Notes taken from a Lecture on local history - Ringmore
given by Rev'd H.C. Hingston Randolph.

The early history of Ringmore, so far as anything about is known, takes one back before the Conquest to the reign of Edward the Confessor. We know that the parish in those days was divided into two principal estates. We know the names of the owners, the extent of the land and its exact value, state of cultivation, flocks, herds which it carried and the number of persons employed - so approximately the population.

All the particulars come from the Doomsday Book. The two estates were of the Manor of Ringmore, spelt in Latin - REMMORA -, and the Manor of Ockenbury. In the original spelling of Ringmore the 'G' was omitted. In some old documents it is written 'Ridmore' and some say the real derivation of the word is Redmoor. Doomsday spelling probably gives the right clue to the derivation of Celtic origin and means the great headland - Celtic spelling RHYN MAWR. This is the name by which the Bolt was known in ancient times. Ayrmer also may be of Celtic origin - 'AYL MAWR - the great rock with obvious reference to the Blackstone. FOLLY is also probably derived from the Celtic word FOIL - a cliff.

HECUS was the owner of the Manor of Ringmore in the Confessor's time or HECCHE - a name which occurs frequently in the Registers of the Parish. A John Hetch or Hatch was at one time tenant of the Manor Farm. Owner of the Manor of Ockenbury was TOVI or TORI - may later have become Terry.

In the Conqueror's time both Manors were held by one RADULF. At the conquest Saxon Hecche and Tori disappear and Radulf comes in (Norman). Master Hecche had gelded or paid tax for 1 hide and ½ of land - a hide = about 100 acres. The whole of the land consisted of 6 carrucates = 6 carrucae or ploughs in one year. There were also 6 acres of meadow and 2 of pasture; from which it would appear that the whole manor consisted of about 150 - 160 acres - valued at 30 solidi or shillings- number of sheep 67. The population of the Manor of Ringmore consisted of 6 villains, 6 borderers and 2 serfs; that of Ockenbury 5 villains, 2 borderers and 1 serf. That is 22 families in all and a rough figure of population for the Parish of 120. Villains = villagers - small tenants with just enough land to sustain their families. Borderers were rather better than Villains as each had his own Bord or Cottage with a parcel of land. Serfs were probably Slaves of their master and kept by him. Radulf, who was the Lord of the Manor, was not Lord in his own right but held the lands in demesne from a higher Lord - JUHEL of Totnes. Juhel was a very powerful Lord and finally had to be put out of the way.

Crowning the hill, the little Saxon Church, 13th century, still retains portions of the old Saxon wall and two narrow windows. It was not mentioned in the Exeter Domesday Book, in which only 10 Churches were mentioned, all being large foundations such as Tavistock and Buckfast. The Church at Ringmore would have been merely a Manor Chapel to serve the needs of the dependents of Master Hecche. No seats for the congregation, men in one part and women in another.

By the Church would be the Manor House, perhaps where the old Manor Farm is today, probably the only stone house in the place, where Radulf would have lived in state. Further down the hill and up the opposite slope would be the mean huts of the villains, with, here and there, the more pretentious wooden houses of the borderers. The houses would be devoid of upper stories with bare ground floors strewn with rushes and just a hole in the roof - no chimney.

Forest laws debarred the villagers from snaring a rabbit or any sort of game and the penalty for an offence of this kind was loss of a hand or eye. The Curfew Bell would be sounded from the Church Gable at 8 p.m. at which all lights and fires had to be extinguished.

After Domesday little is known of the early history of Ringmore beyond that the Manor passed into the hands of certain great families. William FitzStephen held the Manor in Henry II time and passed it on to the fammily of Fissacre. One of this family, Sir Peter Fissacre, killed the Rector of Woodleigh in a quarrel, for which crime he was ordered by the Pope to build a Church of Moreleigh. This took place in Edward 1 reign. Sir Giles de Fissacre, Lord of the Manor, presented Henry de Eyneton to the Rectory of Ringmore in Nov. 1284. In 1315 the Manor was held by Isabel de Fissacre. Later it passed to the Kirkhams who held it for 400 years. The last was Francis Kirkham who died in April 1770. He built the Poor House and gave it to the poor of the Parish as a place of refuge and rest for ever.

Ringmore at one time was classed as a Town and had a Town Well. It had 2 hostelries the Rising Sun and the New Inn, a billing or Bowling greenand its kennels and a pack of hounds. It had fish cellars at Challabrough which were very busy in the Pilchard season, its little shops and its own Mill. The old Ringmore route to the Mill ran along the bottom of the firlds called Millens or Mill Lane. Later a Coastguard station. Its councillors had their Town Hall in the long room at the New Inn. This was from an old Parish Rate Book 1763 - ' lately come in to my hand' written by Rev.H.C.Hingeston-Randolph in the Old Parish Book kept by the Churchwardens from Exeter 1770. Rectors were non-resident and the parich work was entrusted to a Curate, who had charge also of Bigbury.

The Poor House was given to the Poor not the Parish. Later Poor Houses were built in other villages and maintained out of the rates and the local Councillors took over this Poor house and turned it into a common Poor House. This lasted until 1839 when it was then sold by the Church Wardens for £33 to assist the Church rates. It was bought by the Lord of the Manor of those days and turned into a cattle house with granary above for his tenant at the Higher Farm. It was still standing in the time of the Revd Hingeston-Randolph and was owned by a Mr. William Luckroft

There used to be smugglers who were aided and abetted by the parson at the Rectory and when the old Rectory was taken down there were plentiful evidences of this. There are still traces in the Rectory built 1822 of a secret passage from outside, leading to the cellar and caves and secret hiding places along the cliffs

Remains of the old cellars where Pilchards were salted and cured are still to be seen at Challabrough on the Warrens and on the Island. A Mr. T. Farley gave an account of the fish track. As soon as it was known that the fish had entered the bay the Huer was posted on the cliffs to watch the shoreward movement of the fish, The Master Seiner held his boats in readiness until he could give the order to go into action. Three boats were employed. The Seine Boat - the great net stacked on it, crew of 9, 3 of whom including the Skipper attended to the shooting of the net. The 'Volyar' or Follarer with the tuck net and implements for mooring the great ships Seine. crew of 9. and a smaller boat, called the 'Larker' from which the Master Seiner directed operations. At the word the rowers reached the desired spot- the great Seine cast the net , rowed gently round the shoal- the Volyar kept the net taut until the circle round the fish was completed. The Larker took up its position leaking the water with paddles to keep the fish from escaping whilst the ends of the nets were quickly lashed together and the fish captured

A mackerel catch required more hands and 2 crab pots were hoisted on poles on the highest point of the island as a signal for assistance. This was the task of the landlady at the Pilchard Inn - Mrs Fanny Barden - and the services of Datcher (Thatcher) Farley were called to guide the boats to the shoal by signalling with his hands from the cliffs. There would be great rejoicings in Ringmore and a great spread given by the owners at the New Inn. A procession round the village with a band and lead by Mr. Farley's grandfather, the Seine Master, carrying for a banner a Pilchard on a pole.

Reference again to Ayrmer - might have got its name from its propinquity to the mouth of the Erme - called in old times the Arme

Noddon Boundary through Marwell meadows and orchard and came to the bottom of Noddon Hill. St Mary's Well, from which Marwell gets its name. The present building over St. Mary's Well was erected by Revd F.C.Hingeston Randolph and is an imitation of St Minver-Cornwall. The ornamental stone work which adorns the Arch was found under the paving of the Church during restoration 1861

Quote RevF.C.H-R ' I made up my mind to insert a circular window well up in the gable, drew up a plan and a new window made. When a portion of the external slating ~~xxxxxx~~ was stripped and back seat and panelling of gallery removed I discovered the lower half of the original window - a circular one closely corresponding in size with my new work and able to retain unaltered the long concealed half of the . The dressed stonework of the old 'rose' had been knocked away but there were indications that it had been simply a large foliated circle without tracery and such was the window I had on the ground to be set up. Later ' I was in the Churchyard superintending the Restoration when a very old man made his appearance and said to me ' If you please, Sir, they tell me you have put up a round window in the Church again and I am come down from St Anne's Chapel on purpose to see it . He told me that his grandfather was one of the men who worked on Smeaton's lighthouse when it was in building and that he had heard the old man say when he was a youngster that when it was clear weather he could see the round window in the West End of Ringmore Church

Note. In 1766 more light was required for the singing gallery and a new window was pierced through the West Wall of the Church low down so as to give light both to those in the gallery and to those who sat underneath. At the same time the original West window of the church was filled in.

Various particulars of accounts

Paid Mr. Walters toward the Singing	£1.11.6d
Paid Mr. Walters remainder of his sallery for instructing the singing	£1.18.6d
Paid Mr. Widden for spanning of ye pipe	10.0d
'The Base Vile'	£7. 7.0d
Paid for a Case for the 'Vile'	3.6d.

Poor Rate Book.

For washing Ambrose Crispin	1/- (Week after week this occurs.)
Lying forth Ambrose Crispin	4/-
Wool for Ambrose Crispin	5d (The Wool Act in force required that the dead be wrapped in wool for burial.)

For a coffin for Ambrose Crispin 8/6d and so on.

Reminiscences by Mrs. Alice Mason nee Farley.

'My Mind goes back to the stories my grandparents have told me. In the old days, before the motor cars came along, the Doctor used to come on horseback to visit the sick. Sometimes the Rector, The Revd F. HingstonRandolph, would make up some medecine for the villagers, he being a very learbed man. He also used to send coal and dinners to the poor of the village. The Rectory then was well and truly occupied with a big family, eight servants and two gardeners plus a handyman. Today the Rectory is part of the Farm and used for storage. Who would believe that garden parties were held on the Rectory lawn where well-to-do people met and enjoyed themselves Fetes were also held there, where the high light of the afternoon was the Folk Dancing. The Modbury Orchestra came and played and there were several side shows. There was another musical group too - the celebrated Ringmore band. A man called Sam Ryder was the conductor and he used to start them off by saying 'One, Two Three - GO' and off they went. In the Church Institute Socials and Dances were held and very enjoyable evenings spent. The top part of the room was known as the billiard room where the men of the village used to go when they wished. Several different games were played and the men took it in turns to be in charge. The New Inn(now the Journeys End) was nearly always full and the local shop was there too. Before that the Pub was at the top of the village in a house now known as Challabrough Cottage which was also the Post Office. In fact, about five different houses have had the Post Office at different times.

The cottages have been altered too. Barnford used to be two cottages. The village midwife lived in part of it. She was my great grandmother and in great demand as there were large families. In 1929 the Women's Institute was opened. The new Rectory was bought in the 1950's and the Mains water system came to the village at the end of the 1930's. There used to be a village school but it was closed and is now a cottage.

Village Cross crowns the hill opposite the main entrance to the Church, where the parish Alms-houses once stood, has always been known as 'The Cross'. 'Up to Cross' was a familiar way of designating that particular spot. No monument remains but the name is still there. It is practically certain that every Devon and Cornish village had its Cross in ancient time.

From there go by the Upper Road of the Village - more a street then with cottages on either side. The last house to pass was Challaboro Cottage- once a public house 'The Rising Sun' - more appropriate would have been the Setting Sun. Later the village Post Office. Just beyond it and the road turning to the right was Plum Pool - a stagnant sheet of water. Following the road straight ahead by the cart trackon its right came to the entrance to the Billing Green- that is the old Village Green or Bowling Green which was the property of the parishioners about ½ acre.

Following public footpath along the summit of the Ringmore Downs came to edge of massive cliffs - Southern Boundary- to the right Westcombe not Wiscombe, which is locally and wrongly called - stream flows across the beach marks the extreme limit of the Parish in that direction. This side of Ayrmer almost as far as Challabro stream dividing the beach marks the parish eastern boundary.

Copy of a newspaper cutting - Early 1900s Kingsbridge Gazette.

ROYALIST RECTOR'S SUFFERINGS

Persecution of a Ringmore Priest - Some Past History

Fifty years ago one of the few periodicals devoted to the interests of Church people was the 'Newbery House Magazine', and one of the contributors at the time was the Rev. F.C. Hingeston-Randolph, who will be remembered by the oldest residents in the lovely district embracing the village of Ringmore. In an article the writer gave some very interesting details of an incumbent of Ringmore in the seventeenth century, William Lane, who, after obtaining his degrees at Oxford, came into Devon ten days after being admitted B.D. On November 16, 1637, therefore, Lane was instituted by Bishop Hall. The Kirkhams, of Blagdon and Bidwell, succeeding the FitzStephens and Fishacres, had for at least 300 years been lords of the manor and patrons of Ringmore Church. They were, we are told, an ancient and knightly family, and the last of the line, Francis Kirkham, died about 150 years ago.

The previous rector, Francis Torkington, who had just died at a great age, had held the living for 50 years. Sir William Kirkham had granted to Torkington the right of presentation for one term, and he had been permitted to assign it to one William Griffiths, a Bachelor of Laws, who presented Lane. The new rector entered upon his ministry at a most critical time in the fortunes of the Church, and he must have found peace and rest, at least for a while, in this Devonshire combe. The old rectory house to which Lane brought his wife and children stood high on the hill above the church. It was a mediaeval building, and stood unchanged until the beginning of the last century, when it had to make way for a more modern residence.

The church of All Hallows is described as very interesting and is one of the very few in Devon that have come down to us un-enlarged, and otherwise unchanged, from the end of the thirteenth century, when it was rebuilt. It retains in its north transept - the Manor Chapel - a portion of the old cruciform church, which, beyond all doubt, was standing on the far-off day of the Confessor-King, when Saxon Heche was lord.

Mr. Hingeston-Randolph, about the year 1860, undertook the restoration of Ringmore Church, and he has put on record ' the surprise and joy with which under three sets of the Commandments, painted on successive coats of plaster and white-wash (the innermost of which, in black letter, and bordered with arabesque scroll work, was evidently of the date of the ordinance) I found, and with my own hands helped to uncover, a unique and beautiful mural painting, in perfect condition, contemperaneous with and covering the whole of the east wall above the chancel-arch.'

In the following year, on October 7th 1638, Mr. Lane was also given the neighbouring parish of Aveton Gifford. The new living was the larger as tp population and value, and it was more on the map, being on one of the main roads of the county. The Rector, however, preferred to remain with his Ringmore flock, in one of the most secluded parishes in England.

When the Civil War at last broke out, the Ringmore parson devoted all his energies, in company with the Champernownes and the Fortescues, his neighbours, to the Royalist cause. In the field on the glebe at Aveton Gifford, which commanded the important bridge which carried over the river the main road from Plymouth to

Kingsbridge and Salcombe, he organised his parishioners, with picks and spades, to dig trenches and form earthworks, so as to construct quite a formidable little fort. But it was all in vain. Already a price had been laid on the head of 'Bishop Lane, the traitor', as in derision the enemy called him. He retreated to his house at Ringmore, hoping to be forgotten in the general confusion.

Already, however, his foes had landed at Ayrmer Cove, and made for Ringmore rectory and sacked it. Lane found the place a wreck; his two sons were missing; all his goods, including his sheep and other live stock on the glebe, had been destrm destroyed or carried away. He discovered from the frightened parishioners that some of the soldiers enraged at missing their prey, had remained behind and were even then sacking the houses at Aveton Gifford or scouring the country in search of him. What was he to do ?

Said the Rev. Hingeston-Randolph: " the tower of our church is a very remarkable structure in every way. It stands on the south side of the nave and has no tower-arch; only a narrow doorway communicating with its first floor by a winding staircase of stone; the lowest stage being utilised as a porch. The masonry is quite exceptionally good, elaborately bonded throughout and of great strength; the windows little more than slits, five of them closely resembling loopholes, the battlemented parapets carried on bold corbels and overhanging the walls menacingly.. The lower or perch stage is vaulted in a semi-circular arch of plain masonry like the arch of an ordinary bridge, filled up solidly to form the floor of the room over it. This room contains an exceedingly rare feature - a fireplace in the south-east angle, the flue of which is carried up the leads of the tower, where it emerges behind the battlements. There is another little room above, approached by a ladder through a trap-door, and over this is the bell-chamber. Two of the windows in the lowest room are somewhat wider than the others, and are glazed now, for the sake of the bell-ringers but when I knew them first they still retained the old filling-in, thich skeets of lead, pierced with many tiny holes arranged in patterns. The place was chill and gloomy as a cavern.

It was into this tower the hunted rector fled, and for three long months he hid there, fed by his faithful flock out of their humble store. Sunday after Sunday, through all this trying time, he came down from his hiding place and spoke from the altar to the people who gathered there in silence and fear.

At last rumour reached him that his location was known. So he sadly bid his followers farewell, and, having paid a stealthy visit to his wife and children, who were living in a house of his own, the Mill House at Aveton Gifford, he made his way to the coast and escaped into France. Meanwhile he had been deprived of his benefices. The rectory of Aveton Gifford was assigned to a renegade priest, Francis Barnard, the vicar of Ugborough, who, not long before, having turned traitor, had been seized by some Loyalist troops and cast into prison. When the war was over, however, he was inducted in the rude manner of those strange times, but he did not reign long; he led a scandalous existence , utterly neglecting his duties, and became too bad ven for the Roundheads. He was eventually deprived of the living and fled into Ireland, where he is supposed to have died. The living at Ringmore was given to one Samuel Ford, who seems to have been a man of some character and repute.

After a time Lane was able to return to England, and making his way to Aveton Gifford, he found his wife and family in the direst straits, owing to the cowardly conduct of the wretched Barnard. For a time things were a little better

but the family found it impossible to exist on the output of the mill, so the household broke up, one son going to New England, the father going away with a daughter and two other sons, and a son and daughter remained with the mother.

The old rector and his party succeeded in obtaining employment in some limestone quarries at Hope's Nose, in Torbay, and worked up a profitable trade with the boats which called there for stone. Ruin overtook them again from an unexpected quarter. A privateer anchored one day just off the quarries, and the crew drove them from their cottage and took away all their belongings, down to their tools which they used for their work.

So Lane returned to the mill at Aveton Gifford, where he found his people suffering worse than ever. The cowardly Barnard had ruined everything. In despair, Lane started out to London to lay his hard case before the Council. He was forced to walk the whole way, but he got his case considered and in the end Barnard was dispossessed. The poor old rector, though, was not restored. On the other hand, he was consulted as to a successor,, and on his recommendation one John Marten was appointed, who he had reason to hope would at least allow him to spend his last days in his humble tenement in peace.

It is sad to think that the old man was destined never to see his home or family again. A little money had been given him, but only enough to enable him to reach Honiton, from whence he set out on foot. One very hot day he became parched with thirst and drank some water he found on the roadside. He became so ill that he had the greatest difficulty in reaching Exeter, where he put up for the night at the 'King's Head', one of the inns in the High Street. The next day he was found to be in a dreadful fever, and he was unable to resist it in his weak state and died.

It is put on record that Marten, and also Ford, conformed at the Restoration. The former held the living at Aveton Gifford for many years afterwards.

Bishop Seth's Episcopal Register tells us that on February 13, 1663, George Reynell was instituted to Ringmore, void by the death of Samuel Ford, last incumbent thereof, on the presentation of William Kirkham of Pinhoe. In the parish register of Ringmore is the simple entry ' January 5, 1663, Samuel Ford, minister of the gospel, was buried.' There is no stone to mark his grave.

It is good to know that poor old William Lane was buried in a way befitting such a Godly man. The same year that Lane was instituted at Ringmore, his friend, Thomas Alden, was appointed to the rectory of Alphington, on the Chudleigh road, near Exeter. Whether Alden visited his stricken Brother's deathbed is not known; quite possibly he did. What we do know is that after Lane had died his friend conveyed the body to his own church and laid it to rest in the chancel under the Communion table on August 31st 1654. Alden - who, like Lane, had suffered persecution a few years before - died a few weeks after he had buried his old colleague.

Copy of a Newspaper Cutting - The Illustrated Western Weekly News of Sept.3rd 1910.

PREB. HINGESTON-RANDOLPH

Death of the venerable Rector of Ringmore

Rev. Prebendary Hingeston-Randolph, rector of Ringmore, near Kingsbridge, died on Saturday evening. He had a severe illness about two years ago, but recovered sufficiently to celebrate last June the jubilee of his rectorship to the parish. He was appointed to Ringmore on June 16th, 1860, and the anniversary of that day this year was observed as a general holiday in the parish, and a presentation was made to him on the occasion. But for some time his health had been visibly failing, and some weeks ago he took to his bed, and his life quietly ebbed away. He retained his mental faculties almost to the last.

Francis Charles Hingeston-Randolph was born at Truro Vean Cottage, Truro, on March 31st, 1833. His father, Francis Hingeston, was at that time Controller of the H.M. Customs of Truro, which was then more a place of ships and ship-building than it has been since the introduction of steamships. The elder Mr. Hingeston originally spelt his name Hingston. He was born at St Ives, in Cornwall, on November 27th 1796, was educated at Truro Grammar School and he died in 1841, when his only son, Francis Charles, was but twelve years old. That Francis Charles was born into a refined literary home is evidenced by the fact that the father had some claim to be a poet. Some of the elder Mr. Hingeston's poems were printed by Mr. Polwhele in a book published in 1831, entitled 'Biographical Sketches in Cornwall' and in 1857 his son collected the father's scattered literary productions and published them, with a dedication to the Earl of St. Germans.

The venerable clergyman, now deceased, restores the ancient spelling of his name in 1854, and assumed that of Randolph in addition on his marriage, on July 26th 1860, with Martha Jane, only child and heiress of Rev. Herbert Randolph, M.A. for many years incumbent of Melrose, in the diocese of Edinburgh.

Mr. F.C.Hingeston, as he then was, graduated at Exeter College, Oxford, where he was Elliott exhibitioner (double hon. 4th class, Lit. Hum,. and Matt.) He was ordained in 1856 to the curacy of Holywell, Oxford. He moved to Hampton Gayn in the same diocese, in 1858, and succeeded to the incumbency of that parish about a year later. In 1860 he was collated to the remote but beautiful parish of Ringmore, on the South Devon coast, about six miles from Kingsbridge.

At Ringmore Mr. Hingeston-Randolph has remained, the only preferment coming to him being that of a prebendary of Exeter Cathedral, which was given to him in 1885 by Bishop Temple, just before that prelate was translated to the Bishopric of London. The population of Ringmore is small , and this enabled the new rector, without neglecting the parish, to pursue those architectural and archaeological which have marked him out as one of the most erudite clergymen in the West of England. In the earlier part of his career he was a very determined protagonist of the Church, and having a trenchant style, with great knowledge at its back, he made many an antagonist wince and imagine that Mr. Hingeston-Randolph must be a man of almost ferocious character. To those who knew him, however, he was one of the most genial and courteous of friends, and he and his family were always most kind and generous in all their relations with the parishioners.

Mr. Hingeston-Randolph was a man of manifold activities and of prodigious capacity for work. His preciseness and accuracy of detail was manifested not only in his historical and biographical labours, but in all his work for the parish and the deanery. He was dean rural of Woodleigh from 1879 to 1890. One of his first

labours at Ringmore was the restoration of the parish church, which he found in a deplorable condition. Under his own direction - for he had considerable architectural knowledge and skill, and was frequently consulted on such matters - Ringmore Church and churchyard became renowned for their beautiful order. He has described the church in his own words. Writing in 1880 he said :-

" The church - All Hallows - is one of the very few in Devon that have come down to us unenlarged and unchanged from the end of the 13th century, when it was rebuilt, and it retains it its north transept - the Manor Chapel - a portion of the old cruciform church which, beyond all doubt, was standing in the far-off day when our saintly Confessor-King 'was alive and dead', when Saxon Heche was lord. I may not linger to describe the architectural details of this venerable house of prayer, the privilege of restoring which, with reverent care for every beam and stone, fell to my lot. But I cannot refrain from telling of the surprise and joy with which, under three sets of the Commandments painted on successive coats of plaster or whitewash (the innermost of which, in black letters, and bordered with Arabesque scrollwork, was evidently of the date of the ordinance), I found, and with my own hands helped to uncover, a unique and beautiful mural painting, in perfect condition, contemperaneous with, and covering the whole of the east wall of the nave, above the chancel arch."

The work of restoration cost £1,200, the whole of which was defrayed by the rector out of his private purse. He had studued architecture as a boy, and at the age of 19 he designed the vicarage and schools of St. George's, Truro, and was accepted as architect by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. He built a manor house in Northumberland, and with the architects fee provided an organ for Ringmore Church, a small instrument by Bevington, but of wonderfully beautiful tone. He also restored a large number of churches in Cornwall , and some in Devon, free of charge. Among these may be mentioned Zennor, Manaccan, St. Columb Minor, and Belstone. He also took great interest in the building of the Cathedral Church of Truro, and it was largely through his influence that the south aisle of old St. Mary's Church was preserved. St. Mary's was the church of his boyhood, where he was baptized and began to read the lessons as a lad of 16. Bishop Benson opposed the idea, the south aisle of old St. Mary's parish church, on account of the large extra cost, but, after it was done, and the first completed portion dedicated, he asked Mr. Hingeston-Randolph to lunch and said "You were quite right. This link with antiquity is the making of the Cathedral" but, with a humorous twinkle, he added" I should like to send the bill in to you."

After acquaintance with his work as rural dean of Woodleigh, Bishop Temple was led to say " Prebendary Hingeston-Randolph is a financial genius." It was Bishop Temple who asked him to undertake the great work by which he is so well known, viz. translating, indexing, and editing the Episcopal Registers of the diocese of Exeter. To this work for many years he had applied himself with devoted zeal day after day, w writing from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. Besides this, he received numberless letters from correspondents in all parts of the country, and never refused any appeal, whatever the labour entailed; revising the proof of many books - all a labour of love.

In the last quarter of a century of his life Preb. Hingeston-Randolph largely withdrew himself from all matters of public controversy, though he remained to the last keenly interested in all that went on around him, as those who had any personal correspondence with him know well. But he was absorbed in his great historical studies.

As long ago as 1850 he had published a book entitled 'Specimens of Ancient Cornish Crosses, Fonts &c" In 1857 he edited the poems of his father, Francis Hingeston. These were followed by some historical works of John Capgrave, and

later on he edited " Royal and Historical Letters during the reign of Henry IV." for the Lords of H.M. Treasury, under the direction of the Master of the Rolls, in 1872 he published an " Architectural History of the Church of St. Germans," with an introduction by the present Earl of St. Germans. But it was not until 1886 that he produced the first volume of what was undoubtedly the great literary work of his life, which he continued almost to the end. This was his work on the episcopal registers of the mediaeval Bishops of Exeter, one of heavy labour and requiring great erudition. Patiently he worked at this task for many years, poring over manuscripts of crabbed Latin full of unusual contractions. Thus he furnished to the ordinary student a perfect mine of authentic historical information. The Registers have been published in the following order :- The Register of Edmund Stafford 1886; the Registers of Bishops Bronescombe and Quivil, and the Times of Bishop Bytton, 1889; the Register of Walter D. Stapledon 1892; James de Berkeley and John de Grandisson in three parts 1894, 1897 and 1899; Thomas deBramy ham 1902; and Part II 1905; and Bishop Edmund Lacy, part I 1909. He was working at Part II of Bishop Lacy up to the time of his illness. Prebendary Hingeston-Randolph had also edited and annotated with much care " Dr. Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy in Devon and Cornwall during the Rebellion."

He continued this work until May of the present year in spite of increasing weakness. On June 16th 1910, the parishioners of Ringmore celebrated his jubilee as their rector; after which the weakness increased rapidly. In 1903 he had great trouble in the loss of his wife. Of his family two sons have followed their father as ordained ministers of the Church. Rev. H.C. Hingeston-Randolph is now rector of St. Bride's, Little Haven, Pembrokeshire, and Rev. C.H. Hingeston- Randolph is assistant-curate of St. Kew. near Wadebridge.

(In fact the Rev. H.C. Hingeston-Randolph followed on his father as incumbent of the parish of Ringmore.)

EXTRACT FROM
HISTORY, GAZETEER AND DIRECTORY OF THE COUNTY OF DEVON - SECOND EDITION
BY WILLIAM WHITE (DECEMBER 1878)

RINGMORE, anciently spelt 'Ridmore and Rinmore', is a parish in Kingsbridge union and county court district, Ermington and Plympton petty sessional division, Southern division of the county, Totnes archdeaconry, Woodleigh rural deanery, and Ermington hundred. It had 237 inhabitants (115 males 122 females) in 1871, living in 51 houses on 1128 acres of land. Ringmore village is situated on Bigbury Bay, 4 miles S. of Modbury. Colonel Moore is lord of the manor, formerly held by the Fitzstephen, Fishacre, Kirkham, Roe, and other families. The Duke of Somerset and a few smaller owners have estates in the parish. There is a Coastguard Station at Challaborough, with officer and five men; there are detachments at Kingston, and at Bantham, in the parish of Thurlestone. The Church (All-Hallows) is one of the most interesting in the county, being wholly of the 13th century, with the exception of the north transept, or manor chapel, which was retained from a very early church, erected probably before the Norman conquest. It consists of a nave and a chancel, with chancel aisle, a north transept and a south tower and spire, the lower stage of which serves for the porch. The entire building was well restored in 1862/3, by the present rector, all the ancient features being carefully preserved. The chancel is beautifully dceorated, and contains a good organ by Bevington. Most of the ~~xxxxxx~~ windows in the church are filled with stained glass by Horwood, of Frome Selwood. The living is a rectory, valued in K.B. at £19.10.7½d and now at £445 a year, in the patronage and incumbency of the Rev. F.C. Hingeston-Randolph. A small room is used by the Baptists. Ringmore is the central parish of the Erme and Avon School Board United District, comprising the Parishes of Ringmore, Bigbury and Kingston. It was formed in 1873, and now consists of the Rev.F.Farrer (chairman), and Messrs J.Wroth, W.S.Wroth, John White, P.Randle, Wm Stidston, and Wm. Hooppell. F.M.Farrer, Esq., is the clerk. Existing buildings have been utilised as schools at a nominal rent, in all the three parishes. The three schools will accommodate 200 children and the average attendance is 170. The Ringmore School is a very pretty building, near the church, erected at a cost of about £200. Francis Kirkham, the last of his race, gave a house to the poor of this parish for ever in 1768, but it was alienated some forty years ago, and converted into a barn on the manor. Here are the headquarters of the Erme and Avon Friendly Society, founded by the rector in 1865.

Letters are received by mounted messengers from Aveton-Gifford at 10.30 a.m. There is a Wall Letter Box near the Church, which is cleared at 3.30 p.m. Modbury is the nearest Money Order and Telegraph Office. Ivybridge (distant 9 miles) is the nearest Railway Station.

Ash William Hubert Barwick, farmer, Higher Manor Farm.
Baker John, farmer, Marwell
Billing Miss Edith, Board schoolmistress.
Clarke Edward Manlesse, director of the Canterbury Choral Union.
Crimp Mr. John, Myrtle cottage. (HIGH SDE)
Crimp Mr. John Garland, Myrtle Cottage
Donovan Timothy, station officer, Coastguard station, Challaborough.
Edwards Lewis, farmer, Renton
Harris John, farmer, Lower Manor Farm
Hingeston Mrs, The Vean.
Hingeston-Randolph Rev. Francis Charles, M.A., rector, and chaplain to Viscountess Falmouth.

Randle Thomas, carrier and victualler, New Inn (now the Journey's End) R.H.
Ryder Samuel, gardener at the Rectory, The Lodge.
Triggs David, carpenter
Triggs James, junior, mason.
Triggs James, gardener at The Vean.
Triggs William, sexton
Ward Mary, milliner
Ward William, carpenter.
White John, farmer, Okenbury; and Kingston

Carriers - Thomas Randle to Plymouth, Saturdays.
Elizabeth Edwards to Kingsbridge, Fridays
Dinah Skinner to Modbury, Mondays and Thursdays.

Notes on the Ringmore Church etc - by a Country Parson - 1876
Extracted from Records of a Rocky Shore or Annals of our Village
No.1 Our Sextons

On the first of October 1854, at the ripe age of four score years and five, passed from the sight of men William Rendle, who for half a century had been Sexton of Ringmore, a lonely old-world Parish by the Southern Sea, in sunny Devon. The well-loved partner of his joys and sorrows had been taken to her rest some twenty years before; and so it had long been the old man's lot to work at his solemn toil hard by and around his wife's grassy couch, while he waited for his own summons to come. You may see, near the south Chancel-wall, side by side, their neatly trimmed mounds, united at the head by a turfy bond, as the manner of the country is; and a plain slab of slate, reared by pious hands between them, records their names and the number of years fulfilled by them both.

A fine stalwart man, not only in his prime but well on to the end of his days, was William Rendle; great in stature, upright ever, of stately gait and of truly noble presence; a son of the soil indeed, and carrying about with him, therefore, the marks and scars of honest labour, - ' a splendid old man', as I have more than once heard him called by aged friends who remember what he was at his best.

I have said that our Sexton bore about with him the marks of toil, referring chiefly to the sad loss of his left arm and this was how it befell. There is in Bigbury, the next parish along the coast, eastward, at the foot of Stakes-hill, where the road to Aveton-Gifford enters the fords of the Avon, a wood, and in it a ruined chapel sacred to St. Milburgh. You can still trace the Altar-step, and the rude niche wherein the imaged figure of the holy woman once stood, and a gray shattered gable above; but men have built a cottage with the old stones on the western foundations. William Rendle was working one day at Milbourne - for so, in the course of years, have they disguised the name of the Saint,- and one William Revell was his companion in toil: 'Rule' his fellows always called him, as if impatient of two syllables when one would suffice. The men were felling wood, and they made the deep combe resound as the stedfast oaks shuddered under the dint of their mighty blows; for both men knew how to hit hard and home.

Suddenly there was a cry, a pause, a stillness; and the strong man sunk down upon the earth, his life-blood fast oozing away from a ghastly wound on his wrist. Revell ran, at once, to the rescue, and with handkerchief and neck-cloth, as best he could, bound up the gaping gash, and then made off for succour to 'Chapel' as men call it - 'St Anne's Chapel,' as it is written down in maps - a hamlet hard by the scene of the disaster. Soon the doctor was found, and the brave fellow knew his doom; aye, and bore it like a man. They took off his arm, a little below the elbow, and the sturdy labourer was compelled to be idle for a time. But, when he was healed of his wound, he returned with una bated vigour to his work; skilful hands had fitted a hook, which, when need so required, could be exchanged for a ring, to the poor stump, and the Ringmore Sexton was as good a man as ever, and could even mow with his fellows, with the best of them, as in days of old

I need not say that Will Rendle had been an apprentice in his day: he was an apprentice, too, of Patriarchal quality; for he began his 'time' at the early age of seven, with good old Farmer Thomas Randle, at the 'Lower Farm' on the Manor of Ringmore; and on and on he served, even after his marriage, till he was twenty four years old. There were two other youngsters, apprentices, at the Lower Farm in those days. One of them, by name John Ryder, attained nearly to his ninetieth year. For many a year his lot was cast in the midst of manifold temptations; smuggling was carried on, in these parts, to an extraordinary extent, when John was young, especially here at Ringmore; and it was accounted but a venial sin at worst, all along the coast, even if it could be called a sin at all. And who shall find fault with the people, when their very priests went astray, and stories were told, which were not wholly untrue, of 'caves' in Parsonage gardens, and of kegs concealed even in the towers of the Churches?

The tall hills, sloping down in curving masses to the narrow combe, wherein nestle the quaint cottages of the villagers, their brown thatched roofs and gray lichen-clad chimneys peeping out here and there between the orchards, 'crowned' by the glorious sea beyond, then, as now, made up a scene of calm rural beauty scarcely to be excelled on our English coast, and which the apathy and neglect of evil days, and the faithlessness of a hard and slothful age could scarce avail to mar. But the poor old Church was a forlorn sight indeed; its walls bedaubed with white staring rough-cast - 'slap-dash', as it were with fitting contempt, men call it in this country; its roof, shattered by many a wintry storm, falling into decay, and covered with unseemingly patches; its windows broken and dilapidated, and the cracked discoloured glass rattling responsively to every passing breath. As to the Churchyard, it was a mass of tangled weeds and docks, and nettles; a pathless uncared-for waste. The old Sexton, as I have said, had never known a different state of things in Ringmore, and matters were but little, if anything, better in all the parishes round.

It is time to speak of his successor in office, another William, and rejoicing in the old South-Hams name of Triggs, who already for more than five-and-twenty years has broken the ground, and tolled the knell, and cast the earth. Triggs became Sexton in 1850, upon Rendle's resignation; and, ten years later, in the summer of 1860, it was his privilege to seem the end of 'the former desolations'. I found the Parish Church buried in accumulated soil to a depth, in places, of over eight feet; the white-washed walls within, streaming with wet, were smeared with green or black slime from roof to floor; the poverty and meanness of the Holy Table were barely concealed by a still more mean and poverty-stricken covering, a moth-eaten rag which could scarce hold together; the surplice was bedizened with, literally,

hold together; the surplice was bedizened with, literally, hundreds of iron-moulds; the pews, of every conceivable size and shape and height and colour, rotten and ruinous, were breaking down, every now and then, in service-time, under their hapless occupants; the bells were cracked, or broken, or hung uselessly to shattered wheels. The Rural Dean that was in those days told me, later on, that it was always with a sad heart he turned his horse's head, year by year, towards Ringmore, knowing what awaited him there; that no one would care much for his report, or attend to his suggestions!

I saw, at once, that, if anything was to be done, I must needs set to work vigorously and fearlessly, regardless of difficulties, and heedless, as far as might be, of unreasonable opposition. I had to encounter little or nothing of the latter - nothing, I may say with truth, when I think of what might have been - of what has been the lot of so many of my Brethren engaged in the same work elsewhere! We have only one Churchwarden in Ringmore; and, when I was instituted, I found in office the largest farmer in the parish, then recently elected for the first time. He has been Churchwarden ever since; and it is difficult to imagine any one else Churchwarden: a good man, with an honest and affectionate heart; friendly and helpful to every one who deserves help and friendliness, and to many who do not; temperate in all things; true and just in all his dealings; a neighbour and a friend indeed, 'in whom is no guile.' Patiently and kindly he listened to what the new Parson had to say, and his heart was touched that day: he was convinced there and then. ' Do the best you can, Sir,' he said to me, ' and I will help you all in my power.' It was a noble answer, and nobly he kept his word: this, now after more than sixteen years of unbroken good-fellowship, is his Priest's willing and faithful testimony concerning him. From that day forth, money, and men and horses, and waggons, and kind encouraging words and looks were forthcoming, whenever needed, from the single-minded incorruptible tenant of the remote old Manor House of the Bozuns, deep buried in a sheltered combe among our western hills. Neighbouring parishes looked on at us in astonishment; people flocked to our services from all the country round, till there was not even standing-room in the Church, and went home puzzled, and exclaiming ' We have seen strange things to-day!' Reports of all kinds got about, as usual, some of them true, most of them false; and the newspapers took up the cry, exaggerating the false, and making little of the true. And great indeed, no doubt, was the novelty where the simple yet dignified ritual of the Catholick Church and her supernatural verities had been either almost wholly suppressed, or were, at best, but imperfectly apprehended, for a period of time stretching back beyond the memory of living man. At first, men seemed stunned; and of this I took advantage, to fortify the ground I had already gained, and to gain more. And I ventured upon one or two measures - sudden, decisive and irrevocable - which under ordinary circumstances would have been more unjustifiable than they were in my case. I may instance the raid on that terrible array of high-backed pews, which I had found to be simply unbearable, and a serious hindrance to my work: the people were buried in them so effectively that I could not see a single soul when, at Communion time, I turned to read Epistle, or Gospel, or Exhortation ! So, one Saturday afternoon, the whole of the ghastly and disgraceful enclosures fell to a decent and uniform height under the saws of the village carpenter and myself, to the great amazement of the congregation on the following morning: some of them told me that they felt, at first, rather naked and chill in the region which had so long been encased; but they soon found and appreciated the convenience and comfort of the change. There were many friends, by this time; but there were, also, many adversaries. A neighbouring Curate thought it his duty to preach against us, and was put down peremptorily by brave Bishop Philpotts,

always ready to defend the Right, and do battle for the Faith: and not seldom, but over and over again, in the course of years - at home, in the roads, at markets, at Visitations, here, there, and everywhere - well-meaning often, but uninstructed prejudiced men, who knew ~~what they did~~ not what they did, set upon our good Churchwarden, telling him that it was all his fault, and angrily demanding of him why he allowed the Ringmore Parson to do whatever he pleased !

But to return to our Sexton. It was truly wonderful to see how naturally and apparently without the least exertion, he accommodated himself to his altered circumstances. He saw the old order (or disorder, rather, as I knew it to be) changing, giving place to new: he saw the House of the Lord (which had long languished forgotten and nearly forsaken, and was always close shut from Sunday to Sunday) accessible as his own cottage all the week through: he saw the worn and rugged sleeping-boxes of many generations vanish, and their hideous companion, the gallery, follow in their wake and he was scarcely surprised when he found a bell-rope in his hand on man's days, as well as on the Lords own hallowed day. Then the venerable roofs of nave and transept and Chancel, all dating from the early part of the fourteenth x century, were stripped of their mean lath-and-plaster coverings and restored; tiles of rich hues and cunning workmanship replaced coarse slabs of slate from the cliffs at Ayrmer, and across them 'storied windows' cast, as of old, a 'dim, religious light;' the Holy Altar was duly decked and garnished and the Font, rescued from dirt and profanation, once more - at the porch entrance.-

Notes on All Saints Church, Ringmore.

Extract from History of Devonshire.- Polwhele

' Ringmore (anciently Ridmore) scarcely deserves our notice. The parish of Rimmore is adjacent to Kingstone and is much the same in soil, buildings, inclosures etc. It hath two manors the one belonging to Henry Roe, Esq the other to John Wise Esq. The church is a small stone building consisting only of one aisle with a low steeple with three miserable bells. The parsonage is about a quarter of a mile from the church.'

Committee on Church Plate Report read at Salcombe 11.7.1923 (Devonshire Association)

' Ringmore. The ancient chalice, probably Elizabethan, with cover marked R P mentioned in the terriers from 1628 - 1745 has disappeared. There is now only a Chalice - modern mediaeval style 125 mm high, bowl conical 73mm diameter, 43mm deep hexagonal stem with knop and saxfoil foot 84mm diameter. Marks TP and London hall mark for 1880.

Patens. A. Modern mediaeval style 115mm diameter with marks as on chalice.
B. Plain on stand 88mm diameter 28mm high. Marks J.W & Co. London hall mark for 1912
C. On stand eight mullet shape 205mm diameter at points 183mm at centres 40mm high. Pewter.

Archdeaconry of Totnes 1342
Enquiry made 3rd August of the same year.

' Ridmore (Ringmore). The ornaments and altar cloths of the high altar are lost. The nave is dirty, inadequate and needs rebuilding. The parishioners are very poor and their means prevent them building. However they are ordered to put the said defects into order before the next visitation under penalty of 40 shillings. Sir Robert the rector had 40 marks for the defects. He has done many good things in his time, making new buildings and repairing old. These are adequate for the living some defects excepted that can be repaired for 2 marks.

Quote - ' The ancient church of Ringmore contains a relic of more recent strife, in the shape of an icon from Sebastopol.'

Writers' Descriptions of RINGMORE

1907 - The South Devon Coast by C.G.Harper.

' Primitive indeed are the villages that lie away back from the sea in these parts. First comes Ringmore, where the rock outcrops from the macadam in the main road, where the cottages are half-smothered in flowers, and where the domestic fowls that squatter and plunge in dust balls in the middle of the street are the only signs of life. Reminiscences of the old window-tax are called up by a house with a walled-up window, carefully painted with a pretence of being a genuine one of panes and sashes. Even the brass catch has not been forgotten by the artist in illusion, whose treatment is so literal, he must have been the fore-runner of the Newlyn School. The brass catch is rendered more than a thought too brassy, and the unfortunately painted panes are by no means convincing.

P.T.O.

1953 - The South Hams by Margaret Willy - Published by Robert Hale Ltd., 63 Old Brompton Road, London.S.W.7.
Photographs by Stephen Ford, Blandford, Dorset.

'It is interesting to notice along this stretch of coastline more than any other of the South Hams how often the lower Devonian rocks appear to change their texture and whole nature; and are varied still further by the direction and quality of the light playing upon them. Just before dropping down into Ayrmer Cove the cliffs are of warm red sandstone with rounded contours (one shape upreared against the sky with two holes burrowed right through it, is oddly reminiscent of a sculpture by Henry Moore). On the other side of the cove, in abrupt contrast to the humpy friendliness of red sandstone, come sheer slate masses, bluish-grey shading into ochre with surfaces as flat as a man-made wall without cleft or foothold. Farther on, from above Hoist Point, cliffs and rocks gleam a smooth and steely silver against the furrowed surface of the sea. On the western side of the cove beyond Ayrmer, from a certain angle down on the shore, the vertically grained slate resembles nothing so much as ancient wood, dead, grey and clean shaven of bark. One landward leaning mass in particular might be the stripped and riven trunk of some great tree split straight down the centre by lightning.

Re Ringmore Village.

Thurleston fails - for me at anyrate - to fulfil the promises of countless guide books, photographs and eulogies. Now with Ringmore it is quite different. Less lauded and consequently less known and visited, this really charming village between Bigbury and Kingston affords all the delighted surprise of a discovery made for oneself as distinct from an official Beauty Spot one has been instructed and expected to admire. Its white or cream washed stone cottages, with chimneys as tall and toppling and thatch as peaked as any in an illustration to a fairy tale, straggle this way and that, many of them tucked out of first sight down narrow, winding by-ways, and the village is threaded with overgrown footpaths green with nettle, hart's tongue fern and elder - where cow-parsnip, springs waist - and, in places, shoulder high - high , and wh
~~giant periwinkle and lilac look over ivied walls~~

Re William Lane Mr. Harper comments -:

' Here(in the secret room) he lay three months fed by his faithful parishioners but was, at last, obliged to escape to France. At last, venturing to return, he worked awhile as a labourer in the limestone quarries near Torquay until his little dwelling was pillaged by a French privateer. He died at last when on his return from London, whither he had journeyed on foot to ventilate his grievances.'

giant periwinkle and lilac look over ivied walls which show gardens and untidy orchards beyond. Perhaps the best group of cottages in an altogether engaging place is that on the corner nearly facing the post office - white stone walls under a sheltering thatch which has weathered mole grey; winking brass of knocker, letter box and door knob; tubs of scarlet and salmon pink geraniums on either side of deep creepered porches; a tortoiseshell cat blinking or an old dog asleep on shabby stone pavements unevenly worn down by generations of treading feet, as if smoothed by the constant wash of the ses.

The ancient grey church with the tiny spire fits in with its village remarkably well, standing high above the moss-roofed buildings of Manor Farm - whose good, rich smell of cow-dung fills the steep lane, and whose passing wagons gold-needle its banks and hedges with fallen straws - and above the Journeys End. Part of this inn, they say,was built in 1300; and, as the church - with the exception of the supposedly Saxon north transept, containing the original lancey windows with plain-pointed and pointed trefoil heads - is thirteenth century, both have stood here together above the sea for close on seven centuries. The Journeys End is one of the oldest inns hereabouts, although the renewed black and white exterior makes it look considerably younger, inside only the little windows and low-beamed ceilings of the original part suggest the ripeness of great age. A rival in the near neighbourhood is the Pilchard on Burgh Island - supposed to have been the haunt of smugglers, and fully conscious of its romantic reputation.

Devon Life - November/December 1968 Written and Illustrated by David Bowen.

Situated roughly in the centre of Bigbury Bay, with its beautiful coastal scenery and cliffs that vary in colour from red to dark slate, is Challaborough Cove and inland, just half a mile to the north, lies the unspoilt cob and thatch village of Ringmore. Writers describe it as 'very attractive', 'amiable, rambling - as pleasant as much of Devon once was', and mention that it has 'charming views for the photographer'.

Ringmore, most of which dates from the period between the 16th and 18th centuries, owes its preservation to its natural position in a wooded coombe among the hills: that is to say, largely to luck, for it would be difficult to adapt it to the requirements of the present commercial age to any great extent. Even nearby Challaborough, with its caravans, and the more residential Bigbury-on-Sea do not extend very far beyond their respective coastal positions due to the sharply rising contours of the hinterland and the narrowness of most of the lanes. And there are no towns near enough or large enough to attract suburban-type development at Ringmore. The small market town of Modbury is three miles to the north, on the A.379, while the larger town of Kingsbridge to the east, is five miles 'as the crow flies', but about twice this distance by road - which has to go round the Avon estuary.

So Ringmore stays peaceful. Although the village receives its share of holiday visitors who pause here for a while, one is not too conscious of the presence of the motor vehicle. Indeed the lanes in the lower part below the parish church (where one has no room anyway to turn a car) have about them a languid quality which, one feels, conveys the true spirit of the place. Even the village inn, which is situated down a leafy lane on one side of the coombe, gives an impression of wanting to 'stay away from it all' and is appropriately named the Journey's End.

But at one period of its history at least Ringmore was the centre of quite a commotion. It was during the Civil War, when the Rev. William Lane was the rector of the parish.

Mr. Lane was a devoted supporter of King Charles, and when the Parliament men were storming the royalist garrison at Salcombe Castle, he thought of a unique way to prevent the enemy from receiving reinforcements. The beseigers' supply convoys, he observed, travelled along the road that crossed the Avon by the bridge below Loddiswell, but he, Mr. Lane, apart from being rector of Ringmore, held the incumbency of the neighbouring parish of Aveton Giffard, and from there a commanding view of the Loddiswell bridge could be obtained.

The intrepid rector soon evolved a plan to harass the Roundheads, which proved to be highly successful. He mustered the able-bodied men of his parish, and, having trained them for the task ahead, and acquired some cannon, he mounted a battery in a strong and well protected position from which the bridge could be kept under constant surveillance. As soon as an enemy convoy was seen to approach it the guns fired with great effect and supplies of food and ammunition were destroyed.

Eventually the officer commanding the beseiging force sent for aid from the Parliamentary garrison in Plymouth, and several boatloads of soldiers were sent by sea to capture the warlike rector. They are believed to have landed at Ayrmer Cove from where they soon reached Ringmore. But, Mr. Lane, forewarned by one of his messengers, took refuge in a small chamber in the church tower, where at least he had the luxury of a fireplace, and here he remained for three months. sceretly nourished by his parishioners. The Roundhead contingent ransacked the parsonage and made a thorough search of the surrounding country-side, but Mr. Lane's hideout was never discovered.

Alas it was not long before the rector was ejected from both his livings. Some years later, in 1654, he decided to walk to London to place his case before the authorities, but he died of a fever on the way.

Those who explore the Ringmore district will no doubt be surprised that the church has a tower at all, for they are rare in Devon. The present building was heavily restored in 1862/3 and the Victorian influence still predominates. But the North transept contains Norman work from an earlier church.

At Okenbury, between Ringmore and the neighbouring village of Kingston, is a Domesday manor and here, it is said, are substantial remains of a former mediaeval mansion. However the present owner knows nothing of its whereabouts and the only historic building on his land, he explained, was the ruin of an old (square) dovecot, which he had knocked down becsuse he needed the stone for his farm.

THE SOUTH DEVON COAST by S.H.BURTON - 1954

' Leading left off the road from Bigbury-on-Sea to Bigbury is a footpath to Ringmore. This must on no account be missed for it leads to one of the prettiest villages in Devon with a church of exceptional interest. There are comparatively few spires in Devon but Ringmore has one and it dates back to thirteenth century at that. No single part of the church appears to be later than this century, also a curiosity for this county. Add to this the superb situation, the combe to the west and Toby's Point a mile away and you have the reasons for visiting Ringmore.'

COASTS OF DEVON & LUNDY ISLAND by PAGE - 1895

'Ringmore is the prettiest village in this part of South Devon. It lies at the head of the combe, half hidden by the elms and apple trees that cluster about and below its quaint little Early English church. The picturesque appearance of this church is increased by the ivy which is allowed freely to climb the walls, and, when I saw it last, it was further glorified by a magnificent Virginia creeper, which flung its red and gold foliage right over the chancel roof. The low massive tower (which is crowned with a short spire) is peculiar in that it has no arch communicating with the church. It does not appear to be as old as other parts of the building, notably the North transept, which is Norman, if not of earlier date still. 'It retains', writes the Rector, the Rev. Prebendary Hingeston-Randolph, ' in its North transept - the Manor Chapel - a portion of the old cruciform church which, beyond all doubt, was standing in the far-off day when our saintly Confessor King was alive and dead.'

In the troublous days of the Rebellion a chamber in the tower was the hiding place of William Lane, the Rector, who, for his loyalty to a falling King, was hunted down by the Government. Here for more than three months he was supplied with food by his devoted parishioners, until one day it was reported that his place of concealment was known, and he was obliged to fly to France. After a while he ventured to return but not to his parish. Persecution still reared its head. So, to keep his family from starvation, this poor priest became a labourer and worked at the limestone quarries at Hope's Nose near Torquay. But, just as he had begun to see the dawn of prosperity, the crew of a French privateer landed and pillaged his dwelling of everything. Well might the unfortunate have exclaimed 'Save me from my friends', for the vessel 'carried the commission of the exiled King' for whose return to have his own again the poor victim of this untoward outrage would willingly have laid down his life. Soon after this, worn out with suffering, Lane died on his return journey from London, whither he had repaired on foot to complain of the villainous conduct of the minister thrust upon his former parishioners by the Roundheads.

Over the chancel arch is a pattern in fresco painted upon and therefore exactly following the lines and colouring of a more ancient work, discovered, I think the rector told me, when his church was restored. In the chancel itself is an old chair interesting to Devonshire antiquaries as having been at one time the property of Dr. Oliver, author of the Monasticon. On the wall hangs an Icon or image of the Greek church brought from Sebastopol.

WE SEE DEVON by VAL DOONE - 1950

A little inland, in the centre of the high ground between Avon and Erme stands Ringmore, a thatched and rambling village, for which we have particular well-ripened affection. It rambles; it has no focal point unless it be its inn, the Journey's End, but its cottages are among the most charming in Devonshire to picture and many pleasant and curious things stay in our memories about the place. We remember, for instance, the slow, firm, confident craftmanship of its thatcher; we remember that until quite recently it housed a reputed witch and that at summer dusk the long lane leading up from it to Kingston is luminous with glow worms.

Notes taken from 'A lecture on local history – Ringmore'
(by Rev. H.F. Hingston Randolph)

The early history of Ringmore so far as anything about it is known takes one back before the Conquest. In the reign of Edward the Confessor we know that the parish in those days was divided into two principal estates. We know the names of the owners, the extent of the land & its exact value, state of cultivation, flocks, herds which it carried, number of persons employed – so approximately the population.

All the particulars come from the Domesday Book. The two estates were of the Manor of Ringmore, spelt in the latin RENMORE, & the Manor of Okenbury. In the original spelling of Ringmore the G was omitted. In some Old documents it is written RISHORE & some say the real derivation of the word is Redmoor. Domesday spelling perhaps gives the right clue to the derivation, Celtic Rin & means the great headland, Celtic spelling RHYN MANR. This is the name by which the Bill was known in ancient times.

No seats for congregation, mean in one part, worse in another -

By the Church would be the Manor House, perhaps where the Old Manor Farm is to-day - probably the only stone house in the place where Radcliffe lived in state. Further down the hill & up the opposite slope, mean huts of the Villagers here & there the more pretentious wooden houses of the Boordars.

Houses, no upper stories, floors bare ground, thatch with rushes. No chimneys, just hole in the roof.

Forest laws debarred them from snaring a rabbit or any sort of game - offence, penalty loss of a hand or eye.

Curfew Bell from Church Tower at 8 p.m. all lights & fires had to be extinguished.

After Domesday little is known of the early history of Ringmer - beyond that the Manor passed in to the hands of Cabani Great families. William Fitz-Stephen held the Manor in Henry 2nd's Time & passed to family of Fissacre. One of this family Sir Peter Fissacre killed the Rector of Woodleigh in a Quarrel, for which

Cross, ordered by the Pope to build a Church of Rearleigh. This was a Edwardian reign. Sir Silvester de Fissacre, Lord of the Manor of Greenleigh Henry de Segelar to the Rectory of Ringmore Ann: 46-1264.

1315 Manor held by Isabel de Fissacre. Later to the Kirkhams for 400 years. Last Thomas Kirkham died April 1774. He built the Poor House, gave it to the poor of the Parish as a place of refuge - rest for poor.

Ringmore was a Town! said to be a Corporate It had 2 Inns, the Rising Sun, the New Inn its Billing or Bowling Green + at one time its Pinnacle - pack of Hounds. Fish Cellars at Challaborough. very busy in the Pilchard season - its little shops - one Mill.

Trace the Old Ringmore road to the Old Mill running along the bottom of the fields called Millens or Mill Lane. Later Coast Guard station. Long town at New Inn, its Councillors had their Town Hall. Old Parish Rate book 1763 - 'lately come into my hands' written by Rev: H.C. Hingeston-Randolph.

In the Old Parish Book kept by the Churchwardens from Exeter 1770. Rector non-resident, parish work entrusted to a Curate who had charge also of Rigsby.

Poor House. Given to the Poor out the Parish. Later Poor House built in other villages maintained out of rates Councillors took over & turned in to a Convenience from house until 1839. then sold by Church Wardens for £33. to assist Church rate. Bought by Lord of the Manor of these days & turned in to a Cattle house with granary above for his tenant. 'At the Higher Farm' It is still standing to-day owned by Mr. William Tuckcraft (in the time of Rev. H.C.N-R.)

Smuggler - Yes - "aided & abetted by the passon at the Rectory" so tha the Old Rectory was taken down, plentiful evidence of this. Still traces in the Rectory built 1822 of a secret passage from outside, leading to the Cellar, caves & Secret hiding place along Cliffs.

Gallery erected at West End of Church 1786 - for this

I am assured that Isabella de Fossard held land in Redruth in the time of Edward?.

(There is mention of the various Wheelhouses - disasters - of Swanton's tower, & reference to the restoring of the Church 1661 by Rect. F.C.H-R.)

In 1766 - when light was required for the singing gallery. a new window had been pierced through the west wall, low down, so as to give light both to them in the gallery & to those who sat underneath. At the same time the original west window of the Church was filled in. (Reference is made to the taking down of the dilapidated Gallery & then follows the account of Rect. F.C.H-L. which is in the book Mr Wood has borrowed.)

Remains of old cellar where pilchards were salted - cured, are still to be seen at Challabro' on the Warren on the Island. A Mr. T. Hall ('some connection of the Trigg's I think') gave an account of the fish trade. "As soon as it was known the fish had entered the bay the Huer was posted on the cliffs to watch the

Shoreward movement of the fish. The boat Seine, held his boat in readiness until he could give the order to go in to action. 3 boats employed. The Seine boat, the great net stacked on it. crew of 9. 3 of the men including the Skiffe attended to the stacking of the net. The 'Volya' or follower, with the Trawl-net & implement for mooring the great Skiff - Seine. crew of 9. - Smaller boat called the 'barker' or 'barker' from which the master Seine directed operations.
At the word, the rowers reached the desired spot. The Great Seine, cast the net, moved quickly round the Shoal. the 'Volya' kept the net taut, until the circle around the fish was made. The 'barker' took up its position beating the water with paddles to keep the fish from escaping. the ends of the net quickly hauled together & fish captured.
Many more details of the boats & handling of Catch on the Island sands.
A hundred catch required two boats & 2 crab-fish were hoisted on pole on the highest point of the Island as a signal for assistance. This was the task of the landing at the Island Inn. 17 Fishermen.

the sexton of Sabden (Hatchet) Hall, "the three" were called, to guide the boats to the shore by signalling with his hands from the cliffs. Great rejoicings in Heighton. a great dinner given by the owners at the new inn. a procession round the village, with band, headed by Mr. Hall's grandfather, the Saint Hardie, carrying for a banner, a fishcart on a pole.

Reference again to Aymer. might have got its name from its proximity to the work of the Danes. called in Old time The Aymer Eastern Boundary. stream divides Heighton Bigbury.

Nordden boundary through Hanwell meadows orchard & came to the bottom of Nordden Hill. St. Mary's well from which Hanwell gets its name.

The present building over St. Mary's well was erected by Rob: J.C. 6-L. imitation of St Mawes - Cornwall. Ornamented stone work which adorns the arch was found under the paving of the Church during Restoration 1866

X Rep: F. C. H. R. I made up my mind to insert a circular window well up in the gable. drew a plan, & a new window made when

portion of the external slating stripped, back seat & panelling of gallery removed I discovered the lower half of the original window. a circular one closely corresponding in size with my new work & able to retain unaltered the long concealed half of the effig. The decayed stone-work of the old 'rose' had been knocked away, but there were indications that it had been simply a large foliated circle without tracery, & such was "the window I had on the ground to be set up".

Later "I was in the Church and superintending the Restoration when a very old man made his appearance & said to me "If you please Sir, they tell me you have put up a round window in the Chancel again & I am come down from St. Anne's Chapel on purpose to see it. He told me that his grandfather was one of the men who worked on Smeaton's lighthouse when it was in building & that he had often heard the old man say when he was a youngster that when it was clear weather he could see the round window in the west end of Ringmer Church".

Various particulars of accounts –

Paid Mr. Wallis toward the Singing £ 1. 11. 6
" remainder of his salleng for
wishinding the Singing. 1. 18. 6.
Paid Mr. Hidden for sparing of ye pipe 10. 0.
" The base Vile"
Paid for a Case for the 'Vile' 7. 7. 0.
5. 6

Poor late book –

For washing Ambrose Crispin 1/-
Week after week this occurs –
Lying forth Ambrose Crispin 4/-
Wood for Ambrose Crispin 5'.
(the Wood act in fact required
that the dead be waffed in wool for burial)
For a Coffin for Ambrose Crispin 8/6
" so on —