

CORNISH PARISHES IN 1753

III LISKEARD

This account of Liskeard was sent to William Borlase by the Rev. Richard Haydon of Liskeard on 29th May, 1753. It is the work of John Trehawke of that town, described by Haydon as "a gentleman of good understanding, and well acquainted with everything that is worthy of note hereabouts." It is now in the Morrab Library, Penzance, Borlase Original Letters Vol. V, p. 3. Trehawke's subsequent correspondence with Borlase, giving much valuable information about East Cornwall, is in the same volume.

P.A.S.P.

LISKERRET otherwise Liskeard (antiently wrote Liskerd or Les-card) consists of a Town and a Parish of no small extent. The town is a very antient Borough and was incorporated by Queen Elizabeth: the Church which is at the end of the town towards the south-east is a spacious building dedicated to St. Martyn and is in common to the town and parish, and the Church Rate being every year divided into two moieties or halves the one half is paid by the town the other by the parish, but as to the poor and other parochial charges the town and parish are considered as separate districts and each maintains its own poor, etc., accordingly.

The Rev. Mr. Hony, the present vicar, is the owner of the advowson, and the Great Tithes belong to John Harris of Radford Esq.

There was formerly a small chapel of ease at Leanhill in this parish about three miles from the town and which has been used as such within the memory of many persons living but it is now in ruins. There is another much more antient about half a mile from the Town called Our Ladies Chappel now a dwelling, part of the Mannour of Hagland parcel of the dissolved Priory of Lancington. It is situated in the middle of Lady Park Wood joyning to, or rather part of, the Duke of Cornwall's old park, this part of it changing its name as I suppose when the chappel was erected. The remains of the chappel are scarce discernable. This account will very plainly answer a question that has frequently been asked, how the Lord of the Mannour of Hagland should be the owner of a single house and orchard in the middle of a wood and park belonging to the Duke of Cornwall.

Liskeard is situated in the Hundred of West but at the extremity of it for at half a mile distance from the town it joyns to Menhinet parish, in the Hundred of East, at a place called Maudlin formerly a Lazar House as that at St. Lawrence near Bodmin way, and perhaps some lands were given for the maintainance of it but as I never read or heard anything more particular concerning it so I can only give this hint in relation thereto.

There are two or three buildings in the town much more antique than the rest. One is called Great Place and which seems notwithstanding all the alterations it has passed through to have been somewhat of a religious kind but I never could learn any particulars, or that any notice was ever taken of it.

The principal Mannour within the parish of Liskeard and which comprehends a considerable part thereof is called the Mannour of Liskeard, one of the seventeen mannours of the antient Dutchy of Cornwall in which mannours are many customs in common through all and several have some peculiar ones to themselves respectively; thus for instance if a person dyes tenant in the Mannour of Stoke Climsland the estate falls to the wife and she may dispose of it as she pleases, in Liskeard it falls to the wife for life only and after her death it must descend to the son. In Trematon if no son it falls to the daughters as heirs at law, in Liskeard to the eldest daughter only. On these customs I could enlarge very circumstantially if needful. The tenants in general hold their estates under the payment of certain rents and fines and performing the common offices of a mannour, but some few still retain their antient services, thus the owner of Landewarrick within this mannour holds his estate under the service of meeting the Duke at Polston Bridge at his entrance into the County and wearing before him *Unam Capam Grisam*.

Another antient mannour is that of Hagland formerly held of the Prior of Lancelston. It retains the usual priviledges of antient mannours with respect to courts and officers with the addition of this peculiar circumstance that the great bell of the church is tolled when the manour court is held.

The Castle of Liskeard was antiently one of the seats of the Dukes and Earls of Cornwall, the walls whereof which were built with bad stones but an excellent cement are partly standing and partly demolished. The Latin School built in 1666 is within the site.

The hedges of the Old Park (now a village and inclosed fields) still discover themselves by their height in many places by which the extent of the park might easily be traced. It is called Old Park in contradistinction to another park within this parish and which belongs also to the Duke. The nearest bound of the latter is more than a mile off but the bounds of Old Park began at the end of the town. The New Park continued as a park until about 100 years since, just before it came into the hands of Major Johnson, but the Old Park must have been disparked for several centuries past. A castle mannour and park generally went together in old time among the great folks.

The parish consists of corn pasture and coarse ground or heath intermixed with several coppice woods but no commons or downs. Near the town the manure is dung, at a distance lyme and sand. The sorts of grain sown are wheat, barley and oats, and the ground prepared as in the other parts of the neighbourhood.

The town and parish are very healthy—very seldom any epidemick fevers and I never heard of an Ague in the town among the native inhabitants.

The polypes have been found and taken up here and in the same pools three or four other water insects that will answer the experiment made on the Polype of multiplying by division. The names of those other I know not except that of which Mr. Tremblay has given a Cat. in his *History of the Polype* and calls *Limace Aquatique Noire* but the name is all the notice Mr. Tremblay takes of it. By these it appears plain it is not peculiar to the Polype to be made two by being cut into two, but whether any will answer the vegetating quality of the Polype to have their young ones like shoots grow out of and fall from their sides I must leave to the curious.

Liskeard has an excellent spring or fountain in the middle of the town continually flowing from a reservoir through four pipes. This spring empties itself at a mile's distance west from the town at a village called Lodge into Loo River four miles above the flow of the tide or the Sandplace from whence this part of the country fetches its manure and six miles from the sea and town of Looe.

There is another little river on the east side of the town at a like distance of a mile on which the Town Mills are, which belong to the Corporation and are usually let at about £100 a year the inhabitants being obliged to grind thereat. This river falls into the sea about two miles east of Looe at a place called Seaton. Our fish are trout called here Shots caught with an angle and fly.

We have a mineral water at a mile from the town and near the eastern river esteemed by some to be good in its kind, but it has hitherto been of little note and seems likely to continue in obscurity.

These are the only thoughts that occur to my memory relating to Liskeard unless it be with respect to the charities and sepulchral inscriptions. The former can be transcribed if necessary from the particular memorandums of them hung up in the church. There are lands also in the hands of feoffees appropriated for the joynt benefit of the town and parish. The particulars thereof can be transcribed from the trust deed of which I have a copy in my custody.

There are two or three inscriptions on tombstones of a more antient date and a modern one or two not worthy a place in History unless it be to shew that our genius does not run high this way.