

*'Mostly of good person' ... 'replete with picturesque and romantic features':  
Writing about Devonshire and its natives during the 'long-nineteenth century'*

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TO BE CITED WITH THE AUTHOR'S PERMISSION

This essay is based on the paper delivered to the 'Moor than meets the Eye' symposium on Victorian Dartmoor, in March 2017.<sup>1</sup> The symposium was intended to give an overview of the region through a number of perspectives, from its social history, and industrial activities, to its representation in works of fiction and art, and as a tourist destination. My aim was to do no more than frame the discussion of Dartmoor (and the Wrey valley) in the outsiders' perspective on the county over the 'long nineteenth century', a terms which historians use to cover the period 1789–1914, which allows me to sneak in some of the more visually attractive publications of the early-twentieth century.

The paper was both the outsider's perspective as a historian whose *métier* is not local history and who is not a born and bred Devonian (although I have Devonshire ancestry, from the South Hams), but more pertinently for the event's Victorian theme, 'outsider' in the knowledge of Devonshire that was presented to the 'non-native' nineteenth-century British reader through diverse texts.<sup>2</sup> Much of it will be the statement of the obvious, but I am interested in what *was* obvious to the Victorian outside Devon, about the county. The quotations in the paper's titles derive from the land agent William Marshall's *Rural Economy of the West of England*, vol.1 (1796), in which he states:

The natives of Devonshire are mostly of good person; tall, straight, and well featured. Many of the women are of elegant figure.<sup>3</sup>

And the opening assertion of John Britton (1771–1857) and Edward Wedlake Brayley (1773–1854), from their *Devonshire and Cornwall Illustrated* of 1832, that there is not:

a single county in the British Islands more replete with picturesque and romantic features, antiquarian remains, geological riches, and geographical and maritime relations, than Devonshire.<sup>4</sup>

Now I appreciate that the notion of the 'outsider' in relation to Devon, in a century of Devonian diaspora, is problematic.<sup>5</sup> But nevertheless, I still wish to pursue the idea of Devonshire from a distance. This short essay begins with an overview of the types of texts I am considering, before turning to the impression of Devon which we might argue that they collectively or generally evoke about the county in the nineteenth century.<sup>6</sup>

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That doyen of Devon history, W.G. Hoskins, commented that the 'amount of printed matter relating to Devon is probably greater than that devoted to any other English county'.<sup>7</sup> The types of literature I have briefly studied for this paper include early-nineteenth-century illustrated books in series on counties such as the antiquarians John Britton and Edward Wedlake Brayley's *The Beauties of England and Wales; or, Delineations... of each county* (a multi-volume enterprise, this

edition 1803); Victorian-era guide books for travellers such as those produced by the famous London publisher John Murray (Murray's famous red books)<sup>8</sup>; multi-volume national topographical gazetteers such as the brothers Daniel Lysons and Samuel Lysons' *Magna Britannia: Being a Concise Topographical Account of the Several Counties of Great Britain. Containing Devonshire*, vol. 6 (two volumes, 1822); and works that combined topography and antiquarianism at a more localised level such as the bookseller-cum-clergyman Samuel Rowe's *A Perambulation of the Antient and Royal Forest of Dartmoor and the Venville Precincts* of 1848.<sup>9</sup>

The bibliography of Devon in this century would include the locally-produced city, town and parochial level guides and histories (such as Alexander Jenkins's *History and Description of the City of Exeter* of 1806; George Oliver's *History of Exeter* of 1821; William Gardiner's *Barnstaple 1837 – 1897*, and R.N. North's *Plymouth*<sup>10</sup>), as well as the locally-produced antiquarian periodicals.<sup>11</sup> Local works explicitly marketed as tourists guides would include the *Tourists' Companion to ... Plymouth Dock* (1823)<sup>12</sup> or Edwin Lammas's *Ilfracombe as it is, or the Stranger's Guide: with a descriptive arrangement of excursions in the vicinity, and a list of roads, with their distances to and from Ilfracombe ... Illustrated with elegant extracts, and a map* of 1839 (which extracted 'considerably' from *The Beauties of England and Wales*). Edward Brayley's poem was reproduced in Lammas's work,

Lives there a man, so lost to Nature's charms,  
That would not shun, when scenes like these invite,  
The crowded city – and, with joyous step,  
Through fair DEVONIA trace his devious way!

(One finds variants of it in a Welsh context with *SILURLA* exchanged for the county.)

Some of the works on Devonshire were serialised luxury items, such as the Reverend Thomas Moore's *History of Devonshire from the Earliest Period to the Present*, of 1831, intended to be complete in fifty numbers of 1s quarto, each with 'highly finished engravings' and wood engravings designed to attract a discerning readership through its 'superior excellence,' and embracing 'a succinct view of all the principle topics of interest and importance relative to the Antiquities, Historical Events, Statistics, Topography, Agriculture, and Biography of the delightful and inviting county of Devon,' as the advertisement said.<sup>13</sup> The introduction was lyrical about the 'high state of refinement' in engraving, and the public demand for such works about counties and the principal towns had been catered too through the 'division of labour' in manufacture and mechanical arts.<sup>14</sup> The work was intended for 'the public in general, but to the inhabitants of Devonshire especially'.<sup>15</sup> Slightly earlier, the artist and topographer Frederick Stockdale (1786–1858), already publishing his excursions in Cornwall in 1824, announced:

As it is the Author's intention to undertake similar Excursions through Devonshire, he flatters himself, from the partiality which exists for the picturesque, and the importance which that County from its maritime situation has attained, that the Work will be found not only highly acceptable to the patrons of the Fine Arts, but useful to the Traveller or Tourist. The flattering promises already received from some of the most eminent characters, has far exceeded Mr. Stockdale's expectations; and he most respectfully begs to notice the kind attention of the Earls of Morley and Fortescue, Lord Clifford, Sir Trayton Fuller, E. Drake, Sir Manasseh Lopes, Bart. Sir Bouchier Wray, Bart. Sir John Perring, Charles Hoare, Esq. and many other Gentlemen who have Estates in that County.<sup>16</sup>

In Stockdale's case, we actually have some of the working material for a planned gazetteer of the Devon parishes.<sup>17</sup> There were other works similarly catering to the wealthy reader of the early nineteenth century, which offered 'elegant views' of Devonshire scenery.<sup>18</sup> Another lavishly illustrated work was *Devonshire Illustrated in a Series of Views, Cities, Towns, Public Buildings, Streets, Docks, Churches, Antiquities, Abbeys, Picturesque Scenery, Castles, Seats of the Nobility*,

*etc.*, *etc.*, (1829), with steel engravings from original drawings by Thomas Allom, W.H. Bartlett and others and engraved by Heath, Miller, Le Petit, Wallis &c. This had description provided by the antiquarians John Britton and Edward W. Brayley.<sup>19</sup>

Any overview of the printed discourse on Devonshire ought to extend to official reports e.g., on mining in the South West, surveys of the rural economy by agricultural topographers (such as William Marshall's of 1796) and surveys produced by the Devon Board of Agriculture.<sup>20</sup> In the Victorian era it would include the volumes of the *Report and Transactions* of the Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science, Literature, and Art (from 1862 –), and transactions of Plymouth and Torquay learned societies. Then there might be pamphlet literature: republications of the many hundreds of local talks and printed essays on county matters. Longstanding concern to cultivate the waste and wild lands of England stimulated essayists such as Henry Tanner in 1854, concerning Dartmoor, for instance.<sup>21</sup>

We might include such metropolitan publications as the Devon-based Anna Bray's *Traditions, Legends, Superstitions, and Sketches of Devonshire: On the Borders of the Tamar and the Tavy, Illustrative of Its Manners, Customs, History, Antiquities, Scenery, and Natural History, in a Series of Letters to Robert Southey*, which was published by John Murray in 1838. Bray (1790–1883) was the author of novels 'historical, legendary and romantic,' and set at least two of her 'Walter Scott and water' novels in Devon. She is identified in an essay on 'Female Novelists' of 1852, as the 'accomplished delineator of Devonshire characters and characteristics'.<sup>22</sup> We might include other works with Devonshire locales (rather than works merely by those with Devonshire associations).<sup>23</sup> In the symposium Dr Judith Rowbotham considered the role of imaginative literature in creating Dartmoor as a locus for *crime*.

Then there is the social reportage and commentary material published in the national periodical press, such as the social reformer and former Indian administrator Sir Charles Trevelyan's letters on the Devonshire labourer, which were republished from the *Pall Mall Gazette* in pamphlet form in 1869.<sup>24</sup> In these, arguing for emigration as the only remedy for the problem of the Devonshire peasantry, and presenting the prospect of 'new Devonshires' abroad, he opined that the people were 'honest, sweet-tempered, docile, and, although they have long been in a state of depression, they are not wanting in natural intelligence'.<sup>25</sup>

W.G. Hoskins observed, '[t]he Devonshire landscape has produced more bad poetry, perhaps, than any other in England'.<sup>26</sup> The picturesque imaginary of Dartmoor was also the result of descriptive poetry elicited by competition from the 1820s, as in Felicia Hemans' prize-winning *Dartmoor* of 1821<sup>27</sup>, the Devonport schoolmaster Nicholas Carrington's *Dartmoor* of 1826 (the character of the moor reflected with 'entire and loving fidelity'<sup>28</sup>) or the Reverend Edward William Lewis Davies' *Dartmoor Days, or Scenes in the Forest* of 1863 (with its extensive notes and several illustrations, and dedicated to the Duke of Cornwall).<sup>29</sup> A wider field of imaginative literature would bring in the romances historical or otherwise which had modern or historical Devonshire settings.<sup>30</sup>

Devon was a tourist destination, with Britons attracted to the picturesque scenery following the emergence of a picturesque sensibility, and also through the health-giving (or restoring) attractions of the coast – from the late eighteenth century. A final category of insight into Devon would be the accounts of travellers: Hoskins, in *Devon and its People* (1959) cites the record provided in the early nineteenth century by the artist and diarist Joseph Farington (1747 – 1821); in Mark Brayshay's edited collection, *Topographical Writers in South-West England* the Salisbury-based physician William George Maton (1774 – 1835) is noted, for his published – and manuscript – writings of the late-eighteenth century.<sup>31</sup>

It is difficult to know how this material on Devonshire was collected: a task beyond the confines of this paper would be to explore extant library catalogues to see what were the typical holdings of private or proprietary libraries in the early nineteenth century, in Devonshire-related topics. We might imagine the well-stocked library of an early Victorian English aristocrat to contain standard works on county history. The privately printed catalogue of the library (which

can be read online via Google books) at the famous seat of the Hoares at Stourhead in Wiltshire, published in 1840, contains many works of Devonshire county and local history in its extensive topographical collections.<sup>32</sup>

Apart from articles in periodicals<sup>33</sup>, the readership of the middle-class had to make do with the hand books provided by publishers such as Murray's *Handbook for Travellers in Devon and Cornwall* (first published in 1850 and retailing at 10s in 1867) or *Black's Guide to Devonshire (Torquay, Exeter, Plymouth, &c.) With Maps, Plans, and Illustrations* (retailing at 2s 6d in 1867). John Murray's *Handbook for Travellers in Devon and Cornwall* had been the first in the publisher's county series – Devon would be a separate volume in 1879. A review by John Dennis of the sixth and revised edition of Murray's *Handbook* ('every Devonshire tourist will carry it in his portmanteau') in 1866 commented, of the genre:

His volume, if good of its kind, is the result of great physical and mental labour. Almost every page in it has been brought into shape after long and wearisome journeys, after careful inquiry and inspection, after hours spent in rectifying the errors or testing the statements of previous guide-writers ... The author of a handbook, even if confined within the easy limits of an English county, has therefore undertaken no holiday pastime.<sup>34</sup>

A book price of 10s was not cheap in the 1860s. Cheaper serialised publications about Devonshire appeared. In 1897 we have a prime example of hack work in the form of the Topographical Publishing Company's *Devonshire: Historical and Pictorial*, 'illustrated with about two hundred splendid photogravures specially prepared for this work'. Appearing in 6d parts, the work compiled by J. Sydney Curtis, ('author of Dorset – Illustrated,' 'York – Illustrated,' 'The Channel Islands' etc., etc.) was prefaced with the stated desire that it would 'be equally deserving of a place in rich men's libraries and on poor men's swing bookshelves'.<sup>35</sup>

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The perceptions of Devon that might emerge from the national literature on Devon contained in such texts as Victorian tour guides, include: its economy and man-made or natural produce (its fisheries, agriculture, mining, weaving and manufacture of woollen cloth). Marshall's splendid phrase 'finny treasures' – sent to Bath or London, is a reminder of the non-textual, tangible links between Devon and the national economy and consumers: whether it be the produce of the sea, the orchard, the field and the pasturage, or underground.

Topographical works such as that in the antiquary Samuel Tymms's 7-volume work of 1832 – 1843, not surprisingly, offered extensive and conventional county data on the rivers (from Axe to Wrey and Yeo), the state of canal navigation, the provision of picturesque views from its various high points; natural curiosities from caves and chalybeate springs to cataracts; public edifices that ranged from military architecture to civic structures such as town halls, hospitals and theatres.

In Tymms's work (the volume including Devonshire, incidentally, was dedicated to Richard Hoare of Stourhead, and who was praised for his 'general encouragement of topography'), the produce ranges from the granite of Dartmoor, to Combe Martin silver, and oranges and lemons at Saltram, the carpets of Axminster, the 'much noted' white ale of Modbury and, 'peculiar to the dairies of Devon', the famous clouted or scalded cream.<sup>36</sup> In other topographical accounts there is a stress on the variety of picturesque and romantic scenery and views<sup>37</sup>; listings of the ancient buildings, titles and seats of the nobility and baronage.<sup>38</sup> Many found occasion to note the 'stationary' or backward nature of agriculture.<sup>39</sup> Moore's extensive history of 1829 also included 'a list of some of the provincialisms' which, he opined, 'probably from the influence of modern improvement, gradually out of use' from 'agest' to 'zoundy'

(p.353). In 1859 a reviewer saw the future of ancient dialect rendered ‘obsolete as the province is more and more opened by railroads and good roads’.<sup>40</sup>

This was the era in which archaeology emerged.<sup>41</sup> Topography understood as history, antiquities and archaeological or architectural remains or modern edifices, went hand in hand with developments in geology and natural science in the long nineteenth century. Brayley had argued in his contribution to Moore’s *History of Devonshire* that the physical history of counties had only become widely available as ‘knowledge’ within the same period that ‘topographical knowledge has become so copious and so popular’.<sup>42</sup> As the ‘bedrock’ for a county guide, geology would open Murray’s *Hand-book for Travellers in Devon and Cornwall* in 1851. Geology would provide a great mass of detail about the quality and fertility of the soil types that the Victorian reader was expected to find important. There would appear separate works on the flora and fauna of the county, reflecting the thriving culture of amateur botany and zoology.<sup>43</sup>

By the mid-nineteenth-century there had never been such an abundance of detailed statistical and alphabetically arranged information for those interested in the minutiae of a county, from both its road infrastructure (highway returns); political structure (parliamentary divisions and parliamentary boroughs) local government (administrative divisions of hundreds, legal institutions, poor law, ecclesiastical) to a directory of town or parish inhabitants. William White of Sheffield’s *History, Gazetteer, and Directory of Devonshire* (White had been publishing directories since the 1820s, the Devon volume appeared in 1850 and was priced at 14s in calf binding for subscribers, and there were editions in 1878 and 1890), which was published after nearly three thousand subscriptions, offered over 800 pages of information drawing on parochial histories, local guides and handbooks and parliamentary reports.<sup>44</sup> In an age of parliamentary enquiry on population, the Church of England, public charities etc., an abundance of statistics was now available to add to such reference works which were geared for inhabitants from nobility down to yeomen and merchants. Census data would be interwoven too: thus the reader of White in 1850, would have the census data of 1841 on male and female inhabitants and houses (252,700 were males, and 280,700 females). The demographic history of the county in this century is one of decline relative to other regions as Devonians migrated to seek employment.<sup>45</sup> In 1851 with the religious census, readers would have details about the county’s religious complexions.<sup>46</sup> The curious could also find such details as the number of savings’ banks in the county.<sup>47</sup>

From this mass of readily-available data and conventionalized historical detail, the Victorian reader tasked, say, with writing a competing gazetteer or county history, might have emphasised firstly the county’s size, second only to Yorkshire (or third, for some, after Lincolnshire).<sup>48</sup> They would have stressed the significance of the county in agriculture (in the mid-century, White called it among the first in this aspect), its historic significance as a location for metal mining but decline with the profitability of Cornish mining; the historic reputation too for the domestic manufacture of wool and lace which had been destroyed by mechanisation and factory production in the North and Midlands (although thousands still found employment mid-century in so-called Honiton or thread lace); in maritime affairs through Plymouth and Devonport, and other seaports and harbours, and increasingly for the health benefits and recreation offered by its seaside towns. The watering places of Torquay, villas of St Mary Church and Babbacombe Bay might have been singled out in the late-century.<sup>49</sup>

Replacing an emphasis on river and canal transport, there came details about the railways which brought the South West into the wider world through the South Devon and Bristol and Exeter lines, and the Great Western Railway by the mid-century. John Pincher Faunthorpe’s *The geography of Devonshire* (1872), tells us that the Express from London to Exeter traversed 188 miles, in about five hours.<sup>50</sup> The reputation of Devonshire dairies for cleanliness was asserted by White (‘a marked contrast with those of many other counties’). Its other products included cider, that ‘common beverage of the county ... extensively sold in London,’ according to Faunthorpe, who also tells us that gloves were made for the London market by cottagers’ wives and daughters.<sup>51</sup>

The climate was understood to encompass, as William White wrote, “Devonshire drizzle,” which is a rain so light as to deposit itself as a thick dew, attended by a grey cloudy sky<sup>52</sup>; and a mildness in winter that was (in the words of the publisher Adam and Charles Black’s south county guide of 1864, plagiarising the older county entry in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* of 1824, ‘exceedingly mild, and proverbially favourable to the cure of pulmonary complaints’).<sup>53</sup> Its druidic and Celtic past were featured too in gazetteers. In Faunthorpe’s *The Geography of Devonshire* we gather of Dartmoor, ‘[i]t abounds in strange legends of the Devonshire Pixies or Fairies’ and ‘wild legends’.<sup>54</sup>

We can find plenty of comment about the human inhabitants in nineteenth-century texts: some of it linked to the environment. Thus White, after expounding on the gradual improvement in agriculture and the change from tenancies based on lives, to a life, suggests that the Devonshire tenant farmer, being ‘at once a dairy farmer, a breeder or feeder of cattle, sheep, and pigs; and a grower of corn and cider’ due to the climate and soil, has ‘a tone of intelligence and activity which is looked for in vain in other parts of the kingdom, where a monotonous routine narrows the intellect of the dairyman’.<sup>55</sup>

I could develop this point about ethnography by looking at the national and local discourse on the Devonshire race, tracing it back to the extensive commentary on the ‘character of the different ranks of people in Devonshire’, and ‘discriminating features’ of the people, in the Cornishman which might have appeared in the Reverend Richard Polwhele’s *Historical Views of Devonshire*, as announced in the first volume of a work published in London and Exeter in 1793 (in fact volumes 4–5 were never published).<sup>56</sup> But a quotation from the local antiquarian Richard Nicholls Worth’s paper of 1875, reprinted in the *Transactions of the Devonshire Association* will suffice:

We are what we are, in race, character, calling, and social position, mainly because of the geological peculiarities of this western land. The proof is easy. Our tin mines brought the pioneers of civilisation earlier to these shores than to any other part of the kingdom. In the fastnesses of our moors and our hills the struggle for liberty was continued by Britons and Saxons when in more open districts the strife had long been over. Our extended coast Hue, broken by frequent harbours, gave birth to that spirit of adventure and enterprise which made Devon the foremost county in the land in the days of Elizabethan glory, and which has never failed us since. There, too, was commerce encouraged, and by commerce manufacture. Our buried riches, mild climate, and fertile soil, created and fostered mining and agriculture among us, and made them act and re-act upon each other. Still do our rugged uplands, with their rough roads and their sparse population, retain practices, and preserve old beliefs and superstitions, that have died out in less remote and more cultivated neighbourhoods. Thus the Devonshire man in his place, like the Englishman in his, like the inhabitants of other countries in theirs, is in no remote degree the product of the soil on which he lives. There is a deeper meaning in the words ‘fatherland’ and ‘mother-country’ than we are apt to imagine.<sup>57</sup>

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It may have been noted that I have avoided saying much about that ‘singularly wild and dreary’ (Britton and Brayley’s phrase) district of Dartmoor with its ‘cold and cheerless winds’ (William White).<sup>58</sup> In one provincial periodical of the early nineteenth century, the *Newcastle Magazine* of 1826, in an essay ‘Remarks on Dartmoor’, one finds the claim, stimulated by the appearance of Carrington’s poem, that a few years ago, ‘Dartmoor was hardly known. If you mentioned the name it was likely you would be asked where it was. It was reviled and abused as one of the most useless and filthy tracks of country ever beheld’.<sup>59</sup> It was not a place of national tourism in mid-century, which allowed William White to state that ‘Few places are really less known, and few are more deserving of attention than Dartmoor’. He also observed (fittingly for other papers in this

symposium), that ‘beyond the ordinary beaten track, most will be found to delight the artist, the poet, and the antiquary’. One reviewer of a Devonshire publication, in 1859, described the region as ‘more suggestive of the days of Sir Tristrem or of Britomart [figures from Spenser’s *Faerie Queene*], than of these brisker times of telegraph and railroad’.<sup>60</sup> For another, writing in 1889, ‘the scene of several novels lies there, it is the playground of local archaeologists, the poet’s eye, with a fine frenzy rolling, has scanned it, painters in colours have illustrated it, and more than all, word-painters have decorated it’.<sup>61</sup> Quite apart from the books published on Dartmoor in this century, the periodical and newspaper discussion on Dartmoor in this period is worthwhile exploring, to see how the region is framed within the wider understanding of the county and how the idea of landscape that was timeless or threatened by modernity, was discussed.<sup>62</sup> As Archibald Hurd claimed in one illustrated article of 1896, while the county may be one of the ‘play-grounds of England ... Dartmoor, the name given to the great wide, wild highlands of the county, is still a spot almost unknown, untrod, because its genius is misunderstood’.<sup>63</sup>

Experts in the history of topography have noted the ‘highly derivative’ nature of topographical studies, and writings on Devon in the nineteenth century reproduced, as we have seen, material from earlier sources without credit.<sup>64</sup> Those interested in the discussion of Devonshire in nineteenth-century texts can look at many of the printed materials I have referred to in this paper, through copies digitised in Google books, Hathi Trust or archive.org. The survey today has not been able to discuss the works of local ‘anthropology’, folk-lore and biography produced by the local intelligentsia (at random from 1875 in the *Transactions of the Devonshire Association* – the association established to ‘give a stronger impulse and a more systematic direction to scientific enquiry in Devonshire’ – one finds essays on ‘Verbal provincialisms of South-Western Devonshire’, ‘Recent Cases of supposed Witchcraft in Devonshire’, and ‘Devonshire Farm Lads’.

‘No satisfactory or accurate history of Devonshire exists,’ wrote one reviewer in the *Quarterly Review* in 1859.<sup>65</sup> There still remains no extended scholarly study of Devon in the nineteenth century: the print material from the period has never been more accessible for the task.<sup>66</sup>

11 March 2017. Revised 17 March 2017  
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## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> 'In the footsteps of the Victorians: Exploring the Victorian Heritage of Dartmoor', Parke, Bovey Tracey, 11 March 2017.
- <sup>2</sup> Allan Brockett's *The Devon Union List (DUL): A Collection of Written Material Relating to the County of Devon* (University of Exeter Library, 1977), a work of near 600 pages and many thousand entries, is a key source, of course, to use in any research on nineteenth-century writings on Devonshire; in addition there is the Devon Bibliography from 1980; and specialist bibliographies such as P. Hamilton-Leggett, *The Dartmoor Bibliography 1534 – 1991* (1992), as noted in the 'Bibliographical Supplement' to Hoskins, *Devon* (Chichester, Phillimore, 2003)
- <sup>3</sup> W. Marshall, *The Rural Economy of the West of England; Including Devonshire; and Parts of Somersetshire, Dorsetshire, and Cornwall: Together with Minutes in Practice*, Volume 1 (Nicol, 1796). William Humphrey Marshall, 1745–1818 was a critic of Arthur Young's Board of Agriculture
- <sup>4</sup> J. Britton, E. W. Brayley, *Devonshire and Cornwall Illustrated* (H. Fisher, R. Fisher, & P. Jackson, 1832).
- <sup>5</sup> See, for example, *Devonia, the Official Organ of the United Devon Association*, with its advertisements geared towards tourists, and news of diasporic Devon associations such as the Three Towns Association in London. The Association published *The Book of Fair Devon* (1899–1900), which can be viewed on [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org), with its preface, 'This invitation to Devon is issued by the United Devon Association, an organisation recently formed for the purpose of improving the accommodation and facilities of the county of Devon as a place of residence and as a touring ground. It proposes, among other objects, to secure better means for reaching the West, and enjoying its varied and little-known attractions. It contemplates a gradual development of the means which will enable residents and visitors to move about with ease and comfort in the byways and open country, and on the sea coast.' Plymouth University's Library incorporates volumes previously belonging to the Swansea Devonian Society.
- <sup>6</sup> For the scholarship on town and county histories, see R. Sweet, *The Writing of Urban Histories in Eighteenth-century England* (1997); for the interest in history in the period, see P.J.A. Levine, *The Amateur and the Professional: Antiquarians, Historians and Archaeologists in Victorian England 1838-1886* (1986). On Victorian guide books (continental and global), see E. Allen, "'Money and little red books": Romanticism, tourism, and the rise of the guidebook', *Lit: Literature Interpretation theory* 7: 2-3 (1996), pp.213-226; and M. Morgan, *National identities and travel in Victorian Britain* (2001); G. Goodwin, 'Guidebook publishing in the nineteenth century: John Murray's Handbooks for Travellers', *Studies in Travel Writing* 17: 1 (February 2013); B. Schaff, 'Sound Information and Innocent Amusement: John Murray's Books on the Move', ch.11 in J. Spiers, ed., *The Culture of the Publisher's Series*, vol.1 *Authors, Publishers and the Shaping of Taste* (2011). On Devonshire topography, see Sarah Wilmot, 'The Scientific gaze: Agricultural Improvers and the Topography of South-West England', ch.7 in M. Brayshay, ed., *Topographical Writers in South-West England* (University of Exeter, 1996) and I. Maxted and M. Brayshay, 'Aids to Research' in the same volume.
- <sup>7</sup> Hoskins, *Devon*, 'Bibliography. B. General Topographical Works', p.537.
- <sup>8</sup> See *A Handbook for Travellers in Devon and Cornwall* (London: John Murray, 1851). See also G.A. Cooke's *Topography of Great Britain: Or, British Traveller's Directory*: an item in *Notes and Queries* (1887), p.294 refers to the Devon volume as vol.3. (1810?). Later nineteenth-century guide books were published by Ward, Lock and Bowden.
- <sup>9</sup> See G. Goodwin, 'Samuel Rowe (1793–1853)', rev. Elizabeth Baigent, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004).
- <sup>10</sup> Many of the town and parish histories of Devon are listed in Hoskins, *Devon*, 'Bibliography' and the 'Bibliographical Supplement'.
- <sup>11</sup> Such as *The Western Antiquary; Or, Devon and Cornwall Note-book* in the 1880s.
- <sup>12</sup> *The Tourists' Companion to the Towns of Plymouth, Plymouth-Dock, Stonehouse, Morice-Town, Stoke, and their vicinities, the Breakwater, Naval Arsenal, and other remarkable objects. With a Directory of the Principal Trades-People* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1823), 'Advertisement', p.iii.
- <sup>13</sup> *The History and Topography of the County of Devon by the Rev. Thomas Moore. Including Outlines of the Physical Geography, Geology, and Natural History of the County, by E.W. Brayley, Jun., A.S.L.S., with high finished engravings from original drawings taken expressly for this work. The drawings and engravings executed by, and under the direction of William Deeble. Dedicated by permission to the right honourable Earl Fortescue, lord lieutenant of the county of Devon* (London: Jennings and Caplin, 1831).
- <sup>14</sup> On this theme, see the paper by William Finley (University of Sheffield) "'Vehicles for pretty prints": The consumption of image and text and the transformation of topography 1835-1850', at the 'Consuming (the Victorians)' conference, *British Association of Victorian Studies*, Cardiff University, 31 August – 2 September 2016.
- <sup>15</sup> The complicated publishing history of this work is summarised in Brayshay, ed., *Topographical Writers in South-West England*, pp.152-153.
- <sup>16</sup> F.W.L. Stockdale, *Excursions in the County of Cornwall: Comprising a Concise Historical and Topographical Delineation of the Principal Towns and Villages, Together with Descriptions of the Residences of the Nobility and Gentry, Remains of*

- Antiquity, and Every Other Interesting Object of Curiosity : Forming a Complete Guide for the Traveller and Tourist: Illustrated with Fifty Engravings, Including a Map of the County* (Simpkin and Marshall, and sold by the most respectable booksellers in Devonshire and Cornwall, 1824 ), p.1.
- 17 See Brayshay, ed., *Topographical Writers in South-West England*, p.19. The papers are in the Devon and Exeter Institution Library.
- 18 See J. Storer, *Antiquarian and topographical cabinet: containing a series of elegant views of the most interesting objects of curiosity in Great Britain. Accompanied with letter-press descriptions* (W. Clarke, 1808), vol.3.
- 19 *Devonshire Illustrated in a Series of Views, Cities, Towns, Public Buildings, Streets, Docks, Churches, Antiquities, Abbeys, Picturesque Scenery, Castles, Seats of the Nobility, &c, &c.*, (London: Fisher, 1829).
- 20 See S. Wilmot, 'Agricultural Improvers in South-West England,' in Brayshay, ed., *Topographical Writers in South-West England*.
- 21 On Devonshire wasteland, see Wilmot, 'Agricultural Improvers in South-West England,' in Brayshay, ed., *Topographical Writers in South-West England*, p.118.
- 22 'Female Novelists. No. I – Miss Austen,' *New Monthly Magazine* 95 (1852), pp.17-23 (p.18).
- 23 Bray's novels included *Fitz of Fitz-Ford; a Legend of Devon*, and *Warleigh, or the Fatal Oak: a Legend of Devon*. Her *A Description of the Part of Devonshire*, is reviewed extensively in the *London Quarterly Review*, October 1837, pp.157-179. See Beverly E. Schneller, 'Anna Eliza Bray (1790–1883)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004); and *The Athenaeum*, 31 May 1884, p.690 for a late nineteenth-century perspective on her.
- 24 *Three Letters on the Devonshire Labourer. From Sir C. Trevelyan to the Editor of the 'Pall Mall Gazette'* (London: Bell and Daldy, 1869).
- 25 *Three Letters on the Devonshire Labourer*, p. 8, p.14.
- 26 Hoskins, *Devon*, p.283 (and see also Hoskins's assertion, that 'The billowy, feminine beauty of so much Devon does not lend itself to great poetry'.
- 27 Hemans' was the first prize poem by the Royal Literary Society, established in 1821, see 'Extracts From "Dartmoor," A Prize Poem, By Mrs Hemans', *Edinburgh Magazine and Literary Miscellany* 11 (July 1822), pp.56-59.
- 28 *Dartmoor: a descriptive Poem*, by N.T. Carrington, *Author of the Banks of Tamar. With a Preface and Notes*, by W. Burt, Esq., *Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, Plymouth; and Eight Vignettes and Four Views, illustrative of Scenery*, Drann and Etched by P.H. Rogers, Esq., *Plymouth* (London: Hatchard and Williams, Devonport, 1826); 'Devonshire', *Quarterly Review*, [American edition] 105: CCX (April 1859), p.253. See T. F. Henderson, 'Nicholas Toms Carrington (1777–1830)', rev. M. Clare Loughlin-Chow, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), and for contemporary reviews, 'Mr Carrington's Dartmoor', *The Oriental Herald and Journal of General Literature* 9: 29 (May 1826), pp.251-258; 'Dartmoor: a descriptive Poem, by N.T. Carrington', *Monthly Magazine* 1: 6 (June 1826), pp.628-630.
- 29 E.W.L. Davies, *Dartmoor Days, or Scenes in the Forest. A Poem* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts and Green, 1863).
- 30 See for instance, *Waldegrave. A Novel* (2 vols., New York: Harper, 1829), vol.2, with its opening chapter presenting information on Devon, and the comment that 'In passing through Devonshire the tourist is struck with the intelligent eye, the melodious though shrill accents, and hospitable manners of its inhabitants'.
- 31 W.G. Hoskins, *Devon and Its People* (1959; Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1968), pp.120-122; Brayshay, ed., *Topographical Writers in South-West England*, p.24; J. Greig, ed., *The Farington Diary by Joseph Farington R.A.*, vol.6 (New York: Doran, 1926), p.160; W.G. Maton, *Observations Relative Chiefly to the Natural History, Picturesque Scenery, and Antiquities, of the Western Counties of England, Made in the Years 1794 and 1796: Illustrated by a Mineralogical Map, and Sixteen Views in Aquatinta by Alken* (Salisbury: Easton, 1797).
- 32 *Catalogue of the Hoare Library at Stourhead, Co. Wilts: To which are Added, An Account of the Museum of British Antiquities; A Catalogue of the Paintings and Drawings, and a Description of the Mansion* (London: J.B. Nicols, 1840).
- 33 J.L.W. Page, *An Exploration of Dartmoor and Its Antiquities: With Some Account of Its Borders* (1889; 3<sup>rd</sup> edn, London: Seeley, 1892), p.xv, cites 'A Walk through South Devon', from the Religious Tract Society's working-class periodical *Leisure Hour*, 1 July 1869, pp.422-426 (this illustrated essay was 'By the author of the "Regular Swiss Round"', who was the Reverend Harry Jones, of St Luke's, Soho). The *Leisure Hour* also serialised Selwyn King's 'Stories of a Devonshire Village' in 1905, it is task beyond this paper to examine the periodicals of the nineteenth century for articles focused on the county, but some to list would include 'County Sketches: I – Devonshire', *London Journal* 30: 753 (16 July 1859), pp.9-10; 'Summer in Devonshire', *Once a Week* 7: 161 (26 July 1862), pp.121-124; 'The Devonshire Savages', *London Society* 33: 198 (June 1878), pp.510-514; 'South and North Devon', *Saturday Review* 68: 1764 (17 August 1889), pp.185-186. I have located these articles through a search of the database *British Periodicals* (ProQuest).
- 34 J. Dennis, 'Home Travel – Devonshire', *Fortnightly Review*, 1866, pp.587-599 (p.587). The antiquary Richard John King (1818 – 1879) prepared the material for the county volume, and as W.P. Courtney, 'Richard John King, (1818–1879)', rev. Ian Moxted, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004)

notes, he had intended a volume entitled *The Forest of Dartmoor and its Borders: an Historical Sketch*. Hoskins, *Devon*, p.538, describes these handbooks as ‘of considerable value for 19<sup>th</sup> cent. history’.

35 J. Sydney Curtis, *Devonshire: Historical and Pictorial* (Southampton: Topographical Publishing Company, 1897).

36 S. Tymms, *The Family Topographer: being a compendious account of the antient and present state of the Counties of England: Vol. II.—The western circuit: Cornwall, Devonshire, Dorsetshire, Hampshire, Somersetshire, Wiltshire* (London: J.B. Nichols, 1832). See R. Halliday, ‘Samuel Tymms, (1808–1871)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

37 The work of Thomas H. Williams, *Picturesque Excursions in Devon and Cornwall* (London, 1804); *Six Views of Scenery in the South of Devon* (London, 1821); *Devonshire; or, Directions to Scenery and Antiquities* (Exeter, 1828); *Picturesque Illustrations of The Guide to Devonshire Scenery* (Exeter, 1828); *Scenery in Devonshire; or, Directions for Visiting the most Picturesque Spots from the Sidmouth to Plymouth* (Exeter, 1827).

38 J. Britton, E.W. Brayley, *Devonshire and Cornwall Illustrated* (London: H. Fisher, R. Fisher, & P. Jackson, 1832)

39 ‘Devonshire’, *Quarterly Review* (1859), p.255; Moore, *The History of Devonshire*, p.286 (This section of Moore’s work drew on ‘private correspondence’, the standard works of William Marshall, Robert Fraser, *General View of the County of Devon with Observations on the means of its Improvement* (London: Macrae, 1794) and Charles Vancouver, the latter author of *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Devon; with Observations on the Means of Its Improvement. Drawn Up for the Consideration of the Board of Agriculture, and Internal Improvement* (London: Phillips, 1808)); and the comments of the editor, ‘J.T.’, of Tristram Risdon’s *A chorographical description or survey of the county of Devon. With additions* (1630; London: Rees and Curtis, Plymouth, 1811), p.vii. On the backwardness, see Wilmot, ‘Agricultural Improvers in South-West England’, pp.116-117, and the ‘considerable strand of incomprehension ...[lacing] agricultural accounts of the South West’ in the nineteenth century, p.120; for changes after c.1850, see pp.122-124.

40 ‘Devonshire’, *London Quarterly Review* [American edition] 105: CCX (April 1859), pp.232- 255 (p.254). The review refers to *An Exmoor Scolding, in the propriety and decency of the Exmoor Language* (10th edition, Exeter, 1788).

41 See M. Todd, ‘From Romanticism to Archaeology: Richard Colt Hoare, Samuel Lysons and Antiquity’, in Braysay ed., *Topographical Writers in South-West England*.

42 Brayley, *History of Devonshire*, pp.168-169.

43 See J.P. Jones, J.F. Kingston, *Flora Devonensis: Or A Descriptive Catalogue of Plants Growing Wild in the County of Devon, Arranged Both According to the Linnaean and Natural Systems, with an Account of Their Geographical Distribution, Etc*, Parts 1-2 (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1829).

44 W. White, *History, Gazetteer, and Directory of Devonshire* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, 1850).

45 W.G. Hoskins, *Devon* (1954; Chichester: Phillimore, 2003), pp.174-177.

46 *The English Cyclopaedia: A New Dictionary of Universal Knowledge*, volume 6 (1854): ‘According to the ‘Census of Religious Worship,’ taken in 1851, it appears that there were then in the county 1297 places of worship, which belonged to the various religious societies in the following proportions:—Church of England, 54 9; Methodists (four sections), 379; Independents, 142; Baptists, 112; Brethren, 36; Unitarians, 12; Quakers, 8; Roman Catholics, 8; other bodies, 51. The total number of sittings provided was 334,372, of which the Established Church provided 191,710.’

47 *The English Cyclopaedia: A New Dictionary of Universal Knowledge*, volume 6 (London: Bradbury and Evans, 1854), ‘Geography – volume II’, col.748: ‘In 1851 the county possessed six savings banks, of which two were established in connection with the dockyards, and four in the towns of Devonport, Exeter, Plymouth, and Tavistock: the amount owing to depositors on 20th November 1851 was £1, 504, 305 19s 8d’.

48 In population it was the fourth largest English county in 1831.

49 But see, the schoolmaster D.M. Stirling’s *The Beauties of the Shore; Or, A Guide to the Watering-places on the South-east Coast of Devon ...* (Exeter: Roberts, 1838).

50 J.P. Faunthorpe, *The Geography of Devonshire* (London: G. Philp, 1872). Faunthorpe, at that point vice-principal of St John’s College, Battersea, was a clergyman and educator, 1839–1924, who published county histories for schools.

51 Faunthorpe, *The Geography of Devonshire*, p.17.

52 And reprinted without credit, in the entry on Devonshire, in *The English Cyclopaedia: A New Dictionary of Universal Knowledge* (1854).

53 *Black’s Guide to Devonshire* (1864), p.96; *Supplement to the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Editions of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. With Preliminary Dissertations on the History of the Sciences. Illustrated by Engravings* (1824), vol.3, p.547.

54 Faunthorpe, *The Geography of Devonshire*, p.8. See also J. Bowring, ‘Devonshire Pixies’, *Once a Week*, 23 February 1867, pp.204-207.

55 White, *History, Gazetteer, and Directory of Devonshire* (1850).

56 Polwhele’s *History of Devonshire* appeared as three volumes between 1793 and 1806; but the *Historical Views of Devonshire* appeared separately in 1793 and was not completed by the appearance of the announced further three volumes, see W. P. Courtney, ‘Richard Polwhele (1760–1838)’, rev. Grant P. Cerny, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004). Comments on Devonshire as a county with an atypical strength of character may be

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- found in 'Days in Devonshire', *Saturday Review*, 31 August 1895 (pp.266-267) and the 'realization of its supreme unlikeness to any other district of England' (p.266).
- <sup>57</sup> R.N. Worth, 'The Economic Geology of Devon', *Reports and Transactions of the Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science, Literature and Art* (Torrington, July 1875) vol.3 (Plymouth: Brendon, 1875), p.210.
- <sup>58</sup> Page, *An Exploration of Dartmoor*, Preface, p.xiii, refers to non-South Western conceptions of the region, 'as only a name,' and even '*terra incognita*' for many, 'even in Devonshire'.
- <sup>59</sup> *The Newcastle Magazine* 5: 9 (September 1826), pp.398-403 (p.398).
- <sup>60</sup> 'Devonshire', *Quarterly Review*, [American edition] 105: CCX (April 1859), p.254.
- <sup>61</sup> 'Dartmoor', *Saturday Review* 68: 1758 (6 July 1889), pp.22-23 (p.22).
- <sup>62</sup> Again, using the database *British Periodicals* (ProQuest), the following articles – from a list of many 'hits' – may be suggested: 'The Forest of Dartmoor', *Fortnightly Review* 6: 33 (15 September 1866), pp.300-310 ('Few corners of England have remained more entirely unchanged; and few have a more distinct and remarkable character', p.300); 'Experiences on Dartmoor', *London Society* 11: 66 (June 1867), pp.516-521; 'Dartmoor and its Future', *Saturday Review* 46: 1201 (2 November 1878), pp.554-555 (on the Duchy rights, the threat from drainage, and the railway) and 'The Spoiling of Dartmoor', *Saturday Review* 48: 1247 (20 September 1879), pp.353-354; 'Dartmoor', *Cornhill Magazine* 9: 53 (November 1887), pp.508-526; 'Dartmoor', *Saturday Review* 68: 1758 (6 July 1889), pp.22-23; (a review of Page's *The Exploration of Dartmoor and its Antiquities*); A.S. Hurd, 'Dartmoor: The Highlands of Devonshire', *The Windsor Magazine* (December 1896), pp.740-747 ('Illustrated from special Photographs').
- <sup>63</sup> A.S. Hurd, 'Dartmoor: The Highlands of Devonshire', p.740.
- <sup>64</sup> Brayschay ed., *Topographical Writers in South-West England*.
- <sup>65</sup> 'Devonshire', *Quarterly Review*, [American edition] 105: CCX (April 1859), p.234, reviewing Davidson's *Bibliotheca Devoniensis: a Catalogue of the printed Books relating to the County of Devon* (Exeter, 1852) and other works in an extensive essay.
- <sup>66</sup> But see the relevant discussion throughout the classic work by W.G. Hoskins, *Devon* (1954; Chichester: Phillimore, 2003), with supplementary bibliographical material for the new edition. We of course lack a complete *Victoria County History of Devon*.

The romantic period is a term applied to the literature of approximately the first third of the nineteenth century. During this time, literature began to move in channels that were not entirely new but were in strong contrast to the standard literary practice of the eighteenth century. Reason no longer held the high place it had held in the eighteenth century; its place was taken by imagination, emotion, and individual sensibility. The eccentric and the singular took the place of the accepted conventions of the age. The romantic writers responded strongly to the impact of new forces, particularly the French Revolution and its promise of liberty, equality, and fraternity. The humanitarianism that had been developing during the eighteenth century was taken up enthusiastically by the romantic writers. Free, romantic, and individualistic, Britain's self-image in the eighteenth century constructs itself in opposition to the dominant power of a Southern European aesthetics. Offering a fresh understanding of how the British intelligentsia more. Free, romantic, and individualistic, Britain's self-image in the eighteenth century constructs itself in opposition to the dominant power of a Southern European aesthetics. Challenging the European Grand Tour, the new aesthetics championed the Domestic and Picturesque Anti-Grand-Tour, the English garden, Hogarth's new 'line of beauty' and 'shell-aesthetics', Francis Grose's revolutionary 'aesthetic regionalism', and a, both old and new, more consonant 'Gothic' and rough, aesthetics of sublimity.