

19 November 2023

Colyton Parish History Society Newsletter

1. News

a) The fun of metal detecting

I recently had the privilege of accompanying a metal detectorist on an expedition to a local field. On a bright sunny Sunday morning – and having first obtained permission from the owners - we met near the muddy field. Under the watchful gaze of a bull standing guard over his cows – I was a bit nervous at first - we began to survey the ground.

A few minutes later the humming sound from the detector grew noticeably louder over a particular spot. We'd found something! It was a circular metal hole strengthener from a tarpaulin! Undeterred we carried on, moving a few paces across to the lower part of the field – further from the gate I observed, should the bull decide to make a move! Wow - another rising buzz from the probe. This time it was a 20p coin.

Backwards and forwards we systematically covered the ground for maybe another ten minutes as I enjoyed the undisturbed views across the green Coly valley in the sunshine. Then another buzz disturbed the peace. This time more soil had to be removed. Eventually a muddy coin sized disc emerged. After some rudimentary cleaning to remove the mud this emerged:



Known as a Nuremberg Jetton, it dates from the sixteenth century. It was used not as coinage but as an accounting tool. After this exciting discovery we returned to surveying. A few minutes later another buzz: we unearthed a patterned oval lid or bowl which may be Victorian. Finally, we found what appeared to be a little button or stud. It had been a fascinating morning.



In the space of a couple of hours and in an area the size of a football pitch we had had five 'hits' and discovered a couple of interesting and historic items. It surprised me how easy it seemed to be to find things. Were our ancestors down the centuries, many of whom were poor and struggling to make a living, really so careless about their possessions?

Now cleaned up the Nuremberg jetton has been reported to the local Finds Officer and we await their response. My metal detectorist friend said it was the first one he'd found in Devon.



A similar one, named as a Lion of St Mark Nuremberg Jetton and made of a copper alloy is recorded on the Portable Antiquities Scheme 'finds' website: <https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/866443>

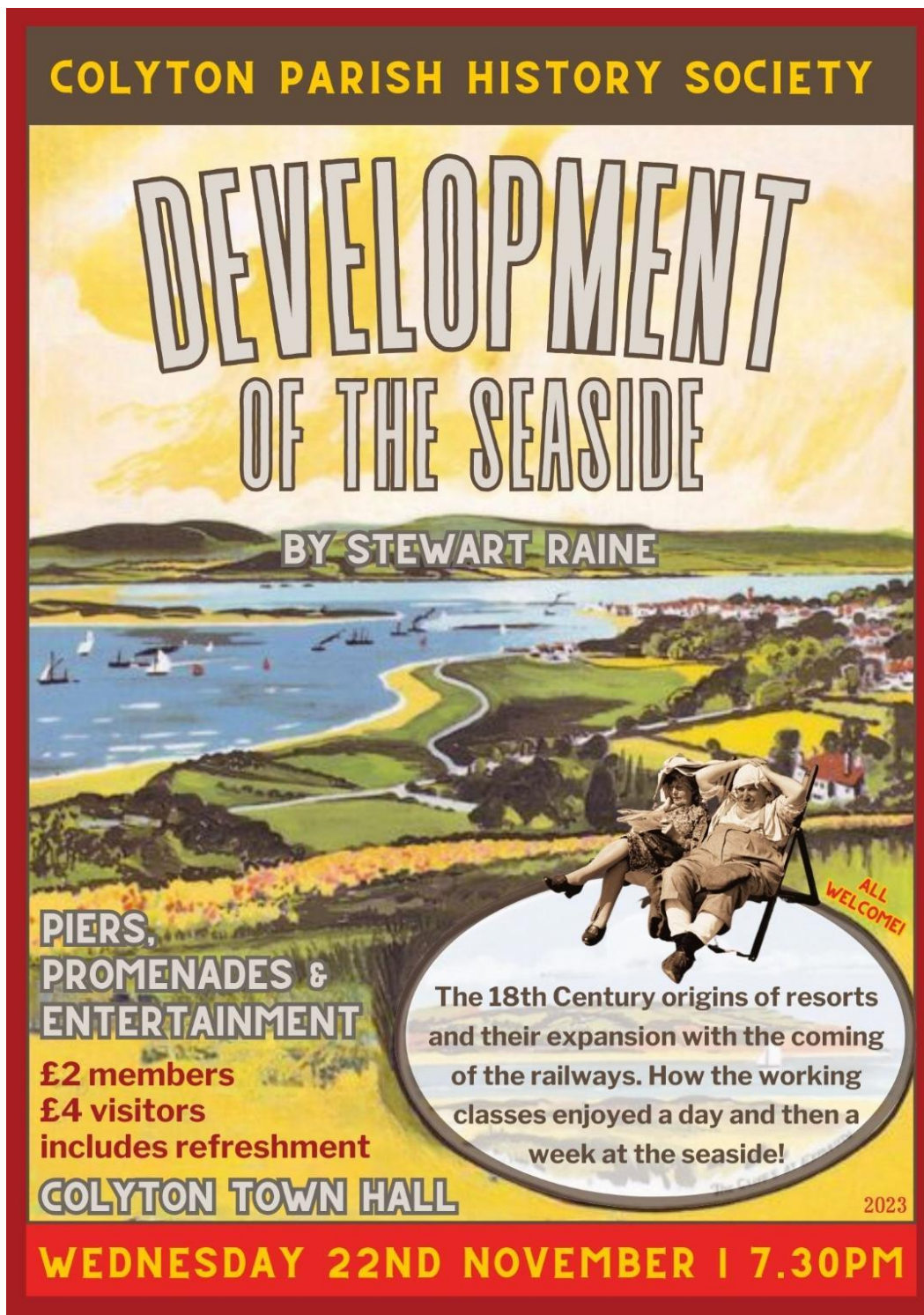
By way of a postscript, in one of those weird coincidences which sometimes happen in life, when I googled Nuremberg Jettons imagine my surprise when this was the first article which appeared: <https://historiciamestowne.org/collections/artifacts/jettons/#>:

"More than 500 of these coin-like objects made in Nuremberg, Germany have been found in the features of James Fort. This is the largest number of jettons recovered from a single site in all of North America. Jettons (or casting counters) were used with a gridded table or cloth to aid in accounting because of the scarcity of pencil lead and paper. Similar to an abacus, the jettons were moved over the lines and spaces representing decimal units. This visual arithmetic eased the complicated maneuvers needed for multiplying and dividing Roman numerals but it was still a tedious process."

I then wrote and told the academics I'd met on my recent trip to Jamestown and one replied:

"Very cool, Sarah! I would love to see this once it has been conserved. I have done a lot of work on the jettons at Jamestown and wrote a bit about them in my PhD thesis. A lot HAVE been found there!"

b) History Society talk for November



COLYTON PARISH HISTORY SOCIETY

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SEASIDE

BY STEWART RAINE

PIERS,
PROMENADES &
ENTERTAINMENT

£2 members
£4 visitors
includes refreshment

COLYTON TOWN HALL

The 18th Century origins of resorts
and their expansion with the coming
of the railways. How the working
classes enjoyed a day and then a
week at the seaside!

ALL
WELCOME!

2023

WEDNESDAY 22ND NOVEMBER | 7.30PM



a. Merchant's House
Market Place
Colyton
Devon
EX24 6JR
e. info@colytonheritagecentre.org
w. www.colytonheritagecentre.org

c) Family Tree research

Ree Gillet from US visited Heritage Centre to research her family

We had a visit on 2nd November from Ree Gillet, an American lady who was researching her Colyton ancestry. She was treated to a Town Walk in the pouring rain as storm Ciarán moved through but was very happy to see Colyton and made a very generous donation to the Society.

This is her story:

In 1630, Jonathan Gillett, one of Ree's ancestors, the fifth child of the Reverend William Gylett of Chaffcombe, Somerset sailed from Plymouth with his brother Nathan on the ship 'Mary and John' to Nantasket, just southeast of what is now Boston. This was in 1630, only 10 years after the Pilgrim Fathers went over to the New World in the "Mayflower".

Three years later, Jonathan returned to England and on 29th March 1633, married Mary Dolbere in Colyton. The following year, the couple sailed to New England from Weymouth on the 'Recovery' to start a new life together. The European population in what was to become the USA was only a few thousand at that time.

Mary Dolbere, who lived from 1607 – 1685, was born and raised in Colyton and is believed to have lived at Cadhayne barn (now Berry's barn?). Her parents were Rawkey Dolbere (1571 – 1641) & Mary Mychell (1576 – 1648). Mary was one of 7 children but only 3 survived: Mary and her 2 brothers, Robert & John.

It's interesting to know how much travelling took place between England and the New World. However, it's not known whether Jonathan and Mary ever returned to Devon to see their families again.

If anybody has any additional information about these people, please contact Tony Robinson on tonyrrob@gmail.com

Thanks to Tony Robinson for this item.

2. Other CPHS Matters



a) Research Projects for 2024

Jacque McCulloch would like to invite Members to consider joining one of the following projects:

i) Merchant's House and St Andrew's Church Tower - A Connection with Cloth Merchants and Bruges Cloth Hall?

It is generally held that Merchant's House was occupied by someone like a wealthy cloth/wool merchant who traded in Bruges, at the Cloth Hall. The building shows no signs that it was an early shop, but rather that it was occupied by someone of significant wealth. Grand fireplaces, a fine 16th Century wall painting, scale of rooms with handsome decorative plaster ceiling are all evidence of a prosperous 'merchant' house.

The St Andrew's Church octagonal tower closely resembles the Bruges Cloth Hall Belfry; the upper stage was constructed between 1483 - 1487. Interestingly, St Andrew's Church tower addition was noted as the last significant construction before King Henry VIII established the Church of England in 1534, and the Reformation that followed.

There are many questions - who authorised the construction of the St Andrew's Church octagonal tower, how was it financed, when was it built? Was the wealthy cloth merchant, presumed to have lived in Merchant's House, instrumental in bringing the idea of the Bruges Cloth Hall Belfry to Colyton? Where are the records to support these theories? Research could be conducted into the merchant trading houses which were established in Bruges. Jacquie McCullough recently visited the Archivist at Exeter Cathedral to discuss the possibility of sourcing the church records of this period. Ellie Jones was very helpful and suggested many avenues for research.

There will be more information in the January newsletter for those Members interested in helping with this interesting project covering many different strands of research. If you would like to be involved or give guidance for the project, your input would be most welcome.

ii) Rebel Bear Project

THE COLYTON PARISH HISTORY SOCIETY REBEL BEAR PROJECT

Would you like to take part in this creative project?

We aim to produce bears dressed in authentic C17th costume, representing the 102 men and boys from Colyton who marched to Lyme Regis in support of the Duke of Monmouth and the Rebellion of 1685.

A Rebel Bear Event is planned for Spring 2024



Bears are dressed in clothes of the style worn during the time of the Monmouth Rebellion of 1685

Typically, the costumes are made of wool from sheep raised in the rebellion areas of East Devon, West Dorset and Somerset

The authentic colours are either natural or sourced from local foraged dyes (fallen leaves, bark from fallen trees), found in the Coly Valley.



Knitting Workshops in Colyton January & February 2024

Are you a nimble knitter?
Please register your interest by contacting Sarah Humphries, email: cloamcrazy@gmail.com
Come along for a knit & natter, enjoy a coffee and help support your local History Society.
Dates and times to be confirmed in the New Year.



a. Merchant's House
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3. Items you may have missed

a) Victoria steamship

<https://www.bridportnews.co.uk/news/23930460.pictures-victoria-steamship-sailing-west-dorset/?ref=rss&IYA-mail=2c6fe12a-fd17-4749-a1e1-928557f14565>

b) In praise of fossil collector Mary Anning

<https://sussexbylines.co.uk/community/in-praise-of-fossil-collector-mary-anning/?IYA-mail=2c6fe12a-fd17-4749-a1e1-928557f14565>

c) Devon Man who inspired Pattlesons Way

<https://www.midweekherald.co.uk/news/23912268.devon-man-inspired-pattlesons-way/?ref=rss&IYA-mail=2c6fe12a-fd17-4749-a1e1-928557f14565>

d) English Heritage - Famous Mansions that are in a sorry state

<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/money/technology/mansions-and-the-place-where-gunpowder-plot-unravelling-famous-english-landmarks-that-are-in-a-sorry-state/ar-AA1jFrBa?ocid=socialshare&pc=HCTS&cvid=faf824631a204aacab6cd12c1e7dbe98&ei=140>

e) D-Day Valentine tanks in Studland Bay added to at-risk register - BBC News

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-dorset-67358811.amp>

f) Gallantry medal for saving drowning scout in 1927 up for auction

<https://www.sidmouthherald.co.uk/news/23909175.gerald-boyd-given-gallantry-medal-saving-drowning-scout/?ref=eb&nid=2405&u=26e309a1465491fa9108b8530c3bc91f&date=081123>

g) Earl of Devon divorces

https://www.devonlive.com/news/devon-news/earl-devon-divorce-devons-meghan-8883931?fbclid=IwAR2RP5ox6AH-m1IVf6V3FuMq4korc12fQvXLqXOI_Yy_spydw7FiO4dhTn4

h) West Bay wartime history exhibition

<https://www.dorsetecho.co.uk/news/23887248.west-bay-war-showcase-wartime-history-dorset/?ref=rss&IYA-mail=2c6fe12a-fd17-4749-a1e1-928557f14565>

i) Lyme Regis Museum opens garden in memory of Paul Mason

<https://www.midweekherald.co.uk/news/23899186.lyme-regis-museum-opens-garden-memory-paul-mason/?ref=rss&IYA-mail=2c6fe12a-fd17-4749-a1e1-928557f14565>

j) Queen Victoria's carriage rotting in a Devon field

https://www.devonlive.com/news/devon-news/queen-victorias-royal-carriage-rots-8846968?utm_source=devon_live_newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Devon+Live+-



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k) Contents of Dillington House put up for auction

https://www.somersetlive.co.uk/news/somerset-news/dillington-house-contents-much-loved-8854231?fbclid=IwAR1k4QwHNIsI0YVzz_uCQRJr6EfVROoigLmopt9KpL4ywj-nxko3ftPU9fk

If you have any queries or comments about the items in this month's Newsletter do let me know.

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