

Brampford Speke

Brampford Speke is located within East Devon local authority area. Historically it formed part of Wonford Hundred. It falls within Cadbury Deanery for ecclesiastical purposes. The Deaneries are used to arrange the typescript Church Notes of B.F.Cresswell which are held in the Westcountry Studies Library.

The population was 273 in 1801 374 in 1901. Figures for other years are available on the local studies website. In 1641/2 56 adult males signed the Protestation returns.

You can look for other material on the community by using the place search on the main local studies database. Further historical information is also available on the Genuki website.

Maps

The image below is of the Brampford Speke area on Donn's one inch to the mile survey of 1765.



- On the County Series Ordnance Survey mapping the area is to be found on 1:2,500 sheet 68/6,10
- Six inch (1:10560) sheet 68NW,SW
- The National Grid reference for the centre of the area is SX926985
- On the post 1945 National Grid Ordnance Survey mapping the sheets are:
 - Six inch to a mile (1:10,000) sheet SX99NW
 - Explorer (1:25,000) mapping sheet 114
 - Landranger (1:50,000) mapping sheet 192
- Geological sheet 325 also covers the area

Illustrations

The image below is of Brampford Speke as included in the Library's illustrations collection. Other images can be searched for on the local studies catalogue.



Extract from Devon by W.G.Hoskins (1954), included by kind permission of the copyright holder:

Brampford Speke is an attractive village, situated on a low cliff of red sandstone overhanging the Exe. George Gissing walked here from Exeter in February 1891 and wrote: "I have discovered a village called Brampford Speke on the Exe, which I seriously think is the most perfect I ever saw. One imagines that some lord of the manor must exert himself to keep it in a picturesque state." There is much excellent domestic building of cob and thatch, ranging in date from the late 16th century to the early 19th; but the church (St. Peter), although beautifully sited above the river, is disappointing on closer inspection. Except for the W. tower, it was entirely rebuilt in 1852-3 and is dull. This is the scene of the great struggle in 1847-51 between the bishop of Exeter (the formidable Phillpotts) and the vicar, the Rev. G. C. Gorham, over the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, in which the bishop was finally beaten. The vicar was instituted and his first act was to rebuild the old church, Bishop Phillpotts assisting with some of his own money.

Branscombe

Branscombe is located within East Devon local authority area. Historically it formed part of Colyton Hundred. It falls within Ottery Deanery for ecclesiastical purposes. The Deaneries are used to arrange the typescript Church Notes of B.F.Cresswell which are held in the Westcountry Studies Library.

The population was 603 in 1801 627 in 1901. Figures for other years are available on the local studies website. The lay subsidy of 1524 valued the community at £13/08/03.

A parish history file is held in Sidmouth Library. You can look for other material on the community by using the place search on the main local studies database. Further historical information is also available on the Genuki website.

Maps

The image below is of the Branscombe area on Donn's one inch to the mile survey of 1765.



- On the County Series Ordnance Survey mapping the area is to be found on 1:2,500 sheet 83/13
- Six inch (1:10560) sheet 83SW
- The National Grid reference for the centre of the area is SY196885
- On the post 1945 National Grid Ordnance Survey mapping the sheets are:
 - Six inch to a mile (1:10,000) sheet SY18NE,SY28NW
 - Explorer (1:25,000) mapping sheet 030
 - Landranger (1:50,000) mapping sheet 192
- Geological sheet 326 also covers the area

Illustrations

The image below is of Branscombe as included in the Library's illustrations collection. Other images can be searched for on the local studies catalogue.



Extract from Devon by W.G.Hoskins (1954), included by kind permission of the copyright holder:

Branscombe is one of the most attractive places on the south coast of Devon "Brannoc's combe," in a break in the high cliff wall. Eastwards the chalk cliffs rise to over 400 ft.; westwards to over 500 ft. Hooken Cliff, between Branscombe and Beer Head, is the first of the great landslips of Devon and Dorset. In one night of March 1790 nearly ten acres of land dropped 200-260 ft. vertically and moved 200 yds. seawards, breaking up into columns and pinnacles. On Berry Cliff, W. of Branscombe, is a large earthwork of unknown age, apparently of rectangular plan, (See V.C.H. Devon 575, for a brief description) and to the W. a number of barrows.

There is no village of Branscombe. Hamlets and houses are planted inconsequently down the beautiful little combe almost to the very beach. Great Seaside Farm, the last of the chain, is a good specimen of an Elizabethan farmhouse. Dotted about the parish are other picturesque and interesting houses the homes of medieval franklins and Tudor and Stuart gentry. Hole (recorded in 1249) was the home of the Holcombes for seven generations until the 17th century, when it passed to the Bartletts. The present house is late 16th century in date. Edge Barton, alone on a steep hillside, has some considerable traces of medieval work. Until the 14th century it was the home of the Branscombes, a distinguished family who produced three sheriffs of the county and one of Exeter's greatest bishops - Walter Bronescombe,

bishop 1258-80. Edge passed from the Branscombes to another notable family, the Wadhams. Sir John Wadham, the judge, acquired it towards the end of Edward III's reign, and his descendants dwelt there until Nicholas Wadham (founder of Wadham College) died without issue. Lower House, N. of the vicarage, has been the home since the 16th century of the Fords, who still possess it. Church Living is a medieval house opposite the church. Barnells, not far away, was built by Capt. Ewell, Nelson's captain of Marines on the *Victory* at Trafalgar. It was known for some time as Trafalgar House.

The parish church is dedicated to St. Winifred, an obscure North Welsh saint who died c. 650. Such a rare dedication suggests that a church has existed here almost since that time. There is, indeed, pre-Conquest work to be seen on the inner side of the lower part of the tower walls, though it is possibly not earlier than the 11th century. The church, besides being one of the most "atmospheric" churches in Devon, is of the highest interest, for it exhibits a process of continuous development from the 11th century to the 16th. Its architectural history is dealt with admirably in the local guide, one of the best of its kind, and is too complicated to be summarised in a few lines here, beyond saying that the massive central tower and part of the nave are Norman; the transepts and W. half of the nave 13th century; and the chancel early 14th. Small changes were made in the 15th and 16th centuries. The woodwork of the church is highly interesting: an Elizabethan gallery, late 17th century altar rails enclosing the altar on four sides, and a three-decker pulpit. There are numerous memorials to the Wadhams, Holcombes, and other local families, both inside the church and in the churchyard. One could spend a good week in and around Branscombe. W. H. Hudson and H. J. Massingham have both written lovingly about it.

Bratton Clovelly

Bratton Clovelly is located within West Devon local authority area. Historically it formed part of Lifton Hundred. It falls within Okehampton Deanery for ecclesiastical purposes. The Deaneries are used to arrange the typescript Church Notes of B.F.Cresswell which are held in the Westcountry Studies Library.

The population was 548 in 1801 499 in 1901. Figures for other years are available on the local studies website. In 1641/2 129 adult males signed the Protestation returns.

A parish history file is held in Okehampton Library. You can look for other material on the community by using the place search on the main local studies database. Further historical information is also available on the Genuki website.

Maps

The image below is of the Bratton Clovelly area on Donn's one inch to the mile survey of 1765.



- On the County Series Ordnance Survey mapping the area is to be found on 1:2,500 sheet 75/11
- Six inch (1:10560) sheet 75SE
- The National Grid reference for the centre of the area is SX464919
- On the post 1945 National Grid Ordnance Survey mapping the sheets are:
 - Six inch to a mile (1:10,000) sheet SX49SE
 - Explorer (1:25,000) mapping sheet 112
 - Landranger (1:50,000) mapping sheet 190
- Geological sheet 323 also covers the area

Extract from Devon by W.G.Hoskins (1954), included by kind permission of the copyright holder:

Bratton Clovelly A large remote parish, has one of the noblest churches (St. Mary) in Devon, and one of the least known. It is almost entirely of late 14th century date - the date 1375 is traditionally given for its completion with window tracery all of that date. The exterior is good but not exciting, but the interior view of the nave, looking

from the chancel steps to the tower arch, is almost cathedral-like. The lofty arcades have moulded piers of the dove- grey Polyphant stone, so beautiful in colouring that one regrets there is not more of it in Devon (cf. Sampford Courtenay). The tower arch is especially lofty and grand. The contemporary chancel is small and mean for such a nave. There is also a magnificent Norman font, of the same type as that at Ashwater, and the N. wall shows traces of mural paintings.

The parish is large and contains a number of interesting old farmhouses, some with Celtic names such as Maindea and Breazle. Boasley occurs in a Saxon charter of c. 1050, and became a medieval "mansion." Chimsworthy is mainly an Elizabethan farmhouse, which has been turned around so that the original front door is now at the back. It is possible that the core of the house is medieval. Guscott was a Domesday manor. Bratton gets its second name from the Clavilles, who held the manor in the 13th century.

Bratton Fleming

Bratton Fleming is located within North Devon local authority area. Historically it formed part of Braunton Hundred. It falls within Shirwell Deanery for ecclesiastical purposes. The Deaneries are used to arrange the typescript Church Notes of B.F.Cresswell which are held in the Westcountry Studies Library.

The population was 406 in 1801 511 in 1901. Figures for other years are available on the local studies website. In 1641/2 129 adult males signed the Protestation returns.

A parish history file is held in South Molton Library. You can look for other material on the community by using the place search on the main local studies database. Further historical information is also available on the Genuki website.

Maps

The image below is of the Bratton Fleming area on Donn's one inch to the mile survey of 1765.



- On the County Series Ordnance Survey mapping the area is to be found on 1:2,500 sheet 10/10 Six inch (1:10560) sheet 10SW
- The National Grid reference for the centre of the area is SS643377
- On the post 1945 National Grid Ordnance Survey mapping the sheets are:
 - Six inch to a mile (1:10,000) sheet SS63NW
 - Outdoor Leisure (1:25,000) mapping sheet 09
 - Landranger (1:50,000) mapping sheet 180
- Geological sheet 293 also covers the area

Extract from Devon by W.G.Hoskins (1954), included by kind permission of the copyright holder:

Bratton Fleming is a large village along one street which climbs steadily up the foothills of Exmoor. The Flemings had their seat at Chimwell, now a farmhouse called Chumhill, which Risdon said was "one of the largest demesnes of this shire." Benton and Haxton were small Domesday manors. The great jurist Henry de Bracton was probably born at Bratton.

Fleming, the first and greatest of the long line of Devon lawyers. (Round, E.H.R. 31 (1916), 586 ff.)

The church (St. Peter) is a Victorian rebuilding of 1855-61, of the worst kind, redeemed by one good monument (to Bartholomew Wortley). At Chelfham the old Lynton and Barnstaple Railway, now dismantled, crossed the valley by a fine viaduct of eight arches, 400 ft. long and 70 ft. above the roadway.

Braunton

Braunton is located within North Devon local authority area. Historically it formed part of Braunton Hundred. It falls within Barnstaple Deanery for ecclesiastical purposes. The Deaneries are used to arrange the typescript Church Notes of B.F.Cresswell which are held in the Westcountry Studies Library.

The population was 1296 in 1801 2135 in 1901. Figures for other years are available on the local studies website. In the valuation of 1334 it was assessed at £08/13/04. The lay subsidy of 1524 valued the community at £22/05/01. In 1641/2 383 adult males signed the Protestation returns. A turnpike was established in 1829. The community had a grammar school from 1667.

A parish history file is held in Braunton Library. You can look for other material on the community by using the place search on the main local studies database. Further historical information is also available on the Genuki website.

Maps

The image below is of the Braunton area on Donn's one inch to the mile survey of 1765.



- On the County Series Ordnance Survey mapping the area is to be found on 1:2,500 sheet 8/11,12,15,16
- Six inch (1:10560) sheet 8SE
- The National Grid reference for the centre of the area is SS487366
- On the post 1945 National Grid Ordnance Survey mapping the sheets are:
 - Six inch to a mile (1:10,000) sheet SS43NE
 - Explorer (1:25,000) mapping sheet 139
 - Landranger (1:50,000) mapping sheet 180
- Geological sheet 292 also covers the area

Extract from Devon by W.G.Hoskins (1954), included by kind permission of the copyright holder:

Braunton is an exceptionally interesting parish. One can only echo Preb. Chanter's words (in *The Church of St. Brannock, Braunton*) that with "its huge area of over ten

thousand acres of rich cornlands, meadows, marshes, moorlands and rolling sandhills, its chapels-of-ease, ancient and modern, its many manors and manor houses, [it] is full of interest alike to the antiquarian, the ecclesiologist, the historian, and the botanist." The reader is referred to that guide for a detailed description of the church and the chapels, and for an account of St. Brannoc, the Welsh missionary-saint of the 6th century to whom the church is dedicated.

Braunton, which is the *Brannocmynster* of a 9th century charter, owes its origin to St. Brannoc, who crossed from Wales and founded a chapel here, perhaps at Buckland where there is a St. Brannock's Well and where a chapel dedicated to the saint formerly stood. The saint is buried in Braunton church, possibly under the high altar; and his foundation became a *minster* or collegiate church by 857, when Brannocmynster was given to Glastonbury abbey "for the taking of salmon." The present church, of unusual plan, is mostly 13th century with a great deal of later detail (the early 16th century). Its most remarkable feature is the wide nave, covered by a fine roof (c. 1500) enriched with bosses. The carved bench-ends, of various dates between 1500 and 1600, are among the finest of their kind in England, and demand detailed inspection. There is a good deal of excellent Jacobean woodwork (esp. pulpit, reading-desk and gallery in the N. transept) and an early chancel screen of very unusual design, though rather meagre in character. There are many interesting 16th and 18th century monuments to the gentry of the parish, especially those of the Belles of Ash and the Incedons of Incedon, and a curious palimpsest brass to Lady Elizabeth Bowcer (Bourchier), daughter of the earl of Bath (1548).

The village has grown greatly by reason of its nearness to Barnstaple, and has acquired a somewhat suburban character, but some excellent traditional building may be found in East Street, South Street and Church Street. In the latter, Nos. 33-5 (formerly one house) are dated 1579. No. 17 East Street and No. 7 South Street are similar in style. These houses, formerly good farmhouses, are a characteristic type of building in many North Devon villages, with their massive stone chimney breasts on the street, beside the front door. Broadgate is an Elizabethan house, formerly a manor house called The Hall. It contains a plaster mantelpiece dated 1626. The S. block is medieval, with a fine roof of 14th century date.

St. Michael's chapel is a conspicuous ruin on the top of a hill NE. of the village, built in the 15th century as a votive chapel for sailors and fishermen, where prayers were said for them and a look-out kept. It was a conspicuous landmark from the sea. St. Anne's chapel, at the S. end of the Burrows, stood somewhere near the present lighthouse and marked the ancient crossing of the estuary from Appledore. This route fell into disuse in the early 19th century, the chapel decayed and is now quite gone, and the old road over the Burrows to Saunton has been lost.

There were formerly several families of gentry scattered about this large and fertile parish, their "mansions" being at Beer Charter, Buckland, Incedon, Saunton, Lobb, Fairlinch, Ash and Luscott. Most of these houses retain considerable evidence of their ancient status.

Braunton Great Field, to the SW. of the village, is one of the three surviving open-field areas left in England, still cultivated upon the "strip-system," but it is dwindling in area. Within living memory, some eighty-five small farmers cultivated this Field and the strips up on the Down to the E., but there are now only twelve.