

A BORLASE MANUSCRIPT RE - DISCOVERED

Interim Note for Private Circulation

by P.A.S. Pool, F.S.A.

An important MS book of drawings by Dr. William Borlase has recently been discovered in Devon Record Office at Exeter (ref. Z 19/16/1), having been missing for over a century. Known shortly as Inscriptions, its full title is 'Topographical Sketches, Church Monuments, Buildings, Epitaphs and Remarks, tending to elucidate the Ecclesiastical and Parochial History of Cornwall'. The book was begun in 1748, though some earlier drawings have been inserted; the majority of the contents dates from the 1750s. The drawings are ecclesiastical or topographical in subject; there is only one drawing of a prehistoric monument, the stone circle of Boscawen-Un in St. Buryan.

The MS was lettered E in Borlase's own list of his MSS, and was Lot 337 in Sotheby's catalogue of the sale of Copeland Borlase's library in 1887; it is no. 79 in the list of Borlase MSS appended to my biography (William Borlase, 1986, 297). After sale in 1887 its whereabouts was unknown until 1990, although it seems to have spent much of that time, unidentified, in Exeter City Library and latterly in Devon Record Office. It contains a letter written in 1890 by Walter Daniell of London, offering it for sale to an un-named addressee, and two book plates: 'Fisher Library, Mrs. Edward Fisher's bequest, 1897', and 'Royal Albert Memorial, Public Library, Exeter'.

This discovery enables a happy and important deletion to be made from the Borlase MSS listed as missing when I wrote his biography. There was almost certainly a companion volume of drawings of prehistoric and druidic monuments, probably the large quarto of Miscellaneous Drawings which is D in Borlase's list and No. 80 in mine.

There follows a summary list of the Cornish drawings in the Inscriptions MS, in alphabetical order of parishes and with dates when these are given. Page numbers are given, with loose drawings listed under the pages where they are now found; a loose page is numbered X. A large number of pages are blank.

- St. Agnes Holy Well, 1752 (page 66).
- St. Allen Doorway at Gwarnick, 1754 (107).
- St. Anthony in Meneage Plan of Little Dennis and fortifications, 1736 (138): View of Church and Gillan Creek, 1733 (139).
- Antony Epitaphs of Richard and other Carews (67).
- St. Austell Inscription over church porch, 1752, with earlier drawing by Jeremiah Milles, 1751, and later note by Borlase, 1770 (59): View of church tower, 1755 (95): Par Bay surveyed by Lt. Michel, 1740 (145).
- Bodmin Two drawings of Saxon doorway in church, one dated 1756 (65, 97).
- Breage View of Godolphin house, 1746 (126).
- St. Buryan Inscription on tomb of Clarice de Bolleit (8, 82, X): Memorial to Arthur Levelis, died 1671 (22): Stone circle at Boscawen-Um (108).
- Caerhays Inscription in window of domestic chapel, from Francis Gregor, 1756 (97).
- Callington View of Dupath Well, by Charles Lyttelton, 1749 (64).
- Camborne Chapel cross at Troon (65).
- Cardinham Brass of Thomas Awmarle, Rector, 1748 (2).
- St. Columb Major View of church, 1755 (71).
- St. Columb Minor Inscription on gateway at Rialton, 1738 (55).
- Cubert Memorial to Arthur Lawrence, died 1669, and Humphry Lawrence, died 1699 (22).
- Cury Saxon doorway in church (90).
- Duloe Arms in church (88).
- Falmouth View of Pendennis Castle (117): Pyramid built by Martin Killigrew in 1737-8 (141).
- Fowey View of 'Trefry Castle' (Place House), 1753 (123).
- St. Germans View of church, 1756 (105).
- Germoe St. Germoe's Chair, in churchyard, 1724 (74).
- Gorran Niche for holy water in chapel at Bodrugan, 1750 (103).
- Gulval Memorial to John Davills, died 1627, and Arthur Harris, died 1628 (16).

- Illogan Views of Tehidy house (110, 125): View and plan of Carn Brea castle (127).
- St. Ives Brass of Oto Treynwyth, died 1463, and his wife Agnes (38).
- St. Just View of church, 1741 (54): View of Porthnanvon Cove, 1749 (140).
- St. Keverne Inscribed font, 1752 (70).
- Lamorran Grave of Henry Trevenur in churchyard (57).
- Landewednack Drawings of inscribed font, one dated 1746 (12, 62).
- Lanhydrock View of house, 1756 (111).
- Lanteglos by Camelford Epitaph of James Beauford, former Rector, deprived as non-juror 1690, died 1721 (68): Monumental stone about one mile west of Camelford, 1753 (89).
- Launceston View of castle and town, 1757 (119).
- Lelant View of Trevethoe house, 1752 (129).
- Lezant View of Greystone bridge (120).
- Lostwithiel View of church, 1752 (58).
- Ludgvan Latin inscriptions set up by Borlase in Rectory garden (title page): View of church tower, 1762 (136).
- Maker View of Mount Edgecumbe, 1756, and another by Richard Edgecumbe (133-4).
- Mawgan in Meneage Two monuments of Carminow family, 1744 (72): Views of Trelowarren house, 1751 and 1745 (110, 131): Sepulchral monument near church called Mawgan cross (142).
- Mawnan Tomb in churchyard of William Newcourte, died 1606 (27): View of Falmouth bay from Rosemullion, 1732 (135): View of Helford river from Glebe, 1736 (147).
- St. Michael's Mount Stone with arms in St. Mary's chapel (61): Fragment of sepulchral stone dug from floor of same chapel, 1752 (X).
- Minster Inscribed stone at Slaughter Bridge (X).
- Padstow Brass of Laurence Merther, Vicar, died 1421, 1757 (96): View from Place House, 1738 (121).
- Paul View of grotto in cliff near Mousehole (137): View of Mousehole from St. Clement's Island, 1746 (143).

- Pelynt View of gatehouse at Trelawne (95).
- Probus Inscription on grave of John Wulvedon, died 1514, and his wife Cecilia, died 1512 (42): View of chapel at Golden, 1749 (57): View of church, 1740 (79).
- Roche Two views of Roche Rock, one dated 1746 (93, 109).
- Sancreed Plan of Chapel Euny (63).
- Sennen Sketch of Whitesand Bay from Land's End, 1749 (140): Inscription on font base (X).
- Sithney Two uninscribed gravestones belonging to the Priory of St. John's, 1752 (52): Brass of Roger Trewythnyk, 1741 (X).
- Tintagel Four gravestones in church (65).
- Wendron Brass of Warin Penhaluryk, Vicar, died 1535 (53).
- Werrington Two views of house and park, one dated 1757 (114-5).

The MS also includes some non-Cornish drawings by Borlase, mostly made during his journeys to Oxford in 1753 and 1757 to supervise the printing of his books. They include, in Devon, a Saxon doorway at Exeter Castle (p. 90) and an inscribed stone three miles west of Okehampton (69); in Somerset, a chapel at Borough Bridge near Taunton (91); in Gloucestershire, the gateway into Badminton Park (89) and Lord Bathurst's house at Cirencester (128); and in Oxfordshire, Ditchley House (128). There are also a few drawings, copied from or contributed by others, of places which Borlase never visited. These include churches at Tutbury in Staffordshire (73) and Halesowen in Shropshire (75, 87); Atherdee Castle in County Louth, Ireland (144); druidic and mithraic inscriptions from Gaul (6, 51, 146); and a rock in Upper Egypt (99).

A fuller account of this MS may be published at a later date. Thanks are due to Mr. Colin Edwards, of Cornwall Record Office, who made this important discovery, and to the staff of Devon Record Office for their ready co-operation.

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