Inside this issue:
Recollections of a Gosberton wheelwright + Austin Lee
William Dorman + Lincolnshire in the industrial period

Magazine of the Society for Lincolnshire History & Archaeology
LINCOLNSHIRE
PAST & PRESENT

43 Spring 2001

Gargoyle, Wrangle church

CONTENTS

Editorial
Gosberton recollections
Austin Lee
Lincolnshire subscribers to William Dorman's 12 sermons
Lincolnshire in the Industrial period
Notes & Queries
The Rustons extravaganza - a wonderful achievement
Heard or deposit
Help for local historians on the www
Bookshelf

J. W. Braybrooks
John Kettoningham
Jim English
Neil Wright
Jon Kinch
Barbara Harbottle
C. J. Lester

Page 2
Page 3
Page 8
Page 9
Page 10
Page 12
Page 17
Page 19
Page 19
Page 20

Lincolnshire Past & Present Editors: Hilary Hooley, Ros Beavers
Reviews Editor: Ray Carroll - Production Editor: Ros Beavers

The deadline for contributions to the next Bulletin and the Summer issue of Lincolnshire Past & Present is 13 June 2001. Material should be sent to the Joint Editors at Joes' Court, Lincoln LN2 1LJ. It will help the Editors if articles are sent typed, double spaced, and with a good margin. WE ARE ABLE TO ACCEPT ARTICLES ON DISK IF THEY ARE Word FOR Windows compatible files.

We are now well into the first real year of the millennium (yes, we are!) and there has been a steady stream of Lincolnshire village books celebrating the changing centuries. I imagine it will be some time before this flow ceases. Local history has greatly benefited from various community and heritage grants which bring these accounts to fruition. I say village books advisedly, as of course there are many more villages than towns, and town books have been generally on particular themes and subjects rather than overall histories.

The two other original editors of *Lincolnshire Past & Present*, the late Terrence Leach and Chris Sturman, enthusiastically kept up with every new title of local interest but I think these days few members can cope with this; they would certainly need plenty of space! Our unflappable reviews editor, Ray Carroll, deserves much credit for tracking down new publications, and I hope readers will help him by letting the Office know of anything they hear about. I have tried to confine myself to the south of the county. One example I have enjoyed is Stanley Naylor’s book, *Lincolnshire Country Life Beside the Wash 1920s to 1939*. He describes all kinds of farming practices, much of which might seem obvious at first, but there are little details that future generations will not learn from artefacts. One such is an account of potato riddling, where the four men change places after every 10 sacks on account of the cold.

More rural recollections and photographs from part of this issue, and I am grateful to Gillian Adlard for lending the MS by her late father, John Braybrooks. He was an enthusiastic and informative member of one of my evening classes, and I think he probably wrote the article for the then Old People’s Essay Competition (now Age Concern), in the 1980s. For those just starting local histories, Dennis Mills’ new web site will be much appreciated and Neil Wright’s industrial history may suggest ideas for future study. A new departure is Barbara Harbottle’s piece, which will (we hope) prompt some discussion or response. With so much material coming in, *Faces and Places* have been squeezed out this time, but they will return. We shall also begin publishing some of the entries from our 2000 competition.

* Hilary Healey - Joint Editor
I am not exactly sure when our business premises came to be in the possession of our family but it would certainly be sometime between 1870 and 1880. My grandfather, who was a native of Cowbit, learnt his trade with a blacksmith at Weston Hills. After a spell with another blacksmith at Algarthorpe, named Benjamin Brand, he came to Gosberton to start in business on his own account, succeeding a man named George Graham. I don't remember when he retired but he was eventually followed by his eldest son. In the meantime, my father, who was the second son, started his apprenticeship as a wheelwright.

First he went to Kirton and then to East Heckington near Sleaford. Not being satisfied with either place, he then signed up with Smith & Simmer, a large firm in St Thomas's Road, Spalding. It was one of the best moves Father ever made. Smith & Simmer were one of the best firms of wheelwrights and blacksmiths in Lincolnshire. The vehicles they turned out were beautifully made, and if properly maintained, would still be in good order after being used by three or four generations of farmers. Any young lad serving his apprenticeship in Smith & Simmers' workshops ended up being a first class tradesman.

After Father had served his time he decided on a change to carpentry and joined a large firm of
Sleaford contractors who were building Rauceby mental hospital. This was completely different work from that done by a wheelwright, but he learned a lot and never regretted the change, especially later in life when he started his own business. When this job was finished he had a year or two with a coachbuilding firm in Warford, and then came back to Gosberton to start on his own account in 1903. My grandfather allowed him to erect a workshop at the bottom of the yard and this was his only building for several years. He had a limited amount of space outside as the blacksmiths required the top end, and another of his brothers, who was a farmer, had a stable and cart hovel where my timber store and machine shed now stands. Next to this was my grandfather's pig sty.

However in 1916 the cart hovel and stable were taken down and re-erected on the farm. This gave Father much more room and he then built the timber store, which I still use for my imported softwood.

Right from the start of his career he always had plenty of work and, like me who followed him, never had any need to advertise. Sometimes he had more farm vehicles in for repairs than he had room for. A farmer across the road would then allow him to put some of them in his yard until he had time to deal with them.

I started work in the shop at 13 years of age, but previous to that he had several other apprentices, and also men who had already worked for other firms. I found the work extremely hard as I was rather small for my age and not exceptionally strong. Most of the timbers we used were oak, ash and elm, all of which were tough and heavy. Everything was done by hand as at that time we had no power driven machinery to ease our often tired and aching limbs. We had a circular saw that was worked by one of us turning a handle on one side and the other feeding the wood to the saw blade. Imagine what this job was like when grinding away through a three-inch or four-inch thick piece of oak or ash. It made us all into old men whilst we were still young.

We also cut much of the timber with a pit saw, which was just as much a killing job as the circular saw mentioned above. This saw would be about six feet long, with a handle at each end. The timber was nearly always cut on a saw pit. This was a long, deep trench dug in the ground with a heavy hardwood frame fixed over the top. After the log or plank had been placed on this frame it was marked with a chalk line where the saw cuts were to be made. One sawyer then climbed down into the saw pit and the other man stood on the top of the log. Each man grasped the handle at his end and began the long, laborious task of pulling the saw up and down. Slowly the saw would cut its way down the chalk mark until the opposite end was reached. This would take many hours, depending of course on the size of the plank or log.

1911, outside the workshop, from left: Jack Spriggs, Arthur Dalton, John William Braybrooks Jr (aged 3), John William Braybrooks Sr, Tom Braybrooks
I must, however, hasten to say that I never had the experience of working in a saw pit. Father tried to make one when he first started in business but as our premises are situated in one of the lowest spots in Gosberton the pit was nearly always waterlogged. He therefore abandoned the idea and made two strong high trestles. After hoisting the timber up on the trestles he would climb on the top and I would be at the bottom end of the saw underneath.

Then began the slow rhythmic up-and-down movement as already stated. The cutting was actually done by the downward pull only, so therefore all the sawdust fell either on or just in front of me. I usually wore goggles but somehow or other some of the sawdust would find its way into my eyes. Within a few minutes of starting my arms would be aching and felt as if they would drop off. Father would keep shouting, ‘Throw it up! Throw it up!’ If I didn’t he himself had got it to pull up, which would have been twice as hard work for him than it already was. I used to feel more like lying down than ‘throwing it up’!

Probably not having a saw pit was a blessing in disguise as sawing up a full size tree trunk was harder work than I ever did. What a difference between those days and now! Today the logs are fixed to a travelling platform to meet an endless type band saw that cuts its way through to the opposite end at terrific speed. More timber is sawn now in a few hours than the old pit sawyers could do in a month.

Afterwards the sawn planks were stacked flat on top of each other with slats in between to form a space that allowed the air to circulate, and thus the drying and seasoning began. Sometimes a slab was nailed across each end of the planks to prevent them from splitting when drying, but a better idea was to give the ends a coat of lead paint. We usually used odds and ends of paint that had been left over from other jobs and was not now good enough for other purposes.

The length of time for the seasoning process was reckoned at about 1 inch per year so, for example, a two-inch thick plank was not ready for conversion until it had been stacked two years. This was none too long, especially with oak – it was always longer drying than elm or ash.

The materials for wheels had to be seasoned like the rest. The hubs, or naves as we called them, were made from pieces of tree trunk (always elm) that had a slightly larger diameter than the finished turned nave. After cutting them to the approximate required length, a one-and-a-half inch hole was bored in the centre, right through from end to end, to help speed the drying process. Even so they were still not ready for use for another two or three years.

The spokes, also the felloces, which formed the outer rim of the wheel, were stacked outside for a similar period. During my time we were able to buy the felloces...
ready sawn out, but they were never the exact pattern required and we always had much chopping to do with the axe and adze to make them the correct size and shape.

To describe every movement made in making a wheel from start to finish would take up far too much time and space than this chapter could afford, but a brief description starts with the turning of a nave in the lathe. Ours could be said to be driven by foot power, not hand power, and was known as a tredle lathe. The headstock had a small pulley wheel at one end and the foot treadle was attached to a much larger wheel. A driving belt was fixed round both wheels and when the footwork began the nave in the headstock revolved at a fast speed owing to the large size of the driving wheel.

Both Father and I did the treadling and, at the same time, one of us, usually Father, worked the various turning tools. It was exceptionally hard work and sweat poured from us even on a cold wintry day. At the same time we were covered with the small chippings that flew through the air from the nave and banded it over our faces. It certainly wasn’t a pleasant job.

When finished, the nave was set out, and marked where each spoke was to be fitted. The blacksmith then tightly fitted two wrought iron hoops, which would prevent the nave from splitting later on, when the spokes were driven in. The foot of each spoke was then made and the spoke partly dressed or prepared with various tools, and the nave was mortised to take each one. They had to be a tight fit and brute force was used by the man swinging the large sledge hammer to drive them home. The tongues, or ‘tangs’ as we called them, at the outer ends were next prepared to receive the felloces, and the remainder of the dressing up done.

The felloces were then chopped and placed to the correct sweep and mortised to fit the tangs. They were then dressed with the adze, circular plane, spokeshaves and glass paper, and fitted onto the spokess. An allowance was made at the end of each felloc of about one eighth of an inch on the outer edge. Later, when the iron tyre was put on by the blacksmith, these joints closed up completely and the whole wheel was solid and tight.

Before the wheel was shod, one other job had to be done. The wheelwright now had to bore out or chop out the centre of the nave and insert the bush, which was a heavy bevelled tubular shaped piece of metal that fitted the arm or axle on which the finished wheel was to be fixed. If the nave was bored out it was usually done by a special tool called a bushing engine.

After the wheel had been shod, the bush was wedged at both ends to hold it fast and keep it in a true position. When I say a true position I really mean it. Otherwise the wheel, when attached to the vehicle, would revolve with a wobbling motion. It could then periodically catch the side of the cart, it would not follow the ruts in the country roads or rows of potatoes in the fields, but worst of all it could cause both the bush and the arm in the axle bed to run hot — in fact, so hot that they could not be touched by the bare hand. When it got to this stage, it was almost as much as the horse could do to move an empty vehicle, and I have more than once seen the centre of the nave partly burnt away by the red hot bush.

Another reason for a wheel running hot was when the farmer either forgot or ‘hadn’t time’ as he often put it, to occasionally lubricate or grease the wheels. It was often plain to see that they had never seen a spot of oil or a lump of grease for years. If a wheel groaned or squeaked they still didn’t seem to notice it and more than once we have had to slog into a wheel with a big sledge hammer to remove it.

Now to wheel shoeing. This was anything but a pleasant job, but we nearly always gave the blacksmith a hand to put the treads on. Some smiths had a tyre oven, which was a small brick building with an iron door, and inside the brickwork was plastered with fire clay. Several tyres were placed inside in an upright position, and a fire was started on the floor and round the walls. One man I knew burned old motor tyres during the last few years of his working life. They made tremendous heat but the stench from the chimney was not exactly appreciated by the householders in the village.

Our blacksmith never had an oven. A few bricks were laid in a circle in the middle of the yard and about half a dozen tyres were laid on top of each other on the bricks. If at the same time we had any wheels to shoe these tyres were laid in the middle of the larger ones. Woodland thorns were then thickly laid over the whole heap and set on fire. The heat generated was terrific and it was not long before the tyres were nearly white hot.

The shoeing took place on a circular flat plate called a platform. This had a diameter of about six feet six inches with a hole about six inches wide in the middle to take the front end of the nave. For various reasons, the soles of some wheels were bevelled so therefore the tyre was bevelled to fit. In this case the hot tyre was laid on the platform with the outer edge of the bevel facing upwards. The wheel was then lowered into the tyre and screwed down with a specially made screw that protruded through the centre of the platform.

If the wheel was not bevelled it was screwed down to the platform first and the tyre put on afterwards. When it had been levered and hammered down water was applied with buckets and cans. As the tyre cooled down it shrank in
size, closed up all the joints of the felloe and tightened the whole wheel.

Once the shoeing had started it had to be completed quickly and efficiently. If not, the felloes would quickly burn and be ruined. The two main ingredients of good shoeing were absolutely correct measuring of the tyre and the tyre being hot. If it was not hot enough it didn't expand and would cut into the felloes with disastrous consequences. If the woodwork was only slightly damaged or blackened with smoke it caused the wheelwright a lot of extra work cleaning it up afterwards.

What with the terrific heat, choking smoke and fumes, and clouds of steam, wheel shoeing was not altogether a desirable job but it had to be done. An apple tree standing several yards away from the fire often had its fruit roasted while it still hung on the branches.

I appear to be rambling on about wheels and probably give the impression that we did little else, but this was not so. There was all the bodywork of the vehicles to make, the axle boxes, shafts, tailboards, raves, side rails and many other things that were required. Wagons and trolleys had their undercarriages. All these things had a tremendous amount of skill attached to their making. I must admit that I myself never did make a complete new wagon body, but I have carried out several extensive repairs that almost reached the new body stage.

It has often been said that there is probably more skill in carrying out repairs than making new. There is certainly a lot of truth in this as far as our job was concerned. To take a thing to pieces that had been so well constructed many years before, repair it, and put it together again, took some doing and really was a work of art.

Another job worth mentioning is the painting. In this part of Lincolnshire, carts and wagons were always painted with orange red, probably the best paint ever invented. I never knew it to crack, blister or flake off. Trolleys were usually done with a bright red similar to post office red.

If the farmer decided on a change of colour, then they might be painted dark blue or green. The complete vehicle was lined out with various colours—the front lettered with the owner's name, the name of the village, also the name of the wheelwright who had made it or painted it. After much practice I could line out equally as good as Father, but as to the lettering, I was not a patch on him. When he had finished, and this included the shading of the letters in different colours, it really did look a craftsman's job. He seldom marked anything out beforehand, just began the first letter somewhere that he thought would be the right place, and would finish with the last letter in the exact spot it should be. He could also get a move on and it wasn't long before the job was done. I was much too slow and he used to say we should be bankrupt if I didn't alter my speed, so therefore he did most of the lettering himself.

Varnishing was the final process. We always used carriage varnish, which gave the vehicle a beautifully finished and hard-wearing gloss. When everything was bone dry we would put it together and pull it outside into the yard so that it was on show till the farmer fetched it away. When the horse was put into the shafts and the vehicle taken away, it made a lovely sight as it disappeared down the road. I always felt proud to have at least taken some part in the workmanship that had been put into it.

I must now bring this chapter to a close. As I said earlier, to give a detailed description of everything we did would be much too big a job, and it would be beyond my capabilities to put it all in writing. I have no doubt that there are still several men about who worked at the same trade as me and were more experienced and better hands at the job than I was. People in other parts of the county had different ideas and ways of doing things and I was always interested in seeing their work and hearing their points of view, and have always felt that one is never too old to learn. In spite of the hard toil and graft I can look back with pride and satisfaction at having had the chance to at least take part in one of the most important and essential jobs of the day. When a cart or trolley was made or repaired, we could survey it and be really pleased with what we achieved.

Since the wheelwrighting died out and we have had to turn to more carpentry and joinery, things haven't been the same. If I go out now and do something such as splicing someone's rotten old doorframe or window sash I get no pleasure from it whatever, and at the end of it there is nothing much to see for the labour involved and the time it takes.

The cost today is enormous, be it anything new or just a repair. Inferior materials are so often used. Many of today's commodities are just thrown together and are either broken or worn out in a short space of time. I suppose it's often a case of making the money do the work.

Many a youth with a year or two's training and the help of up-to-date machinery is classed as a fully qualified tradesman. In my time it took at least four years to properly learn any trade, sometimes very much longer than that. I have no wish whatever to see the old days come back but the contentment and peace of mind people enjoyed was so much better than the rush and tear of present times. Others might beg to differ and have opposite opinions so I will leave it at that.
Austin Lee

John R. Ketteringham

Austin Lee was a cleric who appears to have been particularly popular with his parishioners but at the same time he was a controversial figure. He set out to combat religious apathy and at the same time described the bishops as timid little men.

He was the only son of a brilliant clergyman and was brought up at Claxby near Market Rasen although actually born at Keighley, Yorkshire.

He graduated from Trinity College, Cambridge, with a BA in 1926 and entered Wells Theological College.

His first cure was at Kew where he served from 1928 until 1929 and from 1931 until 1933 he was a chaplain in the Royal Navy. Lee returned to Claxby as vicar in 1944 and for a time he considered resigning in order to contest a Parliamentary seat. Whilst at Claxby he issued a number of broadsheets, which might well be likened to the political pamphlets of the 18th century.

When Clement Attlee became Prime Minister in 1945 Austin Lee sent him an 'open letter' which was widely quoted in the press. Referring to the appointment of a new Bishop of Lincoln, Lee said, 'Names for this bishopric will be suggested to you. Among them will be men who have given offence to nobody, men who are colourless in their observances, inclining neither to the high or the low. Reject them all.' Austin went on to declare, 'What are wanted for bishops are holy and humble men of heart who would attract men and women to the church by the power of love.' In 1948 Austin Lee left Claxby and accepted the living of St Stephen's, Hounslow, where he remained until 1951.

In 1950 Austin Lee became a feature writer with the Daily Mail and also the Daily Mirror. He was always a controversial figure and he had a number of provocative and controversial newspaper articles published.

He gave up his living because, he said, 'the Bishop dislikes me.' He alleged 'that the church was full of humbug and bootstricking - appointments only go to those who can be guaranteed to give no offence'.

He went to live in Galway, Ireland, where he remained until returning to the priesthood in 1958 as curate-in-charge of West with East Allington and Sedgebrook, moving to Carlton as Rector in 1959. In 1961 he became Rector of Wellinghby with Sproxby and in 1965 became Curate-in-Charge of Mablethorpe, leaving Lincolnshire later that year to become Vicar of Great and Little Paxton, Huntingdonshire.

In 1964 he produced a satirical leaflet in which he suggested that the 'dubby old fashioned person' should be replaced by a musical prayer wheel! He had become somewhat bitter with congregations as well as with bishops and he alleged that the average church congregation contains a galaxy of the meanest, most malicious back-biting narrow-minded and bigoted members of the community.

Under the pseudonyms of John Austwick and Julian Calendar he wrote a number of detective stories and became a member of the National Crime Writers' Association.

In 1959 he appeared in the BBC television programme, Tonight, when he was interviewed concerning his detective, 'Miss Hogg', the heroine of a number of the detective stories written under his own name. He also did some work on film scenarios and, during his breaks between clerical appointments, he worked in turn as chef, barman and schoolmaster.

Life was never dull for Austin Lee and he deserves remembering as a very gifted and most colourful campaigning clergyman. He certainly earned the title conferred on him by the press as a 'cleric with a broom'.

Austin Lee died in January 1985 and the funeral service took place in the chapel of Trinity College, Cambridge, his ashes were interred in the family grave at Claxby.

Medieval walls found

Archaeologists have dug five test pits at the site of the future City and County Museum in the Danesgate and Fluxengate car park area of Lincoln. They have discovered the remains of medieval walls less than a metre from the surface.

Jonathan Platt, the Museum project director, has said that although it is unlikely that the discovery will hold up the overall museum plan, it could affect the design of the northern range of buildings. The archaeologists do not know as yet what the walls were part of but excavations are ongoing and more test pits are due to be dug to the south of Dane's Terrace.

The museum has a collection of over two million artefacts. It will chronicle 300,000 years of history. There were meetings in March to decide on the main exhibition themes, the content of audio-visual presentations and initial temporary exhibition ideas. The setting up of educational facilities has also been discussed.

The £10 million project adjacent to the Usher Gallery is to include shops, cafes, bars and artists' workshops. There is to be a fast-track exhibition through the history of the county, a cinematic audio-visual display and a 'time lift' to return you to the 21st century, as well as a large exhibition space. It is expected to happen before the end of 2003, and hoped that part of the funding will be from the Heritage Lottery Fund.
Lincolnshire subscribers to William Dorman's Twelve Sermons

Jim English

Publication by subscription was a popular method of publishing in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and when William Dorman's Twelve sermons upon several practical subjects: occasionally preached at the Rolls Chapel, by the late Reverend Mr William Dorman of Kensington was published in London in 1743, two thousand, three hundred and eighty-four people subscribed to the work.

They included members of the aristocracy, Fellows and heads of various Oxford and Cambridge colleges, bishops, other senior Anglican clergy, and incumbents of Anglican parishes throughout the country. Six hundred and four of the subscribers were female, three did not identify their sex, leaving 1777 male subscribers.

A search of a number of on-line library catalogues has so far identified copies of the work at the British Library, Cambridge University Library, the Bodleian Library and two college libraries in Oxford, and the John Rylands University Library, Manchester. Nothing further so far has been discovered about William Dorman.

At least 17 of the subscribers were from Lincolnshire. Three were Lincoln ladies – Mrs Amcoates, Mrs Frances Taylor, and Mrs Quincey – and a Dr Greatheath was also from the city. Other (apparently lay) subscribers were James Bateman Esq of Well, Mr Hargrave of Lincoln, Mr Williamson of Alford and Mr Lomax of Sleaford [sic]. This left eight ordained clergy – the Reverends Arnall of Burton, Beridge of Alderchurch [sic: alternative name for Algarkirk], Cleales and Drake of Hall, Hall of Harrington, Woodhouse of Scrafield, Richard Wright of Wainfleet, and Green whose address was given only as Lincolnshire.

The final subscriber was the Society of Clergy in Alford – a book club presumably formed by a number of the clergy in the Alford area. These clubs were quite common in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; the usually small membership subscribed to a common fund from which books were purchased for circulation. The normal method of operation was for the club to meet once a month to transact business. The earliest clubs were probably formed in 1709 in Bedfordshire and Pembrokeshire. It has been claimed that the Alford society was formed in 1725 and so would appear to be one of the earliest, if not the earliest, in Lincolnshire.

The earliest clubs were probably formed in 1709 in Bedfordshire and Pembrokeshire. It has been claimed that the Alford society was formed in 1725 and so would appear to be one of the earliest, if not the earliest, in Lincolnshire, other early ones being Boston Book Club (is this, perhaps, the Boston Society that, according to the Biography Database CD-ROM, subscribed to books between 1743 and 1757? Other similar clubs for which I have so far found no dates were the Grantham clergyman's Society (clubs often changed their names, so was this perhaps the Book Club at Grantham that subscribed to John Langhorne's Poems on several occasions in 1760?), and the Horncastle Clergy Society. Is anything more known about any of these, or similar, eighteenth-century Lincolnshire book clubs?

REFERENCES

1 Information on subscribers is taken from Biography Database 1680-1830 Issue 1, December 1995 [on CD-ROM].
2 James Olke, Library history: an introduction to libraries in Great Britain before 1930 (London: Clive Bingley, 1971), p51
3 Thomas Kelly, Early public libraries: a history of public libraries in Great Britain before 1930 (London: Library Association, 1966), p76
4 Notes & Queries 5th series, Vol. VIII (1877), p259
5 The articles of the Spilsby Society are deposited in the Lincolnshire Archives Office. See: Archivists's Report 1959-60, p30
8 Kaufman, p41.

From an early 19th century survey of Metheringham – about a rabbit warren...

Upon a second view of this Warren about sun sett the proper Time to judge of the number of Rabbets, I found it better stocked than I before had reason to suppose, but not to be called full and sufficiently as it ought to be. The surveyor here recommends more grassland to be added. And all the rest remain as a Rabbit Warren, the Fence Wall round it being very good, and the Burrowing ground not much amiss, but one part viz. a valley subject to drown the Rabbits in their holes on a sudden and particular inundation.
Lincolnshire in the
Industrial Period

Neil R. Wright

Over the past few years Regional Draft Research Framework documents have been put together for different archaeological periods in the East Midlands, developing from statements about each county in the region. The following statement summarises a view of Lincolnshire in the Industrial Period, and is reproduced in Lincolnshire Past & Present in two parts. Part 2 will appear in a future issue.

Introduction

This document provides a brief statement on the current state of knowledge about industrial archaeology in Lincolnshire at the end of the 20th century as a contribution to the East Midlands Regional Research Frameworks Project. As previous seminars in this project have been on a period basis, this paper will also consider industry in its wider context in the county and will broadly take the period to extend from 1750 to the present day. It will include consideration of the development of industry, agriculture, transport systems, settlements and social organisation.

As in other parts of the country there has been work by amateurs since the 1960s but little interest by professional archaeologists until recent years. The Lincolnshire Local History Society (LLHS), now the Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology (SLHA), set up an Industrial Archaeology Committee in 1964 in response to an initiative from the Council for British Archaeology (CBA). Since then the SLHA has been involved in the research and recording of industrial archaeology in Lincolnshire and the society's various publications include some with an industrial archaeology content.

In the 1960s members of the SLHA participated in an industrial archaeology survey conducted by the CBA and completed one or more cards for several hundred sites. A copy of each card was kept at the Museum of Lincolnshire Life. In more recent times the Association for Industrial Archaeology (AIA) initiated a new national survey, the Index Record of Industrial Sites (IRIS), which was intended to produce a standard index sheet of basic information about industrial sites for inclusion on computerised Sites and Monuments Records (SMRs). The SLHA was one local society that piloted the new forms and then used them for a few years. The IRIS survey was of limited success and only continued for a short time until central funds ran out. Use of the form varied from one county to another and Lincolnshire was one of the main contributors. The SLHA produced a few hundred forms, most of which were based on the previous CBA survey cards so that earlier information could be included in the county SMR and used in the planning process.

Sources

There are few sources that deal with the archaeology of Lincolnshire in the industrial period. The only town for which the former Royal Commission on Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) published a detailed inventory is Stamford and that volume has few industrial references. Only one volume of the Victoria County History of Lincolnshire has been published and that appeared in 1906 and contains little material relating to this period, apart from a history of sport as seen at the end of the Victorian period. A short guide to the industrial archaeology of the county was published in 1983 in connection with the AIA Annual Conference held in Lincoln and Boston that year and four volumes in the History of Lincolnshire series published by the SLHA relate to the county since 1700. In 1993 An Historical Atlas of Lincolnshire was published. This contained a series of maps that covered all periods of the county's history, each map facing a page of text on the particular subject covered, and 38 of the 66 maps relate to the period since 1500. Other books have dealt with particular subjects (county-wide or local) or looked at particular towns, and a selection of these are listed in the bibliography at the end of this report.

The Industrial Archaeology Committee of the LLHS produced a quarterly newsletter from January 1966 to the end of 1973 and this contains a number of short site reports and other information. In 1974 the LLHS became part of the new SLHA and since then a section of 'Industrial Archaeology Notes' has appeared in some numbers of the Society's annual publication Lincolnshire History and Archaeology as well as individual articles on industrial subjects.

The County Sites and Monuments Records include a number of reports based on the IRIS forms completed in recent years, many of which are copied from the CBA report cards written some 50 years earlier and include sites now demolished. The SMR also has some sites such as the
Fosdyke Canal, which are not date-specific, the Fosdyke being allegedly built by the Romans and still continuing in use to this day!

The situation in Lincoln is better than elsewhere in the county following a recent industrial archaeological survey (IAS) funded by Lincoln City Council and English Heritage. Between 1993 and 1998 an Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) had been produced for the city, encompassing the archaeological record to c1700. The aim of the IAS was to enhance the UAD for the post-1700 period through a survey of the industrial archaeological remains and research into the industrial past of the city and record it on computer. The project work was carried out by the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit (CLAU) from April 1988 to January 1999 and primarily covered the period 1700 to 1945. Because of the limited time and funding available, the survey recorded industrial and transport features shown on four historic maps of the city at particular dates in the 19th and 20th centuries and a photographic street survey to identify any other apparent industrial buildings still standing. Limited historical research was done to identify the occupiers of the properties found from the maps. At the end of the project a written report was submitted to the City Council and the more detailed information is recorded on computer.

The Lincoln Industrial Trust, which was formed in 1972, later absorbed into the Lincolnshire Archaeological Trust and then resurrected as the City of Lincoln Archaeological Unit, published a series of reports as Fascicules. Most of these dealt with earlier periods of the city’s archaeology but one dealt with an aspect of industrial archaeology. This was *Clay Tobacco Pipes from Excavations in Lincoln 1970-74* by Jenny E. Mann, published in 1977, which included a brief history of the industry in the city as well as record of finds. In recent years the Lincoln Civic Trust has published a series of four booklets as *The Survey of Ancient Houses in Lincoln*, which deal with the city’s medieval buildings, and the Trust has now started a project to look at later buildings in the city under the title of *The Survey of Lincoln*. This will include all classes of building up to the present, though not in the same architectural detail as in the previous surveys of the medieval properties. The first part of the city to be so surveyed is the Wigford area in the south-east quarter, bounded by the River Witham on the north and west. The survey of Wigford has been going on for a couple of years now and will continue for a while yet before it is decided how the results may be published.

**Overview of Lincolnshire in the Industrial Period**

A survey of the history of Lincolnshire in the industrial period was published in Wright, 1982, continued on page 14.
43.1 Why Yellow-Bellies? This is a question that comes around every so often and we have had a recent enquiry so it seemed a good time to give it a thorough airing. The list below was prepared some years ago by staff of the Lincolnshire Library Service, and is reproduced below with permission of Lincolnshire County Council Education and Cultural Services Directorate.

Lincolnshire people are traditionally nicknamed ‘Yellow Bellies’, and the question is frequently asked, ‘How did the term ‘yellow belly’ originate?’ In 1935 the ‘Lincolnshire Magazine’ offered a series of explanations, and every few years this query produces a spate of correspondence in the periodical ‘Lincolnshire Life’.

Although many answers have been given over the years (some of which are more plausible than others) no one has been able to state categorically which derivation is correct.

[Here we have outlined various explanations of the origins of the term, so you can take your pick!]

There are several explanations relating to the Lincolnshire Regiment:
1. The 10th (North Lincolnshire) Regiment had as its colours from 1751 to 1881 the red cross of St George on a yellow background.
2. At one time soldiers of the regiment wore green tunics with yellow facings.
3. Owing to the many dykes and marshes in the county, the soldiers had to learn to move adroitly through boggy terrain – like frogs – and there is a species of frog with a yellowish breast living in the fens.
4. Some of the Lincolnshire Regiment had retreated when faced with the enemy, and were therefore cowardly or ‘yellow’. This explanation is not popular with Lincolnshire people.

Although people from all over the county are referred to as ‘yellow bellies’, some claim that the true ‘yellow bellies’ come from the fens in South Lincolnshire:
5. Labourers employed on Fenland reclamation became covered in the yellowish clay they worked on.
6. Wildfowlers and other sportsmen became ‘yellow-bellied’ from crawling and lying about in the clay soil of the marshes and fens.

43.2 Terah Hooley (LP&P 42.4) I have a set of Harmsworth’s Universal Encyclopaedia in twelve volumes, which in spite of occasional inaccuracies is a useful source of odd information hard to find in more exalted reference books. It is of course undated, but internal evidence places the publication in the early 1920s. This is the entry for

‘Hooley, Ernest Terah (b1859), British financier. Born at Sneinton, Nottingham, Feb 5, 1859, he became a stockbroker at the age of 22 and came to London in 1896. By a series of successful deals in company promoting he acquired an immense fortune, at the height of his career commanding over £18,000,000 of capital. His success was short lived however and in 1898 he became bankrupt. Later he embarked on various other schemes, few of which proved remunerative to the shareholders.’

Presumably the entry was written before Terah Hooley faced any criminal charges, which Terance Leach implies came late in the financier’s life.

Veronica Murphy

Re: Query 42.4 from John R. Kettingham (LP&P 42)

In the ‘Oxford Book of Legal Anecdotes’ ed Michael Gilbert pub OUP 1986 ISBN 0 19 214112 0 page 28 there are mentions passim of an Ernest Terah Hooley defending a charge of conspiracy to defraud ‘in the Jubilee Cotton Mills Case’.

Christopher Kitchell
7 Brewer, in his Dictionary of Phrase and Fable, states that the term is an allusion to the frog which is found in the marshes and swamps where the fenmen live.

8 Fen dwellers were subject to ague or malaria, which was supposed to emanate from stagnant water, so that their skins took on a sallow, yellowish tinge.

9 Poppy juice taken to relieve the malaria apparently caused the skin to turn yellow.

10 The Wapentake (ancient local administrative unit) of Elloe, covering the low-lying fens, was referred to as 'Ye Elloe Bellie'; 'bel' was the German word for low-lying. This was later corrupted to 'yellow belly' [This is dubious; 'flach' is German for low-lying]. Some have said that the term dates back to the time of the Lincolnshire Mail Coach, ... running between around 1785 and 1871.

11 The coach was painted dark blue, with a bright yellow body, and was nicknamed 'The Yellow Belly'. It may have been painted this colour so that the splash marks from clayey roads would not show up.

12 The drivers of the Lincoln to London stage coach wore yellow waistcoats and so were nicknamed 'yellow bellies' by the cockneys in London.

13 There was a custom of hanging 'belly' bacon for so long it eventually turned yellow or 'reasty'.

14 Lincolnshire countrywomen, when going to market, traditionally carried their money and gold beneath their dresses, thus they had 'yellow bellies'.

15 Legend has it that if a Lincolnshire person placed a shilling on his stomach before going to sleep, and the coin was still in the same position in the morning, it would have turned into a gold sovereign.

16 There is a story of a lady whose canary died. The body was taken out of the cage and replaced with a frog with a yellow breast in the belief that the frog would sing as beautifully as the canary did. She is supposed to have said to it, 'Now sing, yellow belly!'.

17 Finally we have the legend of the farmer who had an extremely large and ugly daughter who weighed nearly 28 stone. As he was having difficulty finding a husband for her, he offered as a dowry as many gold sovereigns as it would take to cover her stomach, thus making her husband a very rich man.

These are the most popular explanations for the origins of the term 'yellow belly'. Which one do you think is correct? Here is one more:

18 This suggestion, ... by James Dear in the book Aspects of Yellow-belly History (1988) is that the name is derived from the appearance of the newt, especially the Great Crested, which has a yellow underbelly.

queries

43.3 Monkey on the ridge In answer to Query No 42.1 by Ruth Tinley in Lincolnshire Past & Present No 42, to have a monkey on the roof meant that the building was under mortgage. The meaning of the passage quoted is that some money was raised to pay off the mortgage but not the full amount, hence the reference to bad trade. The phrase has survived in the saying 'to have a monkey on the back', meaning to have an addiction, and possibly in the term 'Monkey' to mean £500.

Edwin J. Rose

Also: A 'monkey a stride the ridge' was a mortgage debt secured on a building - usually a dwelling. It was also applied, as here, in a somewhat jocular way, to mean any debt outstanding on a property.

Roger Betteridge

And: Betty Kirkham has heard the expression many times - 'Oh aye, he's gotten a nice place, but it's a pity about the monkey on the roof!'
Lincolnshire Towns and Industry
1700-1914 as continued by Mills, 1989, Twentieth Century Lincolnshire² so this report will only include a brief summary.

At the start of the 21st century, large parts of Lincolnshire are still rural and agricultural, and some villages are still small, or smaller, than they were in 1750. In the 18th century most people lived in villages, and most of the market towns were little larger than some villages and had a strong dependence on the surrounding rural area. Many market towns have grown over these two and a half centuries and have increased their dominance over the surrounding countryside, but in comparison with other parts of England they are still small and even the major urban areas of Lincoln and Grimsby/Cleethorpes are much smaller than a city such as Nottingham.

In considering Lincolnshire's situation in the East Midlands during the industrial period it is first necessary to note three major contrasts within the heart of the region, namely that Lincolnshire did not have any coal industry, nor any large-scale textile or boot and shoe industry. There were a few attempts to set up cotton mills, a lace factory, a bonnet factory or a carpet factory in the county in the 18th or 19th centuries but they were isolated, small-scale, mostly short-lived and unsuccessful.

A major change during the industrial period was the improvement in transport that somewhat reduced Lincolnshire's isolation from the rest of the country. The Great North Road through the county was turnpiked before 1750, and a network of other roads was turnpiked in the 1750s and 1760s. The Trent, Witham and other rivers through the county had been navigable since the medieval period and these were restored during the 18th century. The old ports of Boston, Grimsby and Gainsborough enjoyed a revival and a new dock was also built at Immingham in the early 20th century. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries some short canals were created to link market towns such as Horncastle, Sleaford and Caistor to the navigable rivers. From 1848 to the late 20th century Lincolnshire had a network of railways that served many more places than the canals had done, but since 1970 only a few railway lines survive and private cars are the main means of personal transport.

During the 18th century Lincolnshire's main role in the industrial revolution was as a supplier of food and raw materials for London and the industrial districts lying to the west of the county, particularly the Midlands, South Yorkshire and Lancashire. Only in the 19th century did Lincolnshire establish an important role as engineering works in some towns grew large on the production of agricultural machinery, which achieved worldwide markets by 1914. In the rural areas were wind and water mills, brickyards, a few stone quarries and other premises processing local materials and producing goods for local consumption such as pottery. Old Bolingbroke Lincolnshire produced wool and flax, and early in the 19th century attempts were made to establish textile factories in the county, including a cotton mill, but were largely unsuccessful and have left little trace. The construction of new docks at Grimsby in the 1850s led to the town becoming the greatest fishing port in the world, and the food processing infrastructure established in the town continued to be used for other foods after the decline of the fishing industry.

Local administration in 1750 was based on the three administrative parts of the county – Holland, Kesteven and Lindsey – the hundreds, six boroughs, two dozen market towns and 600 or so parishes in the county, and since then towns have increasingly become centres of administration and social organisations for the areas around them. The precedent was set by the Poor Law Unions established in 1834, followed by other local authorities including Rural District Councils and County Councils for the three Parts of Lincolnshire, and finally the District Councils created in 1974 and two Unitary Councils in the north of the county in 1998.

As towns grew and people's expectations rose towns became centres of services used by the communities around, from amenities such as theatres to services such as schools and hospitals. By the late 20th century many villages had long lost their schools, and were also losing even their basic amenities of a shop, post office or church.

Communications
Lincolnshire is unique in the East Midlands in having a coastline, and over the centuries a number of ports have flourished and declined. The medieval ports of Boston and Grimsby on the coast and Gainsborough on the Trent had declined by the early modern period. Boston was then still the main port in the county but Grimsby had hardly any traffic and after the Louth Navigation was opened in the 1750s, with coastal vessels able to travel inland to Louth, that town took over as the main entrepot for north-east Lincolnshire. As the rest of the East Midlands industrialised in the 18th century the traffic along the Trent rose rapidly and Gainsborough experienced a revival as a port at the mouth of the river, where cargoes were transferred to sea-going vessels. During the 18th century small wooden vessels could be beached at almost any village on the flat Lincolnshire coast, such as Saltfleet or Sknegress, as well as tying up in little rivers or creeks as at Wainfleet, Sutton Bridge or Fosdyke. After the enclosure of Holland Fen in the late 18th century the port of Boston
experienced considerable growth, so that by 1850 the town was, briefly, the largest in Lincolnshire. Successful ports had many supplementary industries such as boat building and the making of sails, ropes and blocks.

The growth of the port of Boston stopped after the railway was opened in 1848 and stole the port’s traffic in agricultural produce to London and inland centres. The port of Gainsborough also suffered as railways were opened through the East Midlands and took its traffic. The port of Boston revived, but not on the same scale, after a wet dock was opened in 1882-4. By that time Boston had been overtaken by Grimsby where the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway built a series of large docks, partly commercial but mainly for the fishing industry. An attempt to build a dock at Sutton Bridge in the 1880s was unsuccessful, but in the early 20th century the Great Central Railway, wanting to add to its facilities at Grimsby, built a vast new dock at Immingham near the mouth of the Humber. In 1987/89 a new river port facility was established at Sutton Bridge, close to the site of the failed Victorian dock a century earlier.

Lincolnshire’s role as a source of food and war materials led to the improvement of its navigable rivers during the 18th century and to the creation of new tributary waterways. An important part in the design of many schemes for waterway and drainage improvements in Lincolnshire was played by the Spalding engineer John Grundy (1719-1783), one of the pioneers of the civil engineering profession. Nationally, famous engineers such as William Jessop and John Rennie were later active in the same area.

The Stamford Canal had been constructed as early as 1664-73 and the Fossdyke canal from Lincoln to the Trent was restored to traffic in 1744, but the major improvements took place in the 1760s with the opening of the Louth Navigation and the restoration of the River Witham. Shorter branch canals were opened in the 1790s and early 1800s to give access from Horncastle, Sleaford, Grantham and Caistor to the waterway network. Most of the new waterways were abandoned after the arrival of railways although efforts are being made to restore the Grantham Canal and the Sleaford Navigation.

Roads in the county were improved by turnpike trusts in the 18th and early 19th centuries, though because Lincolnshire was not criss-crossed by national routes, and much of its terrain was perhaps easier than in other
counties, the proportion of miles of turnpike roads to other roads was not as high as in some other counties such as Derbyshire. The first turnpikes in Lincolnshire were the Great North Road through Stamford and Grantham, and a stretch of road extending eastwards from Lincoln towards the Wolds, but from the 1760s roads were turnpiked northwards and eastwards into the county, up to the Humber bank and the east coast of Lindsey. Later toll bridges were erected at several river and estuarial crossings including Gainsborough, Dunham, Tattershall, Framdyke and Sutton Bridge. One or two tollhouses still survive, as at Hallington, Stamford and Lincoln (Canwick Hill), there are still a few turnpike mile posts along some roads, and the Gainsborough Bridge remains, minus its original parapets but still with a toll house. Market towns at crucial points on the developing transport system benefited from their participation in national rather than local markets, and they served to bring manufactured products into the county and distributed them in their locality. It was the arrival of the railways in the 1840s and 1850s that transformed the position of many Lincolnshire towns. Previously they had all been much of a muchness, with even the county town of Lincoln only a little larger than most of the rest. But after the railways arrived some experienced considerable growth, some stagnated and others declined. The first two railway lines into Lincolnshire were short stretches opened by the Midland Railway Company in 1846, from Nottingham to Lincoln and from Leicester to Stamford, and within ten years a third of the eventual network in the county had been opened taking long distance traffic off the roads and waterways. The county was dominated by two railway companies – the Great Northern (GNR) and the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire (MSLR), renamed Great Central in 1897. The main line from Yorkshire and North-East England to London passed through the western edge of Lincolnshire but no main line passed through the centre of the county. Only in the late 19th century were two new cross-country lines built through Lincolnshire to join East Anglia to the Midlands and to northern England respectively. Virtually all railways in the county were operated by the GNR and MSLR either on their own or in partnership with other companies. The effects of the railways varied from town to town. At Boston the GNR took over from the coastal shipping and the port stagnated for forty years, but at Grimsby the MSLR built new docks and brought massive expansion to what was the small remnant of a medieval borough. Lincoln was served by a multitude of railway companies and benefited from lines going in all directions to take advantage of the natural river valley break through the limestone edge, even though the city was not on a main line. Until the 1850s Grantham and Stamford were important coaching points on the Great North Road, but that business was lost when the railways were opened between London and the north. Grantham was on the main line to Yorkshire and had Hornsby’s substantial engineering firm but Stamford was on a branch line and its local engineering firm, Blackstone’s, was smaller and took longer to develop. Railways also led to the development of holiday resorts on the Lincolnshire coast in the late 19th century, including Skegness, Cleethorpes, Mablethorpe and Sutton on Sea. Skegness and Freiston Shore had existed as very small resorts even before the railways arrived, with just a couple of small hotels each. Tramway systems were created in the two largest urban settlements – Lincoln and Grimsby/Cleethorpes – as well as rural tramways from Grimsby to Immingham and, for a short period before a railway was built, from Alford to Sutton on Sea.

NOTES
1 Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, 1977, The Town of Stamford – An Inventory of Historical Monuments.
3 Wright, N. R., 1983, A Guide to the Industrial Archaeology of Lincolnshire including South Humberside, AIA and SLHA.
7 City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit, 1999, The Industrial Archaeology of Lincoln. CLAU Report No 378.
9 See footnote 4 above.
The Rustons extravaganza at the Museum of Lincolnshire Life

A wonderful achievement! Jon Finch

Lincoln's Museum of Lincolnshire Life hosted a unique celebration of Lincoln's industrial past last autumn, which proved to be an unparalleled success. After repeated requests from enthusiasts, the Museum decided to organise a reunion of engines, machinery and other memorabilia relating to Rustons, one of Lincolnshire's most famous names. The firm originated in 1857 when Joseph Ruston joined the small engineering company of Ruston and Proctor in Lincoln. He turned the company around and by 1911 the firm employed over 5000 people and exported material all over the world, placing Lincoln very much on the industrial map.

The event was held on the weekend of 30 September, 1 October when the museum was full to capacity with all types of Rustons memorabilia. There were traction engines, road rollers, tractors and navvies, to name but a few, truly reflecting the incredible range of products manufactured by Rustons during its lifetime. The response from Ruston engine owners was overwhelming - engines returned to Lincoln from all over the country, from as far afield as Exeter, Kent and Much Wenlock. It was a unique opportunity for the exhibitors and they thoroughly enjoyed themselves during this wonderful pilgrimage.

The enthusiasm generated by the event demonstrates the unique position held by Rustons. Over the weekend it was described as 'the Rolls-Royce of the steam engine world' and the nostalgia and emotion created by the name is undeniable. The event caught the imagination of the local public, with well over 1000 visitors coming to the Museum during the weekend. Many were old Rustonians themselves or had a father or grandfather who had worked for the company.

There were many highlights during the weekend, but probably the most spectacular was the Road Run from the Museum to what would have been the Rustons works. Eleven engines made the short trip down the hill to what is now Alstom, along streets crowded with well-wishers. The sun shone as the engines lined up in the place of their manufacture in front of the original Ruston
and Proctor chimney. Another high point was a visit by the great-great-granddaughter and grandson of Joseph Ruston himself. Mandy Fyfe from the Forest of Dean, and James Hodgson from Shropshire attended the Museum on the Sunday and provided a direct link with the great man who started it all off 150 years ago. They kindly presented plaques to the exhibitors and took an enthusiastic part in the convoy to Alstom. The event would not have been possible without support from the Made in Lincoln project and Lincolnshire County Council, and received financial assistance from local firms such as KDI, Lindum Construction and the Co-op. The event reflected the enthusiasm and pride that many Lincolnshire people still have for their famous and unique industrial past.

---

**Advertisement**

![WEA Logo]

**Are you interested in teaching history?**

**Adult Education Tutors wanted**

**South Lincolnshire Workers’ Educational Association**

**EAST MIDLAND**

The WEA is actively seeking new tutors for its wide ranging class programme in South Lincolnshire and Rutland. History is an ever popular subject and we need:

- Local historians (any aspect of Lincolnshire or Rutland’s history)
- Regional historians (the East Midlands, Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire and Norfolk)
- Family historians (especially for courses on researching your family history)
- Social, economic and political historians of any period for the British Isles, Europe or the non-European World

No teaching qualification is required. Support and training will be offered.

If you are interested please contact Phil Knowles, WEA Office, Lincolnshire County Council Offices, Eastgate, Sleaford, NG34 7EB. Tel. 01529 415418 or e-mail pknowles@wea.org.uk

**Closing date - Friday, 1 June 2001.**

*Do you know a friend/colleague who might be interested - why not pass on the details?*

---

**Help for parish history compilers on the www**

The Lincolnshire Library Service has published a guide to sources for compilers and researchers of Lincolnshire parish histories. The guide was written by Dennis Mills and published on the County Council web site. This is a well thought and carefully structured tour of sources, starting with the basics such as maps and directories and then addressing individual topics such as agriculture, social provision and the key landowners. Indeed, it is more than a guide to sources; it is a “how to do it” guide. It is peppered with illustrations (both appropriate pictures from the local history collection and quotations from the sources) and links to other resources both inside and outside the web site. Even the more knowledgeable historian will find that it fills in gaps and the logical organisation is itself a model for any author to follow. The SLHA, individual members and the History of Lincolnshire publications all feature prominently. If ever there was a need for a SLHA web site this illustrates it; one click on a link would take the reader there. This is a good example of the value of the www, if it could be
criticised there is only the common complaint that some parts are slow to load. How to find it? Well, a search by the key words "parish history" in Yahoo yielded 90400 pages (which is another web problem!) so please, make the address below known as widely as you can.

The Library Service, Dennis Mills and his colleagues who, I understand include Jean Traherne and Liz Schofield, should be congratulated.

C. J. Lester

www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/libraries/parishhistories/parishhistoryindex.htm

The following article is reprinted with the kind permission of the author from Tyne and Tweed No 52. I thought this piece might provoke a response – Ed.

Hoard or Deposit

Barbara Harbottle

[The editor invited Miss Harbottle to contribute a note expressing her views on the role of Local History Societies in collecting an archive for their area. This is the result. Does the cap fit?]

What is an archive? It is a collection of writings, drawings and photographs, or even just one of these, which are considered to have some historical interest. Does your local history society collect such things? If so I suggest you ask yourselves the following questions.

1 Why do you collect? What purpose does such a collection serve? Publication perhaps, or an exhibition, or to save the material from being lost or thrown away.

2 What do you collect? Photographs – prints and/or negatives – and have you sorted out the ownership or copyright? Unique items, such as the only version of a lease perhaps, or an estate map? Lose these and you've made a permanent hole in the documentary record. Or records of any fieldwork you've done such as recording gravestones, with a lot of time and effort involved.

3 Where are they kept? Who is entrusted with looking after them? Do you regularly check that everything still exists? Do you have a clear arrangement as to ownership? Have you returned everything which was not given, but just lent for a particular purpose?

I only ask because of past experience – of documents going missing even in one of our local record offices, of exhibitions of photographs becoming steadily more faded and dog-eared, and worst of all, of acquisitive officers of local history societies.

All professional archivists can tell horror stories of irretrievable losses, like the consignment of a set of parish council minutes (from somewhere in Northumberland) to the flames, or of rescues just in time, like the recovery of boxes and boxes of assorted estate papers from a damp garage in the south of the county, or of minute books from on top of a cistern in someone's loo in mid Northumberland. One of the most fascinating discoveries was that a twelfth century charter of William the Lion found pinned over a hole in the wall of a loo in a country house, in this county of course. Though I don't suppose we're really any worse than our neighbours.

Losses like these occur because the guardian of the collection loses interest or dies, at which point the house gets cleared out by an uncaring or ignorant person, or, much more rarely, because of dishonesty. It could happen to your collection if its care is left to one unsupervised member, when it should be the responsibility of the whole society.

I beg you to consider whether you should continue to hold and amassed an archive of original material. If it was accumulated for a publication and that is now out, do you need it anymore? If you need it for an exhibition, then have it copied – original material, without masses of protection, should not be exhibited. If it was collected to safeguard it, is it stored under suitable conditions? If it was to make it readily available for use by others, then how accessible is it to any one outside the inner circle?

The conclusion must be that original, unique items should not be in private hands. They should be deposited in a record office, or in the local studies section of a library. To put it at its politest, anyone who disputes this is someone who does not use these amazingly rich repositories, and wants to deprive others of information. Where would some of us be without the photographs and insurance maps in the Newcastle Central Library, where would I have looked for the history of Prestwick Carr, if the Ridley MSS were not in the Northumberland Record Office?
NEW BOOKS RECEIVED


With Britain in grave danger of German invasion in 1940-41 the Army established various ‘stop’ lines which, it was hoped, would at least hold up enemy advance once a beachhead was established. The biggest of these was the General Headquarters Line, which ran from Bristol across to London and north to Edinburgh. This book comprehensively covers the planned German invasion areas and the planning, construction and operation of the Line; these included dealing with natural obstacles, pill boxes, gun emplacements and anti-tank devices. Local interest lies in the Line's route through the county, which ran from the Welland, east of Market Deeping, along the Cross Drain to Bourne, across to the Trent at Newark, passing north of Grantham. It then followed the Trent to Gainsborough (skirted to the east) where it would have been defended by an infantry battalion, up to Keadeby and thence to the Ouse near Goole. All the Trent bridges would have been demolished by the Royal Engineers if need be. Maps, photographs and drawings of the various types of defences make this a fascinating book for those with any interest in WW2 history.

T. Hancock, Cherry Willingham


The BBMF at Coningsby is a major county tourist attraction, where visitors can see displays in the County Council's Visitors' Centre before passing through the RAF's hangar to see the aircraft with a volunteer guide. This book concentrates on the Flight during 1995-2000, during which the author, who is also a photographer, took many air-to-air photos of the unit's Spitfires, Hurricanes, Lancaster and Dakota. There is a brief text, which covers the history of the Flight and its individual aircraft, but the bulk of the book is devoted to the magnificent colour photos, many of which have Lincolnshire scenery in the background.

T. Hancock, Cherry Willingham


This is an excellent example of the 'Millennium Book of Our Village' publishing phenomenon of the last twelve months except that it is obviously not the result of a sudden thought on the first of January 2000. This book has been carefully prepared from material researched over several years. It starts with a time-line of events in the parish from Roman occupation to the pre-reception class of the village primary school in 2000. The photographs and oral history give a vivid account of the transition from a small tight-knit agricultural community to the dormitory village of today. The map is undated (OS 1906?) but is useful nevertheless. The lack of an index for a book of just under 100 pages has been made less important by the clear demarcation into themes. Farming Days has sections on child labour, threshing, poverty, and concludes with a rounded account of one farming family up to the present day. 'Village Scenes' covers the church and its awful fire, the chapel, public houses and vernacular architecture. Thus we are led through the sections on Tradesmen and Shops, the Water Supply, Nursing and Welfare, Sport, Societies (including the WI) to the Remembrance of War. How surprising it is to learn that the real purpose of the 'only a decoy' Wireless Station was to intercept and pass on to Bletchley Park messages, which the Germans had encrypted using Enigma machines.

Jennifer Jackson is to be congratulated on co-ordinating the full and varied accounts compiled by parishioners and History Group members. It is a veritable treasure and it believes all Branstonians to buy a copy for EACH of their children, in 40 years' time ownership of a copy might otherwise prove a legacy of contention far beyond monetary value.

Brinda Webster, Heighamton


The editor and her Lincolnshire publisher are performing a useful service in these oral history studies. Here we have the stories of a wartime service of seven very different people whose experiences are all extremely varied. There are no Lincolnshire lads here but they make interesting reading for any interested in the feel of war to the average serviceman.

CLARK, Bernard. Spalding in

A pleasant little descriptive book, which gives a most interesting insight into life in Spalding in those days. Some local people will have their memories refreshed from the accounts their parents or grandparents told them and for others there will be newly acquired information. The drawings and illustrations are excellent companions to the enjoyable mode of writing. It is good to have another book about the south of the county and it is to be recommended and enjoyed.

Marcia Egar, Spalding


This is a rarity – an American book devoted to a British aircraft! One of the RAF’s last all-British aircraft, the Vulcan, because of its distinctive shape and noisy but impressive air display sequences, captured the hearts of the British public. Although stationed briefly at Coltmoor (Rutland), Felling (Yorkshire), Coningsby and Cyprus, it is Scampton and Waddington which are forever associated with the aircraft, serving at these two stations from 1956 to 1984. The book covers the raison d’être of the machine (to drop nuclear weapons on the USSR), its design, construction and service. As the title suggests, there is a fair amount of technical information with many drawings and photos, both black and white and colour. For anyone with an interest in the Vulcan this is a good book, but apart from the Lincolnshire connection, there is little of local interest otherwise.

Terry Hancock, Cherry Willingham


If a third of this book is devoted to the sixteenth century this is not to deny that the authors have made a valiant effort to cover the 1000 years of their title in some detail and using a wide range of reference. Useful summaries relate activity at national level to the effects on village life from Norman rule onwards. Much use is made of maps to show the growth of the village and illustrations (many from the Luttrell Psalter) show agricultural workers pursuing their various tasks. A study of the life of the Rev James Hildyard is valuable for the light he showed in recording the causes of death in 32 years of the registers. Good use is made of the school records and a key feature is the indication of source material and a good bibliography. The authors acknowledge that theirs is not meant to be a definitive history but whoever undertakes such a job in the future will have cause to be grateful for the spade work undertaken here.


These two booklets give useful insights into life on the land and a flavour of village life as it centred on the village school. The farming story tells of a hard life in the fields and methods that have largely been taken over by machines; this is a far from idyllic picture of rural life; the weather was more severe, the work was labour-intensive and wages were poor. Nevertheless Mr French has survived to tell his story in a homely fashion and brings the period to life.

Following a visit to his old school, which he had attended more than 60 years before, he was reminded that the school was 100 years old in 2000. He has set down his memories of his school days (with lists of all his old school mates!) and also of the life in Gedney Drove End. Although stuck out towards the Wash on a road going nowhere, the author depicts a village full of life with church and chapel prominent. He is to be thanked for making these memories available ‘before they are lost for ever’, as he writes. Both have reproductions of old photographs but the paper chosen has not done them full justice. Recommended.


Dr Hislop reviews the documentary evidence, discusses the role of the medieval mason as engineer and designer, describes the preparations for construction, examines medieval masonry building methods and endeavours to identify the work of individual masons using historical data and stylistic analysis. Chapter 5 focuses attention on the evidence from surviving buildings and interpretation of the archaeology – this analysis is perhaps the most fascinating aspect of the book. Generously equipped with black and white illustrations – my only complaint would be that one or two are unclear and difficult to interpret. The glossary could be more expansive.

This modest book does not pretend to be the definitive work on the subject and the author himself acknowledges that more research is necessary before we can understand more fully the process of building design and the master mason’s role in it. However, it is a useful introduction to the practice of masoncraft, particularly valuable to students of building archaeology and conservation, and good value at its low price.

Paula Judson, Senior Historic Buildings Manager, Heritage
Trust of Lincolnshire.


This well deserved tribute succinctly surveys the manifold activities that put the country's engineers among the foremost in the world 150 years ago. Very well illustrated, it covers bridge building, the Crystal Palace, pleasure piers, steam engines in all their shapes and sizes, ship building, trams, water works etc. There is a short section on places to see but it, and the reading list, cannot hope to refer the reader to all the sources necessary to lead on from this stimulating potted history.


This useful little pamphlet deals with the Guildhall's early history, its uses, the archaeology of the site and the changes that have occurred to the building during its eight centuries of existence. Much is compressed in a short space; if a guide to further reading could have been squeezed in it would have been even better.


These two books are for the keen walker prepared to explore a route that starts in Boston and ends on the Channel coast in west Dorset. The Lincolnshire section passes through Fosdyke and then along the River Welland, turns by the River Glen, through Kate's Bridge and Ootherpe and reaches Oakham via Stamford, Easton on the Hill, and along Rutland Water - a total of 55 miles. Full maps are provided as well as descriptive text; in the planner book are details of places for refreshment and overnight stays. The south of the county is short of footpaths and decent walks and this well produced and pocketable work will fill a serious need. Profits all go to the Macmillan Cancer Relief Fund.


Another swift survey from this well-known provider of such pocket histories. All aspects of life on the railway 150 years ago are covered including their building, maintenance, the men who operated the system (drivers, signalmen, station staff, men who looked after the horses - in the 1890s the LNWR alone owned 640 horses, which gave employment to about 2700 men - the ships owned by the companies and, in a final section, women on the railways. Well illustrated with a useful list of places to visit and bibliography it can be thoroughly recommended.


Peter Owen's evacuation to Branton from the London blitz was by his own admission a 'cheat evacuation' for, accompanied by his parents, he had a 'happy war' in the relative peace of his aunt's home. His 'escape' is consequently not from war but into a totally different life style, for in Finchley he was accustomed to electric light, running water and bathrooms. By contrast, in rural Branton, Peter could sleep in a bed, rather than cover nightly under an upturned settle, but water had to be collected from a communal tap, candles lit him to bed, and there was the inescapable two-holed privy at the end of the garden.

In terms of human relations, Peter had also to learn the unwritten rules of a small Lincolnshire community. Branton may have been '130 miles from home in distance but was a world away in so many ways of custom and comment'. His relationship (and later home) with the dour village blacksmith creates particularly poignant images of a past world and a childhood innocence that we have lost. One could sometimes think this book too sentimental at times but then history is as much about recalled emotion as facts. Moreover, it is the minutiae of past ways of life, detailed here so skillfully, that need to be recorded, otherwise they are lost for ever.

Jennifer Jackson, Branton


This book fills a gap in local history and a void in the story at national and international levels. The author starts with the earliest beginnings in 1890 of a nine-hole course on a site long since built over, through to the present eminence of an amateur Championship course with - since 1995 - the presence of the English Golf Union with its training facilities and a second eighteen-hole course.

She plots with scholastic detail the establishment of what is now known as the Hitchin course in 1905. This was to become through re-design, in the second and third decades of the 20th century, a course that is known and honoured in this country and abroad. The history of the Club is also thoroughly documented with
the contributions made by players, green-keepers and benefactors, particularly the Hothchin family, whose generosity and support are responsible for the establishment and development of the course and the current president, Neil Hothchin, for his lifelong devotion to the Club. It is also a social history presenting vignettes of life in the Edwardian heyday when Woodhall was indeed a spa. It is well-rounded and amply illustrated throughout.

Peter and Doreen Rowland, Woodhall Spa

[SKEELS], Della. Gosberton: 1960-2000: a record of some of the events that have happened and some of the people that have lived in Gosberton during the last 100 years; compiled by Della, assisted by Ella. The author, 33 Løwgate, Gosberton, Spalding, Lincs. 2000. [1], 54pp. No ISBN. £3 pbk incl. p&p. The authors have adopted a simple plan, not followed in any of the many village accounts that have come my way in the rush of Millennium books, of searching the local papers year by year for interesting items. So, after a brief scene-setting page on life in 1900, from 1901 to 1998 we gain an idea of life in the village as depicted in news accounts. It all adds up to a useful survey of how a typical Holland village managed its affairs and some of the personalities involved in the process. A final page deals with life in Gosberton in 2000, and a good range of pictures lends support to the story. A good effort, which deserves to succeed.


Following the success of Memory Lane: Lincoln and Lincolnshire Breedon Books have published a further volume of photographs from the Lincolnshire Echo’s archive collection, again compiled by Peter Washbourn, a retired Echo employee and a fountain of knowledge on the city’s past and present. In a hardback A4-size volume, the prints are all black and white, large enough to show interesting details, and of excellent quality. They all relate to the city itself and cover the period from 1930 to the Silver Jubilee of 1977. Most are dated and all include the newspaper’s reference number, with details of how to order copies at the back of the book. The chapters, headed ‘the thirties’, ‘the forties’ etc., are arranged chronologically and interspersed with thematic chapters on ‘the Lincoln scene’, ‘moments of celebration’ and so on.

It is fascinating to find photographs of innovations, such as Lincoln’s first pedestrian crossing (p26) and its first traffic lights (p36), plus clear photographs of many buildings that have long since disappeared – one such shows the demolition of Hartsholme Hall. The chapter on the forties depicts the war and its effects on the city – we see tramlines being dug up (p66) and railings pulled down for scrap metal (p67). The only chapter I found not very interesting was ‘entertaining moments’, a series of shots of celebrities who visited Lincoln in the 50s and 60s – these could have been taken in almost any British city and they show nothing unique to Lincoln. Although the captions are brief, they are informative and accurate; errors are rare and minor – page 53 shows Sibthorp House; Charlie Chaplin’s wife was Oma (p212). This is a substantial book, good value at £14.99, and will bring pleasure to anyone with an interest in the city of Lincoln and its past.

Eleanor Namsted, Lincoln

Sackcloth and ashes corner

By an unfortunate error the review by Tom Lane in the Winter issue carried the wrong heading. The book reviewed so enthusiastically by him should have referred to Alwyn and Malcolm Sentece’s book on Ropsley and not to the book on Ingoldsby by Mr and Mrs Fox, reviewed above. The details that should have headed Tom’s review are:


BOOKS RECENTLY RECEIVED


---

RICHARD KAY
PUBLICATIONS

The majority of our books have a Lincolnshire connection

Look for them in any good Lincolnshire bookshop

DIALECT, HISTORY
(AUTO)BIOGRAPHIES
LIFE IN LINCOLNSHIRE
VERNACULAR HISTORY

We do not, intentionally, publish fiction (except as a vehicle for dialect) and only rarely poetry

SEND FOR OUR CATALOGUE — IT’S FREE!

80 SLEAFORD ROAD • BOSTON • PE21 6EU • UK
01205 353231

24 Lincolnshire Past & Present No 43 Spring 2001