

## TREVERVA

1326 - TREWRUVO; 1359 - TREFTJRVO; 1407 - TREVYRVO

Almost certainly a single farm originally, Treverva became the village it is today because it was situated near the junction of two roads, each of great importance in the past. One road, that entering the village from the south, was an ancient ridgeway from the Helford River at Calamansack in Constantine, passing High Cross in that parish and entering Budock parish near Trewoon. Joining the second road shortly after, it reaches Penryn via Hill Head. The other road, also a continuation of an old ridgeway from Gweek to Stithians via Butteriss Gate, leaves the ridgeway road at Carwythenack in Constantine and continues to Treverva, entering the village at the Western end. This latter road would have been a direct route between the two important market towns of Helston and Penryn, crossing what is now part of the Royal Naval Air Station at Cudrose, from Boughere in Mawgan to Meneage Street in Helston. As well as the market trade, this road would have carried the granite from quarries in Constantine for transportation by sea from Penryn to many parts of the world in the nineteenth century and a century before, in the 1750's, great granite blocks "from 1/2 ton to 1 1/2 tons in size but none to exceed 2 tons" would have passed through Treverva on their way to be shipped for the building of the second Eddystone Lighthouse. John Smeaton, Civil Engineer, F.R.S., the builder, had heard of a granite merchant in Constantine who could supply particularly fine moorstone "of a quality better both to cleave and work" than Smeaton had ever seen before, as he wrote after travelling by horseback from Falmouth to visit Matthew Box of Treglidgwith in Constantine, the granite merchant. Later, Matthew Box moved to Treworval in that parish, and one concludes that supplying granite for the lighthouse had brought some prosperity to the family. It was the granite trade, also, that was responsible for the growth of Treverva, when cottages were built for the workers, in the next century, by which time Treverva had become three separate tenements.

With the building of the Argal Dam, commenced in 1939, and the flooding of the valley below, the aspect of Treverva changed and in 1966 it became part of the parish of Mabe, whose church had always been much nearer than that of Budock, some 3 1/2 miles distant.

In the past, when rates were paid to the Parish Church for the upkeep of the parish, the people of this far corner of Budock, paid their share and their names are to be found in the old account books. They would have made the long, rough, journey to Budock Church every Sunday as well as for their marriages and christenings, and their dead would have been taken through narrow, rocky, lanes by farm cart or handbier, the coffin often resting on one of the stone slabs known as "coffin rests" still to be found beside stile or gateway.

The first that is known of an occupant of Treverva, is found in the Lay Subsidy (or Tax) Roll of 1326 when Ricardo Trewvro paid the sum of Xd as a tenant. Later, a dwellinghouse and land at Treverva was sold by the Menkee family of St. Gluvias to Thomas Harry of Carnsew in Mabe, and in the sixteenth century, when "Harry" had become "Roscrowe" of Roscrowe in St. Gluvias, Treverva is named in a settlement of the Roscrowe Estates, and "one moor in Treverva" belonging to the Hexts of Trenarren in St. Austell, was occupied by John Carnsewe of Trewoon, south of Treverva. Trewoon (Place on the Down) still has traces of an Elizabethan mansion visible in the farm buildings. Subsequent occupants were the Randalls, a family responsible for one of the two Budock Parish charities through John Randall who died in 1743. In 1746, John Penrose, then Vicar of Budock, reported that "John Randall's mansion house was going to ruin". A particularly fine granite for monuments came from a quarry at Trewoon and Mr. Morley Wills, now retired, but still living in Treverva, remembers, in the 1920's, working on a memorial for the Medlyn family of Constantine, still to be seen in that churchyard. He also remembers cutting granite from the same quarry for Council Houses at Trewen about that time.

There was once a footpath beside the old smithy at Treverva, leading across the fields to the pillared gates of Trewoon and thence, through the farm to the quarry. This lane continued behind Tresooth to join the present road to Mawnan Smith and Budock Water and was known as Gipsy Lane. It can still be seen, although overgrown, and may well have been an important road, especially if it linked with another old track passing through Crill and Trewen to enter Budock Water opposite the Trelowarren Arms. It would have

been a shorter route to the church than the present road.

In 1765, the chief ratepayer in Treverva was William Box, a brother of Matthew Box, Smeaton's granite merchant. The Box family had lived in Constantine for more than 100 years and it may have been the granite that brought them clown from Gram-pound where Peter Box, a mason, had died in 1647. "William Box of Budock" as he was known by the family in Constantine, was the son of John Box and Grace Randall of Mawnan, possibly related to the Randalls of Trewoon. Country people did not travel very far in those days, and marriages were usually to be found in the same parish or one immediately adjacent. Another brother, Ananias, married Charity Pascoe of Budock.

William Box, described as "a yeoman", lived at the farm which is now, and has for more than 100 years, been occupied by the Dunstan family. At one time it was known as "the Barton of Treverva" and "Mayne's Tenement" was the name given to the farm later called "Treverva Farm". There is a very interesting division of land in Treverva, in the 1840's when the Tithe Map was made. At that time, Mayne's Tenement and 35 acres of land cut through 31 acres that belonged to a second farmhouse, now demolished, behind the Barton house. From this it would seem that the original holding became two and then, three, separate tenements. This is substantiated by the fact that in 1765, John Rowe Senr. and John Rowe Junr. each paid a rate of 2s/8d while William Box paid 8s/0d.

The Box family continued at Treverva for three more generations and their marriages with local families brought in many names still found in the area today. One marriage, that of William's youngest son, John, to Elizabeth Hendy of Mullion, in 1779, was to bring the Hendy family into prominence in Treverva and in Mabe, where there are a number of graves to be seen in the churchyard. The Hendys had been connected with Budock much earlier when Elizabeth's grandfather, William Hendy and Julian Roberts "both of Mullion", married there in 1703. Among others, their **descendants** married "Rail" and "Knowles" and in 1809, Thomas Hodge of Argol (later known as Woodfield), brother of the Revd. Edward Hodge of Penryn, married Grace Hendy.

John Box succeeded his father at Treverva, the eldest brother, William, having predeceased him. The second son, Matthew, followed his uncle, the granite merchant, at Treworval and prior to moving to Treverva, John farmed Tregarne in Mawnan where a number of his children were baptised. Tie game adjoined Treworval in Constantine as well as adjoining Trewoon in Budock, and Matthew and John both paid rates to Mawnan Church for the two mills, Bosanath and Tregarne, in the valley between the farms. By 1802, Matthew had also died, and John had moved to Treverva. Matthew's widow remarried in 1806, Thomas Midlen of Higher Spargo in Mabe, and the Treworval family continued to prosper, but John Box, who had ten children, does not appear to have been so successful. No records of death in infancy of any of his children have been found, which was surprising in those days, although a little girl died at the age of 9. He may have had farming worries. In 1801, the Vicar of Wendron, a nearby parish, recorded in his church's register that: "A very great scarcity of Grain prevailed in this and the preceding year. The distresses of the poor were very great"<sup>1</sup>. There had been lean years before this. John's own health may have broken down. He died in 1812 at the age of 57, recorded in the Royal Cornwall Gazette as "Mr. John Box of Treverva". His will made in 1810 was witnessed by a neighbour, Jacob Kempthorne, who had moved to Mayne's Tenement from Constantine about the time John left Tregarne, and who was to remain in Treverva until 1833.

Two of John Box's sons, John and William, married two sisters, Elizabeth and Jenefer Geach, daughters of Francis Geach of Nangitha. Their brother, Francis Geach Junr, lived at Higher Argol. William and Jenefer appear to have lived in Constantine, probably at Bosvarren, for a number of years, and John's widow continued to run Treverva in her own name, but by 1821, William took over. Shortly after John's death, Joseph Hendy, Elizabeth's brother, appeared in Treverva and in 1813 his son, Joseph Hendy Junr. married Joanna Copling, daughter of Henry Copling who was farming at Lamanver, and they went to live at the second farmhouse in Treverva. Joseph Hendy Senr. was at Little Argol. Joseph and Joanna Hendy had at least ten children. With the remaining children of the Box family, the place would have been svell populated with young people!

By 1838, the Box and Hendy families had left Treverva. John Box's children had not been educated in the way that the Treworval family were; they were apprenticed into trade. In 1819, Elizabeth Box (possibly an aunt) received a pair of shoes and a shift from the overseers of the poor. William Box of Budock had held various offices in his time, including churchwarden and in 1821 his grandson, William, was, with John Pengilly, a surveyor but in 1827, when William was an overseer, his brother, Joseph, was receiving 8d a week towards his lodgings. Evidently hard times had fallen upon Joseph because "Elizabeth Medlin is to have 20d per week for Joseph Box child during his illness"<sup>1</sup>. It is believed that Joseph later went to the silver mines in Mexico and that "Josephine Box"

who appears in the 1851 Census as an 18-year-old house servant in Penwenis Terrace "bom in Mexico" was his daughter.

Another brother, Elias, became a trunk and packing case maker in Market Street and Fish Strand in Falmouth and Samuel was a butcher and later a shopkeeper in Helston. Finally Samuel moved to Boughere in Mawgan where he farmed a few acres, writing pathetic letters to his daughter who had emigrated to Australia and eventually, declaring himself and his wife younger than they were, they followed, Samuel dying in Fitzroy, Victoria, at the age of 80. He was grandfather to Mr. Henry Box, now a solicitor in Melbourne. Eventually, after much hardship, the family prospered in Australia and a young Matthew Box from Treworval, joined them, bringing the two branches of the family together again. The gravestone commemorating the death of John Box's remaining daughter, Grace, who had married John Acherly of Mabe, is to be seen near the south door in Mabe churchyard. Frederick Box who, with his brother, William, were the last two members of the family to farm at Treverva, married Jenefer Lobb, another well known local name. After leaving Treverva in 1838, he was to be found in Lower Street in Penryn, an agricultural 'labourer. Later, in 1852/3 he was landlord of The Crown in St. Thomas's Street, His brother, William, and sister, Jenefer, became servants at the Vicarage at Mawgan after leaving Treverva, and his father was an innkeeper in that parish. The family at Treworval would not have approved!

During this time, Treverva had developed. In 1808/9 a great deal of work had been carried out on the roads in the vicinity, the "road man" being Degory Warne, working under the direction of the Highways Committee for the Parish. About that time he was busy cleaning the water table in Trewoon Hill and Treverva Lane and drawing slate from Trewoon Hill. In February 1809 he worked 21 days in Lamanva and then cobbled the stones and made the road from Trewoon Gate to Treverva Turning. In March he took stone from Lamanva Quarry "breaking the stuff and making a piece of road in Lamanva Lane. April found him still working in Lamanva Lane whilst Tho'rrias Trebilcock was filling in pits in Tresooth Lane. Argoll Lane also received attention. About that time Degory Warne was also paid for "forming and making the road in the Nomans Land". This would have been the new road through the Penwame Estate to Mawnan Smith. A great deal was being done to improve roads in the interests of the people of the parish, especially those from outlying districts. Treverva had been rough and isolated hitherto, as the following extract from the Royal Cornwall Gazette of 21 May 1805 indicates:

"Whereas in the night of the 12th of January last, George Sowden, Acting Tide Surveyor, and three other Officers of Excise, were violently assaulted in the execution of their duty at Treverva in the Parish of Budock by 12 or 14 men in white frocks and trowsers who beat the Surveyor and Officers with long staves and stones and rescued from them 4 horses laden with smuggled goods...<sup>1</sup>"

This item of news may well have given some truth to a story remembered by Mr. Howard Kessell, now in his late seventies and living at Mabe. As a boy, he lived in the farmhouse, once the home of the Hendys, in Treverva. His father said that smuggled goods were once hidden in a cave in Treverva! He also remembers a big chest that stood upstairs in the house and was probably there before their time. The family all kept their clothes in the chest, which had a compartment at one end on which, says Mr. Kessell, there was the sign of a hammer and sickle. When he was a boy of 15, he worked for a short time reopening an old adit of a mine in a field on Maync's Tenement. The Tithe Map names this field as "Ball Croft" but it should undoubtedly have been "Bal Croft". He says that tin was to be seen there, probably leading to a deeper lode, but the mine was no more than 80 ft deep and was eventually filled in. Perhaps the "circular cakes of Black Tin" said to have been dug up in 1913 by the then tenant of Vellin Antron, a short distance across the valley, in Mabe, came from the old mine working.

In 1810, a license had been granted at the Bishop's Registry in Exeter, for worship at "a house at the entrance of western end of the village called Treverva", and in 1812 another license was issued for a "house newly built on the south side of Treverva". The Tithe Map shows a building in the ownership of the Wesleyan Methodist Society and this continued as a chapel until the completion of the present Chapel, the foundation stone of which was laid in 1889. The previous chapel then became two cottages, as it remains today.

By 1841 the community had increased considerably, and from the Census that year we find that there were 11 dwellings in Treverva, their occupants, other than the farmers, including a wheelwright, two stonemasons, two blacksmiths, two shoemakers, a dairywoman and several agricultural workers. The Winn family were blacksmiths there for several generations and they were followed by Thomas Dale. From the Census of 1851, we learn there were fifteen dwellings and these included a grocer's shop kept by Miss Francis who was also a "dame schoolmistress". By this time, Mayne's Tenement, "part of the Barton of Treverva" as it had been called in an advertisement in the Gazette

of 1806, had been renamed "Trevervah" and a later description in 1838 states "...A newly erected slated dwellinghouse, Barn, Stables, Piggeries ... with an excellent Pump of Water and many other conveniences..." By 1844, George Thomas was the Tenant and William Rail was in the Hendy farm, while John Tregonning was at the Barton. The Hendys had returned to Mullion, to Trewithnow, according to the 1841 Census.

Today, the name of "Treverva" has a new meaning, for it is associated with a body of men who have brought countrywide fame to the village through the Treverva Male Voice Choir, winners of many awards and still under the conductorship of Mr. Edgar Kessell who was responsible for their formation more than a quarter of a century ago. Treverva<sup>1</sup> s future may belong to Mabe, but the past is with Budock.

