… – now known as the Arts Society) who said: “The material looks like bed hangings I’ve seen in historic houses.”

Brenda compared the cope’s embroidery with some pictured in a book from the Victoria and Albert Museum, belonging to Sue Rescorla (a local expert in embroidery and church vestments). Sue and Brenda were delighted to match identical images from the book with the St. Petroc’s Church’s cope.

By appointment, David Dunkley (deputy churchwarden at the time), took the cope to the Victoria and Albert Museum. The London experts said the original material was probably a curtain or bedcover. Julia was right. The date of the handywork is most likely to be from the first quarter of the 18th century. Victorians skilled at needlework, performed repairs on the material, recycled it into a cope and added the velvet trim. We know this because the seams are machined and the stitching looks like the type made by a treadle sewing machine.

Not long after Brenda’s discovery, the embroidery on the velvet trim was repaired by the Bodmin Branch of NADFAS (The National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies, now known as The Arts Society).

The special cope was worn by Revd Paul Holley, at St. Petroc’s Church in August 2021, at a service commemorating the Prayer Book Rebellion.