

LAKE'S PAROCHIAL HISTORY OF CORNWALL

LOSTWITHIEL

Extract from pages 169 to 179 of Volume III, Part No. 36 of "A Complete Parochial History of the County of Cornwall" (known as "Lake's Parochial History of Cornwall") compiled from the best authorities and corrected and improved from actual survey and published in 55 monthly parts by John Camden Hotten of Piccadilly, London and William Lake of Boscawen Street, Truro between June 1866 and May 1873. The cost of each part was one shilling.

Joseph Polsue begins his history of Lanlivery with quotations from Thomas Tonkin's (1678-1742) three-volume History of Cornwall, the publication of which was announced in 1737 but it was never actually published.



Steeple, Lostwithiel

Lake – Volume I , Part No. 3

TONKIN.—Lostwithiel is in the hundred of Powder, and is surrounded to the west, north, and south, by Lanlivery; to the east it has Fowey river between it and S. Winnow. As for the name, I take it to be a corruption of *Les-uchel*, i.e. the *lofty-place*, as having been from all antiquity the chief seat of the Dukes, &c., of Cornwall. Mr. Camden in Cornwall saith, "the *Uzella* of Ptolemy is seated, and has not quite lost its name., being called at this day Lestuthiell, from its situation. Now *uchel* in British signifies the same as *high* and *lofty*. But of this more when we come to describe the town. As for Mr. Carew's derivation, who calls it Lostwithiel, from the Cornish Lostwithiiall, which in English, saith he, signifieth a *lion's tail*, it is so ridiculous, as not to be worth repeating; neither doth the word carry that sense. This parish is a vicarage, valued in the King's books at £2 13s. 4d.

The Duke of Cornwall is patron. The incumbent Mr Baron, who succeeded Mr Whiteford.

This church is not valued in Tax, Benefic., anno 1291; and was then appropriated to the priory of Bodmin.

THE TOWN AND BOROUGH OF LOSTWITHIEL, "Reputed" saith Mr. Willis, "the ancient *Uzella* of Ptolemy, lies situated on the river *Uzella*," (I wonder how Mr Willis come to be guilty of this mistake, since both Leland and Camden, whom he quotes, tell him that it lies on the river Fowey.) "from which it more probably had its name, as the learned Camden thinks" (Mr. Camden says as I have quoted him above,) "than from Mr Carew's interpretation of the word Lostwithiel, which he would have to signify in English, a *lion's tail*. This town is reputed in former times to have stood on a high hill, where the old castle of Lestormel showeth its ruins, which with a park thereto belonging, lies on the north side of the town" (and is in the parish of Lanlivery, for which reason is not treated of here). "In the park was a chapel of the Trinity long since defaced, as are the public buildings of the town, insomuch that little remains of them: though some small parts are repaired, and made use of for the prisons and courts belonging to the Tin Stannaries, which are appointed to be kept here, this being one of the coinage towns.

Before I go on any further with Mr. Willis, it may be proper to insert at length what Mr. Camden saith of it. "More within the land, on the same river (Fowey), the *Uzella* of Ptolemy is seated, and has not quite lost its name, being called to this day Lestuthiel, from its situation; for it was upon a high hill, where is Lestormel, and ancient castle; though now it is removed into the valley. Now *Uchel*, British, signifies the same as *high* and *lofty*, from whence *Uzello-dunum* of Gaul is so termed, because the town being built on a mountain, has a steep rugged ascent every way. This in the British history is called *Pen-Uchel-Coit*, a *high mountain in a wood*, by which some will have Exeter meant. But the situation assigned it by Ptolemy, and the name it has to this day, do sufficiently evince it to have been the ancient *Uzella*. Now it is a little town, and not at all the populous; for the channel of the river Fowey, which in the last age used to carry the tide up to the very town, and bring vessels of burthen, is now so stopped up by the sands coming from the tin mines, that it is too shallow for barges; and indeed all the havens in this county are in danger of being choaked up by their sands. However it is the county town, where the Sheriff every month holds the County court, and the Warden of the Stannaries has his prison. For it has the privilege of coinage, by the favour (as they say) of Edmund Earl of Cornwall, who formerly had his palace there. But there are two towns which especially eclipse the glory of this *Uzella*,-Leskerd to the east, and Bodman to the north." Now to return to Mr. Willis: It is a very ancient corporation, belonging to the duchy, having had great privileges conferred upon it by Richard Earl of Cornwall, who, when he was king of the Romans, in the twelfth year of his reign, by charter dated at Wallington, made Lostwithiel and Penknek (alias Penketh, in the parish of Lanliversey, for Lanlivery) a place near adjoining, and now part of the borough, one free burgh and granted his burgesses a gild mercatory, &c. When this place was first incorporated, I have not been informed; but it has returned members to parliament ever since 4 Edward II. and once before, viz 23 Edward I. The representatives are chosen by the majority of the Corporation, which consists of seven capital burgesses (whereof one is Mayor), and seventeen assistants in whom, as I presume, the fee farm rent of the borough is vested, who hold the same, or not many years since did, of the Duchy. This Corporation (otherwise a poor one) holds also the anchorage in the harbour, and bushelage of measurable commodities, as coal, salt, malt and corn, &c., in the town of Fowey, which port lies lower on this river, which was navigable to this town

before the sands barred it up. The town of Lestwithiel consists chiefly of two streets, from east to west, meanly built, and has in it a church (of which more at the end).

In August, 1644, some soldiers of the Parliament Army, as may be seen in Dugdale's short View of the late Troubles in England, defaced several stately edifices in this town, as the Great Hall and Exchequer of the Dukes of Cornwall, who had their palace here in times past; this having been formerly reputed the shire town of the county, a small branch of which is yet retaineth, viz. the election of knights of the shire, and the keeping of the county weights and measures, which it had assigned by act of Parliament, anno 11 Henry VII. Who held this manor (note, that this place is no manor but Penknek.) at the making of the Domesday Book, the learned Dr. Brady could not discover; but no doubt it was reckoned among those of Robert, Earl of Morton and Cornwall, the King's brother. Though in the reign of Richard I, it was part of the demesne lands of Roberts de Cardinan, Lord of Fowey, who was returned debtor into Exchequer, of ten marks due to the King for having a market at Lostwithiel. *Robertus de Cardinan debet decem marcas pro habendo Foro apud Lostwithiel.* However, this town belonged, temp. Hen. III to Richard Earl of Cornwall, King Richard's nephew, upon the death of whose son Edmund, it became part of the King's demesne, and anno 7 Edw. III. upon the creation of John Earl of Cornwall, the King's brother, he had this borough, *inter alia*, granted him; which was afterwards assigned to Edward the King's son, when he was made Duke of Cornwall, and became, upon his death, the jointure or dowry of Joan Princess of Wales, his wife; on whose decease, anno 9 Ric. II. the King granted it to Tho. Holland Earl of Kent, his (half) brother, who held for life the manors of Lostwithiel and Camelford; he died in the 20th Ric. II. His son Thomas was created Duke of Surrey, and was beheaded anno 1 Hen. IV."

Mr. Willis having a little mistaken this, I have thus rectified it. After the death of which last Thomas, (who also held them for life), Sir John Cornwall, Lord Fanhope, obtained a grant of the same on account of marrying Elizabeth, the King's sister; and obtained a grant of the same from Henry Prince of Wales to enjoy them during her life; and afterwards procured it for his own life, and died accordingly seised thereof in December 1443, 22 Hen. VI. The yearly rent of this borough payable to the Duke of Cornwall, is in Doddridge's History of that Duchy, set down at £11 19s 10½d. The town is situated between two hills. Boats of ten and twenty tons come up hither. Here are about 70 houses; and the manor is in the Duchy.



HE parish of Lostwithiel is situated in the deanery and hundred of Powder; it is bounded on the east by St Winnow; and the north, south, and west sides by Lanlivery, with which parish it is closely identified. The parish contains 91 acres; of which 63A. 2R. 4P. are meadow and pasture land, a small portion of which is occasionally tilled to corn; 10A. 2R. 4P. orchards and gardens; 2A. 2R. gardens attached to houses; 1R. 20P. glebe; and 14A. 0R. 12P. streets, highways, roads, wastrels, and sites of houses.

The tithes were commuted in 1839, at £40 5s. 6d.; which includes 5s. 6p. payable on the glebe when not in the vicar's manurance. The living is a vicarage in the patronage of the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe.

The whole parish, including a portion of the river Fowey, comprises by actual measurement 110A. 2R. 20P.; of which the houses, courtlages, streets, roads, wastes, and river, measure 26A. 3R. 13P.; and the glebe 1R. 21P.

The borough is more extensive than the parish, and contains 346A. 2R. 20P., namely Lostwithiel parish 110A. 2R. 20P.; part of S. Winnow 12A.; and part of Lanlivery 224A.

List of Vicars: — Peter Waryson, 1536; Sharpe, 1662; James Salter, 1674; Humphry Potter, officiating minister, 1684; John Baker, 1691; Thomas Whitford, 1717; Jonathan Baron, 1730; John Baron, his son, vicar in 1782; Samuel Furley held the living on bonds from 1804; for John Baron nephew of the preceding John Baron, who was admitted in 1807; and the present aged vicar the Rev. John Bower, admitted August 2, 1816.

The church, which is dedicated to S. Bartholomew, comprises a chancel, nave, and north and south aisles, and a vestry. The chancel window, a geometric decorated one, is much larger than usual; the reredos is modern, and painted in the oriental style; on the south side of the chancel is a piscine with a shelf. The communion plate was presented by Thomas Jones, Esq., formerly of Restormel House. The corporation pews are ornamented with the arms of the borough and those of the first Earl of Mount Edgcumbe, carved in wood. On the front of the organ loft are painted the royal arms, with the date 1760; the borough arms or badge, namely a castle with a thistle on each side, and in front a river with fish, with the legend, — *Insignia Burgi de Lostwithiel et Penknight in Cornubia*, and the arms of the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe.

The arcades each consist of five pointed arches supported on octagonal piers of Pentewan stone; above each arcade are four clerestory windows.

The east window of the north aisle is of stained glass, the chief object of which is the *Crucifixion*; the legend *Aspicientes ad Jesum*.

The second north window represents the *Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension*; with the legend — *Beati mortui qui moriuntur in Domino*. On the sill is the following inscription, — "This and the window at the Eastern end of this Aisle are offered to Lostwithiel Church by the Revd. John Bower, the vicar of the parish, in memory of a beloved mother, a dear sister, and an affectionate aunt.

Elizabeth Bower died on the xvth Sepr. M.DCCC..XXXIV; aged LXXXIV years.

Eliza Scott, wife of Wm. Isaac Scott. Esqr., Captn. in the R.N., died at Chudleigh in Devon, on the 1st Oct. M.D.CCC.XL; aged LIX years.

Mary Eliot died on the 1st Sepr. M.DCCC.XLI; aged LXXXIV years.

The mortal remains of each lie interred in the same vault in the adjoining Church yard."

Another of the north windows represents *Christ blessing little children*; it is inscribed, —

Louise. Gul : Westlake. uxori qua. ut. vixit. sic. obit. Christians. xiv Kal : sex. A : D : MDCCCXIII.

Preserved on a tablet over the north door is a piece of sculpture in alabaster, representing the flaying of S. Bartholomew.

At the west end of this aisle is the vestry; a modern erection.

At the east end of the south aisle is a stained glass window, the chief figure of which is king David; on the sill is the following inscription, — "This window was erected by Joseph & Jenefer Stephens in memory of their son, Frederick Joseph, who died in London August 11th, 1866, aged 22 years; and was interr'd in the St Mary's Islington Burial Grounds, Finchley."

A south window in the same aisle represents the Saviour with Moses and Elias; it is inscribed, — "Carolo Curteys qui obiit v Kal. quint. A.D. MDCCCLXVI." On a brass attached to the sill is engraved, — "In memory of Thomas Curteys, died 14th September 1848; aged 70 years.

Mary Curteys his wife, died 2nd December, 1810; aged 34 years.

Caroline Mary Curteys, their daughter, died 2nd January, 1854; aged 48 years."

Attached to the eastern respond of the south arcade are the arms of Kendall quartering Way or Wayte, in plaster; a precisely similar shield lies in the vestry, damaged. The pedestal of the poor's box has carved on it W. T. MAIER, 1645. R. L. Both aisles have lean-to roofs.

The font, which is of Pentewan stone, is octagonal; it rests on a clustered shaft and four small clustered pillars. On the sides various

subjects are sculptured in relief, from very rude designs, among others the Crucifixion; a huntsman on horseback, with his horn, hawk, and hound; two lions passant, &c.

There are north and south porches; in the latter is a quatrefoil shaped stoup in good preservation.

The tower is strongly buttressed at the base; it is surmounted with a spire which rises from a graceful octagonal lantern, of handsome open tracery work. Within the last century the spire has been reduced several feet in its height. The belfry contains five bells and a clock. Brasses and tablets of slate and marble are thus inscribed :-

Hic jacet Tristramus Curteys, armiger, qui obiit quintodecimo die Aprilis, Anno dm' Millmo. cccc' .xxiii^o; Cui' a' i' e' p'piciet de', ame'.
(Brass, with armed knight in spurs.)

Here lieth Temperance the wife of William Kendall, Jantlman, whoe decessed the 9 day ————— Elizabeth, & an'o domini 1579.

Clauditur hic conjux nullipietate secunda Quillilmi Kendallii et Temperancia dicta.
Non sinecunotorum genitu (miserabile parca
Ruperunt vitæ pendula fila suæ
Femina (dum vixit) lumen columen4q. mariti
Femina fida viro femina flenda suo
Lucinam nonies nonies paritura vocabat
Pignora fecundi pignora flenda thori
Multa ruinosæ præbebat numera turbæ
numera quæ tacite que sine tested edit
Optima sinceræ jecit fundamina vitæ
quam sequitur Christo dante superna salus.

Near this place lie the remains of William Luke, Esquire, Captain of a Company in the Cornwall Militia Regiment. He was one of the Capital Burgesses, and served the office of Mayor of this Borough for the year ending Michaelmas 1763; and died the 12th day of April, 1764; in the 26th year of his age.

To the memory of William Bower, Gent. one of the Capital Burgesses of this Borough, who died in his Mayoralty Decr. 9th, 1779; aged 70.
This monument was erected by his affectionate and mournful widow, Joan Bower.

Near this place lie the remains of Samuel Hext, Esquire, late one of the capital Burgesses of this borough, who died on the IVth day of September, MDCCC; aged LXVII years.

Also of Margery Hext, his wife, who died on the xxvth day of November, MDCCLXXIX; aged LXV years.

And also of Samuel Hext, their son, who died on the XVth day of November, MDCCLXXIX; aged XV years.

In memory of the Hon. M : General Charles Monson, who died at Truro of a decline January 11th, 1800; in the prime of life, and at the dawn of prosperous fortune. His heart was generous, his mind amiable, and universally endearing his social worth. The friends who trace this memorial will drop a tear of sorrow on his grave; and the strangers who pity his fate, should heave a sigh of apprehension for their own.

M.S. Matilda Fortescue, wife of Wm. Fortescue, Esqr. died Mar. 21, 1801; aged 38.

John Fortescue, their son, died May 10, 1796; aged 13.

Near this place lie the remains of John Baron, Clerk; having passed great part of his well spent life in this borough, of which he was 33 years the vicar, and 24 years an alderman. Both situations he filled with peculiar attention to their respective duties. For true and general benevolence & liberality he was a most worthy example; and on the 19th March, 1804, in the 72nd year of his age, he died as he lived – universally beloved & respected.

To the memory of J. W. Scott, son of Lt. J. W. & E. Scott. Born Decr. 16, 1803; died March 28, 1805. (Brass)

Near this place lies buried Thomas Hall, M.D., who departed this life the xxvth day of Sepr. MDCCCVI; aged L..

Reader consider, that how long your life may be extended, to this abode thou must come at last.

This monument is erected to the memory of the four daughters of Anthony and Mary Spernon, formerly of this town

Catherine Spernon died 20 June, 1798; aged 65.

Grace Spernon died 9 June, 1807; aged 69.

Jane Spernon died 13 June, 1809; aged 69

and Mary Spernon who died 28 April, 1823; aged 74 ; was the last representative bearing the name of the ancient family of Spernon of Pengelly, in this county.

D.O.M. Near this place are deposited the remains of James Baron, Esqr., Captain in the Royal Navy, a Capital Burgesses of this Borough, who died the 15th of December, 1807; aged 72.

In hope of this bliss content I lie ;
Tho' pleas'd to live, yet not displeas'd to die ;
Life has its comforts and its sorrows too :
For both to all-wise Heav'n our thanks are due.
Else thoughtless man would fix his place of rest
Where nature tells him he can ne'er be blest.
How far my hopes are vain or founded well,
GOD only knows;--but the last day shall tell.

Also of Catherine Baron his widow, who died the 17th February, 1823; aged 80.

Sacred to the memory of three children of William and Matilda Fortescue.

William Loftin Fortescue, Esq., a captain in H.M. 89th Regt., died at Gibraltar 23 Sept., 1810; aged 28 years.

John Faithful Fortescue died 10th August, 1815; aged 17.

Charlotte Fortescue died 8th November, 1824; aged 34.

Sacred to the memory of Robert Baron Cooban, Lieut. R.N., son of John Cooban, Esqre. of Plymouth, who died a prisoner of war at Verdun in France in

December, 1810; in the 34th year of his age.

Also of Catherine his wife, who died on the 8th day of September, 1819; aged 45 years.

Also of Robert Baron Cooban, their only son, who died in June 1814; aged 11 years.

Sacred to the memory of Margaret Bennett, ob. August 27th, 1784; æt. 39 years.

Richard Bennett, Gentn. (husband of Margaret Bennett,) ob. April 3rd, 1812; æt. 68 years.

Elizabeth Ann Bennett Lawrance, ob July 3rd, 1820; æt. 6 months.

Also Margaret Lawrance, ob. August 14th, 1820; æt. 3 years.

Daughters of George and Dorothy Lawrance of this place.

Job. XIV. c., I. v.

Sacred to the memory of Thomas Hext, Esq., of Trenarren in this county, who died after many years residence in this town, on the 29th January, 1822; in the 60th year of his age.

Jane the wife of Fredk. T. Michell, R.N., died Feby. 14th, 1824; in the nineteenth year of her age.

So innocent, so blest thy short career,

For THEE may well be spared each natural tear.

Nor shall the cypress darken o'er thy tomb

As how can thought connect with thee its gloom.

Jane! thy remembrance as a light shall beam

A guiding-star thro' life's distressful dream;

And when I feel the mandate of my God

Like THEE I'll drink the cup, I'll kiss the rod.—LOUISA WHITBREAD.

This tablet is erected by Rebecca Fortescue to the memory of a beloved husband and daughter. William Fortescue, Esqr., late of Penwarne in this county, and, for several years Major of the Royal Cornwall Militia. Died July 14th, 1824; aged 63 years.

Hester Ann Fortescue, their daughter, died October the 26th, aged 11 years; A.D, 1822.

The said Rebecca Fortescue died January 31st, 1858; aged 84.

This tablet is erected to the memory of John Hext, Esqr., of Trenarren in this county, who died on the 30th June, 1838, universally beloved and lamented; aged 72 years; and whose mortal remains are interred in the adjoining church yard.

Sacred to the memory of James Francis, son of the late Major General George Mackie, C.B. Born February 1st, 1824; Died April 14th, 1842; aged 18.

This tablet is erected by his sincere friends, Henry Frye, 39th Regt. Madras Native Infantry, and Ernest Elderton, 10th Regt. Bengal Native Infantry.

Sacred to the memory of George Bell Lawrance, Esqr., Commander in the Royal Navy, who died on the 9th April, 1846; aged 70 years.

Also to Dorothy Bullock Lawrance, his wife, who died on 14th March 1845; aged 60 years.

Residents of this place. Their remains lie in the family vault near this spot.

This tablet is erected by their bereaved children as an humble tribute to the memory of their late affectionate and devoted parents.

Sacred to the memory of Richard Lanyon, Esq., Surgeon, &C. He was descended from the ancient families of Lanyon in Madron and Gwinear, and having passed a long life in the active discharge of the most philanthropic and Christian duties, and filled the highest offices in the corporation of this town, died on the 19th of April, 1848; æt. 82.

As he lived, so he died,—a Christian.

Also of his son Richard Lanyon, M.D., F.A.S., &c., who for many years successfully practised his profession in his native town, where he was well known for his antiquarian researches, and his literary and scientific attainments; he also zealously and usefully filled the highest offices in the corporation, and died humbly relying on the merits of his Redeemer, Sept. 10th, 1852; æt. 53.

This monument is erected by Radolphus Edward Lanyon, as a tribute to their worth, and a mark of his gratitude.

Sacred to the memory of Elizabeth Hext, widow of John Hext, Esqre., of Trenarren in this county, and daughter of Thomas Staniforth, Esqre., of Liverpool and Darnall Hall, Yorkshire. She died December 13th, 1851; in the 82nd year of her age.

After a residence of upwards of 50 years in this town and neighbourhood, her remains were laid in the adjoining burial ground beside those of her husband and infant son.

The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance. Psalm cxii. verse 6.

In memory of Phillippa Westlake; born 8th of August, 1774; died 25th of August, 1850.

Mary Westlake; born 29th of November, 1776; died 22nd of July, 1854.

John Westlake; born 17th of August, 1778; died at Cambridge 1st of July, 1849.

William Westlake; born 10th of February, 1781; died 24th of March, 1860.

Susanna Harper Westlake; born 22nd of May, 1782; died 23rd of April, 1863.

Sacred to the memory of Lieut. G.B. Lawrance, R.N., who died of yellow fever at St Croix January 15th, 1853; aged 38.

“Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.”

Near this tablet lie the remains of Phillippa, widow of William Wade, late purser R.N., who was lost in the “Delaware” in the year 1798. She departed this life on the 5th of February, 1859; aged 88 years.

Floor stone :—

Here lieth the body of Captain Nevell Norway, who was buried 6 day of Feb. 1757.

On a slate tablet against the wall of the church outside,—

— of John Bolte, which was Buried the 6th day of Desember —

Better it is to Dy,
The Sovles Life to Save,
Then to Lose the Soule,
The Bodies Life to have.

On a granite obelisk, —

M.S. Thomas Foster, died June 15th, 1858; aged 78.
 M.S. Margaret Foster, died April 16th, 1866; aged 70.
 M.S. Mary Dorothy Durett Foster, died Jany. 19th, 1837; aged 16.

Respecting the desecration of the font, and the "attempt to blow up the building with gunpowder," by the Parliamentary party, in 1644, we give the following from the diary of Richard Symonds, one of the king's lieutenants in the Civil wars : —

One of their actions while they were in Listithiel, must not be forgotten. In contempt of Christianity, Religion, and the Church, they brought a horse to the fount in the church, and there, with their kind of ceremonies, did, as they called it, christen the horse, and called him by the name of Charles, in contempt of his sacred Majesty.

Another was done by their Provost Martiall, who put his prisoners in the said church. The night they marched away, two of the prisoners, being rich men of Cornwall, gott up in the steeple and pulled up the ladder, and called to the Marshall, jeering him. "Ile fetch you downe," said he, and sett mulch and hay on fire under them; besides they shott many muskets into the belfry at them; all would not doe. Then he fetch a barrel of powder and gaue fire to it, threatening to blow them up, *and that blew into the church and blew off most of the slate* and yet did not hurt the prisoners.

In 1857, a new cemetery was opened adjoining the Restormel road; the land had been the property of the late Jonathan Baron, Lieut. R.N. of Bodmin. Attached to an upright piece of granite, supposed to have been the shaft of an ancient cross, is a brass plate bearing the inscription : —

This Stone, taken from the old churchyard, marks the grave of Henry Fish, an infant, whose mortal remains were the first which were interred in this Burial Ground, on the 12th day of February, 1857.

"Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

JOHN BOWER, Vicar.

"Lostwithiel," writes Carew, "should seeme to fetch his original from the *Cornish Lostwithiall*, which in English, soundeth like a lion's taylor; for as the Earle of this prouince gaue the Lyon in armes, and the lion's principall strength (men say) consisteth in his taylor; so the towne claymeth the precedence, and his Lord's chieftest residence, & the place which he entrusted with his Exchequer, and where his wayghtier affaires were managed. Maioralty, markets, faires, and nomination of Burgesses for the parliament, it hath common with the most : Coynage of Tynne, onely with three others; but the gayle for the whole Stannary, and keeping the County Courts, it selfe alone. Yet all this can hardly rayse it to a tolerable condition of wealth and inhabitation. Wherefore I will detayne you no longer, then vntill I haue shewed you a solemne custome in times past hereyeerely obserued, and onely of late daies discontinued, which was thus : —

Upon little Easter Sunday the Freeholders of the towne and mannour, by themselues or their deputies, did there assemble; amongst whom one, (as it fell to his lot by turne) brauely apparelled, gallantly mounted, with a Crowne on his head, a scepter in his hand, a sword borne before him, and dutifully attended by all the rest also on horseback, rode throw the principall streete to the Church; there the curate in his best *beseene*, solemnely receiued him at the Churchyard stile and conducted him to heare diuine service : after which he repaired with the same pompe, to a hovse fore-provided for that purpose, made a feast to his attendants, kept the tables end himselfe, and was serued with kneeling, assay, & all the other rites due to the estate of a Prince : with which dinner the ceremony ended, and every man returned home again.

The pedigree of this vsage is deriued from so many descents of ages, that the cause and authour outreach remembrance; howbeit these circumstances offer a conjecture, that it should betoken the royalties appertaining to the honour of Cornwall."

That Robert de Cardinham was lord of Lostwithiel temp. Richard I. will be seen, not only from the fact of his having paid ten marks to the king for the privilege of establishing a market in the town, but from his charter granted to it probably about the year 1196; of which the following is a translation : —

Know all ye as well present as to come to that I Robert de Cardinham have given and granted, and by this present charter have confirmed to all my burgesses and men of Lostwithiel, and to all those who hold burgage tenements or lands in the same, all honours, dignities, liberties, and quittances (as far as I can for myself and my heirs) which my ancestors gave them of old *on the day on which they founded the town*.

To wit, every burgess shall ho'd his burgage tenement or tenements hereditarily by rendering for each burgage vj pence annually; to wit, three pence at Easter, and the same number at the feast of St. Michael, in discharge of all service and demands. And at his death his testament shall be valid, but his heir shall for relief of twelve-pence hold his hereditaments freely and hereditarily, and possess them in peace.

Moreover the aforesaid burgesses and men of the aforesaid town and their heirs shall remain free and quit of all sullages and customs by land and sea. And if by chance any of them shall be impleaded he shall answer before me or my bailiffs in the said town of Lostwithiel, freely, without cause or motion, and not elsewhere. And if he shall incur a fine he shall be quit for sixpence. And if he shall be convicted of blood, or wounds, he shall give security for twenty pence, and pay them as shall be mercifully allowed by me or my bailiffs. And if I shall wish to make a provost, the aforesaid burgesses shall elect him from those persons who are resident in the often hereinbefore mentioned town.

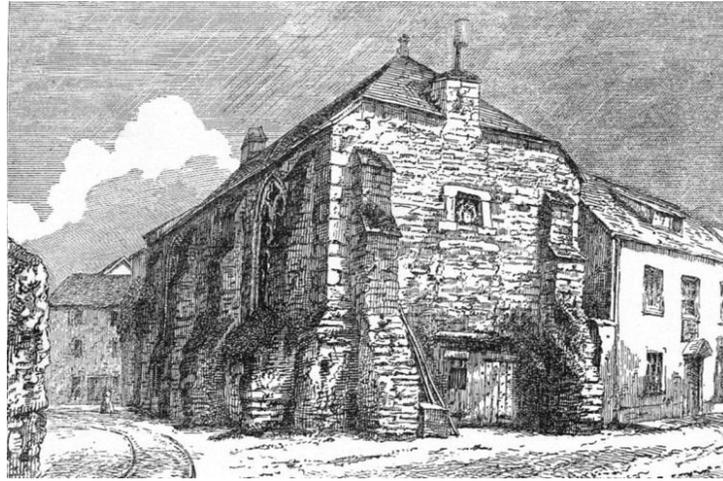
Moreover it is to be noted that the above-named burgesses may give their sons, daughters, and kinsfolk in marriage, without licence or suit, whensoever and to whomsoever they will. But no stranger shall keep shop out of a ship : that is to say in the town, except by the permission of the provost and of the whole townfolk.

And if any burgess should wish to sell his burgage tenement he may do it without suit, save my right, to wit, xij pence from the purchaser through my favour or that of my bailiffs.

Likewise if any of the oftentimes named burgesses shall have any tenant in the said town of Lostwithiel he may freely and fully hold a court for him.

That this may remain ratified and unshaken for the time to come I have strengthened it as well by testimony of this present writing as by affixing of my seal, these being my witnesses : John son of Robert, then steward; Richard, Stephen, and Roger, sons of Robert; Richard de Pencued; Odone de Penpel; Richard de Pridias; Richard russel; Hugh his heir; Thomas ballet; Walter de S Winnow; Algar Harloc; Roll de killin; Robert de radveston; Nicholas de henland; Robert de Carminou; Henry d'Abemare; Ralph Serviente; Roger Walter; Silvester de Pendennant; Thomas son of henry; and many others.

In the early part of the reign of Henry III., *circa* 1219, Andrew de Cardinan gave the borough to the Tywardreath Priory, subject to suit of court to him and his heirs; and the acknowledgement by prior Michael in 1250, for himself and his successors, of the obligation of performing suit, at stated periods, at the court of *domini Andre de Kardinan*, is still extant. The obit of *D'n's Andreas de Cardinan*, was entered on the calendar of the priory as on Sept. 19. It appears nevertheless that the borough was afterwards vested in the Earls of Cornwall, and to have been annexed to the Duchy by Edward III., with the manor of Penkneth, now Penknight. Temp. Richard II., it was granted for life to William Tamworth, one of the king's Esquires of the Body.



The Palace, Lostwithiel

Lake – Volume I, Part No. 12

Richard Earl of Cornwall, and King of the Romans, made Lostwithiel including Penkneth, a free borough; though his residence of Restormel Castle is very doubtful. His son, Edmund Earl of Cornwall, resided there for nearly thirty years, and during that period Lostwithiel was little other than the chief place of the county. Earl Edmund granted the town many privileges; he ordained that the coinage and sale of tin, a privilege it had hitherto shared with Liskeard, Truro, and Helston, should be at Lostwithiel *only*, and that the county meetings should be held there. He provided also, handsome and substantial buildings, considerable portions of which still remain, for his Exchequer, Shire-hall, and Stannary prison. Edmund Earl of Cornwall died in 1300; and in 1314, the burgesses of Lostwithiel complained to parliament that Bodmin, Truro, and Helston, had interfered with their privileges; and that the prior of Bodmin had then lately procured the county meetings to be held at Bodmin. They got redress; but their exclusive possession of these privileges was of short duration.

The county elections were held at Lostwithiel until the Reform Act of 1832; and the Epiphany and Midsummer sessions were not removed from thence to Bodmin until the early part of the present century. The Archdeacon's court, which had been held at S. Neot from 1600, and removed to Lostwithiel in 1753, was transferred from the latter town to Bodmin in 1773.

Lostwithiel was incorporated by James I. in 1623; and the charter was renewed by George II. in 1732. The corporation consisted of a mayor, chosen on the Tuesday after the 29th September, seven capital burgesses including the mayor, and seventeen assistants.

The borough sent members to parliament from 1304, 33 Edward I. to 1832. It has been said that it returned members so early as the 23 Edward I. 1294. Joseph Addison, the poet and essayist, represented it 3 Anne, 1704.

There was a grammar school here, established by the corporation *circa* 1770, to the master of which they paid £30 per annum; but this has ceased to exist. The corporation also allowed £10 per annum to the master of a writing school; and £5 per annum was received from the trustees of the Rev. St. John Eliot's charitable donation for the education of poor children.

The *Silver Oar* jurisdiction of the borough extends over the waters of the river Fowey, from Pontius Cross at the mouth of Fowey harbour, on the south to so far up the river northwards, as a pair of oxen yoked together, can be driven in its bed.

The following is a translation from a Latin work published in Amsterdam in 1661,—“On the north is Listthysel, the ancient town of *Uzella*, a little town, having mines of tin, and the privilege of coining it. *It is the chief of the province*, and the seat of the public convocation.” Lostwithiel, despite the opinions of Camden and Borlase, is considered not to be the *Uxela* of Ptolemy, which appears by Richard of Cirencester, to have been on the river Parret, in Somerset.

The town of Lostwithiel is situated in a pleasant hollow at the head of the estuary of the river Fowey, which is thus far tidal. It consists of three principal streets; two running east and west parallel to each other, and one north and south. In consequence of the queen passing through the last named street on her way to Restormel, in 1846, it has since borne the name of Queen-Street. In it is the market-house, over which is the commodious town school; the structure is of granite ashlar, and a tablet on the front is inscribed,—“This building was erected by George Visc'. Edgcumbe & Valletort in the year 1781.” Over the inscription are the arms of Edgcumbe bearing an escutcheon of pretence those of Emma, daughter and heir of Dr. John Gilbert, archbishop of York, his lady.

In the south street is the town hall, supported on arches, and strongly built of wrought granite. On the front is a tablet inscribed,—“Richard Edgcumbe, Esq'. erected this building anno 1740.” Over the inscription are the Edgcumbe arms. In the north street is an old building, on one of the coins of which is inscribed,—WALTER KENDALL OF LOSTWITHIEL WAS THE FUNDER OF THIS HOUSE, 1658; HATH A LEASE FOR THREE THOUSAND YEARS, WHICH HAD BEGINNING THE 29TH SEPTEMBER, 1652. At the bottom of this street is an ancient bridge of eight arches over the Fowey; and adjoining is the Lostwithiel station of the Cornwall railway, 277 miles from London, 30½ from Plymouth, and 23¼ from Truro. Near the station is a small stream of water which forms the eastern boundary of the borough; this is commonly called the *Coffer* or Copper lake, though in the town records it is called the *Cob* lake. Over this near the mill, was suspended in olden time, the instrument of punishment for the scold, called a *Ducking stool*.

Near the town quay stand the remains of the ancient Exchequer, Shire-hall, and Stannary prison, mis-called the *palace*. Considerable portions of the original buildings have disappeared, and a strong wall which enclosed the entrance court has been removed within memory, for the purpose of widening the roadway. The structure which is now occupied as merchants' stores, is strongly built and heavily buttressed; the gable displays the Cornish arms and the Prince's plume, and latterly two new granite windows have been inserted. The Stannary records, are said to have been removed from the turret of Luxulyan tower to this place, and to have been destroyed by the Parliamentarians in 1644.

Leland who wrote about three hundred years ago thus speaks of Lostwithiel, “From Bloughan (probably Milltown) to Lostwithiel scant a

mile on the principal streame of Fawey river. It hath ebbid and flowen above Lostwithiel; but now it flowith not ful to the town. In Lostwithiel is the shir haul of Cornewaul. Therby is also the coynage haul for tynne. The town is privilegid for a borow; and there is wekly a market on Thursday. *Richardus Rex Rom. Comes Cornubiæ* privilegid this town. The paroch church is of S. Barptolome. There comithe a broket from west throgh the side of Lostwithiel, and goith est into Fawey river, dividinge Penknek from Lostwithiel.

Carteis, a gentleman of almost an 100 mark land, dwellith betwyxt Bloughan and Penknek.”

The family of Curteys or Curtoys resided at Pill ; they are said to have married an heiress of Fitz-Walter, and a coheiress of Somester. Several members of this family represented Lostwithiel in parliament between the years 1304 and 1421.

Samuel Austen was born in this town in 1606; in 1630 he took the degree of M.A., having previously published in 1629, his *Urania, or the heavenly muse*, in octavo. Samuel his son, was born here in 1636; he published several works both in prose and verse; and died in 1665.

The family of Kendall have maintained great influence in the town and neighbourhood for several centuries, and represented the borough many times in parliament from 1364. “*M. Will. Kendall's* hospitality,” writes *Carew*, “while he liued and here kept house, deserueth a special remembrance, because for the store of resort and frankness of entertainment, it exceeded all others of this sort.”

The county weights and measures, first deposited under Act of Parliament, 11 Henry VII., 1495, were kept here to a comparatively modern date.

In the town are chapels for the Wesleyan Methodists, Independents, and the United Methodist Free Church. There are several near villa residences both in the town and its suburb, Tangier.

The mercantile traffic is chiefly confined to the importation of timber, coals, and limestone; near the centre of the town a tanyard.

Fairs are held on March 13, May 7, July 10, September 4, November 13; the market is on Friday.

Beside the corporation, the chief landowners are the Earl of Mount Edgumbe, T.J. Agar-Robartes, Esq. and the Messrs. Foster.

Although the river is silted up to the spring of the arches of the bridge, it is probably in much the same condition as in the days of *Leland*, as boats and barges still reach both the bridge and town quay, at full tides, without any difficulty.

The following charities exist in the town,—Lord Mohun's £1 5s., given away in money; Hext's £5 6s., derived from £176 13s. 4d. consols. in bread; Tonkin's £1 10s. 6d. interest on £50 in savings bank, in money; David Watts's charity, inscribed on a tablet in the chapel of the United Methodists,—£18, interest on £400, for general uses of the poor.

Geologically this parish is precisely the same as the eastern part of Lanlivery, which nearly surrounds it. (*Note: On page 32 of Volume 3, Part 31 of "A Complete Parochial History of the County of Cornwall", it is recorded that the eastern portion of Lanlivery rests on schistose rock, from which large quantities of iron have been raised.*)

Parochial Population of Lostwithiel - taken from the table on pages 159 to 162 of the Supplementary Papers in Volume IV, Part No. 55. of "A Complete Parochial History of the County of Cornwall"

1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	1871
743	825	933	1548	1186	1053	1017	922

NOTE: The meaning of the name "Lostwithiel" has been subject to much debate but it is now generally accepted that it means "Tail of the forest". Its modern spelling in the Cornish language is "Lostwydhyl".