



News from the History Group Research Team

This January marks the 10th anniversary since Chris Selby started the St. Tudy History Group in January 2014. I have been delving and reporting on my research into St. Tudy and its past inhabitants for five years now. This has taken me on quite a journey around England, Australia, Canada, America and the World, all without leaving my office. During this time, I have investigated such “characters” as Aaron Masters who liked a drink, getting married and stealing cows which landed him in Australia. Other “characters” were John Cook who decided to sell his wife in Camelford in 1812, George Kendall who escaped from Bodmin Gaol, and Mary Jane Allen my other unsolved case. Then there were those that did well out of adversity like James Ruse, a convict who saved a colony from starvation, and Richard Rowe who travelled to America in 1905 and regularly embarrassed his family in Church. Also, James Philp from St. Tudy who lived in Algonquin, Illinois with his family, fought in the American Civil War and became a hero saving his neighbours from their burning house, and became one of the most prominent men in Algonquin. Then there were the Lobb Brothers from Pencarrow who became international Plant Hunters.

Reverend Charles Hodgson, who shall we say liked the good life, with his cases of Maderia, a good and kind man, and Obadiah Ghossip the Yorkshireman who was Rector of St. Tudy between 1630 - 1650. The wonderful Reverend Collisson who was a famous song writer, organist, comic opera singer actor and composer who lived at Wetherham between 1898-1901, and “cried steadily from St. Tudy to Exeter when he had to leave”. We can’t forget the Blighs of Tinten Manor and St. Nicholas Chapel, also Loveday Hambly, the Quaker Saint of Cornwall who was born at Hengar Manor around 1604. Local residents like Samuel and Rebecca Tom of Tamsquite, who are buried at the Methodist Chapel, the fashionable Temperance Clickard from Coldsent, Edward Symonds of Polshea whose will of 1837 mentioned cyder making and dung. The brilliant Dr. Richard Lower of Tremeer, and Humphrey Nicholl of Penrose who was responsible for bringing Pirates to justice in the 1600’s. I also looked into the life of Charles Jaggard, first School Headmaster of St. Tudy a talented Cricketer who bowled W.G. Grace out for 99, little Molly Renfrew who, aged 6, took part in St. Tudy races, and Royalty like Prince Chula of Siam, living at Tredethy, St. Mabyn, the Onslows of Hengar Manor’s connection to the Royal Family, finally last but not least, Granny Boswell the Gypsy Queen.

What amazes me is that this small area of Cornwall is so rich in history, brave and adventurous people who all have amazing stories to tell. We wouldn’t have known about any of them if Chris hadn’t set up the History Group. Hopefully he would be proud of what we have achieved. These journeys into people’s lives has reminded me of the saying “walking in the footsteps of your ancestors” which we can do here in St. Tudy. Having just scratched the surface, there are new adventures and stories to tell in 2024. I have enjoyed my journeys into the past and hope you have too.

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