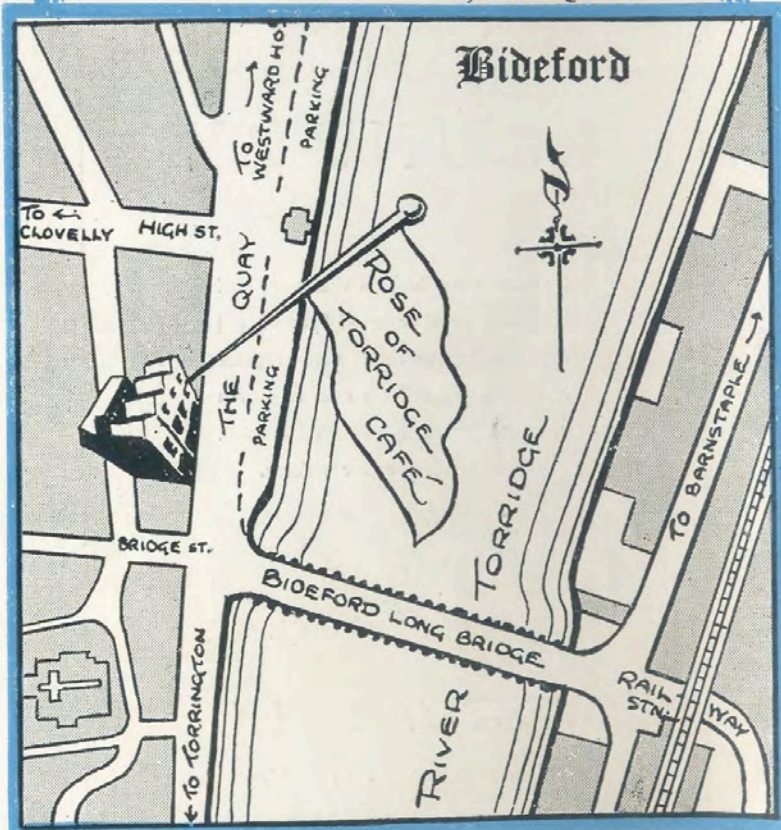


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Rose of Torridge Cafe

6, THE QUAY



OUTSTANDING for Morning Coffee, Hot & Cold
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IN GLORIOUS DEVON

The Old and Historic
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Telephone No. 83

Proprietors : Mr. T. and Mrs. H. Pennington

A.A. and R.A.C. APPOINTED



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Bideford-in-Devon

Centre for "Kingsley's Country"

Official Guide to

BIDEFORD AND DISTRICT

Written and
Edited for the
Bideford Joint
Advertising Committee
by Sheila Hutchinson

Publicity Officer : W. WESTACOTT, Town Hall, Bideford

IT IS A TRUST HOUSE

THE
ROYAL HOTEL
BIDEFORD

(Adjoining Station and close to River)

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26 Spacious Bedrooms
all with H. & C. and Electric Razor
Points. Pleasant Lounges. Hotel Bar
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(under New Management)

Bideford's most popular
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Open all year round.
Fully Licensed.

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Comfortable bedrooms,
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—all with h. and c.
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Ideal Touring Centre.

Easy reach of sea and
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Reasonable Terms
Noted for Cuisine and
SERVICE

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Occupies an unrivalled position overlooking the river

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Delightfully situated Country House Hotel standing in three acres of grounds overlooking the lovely Torridge Valley.

Charmingly furnished Lounges, separate tables in Dining Room. All Bedrooms have h. and c. water, comfortable interior sprung mattresses and enjoy exquisite views.

Private Family Suites. Central Heating throughout. Excellent Cuisine. Farm Produce. Utmost comfort.

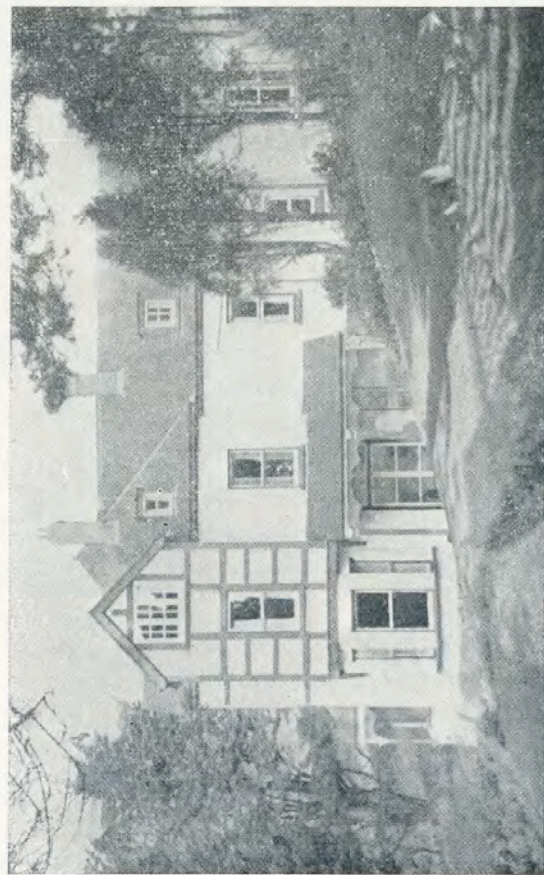
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Own Garage.

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A delightful and convenient centre for exploring the beauty spots of Devon and Cornwall

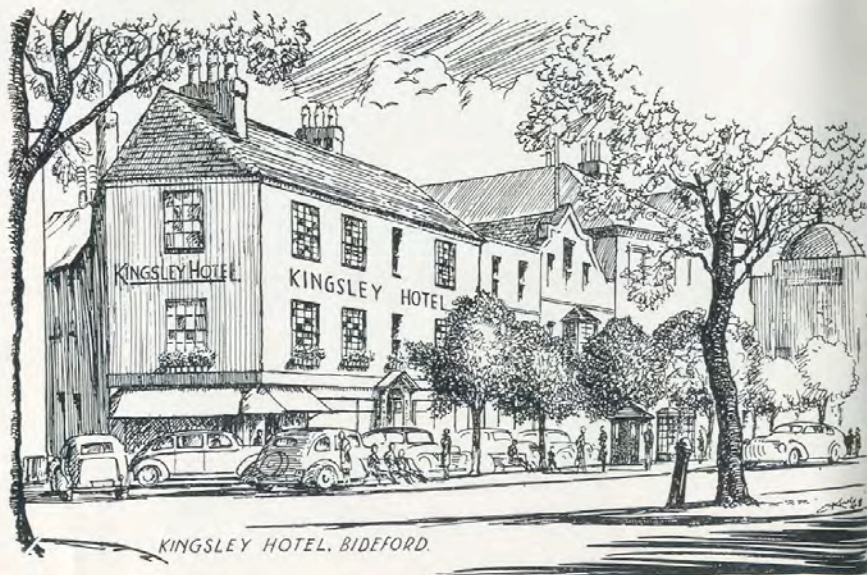
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The

Kingsley Hotel

THE QUAY, BIDEFORD



KINGSLEY HOTEL, BIDEFORD.

*Adjacent 'Bus terminus, main shops,
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*H & C all bedrooms; interior sprung mattresses
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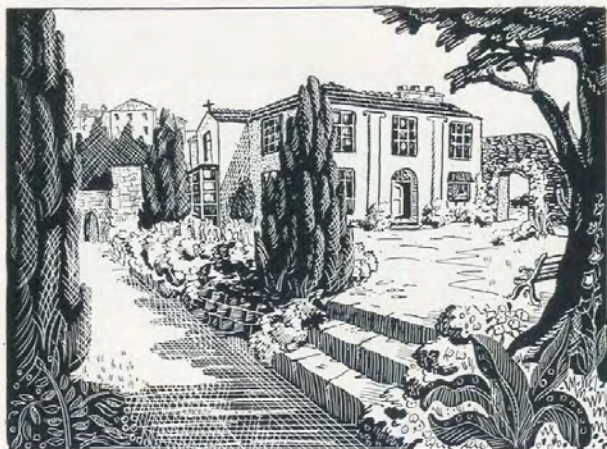
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The Mount



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We all do our best to see that visitors enjoy their stay in bright and comfortable rooms with good food attractively served.

All Bedrooms H. & C. and Interior Sprung Mattresses.

TARIFF 6 - 8½ guineas

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Brochure with pleasure

Mrs. E. COCKREN

THE ONE PLACE IN BIDEFORD
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The Place for your Newspapers, Periodicals,
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Private and Commercial Hotel
MILL STREET, BIDEFORD



Central position, near river and
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WELL-APPOINTED BEDROOMS
WITH H. & C. WATER

Terms: Full Board, 7gns.; Dinner, Bed & Breakfast, £6

Resident

Proprietors: Mr. and Mrs. R. Morgan (Tel. 179)



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For Self contained units,
situated on main
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Modern Facilities, H. & C.,
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Vacancies: March, April,
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SHOP, LICENSED BAR ON
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Children and Pets Welcome.

*Everything for your Comfort
and Enjoyment.*

For Your . . .

MORNING COFFEE ★ TEAS
LUNCHES ★ SNACKS

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NEW ROAD — ON THE RIVER FRONT

ALL GRILLS ANY TIME OF DAY TO 10 p.m.

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Free Parking (opposite)

Under entirely
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Proprietress:
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Yeoldon Hotel

NORTHAM



A beautifully appointed Country House standing in
8 acres of grounds overlooking Torridge Valley.

Ideal holiday centre within easy reach of the sea.
Swimming, Fishing, Sailing, Golf, Riding, etc.
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MODERATE TARIFF PERSONAL SUPERVISION
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Self-contained Holiday
Flatlets.

H. & C. Own meters

Free Parking.

5 minutes Sea and Shops.

Children welcomed.

Ideal position with
wonderful views
across the Bay.

Main water, electricity
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GARDEN. GARAGE. BEACH HUT.

Moderate Terms with a helpful service that will ensure a happy holiday.



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2, BUTTGARDEN STREET —————
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- ★ Ideal Touring Centre, Highly Recommended and noted for Comfort and Good Service.
- ★ Most Rooms have nice views of the River Torridge, and are fitted with H. & C. water, spring interiors, and bedside lamps.
- ★ Local Farm Produce.

Riding arranged at nearby stables.

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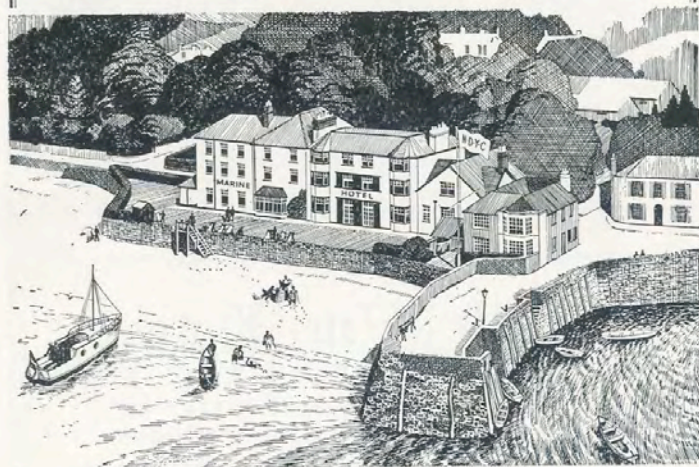
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FISHING : SAILING
FREQUENT FERRY TO APPLIEDORE

GOLF AT SAUNTON AND WESTWARD HO !

Agnella *Guest House* WESTWARD HO!

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FOR HAPPIER HOLIDAYS AT MOST
REASONABLE COST. CLOSE SEA AND
SANDS. LOVELY VIEW. H. & C. ALL
ROOMS. CHILDREN WELCOMED.

Write to us before deciding
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Telephone: Northam 468

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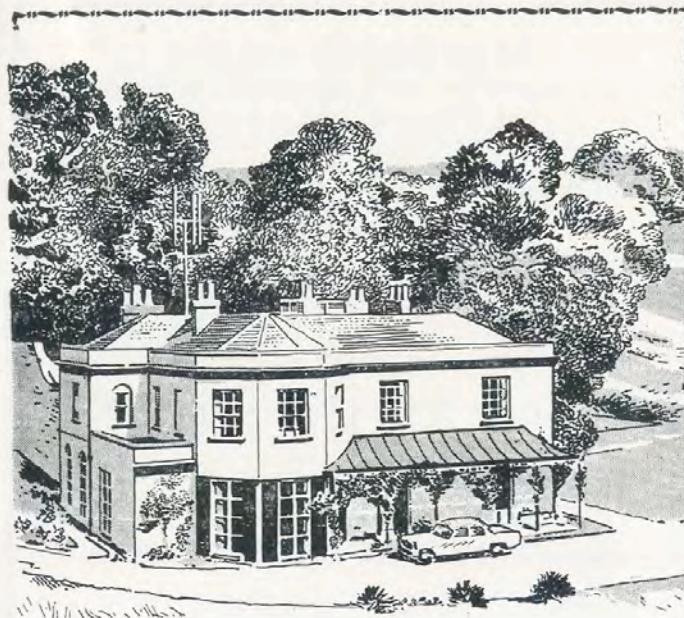
Lovely secluded
grounds with Tennis
Court. H. & C. and
Spring Interior Mat-
tresses in all Bed-
rooms. Garage.

Excellent Cuisine
with own Garden
Produce.

Under Personal
supervision of the
Proprietors.

Reasonable Terms.

*Brochure on
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Economical Family Holidays

Beautifully situated in the midst of seven acres
of private woodland and a mile from the sea,
modern furnished bungalows, each with its private
bath, hot and cold water, indoor sanitation.
Two, three and four-bedroom types as desired.

Fully licensed club house (*pictured above*),
games room, children's swimming pool.

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33, CLOVELLY, ROAD, BIDEFORD, N. DEVON

Proprietress : Mrs. J. R. Jones

BED & BREAKFAST EVENING MEAL

Reduced Terms for Children. Spring Interiors. T.V.

Garage booked 100 yards from house if required.

8 minutes walk to Bideford Quay and Shops

15 minutes to Railway Station

The

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on A39 Road to Cornwall

MORNING COFFEE : LUNCHES : TEAS
SUPPERS AND LATE DINNERS

HOME-MADE CAKES EXCELLENT COOKING
PARTIES CATERED FOR

★ *Also Bed and Breakfast with Slumberland Beds.
Hot & Cold water in some bedrooms.*

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50, CLOVELLY ROAD, BIDEFORD

BED & BREAKFAST EVENING MEAL

Terms Moderate — Children Welcome

Free Parking Space

Apply : Mrs. G. E. GLOVER

For the perfect holiday

SUNRAY CARAVAN GARDENS

“ ENNISFARNE,”

WESTWARD HO ! DEVON

A small, select garden site close to the sea.
Caravans are fully equipped and all have
electric light and most have running water.

Cleanliness Guaranteed

Brochure Free. 'Phone Northam 789. Shop adjoining

For a quiet, peaceful holiday without restrictions

SUNRAY HOUSE

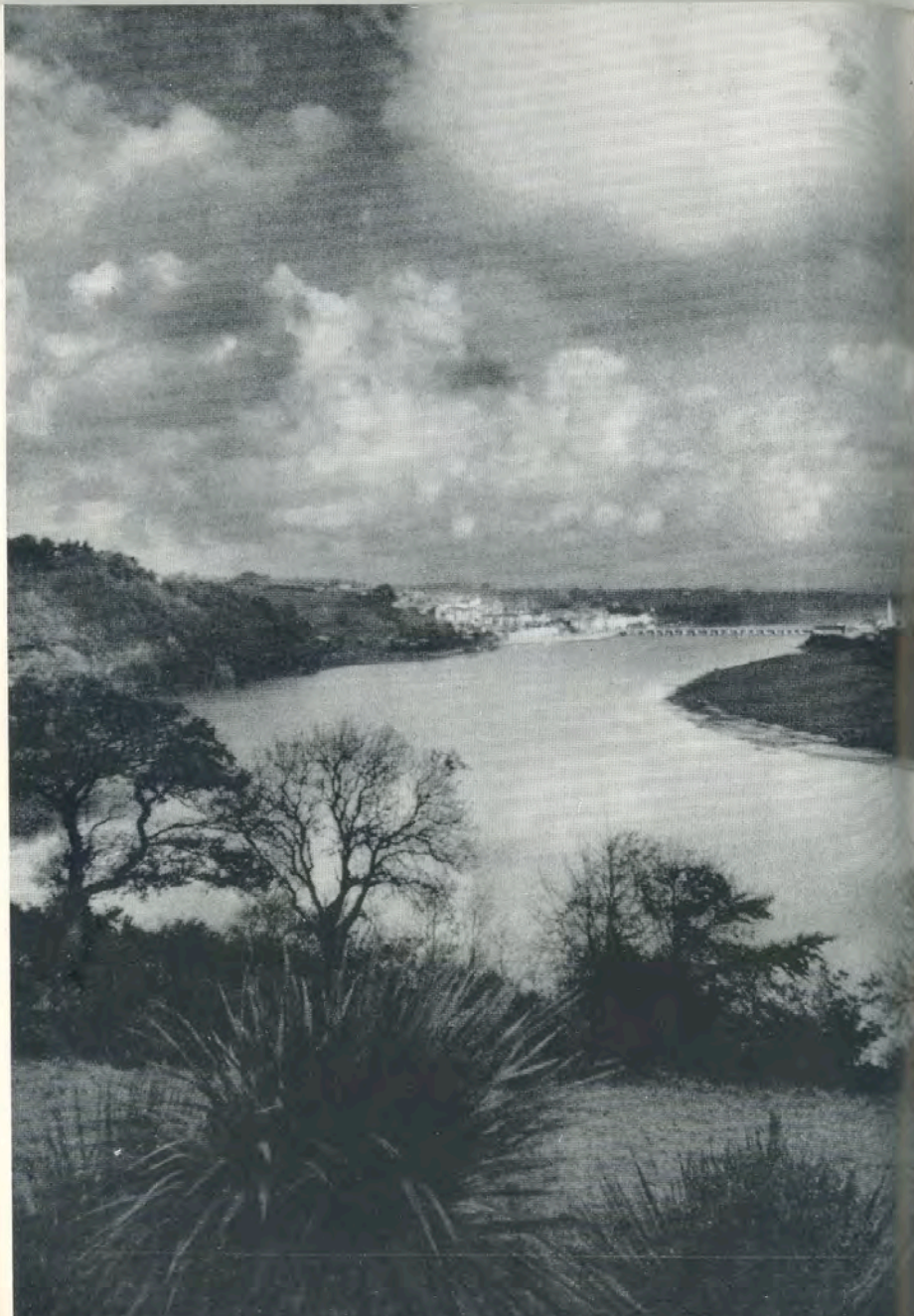
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Eastbourne Terrace, Westward Ho !

Enjoy a happy holiday in a clean, comfortable,
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close to the sea. Spring interior beds. H. & C.
running water.

Brochure Free

'Phone NORTHAM 789



THE LITTLE WHITE TOWN

Kingsley's Country

INTRODUCTION

BIDEFORD, and the surrounding district generally, owe much to those who have written their praises of this beautiful corner of the world ; to none perhaps are they more indebted than Charles Kingsley, whose adventurous historical romance *Westward Ho !* made North Devon famous for all time.

This Guide is compiled with the main idea of bringing an attractive district briefly before the eyes of those settling two important questions : " Where shall we spend our holidays ? " or, " Where can we find a really pleasant residential neighbourhood ? " Essential information, history and description, are all incorporated : and the illustrations have been chosen to depict not only the local atmosphere but also the individuality of a town and district so far famed.



BIDEFORD PROMENADE
STATUE

KINGSLEY'S COUNTRY

Kingsley's Country has been described as roughly the tract lying West and South-West of Bideford in North Devon. The winding Torridge with its wide estuary ; the beautiful combes of Bideford Bay, circling round by Portledge and Bucks Mills to old-world Clovelly ; the rugged heights of Hartland Point and the wild West Country on the Cornish border—these form the boundaries of an area over which Kingsley cast the spell of his unrivalled creative literary powers. Even had not the district already its full share of intrinsic beauty, the weaving of that unsurpassed romance, *Westward Ho!* its threads leading from Bideford to the Spanish Main, from the Irish wars to the conquest of the Armada, upon the rich weft of Elizabethan England and the intermingling of fictional characters with real personages—of Rose Salterne and her gallant following ; and the Grenvilles and other local families of the day, who actually trod our coast and our streets—could not fail to stir the hearts and capture the imagination of all who come to muse upon the great men who in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries set forth down the Estuary and over the Bar to seek wealth in the Americas or to dismay the ships of Spain.

To-day we have proud memories of more recent war-like preparations for the greatest invasion in History: that which mercifully left these shores instead of threatening us from without ; and if some Charles Kingsley of the future in writing of the assault craft circling in Bideford Bay and the strange amphibious monsters manoeuvring on the estuary sand, should remark that the Invasion of Europe in 1944 was won from the North Devon beaches, there is no contemporary historian who dare to say him nay.





Photo: Castle Studio, Torrington

BIDEFORD'S ESPLANADE AND BRIDGE

JOURNEY TO BIDEFORD

From the South

Both of the main approaches to Bideford are beautiful; together, they epitomise the extraordinary richness and variety of the Devon landscape, for which Bideford makes so superlative a holiday centre. (See map, page 55). The traveller by road from South Devon, coming by either the Winkleigh or Hatherleigh route—the two converge at Torrington—cannot fail to be struck by the massive rugged rhythm of Dartmoor, as he leaves it behind him, seeming to dominate the whole landscape of rolling, interlocking hills and the deep winding valleys of the Taw and Torridge, into which the Okement flows near Hatherleigh.

At Torrington, the road comes right down into the Torridge valley; and at any time of the year the unhurried traveller well may linger here on his journey to Bideford, for he will be rewarded by scenery of extreme beauty. On the outskirts of Bideford—the road again at river-level and giving him a full-length view of the famous twenty-four arched bridge, stretching with sturdy grace the full 667 feet span of the now tidal Torridge—he should feel that whether as visitor or intending resident, he has chosen well.

From the North

Either by road or rail, the approach from the Barnstaple side is a complete scenic contrast. Here, Exmoor's blue hills lie at one's back; but they merge gradually into the nearer landscape and lack the dramatically abrupt skyline of granite-hearted Dartmoor. On the right is the Taw estuary, with its wide marshes and mudbanks, and in the middle distance Braunton Burrows' huge sand-dune ranges—the country, this, of Henry Williamson's "Tarka the Otter" and "The Pathway," and having a personality of its own in every way as distinctive as that of the two great Devon moors.

At Instow, where the two rivers Taw and Torridge join, the breath-taking view of the whole estuary lies before one, leading out past Braunton Light and Appledore Pool and the white-capped, long-dreaded Bar; behind which Lundy, the "Puffins'" (and at one time, the pirates') Isle lies seemingly suspended on a summer day, in a blue mist that is neither sea nor sky. The fishing, ship-building and generally seafaring village of Appledore runs in a low horseshoe of grey houses encircling the green, rounded mass of Western Hill; while beyond the sandhill-flanked expanse of Northam Burrows with their famous Golf-course, Westward Ho! can be seen with a bluff headland as background; and behind that again, the long, grey, steep-sided finger of Hartland Point reaches out into the sea as if to join with Baggy Point, north of the Bay, to seize Lundy in a pincer grip.

Passing through Instow—for preference along the Front—the Torridge is now directly alongside. Across the river, green fields cap gaunt shale cliffs fringed with woodland; there, so Kingsley claims, Amyas Leigh walked home from Bideford to Burrough—and there, too, one may walk to-day, if a little mud and some rough going be not taken amiss.

Again a bend in the road brings a sudden view of Bideford and its notable bridge, and the wooded hills lying beyond and around it—the whole possibly a little grey, ethereal and mysterious with the sun behind it, or—with the westerling sun of a summer evening and the glory of a full tide—the river lies in a great spreading sheen of silver and grey, scarlet and gold, cut by the solid and shadowed stonework of the bridge and patterned by the crinkling reflections of ships, houses, wharves, and the trees on the river bank. Should our traveller from the North meet here with his fellow from the South, only that same unmistakable shape and structure of the Bridge might tell them that both had reached the same town; but both would agree that the journey surely was worth while.

BIDEFORD

"... *Bediford pretty famous for resort of people, and an arch'd stone bridge.*"—William Camden, "*Britannia*," 1567

"All who have travelled through the delicious scenery of North Devon," writes Kingsley, "must needs know the little white town of Bideford, which slopes upwards from its broad tide-river, paved with yellow sands and many arched old bridge, where salmon wait for autumn floods, towards the pleasant upland on the west. Above the town the hills close in, cushioned with deep oak woods, through which juts here and there a crag of fern-fringed slate; below they lower and open more and more in softly-rounded knolls and fertile expanses of hazy flats, rich salt marshes, and rolling sandhills, where Torridge joins her sister Taw, and both together flow quietly toward the broad surges of the Bar and the everlasting thunder of the long Atlantic swell. Pleasantly the old town stands there, beneath its soft Italian sky, fanned day and night by the fresh ocean breeze, which forbids alike the keen winter frosts and the fierce thunder heats of the Midlands . . ."

Easy Access

Bideford's character has changed very little while keeping pace with the times. The same charm that captivated Kingsley still remains, though improvements and additions are continually being made to the town's amenities. It is easy of access from all parts of the country; the journey from Waterloo on the Southern Railway is made in little over five hours with no change of train; while connection with the Great Western line may be made either at Barnstaple Junction or at Exeter (St. David's). There are good 'bus services daily from Bideford to Plymouth, Launceston, Bude, Ilfracombe, Clovelly, Barnstaple and elsewhere; Barnstaple and Ilfracombe are also on the railway; while by changing at Torrington to the branch line to Halwill Junction, Bude, Okehampton, Padstow, Wadebridge and Bodmin may also be reached by train. 'Buses for Westward Ho! and Appledore run a quarter-hourly service in the summer.

Hotels and Shopping

In Bideford can be found excellent and reasonably priced hotel and boarding house accommodation, of which lists will be found on page 74. The shopping facilities are centrally placed and, as we are often told by our visitors, of high quality; as indeed befits the main market town serving not only a large agricultural and rural area, stretching to the borders of Cornwall, but also the residential districts of Northam and Westward Ho!

Amenities

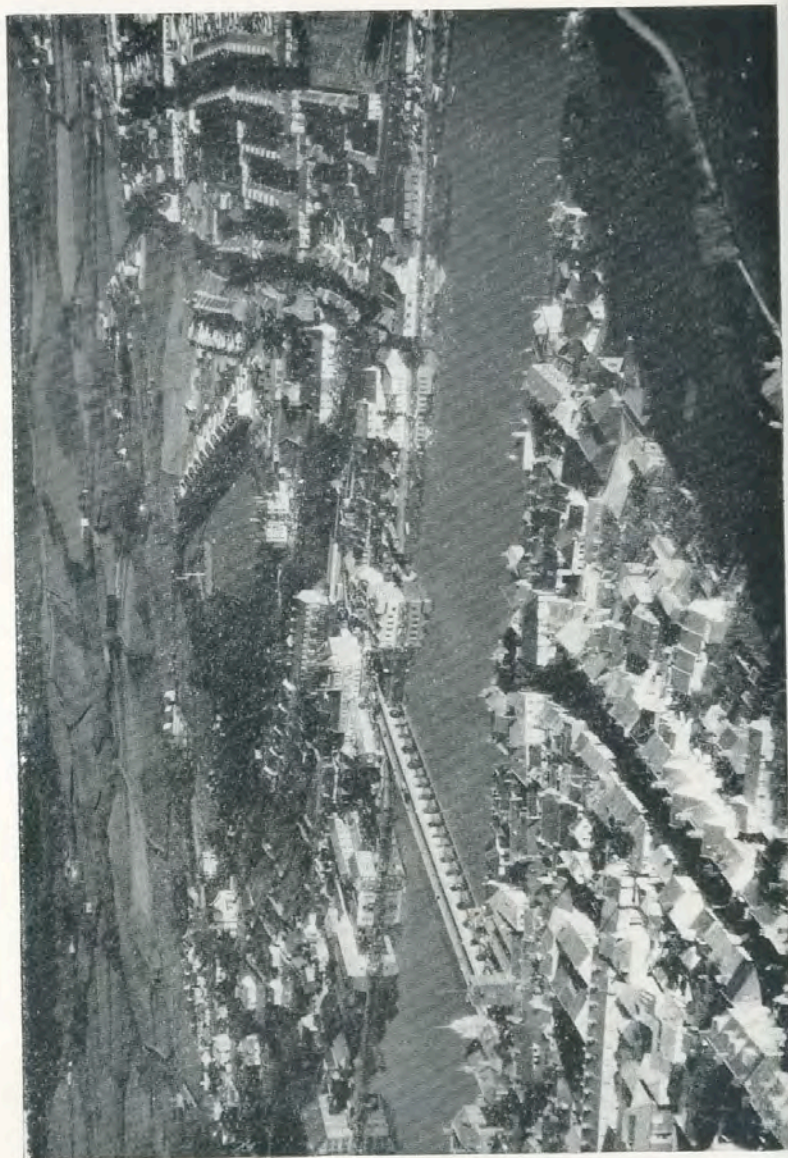
Bideford has a population of some 10,000, the majority of whom enjoy very good health, if the extremely low death rate is any gauge. The town rises sharply from both sides of the Torridge on which it stands; the soil is rich, overlying a subsoil of shale; and the climate is mild and more bracing than that in the South. There is an excellent water supply drawn from the three reservoirs owned by the Municipality, with powers of reinforcement from a fourth; the district is well served by Gas and Electricity Companies; and extremely good educational advantages are enjoyed by the town. The Free Library and Museum, administered by an active sub-committee of the Borough Council, provide additional free facilities for study; while the Art and Technical School offers a high standard of vocational training. There are flourishing Art, Choral, Dramatic and Music Societies in the town; and seasonal courses of Lectures are held. In fact, anyone with a lively mind will soon find he need have no fears about how to keep it occupied—as many of our late evacuees have testified.

Recreation

Recreation is well cared for. There are Tennis, Cricket, Bowling and both Rugby and Association Football Clubs in the town; and the large playing field and putting-green in the Victoria Park, together with the recent purchase of the well-laid-out Sports Ground, gives the Borough Council the administration of a considerable acreage of ground for games of all kinds. Bideford Bowling Club's annual tournament in August attracts a large entry and many enthusiastic spectators each year. The Torridge Vale Tennis Courts, owned by the Stella Maris Convent, and the hard courts there, are open to the public during week-day afternoons from the end of July to September. Bideford's great sport, however, is rowing. There are two long-established amateur clubs, one of which also caters for general athletics; both have a fine record of West of England Championships; and Bideford Regatta, held as a rule in the first week in September is, with its accompanying Fair, fete day for the whole district for miles around, and the river comes proudly into its own.

Going a little further afield, the Royal North Devon Golf Club at Westward Ho! is world-famous (see pages 72-73). Fox-hunting may be had with the Stevenstone, or the Torrington Farmers' Hunts and Otter hunting with the Cheriton. There are many opportunities for rough shooting; for trout fishing in the reservoirs and also up the river; and the Torridge is famous for its salmon. The river and estuary provide unique scope for sailing, the class of boat particularly catered for being the 12-16ft. dinghy, based at either Instow or Appledore. (See page 65 for full particulars of Sports, etc.).

There are two large cinemas, both newly built and equipped with large screens and first-class projection and sound apparatus: the "Strand" on the Kingsley Road, and the "Palace" in Bridgeland Street.



THE PORT OF BIDEFORD

A Walk Round Bideford

(See Street Plan, Centre Inset)

Municipal Buildings, Free Library and Museum

At the west end of the Bridge, the Municipal Buildings and the Bridge Hall face each other across the narrow foot of Bridge Street, a steep ascent that used to be the old coach route. The Bridge Hall, which is the headquarters of the Trust, was built in 1882 in place of an older structure which also housed the Grammar School. On the outside of the building is an ancient sun-dial with the legend "*Sol Tibi Signa Dabit*," which came from the earlier building. The present Free Library and Municipal Buildings were erected in 1906. Bideford adopted the Public Libraries Act of 1872, being one of the first towns in the west to rate itself for this extra-educational purpose. The Library is under the Carnegie Trust, and besides the Newspaper Reading Room, it has a very fine selection of books of fiction and reference, with a large section devoted to the West Country. In the Court Room of the Town Hall may be seen the Elizabeth and James I Charters and some interesting portraits and parchments.

It is the policy of the Library Committee to give the Museum as local a character as possible; in it there are, among other things, a collection of shipwright's tools: some fine Bideford pottery, and many pictures and models of locally built vessels; also fossils and flint instruments found in the district. Of recent years Bideford has acquired by gift two magnificent examples of craftsmanship: one, a large and most exquisite silver model of an Armada-type galleon, presented by the late Sir Basil Peto, Bt., M.P., to commemorate the restoration of the title of Port in 1928; the other, a scale model of Bideford Bridge, designed to show its appearance during the different periods of its long life. This model, unique in conception and superbly made by Alderman F. E. Whiting, F.R.I.B.A., Bridge Warden, was presented by him to the Bridge Trust in 1945, and is now on view to the Public at the Free Library.

The Burton Art Gallery

This splendid little gallery was opened in October, 1951. It is the gift of Mr. and Mrs. T. Burton in memory of their daughter. Mr. Burton is a Freeman of the Borough, and it had long been his wish that the town should be able to take up the offer by Mr. H. Coop of a magnificent collection of paintings. This desirable object having been attained, Bideford is now the proud possessor of a gracious building containing a most satisfying display of beautiful pictures which will delight visitors and residents. The gallery will be found on the fringe of Victoria Park and amply merits more than a single visit.



The Quay

Many people are enchanted by their first impression of Bideford Quay and Promenade, a wide and imposing thoroughfare which, with its tree-shaded walks, extends for a considerable distance till it becomes the River Bank walk. Many of the present Quay-side buildings are on the sites of old inns, most of which have disappeared into the mists of "redundancy" and the past. One of the last to go was the "Ship," claimed by lovers of *Westward Ho!* to be the scene of the forming of the Brotherhood of the Rose. It once had a gabled roof; and was at one time known as the "Newfoundland Inn"—plainly a tribute to the flourishing Newfoundland Trade of the 17th century. The present Church Lads' Brigade Hall in Allhalland Street is said to be on the site of the old "Castle Inn," which in turn was held to have started life as the Manor House of the early Grenvilles.

On the Quay—which incidentally is owned by the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of Bideford, who, as Lords of the Manor, receive the wharfage dues thereof—there is always something to watch: the unloading of coal from coasting vessels, or fresh fish from the Bay; or, in due season, and just above the Bridge, salmon netting at low water. A summer evening's high tide brings out the Rowing Clubs, whose comings and goings from the boatsteps near the Kingsley Statue lend colour and activity to the river scene, while white sails amply demonstrate that the art of sailing on these somewhat tricky waters has been by no means lost with the coming of the age of steel, steam, and the internal combustion engine.

Central Bideford

The old residential part of the town was High Street and Mill Street. Here lived the merchant adventurers of the great days of wool, tobacco and expeditions to the Spanish Main (for mixed purposes: merchant vessels went armed in those days, and fought or traded as circumstances and human acquisitiveness chose to dictate). The steep High Street, the "Magnus Vicus" of the 13th century, leading westwards from the Quay, is still the principal street of the town and centre of the shopping area. From it, Grenville Street leads to the Market, built in 1883 on a site used since 1675—before that, the market was in High Street—and whose laden counters, formed of large wicker hampers locally known as "Mawns," have gladdened many a visiting townsman's eye.

The second main turning from the Quay, Bridgeland Street, is a broad thoroughfare most excellently conceived by its designer, one Nathaniel Gascoyne, acting for the Bridge Feoffees in 1690, and standing as a mark of the town's prosperity at that time. Even to-day, after various intrusions into what must have been a remarkable example of architectural harmony, it still shows some very beautiful frontages with unspoiled contemporary detail. The Masonic Hall in this street is said to stand on the site of the house of Thomas Stucley, mathematician and philosopher, interested in theories as to the quadrature of the circle and perpetual



Photo : Castle Studio, Torrington

ENTRANCE—VICTORIA PARK

motion. Next above it is the Congregational Church replacing the "Great Meeting House" of the early Nonconformists; to-day its twin spires form an impressive landmark.

The Park

On the landward side of the picturesque River Bank Walk is Victoria Park, constructed in 1912 on land which before the building of the Embankment in 1826 was a long creek up which the tide flowed as far as Kenwith. The Park includes a large recreation ground and popular Putting Green; plans are in hand for a considerable development of the extension northwards. Here may be found such a combination of sheltered, sun-trapping or shaded seats, rich colour from the beautifully laid-out flower-beds (it is claimed that flowers bloom here every day in the year); flat grass, swings and sand-pit for young children, and the putting-green for all ages, that plenty of rest and recreation can be had without going further afield. In the Park, surrounding the Bandstand, are the old Armada guns, about which there has been much controversy. It is now generally agreed that these guns, which for many years served as mooring posts on the Quay, are eight of the finest specimens of the type of gun used by the Spaniards during their projected invasion of Great Britain; and these, together with the Treasure Chest in the Museum, are similar to those at Inverawe Castle, the residence of the Duke of Argyll, which were dredged up at Tobermory.

Old Bideford

Some mention may be made of other Bideford streets and buildings of interest. The old road to Northam, long known as the Causeway, was constructed in 1439 at the instance of the Bishop of Exeter on funds raised by the sale of Indulgences. Within fairly recent memory, it was impassable at high tide: this now seems difficult to believe! Leading to it from Bridgeland Street is North Road—once, being the hub of the Pottery industry, known as Potter's Lane. In it there are still some very old houses with massive and picturesque brick chimneys. Mill Street, joining it at the top of Bridgeland Street, retains its original and now rather uncomfortable lack of width; once it led to a mill somewhere in the Kingsley Road area; though since Westcombe in the middle ages was inhabited by cloth-makers, it may equally well refer to a fulling or tucking-mill on the (now enclosed) stream there, for shrinking the newly woven cloth.

The Rope Walk, leading from the Quay to the Strand, is a relic of the shipyard that once stood on the Pill creek; here ropes were made, being laid-up by hand, the worker walking backwards as the completed length increased from the post to which the strands were fastened. Most shipyards had "rope walks" in the days of sail; they do not often survive as streets.

Coldharbour, leading off North Road, may or may not be indicative of Roman occupation as this name is often taken to imply; seams of soft coal have been worked under Bideford for many centuries, and it may here have that as origin, especially as there are instances elsewhere of "Cold" harbours being spelt earlier as "Cole." "Harbour" is also a term in the ancient sport of Venerie, as any Exmoor Staghunter knows. Whatever its derivation, it is undoubtedly a very ancient street. There is more certainty about Gunstone Street: here in the days of stone cannon balls, were such "Gun Stones" made. New Street, leading from Gunstone to High Street, may have been "New" in Elizabeth's day; it had in it till about 1929 an old public house, "The King of Prussia," with an inscription on its front in Tudor lettering: "IB/ABO," which defies all translation.

Allhalland Street was so named from the tiny thirteenth century chapel of All Saints or Allhallows which stood at the west end of the bridge, and whose existence has been traced from the old seal of the Bridge Trust and from documentary evidence. There was a similar chapel, but of St. Anne, at the east end.

Buttgarden Street was built by the Bridge Feoffees in 1670, either on the site of or near the old Archery Butts. Honestone Street provides a puzzle—it is generally supposed to have been near the old town boundary (Hore or Hoare) Stone, the name having become corrupted to its present form. In any case, it has nothing to do with Honesty—with no reflection on the morals of its dwellers! In Old Town stood the cottages of the three old "Bideford Witches" (see page 42). They were burnt down many years ago. Meddon Street was spelt Maydenestrete on documents as early as Edward I, and Mayden St. in 1673. It is still often so pronounced.

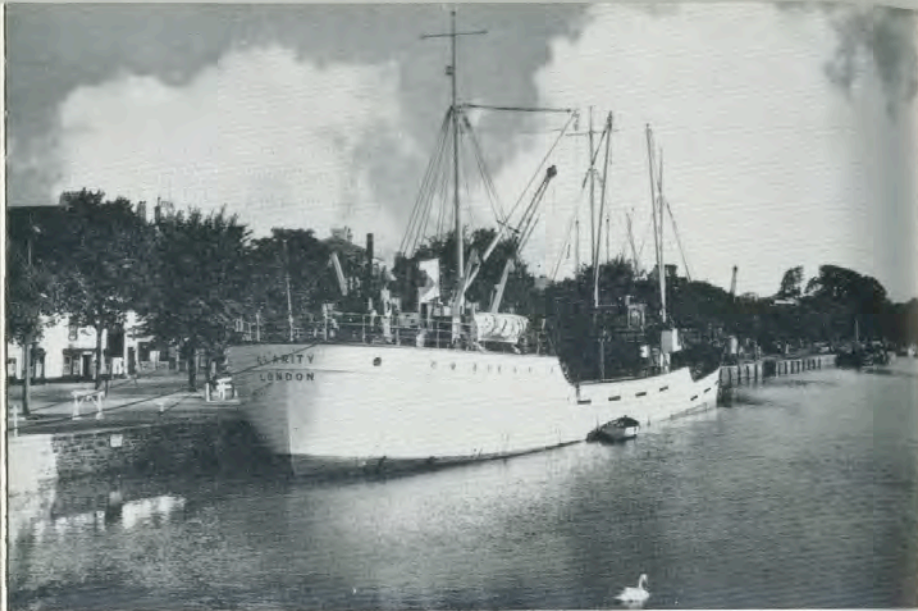


Photo : Castle Studio, Torrington

BIDEFORD QUAY

East-the-Water

East-the-Water seems to have held varying forms of this title for centuries. At one time its river front was a hive of shipbuilding activity. The Royal Hotel came into being in 1688 as the "Colonial Buildings"—a significant comment on the trade of the time. Somewhat later it included in its structure one of Bideford's three jails. It is better known as the scene of the composition of some of the immortal *Westward Ho!* The Kingsley Room, approached by a beautiful oak staircase, is of noble dimensions, panelled in yellow pine, and with interesting old prints and pictures of Bideford hanging on walls that must have echoed to the cheers of many a launching from the big shipyard across the way—now the Brunswick Wharf. More recent history yet was made within the hotel, where distinguished officers of H.M. Forces planned exercises and manoeuvres that led to the assault on the Normandy Beaches in 1944.

Chudleigh Fort

High above the hotel and railway station, Chudleigh Fort and Memorial Park command a view of the river and town well worth the steep climb up there. Further up again, two new housing estates at Sentry Corner—one a post-1918 development, the other now under construction—mark Bideford's steady growth. "Sentry" is probably a corruption of "Chantry"; that particular field was once Church property which paid tithe, so it is reasonable to suppose, for the upkeep of a Chantry Chapel in St. Mary's.

History of Bideford

Name of Town

Originally accepted as meaning "By-the-ford," recent research suggests that the derivation of Bideford's name is not so simple. In the Domesday Book, it was spelt "Bediforda," in other early documents it varies from this to "Bideverde" and "Bydeford." It may be either "Byda's ford," or "Bydenford"—"ford-in-the-hollow." S. E. Winbolt suggests that "ford" may be a corruption of Scandinavian "Fiord," from the great area of water covered by the tide until about 100 years ago when creeks etc. on both sides of the town were embanked and drained.

The Danes

Bideford's traditional entry into history is through a tale of bloodshed, a record for the year 878 A.D. in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle describing the landing of Hubba the Dane "in Wessex, in Defenascire" (Devonshire) with 23 ships, and the slaying of himself, 800 men "and 40 of his army" having long been held to relate to this district. Tradition names his conqueror as Odun, Earl of Devon, said to live at Cynuit, Henny, or Kenwith Castle (as now it is called), 2 miles west of Bideford; and the place of battle as Bloody Corner on the Northam-Appledore road, where last century an inscribed stone was set up to mark the site.

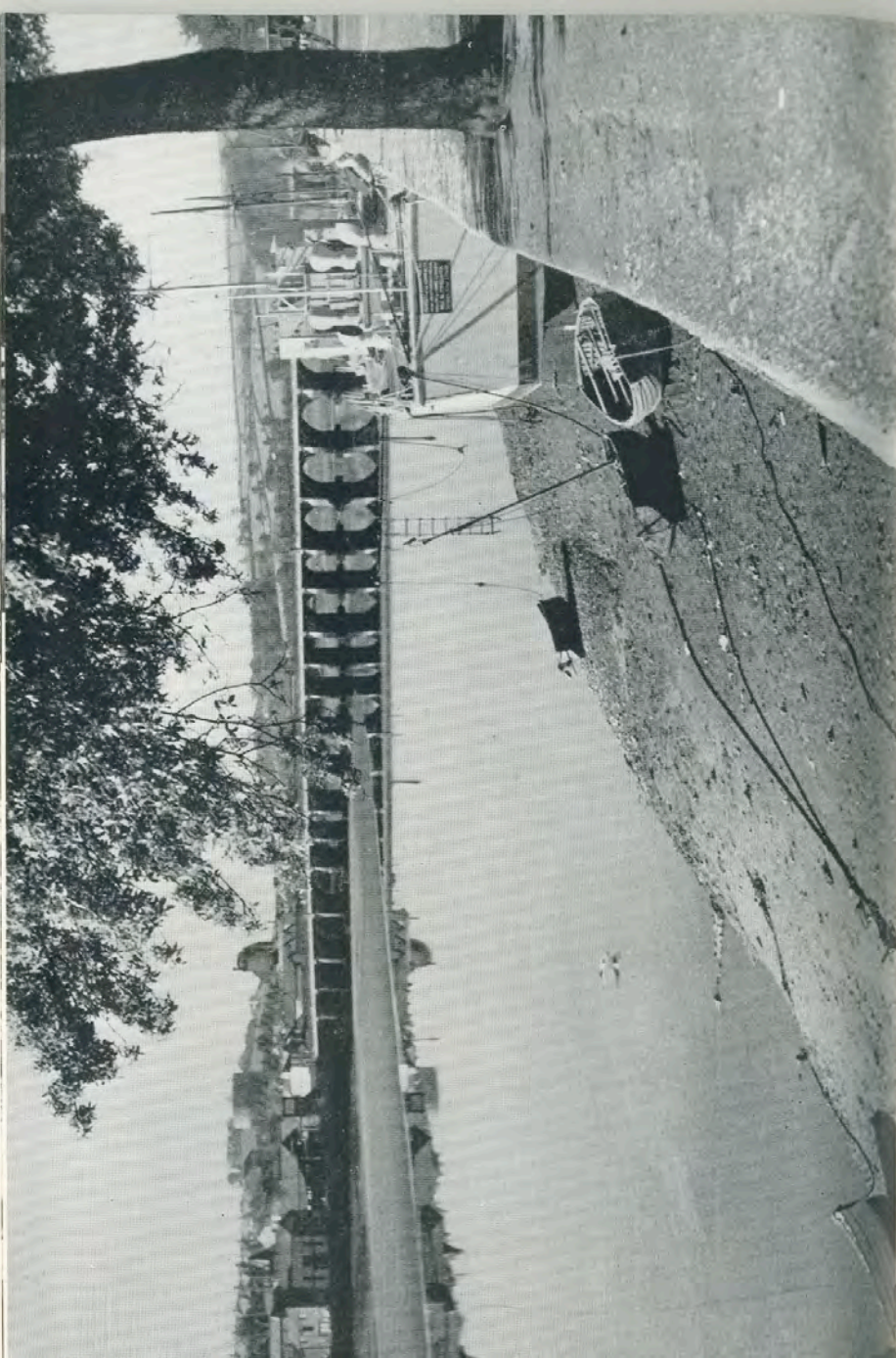
Domesday Book

Whether Hubba's disaster be fact or fiction, there is no doubting the sober chronicle of the Domesday Book (1086). This states that Bediforda, which Brictric held, paid geld for 3 hides of land (about 360 acres) which 26 ploughs could till. The population was about 50 persons, 18 beasts and 300 sheep; and the land consisted of 150 acres of woodland, 10 acres of meadow and 20 of pasture, with a "certain fishery"—most likely a "kiddle" of stakes and wattle to hold fish at the ebb tide. Brictric, who held the manor from Gytha, mother of King Harold and the widow of the Earl of Devon and Kent, also held at least 15 other Devonshire manors; it is not clear on which of them he lived.

The Grenvilles

William Rufus bestowed the Manor on Sir Richard de Granville or Grandeville, conqueror of Glamorgan and descendant of Hrolf the Ganger, and who was to found a noble line to hold the Manor of Bideford till 1707, when it passed by purchase first to the Cleveland family and later to the Borough Council, who are the Lords of the Manor to-day, holding the Manor Court with all the traditional ceremonial on the first Saturday after Easter each year.

A succeeding Grenville granted the town its first charter in the reign of John; another improved on this in the time of Edward



I, giving the right to hold a market and fair, and to elect a town provost. At much the same time, both the Parish Church and the Bridge were built. (See pages 44-45).

The Wool Trade

Bideford's history is largely the story of her trade. In the Middle Ages, the North Devon towns were mainly devoted to the manufacture of woollen cloth. Fine Spanish wool was imported and mixed with the coarser Devon fleece, and the resulting weave exported from the district. Bideford serges were famous. This double trade meant a busy port, whose activity was further increased by the means of transport—the ships—being built on the spot from local oak; and Bideford ships were as famous as her cloth. Leland, "The King's Antiquary," touring England between 1534 and 1543, remarks of Bideford that "It has a pretty quick" (lively) "street of smiths and other occupiers of ship craft." He might have said the same in any century but the present one.

Armada

The discovery of America opened up fresh commercial possibilities for the Elizabethan ports; indeed, it is said that the five ships *Dudley*, *God Save Her*, *Tyger*, *St. Leger* and the *Golden Hind*, sent from this estuary to join the fleet against the Armada in 1588, had been equipped by Sir Richard Grenville for an expedition to the Americas, and were actually lying in Appledore Pool awaiting good sailing conditions when they were diverted from their mercantile (though not necessarily peaceful) intentions for somewhat more pressing business nearer home.

The Grenville family throughout its connection with North Devon was notable for the distinguished careers and tradition of public service of its members. The most famous of



BIDEFORD'S ARMADA CHEST (A.D. 1588)



these is undoubtedly the Elizabethan Sir Richard, the circumstances of whose death at the age of 50 in the expedition against the Azores in 1591 constitutes perhaps one of the most heroic, most impudent and most typically British of naval engagements in this country's history. With his small vessel *Revenge*, manned by 180 men (but "Men of Bideford in Devon," as Tennyson justly records) he took on 15 ships of the main Spanish Fleet, fought them for 15 hours till, having done immense damage to the enemy, he surrendered, himself mortally wounded. True to her name, *Revenge* later sank with 200 Spaniards on board.

Commercial Expansion

Bideford's increasing importance led to the grant of a fresh charter by Queen Elizabeth which empowered the election of a Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses and among other things made Tuesday the Market-day, as it has been ever since, though the fair-days referred to in these early charters are now things of the past. James I granted another charter (1610), further extending the civic rights.

A tragic sidelight is thrown on the new American trade by two entries in the Parish registers. One, in 1588, records the Baptism of "Rawly, a Winganditoian." Almost exactly a year later is the entry of his burial. One need perhaps look no further than an unfamiliar English winter as the cause of the poor Indian's brief sojourn here, though loneliness and homesickness no doubt played their part.

Civil War

During the Civil War, North Devon was of strong Parliamentary sympathies. Bideford and Barnstaple men joined in the force which defeated Hopton and raised the siege of Plymouth. However, Col. Digby of the Royalist army retaliated: and after an action at Torrington in 1643, laid siege in August to Bideford's fort, garrisoned by Maj. Gen. Chudleigh, who surrendered on September 3rd, despite a levy of £200 raised by Barnstaple to supply the defenders with corn, money and gunpowder.

The Plague

In June, 1646, Bideford's commerce brought her calamity. A bale of imported wool (so it was thought) carried the plague. On the outbreak of the disease, the principal officials, including the Mayor, fled; his place was most nobly filled by John Strange, himself a merchant and previous Mayor of the town. He made himself responsible for organising the measures then considered necessary to combat the pestilence and to prevent its spreading outside the town; and he tended the sick and cheered the bereaved till in August he too caught the infection and died. His memorial is in the Parish Church. Out of a population of about 1,950, 210 persons died from the plague in its six months' visitation. "In a few weeks," says Watkins, writing 140 years later, "the houses were filled with horror and the streets were covered with grass."

The Reformation

Bideford seems to have remained relatively undisturbed by the general religious unease of the Reformation. However, in the later split from the then newly established Church of England, William Bartlett, late curate of St. Mary's, became a pioneer of local Non-conformity. After a long and courageous career (he worked with Strange during the plague, while he was acting as Rector during the dispossession of the incumbent, Rev. Arthur Giffard) he was himself ejected upon the restoration of Mr. Giffard at the end of the Commonwealth, and later founded the Congregational Church in Bideford.

Witches

The then popular dread of witches was about at its height when in 1682 three Bideford women, probably harmless old souls enough, were tried at Exeter on an information laid by sundry citizens, and executed. They were Mary Trembles, Temperance Lloyd, and Susannah Edwards; and they were among the last supposed "witches" in Devon to be thus condemned.

Tobacco

Trade meanwhile was on the increase, as may be indicated by Barnstaple's protest in 1624 against the establishment of a Custom House at Bideford which would divert a good proportion of Barnstaple's harbour dues to the Torridge town. Besides the wool trade, Bideford was obtaining a growing share of England's total tobacco imports: while the Newfoundland trade (in salted cod, for sale to Southern Europe) in 1699 occupied some 174 Bideford vessels against London's 71. In the period 1700-55, Bideford imported more tobacco than any port in England, in 1735 paying £15,101 duty on 3,337 hogsheads. In Queen Anne's time nearly half the total imports of the Irish wool trade were landed in North Devon. The wool was combed, sorted and spun in Bideford and the surrounding villages, and taken by pack-horse to the weaving towns. But by 1750 this trade had died, and the Newfoundland trade was suffering badly from French competition, while French privateers found such rich harvest through plundering the North Devon merchantmen that they nicknamed Bideford Bay "The Golden Bay."

Mixed Trade

However, a more local commerce grew up to occupy Bideford merchants and shipmasters. Improving agricultural methods led to a greater use of lime; limestone was imported and burnt in the numerous kilns which may now be seen in various stages of decay up the river and about the coast. Since 1575, coal had been brought from Wales—largely for lime-burning, brewing, and firing the pottery for which Bideford was then well-known. Ship-building

gave an exportable by-product in the form of oak-bark for tanning. Watkins deploras the extensive fellings of local oaks for this purpose; yet even now, after the depredations of three continental wars there is no hilltop near Bideford from which it is not possible to look on woodland, though the last war has certainly taken a terrible toll of our trees.

The town's business as a port continued to be lively; throughout the first half of last century emigrant ships sailed from here to America; and the varied trade may be gathered from accounts of such things as elephant's tusks and barrels of palm-oil standing outside the Custom House, then No. 1, Bridgeland Street. Within living memory there were at least five shipyards at Bideford and another further up the river near Annery. In these yards, traders of anything up to 2,000 tons burden were built; and as befits a vigorous West-country sea-port, authentic tales of smuggling and of fast cutters built "on the side" for anonymous owners are not wanting.

Nineteenth Century

The coming of the railway to Bideford in 1855, and the growth of the use of steel and steam, together with the foundation of Westward Ho! as a seaside resort and the general "discovery" of North Devon's scenic beauty and holiday possibilities, led to a change in Bideford's character from a shipbuilding port to that of a market town serving a community mainly agricultural and residential rather than sea-faring. The Bridge underwent two or three widening operations to meet increased transport needs; so did the Quay—it was necessary: some sixty years ago it is recorded that the cross-trees of a vessel sharply heeled over at the Quay-side, went through the roof of a house where the Southern National 'bus office is to-day.

In 1886 the title of Port was lost temporarily through inclusion of Bideford with Barnstaple under the Customs Consolidation Act. The ancient dignity was, however, restored in 1928; details of the Port boundaries, written on vellum, hang in the Town Hall; while an ornamental garden was laid out opposite the Kingsley statue to commemorate the restoration. The Kingsley statue itself was erected in 1906.

Present Day

In 1919 an attempt was made to revive the old shipbuilding trade, home-grown timber now being replaced by steel from elsewhere. Those years were not, however, favourable to the creation of what was virtually a new industry; and the yard on the site of a famous shipyard of last century, is now the 'bus repair depot. The old craft has not however died: both above the bridge and further down the river at Appledore, many boats and pilot craft in peace time and a multitude of small Naval vessels during the war, can claim a Torridge-side birth.

Coat of Arms

In 1936 a Grant of Arms was made by the College of Heralds. The new "coat" of which the full blazon may be seen framed in the Town Hall, incorporates in its design the *motif* from the old town Seal, long used unofficially as "Borough Arms," and also the three golden clarions of the Grenvilles. Passengers on the Southern Railway should look out for the Bideford Arms on the new "West-country" Class engine christened here in 1946.

The last war saw Bideford through relatively unscathed, two parachute mines dropped at the top of the town in October, 1941, doing so little damage as scarcely to be worthy of record. Bideford had a keen Civil Defence Service, whose merciful fate it was, like that of the equally zealous Home Guard Battalion (whose Banner was lodged, with appropriate ceremonial, in the Parish Church in 1945) to "only stand and wait." Where the district did come into service was in the reception of evacuees; it is estimated that at the peak the population must have almost doubled, and the wonders worked by the W.V.S. and kindred services will never be known. Tributes which this district has since received cause us to venture to state that our Devonshire reputation for kindness and friendly welcome still stand high. May it never grow less!

Church of St. Mary The Virgin

Dedicated by Bishop Bronescombe in 1259, the Norman Church of St. Mary undoubtedly replaced an earlier Saxon structure. The building of 1259 was originally "in the form of a proper cross." It underwent many changes; in 1842 it seems to have been in a bad state of disrepair; and in 1862 in the name of "restoration" it was, with the exception of the Tower, completely levelled and rebuilt. Its stones found their way into the walls of houses then building; its pillars made gateposts for sundry secular properties round the district; and save for a few bench-ends made up into the present tower-screen, its magnificent old woodwork went for firewood, and with all this destruction there vanished, with few exceptions, the associations of centuries. There still remain the tomb of *Sir Thomas Grenville*, died 1513, and founder of the original Grenville Chantry of which there is now no trace save the tomb; Lady (Mary) Grenville, wife of Sir Richard "The Spaniards' terror," was also buried here. An interesting memorial to *John Strange* (see page 41) is now masoned into the wall of the south aisle; the *Norman font*, with cable moulding and eight panels of ornament, is unique. This at one time, incidentally, is said to have been thrown out and used as a pigs' trough during the Reformation. The *Bells* are a ring of eight—five by Rudhall of Gloucester, 1722; one by Mears of Whitechapel, 1810; two by Abbott of Bideford, 1876. The whole ring was re-cast by Taylor of Loughborough, May, 1919, one bell being provided by the Free Churches of the Borough. The *Registers* date from 1561.

Bideford Bridge

"Everyone who knows Bideford," says Kingsley, "cannot but know Bideford Bridge, for it is the very omphalos, cynosure and soul around which the town, as a body, has organised itself . . . being first an inspired bridge; a soul-saving bridge; an almsgiving bridge; an educational bridge; and last, but not least, a dinner-giving-bridge."

In other words, the Bridge, through the Feoffees who administer its welfare on behalf of the town it serves, owns property; and during the many centuries of this relationship has thus paid not only for its own upkeep but also contributed largely to the common good, not the least of which responsibility being the maintenance of the ancient Grammar School from at least the sixteenth century to the present day.



THE BRIDGE SEAL

Its early history is a trifle obscure. Legend ascribes its origin to a dream in which Richard Gurney, the Parish Priest, saw a suitable site for its foundations in the tide-swept sand and mud. Again, the odd sizes of the 24 arches—no two are the same width—have been accounted for by the suggestion that the rich built the wide ones and the poor the narrow; if so, a very carefully graduated scale of income levels seems to have been followed! It is more likely that the foundations were set where the presence of rock made this structurally possible. Lastly, tradition asserts that the bridge was set on bags of wool—and figuratively, no doubt it was. Anyhow, research reveals that the first structure, a wooden one, was erected in about 1280. This was not replaced by a stone bridge for

BIDEFORD FRONT

at least two centuries, built round the wooden structure, the lengths of the original timber lintels probably really defining the different widths of the arches. There are many early records of Indulgences granted by the Bishop of Exeter for the raising of funds for its repair and maintenance—notably in 1396, 1437, 1442, and 1439. Leland (1506-52) remarks: "The Bridge at Bedeford upon Turege is a very notable worke and hath XXIIII arches of stone, and is fairly walled on each side. A poor preste began this bridge; and as it was said, he was animated to do so by a vision. Then all the cuntry about sette their handes on to the performing of it: and sinse, landes hath been given to the maintenance of it. There standeth a fair chapel of Our Lady at the very end of it, and there is a fraternitie in the town for preservation of this Bridge: and one waiteth continually to kepe the bridge clene . . ."

Since then its history has been one of widenings and alterations, always however following the original form of the arches, though this was nearly abandoned in favour of a new three-arched bridge in 1867—a truly appalling project which was only defeated by a public meeting of citizens (who had just watched, apparently without a qualm, the sweeping away and rebuilding of their ancient parish church) objecting to the rate increase necessary to cover the work. The present width and gracefully designed parapet of local stone were reached in 1925, when the east and west approaches were also greatly improved, and the Bridge declared an Ancient Monument under the Acts of 1913 and 1931, so that threats such as that of 1867 are removed for ever.

Prints of the old Seal of the Bridge Feoffees show the early bridge, with its two chapels and a cross in the middle with a relief of the Virgin and Child for the protection of travellers. Old prints and pictures in the Library and Museum show the Bridge as it was in the 18th and 19th centuries; for further information see "The Long Bridge of Bideford," by F. E. Whiting, F.R.I.B.A. (1945) and "The Long Bridge of Bideford" by Alexander G. Duncan (1902 and re-print, 1930), etc., in the Free Library.

"The Long Bridge of Bideford is the End of the World . . ."
(Hillaire Belloc)



Westward Ho!

By car the run from Bideford to Westward Ho! only takes a few minutes. In the summer there is a quarter-hourly 'bus service, while for walkers a very pleasant way via Raleigh Hill and Buckleigh lies partly over fields.

Westward Ho! is a grand place. There are two miles of perfect sands, washed clean twice daily by the Atlantic, which leaves thousands of fascinating pools in the rocks south of the sands, teeming with sea-life of all descriptions. All day long, at any state of the tide, there is the most exhilarating bathing. The long ocean rollers come pounding in, sweeping along the surf-board experts and creaming round the other bathers before dying away to nothing by the toddlers on the fringe. Bathing at Westward Ho! is as safe as it possibly can be. For youngsters learning to swim there are two large pools hewn out of the rocks; and for swimmers of all degrees, the Patio open-air baths—which are also a veritable sun-trap.

A natural feature of great interest at Westward Ho! is the long Pebble Ridge which forms a breakwater behind the whole length of the sands, and protection for the world-famous golf course. At the angle of the Burrows, where the river meets the sea, is a wilderness of sandhills, covered with the springiest of turf and a fine place for picnics. Round beyond the coastguard's hut, facing the lighthouse and the huge range of Braunton Burrows just across the river, one is in an entirely new world: the estuary at its wildest, a haunt of duck, waders, and other sea-birds, and where one seems very near to the raging Bar. It is, incidentally, not safe to walk on the greatsandbank leading out to the Bar at low water, inviting as it may look: the sand is soft and treacherous and the tide appallingly swift and strong; nor is it advisable to bathe in the estuary.

The line of hills whose western end, "Kipling Tors," was the scene of some of the exploits of "Stalky and Co.," is now National Trust property. The views from the top are magnificent. The old United Services College where Kipling went to school still stands, converted to flats, the gymnasium making a good hall for badminton and dances.

Westward Ho! came into being in 1863, when the Earl of Portsmouth laid the foundation stone of the first new buildings, and gave the name of Kingsley's novel to a place where formerly there were but three ancient farms, but which now comprises a central core of shops and cafes, church, chapel, hotels and boarding houses, with a scattered fringe of larger residences and summer bungalows. The inhabitants are well satisfied with the amenities of water, drainage, light, heat and transport provided. Camping is well catered for. Many tourists pull up for the night and stay a week.



THE MAGNIFICENT SANDS OF WESTWARD HO ! ARE IDEAL FOR
THE THRILLING SPORT OF SAND YACHTING.

Perhaps Westward Ho!'s most striking feature is its spaciousness. The thousands of acres of sands, Burrows, rocks and hillsides give ample room for everybody ; even on a Bank Holiday it is easy to move from the centre of activity and find peace and quiet in surroundings of great beauty. Another equally striking feature is the almost extraordinary safety of the beach, especially when the force of winter storms is considered. Near the Patio Baths the remains of the one and only attempt to build a pier stand as mute evidence of the power of the sea : it lasted precisely a year. The new sea-wall, built of reinforced concrete in 1928, was a stern and necessary step taken to prevent Westward Ho ! from being washed away altogether. Even the summer visitor occasionally gets a chance to see the Atlantic pitting its full fury against the wall ; with a high spring-tide it is a sight to be remembered. In the old days of sailing vessels, this beach was the scene of many wrecks, as Northam Churchyard bears silent witness. Now it can well be regarded as North Devon's holiday paradise—for children and grown-ups alike.

Northam

The Church

Northam is an ancient village, whose Manor at the time of Domesday Book had passed from Brictric to the Abbot of Caen. The " tall, grey, windswept tower " of the old Church of St. Margaret has long been a mark for seamen coming in over the Bar ; indeed, at one time it was whitewashed in order to be seen more distinctly. It is the second tallest in Devon. The Church was completely " restored " in the middle of last century ; a date suggestive of an earlier restoration is carved in Tudor lettering on one of the Nave capitals. The Registers date from 1538 ; while these were being re-arranged in 1935, part of a 14th century " Kyrie " was found to form the cover of an old account book. A copy of this beautiful piece of illumination is to be seen in Bideford Museum.

Burroughs and Leighs

Northam will be familiar to readers of *Westward Ho !* as the home of Amyas Leigh, who lived at " Burrough "—originally the seat of the Burrough family, which can be traced back to the 13th century ; one of its members (Stephen) found fame in Elizabeth's reign as a navigator. In searching for the North-East passage he reached Russia, " discovering " the Muscovite Court and capital and no doubt doing much to further the trade relations then established between Russia and this country. He became Chief Pilot of England ; his outspoken criticisms of the contemporary British Fleet possibly contributed to its ultimate success against the Spanish Armada. His brother, William, was Vice-Admiral of England. After 1550 Burrough House passed to the Leighs

"Potwallopers"

From time immemorial the parishioners ("Potwallopers") of Northam, Appledore and Westward Ho! have had the right to graze their beasts on Northam Burrows. These rights are jealously guarded; in 1867 a bridge leading on to the Burrows was wilfully destroyed in order to prevent carriages from damaging the pasture. A public meeting called to discuss the matter led to the formation of the Burrows Committee to watch over the graziers' interests.

A Golfing Village

The Manor rights are held to-day by the Golf Club; the administration of the affairs of Northam, Westward Ho! and Appledore being conducted by Northam Urban District Council. Northam is essentially a golfing village, and many of its sons fill posts as professionals in different parts of the world, J. H. Taylor, many times Open Champion, being the most famous of them all. Golf is dealt with fully on page 73; suffice here to say that, though a championship course (the 'Varsity match was played here in March, 1938) the handicap man can enjoy it as well as the scratch player. The links are subtle. While the tiger is finding it difficult to get his 3's and 4's, the ordinary player can go along quite happily with his 5's and 6's with an occasional 8 or 10 to remind him where he is. The Dormy House alongside the Club House provides a crowning amenity which for a golfer and family make Northam or Westward Ho! ideal places for a holiday.

Appledore

No one visiting Bideford and Westward Ho! should leave North Devon without turning eastwards at Northam and, after passing on the left a grand view of the whole extent of the Burrows and estuary, dropping down the steep hill into *Appledore*. This is a township of some 3,000 inhabitants, and a place with a distinct individuality. For generations Appledorians have lived on or by the sea. Shipbuilding is their traditional craft; there are here two dry docks whose skilled surgery has restored to sound health many a vessel after an Atlantic buffeting or the misfortunes of war. Appledore's shape and character have changed very little for centuries. The Quay has been recently widened and improved; otherwise one can almost shake hands across the narrow streets. There is always plenty of interest on the Quay; colour and picturesque form in the houses and movement on the river; none but the ghosts of seamen of long ago could tell the full tale of ships of every age and nation and rig that have anchored for harbourage in Appledore Pool since the coming of Hubba the Dane. And the fathers of living men could tell of sundry kegs of brandy fetched at dead of night from Graysand Hill (the Burrows' northernmost tip) and buried under the most innocent of cabbage-patches or lowered into wells . . .

The Church of St. Mary was built in 1838; before that the parish formed part of Northam—which, or so loyal Appledorians will say, is why so many seafaring men lie in Northam Churchyard—"where they don't belong."

Appledore is a remarkably healthy quarter, being sheltered from the prevailing West and S.W. winds. It has a reputation as an excellent spot for chronic bronchitis sufferers. There is a ferry to Instow; and boats may be hired to row or sail. This estuary is tricky; the "Nautical Information" on page 71 is only a rough guide. Local advice should always be followed implicitly; experienced seamen don't give warnings just for fun.

The origin of Appledore's name puzzles the experts. In 1347 it appears on a document as "Apelder"; it is probably the "Tawmutha" of Domesday book, and may derive from the Celtic "Aber Taw"; mouth of the Taw, which seems reasonable if there were more evidence to support it.

Instow

Instow may be reached by train, or 'bus; or by ferry from Appledore. Its amenities include gas, electricity and water; it has a very equable climate suitable for convalescents. Facing South and West, it has a fine view of the Bar and estuary; the flat, safe, sandy beach is beloved of all children, while the line of sandhills and the marsh beyond provide further opportunities for adventure. Here is the ground of the long-established North Devon Cricket Club with its attractive old reed-thatched pavilion; and also the Headquarters of the Taw and Torridge Sailing Club.

A Note on Tides

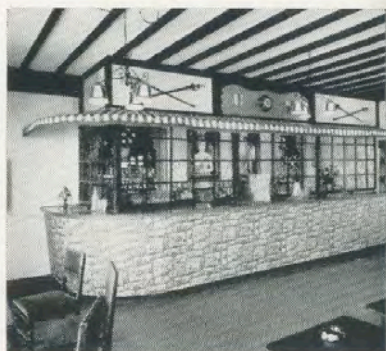
In this district there are two tides each day, occurring at roughly twelve-hour intervals. The highest tides ("Spring") are fortnightly, just after the New and Full Moons; it is then high water at Westward Ho! round about 6.30 a.m. and p.m. (Half-hour later at Bideford Bridge). "Neap" tides in the alternate fortnights occur about mid-day and mid-night; they are slow and with very little rise of water. The Springs are swift and rise 16-18 feet at Bideford. There are tide indicators at the Harbour Office on Bideford Quay and on the front at Westward Ho!



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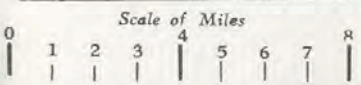
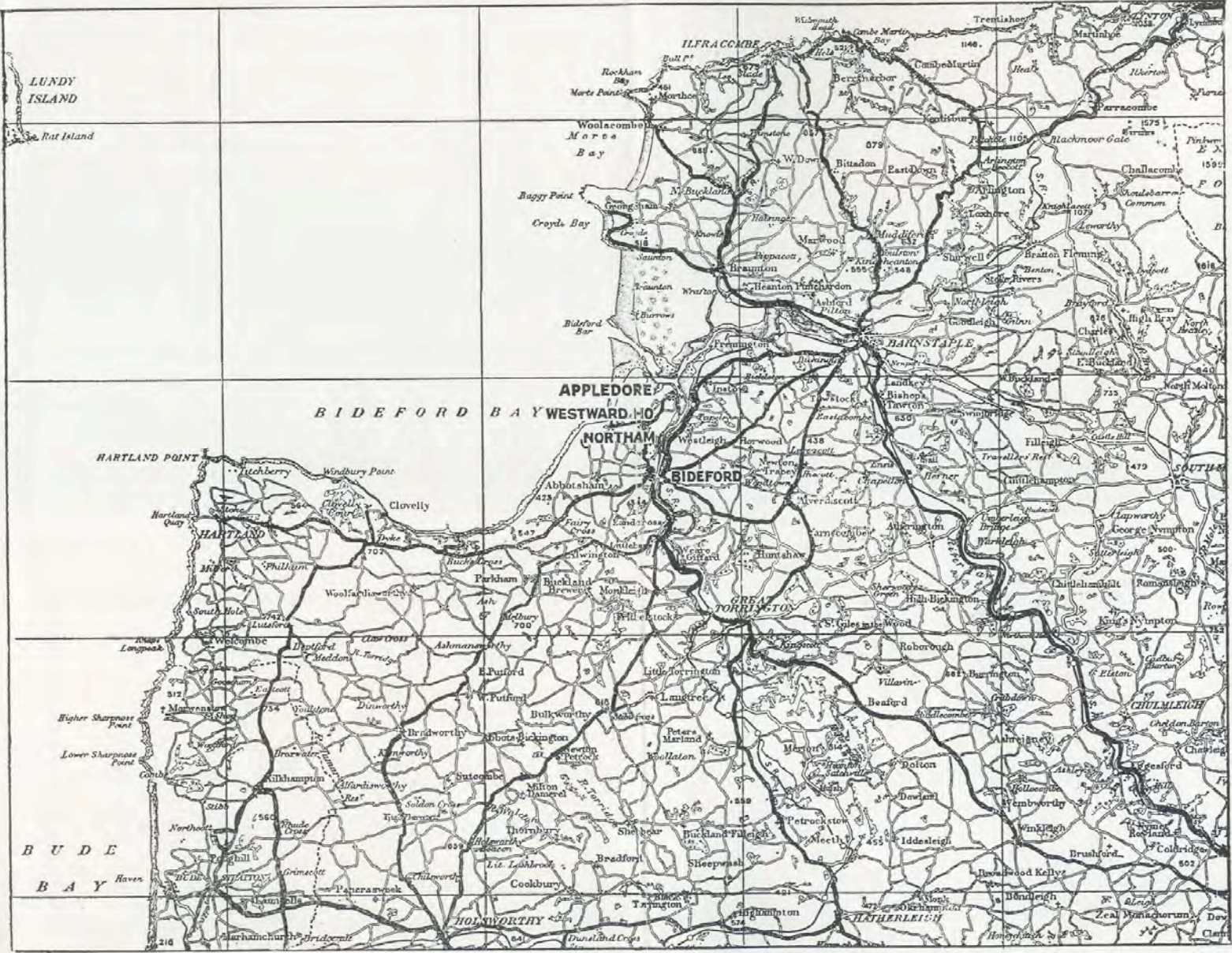
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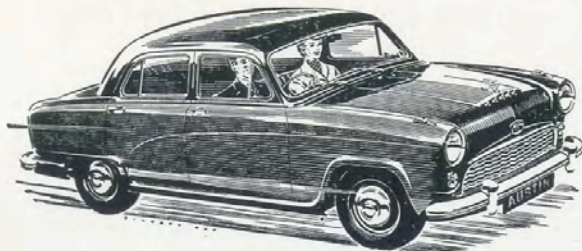
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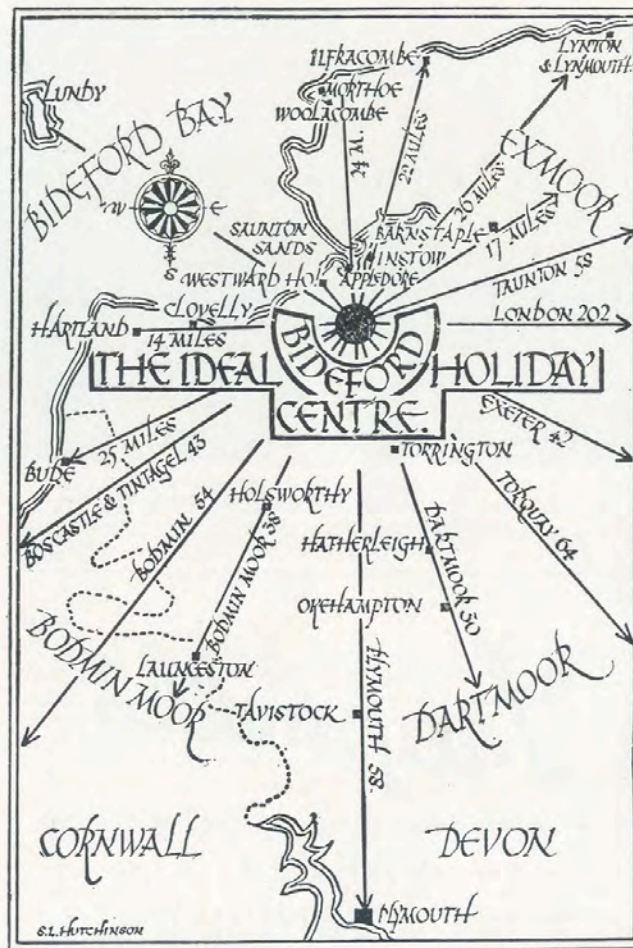
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Round The District

Hartland

Origin of name extremely obscure and theories complicated. *Church*: S. Nectan, 128 ft. tower, a landmark to seamen. Rich original. Perpendicular rood-screen; Norman font; superb 14th cent. roof to Lady chapel; some fragments of 14th cent. figures from site of Abbey; many other features of great interest and beauty. *Parish*: one of the largest and wildest in England, certainly in West-country *Abbey*: entirely rebuilt as a residence; founded 1168, following still earlier college of secular canons; dissolved 1539. *St. Catherine's Tor* (walk south from Hartland Quay; $\frac{1}{2}$ mile) once crowned not by Roman building as stated by Kingsley, etc., but by 14th cent. chapel—a "cell" of the Abbey. Fragments of foundations only remain. Whole history of this ancient parish set forth in detail by R. Pearse Chope in "The Book of Hartland" (Bideford Free Library). *Scenery*: Of great grandeur, unsurpassed anywhere in coastal England and Wales. Cliffs average 300ft.; endless variety of walks. *Speke's Mouth* (1 mile south of Hartland Quay) should be visited for fine waterfall; also *Shipload Bay* (National Trust) $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles North of Hartland town. Bathing possible there. *Lighthouse* on extremity of Hartland Point, may also be reached. Good hotels, guest-houses and boarding house accommodation in Hartland and Stoke. Church 15 miles from Bideford.

Clovelly

Name probably Welsh "Clawdd": a trench, perhaps a reference to Clovelly Dykes, plus Old British personal name "Beli." *Church*: All Saints. Norman porch; Saxon font; many memorials to Cary family. *Village* is world famous; its old-world charm has been carefully preserved; and the steepness of its street which makes it "impracticable for motorists" ensures that its full beauty shall be appreciated by the discerning traveller by the best possible method: on foot. Watkins (1792) says the Clovelly houses "seem joined like pigeon-cotes against a wall." Front doors on a level with roof-tops; fuschias mounting up to meet creepers trailing down: these are the imperishable features of Clovelly which make the cliff village unique. Part of the village is National Trust property. Walkers get the best out of Clovelly; it should be given a full day, starting with the three-mile *Hobby Drive* (cars permitted on payment of toll); explore the village down to the harbour, then take the turning by the Red Lion Hotel and up the hill to Clovelly Court park gates. From here it is a two-mile walk to *Gallantry Bower* (350 ft. cliffs); and it is worth going on to *Mouthmill* through "the Wilderness" down to the quiet cove dominated by the dramatic Blackchurch Rock. It is never advisable to try to walk along the beach for any distance in the Hartland or Clovelly districts unless very certain of tidal behaviour: the cliffs are almost unclimbable by the ordinary mortal—they were used

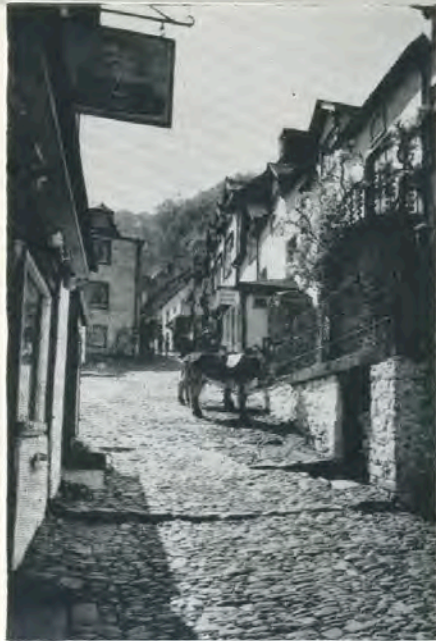


Photo : Castle Studio, Torrington
CLOVELLY HIGH STREET

for roped Commando training in the war—and their appearance from below can be very deceptive.

There are two good hotels at Clovelly: a 'bus service several times daily from Bideford, and an excellent car-park with a view commanding the whole Bay. But no part of Clovelly proper can be reached except on foot.

Bucks Mills

Originally *Bochewys* (1086); Bokish (1311). Probably from "Boc," meaning an estate held by "book," i.e. by charter. Land granted time of Edward I by Stephen de Wallen to Robert Stockey and his heirs to have a way for ever "to carry sea-sand from the sea"; "-wys" is obscure. Sand, seaweed and lime once traded here. Bucks is Clovelly in miniature but with an individuality and charm all its own. Has a sandy beach,

which Clovelly lacks—with safe bathing. Beautiful cliff walks; footpath from near Hoops Inn on main road; cars can drive right down into village, but parking and turning facilities are extremely limited and present an increasing problem to local authorities concerned, both to accommodate visitors and to preserve the place's charm.

Peppercombe

"Pippa's Combe." (Old English, temp. 1086: nothing to do with Browning!). Charming cove with sandy beach below vivid red sandstone cliffs; no village—turn right at *Horns Cross* on main road. Very steep approach; just possible for cars, but when in doubt—walk. Cliff walk is on private estate; rocky beach may, however, be walked along without difficulty and cliff-top taken up again at *Babbacombe* and thence on to Westward Ho! (four miles). Is in parish of Alwington (Aelfwynn's tun—farm). Church of St. Andrew; perpendicular; memorials to Coffin family (at Portledge since before Domesday Book). Much fine Jacobean carving. One mile off main road; turn east from Fairy Cross.

Abbotsham

Abbot's Ham—the ham (homestead) held by the Abbot (of Tavistock, 1086). Church: St. Helen's; Early English (restored), good bench ends. Cliff walks from *Greenacliff* and *Cornborough*

(possibly meaning "fortified place on the horn"—prominent hill) to Westward Ho! For *Greenacliff*, turn right after Post Office; for *Cornborough*, turn right by New Inn.

Buckland Brewer

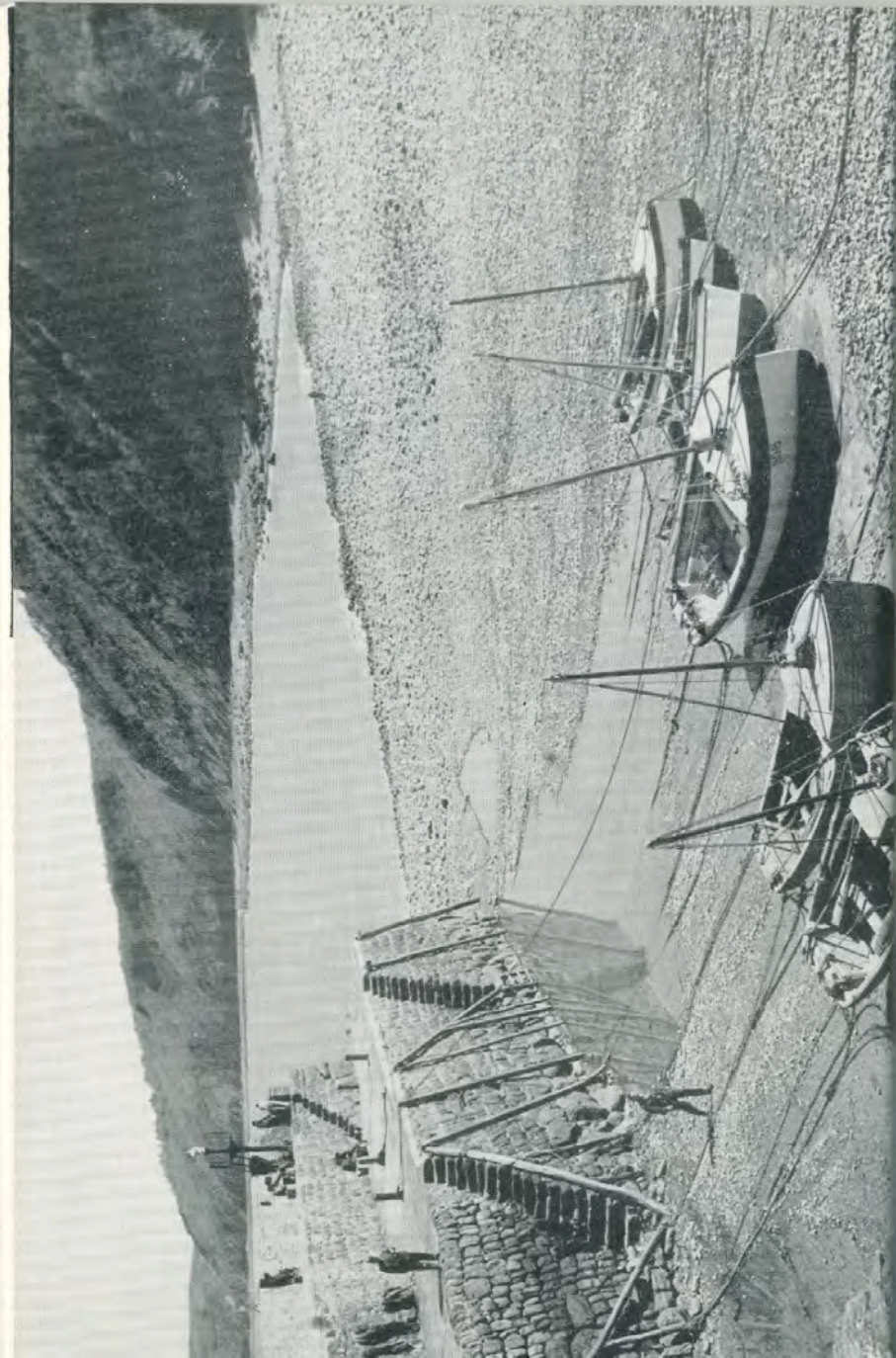
From "Boc-land" (land granted by charter) to a member of the Briwerre family. Church: SS. Mary and Benedict. Original Norman church destroyed by lightning, 1399; "beak-head" doorway remains. Turn right, up Yeo Vale road at Landcross; then left at Yeo Bridge for two miles of beautiful beech avenue, past Orleigh Court (ancient seat of the Dennis family; not visible from road) to village. After passing Church, turn down to steep valley of R. Duntz, where daffodils grow wild in spring; join main Plymouth road at Frithelstock Stone. Bideford may be reached by two ways:—

(a) Via *Monkleigh*. Manor held by Monks of Montacute Abbey, time of Stephen; -leigh from "leah": a clearing in woodland. Church of St. George. Brasses, carving, good bench ends and scien, circa 13th cent. Arms of many notable Devon families; canopied altar tomb, 1430. Road to Bideford has beautiful views; passes behind Annery, well-known to lovers of *Westward Ho!*; said to be home of Lord Justice Hankford in 15th. cent.

(b) Via *Frithelstock*. Presumed to be "Frithulac's place." Church: SS. Mary and Gregory. Perpendicular. Niches in nave piers for figures of saints, now vanished. Fine bench ends; old chest belonging to Gay family (John Gay "Beggar's Opera"). Church adjoins 13th century *Priory* ruins; this was "colonised" from Hartland Abbey. Fine western gable end with three fine lancets still stands almost intact: ruins cleared of ivy, 1931, under the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, and the masonry grouted for preservation. The road leads through village to Torrington Station, by old Rothern Bridge, disused but not destroyed, and mentioned by Leland; said to have been built by the monks in 13th century because winter floods made river impassable. Return to Bideford either by main road—runs alongside Torridge, beautiful at all seasons of the year—or by train. Distances: Bideford—Buckland Brewer, 5 miles; thence home via Monkleigh, 7 miles. Frithelstock Stone to Torrington Station, 2 miles; on to Bideford, 8 miles. Train takes 7 minutes. 'Bus from Torrington 1 mile uphill from station.

Horwood

Probably "Haran-wudu": grey wood. Church: St. Michael. Perpendicular. 14th cent. alabaster tombs; 13th cent. piscina; fragments of old glass; 14th cent. tiles; good bench ends. Follow "Old Barnstaple Road" (see Street Plan, Inset), turn right half a mile beyond *Eastleigh*; pass Church to reach Torrington—Barnstaple road at Newton cross. Either (a) turn left, to Barnstaple, returning thence by 'bus, train or the "Old" road (turn left at Hele). A hilly way, but superb views of Exmoor, estuary, etc. Or,



(b) turn right via *Newton Tracey* (ancient church of St. Thomas a Becket : a de Tracey was one of his murderers) and *Alverdiscott*, back to Torrington. Grand views on a clear day.

Return to Bideford via **Weare Giffard**. (Wer : a weir ; Giffard : old Devon family with original seat at the Hall). *Church* : Holy Trinity ; decorated. Fine hammer beam chancel roof ; 13th century tombs ; 14th cent. wall painting and glass (fragmentary). 16th cent. memorials to Fortescues ; good bench ends. Very good "geometric" pattern clear glass windows replacing those destroyed by Roundheads. A beautiful church. The *Hall* ; 15th century, now private dwelling ; magnificent woodwork and original galleried dining hall. Occasionally open to public, by courtesy of the owners. Weare Giffard in season is famous for strawberry teas. *Distances* : To Horwood, 5 miles ; thence to Hele and back by "Old" road, 13 miles ; Horwood to Torrington, 9 miles.

Landcross. Is a little village with a tiny church of Holy Trinity 2 miles south of Bideford on main Torrington road. Good bench ends ; General Monk, born at Potheridge near Torrington, was christened there.

Other Places of Interest

Walk along riverside to *Appledore* (roughish going, but worth it) ; return via Northam or by ferry to Instow and back by main road.

Old Barnstaple road to Eastleigh ; turn off for *Westleigh* and down to main road.

Littleham (fine church of S. Swithin) via Ashridge above Reservoir, and down into Yeo Vale for Torrington main road. Beautiful views.

Instow. Up "Old" Barnstaple road, turn left at Holmacott, then right, then left to come down into Instow by Worlington. Grand views of estuary. ("John's stow" : Holy Place of S. John—St. John's Church).

Gammaton Moor and Reservoirs. Up Torrington Lane (see street plan) ; turn right at cross roads to come down into Weare Giffard by Park farm ; or, down to river by Little Weare to Halspill. Or, by Huxhill and Huntshaw bridge to Torrington. Hilly, but grand views. Torrington bus to Bideford passes through Weare Giffard.

Torrington

"The tun (enclosure, thence : village, homestead) on the Torr ridge." Torrington sits atop a hill, like Jerusalem ; an ancient Borough with a long history. It once sent two members to Parliament ; Cardinal Wolsey was its vicar ; Henry VII's mother lived here ; in 1484 the sessions were held here and 500 notable persons indicted for treason against Richard III and outlawed. The church of *S. Michael* was blown up in the Civil War. Torrington is surrounded by some of the loveliest scenery in Devon ; Castle Hill,

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Mr. R. Ford, the present operator of this service, is well known locally for his remarkable Bass catches and has over a long experience discovered by trial and error much interesting fishing information. The national fishing journals have recognised and welcomed his small booklet "Spinning for Bass" and many visitors delight in discussing their fishing problems with him.

The *Angling Times* in book reviews has this to say: "The wide experience of Devon angler R. Ford has been packed into a little booklet called *Spinning for Bass*. The booklet covers every aspect of catching this fine fighting sea fish on spinning tackle. It even includes hints on preparing the fish for table and methods of cooking it."

Send 2/- for this knowhow booklet by Britain's Bass Spinning Champion, my specialist Bass lures information and fishing cruise details.—R. Ford, Torridge House, Torridge Hill Bideford.

and Furzebeam (this is on the Weare Giffard Road) on the great Common, give unsurpassable views of the Torridge country, which is also the country of "Tarka the Otter."

By Boat : Weare Giffard

Choose an afternoon tide ; takes about two hours to row each way, going up with the flowing tide and returning with the ebb. Extremely lovely and absolutely peaceful.

Towards Appledore

This means a row against the tide one way, unless boat taken out for the day and landing at Appledore or Instow. When pulling against the tide, keep right in under the western bank of the river, where the current will be slack.

Places of Worship

Visitors are cordially invited to any of the following services, Sundays at 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. :—

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Assistant Curate : Rev. D. Raymond Jones, Penlea, North View, Avenue, Bideford.

ST. PETER'S, East-the-Water

Priest-in-Charge : Rev. W. T. Brewster, 20, Fort Terrace, Bideford E.

BAPTIST CHURCH, Lower Gunstone

Minister : Rev. Eric F. Knight, B.A., B.D., 46, Clovelly Road, Bideford.

BETHEL FREE CHURCH, East-the-Water

Minister : Rev. Robt. H. Parsons, Torridge View, Mines Road, Bideford.

LAVINGTON (CONGREGATIONAL) CHURCH, Bridgeland Street

Minister : Rev. Gladys Smith, Lavington House, Abbotsham Road.

METHODIST CHURCHES

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Minister : Rev. R. H. Foster, Beverley, 41, Abbotsham Road.

High Street

Minister : Rev. J. Owen Clutterbuck, Northcote, Abbotsham Road.

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Summer Holiday Features

PORT OF BIDEFORD REGATTA

Bideford Regatta is considered by Bidefordians and visitors to be the great day of the year. It is usually held during the first week in September and is visited by people from far and wide.

The actual Regatta, as a rule, is divided into three parts—one day being set aside for rowing, another for fireworks display and a third for land sports. Regatta Day proper is confined to Rowing: the local competitors are challenged by crews from the whole of the West of England, Bideford's colours being worthily carried by the Amateur Athletic Club and the Amateur Rowing Club, both of whom have been established for many years and whose rowing prowess is renowned in the West. The races are mainly four-oared and pair-oared, rowed in outriggered shell boats of the best type. The Regatta itself is of very ancient origin, and its earliest records are lost in antiquity.

The river looks its best in Regatta week, animated with the movement and the coloured favours of competing crews, the sailing dinghies, and innumerable small craft of all descriptions, and reflecting the azure sky, and the green of surrounding hills and trees and vivid splashes of colour from the Fair on the Pill.

The firework display presented in the Sports Ground is one of the best of the kind given in the West Country, every effort being made for visitors to see the spectacular items in comfort.

The Sports have a reputation unparalleled in the district, and runners, cyclists and other athletes make special efforts to attend these sports annually. The Cycle events are worth special mention, and international riders are frequent competitors.

BIDEFORD BOWLING CLUB

Visitors to Bideford and District are welcomed to the Bowling Green situated on the Strand amidst ideal surroundings. The Club possesses one of the best six rinks Cumberland Grass greens in the County. Visitors can avail themselves of the facilities on any week day (during the playing season) from 2 p.m. the following fees applying:—

Afternoon and Evening Sessions, 1/6 per Session.
Weekly, 10/6.

Hon. Secretary: Mr. F. A. Pearson, Inglewood, Raleigh, Bideford.

The Club holds an Annual Tournament Week each year, commencing on August Bank Holiday. For further particulars please apply to Tournament Secretary, Mr. F. Snell, 24, The Strand, Bideford. This event attracts a large entry from a very wide area. Entrance to the Bowling Green is adjacent Strand Cinema.





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Held during August.
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 Glenfield Road, Bideford (Tel. Bideford 387).

Other Summer events are the Bideford Carnival, in aid of local charities, Golf Meetings at Westward Ho ! etc.

LOCAL SOCIETIES include :

Bideford and District Chamber of Trade. Hon. Sec. : Mr. C. C. Prust, Roseland, Abbotsham, Bideford, N. Devon (Tel. Bideford 802).

Freemasons, Order of. "Lodge of Benevolence," No. 489, 12, Bridgeland Street. Hon. Sec. : Mr. C. T. Braddick, Grenville House, The Quay, Bideford (Tel. 264).

Rotary Club. Secretary, Mr. R. G. Balsdon, 3, Hillside Terr., Pitt Lane, Bideford. Hon. Treasurer : Mr. C. J. Martin. Meets Thursdays, Tanton's Hotel, 1 p.m.

Toc H. Secretary : Mr. D. French. Every Tuesday at Miss Muffet Cafe, Meddon Street, Bideford.

British Legion. New Street. Hon. Sec. : Mr. H. Phillips.

Conservative Club. 23, Bridgeland Street. Steward and Stewardess : Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Lee.

Liberal and Radical Club. 24, High Street. Hon. sec. : Mr. E. Jennings, 69, Elm Grove, Bideford. Steward : Mr. W. H. Johns.

Amateur Athletic Club. The Pill. Hon. General Secretary : Mr. J. Sinclair, The Gymnasium.

Amateur Rowing Club. Boathouse and Club House : Rope Walk. Hon. Sec. : Mr. J. Roy Ellis.

Bideford and District Flower Show (November). Hon. Sec. : Mr. D. French, 107, Clovelly Road, Bideford.

Bideford Cricket Club. Ground at Westward Ho !

Westward Ho ! Ladies' Hockey Club. Hon. Sec. : Mrs. Uren, Hoar Oak, Hillcrest Road, Rumsam, Barnstaple.

Bideford Rugby Club. Hon. Sec. : Mr. M. C. Bird, Club H.Q., Sports Ground, Bideford.

Bideford Association Football Club Hon. Sec. : Mr. T. J. Rosser, 3, Myrtle Grove, Bideford (Tel. Bideford 610).

Bideford Amateur Dramatic Society. Hon. Sec. : Miss S. Tipper, Glebelands, Instow.

Westward Ho ! Art Society. Hon. Sec. : Miss S. L. Hutchinson, Tower House, Orchard Hill. Annual Exhibition, August, open to Non-Members.

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Salmon and Trout Fishing is available on the Torridge, and Board of Conservators Licences may be obtained from E. Gale and Son, Ltd., Fishing Tackleists, Mill Street, Bideford :

Sea Trout, £2 a season ; 10/- week ; 5/- day.

Trout, £1 season ; 5/- week ; 2/6 day.

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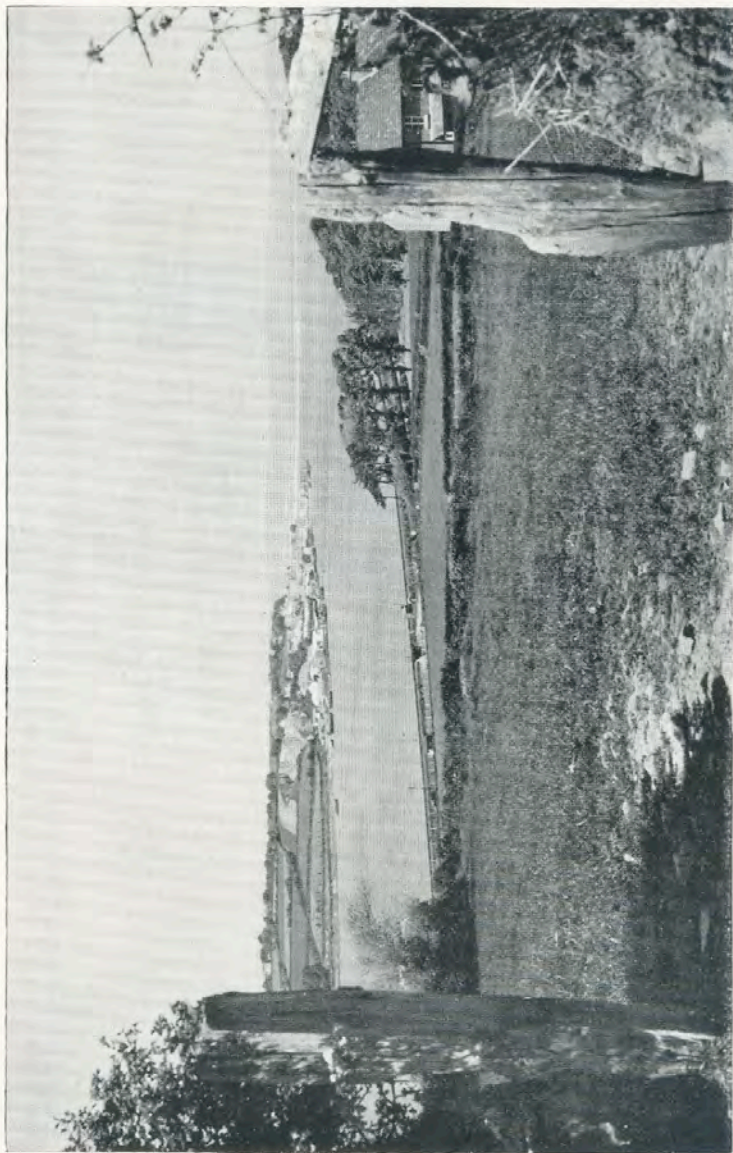
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APPLEDORE FROM WESTLEIGH

Rivers Taw and Torridge

(Nautical Information)

APPLEDORE, BIDEFORD, BARNSTAPLE and INSTOW

H.W. Appledore 5 hrs. before H.W. Dover.

Rise 23ft. springs, 11 neaps.

The Taw and Torridge unite at Appledore and enter the Bristol Channel over Bideford Bar as a combined stream. The Bar is well buoyed as is the channel to Appledore where the pool in which vessels may anchor is marked by a small conical red buoy. When anchoring in the pool, buoy the anchor as the bottom is fouled by old cables.

The river should be entered on the flood and if it is intended to proceed up the Torridge to Bideford it is advisable to take a pilot at Appledore. At Bideford a vessel can lie (aground at low water) comfortably alongside the Quay. The tides in the river and estuary are very strong and except in Appledore Pool there is no anchorage to be found—the Pool has a depth of $2\frac{1}{2}$ to $4\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms. From the Bideford Bar fairway Bell Buoy proceed with the upper and lower lighthouses on the east side of the Estuary in line, leaving the next two black conical buoys to starboard, from the second of these buoys (Middle Ridge) steer to pass the Pulley Buoys (black conical) to starboard. Enter Pulley and Inner Pulley. When Graysand Hill is abeam to starboard, alter course east to bring the bungalow on the foreshore at Instow in line with and under Worlington houses on the hilltop. With this mark on, proceed to the pool, where four mooring buoys should be passed close to starboard.

The River Taw may be explored as far as Barnstaple in a dinghy and the Torridge as far as Wear Giffard—up on the flood tide and back on the ebb. There is bass fishing near Sprat Buoy on the latter part of the ebb, the bait used being soft shelled green crabs which can be got from small boys at Appledore. In former days the estuary was largely used by shipping, and was an important sea-port in the 16th and 17th centuries. The estuary is well worth a visit, and is a convenient port of call en route to Tenby or up the Bristol Channel. The depth on the bar is 27ft. ordinary H.W. Springs, 21ft. H.W. neaps. There is often a dangerous sea on the bar in even moderate weather and a short steep sea in the channel on the ebb with a strong nor-westerly wind. A stranger should not attempt to enter at night without a pilot.

Note. The above sailing instructions are for general information only; yachtsmen entering or sailing in this estuary are strongly advised to acquaint themselves with the most recent information available as to positions of buoys, weather conditions, etc. The publishers of this guide cannot be held responsible for any accident resulting from the use of instructions printed herein which, while correct at the time of going to press, may have subsequently become inaccurate owing to circumstances outside the publishers' knowledge or control.

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- "*Ellerslie*," 65, Abbotsham Rd. Comf. Accom. B. & B., H. & C. in Bedrooms. Some Parking Space. 'Phone Bid. 1190, Mrs. Darrell.
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(E) East Side of River

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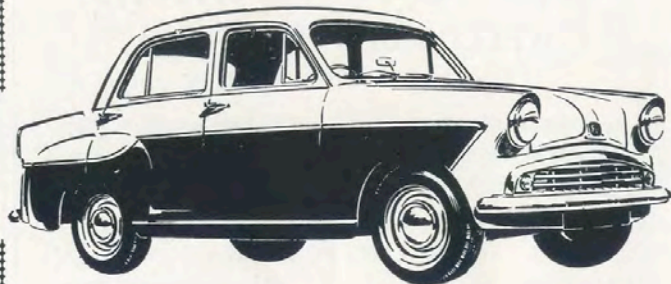
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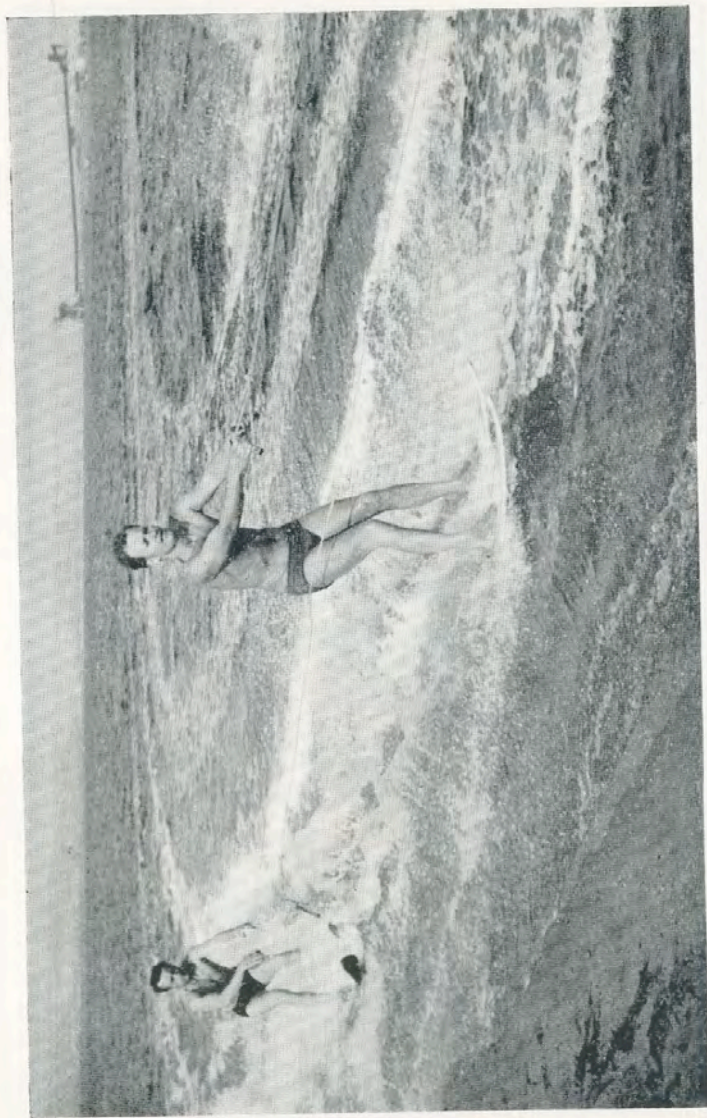
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