

Milles Parochial Returns 1752



The Milles Parochial Returns were a series of questionnaires sent out by Dean Milles to all the parishes in the county in 1755. The responses came from about 250 parishes, usually from the parson, but sometimes from the schoolmaster or another informed parishioner. The questions covered a wide field, including inquiries about the church. These returns provide a valuable snapshot of the state of the parishes at that time. For example, one respondent mentioned a ruined chapel at Westcott. These records are a significant resource for historical and genealogical research.

(Information and portrait from CHAT GPT)



Dean Jeremiah Milles (1714-1784), was Precentor and then Dean of Exeter Cathedral (1762-84). Milles spent many years collecting material towards a history of Devon that was never published. His papers are now in the Bodleian Library in Oxford, but microfilm copies of the most important classes are available in the Devon Heritage Centre.

There are two classes of material: the returns to a questionnaire sent out by Milles to all the parishes in the county, to which about 250 parishes replied, invariably in the person of the parson, sometimes by the schoolmaster or other informed parishioner. The questions cover a very wide field, but ask about the church, dedications, chapels, ancient buildings, ruins, etc. The second class is of Milles' own notes arranged by parish, and these too can contain useful material, sometimes sketches, plans, and notes sent in by others.

(Extract from entry in Wikipedia)

Edward Rayner, Rector 1739-1775 completed the questionnaire for Hemyock

Board to right of entrance door in South Aisle of St Mary's Church, Hemyock, listing Rectors of Hemyock Church from 1267 to the present.

RECTORS OF HEMYOCK			
1267	Thomas de Hydone	1549	John Swayne, S.T.P.
1274	Symon de Hydone		Thomas Clapham
1283	Master Ralph	1587	Anthony Bonde
1321	Sir Henry de Whiteley	1619	Roger Kelly, A.M.
1321	Sir Thomas de Whiteley	1643	Robert Chapline
1340	Sir William de Hokham		John Johnson
1361	Sir Ralph de Duellonde	1689	Peter Fisher, A.M.
1377	Master William Trevellys	1739	Edward Rayner
1382	Master Walter Graundone	1775	John Land
1384	Sir Richard Spicer	1817	James Sparrow, A.M.
	John Whattecombe	1829	Francis Warre
1395	William Rothewell	1854	Francis J. Kitson, B.D.
1410	Sir John Halsanger	1873	Edward W. L. Popham, B.A.
1429	Sir John Wynford	1896	John de B. Forbes
1449	Sir John Wyndeyate	1927	Leslie G. Ketchley, M.A.
	Master Michael Carvanell	1949	Harold W. T. Stamp
1461	Robert Treveathan	1958	W. Llewellyn Jones, M. A.
1473	Master Oliver Dynham	1973	Anthony C. B. Grosse
1473	Master William Braddeley	1997	Margaret M. Cameron
1475	John Windoner	2005	David Sherwood
1493	Henry Prows	2011	David Burton
1525	Master William Moyné, LL. B.	2019	Canon Rebecca Totterdell

Milles' questionnaire and replies for the Parish of Hemyock by Edward Rayner, Rector of Hemyock Church

(Rayner's replies in italics)

- 1 What is the true modern name of your Parish ? *Hemyock.*
- 2 How do you find it spelt in ancient records? *Sometimes Hemiocck but more frequently Hemloke or Hemioake, especially in the oldest records that I have met with.*
- 3 . The supposed Etymology of it ? *The Etymology which I have heard. given of it is too fanciful to be insisted. On.*
- 4 The length and breadth of the Parish according to the Compass? *The limits of the Parish from East to West are about four: miles; from North to South about four miles and a half.*
- 5 By what Parishes bounded? *It is bounded. on the East by Cley--Hidon, on the South by Dunkswell, Shildon and. Uffculm, on the West by Culmstock, and-on the North by Sand.ford--Arundel and. Wellington.*
- 6 . The Names of the Towns, Hamlets, Villages in it with their respective situations and number of houses ? *There are Six small villages, besides that in which the Church stands (which is commonly called Hemyock Town),viz:- Pencross,,Mellah, Ascomb, Tedborough, Shuttleton and Madford. The number of houses in them are not equal to the Farm Houses, and the Cottages that lie plentifully scattered in the Wastes, and on the sides of the Hills with which the Parish is surrounded. It is difficult to ascertain the exact number of them all, but I believe they may amount to between 2 and 300.*
- 7 . The number of Baptisms and. Burials, communibus Annis ? *The number of Baptisms com. an. appears to be about 28, of Burials about 20.*
- 8 . Names and. Situations of the Manors, and of their present and former Lords as high as you can trace them? *The Manor (to which the Advowson was appendant) and Hundred of Hemyock from the Conquest to the Time of King John, belonged to the family of Hidon, Knights from the adjoining Parish of Cley-Hidon, as well as Clist-Hidon, took its Name.. From the Hidons it came by Marriage to the noble Family of Dinham or De Dinant; the last of which dying in the latter end of the Reign of Henry the 7th or the beginning of that of his Son without Issue, this Manor with the rest of his great Estate fell to his four Aunts, who as Dugdale says, were married to Sir Fouke (or Fulk) Fitzwarine, John, Lord Zouche. Sir John Carew, and Sir Thomas Arundel. But I believe Elizabeth, Lady Fitzwarine, was first married to Sir Thomas Brandon; for I find by the Bishops Register of the Acts of the Institution that he, with hs wife Elizabeth, joyned with John, Lord Zouche, Sir John Arundel and Sir Edmund Carew, (who according to Dugdale, were sons of Sir John Carew by Margaret, the elder Sister, and of Sir Thomas Arundel by Catherine the third Sister)in the First Presentation to Hemyock that passed after the death of the last Lord Dinham. The Hundred as well as the Greatest Part of the Manor afterwards came into the Possession of Lord Chief Justice Popham. But the Hundred and one 4th part of the Manor now belongs to Mr Leigh of the Isle of Wight, to whose family it descended from Evely who purchased his Right in Manor or Arundel. The other three parts are lost. Probably the Manors of Culmbridge and Madford, the one lying in the East and the other in the South-east Part of the Parish, were formed out of the great Manor.*

When it was divided. The former, now comprised in a singe farm is the Property of one Berry; and most, if not all the estates of the latter have been lately sold in Fee. This last manor was purchased about 30 years since by Waldron of Popham.

The Manor of Culm Davy, including a Tithing of that Name, situated in the North Part of the Parish was always distinct from the Manor of Hemyock, and was according to Sir William Pole, for more than four hundred years in the Family of Bowerman; till about 40 years ago it was sold to Mr Kerlake, in who family it still continues.

9 What Mansion - houses belonging to them ? *The Mansion House of the Manor of Hemyock was formerly the Castle; Culmbridge and Madford Manors never, as far as I can learn, had any belonging to them which makes it still more probable that they were originally Parts of the Manor of Hemyock. The Mansion House of Culm Davy is now nothing more than a good Farmhouse.*

10 Particular Customs, Tenures and- Privileges of them ? *I have heard that not many years since small Debts arising in the Man. were brought before the Steward. of the Lord.'s. Court. But that Custom is now disused..*

11 In what Manor or Part of the Parish is the Church Situated ? *In the Manor of Hemyock, and very near the Middle of the Parish.*

12 At what distance from Exeter and the next Market Town ? *It is situated 20 miles from Exeter. Its nearest Market Town is Wellington in Somersetshire from whence it is distant four miles and a half and about eight from Honiton.*

13 . To what Saint dedicated? *St. Peter E.* The form & size of it ? -

14 With what materials built and covered ? *It is built with flint stones and covered with lead.*

15. And. about what Time supposed to have been erected? -

16 What Monuments or Incriptions in it earlier than 1600?-

17 . Or of memorable Persons since that time ? -

18 . What Coats of Arms, carved or painted in the windows or elsewhere ? *The Arms of Dinham are painted. on the wall of the South Aisle.*



Dynham Coat of Arms - N.B. they are no longer painted on the wall of the South Aisle,

19 Tower, its Height, Shape and. Situation with respect to the Church ? *The Tower is low and has a little steeple on it. It is placed. at the West End of the Church.*

There is no longer a steeple on the Church Tower and a clock, flag pole and weather cock have been added



20 The number of Bells in it ? *Five* The name of the present patron ? *Popham*

21 Chappels of ease if any how situated. and. endowed. ? And. To what Saint dedicated ?

There is a Chappel in the Manor of Culm Davey called. Culm Davey Chappel; it is situated. in the North side of the Parish about two miles from the Church and endowed with a small glebe. It is dedicated to St. George.



Culm Davy Chapel

22 . Names of ruined. Chappels, if. any and how situated. ?

23 What Wakes, Parish-feasts or annual Processions ? *A revel is held' at Hemyoek the Sunday after Holy-Rood Day and at Culm Davy the Sunday after St. George' s Day.*

24. Are there any Roman Roads, Walls, Camps, Forts, Pavements, Urns , Stoves, Lamps, or Weapons of War found in your Parish and where now to be seen?

25 . Any obelisks, or rude simple stones, or enclosures made of stones erect in a circular or other Form?

26 Any large stones placed horizontally on others ? -

27 Any basons cut into the Surfaces of your rocks? -

28 Any rocking Stones or Caves made by Art? -

29 Any Danish or Saxon Encampments, Urns, Bracelets, or Weapons, found in Sepulchres? -

30 Any ancient crosses standing with or without Inscriptions? -

31 Any ancient Castles, if any, and by whom built?

32 What parts of them are now remaining?

33 To whom belonging? *The ruins of an old castle lie close adjoyning the Church. It was formerly the seat of the Hidons, by whom it was probably built. The Gateway, with a Tower on each Side, was standing in my time; but the upper part of it being much in Decay, it was lately pulled down. However about 40 feet of the two Towers and the Arch between them are still remaining. Besides these there is nothing of the old Buildings but the Foundation of the walls and the Ruins of the round Towers that stood at the four Angles of the Castle. It was surrounded with a moat, filled, I suppose, by a stream of water that runs close by it. There is a farmhouse within the Wall which..... (Here unfortunately the edge of the parchement has been worn away).*

31 Any ancient Castles, if any, and by whom built?

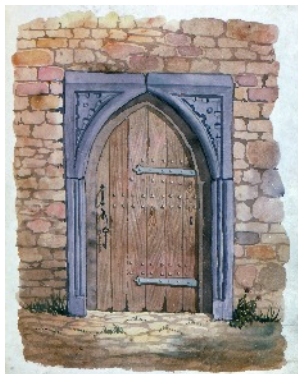
32 What parts of them are now remaining?

33 To whom belonging? *The ruins of an old castle lie close adjoining the Church. It was formerly the seat of the Hidons, by whom it was probably built. The Gateway, with a Tower on each Side, was standing in my time; but the upper part of it being much in Decay, it was lately pulled down. However about 40 feet of the two Towers and the Arch between them are still remaining. Besides these there is nothing of the old Buildings but the Foundation of the walls and the Ruins of the round Towers that stood at the four Angles of the Castle. It was surrounded with a moat, filled, I suppose, by a stream of water that runs close by it. There is a farmhouse within the Wall which.....* (Here unfortunately the edge of the parchment has been worn away).

Sketch made of Hemyock Castle by the Antiquarian Peter Orlando Hutchison about 100 years later



*East Gateway of Hemyock Castle, Devon
Sketched on the spot July 17th 1851*



*Inner Gateway,
Hemyock Castle
Sketched on the spot
July 17th 1851*



*North side of the Moat and ruins, of
Hemyock Castle in the County of Devon
Coloured on the spot August 5th, 1851*

34 Abbeys, and Religious Houses, their Situation? -

35 What parts of them remaining? -

36 To what uses now converted? -

37 To whom belonging? -

38 Remarkable Particulars concerning them? -

39 What Colleges, Hospitals, Schools, and Almshouses in the Parish?

40 By whom founded? And for what uses? -

41 Their ancient establishment? And present state? -

42 Are there any Gentlemen's Seats and remarkable Improvements in the Parish? -

43 Any Bridges or Roads or other Publick Works? When made or erected? -

44 What Fairs or Markets? On what days kept? -

45 What is chiefly sold in them?

46 What ancient Sayings or Proverbs are there relating to the Parish? -

47 The names of remarkable Woods, Mountains, Rocks, Parks, Commons and Warrens; with their particular Situations in the Parish?

48 The face of the Parish in its several Parts? Whether hilly or level? *The Parish is surrounded with High Hills, and Heathy Downs on every side, but where the Vale runs to Culmstock. Indeed the Parish extends a good way on several of them, which is very advantageous to the Farmer for feeding Sheep and to the Poor for cutting Turf for firing..*

49 Open or enclosed? Consisting of Downs, Heath or Woodland? *The land beneath the Hills and the Vales between them are all enclosed.*

50 The colour and nature of the Soil? *The Soil is not so fruitful as the Vales that lie on each side of the Blackdown Hills; the colour of it is a dark yellow, everywhere full of Flints, mix't in some places with Marle.*



Vale to Culmstock from above Tedborough



Old Marle pit above Tedborough

51 Is it chiefly Chalk, Sand, Gravel, Stone, Clay or Marle? -

52 What Proportions of Arable land, Meadow and Pasture? -

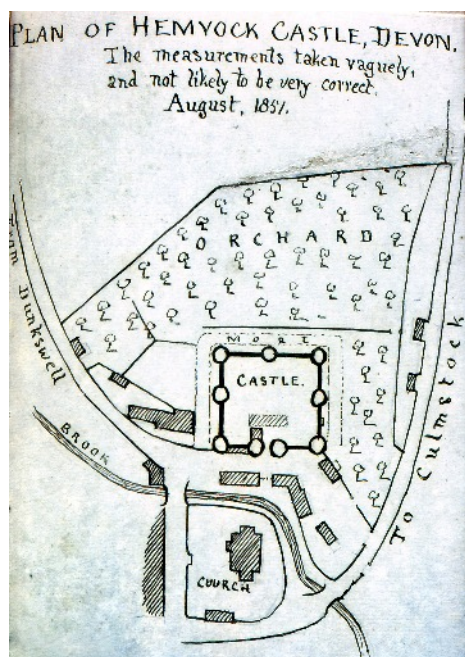
53 The usual value of each per Acre? -

54 How manured and improved? By lime Sand, or Dung and in what Proportions? *It is manured with Lime. Dung, and Marle in the usual Proportions.*

55 What grain is chiefly sown, or agrees best with the Soil? *It is sown with Wheat, Barley and Oats but the latter seems to agree best with the Soil.*

56 What is the greatest Produce per Acre? -

57 What quantity of acres under Orchards? -



Peter Orlando Hutchison's 1851 Plan of Hemyock Castle showing cider Orchard (left) Hemyock Castle Cider Orchard late 1960s (right)

58 What sort of Apples are chiefly planted, or are found to agree best with the soil? - *The Cyder here made is of a coarse rough Sort, owing in great measure to the Carelessness and obstinacy of the Farmers, who are not at all Curious in their choice of Fruit, or the Management of their Cyder. It is generally sold at much the same price as in other parts of the County. I have observed that the Apple Trees in this hilly part of the country, more subject to Blights, than in other Places, the North and East winds (the Parents of the Blight) which are here very sharp, seem to have a greater and more noxious effect upon the Blossom.*

59 What quantity of Cyder is generally made yearly? -

60 Is it remarkable for its goodness? Is it of the rough or sweet sort? -

61 And what is the usual value of its per Hogshead, at the Pounds mouth? -



Double Hogshead Cider Barrel



Mid 18th century Cider Press - metal screw is mid 19th century and originally it had 2 wooden screws

62 What quantity of Woodland is there in the Parish? -

63 Does it consist chiefly of Timber Trees or Coppice? -

64 What sorts of Trees are most common and seem to thrive best? *The quantity of Woodland, considering the largeness of the Parish is not at present very great, there may be in different parts about 80 Acres. It consists chiefly of Timber Trees, Oak and Ash are most common and thrive best. Formerly oak was so very plenty, that some have fancied the Parish took its name from it. But from its present appearance no one could have thought on such an Entymology.*



Oak trees are still common, sadly many ash trees have been adversely affected by ash die back. Oak as a timber, was used for house building and also for ship building

- 65 What shrubs, Plants and Vegetables, are peculiar to , or grow most commonly in the Parish? -
- 66 What rare or uncommon Plant? -
- 67 What are their supposed Virtues, and in what manner used? -
- 68 What mineral or Medicinal Springs are there in the Parish? -
- 69 What are their Qualities, Virtue, Weight and Analysis? -
- 70 For what Disorders used, and in what Method? -
- 71 Are there any well attested cures wrought by them? -
- 72 Are there any periodical Springs? Any Springs that ebb and flow? -
- 73 Or that bury themselves under Ground? -
- 74 Any that petrify or incrust other Bodies with stony Particles? -
- 75 Of what depth are the Wells in the different parts of your Parish? -
- 76 What strata have been observed in digging them and in what Order do those Strata lye? *On the Hills I am informed that the Wells are from 80 to 100 feet deep, in the Vales their Depth is from 12 to 19 or 20 feet. On digging on the former there are found but few strata of Marle on the top, but a cold barren yellow sand. As they get deeper they come upon Marle. In the Vales the Workmen soon come to a yellow Marle which generally continues till they find a Spring.*
- 77 What Rivers or Rivulets rise or run through the Parish? *The River Culm, joyned by some nameless Rivulets runs thro' the Parish almost from East to West with a narrow, shallow Stream. Its Bed is excessively stony, and its Banks, in most places, I believe, of a kind of Marle. At all times of the Year; after great Rains it is apt to overflow its Banks, when its Current is exceeding rapid.*
- 78 Their Course, Breadth and Depth, the Nature of their Bed and Banks?
- 79 Are they liable to Inundations and at what Season?
- 80 What cascades or Wears on them?
- 81 With what Fish do they abound? *In a small insipid Trout and Eels.*
- 82 How, and at what Seasons caught, and in what Quantities? -
- 83 Are there any large Pools or Lakes in the Parish? -
- 84 What Sorts and Colours of Marle, Moorstone, Limestone, Freestone, Building-stone, Coral, Slate, Pipe-Clay, Brick Clay, Ochre, Marle or Chalk are found in the Parish?



Potential fishing area!



St Margaret's Brook - tributary of the River Culm



River Culm

- 85 And in what manner are they used? *Marle of a deep yellow colour is found in most parts of the Parish and is used for Manure.*
- 86 Are there any impressions of Land or Sea Animals, or Shells found in your Stone Quarries? -
- 87 Are there any Transparent Pebbles, or other Stones remarkable for their figure? -
- 88 What sorts of Cattle are bred chiefly in the Parish? *Very few Cattle are bred her; those which are are chiefly for the Dairy.*
- 89 At what Fairs or Markets are they sold? -
- 90 Are they remarkable for their Size, Shape, Colour or Breed? -
- 91 Are there any Birds, Land or Water Insects, remarkably common or singular in their kind? -
- 92 Have they any particular good or bad qualities? -
- 93 Are they Prejudicial to the Fruits of the Earth and in what Season? -
- 94 Is your Air sharp and dry or mild and foggy?
- 95 Is it reputed wholesome or unwholesome? *The Air is sharp, especially on the Hills. It is thought to e very healthy, they who are born into it, and are able to bear the Severity of the Winters, particularly find it so.*
- 96 Are there any Remarkable Particulars relating to the Make, Complexion, Strength, Health, Age, Diet, and Temper of the Inhabitants? -
- 97 Remarkable Instances of Longlived Persons, or of Extraordinary preternatural Births? -
- 98 Have you any Trade or Manufacture in the Parish? *The Trade here is not much; it consists in making of Serges, and what is commonly called Kirton Whirtes.*
- 99 How is it carried on and in what Manner is it disposed of? *It is carried on by Serge makers and disposed of to the Merchants of Exeter and Tiverton.*
- 100 Are there any remarkable Facts of History relating to the Parish? Any natural Caves in Limestone or other Quarries? Have you any Silver, Lead, Tin, Copper or Iron Ore? How wide is the Vein? Does it run North and South or East and West? What is the annual profit made of it? Are your mines subject to Damp? How long have they been worked? Have you any Bitumen, Naptha, Alum, Calamine, Blacklead, Mismuth, Mercury, or Antimony found in your Parish.

(Additional information from Wikipaedia)

Rev. Jeremiah Milles (1714–1784)[was President of the [Society of Antiquaries](#) and [Dean of Exeter](#) between 1762 and 1784. He carried out much internal renovation in [Exeter Cathedral](#). As part of his antiquarian research into the history of the parishes of Devon he pioneered the use of the research questionnaire, which resulted in the "Dean Milles' Questionnaire", which survives as a valuable source of historical information.

Comment:

Rev. Edward Rayner did not reply to all 100 questions on Milles' questionnaire but he has provided invaluable information on the Parish of Hemyock in the mid 18th century. His replies also demonstrate contemporary spelling and grammar. The modern photographs taken by Davey Sheppard during walks.