

answered 27/6/96 - Marked
see photograph -

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

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24 June 1996

Dear Lady Stevens,

Thank you for your letter about the rectory at East Worlington. I'm afraid I don't have any specific knowledge of the house, either architecturally or from documents, so I can only speak from a general knowledge of Church history. Very little survives in records about parsonages until the early 17th century, when there is a class of documents called terriers which normally describe them as to their rooms, gardens, state of repair. These documents are in the Devon Record Office at Exeter and the staff will point you to them, but you imply that you have already looked at that source. The Church Commissioners are not relevant, except in places like (say) Thorverton where the local manor belonged to the Church -- even so their local records have generally been devolved now to local archives. The evidence about parsonages is otherwise largely architectural, or confined to maps like the Tithe Awards of c. 1836. There might be legal cases about dilapidations in the consistory court records in the Devon Record Office, but these are in manuscript, not indexed, and you would probably need to spend a fortnight going through them and might find nothing.

You talk about the handing over of the house to the Church shortly after the restoration of the monarchy. This strikes me as unlikely. There is no sign that parsonages changed sites in history. East Worlington's parsonage site was probably established in the late Saxon or Norman period, and remained there permanently. There was some dislocation of the Church during the period 1649-1660, and it's possible that a parsonage could have fallen into lay hands and then been recovered by the Church after 1660. But I would expect the traditional rectory to have been recovered by the Church, not a different house.

My book on *English Church Dedications* will be published by Exeter University Press in September and obtainable from all booksellers. It confirms the ancient dedication of East Worlington to be Mary, but it will come as a shock to West Worlington to find that its ancient patron saint is quite different from Mary - the latter just a guess from East Worlington. I have also discovered for the first time the dedication of the now vanished church at Affeton.

With good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Nicholas Orme

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In shop

See it in the shop - who is the Zoo?