil as a minor service centre. They are no longer the problems of decline but of self improvement in a community which is numerically and economically fairly static.