

LAUNCESTON OLD CORNWALL SOCIETY.**FEBRUARY 12 2019**

The February meeting was held at the Royal British Legion in Westgate street. Members were welcomed by John Ellacott Society chairman. Members stood to remember Mrs. Phyllis Edwards a member for a number of years who recently died. There were no apologies for absence or correspondence.

Mr. Ellacott then welcomed Mr. Terry Faull, a regular speaker, whose subject on this occasion was an illustrated talk about the Agricultural Riots of 1830. At the time of great change, agricultural workers were concerned in the light of various inventions, like the threshing machine, that their homes, most living in tied cottages, wages and their livelihoods could be put in jeopardy. Food shortages would follow, potatoes being the main food item and whatever they could scrounge. In some areas smuggling wrecking and poaching was rife. The first riots blew up in Kent and soon spread throughout the country. They were led by an elusive figure "Captain Swing" There were over two hundred riots in the west country, seven being in Cornwall. There was a march from Camelford to Stratton and then on to Launceston. Launceston and Callington were mentioned in an item in "The Times" pointing out that living conditions were bad and wages pitifully low. The aristocracy and landowners were warned of action by the rioters in a threatening letter from Captain Swing. Machinery was damaged, ricks and barns burned. The government became alarmed and began to clamp down. For those rioters who were caught, severe consequences, imprisonment, transportation to Van Dieman's Land or in some cases execution swiftly followed, leaving their families in straightened

circumstances. The threat of the Launceston Workhouse was always looming. The early history of the workhouse was mentioned and the harsh day to day life at the workhouse was touched upon. Lively discussion followed. Mr Faull was thanked for a most interesting talk by John Ellacott, Society Chairman. The monthly raffle was run by Vera Ellacott and Bill Roberts. The next meeting will be on March 11th at 7-30 pm at the Royal British Legion in Westgate Street, when the invited speaker will be Mrs. Valerie Jacob, Crinnis, St. Austell, who will intrigue members with another illustrated selection of "More Curious Cornish Corners." All Welcome

John Neale

Hon Sec.

Launceston Old Cornwall Society

E Mail johnnealekernow88@gmail.com

