



Plymouth

Plymouth is located within Plymouth local authority area. Historically it formed part of Roborough Hundred. It falls within Plymouth 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 16,378 in 1801, 107,636 in 1901, and 241,000 in 1991. Figures for other years are available on the local studies website. In the valuation of 1334 it was assessed at £34/12/08. The lay subsidy of 1524 valued the community at £85/08/06. In 1641/2 1440 adult males signed the Protestation returns. It is recorded as a borough from 1276 and was incorporated in 1439. It had parliamentary representation from 1442-date. A turnpike was established in 1758. The community had a grammar school from 1573. Absorbed Devonport and East Stonehouse in 1914. A market is recorded from 1822.

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 Plymouth 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 123/8+
- Six inch (1:10560) sheet 123NE,SW,SE
- The National Grid reference for the centre of the area is SX470560
- On the post 1945 National Grid Ordnance Survey mapping the sheets are:
 - Six inch to a mile (1:10,000) sheet SX45NE
 - Explorer (1:25,000) mapping sheet Explorer 108
 - Landranger (1:50,000) mapping sheet 201
- Geological sheet 348 also covers the area

Illustrations

The image below is of Plymouth 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:

Plymouth is a city of some 209,000 people, by far the largest town in Devon, extending for about 4 m. from W. to E. across the peninsula between the estuaries of Tamar and Plym. To the S. lies the Sound, a magnificent deep-water anchorage, and one of the finest harbour views in Europe. Inland, the city boundaries reach Tamerton Lake to the NW. and include the rural parish of Egg Buckland on the NE., taking in altogether an area of 13,136 acres, or rather more than 20 sq. miles. The city is essentially a union of the three towns of Plymouth on the E., Devonport on the W., and Stonehouse between them. Though the three towns had coalesced long before, they were not united under one authority – the borough of Plymouth – until 1914. In 1928 the borough was made a city by royal charter, and is now headed by a lord mayor.

The topography of Plymouth is complex, with its numerous inlets of tidal water, the undulating and broken character of the peninsula itself, and the fact of its growth from three independent centres. Few cities, if any, in Britain have such a superb site, with the blue edge of Dartmoor in full view to the NE., the Cornish hills and the noble estuary of the Tamar to the W., and the Sound in front enclosed between fine headlands, and dotted with shipping.

The old town of Plymouth lay in a hollow behind a limestone cliff-wall, which stretched from the Tamar to the Plym and continued beyond the Plym in the heights of Oreston and Mount Batten. The central section of this limestone wall forms today the famous Hoe. Three deep inlets breached the wall - Sutton Pool, Mill Bay (with Sour Pool), and Stonehouse Creek, of which the last two originally extended much farther inland than they do today. Around Sutton Pool, or more precisely a little NW. of it, in the region of Old Town Street today, lay the Saxon germ of this great city - the hamlet of Sutton or "South *tun*." Where Devonport now stands was a bird-haunted waste of marsh and mud along the Tamar mouth. The sketch-map shows the elements of Plymouth topography.

The hamlet of Sutton was part of a royal estate in Saxon times. Much of this royal estate (the manors of Sutton, King's Tamerton, and Maker) was granted away by Henry I to the Valletorts, who in turn gave part of the manor of Sutton to Plympton Priory, not far away. The monastic half of the manor became known as Sutton Prior; to the N. and W. of it lay Sutton Valletort (or Vautort).

Until the latter part of the 12th century, Sutton Prior remained a small agricultural and fishing village. With the acquisition of the provinces of SW. France by Henry II, the harbour was increasingly used by military and commercial shipping, though always overshadowed by Dartmouth which had a more sheltered anchorage. The great defect of Plymouth Sound was that it lay wide open to the prevailing SW. winds, and it could become a prison for sailing ships.

The priors of Plympton created a borough on the shores of Sutton Pool, probably about the middle of the 13th century. The prior at Plympton was granted a market and fair at Sutton in 1253. A borough may have been set up forthwith. There was certainly one by 1275 (Hundred Rolls) and the name Plymouth began to be used of the port proper. By the late 13th century the harbour was being used increasingly as a place of assembly for military expeditions and for ships engaged in the French wine trade, and Plymouth became second only to Exeter in population and wealth. (D.S., 223-4.)

In its early days, Plymouth was held back by the close control exercised over the borough by the priors of Plympton. After a prolonged struggle the town shook itself free of its maternal parent and was incorporated by act of parliament in 1439. By this charter the three Suttons (Sutton Prior, Sutton Vautort, and Sutton Ralf) were amalgamated, and a mayor and corporation set up for the enlarged borough.

Although Plymouth merchants were considerable men in the early 16th century - old William Hawkins, the father of Sir John, being the most notable - the town did not achieve any national importance until the latter part of the century when it became the principal naval base in the war against Spain. It became a clearing-house for prizes taken at sea, a starting point for voyages of exploration and colonisation, and a port of assembly for the navy. The choice of Plymouth, rather than Dartmouth, as the naval base was largely due to Sir Francis Drake, whose home port was Plymouth, and to Sir John Hawkins, a native of the town, who was treasurer of the navy 1578-

89, and comptroller 1589-95. It was from Plymouth that Drake sailed on 19 July 1588 to attack and defeat the Armada, and it was on Plymouth Hoe that he played his famous game of bowls. This traditional story is almost certainly true. It first appeared in print in 1624, within living memory of the event;(Bracken, *History of Plymouth*, 91-3.) and there are certain other details as to tides and winds which make the story highly probable.

Plymouth rose with the Spanish menace and fell away with its removal in the early 17th century. The population nearly doubled in the war town of 1580-1600. We hear of new streets being built all round Sutton Pool at this date. "Sperke's new streete " named after a big merchant (and called New Street today) is first recorded in 1584; Treville Street is named after the Elizabethan merchant Richard Treville; Southside Street appears in 1591, Looe Street in 1588. This is now the oldest and most historic part of the town, where several 16th and 17th century merchants' houses remain. The most notable example is No. 32 New Street, which dates from c.1590. It now belongs to the Plymouth corporation and is open for inspection. New Street itself retains much of its old character, narrow and winding, and paved with granite cobbles.

As the Spanish threat to England lessened in the 17th century, Plymouth lost much of its importance as a naval base. It remained the second town of Devon, stinking, sprawling, and full of poverty-stricken fishermen, carrying on also a considerable trade with the New England colonies. The next great impetus to its growth came with the rise of France as the national enemy, and hence the renewed necessity for a western naval base. Dartmouth and Falmouth were considered and rejected, and the site for the new naval dockyards was fixed, not at Plymouth itself, but on the unpeopled marshes and meadows along the edge of the Tamar. By 1696 the naval base of Dock had come into being. The incessant wars of the 18th century nourished the new town to such effect that within a hundred years it had surpassed Plymouth, and the rivalry between the two was intense. By 1815 Dock had some 32,000 people against Plymouth's 22,000. Stonehouse, which lay between them, had grown to about 6,000 with the overflow of naval buildings from Dock, but the three towns were still separate entities. In 1824 Dock was granted the more dignified name of Devonport and Foulston's fine column (which still stands) went up to commemorate the event. Devonport achieved complete recognition as a separate town when it was incorporated in 1837.

With the end of the long wars, Devonport's growth slowed up, and Plymouth forged ahead as a fishing port and a growing commercial harbour. The construction of the Breakwater by Rennie (1812-40) gave the port one of the largest and safest harbours in Britain. By 1881 Plymouth had 74,000 people, Devonport rather less than 49,000, Stonehouse some 15,000 - a total of about 138,000 in the Three Towns, as they were now habitually called. They were now one continuous mass of building and their unification under one authority was inevitable. This came in 1914, when the whole borough took the name of Plymouth, though each town retains its own distinctive character. Plymouth flourished as a great naval base during the war of 1914-18:

"Upon the British coast what ship yet ever came that, not of Plymouth hears, where the brave navies lie?" said Drayton long ago in his *Polyolbion*.

But the Second German War reached it as the First had not done. From 1940 to 1943, and above all in the terrible spring of 1941, the city was pounded from the air by the missionaries of 20th century civilisation, and suffered vast damage and casualties. About 1,000 people were killed, 5,000 injured, 10,000 houses destroyed, and some 70,000 more damaged. The whole centre of the city was wiped out, but the congested area around Sutton Pool largely escaped and represents all that is left of old Plymouth. Now the new city has risen from the ruins but it is too soon to pass judgement upon the result. Old Plymothians look sadly upon it.

Of medieval Plymouth, very little remains. The fine 15th century parish church of St. Andrew was gutted by fire in the 1941 raids. The tower and walls stand, and it is proposed to rebuild it. Chantrey's marble bust of Zachariah Mudge, a great Plymouth figure in Georgian times and a close friend of Sir Joshua Reynolds, was among the things saved from the burning church. Charles Church, not far away, the only 17th century church to be built in Devon, was dedicated to King Charles the Martyr, and consecrated by Bishop Seth Ward in 1664. It, too, was destroyed except for its tower and walls, and its future is uncertain. The Prysten House ("Priests' House") on the S. side of St. Andrew's churchyard, is a late 15th century building which fortunately escaped damage. It is a quadrangular building of limestone and granite, with a central courtyard and original door-ways, windows, staircases, roofs, and other features. (For fuller details see Judge, *The Story of the Prysten House, Plymouth*)

At the E. end of the Hoe is the Citadel, the most important historic building left in Plymouth, commanding the entrance to the Cattewater and to Sutton Pool. There had been earlier defensive works at Plymouth. Henry IV had granted the inhabitants of Plymouth a patent "to erect towers and defences against their enemies," and a map of Henry VIII's time shows a wall, with towers at each end, extending along the whole length of the Hoe. A new fort was erected on the E. end of the Hoe in 1590-2, but this was demolished in 1666 when the foundation-stone of the present Citadel was laid by John Grenville, Earl of Bath and governor of the town. This foundation-stone may still be seen. The Citadel has been described as a fine example of the 17th century type of fortress associated with the name of Vauban, the celebrated French military engineer. Its main gateway, dated 1670, is one of the best examples of baroque architecture in this country, often attributed to Wren but in fact the work of Sir Thomas Fitz.(Copeland, *The Royal Citadel, Plymouth*, 9. I am indebted to admirable booklet for the details of the Citadel) It is unlike anything else in the west of England. St. Katherine's chapel in the Citadel was built in 1668, but rebuilt in 1845 in a Gothic style. Its original N. doorway remains. The chapel is open to the public for divine worship at certain times stated on a board by the main gate. Charles II visited the town twice (in 1671 and 1677) to inspect the Citadel.

The last gasp of good architecture is the early 19th century work of John Foulston (1772-1842), who left an unmistakable stamp everywhere in the Three Towns, both in their monumental public buildings and in their minor domestic architecture.

Foulston was trained in Thomas Hardwick's office and apparently practised in London. In 1811 he competed for the new hotel, assembly rooms, and theatre (plate 2) projected by the Plymouth corporation. His design was accepted and the foundation stone of this monumental group laid on 10 September 1811. At the age of forty he took up his residence in Plymouth and here he worked for the next thirty years, town-planning on a grand scale or designing a single villa with equal facility. Professor A. E. Richardson sums up his work thus: " Foulston, like Granger of Newcastle, was fired with the desire to emulate Nash's work in London; the moment and the man had arrived for such developments, and the result was the shaping of Union Street with the Octagon as a hiatus at the centre. Foulston's other town-planning achievements included Athenaeum Street, Lockyer Street, the Crescent and a range of villas called Devonshire Villas to the north of the town. In addition to designing the majority of the terraces in Plymouth he constructed nearly all the public buildings, with the exception of the Customs House, which was designed by Laing; and he at this time prepared plans for nearly all the minor streets which the speculative builders of the day were eager to proceed with. Plymouth in the early 'twenties was a forest of scaffold poles, soon to be cleared to reveal the stuccoed conventions in Greek taste devised by this architect. It is, of course, burking the question to assume that Foulston designed every house, but his personality is stamped on the doors, windows and iron gates, while it is clear the builders of the time were sworn to allegiance, for they caught the spirit of his manner and faithfully obeyed his orders. At Stoke Damarel, Foulston's hand is to be seen in the composition of the stately facade forming St. Michael's Terrace, as well as in the unique Albemarle Villas which are contiguous (plate 5). His work at Devonport included the civic centre, the Naval Column and many other works." (Richardson and Gill, *Regional Architecture of the West of England*, 54) Towards the end of his life, Foulston took into partnership George Wightwick, who did much good building in Plymouth and Devonport in the 1850s. But after 1860 the Foulston tradition was lost and new building in the Three Towns became as common-place as anywhere else.

Of Foulston's great civic centre in Plymouth, most is gone. The Theatre was destroyed before 1939 to make room for a gigantic cinema which might just as well be in the outer suburbs of London (it survived the air-raids), and the Royal Hotel and Assembly Rooms perished in the raids of 1941. The Athenaeum, built next to the theatre by Foulston in 1818-19, is also gone. The Proprietary library (1812) in Cornwall Street, was destroyed in the war of 1939-45. The Royal Union Baths (1828), in Foulston's best classical style, were pulled down as early as 1849 to make room for the new Millbay railway terminus. One of the few public buildings by Foulston left in Plymouth is St. Catherine's Church in Lockyer Street, built in 1823 and then called St. Andrew's chapel.

At Devonport most of Foulston's civic centre in Ker Street survives; the Town Hall (plate 3), a handsome classical building modelled on the Parthenon, finished in 1823, the Column commemorating the new name of Devonport (1824), and the Civil and Military Library (1823). The Column was originally intended to have a colossal statue of George IV on the top, but the necessary funds were never forthcoming. The Civil and Military Library was built in the Egyptian style one of Foulston's few eccentric

buildings. It is now a Christian Scientist church and exceedingly shabby. The Mount Zion chapel, now destroyed, formed part of this civic centre. It was built for the Calvinists in a vaguely Mohammedan style. Foulston calls this extraordinary collection of buildings "an experimental group." His own opinion was that it was a strange but picturesque combination. (Foulston, *The Public Buildings in the West of England as designed by John Foulston*, 63).

Among the numerous 19th century churches of Devonport, a number were designed by J. P. St. Aubyn, including St. Paul's (1849), St. Mary's (1850), St. James the Great at Keyham (1849-51), and St. Stephen's (1852). St. Aubyn's Church was built in 1771, St. John's (Duke Street) in 1779. The ancient parish church of Stoke Damarel (St. Andrew) is of little interest. It was a 15th century church, but has been so enlarged and altered as to have little character left.

The monumental architecture of the Dockyard and the other naval establishments in Devonport and Stonehouse is of much more importance. Sir John Rennie's Royal William Victualling Yard at Stonehouse (1826-35) is one of the grandest monuments of the 19th century in England. It is a vast conception, of Spartan severity: an engineer's architecture suitable in every way for naval affairs and designed down to the detail of the lamp-posts. Less exciting are the Royal Naval Hospital at Stonehouse (1762 onwards) and the Royal Marine Barracks (1784 and later). The two dockyards that constitute the Naval Dockyard front the mouth of the Tamar—here called the Hamoaze—for some 2 m. and cover together 243 acres. Visitors of British nationality may be conducted around them on application at the main (Keyham) gate at any time during ordinary working hours. The two yards are separated by the Gun Wharf, built in 1718-25 by Vanburgh.

St. Budeaux, N. of Devonport, is now completely engulfed in suburban Plymouth. The parish church (St. Budoc) was rebuilt in 1563 "in the Gothic style on a new site which commands fine views of the river and the Cornish bank. The old site was somewhere by the shore of the creek near Budshead, and was perhaps the landing place of the Celtic saint Budoc in the 6th or 7th century. There are considerable traces of the old mansion of the Budsheads here. The whole creek is beautiful and full of feeling, associated as it is with many of the early saints, Indract, Dominic, Budoc, and all their company (see TAMERTON FOLIOT also). The present church is chiefly of interest for its associations with Sir Francis Drake who was married here to Mary Newman in 1569, and with Sir Ferdinando Gorges (1566?- 1647). He was governor of Plymouth, became interested in colonisation, and formed two companies which received grants of land in New England. He founded the settlement of New Plymouth in 1628, and was appointed first governor of Maine in 1635. He died in 1647 and his table monument is here.

Egg Buckland parish on the NE. side of Plymouth is partly occupied by the military defences of the town and port. The church (St. Erasmus) has a good 14th century tower and S. porch, but was otherwise rebuilt in 1864. Widey Court, about ½ m. NW., was the headquarters of Prince Maurice when he besieged Plymouth in 1643,

and was visited by the king in September 1644. The house is now neglected and dilapidated.

In the middle of Plymouth Sound lies Drake's Island, formerly called St. Nicholas's Island from the chapel that stood on it. It is fortified and garrisoned, and was formerly a State prison. The republican general Lambert died a prisoner here in 1683, after sixteen years' confinement which he passed chiefly in painting flowers and working out problems in algebra. For a time he had as a fellow-prisoner James Harrington, the political theorist and author of *The Commonwealth of Oceana*. Harrington was afterwards allowed to live in Plymouth for his health's sake, and eventually died in London in 1677. Several adherents of the parliamentary cause were confined on the island after 1660, as well as dissenting ministers after the act of 1662. (Mowan, *A Brief History of Drake's Island*, 12) The chapel of St. Nicholas, which stood on the summit of the island, was demolished in 1548 to make room for the fortifications. The island now belongs to the War Department and is not normally open to the public.

Beyond the island lies the Breakwater, begun in 1812 and finished by Sir John Rennie in 1840. It lies 2 m. from the Hoe, is about a mile long, and required about 4,500,000 tons of limestone for its construction. The lighthouse on the end was first lit in 1844. In the centre is a large fort, which is actually a separate structure.

Fourteen miles from the Hoe, from which it is visible on clear days, is the famous Eddystone lighthouse, the fourth on the site. The first structure was Winstanley's (1696), swept away in the great storm of 1703. Rudyerd's lighthouse (1706) was burnt down in 1755. Smeaton's (1759) was only superseded in 1882 because the rock on which it stood was being undermined by the sea. It was taken down and re-erected on Plymouth Hoe. The present lighthouse was built by Sir J. N. Douglass and lit in 1882. It rises 133ft. above high-water mark. It is built of granite blocks, weighing in all 4,668 tons, and has been the model for most lighthouses since built in similar situations on isolated reefs.

Plymouth has given its name to some forty Plymouths all over the English-speaking world. What greater testimony is needed to the affection that it has inspired for the past 400 years? It is the mother of all Plymouths everywhere.

Plympton St Maurice

Plympton St Maurice is located within Plymouth local authority area. Historically it formed part of Plympton Hundred. It falls within Plympton 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 604 in 1801 1117 in 1901. Figures for other years are available on the local studies website. In 1641/2 159 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 Plympton St Maurice 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 124/7
- Six inch (1:10560) sheet 124NE
- The National Grid reference for the centre of the area is SX546557
- On the post 1945 National Grid Ordnance Survey mapping the sheets are:
 - Six inch to a mile (1:10,000) sheet SX55NW,NE
 - Outdoor Leisure (1:25,000) mapping sheet 20
 - Landranger (1:50,000) mapping sheet 201
- Geological sheet 349 also covers the area

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

Plympton Earl (or Plympton St. Maurice) lies on a by-road $\frac{1}{2}$ m. S. of the busy main road from Plymouth to Exeter. Those who have a special feeling for the small, ancient, and decayed boroughs of England will be delighted with Plympton. It has

been left on one side in the past two hundred years or so, and one smells cow-dung in the streets instead of petrol fumes: the immemorial life giving smell of the land from which the little town took its birth in the 12th century.

The manor and honour of Plympton were granted by Henry I to Richard de Redvers before 1107. He built the castle on his demesne land, on the S. side of which there grew up a small community of traders and farmers. His descendant, William de Vernon, 5th Earl of Devon, made a borough of it in 1194, with a market and fair; and unlike so many of the seignorial boroughs of Devon Plympton grew into a town, though never of any great size. It was one of the few "regular boroughs" of Devon, returning members of Parliament without a break from 1295 until it was disfranchised in 1832; and it was incorporated in 1602 and had a mayor and corporation from then until 1859. In 1328 it was made one of the four stannary towns. By Elizabeth's time the town had a weekly market and no fewer than four annual fairs; and the charter of William and Mary added two more fairs, making six in all. The decay of the castle and the dissolution of the priory did not affect the life of the little town unduly. Even if we did not know this from the records, the architectural evidence from the 16th to the 18th cents. would reveal the prosperity of the place. Plympton carried on wool-combing, tanning and brewing, coopering and hat-making. All these trades died for one reason or another, and at the first census (1801) the borough had only 604 people. It grew slowly during the 19th cent., mostly at the perimeter and not in the old town itself. But it still has only some 1,200 people, and the town keeps its ancient atmosphere. Some recent growth is due to the influence of Plymouth.

The disfranchisement of the borough in 1832 gave it a mortal blow, for the close corporation depended on its patron and recorder (the Earl of Mount Edgcumbe) for meeting the greater part of its annual expenditure. (Report of the Commission on Municipal Corporations, 1835 (Plympton)) With the abolition of the parliamentary borough, the patron withdrew the favour of his countenance and his cash. It was this that led the desperate corporation to start selling their pictures, including Sir Joshua Reynolds's self-portrait. The Guildhall is an interesting building in the local slate and granite, dated 1688-96. It is now occupied by the Plympton St. Maurice parish council, who succeeded the old corporation after an interval. The corporation allowed its charter to lapse in 1859, when the last mayor was elected; and the ancient borough, so long enfeebled, passed quietly away in its sleep.

The castle, built by Richard de Redvers, was surrendered during the rebellion of his son Baldwin in Stephen's reign, and is said to have been razed. The ruins of the stone keep date from this time. The earthworks of the castle, including the motte, are substantially intact and make a promenade from which one gets a good view over the roof-tops of the little town.

The grammar school, built about 1664 in a Jacobean Gothic and restored in 1870, is famous for its associations with Sir Joshua Reynolds, whose father was master here. Much of the original building remains, including the school room and the granite arcade or cloister, the subject of one of Reynolds's earliest drawings. Here also were

educated Northcote, Haydon and Eastlake; Haydon was at the head of the school in 1801. Few schools in England can have such rich associations in the history of painting, but few towns in England can have been so unaware of their greatest son. Plympton pulled down the birthplace of the greatest portrait painter the country has produced; there was not even a memorial to Reynolds until a tablet was placed in the church in 1904.

The parish church (St. Maurice) was formerly dedicated to St. Thomas of Canterbury, this dedication being changed in the time of Henry VIII. It is an exciting building of 14th and 15th century date, restored in 1879.

Many old houses survive in the grey streets of Plympton. Plympton House, now a mental hospital, was begun in 1700 by Sir George Treby, Lord Chief Justice, and finished by his son, George Treby, in 1720. It has a perfect Queen Anne front, and retains complete and intact its contemporary gardens.

Plympton St Mary

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The population was 1562 in 1801 3837 in 1901. Figures for other years are available on the local studies website. In the valuation of 1334 it was assessed at £04/06/08. The lay subsidy of 1524 valued the community at £46/11/03. In 1641/2 533 adult males signed the Protestation returns. It is recorded as a borough from 1225 and was incorporated in 1602. It had parliamentary representation from 1295-1832. The community had a grammar school from 1658. Incorporated in Plymouth. A market is recorded from 14c.-1985.

A parish history file is held in Ivybridge 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

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- On the County Series Ordnance Survey mapping the area is to be found on 1:2,500 sheet 124/2,3
- Six inch (1:10560) sheet 124NW,NE
- The National Grid reference for the centre of the area is SX540566
- On the post 1945 National Grid Ordnance Survey mapping the sheets are:
 - 1:10,000 (six inch to a mile: sheet SX55NW,NE
 - 1:25,000 mapping: sheet Outdoor Leisure 20
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Illustrations

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

Plympton St. Mary is a vast parish, covering well over 10,000 acres, with an ancient village on the main road from Plymouth to Exeter. Today the village is almost a suburb of Plymouth, and has doubled its numbers since 1900.

An Augustinian priory was founded at Plympton St. Mary in 1121, but a collegiate church of St. Peter and St. Paul had existed here from the time of Alfred. Plympton priory became the second richest monastery in Devon and Cornwall, exceeded only by Tavistock Abbey, but scarcely a vestige of this great house remains today. Such small fragments as remain lie to the S. of Plympton Parish Church. Among its property was the site of Plymouth, a town which owes its origin to the priory.

Plympton church (St. Mary) stood in the churchyard of the conventual church: hence its comparative isolation from the village today. It now stands in a lawn-like churchyard, a handsome building of early 14th and 15th century date, built largely of granite. The granite tower (108 ft.) is notably good. Among the features of the interior are the Strode monuments (1460, 1637), some ancient heraldic glass, the mutilated canopied tomb of a Courtenay (15th century), the handsome triple sedilia and piscina in the chancel, and the good modern parclose screens.

The fertile countryside of Plympton had no fewer than thirteen lesser Domesday manors besides the royal manor. All these ancient estates survive to-day (except the lost Walford), most as farmhouses, some as country houses. The Domesday manors

were Baccamoor, Battisford, Bickford Town, Challonsleigh, Elfordleigh, Hemerdon, Holland, Langage, Loughtor Mills, Torridge, Woodford, Walford (lost), and Yealmpstone. Sparkwell appears by 1167, Saltram by 1249, Boringdon by 1279, Newnham by 1292.

Boringdon came to the Parkers in the time of Elizabeth. They rebuilt it on a substantial scale and made it their principal residence until they moved to Saltram after 1712. The house has been half-demolished, but there are considerable remains of the Elizabethan house, including the great hall.

Saltram, on a fine site overlooking the Plym estuary, is the largest house in Devon. In the reign of Charles I it was the seat of Sir James Bagg of Plymouth, and was then a substantial Tudor mansion. John Parker married Lady Catherine Powlett and it was they who built Saltram much as we see it today: a house of George II's time. It has been altered and added to three or four times, and is now rich in all that the 18th century architects and craftsmen could effect. (*Country Life*, 59 (1926), 160-170; *Tourist's Companion to Plymouth, etc.*, 289) In 1768 the lower rooms were superbly decorated by Adam, notably the saloon and the dining-room. The former is a double cube, and is said by Polwhele to have cost at least £1 0,000. The ceilings of these rooms were painted by Zucchi. Among the art treasures of this great house, the collection of English and French furniture, and the pictures, are equally outstanding. The furniture includes a superb writing table which formerly belonged to Louis XIV. The pictures are undoubtedly the finest collection in Devon. They include a considerable number of the works of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was a friend of the Parkers and often stayed at Saltram, and the fine Italian pictures collected from 1751 onwards on the advice of Reynolds. Saltram is one of the three great houses still kept up in Devon. The other two are Powderham (the Earl of Devon) and Castle Hill (Earl Fortescue).

Newnham Park is the seat of the Strodes, who originated at Strode in Ermington, and moved to Newnham in the 15th century. Their old house is now a farmhouse (Old Newnham) with many traces of the former "mansion," but about 1700 they built their present house in a large park.

On the NE. side of the parish, on the high foothills of the Moor, are extensive china-clay works. The scenery of the parish is beautiful and varied, especially in the wooded valley of the Plym. Plym Bridge is the most interesting and picturesque on the Plym. A bridge existed here as early as 1238, on the important main road from Tavistock to Plympton.

Plymstock

Plymstock is located within Plymouth local authority area. Historically it formed part of Plympton Hundred. It falls within Plympton 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 1663 in 1801 3195 in 1901. Figures for other years are available on the local studies website. In 1641/2 311 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 Plymstock 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 124/9,10,13,14
- Six inch (1:10560) sheet 124SW
- The National Grid reference for the centre of the area is SX515535
- On the post 1945 National Grid Ordnance Survey mapping the sheets are:
 - Six inch to a mile (1:10,000) sheet SX55SW
 - Explorer (1:25,000) mapping sheet 108
 - Landranger (1:50,000) mapping sheet 201
- Geological sheet 349 also covers the area

Illustrations

The image below is of Plymstock as included in the Library's Illustrations webpages. 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:

Plymstock is now swamped by suburban Plymouth. The church (formerly All Saints, now St. Mary and All Saints), is essentially a 14th century building enlarged in the 15th, when the fine bold W. tower was added. There are two excellent granite arcades, of differing styles, and a handsome rood-screen of the same period (15th century). The pulpit is late 17th century, with contemporary stairs and sounding-board. In the S. chancel aisle, which was the chapel of Harris of Radford, are some good 17th and 18th century mural monuments of the family.

Radford, the seat of the Harrises from Edward IV's time (1461-83), was demolished in 1937 to make way for a building estate. An account of the house will be found in DA 77 (1944), 149-55. A number of small manors existed here as early as the Norman Conquest - Goosewell, Hooe, Staddiscombe and Staddon.

Oreston, now a populous suburb, has extensive quarries of limestone from which the stone for Plymouth break-water (1812-41) was taken - 4½ million tons in all. At Mount Batten, now a sea-plane station, considerable discoveries of burials, pottery, coins, and other evidence, show that a native trading settlement existed on the S. shore of the Cattewater throughout the greater part of the Roman period. The coin sequence runs, with slight breaks, from Nero (54-68) to Honorius (433). (For the

details of these and other discoveries, see Worth, "Prehistoric Plymouth" in the Trans. Plymouth Institution for 1931, 1944) During excavations for the present Stamford Fort in 1864, a late Celtic cemetery was discovered on the hillside a little SW. of the fort. (A full account of the discovery is given in *Archaeologia*, 40 (1866), 550-10, and a short account in V.C.H., 367-8).

Stamford Fort occupies the site of defences thrown up in 1643 by the inhabitants of Plymouth in preparation for the royalist siege, and is named after the parliamentarian commander, the Earl of Stamford.

Plymtree

Plymtree is located within East Devon local authority area. Historically it formed part of Hayridge 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 375 in 1801 359 in 1901. Figures for other years are available on the local studies website. In 1641/2 146 adult males signed the Protestation returns.

A parish history file is held in Cullompton 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 Plymtree 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 57/15
- Six inch (1:10560) sheet 57SE
- The National Grid reference for the centre of the area is ST052028
- On the post 1945 National Grid Ordnance Survey mapping the sheets are:
 - Six inch to a mile (1:10,000) sheet ST00SE
 - Explorer (1:25,000) mapping sheet 030
 - Landranger (1:50,000) mapping sheet 192
- Geological sheet 325 also covers the area

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

Plymtree is a small parish set in a fertile red sandstone country of rich dairy pastures, magnificent oak timber, and orchards that produce some of the best cider in Devon. It contains a number of interesting houses. Fordmoor, formerly called simply Ford, is said by Lysons to have been the home of the Fords from Henry II's time until 1702. It

is a fine Elizabethan house. Woodbeer passed through a succession of families from Domesday onwards. The present house (Woodbeer Court) is a medieval hall-house, with walls 4 ft. thick. It was reconstructed internally at a later date, like so many medieval mansions in Devon, to make more convenient rooms. Hayne House is early Georgian. Greenend was the manor house and was for long the residence of the Pratts, ancestors of Earl Camden.

The parish church (St. John the Baptist) is a 14th century building, with a S. aisle and W. tower added in the 15th century There are 15th century carved bench-ends, and some interesting church plate, but the glory of the church is the rood-screen. This is a very beautiful example of the fan-vaulted Devonshire screens, dating in all probability from just after 1470. The painted figures on the lower panels of the screen rank as one of the most perfect sets yet remaining; most of them keep their ancient colour. The four panels representing the Adoration of the Magi are particularly notable; but there is no basis for the assertion that the three Kings portray Cardinal Morton, Henry VII, and Prince Arthur.

Thomas Mozley, who was rector 1868-80, was for many years a leader writer to *The Times* and author of *Reminiscences of Oriel College and the Oxford Movement*. He used to walk or drive every afternoon to Ottery Road station (now Sidmouth Junction) where he had a room at the Railway Hotel. Here he found the subject on which he was to write his leader, sent down from London by telegraph, and his article would be despatched to *The Times* by the late afternoon train.