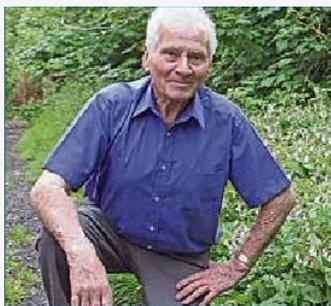


The Recollections of Jim Edwards



Jim is a local historian who is described on the [Launceston Then!](#) website as “A man of many scribblings and much knowledge of the town [Launceston] and its area and it would be a shame not to have all his work on view for all to see.”

North Hill

Trebartha Hall

IT ALL BEGAN WITH A DUCK RACE ...

... on the river at Trebartha Estate on a Saturday in September. While waiting for the races to begin it was noticed there was a small area in the field which had been fenced around with hurdles and barbed wire to keep cattle off.

On further investigation the site – which is about twelve feet square – proved to a ‘pit’ about six feet deep, with steps, and at the bottom a small ‘cave’ leading off to the right. Someone suggested it may be a burial chamber, but that seemed unlikely. Within the enclosure were five large, ancient granite stones; one of these is a five-sided road sign, bearing on each side the names: Launceston Road, Callington Road, Liskeard Road, Bodmin Road, Camelford Road. (The original site of this stone was at Trewinnow Cross, Slipperra. During World War Two all road direction signs were removed for fear they would aid any enemy invasion).

Curiosity was aroused. The estate is owned by the Latham family – after a couple of tentative telephone calls we were invited by Mr Michael Latham to visit when he would explain all. He cordially received us and went on to briefly explain some of the history of the estate. The entire estate, including the standing timber, nine cottages and fishing rights, was purchased in 1940 by his grandfather, who was in the timber trade. At the beginning of the war the Ministry of Supply took over the running of the forests in Britain and Trebartha was able to provide timber for pit props, building, etc.

The mansion and outbuildings were used for Italian prisoners of war, many of whom were released to farming, mining, and other jobs when the Italian nation turned against the Nazis. The American Army later took up residence, for training purposes and for storing vast amounts of stores in preparation for the D-Day landings. Mr Latham took us across the fields to the fenced-in area – he explained that the object of curiosity was a ‘cool chamber’, which was situated just a few yards in front of the now demolished mansion house. At the bottom of the pit, in the floor of the chamber, is a spring, which enabled the contents of milk, butter etc to be kept cool on the shelves.

Mr Latham explained that one of granites, which had a hole cut through it, was one of a pair of toll gate posts; a bar would have been placed through the hole until the toll had been paid. Another of the granites was a gravestone for a horse of which an original owner had been very fond. The other granites are not in good condition, but are recognisable as the remains of crosses.

From the pit, Mr Latham took us up the hill to the site of the second of the two mansion houses which had stood there. The first, together with a domestic chapel, was taken down by the then owner, Colonel Rodd.

A large bell which the Colonel had erected in his stable yard in 1762, is now in Lawrence House Museum, Launceston.

The second structure was demolished by the Lathams in 1948. The old laundry, typified by the long narrow windows, is now used for entertaining during 'open days'. Part of the old laundry was converted by the Americans into a shower room for officers. The old stables and coach house have been converted into dwellings; the old walled garden is now lawned very attractively. Part of the surrounding walls have small 'window-style' holes in them, Mr Latham informed us it was for the use of an aviary which had been attached to the wall by a previous owner very much interested in birds – he also told us many of the stuffed birds once held in Launceston Museum came from this gentleman.

At the top of the garden is another building – this was once the carriage house – the huge doorways now containing large windows; above this is the old stable block of the mansion.

At the bottom of the sloping field and on the other side of the river, is a garden installed c.1900, including a lake approached by a walk known as 'Ladies Mile'.

On the return journey over the fields I asked about the small pond lower down the hill – it was explained this was installed around 1900 and holds only about a metre depth of water, but it looked very pretty on this sunny day.

Footnote- my duck is still swimming.

Vic Paffett & Jim Edwards.

Vic: Nowhere in the Trebartha book can I find reference to the 'coldhouse' we looked at. The nearest ref I find is on page 129, which refers to One Stone: "Trebartha harbours a five-sided stone signpost with crudely carved on its five faces the names of Launceston, Liskeard, Callington, Bodmin and Camelford. The stone is of the C.18 or older, and would seem to have stood near Five Lanes as this is the only road junction in the area to approximately fit the five names, although, even there the geography is not exact." [Note by Jim Edwards: The stone was from Trewinnow Cross, Slippera.]

Quote: "Historical Survey of the County of Cornwall. 'The venerable old mansion of the Trebarthas and Spoures together with a domestic chapel was taken down by order of the late Colonel Rodd."

The Spoure mansion had faced north towards Launceston whilst the new Hall had a long facade facing south. A notable feature of the new edifice was the wonderful views it commanded over the Swan Pool, American Gardens and woods, backed on the horizon by a prospect of Hawks Tor and Bodmin Moor. It was demolished in 1948.

It would appear that at least part of the Spoure building was incorporated in the kitchen quarters of the new house at the back, as over the back door was a carved granite tablet with three initials and the date 1677.

The inscription records the improvement Edmund Spoure carried out for his wife Mary Rodd whom he married two years before. The tablet, about 3 feet high and 2 feet wide, has been saved and built into the wall of Trebartha House.

Quote: "In 1762 Francis Rodd, aged 30 years, and anticipating his marriage to Jane Hearle, hung in his stable yard a large bell, 12 inches in diameter, and inscribed round the rim "F. Rodd, Esqr. 1762".

1881 Census: Trebartha Hall:

Francis R	RODD	county magistrate	U 42	South Petherwin [part blind]
Caroline M	RODD	sister	U 40	South Petherwin
Albert E	HOLLIS	clerk. secretary	U 21	Bythorn, Beds.
Elizabeth	SHEPPARD	lady's maid	U 40	Oxford
Emma J	BROWN	cook	U 29	Lawhitton
Ann	CHUBB	kitchen maid	U 27	North Hill
Charles	NORTHEY	page	U 15	North Hill

A more comprehensive history of Trebartha is contained in a book by Brian Latham, Mr Michael Latham's father. Extracts – Belonged to Ulnod pre-Norman. Taken by Norman who changed his name to Trebartha after the land. Henry – under Edward First. Nicholas under Edward IV. Nicholas c 1460 – dau Anna mrd in 1498 to Thomas Spoure – one of Henry VII's Captains. Spoure held until 1729. Mary Spoure betrothed to first cousin Francis Rodd of Okehey, Devon. Mary died before wedding, willing the estate to Rodd. Spoure married Elizabeth Speccott before 1666.

Latham first sighting of area when parents went to view Stonaford in spring of 1927 for possible new home. Messrs Kittow & Son advertised Trebartha woodland for sale in July 1940 [Horace and Mr Dennis] Rodds to sell. Latham made offer for woodland. Kittow took him to see estate and told him Rodd prepared to sell whole estate for right price. Latham enquired of price, then notified father and said 'buy'. Father replied 'too dear'. Latham re-approached Kittow who said price remained same – good buy. Father approached twice more before he replied 'Buy'. This is the first time the estate had changed hands by purchase. Once by conquer, twice by marriage. Included in sale – River Lynher, Withy Brook [fine trout streams]. Lake for swans, ducks, etc. fenced to keep out foxes – walk named Ladies Mile. Tinnars Park – old mining settlement. Gamekeeper Harry Landry. Much, much more in book in library Numbered C/942 371.

Jim – I believe name Spoure gradually changed to Spurr of which several were from North Hill area – moved to east side Dartmoor, Lezant and Milton Abbot.

There is a whole book to write – have not gone through Bryan's book, just first few pages. Full of events and dates, names of persons and places, etc.

Post & News 6th July 1940 advertisement:

TREBARTHA HALL for Sale at Auction at the White Hart Hotel, Launceston, on Thursday July 35th [unless previously sold]. Residence, Woodlands, Pasture Lands, and Nine Cottages – in all about 89 acres, with about Two Miles of fishing rights.

LOT 2 comprises about 48 acres of Land principally pasture and a Cottage at Lewarne, and further fishing rights.

Lots 3, 4 & 5 include the freehold of about 129 acres of Woodland, with valuable growing Timber therein, [+ more].

The remainder of the Estate, comprising about 3,360 acres will be offered for Sale in the near future Unless Sold Privately.

Calendars of Cornish Glebe Terriers, 1673 – 1735, page 118/9;

557. North Hill. 23 Jan 1679/80. East.

Glebe: about 50a, bounded on the W. by Squire Spour's land, on the N. by the Prince's land, on the S. by a river [except for the Wet Meadow, bounded on the E. & N. by Squire Bond's land of Earth, on the W. by Wet Meadow lane, and on the S. by the Prince's land]. The Lower Sentreys, 12s., two fields and a meadow below the highway on the W. of the Church; the Mead Sentry 4½a; the Higher Mead Sentry, 4½a; the Broome Park 4½a ; the Beacon Park, 12a.; Black Croft, 7a.; Three Corner Park, 3½a.; the Wet Meadow, 1¼a.; and orchard, ¼a. ; bounded on the N. by the highway, on the E., S., & W., by the Squire Bond's land; a herb garden, bounded by the house and church-yard. House: a parlour with a chamber over, a hall with chamber over, a kitchen with a chamber over and cockloft over that, a buttery with a chamber over. A malthouse, a stable, a kitchen with chamber over, a cowhouse, a barn, a house to tye in Oxen, erected by myselfe, a mowhays, the one enclosed by myselfe, a lodge and other small out-houses, all bounded by a court wall. Signatories: Jonathon Darley rector, John Darley curate, John Bowhay churchwarden, Francis Hocken and Robert Wevill.



669. North Hill, 18 April 1727. East. [The property shown here outlined in yellow, being south of St Torney's Church, North Hill].

House: stone-built, slate covered; a porch and entry, floored with stone; a small passage commonly called the Hall, floored with earth; a kitchen floored partly with boards and partly with stone; a buttery within the kitchen, floored with stone; a chamber over the hall and entry; a chamber over the parlour; a chamber

over the kitchen, with a garret above; a chamber over the buttery, and a study over the porch; all the rooms ceiled or plastered overhead except the chamber over the hall, and the garret. A barn, stable and cowhouse, all under the same roof, with a linney for an oxhouse, stone-built, slate covered; a small malt house, stone built, slate covered; an outer or back kitchen with a corn-chamber above [and a pound house adjoining], stone built, thatched; a small offices, stone-built, covered with slate, a wainhouse, thatched; 2 small mowhays, one on each side of the



barn. The whole homestall enclosed with a wall, bounded on the E., S., & W., by the highway and on the N. by the churchyard. 7 oaks in the churchyard, of no great value, some young firs lately planted; no timber on the glebe.

Glebe: 50a. according to a terrier of 1679, all enclosed and bounded on the W. by the lands of Charles Grylls, Esq., on the N. by the lands of the Duke of Cornwall, on the E. by the lands of the Duke, William Addis, Esq., Thomas Darley, gent, Edgecombe Pethen and John Luskey, on the S. by the river Lennar, except for the Wet Meadow which is bounded on the E. & N. by the lands of Thomas Darley gent., on the W. by

Wet Meadow Lane, on the S. by the Duke's lands; and a small orchard bounded on the N. by the highway, on the E. W. & S. by the lands of William Addis Esq. 2 fields arable with a furzy hill in the lower hill [where some young oaks grow] and a meadow called the Lower Sanctuary, 12a.; the Mead or Garden Sanctuary [including the herb garden] 4½a.; the Higher Mead Sanctuary, arable, 4½a.; the Broom Park, arable, 4½a.; Beacon Park, arable, 12a.; Black Croft, furze and pasture, 7a.; the Three Corner Park, arable, 3½a. the Wet Meadow. 1¼a.; the orchard, ¼a.; the homestall, ¼ a.

Fees: every married person, widower or widow pays 1½d. every other communicant at Easter 1d. Marriages 1s., churchings 6d., burials nothing. Every single person, widower or widow having no child or children alive at their decease to pay the mortuary according to statute. There is also a garden penny and a hearth penny.

Tithes: No lands exempted, but the parishioners pretend a custom of 2d. for every cow in lieu of milk, 2d. a hogshead of cider, and apples according to conscience. Of calves, lambs and pigs the rector is to have one out of 7, allowance to be made for the other 3, as likewise payment being paid by the parishioners for any number under 7 [which is said to be] consonant with Archbishop Winchelsey's canon of 1305. All other tithes due.

Furnishings: a woollen and fine linen cloth covering for the Table, and a napkin; a silver chalice and cover inscribed with the names of Gentall Bant & Thomas Daw churchwardens 1697, a pewter flagon and plate, a velvet cushion for the pulpit, 5 bells in the tower.

Church: the parish repairs the church and the churchyard fences; the rector repairs the chancel.

Clerk: for about 28 years paid 40s. p.a. but some parishioners now object that there is a custom that each householder is to pay 4d. and every cottager 2d. p.a.

Sexton: usually has 6s 8d. p.a.

Both clerk and sexton appointed by the rector.

Turbary: the rectors 'time out of mind' have turf on Twelvemens Moor, without interruption or payment.

Signatory: John Roberts, rector.

Kelly's Post Office Directory 1856: North Hill.

North Hill is a parish and pleasant village, 7 miles south of Launceston, 9 west from Callington, and 10 north from Liskeard, in the north-east division of the Hundred of East, Launceston Union, East deanery, Cornwall archdeaconry; Exeter bishopric, East Cornwall; it is situated on the river Lynhoe and the Launceston and Liskeard road. The church of St Torney is an old granite building in the perpendicular style; has a nave, north and south aisles, chancel of older date than the rest of the church; also a porch, with fine groined ceiling of granite, a tower and 6 bells; there are two monuments in the church, one to the Vincents, of Battens, and the other to the Spours once the owners of Trebartha. The living is a rectory, worth £536. 9s. yearly, with residence and about 50 acres of glebe-land, in the gift of Francis Rodd, Esq. There are meeting houses for Wesleyan Methodists and Bryanites, a National School for boys and girls, and a Sunday-school held at the National school-room. A fair is held in September and November, yearly, for sheep and cattle. Kilmar granite quarry is about 2 miles west from the church, and is an extensive mass of granite rocks; there has been a large quantity sent to London for building the new Westminster Bridge, by the Cheesewring Company. Trebartha hall, the seat of Francis Rodd, Esq., distant one mile from the church; the Tors, the wood and romantic waterfall, combine to make the scenery very beautiful. The population, in 1851, was 1,193, and the acreage is 6,732. The soil is light; the subsoil granite and slate. Francis Rodd, Esq., is lord of the manor and chief landowner. The chief crops are wheat, barley, oats, turnips, mangel wozel, and grass. The chief villages are:- Coad's Green, 2 miles east; Illand, 2 north-east; Trebartha, 1 west; Bath Pool, 1½ south-east; and Congdon's Shop, 1¼ north.

National school, Philip Sandercock, master. Post Office, Philip Sandercock, postmaster.

Cornish Churches: Dedicated to St Torney, North Hill church is said to be more interesting than most Cornish Village churches especially in its monumental tombs and slates, etc. There is a slate to Henry Spoure of 1603; Skull [imago mortis] and coat of arms:- Thomas Vincent of 1660 and his wife and 15 children. There on an elaborate stone tomb with slate front and top, and a slate back prettily upcurved, with an allegorical representation of the Ascension, and below a figure of death. Richard Spoure of 1653, also, still slate, with three arches, still wholly of Jacobean proportions, Henry Spoure 1688, with sister and parents. One of the most endearing of monuments in a Cornish church is the father and mother kneeling opposite each other, still in the old Elizabethan and Jacobean tradition, the children standing in niches behind. The four figures are realistically coloured standing wall-mounted, with columns left and right, and an elaborate entablature and pediment – V Darley and wife, of 1791 by Emes of Exeter. F Hearle Rodd and wife 1836 and 1833 identical monuments by E Gaffin of Regent Street, [Pevsner].

1549 Returns: NORTHEHYLL. Received ther ij challis wt pat of x unces & rede liv'd.

Old Families: Spoure of Trebartha in Northill married the heiress of Trebartha in the reign of Henry VII; became extinct in 1729. The Spoures married heiresses of Roose of Whitstone and Speccott of Anderton. The heiress of Spoure married Bellot, afterwards Grylls.

Arms: Gules, on a chevron Or. a rose of the first, and 2 mullets pierced, Sable.

Mills of Lezant. From a monument in Lezant church, we learn that John Mills, and Joan his wife (daughter of Thomas Spoure of Trebartha) died on the 11th March 1573.

Lyson 'Magna Carta' 1814: Rodd of Trebartha Hall in Northill, settled in Cornwall about the year 1700, descendant from the ancient family of Rodd of Herefordshire, married the co-heiress of Hearle of Trelliseck near St Erth and of Penryn. Jim E.

Linkinhorne Parish

Post & Weekly News, January 13, 1934.

Henwood, Linkinhorne. On Monday 9 February, the new Primitive Methodist Chapel was opened at the above place, when an excellent service was preached by W Hicks, Esq. of Plymouth, after which more than 100 persons sat down to tea. A public meeting was afterwards held – the chair taken by Mr G Osborne, of Liskeard, circuit minister, - when able addresses were delivered by Messrs W Cole, of Callington, G Robins, of Cheeswring, W Hicks, Esq. and Mr T Drew, of Plymouth. On Sunday the 15th, inst. The opening services were resumed, when three impressive sermons were preached by Mr H Badcock, of Devonport, to crowded congregations; the collections amounting to £7 10s.

It is evident from the above amount collected, together with donations amounting to £78, that the people approve of the undertaking. There is perhaps no spot in Cornwall where a chapel was more needed than here, and we believe that the erection will confer a lasting blessing on the neighbourhood. Every sitting in the chapel has been let.

Cornish & Devon Post, Sat 13th July, 1878

LINKINHORNE Bible Christian Chapel: on Thursday 11th June, 1878, the Memorial stones were laid by Messrs Rattenbury, Retallick, Matthews, Egginton: afternoon sermon taken by the Rev A Trengove.

The chapel is built in Bray Shop Village, on about one acre of land purchased for £40.

The contract for the masonry was let to Mr Thomas Hill for £85, the carpentry to Messrs Luke, Knight & Son, of Gunnislake, for £110. The total cost of the building was to be about £240.

Cornish & Devon Post 16 August 1890:

LINKINHORNE CHURCH, CORNWALL

An Interesting Discovery.

The restoration of this church, which has been undertaken by the vicar, the Rev W H Poland, and a committee of parishioners, is making satisfactory progress under the direction of Messrs Hine & Odgers, the architects, and it is hoped the work will be completed in October. A few months ago the interior of the building presented a most desolate and unpromising appearance, with walls, roofs, pillars, and arches covered with white-wash, and scarcely a fragment of carved work of colour to relieve the dreary waste.

Since then all the white lime has been removed and the masonry cleaned, repaired, and pointed. Here, as in so many churches of Cornwall and Devon, it is found that the earlier work is in freestone, and the latter in granite. The south aisle, erected about 1380, is built in the easily-worked local stone of Pengelly; the north aisle and tower, erected by Henry Trecarrel early in the 16th century, are of granite, chiefly in large blocks.

A weird interest attaches to Trecarrel's church work, in which alone he found consolation on the break up of his family at home; but even more attractive is the 14th century work in the south aisle, not only because in regard to time [as in other respects] "distance lends enchantment," but because the earlier work includes a fuller history. In peeling off the layers of white lime from the south wall, portions of texts, in old black letters, surrounded by scrolls, were noticed, and below these again indications of coloured figures; and on a careful and complete removal of these outer surfaces a life-size figure of Our Lord was disclosed, with groups of smaller figures at each end and beneath His feet, representing the seven acts of mercy: - to give food to the hungry, and drink to the thirsty, clothing to the naked, harbour to the homeless, to visit the sick, to minister to prisoners, to "bury the dead". The groups with the words on labels above are imperfect, and have not yet been fully identified. The act of clothing and that of visiting prisoners seem to be included in one picture. The legends appear to be all in English. The dispenser of

mercy in every act [excepting the last, in which a priest with a tonsure appears], is a woman in the dress of an abbess, with a peculiar bag at her waist, sometimes called a "gipsy bag."

The figure of Our Lord, under a canopy or tent, against a diapered background, is fully outlined. He is represented with a nimbus [enclosing a cross] surrounding His head, and with wounded side, hands, and feet. His bleeding hands are uplifted as if in blessing ["Ye have done it unto Me,"] and the symbolical treatment of the subject throughout is of much interest.

The fresco [for such, no doubt, it is, although executed on only a thin coat of plaster, and in a manner very different to Italian frescoes], is probably only one of a series which occupied the spaces between the door and window openings of the south aisle, indeed further west is a portion of another painting, the subject of which has not yet been made out, and which was covered by the past Reformation lettering alluded to. The words "King James" probably fix the exact period of this later treatment. There can be little doubt that the frescoes are of the same date as the aisle itself [Circa 1380], and that they are on the original plastered surface of the masonry. The usual plastering of that time was a mere skim. In this case it is nowhere more than a quarter of an inch thick, including an undercoat of sand and lime to make up any unevenness of surface in the wall. Over this is a thin coat of almost pure carbonate of lime, on which the artist must have worked. The colours he used were chiefly earths - red ochre, sienna, green, and copper.

It is not a little striking that besides the fabric itself, the only remains of mediaeval art left in this church are a head of the Saviour in the glazing of a window which is in the line of the Rood, and close by this remarkable and beautiful fresco, with its lesson which Shakespeare re-echoes in the "Merchant of Venice" - "In the course of justice none of us should see salvation. We do pray for mercy; and that same prayer doth teach us all to render the deeds of mercy".

Although the fresco of the seven acts has been hidden for nearly three centuries it has been scarcely a forgotten dream in the minds of the parishioners. A sort of tradition of it seems to have been handed down from one generation to another, as indicated by some unusual epitaphs in the church and churchyard. On a slab in the south porch the virtues of Mrs Elizabeth Phillips, who died in 1769, are thus recorded: -

"While here on earth
A pious life she led,
She cloth'd the naked,
And the hungry fed.
Each Christian precept
Early did profess,
Was friend to widows,
And the fatherless."

It is almost needless to say that the remarkable "find" at Linkinhorne will be most carefully protected from injury. Quite a history if written on the south wall of the church. It tells of the teaching by pictures by the church in the Middle Ages; of the teaching by the literal words of Scripture by the Church of the Reformation; the numberless coats of whitewash over both speak of subsequent ages of neglect and indifference; and may not the restored fabric typify the awakened Church in Cornwall of the nineteenth century?