

Part 5.
Calstock and Devonport continued

Calstock is a small village, in East Cornwall, located on the River Tamar near the uppermost navigable point of the river. The village is about 20 miles by road from Plymouth. There has been a presence at Calstock for over a thousand years. Being mentioned as a manor, it is recorded in the Domesday Book by its then name of Callestoch. During the Middle Ages Calstock manor was a thriving agricultural area with a busy quay. Calstock as a settlement first appears in the ancient documents around about the 15th Century. The village developed towards what it is today in the 1800s during the mining boom; between 1800 and 1850 the population of Calstock increased about seven-fold. The navigable waters of the Tamar played a very important role in Calstock's development with the river being used as means of transporting the ore out and limestone and coke back. A fleet of boats, built in Calstock boat yards and manned by locals, conveyed the goods up and down the river.



Calstock church



Calstock viaduct and the River Tamar



Cream tea at Calstock

In the late 1800s the people of Calstock and Gunnislake were demanding a rail link to London. A railway already existed from Tavistock to Plymouth and in 1904 a contract was awarded to build the viaduct across the River Tamar and to link in the East Cornwall mineral railway at Bere Alston. The viaduct took about three and a half years to build and is constructed totally from concrete blocks; each one made on site to the exact requirements for its location in the final structure. The railway eventually became an important means of transportation causing an obvious decline in river traffic. In turn the build-up of road traffic led to the decline of the railway and the lines to Tavistock and beyond Gunnislake were closed down. Although under constant threat of closure the railway from Gunnislake to Plymouth is used daily by a small train carrying commuters and holiday makers along the very beautiful, picturesque Tamar Valley line.

Edmond, always described in parish registers as a gent, and Catherine Fowell had four sons baptised in Calstock: Edmond (1692), Henry (1693), John (1695), and Richard (1699). Their grandson Henry through their second son, also Henry, married a Calstock girl, Elizabeth Hunn, in Plymouth in 1758 and that small branch of this very old family stayed in Plymouth - no longer a family with grand homes and titles, but blacksmiths, shipwrights and tailors, good working men earning their living, like Richard Vanstone, in or associated with the Plymouth Docks.

Richard and Elizabeth (Smith) Vanstone took most of their children to the chapel where Elizabeth herself was baptised - the Morrice St Wesleyan Chapel, as did Elizabeth's brothers, Henry and John. The Wesleyan creed was founded by John Wesley and his brother Charles at Oxford in 1729, and its adherents were derisively called "Methodists" because of their methodical, studious and logical approach to the scriptures. Preaching the doctrines of Christian perfection and personal salvation through faith, John Wesley quickly won an enthusiastic following among the English working classes, for whom the formalism of the established Church of England had little appeal.

Opposition by the English clergy, however, prevented the Wesleys from speaking in parish churches; consequently, Methodist meetings were often conducted in open fields to the peasant classes. Such meetings led to a revival of religious fervour throughout England, especially among the poor, and although the Wesleyan faith did not reach the proportions of the mainstream Anglicanism, its followers were often much more zealous. Certainly, Elizabeth's strong non-conformist background would have made it surprising if she had patronised the established church. Richard and Elizabeth Vanstone made their home in Ker St, Devonport, very close to the Devonport dockyards and Richard could still be found in Ker St in the 1850s. Richard and Elizabeth's marriage itself still proves elusive, but this is very likely because of their association with a nonconformist sect, the records of which often did not survive.

However, at least 11 Vanstone children can be identified from various baptism, death and census records. They were: Elizabeth, 1817; Emma Smith, 1818; John Richard, 1820; William Edwin, 1821; Thomas Henry, 1823; Richard James, 1826, who died as a child; Mary Ann 1827; Henrietta Adelaide, 1828; a second Richard James 1832; Francis, 1835; and Georgina, 1838, who died of convulsions aged three in 1841. Once again a Richard Vanstone had been named for an elder brother who had died young. In 1840 Richard was renting some land nearby, known as Seven Acres, from Sir John St Aubyn for £10.1s.0d - actually 8 acres, 0 roods and 38 perches. The tithe map shows three buildings at the northern end of the property, possibly storage sheds or stables and here Richard probably grew vegetables and maybe had hens and a few sheep. This no doubt helped keep his large family supplied with fresh produce for most of the year and in the leaner months, especially during winters in his job at the dockyard, would bring in some much-needed money to tide the family over.

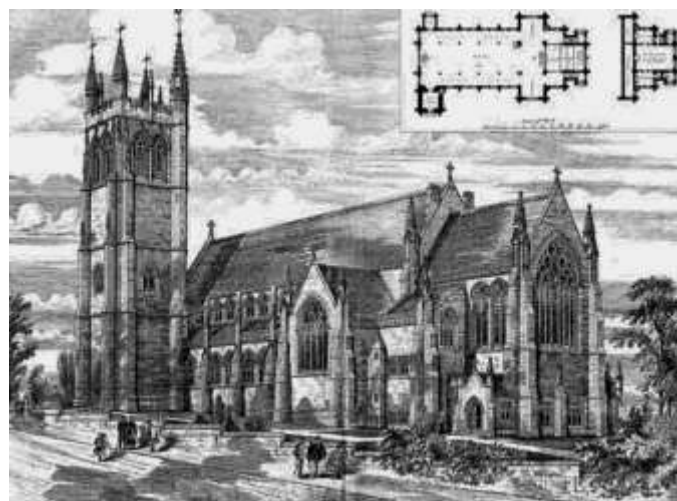
On 27 September 1840 Richard Vanstone must have been involved in trying to fight the greatest fire ever seen in the dockyard. A policeman on his rounds saw flames issuing from the Talavera, a ship under repair in the forward section of the Union Double Dock, and immediately raised the alarm.

Meanwhile, the flames spread rapidly to other ships and the dockside buildings, aided by the volume

of timber strewn about the yard. As fire engines rushed to the scene, hundreds of townspeople turned out to help, and in the harbour numerous small boats tried to pull ships clear. By daybreak the fire was under control, but it was not finally put out until six o'clock that evening. Besides the near total destruction of three ships, there had been enormous damage to the dock buildings. No doubt Richard's children witnessed this terrible fire. Maybe they even helped to put it out.

Another event which may have impinged on the lives on Richard Vanstone and his family was the cholera epidemic of 1849. Cholera was the scourge of the nineteenth century as bubonic plague had been in earlier centuries. The first great cholera epidemic in Britain had begun in India in 1817 and reached Britain in 1831-32, causing deaths in towns and cities all over Britain. 53,293 people died in the epidemic which ravaged Britain in 1849. The first stage of cholera is a mild and painless diarrhoea which lasts two or three days and is often not regarded as anything serious. In the second stage, the diarrhoea becomes very violent, accompanied by continual vomiting, a severe pain in the pit of the stomach and intense thirst. The symptoms then advance rapidly - agonising cramps of the legs, feet and abdominal muscles, the surface of the body becomes cold and blue or purple, the skin dry and wrinkled, the features pinched and the eyes deeply sunken. Death often comes in as little as one day from asphyxia by vomit.

The Plymouth weekly paper, the Plymouth, Devonport and Stonehouse Herald, chronicled the history of the epidemic. The first deaths were recorded on 4 July 1849, the last on 8 November. There were 921 deaths in Devonport in the quarter ending 30 September 1849, 717 of these from cholera. It must not be thought that the disease was invariably fatal. The Herald for 29 September gives the figures for the disease up to 28 September for Plymouth: there were 1239 cases of cholera, and 1823 of choleraic diarrhoea, but only 663 were fatal. In a study of the Stoke Damerel Parish registers for 1849, it was discovered that the number of burials, which between January and July ranged between 82 and 93 a month, shot up to 488 in August and 280 in September. By October they were down to 74, and by November an incredibly low 48, lower than any month the year before. The annual total burials for 1849 was 1434, as compared with 958 for 1848 and 698 for 1850. Like the low figure for November 1849, the much lower figure for 1850 was probably due to the fact that most of the weak had already been weeded out, leaving a resilient population.



St. Andrews parish church Stoke Damerel

	459	
	460 and 461	Middle five Fields
Jeremiah Marks	462	path Field
William Hodge	463	Lower five Fields
Jeremiah Marks	464	Barn Park
	465	Meadow
	468	Lower Barn park
	469	Lane end
	470	Middle Field
	471	Bramble park
Thomas Jenner	472	Lower Hughes
	473	Hughes Meadow
William Cumble	474	New Park
Thomas Roberts	475	Slade
	476	Shew piece Meadow
Henry Hoar	477	Shew piece
Jeremiah Marks	483	New Park
William Skinner	484	New Field
Thomas Jenner	485	Hughes
William Maben	486	Wood Field
Richard Rowe	487	Path Field
Robert Rosevear	503	Yonder path Field
Richard Vanstone	504	Seven Acres
William Hlyson	505	Whince Wood
	506	Long Field
Edward Abbott	169	Cliff Field
	170	Cliff Field

Rental list



1840 TITHE MAP DEVONPORT



The Devonport Guildhall in Ker Street possessed a noble and classical exterior. Built in Grecian Doric style and completed in 18121 it was designed by John Foulston after the style of the Parthenon at Athens. The four massive fluted columns produced an imposing effect. On the entablature over the entrance was placed a fine figure of Brittania. The central fire station once stood on the left of the guildhall (facing).



The Devonport Voluntary Fire Brigade, as it was known before amalgamation with Plymouth in 1914, had horses to pull the engine. The column standing to the right was erected to commemorate the change of name from Plymouth Dock to Devonport in 1824. A lone trumpeter would stand on its top to play the required echo to a piece of music called Alpine Echoes being played by a military band inside the Guildhall. A magnificent view of the Cornish and Devon hills can be seen from the top.

When born	Baptized	By whom	Parents & Childrens names
Born 23 June 1791	Decr 22	Chas Boone	Charlotte, the Daughter of Chris: & Mary Rogers.
Born Novr 21 1791	Decr 22	do	John, the Son of John & Mary Denison
Born Octo 19 1791	Decr 22	do	Ann, the Daughter of Richard & Sar: Kingwell
Born 17 Decr 1791	Jan 7 5 1795	Do Coke.	Catherine Bayly, Daughter of Thos. and Mary Stephens
Born 1 Jan 4 1795	Jan 7 7 1795	Do	Mary Michael, Daughter of John & Eliz th Denning.
Born Decr 20 1791	Jan 19 1795	Chas Boone	Fancy, the Daughter of James & Mary Hawkins
Born 16 Novr 1793	do 21 1795	do	Sarah, the Daughter of Jn ^r and Eliz th Mills.
Born 18 Decr 1794	do 22 1795	do	Sarah, the Daughter of Kampson & Sar: Baskerville.
Born 3 Octo ^r 1795	do 26 1795	do	Betsy, the Daughter of Alexander & Eliz th Smith.
Born 20 Octo ^r 15 1791	Octo ^r 30 1791	do	Sarah, the Daughter of Rich: & Johanna Bray.
Born 21 Octo ^r 1791	Nov 18 1794	Jn ^e Boyle	Thos, the Son of John & Mary Nile.
Born Decr 8 1794	Decr. Jan 4 19 1795	do	Ann, the Daughter of Rob: & Marg: Welsh
Born Decr 1 1794	Decr 16 1794	do	Joseph, the Son of John & Eliz th Notts.
	Novr 12 .. 1794	do	Rachel, the Daughter of Sam: & Honor Drew.

City or Borough of Davenport
 Parish or Township of St. James

PLACE	HOUSES		NAMES of each Person who abode therein the preceding Night.	AGE and SEX		PROFESSION, TRADE, EMPLOYMENT, or of INDEPENDENT MEANS.	Where Born	
	Uninhabited or Building	Inhabited		Males	Females		Whether Born in same County	Whether Born in Scotland, Ireland, or Foreign Parts
Kendrick		1	Charles L. Tuttle	40		Merchant	Y	
			Elizabeth D.		35		Y	
			Mary D.		11		Y	
			Margaret D.		9		Y	
			John D.		3		Y	
			Elizabeth D.		1		Y	
Do		1	Elsie Little		45	Smith	Y	
			William Simpson	35		Smith	Y	
			Mary Ann D.		40		Y	
			William D.	10			Y	
Do		1	Richard Piers	55		Lab.	Y	
			Nancy D.		50		Y	
			Lysia D.		30		Y	
			Israh D.		20		Y	
			Rebecca D.		20		Y	
			Rachael D.		15		Y	
			Richard Vanston	50		Lawyer	Y	
			Elsabeth D.		45		Y	
			Thomas D.		17		Y	
			Mary Ann D.		12		Y	
			Adelaide D.		11		Y	
			Richard D.		9		Y	
		Francis D.		6		Y		
		Georgina D.		3		Y		
		Robert Carter	50		Smith	Y		
TOTAL in Page 2		8		10	15		TOTAL	

BAPTISMS solemnized in the Parish of Stoke Newington
in the County of Essex in the Year 1832

When Baptized.	Child's Christian Name.	Parents' Name.		Abode.	Quality, Trade, or Profession.	By whom the Ceremony was Performed.
		Christian.	Surname.			
1832 October 16	Edward John Mastoman	Edward and Ann	John	Templeport	Cabinet-maker.	W. S. May Rector
No. 24						
17	Ellen Elizabeth Migge	Thomas and Mary Lynn	John	Templeport	Labourer	J. Jacobs Minister
No. 25						
17	Mary Elizabeth Munro	Peter Munro and Mary	Brother	Templeport	Labourer	J. Jacobs Minister
No. 26						
17	Richard	Richard and Elizabeth	Vanstone	Templeport	Wagoner	J. Jacobs Minister
No. 27						
17	George	Thomas and Jane	Munro	Templeport	Baker	J. Jacobs Minister

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF DEATH



GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE

Application Number... R. 51528

REGISTRATION DISTRICT Stoke Newington
DEATH in the Sub-district of Stoke Newington in the Parish of Stoke Newington

Column- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
No. When and where died Name and surname Sex Age Occupation Cause of death Signature, description and residence of informant When registered Signature of registrar

448	Early part of August 1844 at 105, New Street, Newcastle	Georgia Sandstone	Female	3 years and 8 months	daughter of Richard Sandstone a Lawyer	Concussion	Caroline Bird present at the death 110 1/2 Prospect Row Newcastle	Second of September 1844	John Gidye Registrar
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None of Richard's family appear to have been affected by the cholera, although they undoubtedly knew many who were, and they may well have lost members of their extended family. Richard's wife Elizabeth (nee Smith) had died of consumption (pulmonary tuberculosis) at Ker St in November 1843 aged only 48 and little Georgina had succumbed to convulsions two years earlier.



Stoke Damerel churchyard

The couple's eldest son, John Richard, became a sawyer in the naval dockyard like his father. He, too, lived in Kerr St with his wife Emma Louisa, in No.14 - said to be, on census night in 1851, the Ker St house with the most occupants with eight families and 34 people. According to Ann Chiswell in Devon and Cornwall Notes and Queries: "Many people in Ker St lived alone, and were not really 'families' in the usual sense: there were three women living separately in this house. Other occupants were a widow with three children and a male lodger, parents with six children, with four children, and three children, and another set with four children and the wife's mother. This is typical of a household containing poorer families, the four fathers being a stonemason, mariner, sawyer and labourer."

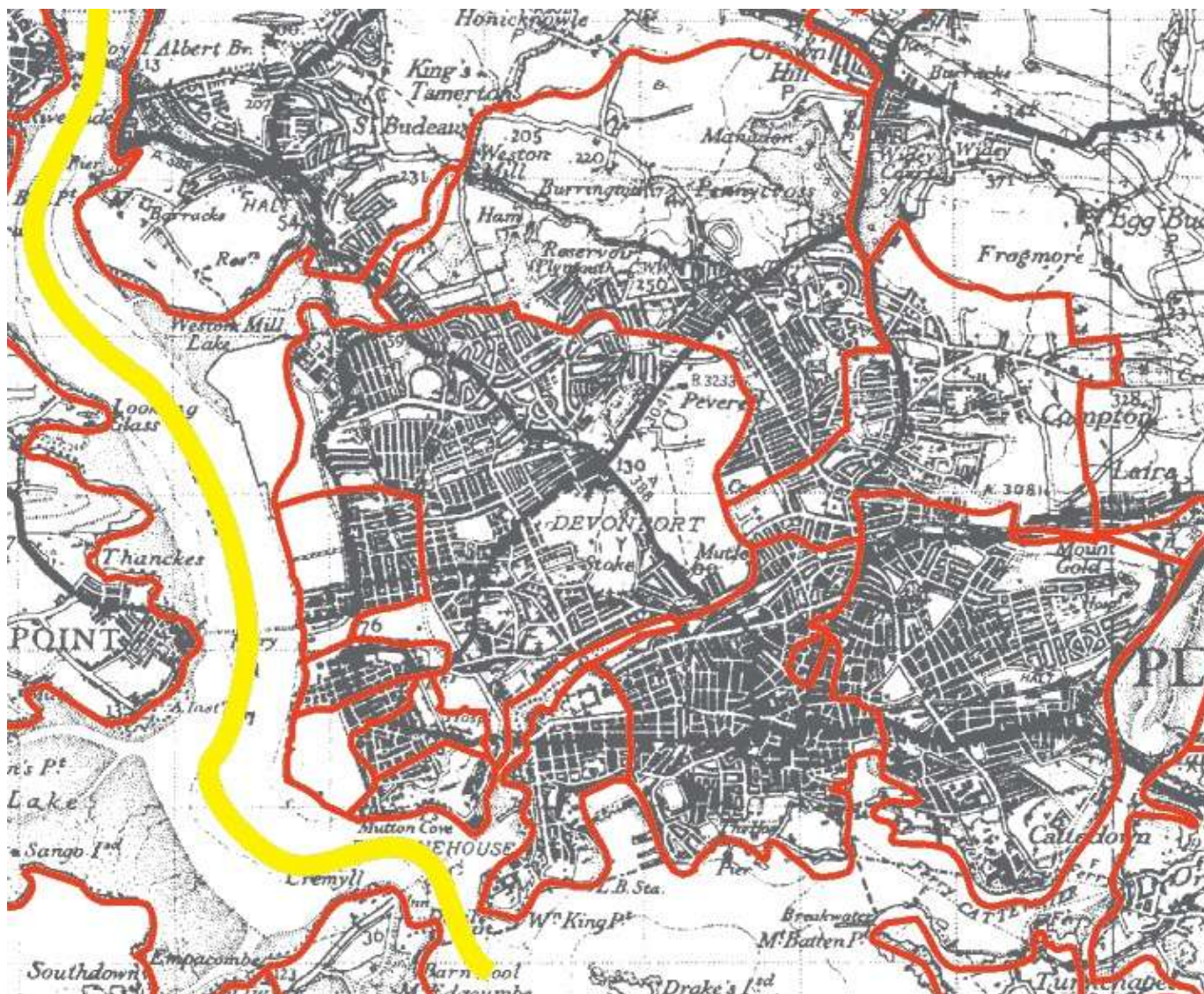
John Richard Vanstone was the sawyer in question. He and his wife had three children at 14 Ker St. Their eldest child, Elizabeth Jane, had died of whooping cough aged 11 months in 1843, but living with them were Elizabeth A aged seven, a scholar; Frederick W aged four; and Georgiana L aged one.

The third son, Thomas, became a shoemaker, like his uncle and namesake Thomas Vicary Vanstone. Young Thomas was still at home aged 17 at the time of the 1841 census and he can't be found in the 1851 census indexes, so it appears Thomas spent some time away from Devon. By 1881, however, he is back in Devonport at 14 St Stephens St aged 58 with his 60-year-old wife Elizabeth; he a shoemaker and she a shoemaker's wife. If the couple had children, they no longer lived at home, but they did have living with them Thomas's nephew, Charles Edgland, aged 13, a scholar.

The third daughter of the family, Mary Ann, married Robert Edgland, and in 1851 she and her husband Robert, a labourer, were living with the widowed Richard and his youngest son Francis in Ker St. Richard, aged 61, was still working as a sawyer, and Francis, aged 16, was an errand boy. Mary Ann became something of a businesswoman in her later years: in 1881 she was living in

Plymouth St Andrew and her occupation was given as general dealer. She was the head of her household and had a lodger, Emily Andrews, a shopkeeper.

Richard Vanstone was admitted to pension in October 1858 when he turned 69. Because the dockyards were a naval concern, a pension was provided by the Admiralty at a rate of £20 a year. Richard drew his pension for over 11 years and died on 16 January 1870 aged 80.



Stoke Damerel parish map