Cold War in Lincolnshire
John Byng
Gainsborough Old Hall
Gedney Fen
Mystery of George Wm Thomas
Four pages of books
Competition winners' essays

Magazine of the Society for Lincolnshire History & Archaeology
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The deadline for contributions to the next Bulletin and the Spring issue of Lincolnshire Past & Present is 2 February 2001. Material should be sent to the Joint Editors at Jews’ Court, Lincoln LN2 1LS. It will help the Editors if articles are sent typed, double spaced, and with a good margin. They may be sent on disk — this is very helpful — if they are Word for Windows compatible files.

Cover picture: Wrangle church in winter
EDITORIAL

We hope you will enjoy this special bumper edition of LP&P over the Christmas break. Here at last are essays by three of the Lincolnshire 2000 writing competition winners, Sheila Stevens, Brenda Webster and R. C. Wheeler. Sorry, but there are no Notes and Queries as such but Michael Turland has asked an interesting question in his article about a mysterious gentleman called George William Thomas. Does anyone know who he was? It is always amusing to hear the remarks of the outspoken John Byng on his travels and some can be found in Charles Rawding’s ‘Aristocratic Landscapes’. But more recent landscapes are described by John T. Turner in his article on the former Regional Government Headquarters in a bunker at Skendleby. Douglas Hoare tells an unhappy tale of Godney Fen, and you can learn the latest news from Gainsborough Old Hall, while we hear of another old stately home that has been put on the market. Finally, an apology to Jennifer Jackson, that her article on Branston Pinfold in the last issue was attributed to Jennifer Johnson!

Cold War remains in Lincolnshire

Underground Regional Government Headquarters at Skendleby

John T. Turner

The ventilation vents – the most prominent feature of the site

The many years of the cold war saw the major nations of the world spend astronomical amounts of money on both weapons and defence. In the final phase between 1985 and 1993 Britain, along with other countries, prepared for what was expected to be a global catastrophe – total thermo-nuclear war. The many structures that were converted or built then are rapidly disappearing, either being demolished or converted to more mundane uses.

On 25 February 2001, thanks to Mr Terry Wiseman of Market Rasen, members of several interested societies were able to tour the underground bunker near Skendleby. This would have been the Regional Government Headquarters for this area in the event of total thermo-nuclear war. Although stripped of all its communications equipment and most of its furniture by the Home Office, it still remained as it had been left when decommissioned in 1993.

It was bought by a cold war enthusiast in 1995 and kept in its original condition. The visit may possibly have been the last opportunity to view it in that condition as the site has again been sold and the new owners may need to make changes. Thanks must be expressed to the then owner who wishes to remain anonymous, and to Mr Tom Morgan the representative of Pygott & Crone the selling agents, for their generosity in allowing the party of about fifty people to roam anywhere on the site and to photograph freely.

In the early 1980s the concept of total thermo-nuclear war was seen as a distinct possibility by the Government, so the role of the Civil Defence organisations became the preservation of the democratic framework of government together with the structure
The guardhouse bungalow, the only entrance to the bunker

of the emergency services, attending to the needs of any survivors to follow. The concept assumed that a total thermo-nuclear war would leave the whole world in such a state of disruption and turmoil that life as we know it would never return to normal. Regional Government Headquarterers were established throughout the country. A few were built on new sites but most, as at Skendleby, were conversions of existing bunkers.

In the event of a total thermo-nuclear war, between 150 and 200 people would have left their homes and families to report to the Skendleby bunker. They would have included civil servants, scientists, members of the armed forces, as well as BBC and MSX personnel, all under the command of a controller — probably a cabinet minister. It would act as the focal point for heads of civil departments and emergency services in the area, each of whom would be housed in their own bunkers beneath local government offices, fire stations etc. Information on the world outside would be relayed from the numerous underground ROC posts scattered around the country, reports from the local ones being channelled through the UKWMO Midlands Section Headquarters located in the bunker at Fiskerton.

Whether all these people would be able to reach the bunker in time, or whether it would remain operational after a nearby thermo-nuclear explosion was fortunately never put to the test. Thus, like its counterparts elsewhere, although constructed at considerable expense in 1985, the Skendleby bunker was rarely used even for exercises and was decommissioned in 1993. Although a top secret installation, the site is clearly visible in all directions, being on a high point in the Wolds at the seventy-five metres contour. It is identifiable by a tall radio mast and four huge vents on the top of a man-made mound. It lies one and a half kilometres north-east of the village of Skendleby, just within the parish boundary of Claxby St Andrew, and covers an area of 2.72 hectares. Originally a Chain Home Low Radar Station that operated between 1941 and 1945, it was developed in 1953 as a Ground Control Intercept Station. This change entailed the construction of a two-storey underground bunker, guardhouse bungalow, and a connecting tunnel. It was later developed as SRHQ 31 that covered Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire.

In 1985 its final phase was to become RGHQ 3. The false floor that housed the many new redundant cables and services was cleared and an additional storey put in, as well as new plant rooms, while on top of the bunker at ground level, a new storey was constructed to house emergency diesel generators and air cleaning filters. The whole of this new storey was mounded over with soil and set with grass.

The main external feature of the site is the guardhouse bungalow housing sentry post and decontamination rooms. Built of concrete and brick, faced it has the appearance of a normal small bungalow, although the windows on the sentry post side are just black paint. To one side of the bungalow is a square concrete annex, also with a skin of brickwork. It has a massive, single-piece steel, airtight blast door. Inside is a vertical shaft with an access stairway and a five-ton overhead crane. At the bottom is a drinking-water storage tank and the start of a long tunnel that slopes down to the upper storey of the underground complex.

At the end of the tunnel is a huge
two-part airtight blast door made of 25mm thick steel and said to weigh three tons, that can seal off the lower working levels. The door is opened by only one lever on the outside but can be secured by ten levers on the inside if necessary. The high voltage room for the site is to the left of this door. The underground part of the bunker consists of three stores. Its outer walls are made of reinforced concrete and is built on a gravel bed designed to absorb the shock wave from a thermo-nuclear blast. The bunker is enclosed in a Faraday cage to protect the electronic equipment from electro-magnetic radiation.

Inside the blast door the bunker takes on the appearance of a normal office suite with carpeted wooden flooring. However, with all the communication equipment and most of the furniture removed, there is little to give the visitor any idea of what life would have been like when sealed down here for up to three months. The upper storey would have been the business hub in the event of a total thermo-nuclear war, with offices for all the main services as well as a BBC broadcasting station and a telephone exchange.

Today the Home Office radio room is empty apart from the overhead cable trunking, and the soundproofed BBC studio and its control room are bare. Next door the MSX rooms have lost their VDU screens and the BT rooms only retain the distribution panels and a single anti-static notice, although one telephone is still connected in case anyone should get locked inside. All the other rooms on this storey, which include offices for scientists, uniformed services personnel, government departments, a military radio room, and the controller’s office, are all empty. The male and female toilets remain operational. Stairs lead down to the middle storey where a large room, now empty, would have housed various government departments. The canteen is on this storey and although the canteen itself is empty, the stainless steel kitchen installed in 1985 is still complete and in pristine condition – has it ever been used?

A poignant reminder of the bunker’s sudden demise, one small room still had its lockers, table, chairs, kettle, tea bags, mugs, and even a pin-up calendar for 1993! Log books were scattered on the table.

Further stairs lead down to the bottom storey where the male and female dormitories and sick bay now lay empty, although here again the toilets remain. The main feature of this storey is the new plant room, which was added in 1985. It controls the heating and air conditioning of the complex and occupies a large part of the storey. It is in full working order and still maintains the complex in a reasonably dry condition. It has rows of control panels and the ducting extends up into the middle storey. In one corner of the room is a large multi-drawer plan chest crammed with drawings of the ventilation and heating circuits as well as plans of the site. Here again there are signs of the abandonment in 1993 with holiday brochures, operating manuals and drawings still lying on the supervisor’s table.

A stairway leads upwards to the new storey added to the site in 1985. It is built above the upper storey, and in fact is almost at ground level. Inside, two diesel generators survive in pristine condition that can supply emergency power should the National Grid supply fail. Diesel fuel tanks on the site have sufficient capacity for three months’ supply. Also in this storey are the air circulating fans and air filters. To protect this additional structure the earth mound covers the whole and there are four very large concrete ventilator vents. The steel access door to the outside is at this level, with a personnel access hatchway, both located between two of the ventilator vents.

The site has its own bore hole that can supplement the main water supply, and an integrated waste disposal system. The water is stored in a 21,000-gallon tank. Externally, apart from the guardhouse bungalow and the four ventilator vents, the only structures

One of a pair of diesel generators, in pristine condition
Stately home for sale

Fulbeck Hall, home of the Fane family since the 17th century, has recently been put on the market as part of the estate of the late Mary Fry, a former SLHA member. According to Pevsner the actual 17th century house burnt down in 1731 and was rebuilt for Francis Fane in 1733. I could not locate the ‘greenback’ at the time of writing, but one wonders if there may not be some parts of the earlier house (or houses) in there somewhere, as so often is the case. The house is thought to be by a Stamford architect, George Portwood, although much of the ‘Stamfordian’ front is obscured by bay windows and a Charles Kirk porch (apparently from Sysonby). The gardens north-west of the house were laid out by an Edwardian designer, W. Innes Stuckey, in 1905.

Mary Fry organised many events and open days there, including the innovative Fiddle Festival, and the Hall even appeared once on the television show Changing Rooms. It is expected to fetch in the region of one and three quarters of a million pounds. Let us hope that the purchaser will still open the house and gardens occasionally.

Tennyson at the BM

A group visited the new covered court at the British Museum this summer, and were suitably impressed. One of the main inscriptions carved into the floor is from Tennyson – I am sure one of our readers will be able to give us the origin of this quotation!

and let thy feet
millenniums hence
be set in the midst of knowledge
Lincolnshire aristocratic landscapes: the view from the 1790s

Charles Rawding

"I never saw a heavier clump" — the mausoleum at Great Limber — source, Charles Rawding

Modern perspectives on country houses and parklands tend to be understandably historical in outlook and usually uncritical in tone — with the notable exception of architectural styles. Two standard accounts in this vein would be my articles on Brocklesby and Bayons Manor published in this magazine some years ago. Less account has been taken of contemporary writings on the subject. Newspaper reports from the 19th century often seem syecophantic, as with the Lincoln, Rutland and Stamford Mercury description of Willingham Hall as the ancestral home of the Boucherette at a time when it was only 54 years old or the Market Rasen Weekly Mail description of Bayons Manor at the time of the funeral of Charles Tennyson d'Eyncourt. "The flag was drooping half-mast high on the tower of the beautiful house, that poem in stone which his genius has left."

The diaries of the Honourable John Byng, however, tell a rather different story. Over the period 1781 to 1794 the Honourable John Byng, later the 5th Viscount Torrington, undertook a series of tours through England and Wales visiting the houses of his peers as well as staying in the inns and public houses of the towns and villages through which he travelled. Byng has been appropriately described as "the William Cobbett of country house visitors, conservative, verbose, deeply opinionated." Byng kept detailed diaries of his travels, which have subsequently been published. Byng visited Lincolnshire in 1791 travelling from the south of the county, up through Spilsby, Horncastle and Louth to Grimsby before heading west and then
south, returning to London and his work as Commissioner of Stamps. On Friday, 8 July 1791, he arrived at Revesby, the seat of Sir Joseph Banks:

"The park is flat, dismal and unimproved; the house mean, and uncomfortable, with a horse pond in front; with no gardens or comforts, but when a man sets himself up for a wild eccentric character, and (having a great estate, with the comforts of England, at command), can voyage it to Otaheite [Tahiti] and can reside in a corner house in Soho Square, of course his country seat will be a filthy neglected spot." He left his card, but presumably did not share his thoughts or send a copy of his diary entry! Later the same day, Byng and his companion arrived at Scrivelsby Hall (Court), "the ancient seat of the Dymokes" where Humphrey Repton was employed 'to improve the ground for him.'

"The stables are very old. I was tempted to enter the house, in hopes of antiquity, but sadly disappointed, for nothing in it was there to observe, but 3 champion saddles, and caperboxes. Neither old pictures or portraits here, but most of the house was burn'd down (which I knew not) about 30 years ago. It is surrounded by a mote." By the following Tuesday Byng had reached Great Limber, where the Mausoleum was under construction 'a little Radcliffe library'. As an aside, and perhaps a reason for the subsequent construction of the New Inn, he comments: 'for the sake of contrast and miserable comparison stands, (for the reception of the living) an alms house so bad, as not even to afford cheese!' We, then, walked up to this, not yet finish'd, mausoleum, a fine effort of Mr W's genius! And a fine sum it will cost! A humbling Grecian building, whose lower storey is to be the deposit for the dead; and the upper circular hall will be filled with monuments — Ld O [ngle], d's at Warden... is worth 20 of this, and did not cost a 20th part of the money. This is adorned with festoons of flowers, and there are stone baskets at the top: I never saw a heavier clump — and the experience will be as heavy as the clump.

Having rubbed Wyatt's masterpiece, he then turned his attentions to the plantings that now form the significant belts of woodland running from Pelham's Pillar through Limber and around the core of the Brocklesby Estate.

"About this grand folly, there are plantations making without either knowledge, or taste, and with such wide drives are horribly staring, and disagreeable; these adjoin to Brocklesby Park; where many more great plans are to be perfected." On his return south, he made similarly scathing remarks about Syston Park, the seat of the Thorolds: "whose house is stuck in the clouds — and whose park is scurvily planted" and Belton Park: cruelly cut in two by the road, a tasteless spot devoid of grandeur, of quiet, or of comfort." At this point the reader might be forgiven for wondering why the future Viscount Torrington bothered to visit Lincolnshire at all! His summary of Lincolnshire was: "a very large county, there is little for curiosity, but few gentlemen's seats, and the sea coast is flat, and unpleasant." Indeed, his only complimentary comments were about Lincoln Cathedral and Thornton College.

Given such a jaundiced view of the world, one might question the relevance of Byng's observations. However, they do provide a contemporary viewpoint, from an equal, of the lifestyles and landscapes of Lincolnshire and as such offer an interesting counter to the majority of discussions of the ruling classes in rural Lincolnshire.

FOOTNOTES


2. Lincoln, Rutland and Stamford Mercury, 2 February 1844.


8. Sir Joseph Banks (1743-1820) was a world-famous naturalist and explorer who travelled with James Cook on the Endeavour in 1768-1771, and remained as a major sponsor of science in the Australia region. He was a collector of animals and plants as well as being interested in sheep breeding and farming on his Lincolnshire estate. Hence Byng's typically jaundiced description of him as a 'wild, eccentric character.' Banks was a friend of the King and President of the Royal Society from 1778 until his death in 1820.


The mystery of George William Thomas

Michael Turland

In 1881, Kirk and Parry, contractors, were engaged upon the construction of the railway line between Spalding and Ruskington, as part of the Great Northern & Great Eastern Joint Railway between March and Doncaster. The project included a loop line through the existing Sleaford station, which already served railways to Bourne (1872) and Grantham (1857) and Boston (1859).

Late in 1881, George William Thomas arrived to excavate an area east of the station. I suspect he had been approached by the Venerable Edward Trollope who knew that Anglo-Saxon remains had previously been found in this area in 1858 (see page 100 and plate V of his book, Sleaford and the Wapentakes of Flaxwell and Aswardhurn, 1872).

Thomas conducted an exemplary excavation, by the standards of his time; and more importantly, firstly read a paper on the subject to the Society of Antiquaries (30 March 1882 — copy to the Spalding Gentleman's Society); and secondly had it published in 'Archaeologia' (Vol 1, 1887) where it comprises 24 pages plus 3 pages of plates. This was in turn published as an offprint: only last year I obtained a copy, uncut, i.e. never opened, after 113 years!

Most of Thomas' finds are now in the British Museum, some forming part of the permanent Anglo-Saxon display. (The remainder are in store — Kate Orr, a former NKDC community archaeologist, went down to London and saw them a year or two ago). A few items are at the Spalding Gentleman's Museum. There are magnificent cruciform brooches of gilt and bronze, some of which appear in Aberg's chronology.

The question is: who was George William Thomas? and where did he learn his archaeology?

The evidence is circumstantial. Thomas was not a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries (FSA), nor does the Spalding Gentleman's Society have any record of him. He is not in the Compact Edition of the Dictionary of National Biography. The Royal Archaeological Institute have not heard of him as a member.

The British Museum says that it acquired its finds in 1883 when they were presented to the Department of Medieval and Later Antiquities by a previous Keeper, A. W. Franks. I happened to notice that Archaeologia I says (p405) 'the collection of objects discovered by Mr Thomas ... was sold by auction at Boston in February 1883 and acquired by Mr A. W. Franks FSA by whom it has been presented to the British Museum confirming the museum's register of acquisitions, and providing a vital detail - Boston! (Note also that as a FSA, Mr Franks probably heard of Mr Thomas in 1882, and saw the finds.)

George Bagley's history of Boston reveals that in 1880 a George William Thomas was mayor (and agent for W. J. Ingram MP). This George William Thomas was by profession a solicitor, and in 1880 resigned as mayor to become town clerk! However, to quote Bagley, within three years ... in his private practice ... a series of scandalous frauds gauged for eighteen months with hard labour, dismissed as town clerk, made bankrupt, and struck off the roll of solicitors.'

Note the bankruptcy and the dates. This is surely the origin of the Boston auction of 1883; and the George William Thomas are the same man. Clearly he had kept his finds, and they were sold to pay debts. But where Thomas learned his archaeology remains a mystery. His report is not the work of an amateur. Thomas was obviously trained — and informed. Did he have contacts with experts like General Pitt-Rivers, who became the first Inspector of Ancient Monuments in 1883; but whose publications setting out the fundamentals of modern scientific archaeology do not start until 1887? Is there comparable work to that of Thomas elsewhere in Lincolnshire c1880 — or indeed other work by him recorded anywhere?

To return to the site at Sleaford Station, there is work in hand to identify where exactly the dig took place — both Elsdon and Mahony/Roofe in their works on Sleaford archaeology, have areas shown that are far too large! Thomas says an area of about 3600 square yards — but does not include a map and his description is less than precise. But we fortunately have an Ordnance Survey town plan at 1:500 surveyed in 1887 that includes the area! And may shed some light on the matter.

NOTES
The Society of Antiquaries has the originals of Thomas' plates. Boston Borough Council checked its records but could only say that Thomas became mayor in 1879 but its archives are in the Lincolnshire Archives so there may be more information there.

According to White's Lincolnshire Directory 1872, George William Thomas is a solicitor in Emery Lane, Boston, and a councillor. In 1876 and 1882 he is living at Allan House, Carlton Road (in 1872 he was at No 18 West Street Road). In 1904 Allan House is a substantial residence in about five acres of grounds (OS 1:2500). Thomas later...
have been a member of the SLHA for some years now and, as I am also a committee member of the Friends of the Old Hall (Gainsborough), have been asked by both organisations to take on the responsibility of keeping our society up to date with news from FOHA. This I am very pleased to do. For those of you who may not be familiar with FOHA I will, in this initial bulletin, tell you a little of our history and what we do now.

The original ‘Friends’ were the people who, with great foresight, an even greater amount of very hard work over many years, and a love of this 15th century medieval Hall, saved the then derelict building (whose illustrious previous occupants included Lord Burgh and Sir William Hickman) from further decay and threatened demolition. They then took upon themselves the task of opening it to the public and running it themselves for a great many years.

All of this began over 50 years ago and we celebrated our Golden Jubilee with many events over 1999-2000, including a Civic Reception at Gainsborough Guildhall, and a dinner in the Great Hall, at which we were serenaded by an “Elizabethan Minstrel” in full costume. The present Friends, which I am happy to say still do include some of those original ‘pioneers’, continue to raise much needed money for the various needs of the Old Hall and one of the ways is by holding our series of ‘First Tuesday Lectures’ which take place in the building at 7.30pm on the first Tuesday of each month. Members and non-members alike are most welcome at these talks where refreshments are also provided.

The main achievement of FOHA during 2001 has been the purchase and recent installation of the special ultra violet protection blinds for the windows in the East Range of the Old Hall, these being in the part of the building that receives the strongest sunlight. After our Committee voiced the need for these blinds some two years ago they started the ball rolling and I am pleased to report that, with a twenty percent contribution from our funds and eighty percent from an EMMS grant, this FOHA initiative has finally been realised and the collections in the affected rooms will now be protected for years to come. We have also been pleased to supply the funding for some new trellises, for use in the Great Hall, at the request of the Old Hall management. We have recently run, with the WEA, an extremely interesting conservation course entitled ‘Blowing Away The Dust’, and led by Catherine Wilson, who I know will need no introduction to most of you. The next joint FOHA/WEA venture is a Saturday School on the 6th October (10.30-3pm) when Janette McMillion will take us through ‘The Wonders of Medieval Gardening’.

The Friends also have an active gardening group who meet once a month to plan and tend the flower beds around the magnificent medieval building which many say really is ‘the jewel in the crown’ of West Lindsey. Could you give a little time each month to help with this enjoyable task maybe? If so then please contact Joy on 01427 615715. The younger members of the community are not being left out as a Young Friends’ group is about to be launched too.

These are just a few of the benefits of belonging to this very worthwhile group which you can join for just £5 a year Single Membership or £10 for Family Membership. The added benefit of joining at this time of the year is that you will not have to pay again until January 2003! By showing your card on arrival at the Old Hall you will be given free entry each time you wish to visit, and this includes the many events, such as the craft fairs, which are held there each year. You will also receive regular newsletters that will keep you up to date with FOHA and the Old Hall.

For a membership form please telephone 01427-612017 or write to Paul Howitt-Cowan, 2 Kenneth Crescent, Gainsborough, DN21 1PR. We hope you will join our friendly group.

Jean M. Panthorpe
Way down on the fens

Douglas Hoare

From 1604 until well into the 19th century, the Carre's Grammar School's only income was a share of the rents of the 'estate at Gedney Fen and Gedney Hill belonging to the Trustees of Sleaford School'. [The residue was distributed to aged and impotent persons in New and Old Sleaford and Holderness.] The 1835 fire insurance policy with the Norwich Union also covered 'a farmhouse, a barn and two stables adjoining with granary over one, a calfhouse, gihouse, bullock hovel and a wagon hovel'.

In 1841/2 a new kitchen designed by 'Robert Ellis Junior' was put into the farmhouse, and subsequently, a tenant added a brew-house. At the time the tenant was recorded as Isaac Meatheringham. The tenancy passed to his son William. Isaac's will being deposited with Edmund Clements, solicitor and clerk to the trustees of 'Mr Robert Carre's Charity'. William Meatheringham recalled that, when he entered the farm, 'everything was in such a wild and dilapidated state - there was not a hedge in the House nor a bit of fencing, not a gate nor a quick hedge on the farm; there was about ten acres sown with wheat but it was ... under water'.

In the course of the 19th century, relations between trustees and tenants, and also between tenants were not always of the most cordial. Admittedly, farming at that time was just as hazardous as it remains in the 21st century. The extracts from the correspondence in the School archives will speak for themselves. [The English is at times rather quaint!]

One particularly unfortunate tenant was Mr J. J. Laming. On 28 December, 1869, he wrote to Mr Clements, 'I have been to see Mr Woods of Gedney Hill Mill and cannot make anything of him - he does not consider himself indebted to the Charity. There was nothing standing on the ground but a little Privy and that has been pulled down sometime since.' Mr Laming at times found it difficult to pay the rent. In the 1890s his letters include phrases like 'I am having difficulties with the farm', 'I have no money left', because of this most disastrous...
[sic] year' and 'I am glad to say that I have sold the wool just in time, you see by this month it gives me a better chance'. [We shall hear more of Mr Laming a little later on.]

In 1849 William Meatheringham requested permission to plough up some six acres of grass land, 'the piece lying east adjoining the house on the road called Jiggle Bank' and to cut down six poplar trees 'which are injuring the house'. The tenant before Mr Woods at Gedney Hill was one James Hurn. In August, 1853, Mr Hurn was served by William Meatheringham on behalf of the trustees with a formal notice to quit for non-payment of rent. In December of that year, William Meatheringham went there to collect Mr Hurn's share of the rent. The reception he received was 'He will not pay me. He only laughed at it'. Moreover, 'there was no stock on the land'.

Mr Meatheringham consequently stated his intention of taking Mr Hurn to Holbeach County Court. Persuading Mr Hurn was not easy; after the aforementioned visit, Mr Meatheringham told Edmund Clements that he had been to see Mr Hurn seven times. However, finally Mr Hurn wrote:

'Tell me how much is due ... I will send the cash by return of post ... I remain, Sir, your true and humble servant'. Indeed, on 17 December he did send the full amount due. But Mr Hurn's tenancy continued to prove problematic. There was the issue of an unauthorised chimney at the Gedney Hill Mill. Mr Meatheringham complained in December, 1856, that 'the gateway and pigstye [are] quite a nuisance' and Mr Hurn has 'paid no acknowledgement for the chimney'. Nine days later Mr Clements declared that, if Mr Hurn 'does not do what is required of him, a person will be sent to take down the chimney of the mill' and an action will be brought for trespassing. The following June Mr Hurn enclosed four shillings in stamps to Mr Clements 'for four years rent for the ground the chimney stands upon and the flat topped [sic] cole [sic] house', and he requested that the pigsty should remain.

This sorry chain of events had ended by December, 1857. Mr Meatheringham wrote to Mr Clements to report 'James Hurn has pulled down the pigsty but not bricked up the gateway and the hovel as the trustees specified ... But now Mr Hurn who owned the Mill has fled to America'. Finally, Mr Meatheringham ended his tenancy in 1863. His letter referred to the work 'he had done, and he ended: 'I sincerely trust that my successor may enjoy the improvements that I have made for many years to come'.

The farm passed into the tenancy of the Mr Woods of whom Mr Laming could not make anything! And then to Mr Laming himself. Farming difficulties continued; 'This last two days, the rain we have had, cannot see the land where the Horses where [sic] ploughing for water': I have not made the rent off the land this last four years - wet seasons, the land has not paid for seed and labour, [to] say nothing of the outly [sic] of money, some fields [have] been completely flooded [and I] could not get seed in to harvest it, and [in] other fields [I] had to fetch the stooks [sic] out of the water ... I am not the only one suffering. [The] other fields of my neighbours [are] in the same way ... I have spent a lot of money on the land in draining it and [doing] the dikes out.' [26 December, 1880]

The following March Mr Laming told Mr Clements: 'I have suffered my loss silently' [the writer's underlining], and 'I must request a deduction of rent of ten shillings per acre'. I have been very unfortunate with my sheep but not worse than my neighbours. Several of them [in] the next field to mine have not a sheep left - all dead with rot'. He felt it impossible to continue in that state of things. I have made it home for years and now I should not like to turn [my] wife and family out'. He was, obviously, anxious to know the decision of the trustees. Unfortunately the archives do not contain the trustees' answers and reactions to the tenants' letters. This small glimpse into conditions on the Gedney estates shows how the income from them remained small in the 19th century and why the school's income had to be augmented from other sources.

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**Obituary**

**Norman Leveritt**

We are sorry to record the death of Norman Leveritt, President of the Spalding Gentlemen's Society. He had long been an active member of the SGS, previously having been the Hon Curator of their museum. He was for many years an individual member of SLHA and used to be a regular attendant at the Brackenbury lectures. He was joint author, with Michael Elsdon, of *Aspects of Spalding: 1790-1930*, published in 1986, and *Aspects of Spalding: people and places*, published in 1989. His encyclopedic knowledge of the Spalding area was an inspiration and resource for many people, and he will be greatly missed.

*Hilary Healey*

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Parliamentary enclosure was the replacement of two or three large open fields by smaller individually owned fields. The open fields were made up of strips owned by individuals but cropped and stocked according to ancient rights and practices controlled by the community of owners. The individually owned fields were cropped and stocked according to the wishes of the owner alone.

The period of Parliamentary enclosure is generally accepted to run from about 1725 to about 1860 and it is thought that, by then, many small farmers and cottagers with some land rights had already disappeared. Gray has shown that in Bedfordshire for example only one twelfth of the parishes still had a clear three-field system by that time.1

In the Lincolnshire Archives there lies evidence that in some parishes here enclosure had been creeping in for many years before the eventual fusing up by their Act of Parliament. This evidence has to be gleaned from documents originally designed for quite a different purpose: the Glebe Terriers. These were intended to show, by listing glebe holdings by name with their acreages and boundaries, that lands which belonged to a rectory had not been sold or otherwise alienated.

Glebe terriers thus give a review of known holdings over a known period of time. It is suggested that they would often reflect more general changes in landownership in a parish. This idea was examined in relation to the good series of glebe terriers that exists for Washingborough for the period 1605 to 1733.2 Boundaries of holdings at that time were normally given as the names of owners of bordering lands. An analysis of the names of these neighbours should show whether their number was being reduced. Such a reduction would happen if adjoining lands passed into the hands of fewer and fewer owners as it was bought and enclosed privately by a few wealthy men. The pieces of glebe were scattered at random in the parish so there is no reason to suppose that the same situation would not apply generally to other lands there.

In 1605 the Glebe land of Washingborough totalled 137 acres with an additional fishing garth and reed bush. It consisted of two almost equal areas (44 acres each) of arable and pasture, with a further 47 acres of meadow. An analysis of the people holding adjacent land shows that at least until 1638, the adjoining lands were held mainly by men of the same surname as those who had held them in 1605.

During analysis it became apparent that the glebe terriers made by James Bateman, who was rector for the 18 years from 1669 to 1687, were anachronistic for they cited as owners of neighbouring lands those people whose names had been replaced by others some 40 years earlier. It seems that he copied from an existing older document rather than checking on current names. He was probably non-resident, renting out the glebe lands entirely and having no personal involvement with his neighbours. He held his incumbency in plurality with Nottton and wrote and witnessed the will of only one parishioner in Washingborough.

In 1688 Walter Leightonhouse followed Bateman as Rector and died in office in 1701. The account of the glebe terriers, which he signed on 1 August 1700 gives no names of neighbouring land holders but is vitally important for it gave the clue that three pieces of the glebe were "lately enclosed". These were the first three pieces of arable land and totalled 32 acres. There is nothing further to indicate whether the fourth piece of arable and the remainder of the glebe was unenclosed or whether the writing of the fact was felt to be too arduous in what would by that time be an obvious situation.

The 13 glebe terriers that have been analysed are not totally satisfactory: many are undated and approximations of their dates have had to be made from the dates of the deaths of churchwardens or sidesmen who acted as witnesses. After rejecting the two that James Bateman signed during his 18-year incumbency, 11 remain for the 145 years between the first one, made in 1605, and the last, of 1750. Only three were made before the advent of Leightonhouse in 1688. Even where the glebe terriers can be calendared with some degree of accuracy there is no indication whether the neighbouring occupiers were tenants and liable to annual change, or owners whose removal may have deeper significance. However, with these reservations in mind, it is possible to detect a change in the scale of land ownership.

The 'Little Field near Kenting Close', the first of the four pieces of arable, had highways on the north and the west, and the beck on the south. The eastern neighbours were members of the Burwell family. They were there from 1605 to the first return made by the Rev George Fairfax in 1706. In 1706 Mr Harvey replaced the Burwells. The Harvey family do not appear in any other documentation of the parish and were probably tenants. A William Burwell reappears in 1733 as this neighbour in the last terrier of the
series. 'Wildwong Heads' (14 acres) was renamed about 1685 'The Highfield'. Its western boundary was Canwick Field.

The northern neighbours in 1605 were Thomas Fawwell and Nicholas Pickering. The Fawwells, through different members, maintained family ownership throughout the entire period. The Pickerings were replaced by a Mr Lee 'and others' until 1706 when, in their turn, 'Lee and others' were replaced by a Mr Harness for the remainder of the period.

On the south were the lands originally of Sir Peter Eure and Leon Hollingsworth. Ralph Eure replaced Sir Peter and different bearers of the name maintained ownership right through to the end of the series. In Fairfax's time Mr Thos. Clarke replaced Leon Hollingsworth.

On the eastern boundary Mr Harness replaced Mr Lee (as he had on the north side) to become co-tenant with Joshua Franklin. These two men, with a highway, had replaced three of 1605 and two men of 1638 by about 1685. The creation of a new highway is also a sign of enclosure as access was required to private fields. By the last terrier, Harness and Franklin were themselves replaced by Mr Sansom who was the Master of Heighington Grammar School. Thus, for the Highfield the seven original neighbours were, by 1735, reduced to five names that were all new.

The third piece of arable land noted as 'lately enclosed' in 1700, was the ten and a half acres of 'Broadgate Furlong opposite the parsonage gates'. This was bounded on the south and the east by two highways and on the north by the Lord of the Manor, starting with Sir Peter Eure and ending with Mr Charles Hall. On the west also, there was only ever one owner named: during Fairfax's time it was Mr Sansom. Thus, for Broadgate Furlong, as for Little Field, it was only the names and not the number of owners that changed over the 128 years covered by the glebe terriers.

The fourth piece of arable, bearing no annotation about enclosure, was the ten and a half acres of 'Elber Dyke'. It was bounded on the north and south by two highways and the 'running beck'. On the east in 1605 there were three named neighbours 'with others'. One hundred years later, by the time of Joshua Clarke's terrier of 1703, there were just two (different) names, still with 'other small parcels'. Not until the first terrier of Fairfax in 1706 was the name of a single eastern neighbour given: Mr Thos. Clarke. He was still the only one there in 1733 when Thos. Hall signed the terrier.

The western neighbour in 1605 was John Harvester. He had mortgaged land to Charles Wimbish but later it was sold to Ralph Eure, who paid £34 to John Halvester and £40 to Wimbish. The land on this western boundary was then held by a Ralph Eure from 1638 to 1724, when Charles Hall took over both this land and the lordship of the manor. For Elber Dyke the principal change was thus the replacement of 'three men with others' by one man in the first decade of the 18th century.

The evidence from the glebe terriers of Washington shows that, for the glebe arable as a whole, the number of owners of neighbouring land had diminished from 12 'plus others' in 1605 down to six men by 1733 of whom three, Hall (lord of the manor), Clarke and Sansom were new names in the parish. For the meadow lands and pasture grounds there is very little change: indeed. Except for the north boundary of the 14 acres of Low Moor, there was one neighbour on each boundary in 1605 and one in 1733. On that northern boundary the two men of 1605 were replaced by two other men bearing the same surname in 1638 and then by Mr Luddington, clerk, and finally by the lord of the manor in 1733.

In addition to this evidence there is the change of name, stated unequivocally in 1690, from Wildwong Heads (a plural indicating a multiplicity of lands?) to the High Field (a distinct, singular name) of one of the pieces. A new highway had been established to replace one of the three neighbours at the same time. All this evidence from the analysis of the Washingtonborough glebe terriers indicates that the enclosure of the arable lands of the entire parish was probably completed some time in the decade before 1700.

The first stage of the enclosure had been recorded in the terriers (not glebe terriers) of Washingtonborough and Heighington, which were signed on 1 June 1575.

The parliamentary enclosure of the parish was effected by an Act dated 1827 that dealt with the fen land between the Carr Dyke and the River Witham. At this time the area was stated to be 'much annoyed by water in winter': the enclosure was inextricably concerned with the attendant Drainage Act. The arable land was stated to be on the 'Ancient High Land' and was unaffected by the Parliamentary Enclosure.

It would be interesting to know whether the analysis of glebe terriers of other parishes in the county gave similar results.

REFERENCES

(LAO) indicates 'Lincolnshire Archives Office'


2 LAO Washingtonborough Glebe Terriers

3 LAO Washingtonborough Parish 23/1 Heighington Terrier, 23/4 Washingtonborough Terrier

4 LAO Washingtonborough Parish 17

5 LAO Kesteven Award 83.
Leasingham lies two miles north of Sleaford in Flaxwell Wapentake. It is 17 miles south of Lincoln. It covers approximately 2,082 acres. In 1819, an Act of Parliament, awarded in 1822, was passed to enclose 377 acres of Common Moor. This left a shortfall of 1,705 acres begging the question when was this enclosed? Apparently the rest of the parish had been enclosed piecemeal by private agreements before this date. Documentary evidence from glebe terriers, indentures, inventories, the award and the extant landscape was used to account for this process of 'silent enclosure'. This has shown that some enclosure took place by agreement from the early to the mid 17th century. Some may be before this date. Indentures referring to enclosure exist from 1652 onwards. The Enclosure Award map refers to 'ancient enclosures' amounting to about 300 acres. These are located around the village core, adjacent lands, part of the West Field area, lands around the common and in the far east of the parish peripheral to the township.

Leasingham lies on the spring line of the dip slope of the escarpment known locally as the Heath. The village lies in a shallow valley where the heath land meets the clay vale of the River Slea, which forms its eastern boundary. The Leasingham Beck drains the parish from west to east. The land rises to about 160 feet in the west. The lay subsidy of 1334 showed it to be a rich agricultural parish with its value of crops and stock being fourth highest in the wapentake. It was an open or freeholders' village, not a closed or estate village like Noctor or Blankney.

Place name evidence to locate the open fields and closes survives today in Westfield Farm for example. Glebe terriers refer to the West Field, East, North and South Fields, to West and East Meadows, and to the Common. This would suggest a Four Field Open Field system. Many systems started as two fields that were later subdivided into four fields or more. The West Field area is still a discrete area of farmland. An area of 340 acres was given of Bardolf's fee to the Preceptory of Temple Bruer. The Knights...
Templar owned much of the heath land for raising sheep for wool. Perhaps the area donated was the poorest for arable but suitable for sheep, lying adjacent to their other lands. By the Enclosure of 1822 this was a single block of 285 acres. In 1839 the Tithe Commutation Act shows the largest owner was Charles Rylatt with 265 acres in Westfield Farm.

The landownership pattern was complex. In the Domesday Book of 1086, the land was divided into two, perpetuating the two Anglo-Saxon owners, Barne and Old. Barne's land went to the Bishop of Lincoln, Oldt to Geoffrey de Aselin. The Bishop's portion passed through the Rangenstone family to the Brownlows. The Caris, as possessors of Sleaford Castle, claimed most of the tenants of the Bishop's Manor of Leasingham in 1527. Edward Yorke of Ashby de la Launde bought the manor in 1580. The Yorke's lived at Leasingham as Lords of the Manor from 1580 to 1878. Also in 1580 other portions were bought by John Morice, George Swan and Richard Glen.

Extensive searches of rentals, title deeds, assignments of mortgages, leases and re-leases, mortgage by demise, indentures, inventories, wills, marriage settlements and glebe terriers have produced various references to early enclosure. The earliest extant terrier for Leasingham is dated 1605. This glebe lay in strips. The terrier of 20 August 1634 lists arable lands and fields in the East, North and South Field.

Leasingham had two Rectories, the North and the South, with glebe allocated to each. By 1754 the two motieties had united. By 1693 the glebe terriers were much shorter and show the land being consolidated into four closes of eight to ten acres, plus rights of common for the two moieties totalling 40 acres. By 1843 Edward Trollope was Rector and by 1864 the terrier was recording tithe rent from Leasingham of £642 (and Roxholme, £255). No wonder Trollope could afford to re-roof the church and build a new chancel at his own expense!

The inventories and wills have proved an interesting source of enclosure evidence. In the 19th and 17th centuries there was a change from arable to pasture and a noticeable increase in the number of animals, farming equipment and wealth. These animals could only have been effectively raised in enclosed pastures. There were massive benefits from being able to nourish one's own animals in privately owned enclosures.

The wills and inventories were selected especially if the people involved were mentioned in other documents. References to closes abounded. In John Wright's will of 1690 he left one close called Deepdale and one Six Acre Close, purchased in 1690 from John and Samuel Poyntell. In the inventory of Richard Harvey (Harveyman) of 24 October 1564 he owned ten sheep, five swine, seven cows and three calves, four mares and two foals. However, by 1698 Richard Blansfield's animals included 60 oxen and a ram, 40 'shearing weathers', 51 lamb hogs, 10 'drake sheep', two swine, 12 cows, four draught beasts, two mares and a foal. Later, Samuel Washington had, amongst other animals, 187 sheep in 1700. (See Fig 1).

Conjectured pre-enclosure Open Field Systems, based on extant documentary evidence (Fig 2).
The Hearth Tax returns of 1665 list 11 inhabitants who appear in a 1652 enclosure indenture and 11 who witnessed wills. Most have between two and four hearths, which suggests a degree of wealth and comfort. Three of those listed in 1683 appear in the enclosure indenture of 1687. They are John Knott, William Smith and John Poyntell. Enclosed land fetched higher prices. Copy holders and tenants at will, small and medium sized peasant proprietors, often went under as leasehold farms increased in number and size. Indentures have proved very useful. One, dated 1 May 1652, is a conveyance by freeholders for enclosure. It was made between John Poyntell and 17 other freeholders including John Arnall, yeoman, John King, Clerk and Rector, John Wright, John Knott and Samuel Washingborough. The two plots involved were in the South Field, one of eight acres and the other of six acres. The latter can be equated to Low Close on the 1822 Award map. Universal consent was needed and achieved. "All the said freeholders... have agreed to enclose...". It speaks of "ground closes and pastures newly inclosed or set out to be inclosed in Leasingham and of the wastes and common grounds." The plot of eight acres lay to the south of Leasingham Manor abutting the south of Loddingham (Holdingham) Field. Fourteen acres of the South Field had been 'totally inclosed'. Provision was made for the maintenance of the new hedges and ditches.

A marriage indenture of 2 March 1653 included Thomas Lammyn, yeoman of Leasingham. It involved furlongs in the North Field and 13 acres of 'new inclosed ground called Weddings Guilt Close'. This indenture contained a mixed holding of strips and newly inclosed land.

An indenture of 1678 was between William Yorke (Lord of the Manor) and Sir William Yorke (his son), Jasper Justice, Rector of South Leasingham, William Watts, Rector of North Leasingham, and seven other yeomen, gentlemen and a widow. On the other part was John Poyntell of Leasingham, Gentleman (from yeoman to gentleman in a generation). It is said that the east, north and south sides of the town by 'a general and mutual consent... having been inclosed and laid out in severally for the space of twenty five years last past... by reason and means of such inclosure the said Lord and freeholders have found by Good experience that the said town... as well as their respective lands... have been much improved and advantaged and many trespasses with cattle and plowing away of lands opposing the Commons and other injurys and Inconveniences have been avoided.' As the West Field was still open
and unenclosed they wished to enclose it. So from 1678, it was being enclosed for the ‘greater advantage of the said town... and for the more particular profit and benefit of all and every of the said parties.’ It was seen to those involved as advantageous to enclose, providing you were a landowner or a leaseholder or a tenant with a substantial holding. Recompense of two plots totalling fifty-two acres was made to those who were cottagers. Both these plots can be traced on the Award Map of 1822. Most of the west and northern part of the enclosure of the West Field can be accounted by this one indenture alone. As land was given in marriage settlements and exchanged, mortgaged or bought, ancient enclosures can be tracked down and holdings reconstructed. A plan for the pre-enclosure open field system can be suggested (See Fig 2).

The Earl of Bristol owned land in Leasingham. In a survey of 1716, he had three closes, all owned by Richard Terry. They totalled about 125 acres. Formerly rented at £35 per annum, he was now charged £41 15s 0d. There was no doubt that the descendants of yeoman Robert Carr were profiting from enclosure. ‘Visually the impact of enclosure on the landscape was profound.’ The great open fields were replaced by hedged or dyked fields. In Leasingham there are not many hedged fields. Hedge counting around the Deepdene/Green Lane area and Spring Lane recorded ages of around 500 years old. The eight-acre plot to the south of Leasingham Manor had a 400 year date that accorded well with its enclosure date of 1652. The western hedge line was beautifully curved following the curve of the plough on the original strips. (See Figs 3 and 4). The new closes in Leasingham were often large in size and appeared to have been subdivided later to adapt to changing agricultural economies and practice. Where hedgerows do exist they appear to be contemporary with the known documentary evidence. In Lincolnshire, variations in soil and drainage influenced soil fertility, which in turn accounted for widely separated chronologies of enclosure even for neighbouring or near neighbour parishes.

It would appear that enclosure was carried out over quite a long period and without hardship. At least none has been recorded. In the days before newspapers, this was no guarantee that there was no opposition. In the 1678 indenture they were conscious of depopulation and decay of farms. Three outside parishes were appointed to be arbitrators and plotters of the West Field. This anticipated some of the organisational elements of Parliamentary enclosure. The later census returns of the 19th century record no panniers, but that did not mean there was no poverty.

In Leasingham, the enclosing of the glebe land may have lagged behind that of the progressive yeoman’s lands. Enclosure may have been hampered by there being two moieties. The enclosures were yeoman led rather than the initiative coming from either the Lords of the Manor (the Yorkes) or from the Two Rectors. The landlords, freeholders and tenants had enough acumen and drive to unite to arrange the consolidation of their holdings with universal agreement. This contrasts with neighbouring Sleaford, which was not enclosed until much later, being held in check by the Earls of Bristol until Parliamentary enclosure was instigated. That did not prevent them from enclosing some of their outlying lands and, in many cases causing depopulation, as at Brancwell and North Rauceby. Nearby Evedon was partially enclosed by a Decree in Chancery in 1536. This was led by the Lord of the Manor (Sir Peregrine Bertie) and the Rector. Here they resorted to Chancery to lend weight to their agreement.

The bulk of Leasingham’s enclosures were piecemeal and private, dating from the 1650s to the early 1700s, leaving only 22 per cent of the total acreage to be enclosed by Parliament Act and Award in 1822. That was the Common Land or Leasingham Moor.

REFERENCES

LAO = Lincolnshire Archives Office
PRO = Public Record Office
2 LAO Kesteven Award 48, 1822.
4 LAO Glebe Terrier Bundle for Leasingham (21 items).
7 LAO Glebe Terrier Bundle for Leasingham, 1695.
8 Ind. 20 May, 1693.
9 Ind. 3 August, 1864.
11 LAO Will, John Wright 1600/61.
12 LAO INV 43/307 R. Harmer, 24 October, 1564.
13 LAO INV 193/280 Richard Blundfield, 28 October, 1700.
14 LAO INV 194/318 Samuel Washingham, 30 October, 1700.
15 PRO E179 140/754 1665 pp 268-269. PRO E179 140/574
Guidepost at Branston Mere
-a sign of things to come

The disappearance of traditional guideposts from our roadsides is a topic which has appeared in LP&L on several occasions and it is pleasing to report good news about one of the very few Kesteven County Council road signs to survive intact.

Three years after representations were made to the County Council Highways Directorate, the guidepost at the junction of Bloxholm Lane and the B1178 road on the southern outskirts of Branston has been fully restored to pristine condition, albeit with what appear to be uPVC boards and letters. Nevertheless, the effect is quite splendid and it is hoped that further examples will be seen around the county in future.

C. J. Lester

Lincolnshire County Council, in agreement with Heritage Lincolnshire, is now committed to maintaining these popular old signposts that are typically cast in iron, with wooden arms and iron finials on top. The South Holland district still has 42. Ed.

Milestone at Fosdyke

An early cast iron milestone has been repainted, restored and re-established on the A17 at Fosdyke.

Dated 1835 and made by Howdens of Boston, it is one of a series between Fosdyke and Swineshead, of which at least two others survive. The work was carried out thanks to the initiative of farmer Peter Ullayt, and with the help of Heritage Lincolnshire. It is actually slightly less than a mile from its nearest neighbour, as it was on the 'old' A17, in the loop that runs through Fosdyke village, now by-passed. This road was turnpiked in 1826 and of course the first Fosdyke Bridge had only been completed in 1815.

H. Healey
A curious Chancery case

R. C. Wheeler

In about 1555 the Vicar of Harmston, some five miles south of Lincoln, started proceedings in Chancery against three of his principal parishioners. The facts were obscure. The effects were not: as elsewhere, the acquisition of monastic land bound its new holders to sustain the protestant reformation.

The story starts 17 years earlier. Before their suppression in 1538, Thurgarton Priory in Nottinghamshire and St Katherine's Priory outside Lincoln both held manors in Harmston. After remaining in the hands of the King for some five years, these were granted together with much other property, to Sir Richard Disney of Norton Disney and William Riggs of Clerkewell. It appears that the two purchasers divided the two lands between them, with William Riggs taking the Harmston property.

Then, in 1551-2, four separate final concords record the transfer of substantial chunks of property from William Riggs to three Harmston yeomen: William Gregge and William and Thomas Middlebrook. Thereafter there is no record of William Riggs holding property at Harmston, so we can presume he had disposed of all his property there.

The timing of this disposal is interesting: the sickly Edward VI was shortly to be succeeded by his sister Mary, who adhered to Roman Catholicism. It would be wrong to assume that William Riggs could foresee this. Nevertheless, with his court connections - he was an Auditor at the Court of Augmentations, which handled the sales of monastic property - he must have had a clearer idea of the risks than the local men to whom he sold.

About this time, the Vicar of Harmston, Leonard Dixon, died, having served the parish for more than 20 years. The living was not a rich one, being worth just £7-6s-8d. More seriously, given the progressive rise in prices, his remuneration was a fixed sum, paid previously by St Katherine's Priory (but now by the Crown) out of appropriated tithes. Fortunately, Leonard Dixon seems to have held a lease of some of the Priory's land; as prices rose, the profits from this would have risen also.

The new vicar, George Scarowe, seems to have expected to take over this lease. On being denied it, he launched an action in Chancery. From the name of the Lord Chancellor it can be dated to 1553-5. The date of Scarowe's institution as Vicar is not recorded, but he compounded for first-fruits 5 February 1555 so the case is probably of 1554-5.

His case was that his predecessors as vicar had held a messuage and three oxgangs of land as part of their glebe, but Thomas and William Middlebrook, and William Gregge alias Clarke had got hold of 'sundry deeds, evidence and charters' belonging rightly to Scarowe and had thereby 'wrongfully entered into the premises and expelled and put out' Scarowe. The bill of complaint is long-winded but vague with Scarowe admitting he does not know the exact nature of these deeds nor whether 'they be in bag, box or chest', 'sealed, locked or unlocked' and so forth.

The defendants' joint reply was short and to the point: They had never claimed any right to his messuage (which seems to have been understood to be the vicarage house); as for the three oxgangs, neither Scarowe nor any of his predecessors as vicar had at any time held the land. William Middlebrook submitted a more informative and fuller answer. After asserting that the complaint was intended to put him 'to wrongful vexation' and could and should have been heard at common law rather than in Chancery, he admitted that Leonard Dixon had held a lease from St Katherine's for the term of his life, the reversion being to Mr William Riggs. William Middlebrook had purchased the reversion from William Riggs and Leonard Dixon had paid William Middlebrook the sum of one penny to acknowledge that he was now William Middlebrook's tenant. As to the house, Scarowe had dwelt there since he first became vicar.

Scarowe's response was to deny that Dixon had been tenant for life or that he had acknowledged himself a tenant of William Middlebrook in this way, and even if these were true, Middlebrook's defence was insufficient in law to answer his complaint. With that, the court papers come to an end.

What do we make of this? First, there is a marked contrast between the rash allegations and almost historic style of Scarowe's complaint and the sober and careful response of the defendants (or their attorney). Secondly, part of Scarowe's complaint seems to have been untrue: he does not trouble to deny William Middlebrook's claim that he has been living in the house he claims to have been expelled from. In contrast, all the defendants' statements appear to be true, though sometimes economical with the truth: it would appear that Leonard Dixon had held the land, albeit not as vicar but in his private capacity. Thirdly, one notes the absence of any mention of how 'the late Priory of St Katherine's' was suppressed by the Queen's late father or indeed how the defendants held a great deal more of its former land. In contrast, Scarowe seems exces-
sively keen that all the ‘deeds, evidence and charters’ should be produced in court, even though he doesn’t know their content. It is as though he expected them to identify the defendants as recipient of monastic spoils and thereby jeopardise their entire wealth. Is this why Thomas Middlebrook and William Gregge were made co-defendants or was Scarrowe genuinely ignorant of who held the land he claimed?

Scarrowe’s Chancery case must have failed: the value of Harms’ Vicarage quoted in the Liber Cleri of 1576 is still £7-6s-8d. Yet the case was not forgotten. Scarrowe died by 1576. There was a long vacancy, followed by the incumbency of Constantine Harrison and after his death one John Vincent was instituted in 1601. A short terrier of the glebe survives from that year to which John Vincent has added:

‘Witness that 2 oxcogs of land with meadow and 1/2 of pasture in the fields and territories of Harmsoton is reputed to belong to the said vicarage, which land with the appurtenances is now in the occupation of John Middlebrook of Harmsoton and having been so occupied above these 40 years together with other land, a true terrier of all the said vicarage cannot certainly be found out. Notwithstanding, I, John Vincent, vicar of Harmsoton do protest by these presents that I will use all careful means for finding out the truth in the premises and so to certify the same into this court.’

A recent discovery among newly-catalogued Thorkild papers shows that John Vincent was as good as his word. By 1610 he had taken the case before the Commissioners appointed under an Act of 43 Eliz: ‘to redress the misemployment of lands, gooses, and stocks of money heretofore given to charitable uses’. By this date, the occupier of the land was one Edward Deathe of Newark and he had helpfully produced in court what appears to have been the (counterpart) lease granted to Leonard Dixon. This makes it clear that the quantity involved was indeed two oxcogs, not the three alleged by Scarrowe, and that it was called ‘the vicarage land’ which does indeed suggest that its occupation had become customary. The condition of the grant was that Leonard Dixon should cause a curfew bell to be rung every night throughout the year as his predecessors had done. The grant was to Leonard Dixon for the term of his life and to his successors for ever, except that the word ‘successors’ had apparently been erased. It would be wrong to assume that the reason necessarily represents crude tampering with the evidence on the part of Riggs, it is quite possible that the inclusion of the phrase on the counterpart was a抄ist’s error – there is, after all, an inherent contradiction in granting something to an individual for life and to his successors as vicars, which becomes apparent if he should resign or exchange his living. Overall, it is difficult to avoid the commissioners’ conclusion that the matter was doubtful and it is surprising that we hear no more of the case.

And yet there are features that bear further consideration. If the land had been held by Dixon’s predecessors (in the plural) the initial grant must have been earlier than 1489. That is, before inflation had reduced the real value of the £7-6s-8d the Vicar received from St Katherine’s. St Katherine’s was always pleading poverty: did it need to augment the value of the vicarage in this way? Could it afford to? Why should St Katherine’s, being well out of earshot of Harmsoton, have the least interest in whether a curfew bell was rung? Could the answer to all these questions be that a past villager had bequeathed land to the vicar on condition that he ring the curfew bell – no doubt in the hope that it would cause the villagers each night to recall his memory and pray for his soul. Could it be that, as was so often done for bequests of such a nature, the land was actually left in trust for St Katherine’s for them to see that the service was performed? If that were the case, it casts new light on the Chancery case.

It is worth following through the consequences. The land would produce no income so would not appear in the Particulars drawn up by the Court of Augmentations, nor would Dixon appear as one of the tenants listed in the Letters Patent granting the land to Riggs. Nevertheless, the reversion would pass to him by virtue of a clause including ‘all other lands etc at Harmsoton lately belonging to St Katherine’s’ Riggs must have known about this ‘vicarage land’ because his successor in title in 1610 could only have acquired the counterpart lease through him. It was normal practice for a new landlord at this level to require a tenant he had taken over to acknowledge his lordship by paying a token sum: a Harmsoton deed of 1624 records the process of ‘attombing’ just as it is described in William Middlebrook’s answer to Scarrowe’s complaint. So Middlebrook’s statement continues to ring true. In contrast, Scarrowe seems ignorant, not merely of who held the ‘vicarage land’ but of the service his predecessor had performed for it. Had no one noticed that the curfew bell was no longer being rung? It is as though Scarrowe and his parishioners were just not on speaking terms.

What could have caused this? It may simply be that he was an obnoxious character and unsuited to his vocation. However, as the presentation to the living had passed to the Crown – to Mary I – we must assume that he was a firm supporter of the old religion. There is no direct evidence for Protestant views in Harmsoton at
this date but Anthony Meeres, been in monastic ownership, lord of the adjoining manor of This is of course only speculation. Aubourn, was sufficiently comm. Yet, whether we regard Scarrowe mitted to Protestantism to leave as the vexatious litigant or as the the country during Mary's reign, victim of the spoilers of the monas- so the new beliefs must have been teris. we seem to find the whole familiar in the neighbourhood. So village ranged against him and this in 1555. half the village would at a time when he was charged with have been worrying about the va- restoring the rites and practices re- lidity of their leases of former formed under the two previous monastic land, while their new reigns. So far as we can judge from vicar was ordering them to re- the negative evidence of wills, he place at great expense the altars and images, the vestments, books and utencils that they had only be called the father of Protestantism in Harlston but he certainly be surprising if resentment led buried the old religion.

NOTES

By letter patent of 36 Hen. VIII. that might or might not have been transcriptions are in LAO-

\[\text{eg Solly 25.}\]

\[\text{In the interests of readability, spellings have generally been converted to modern forms.}\]

\[\text{Valor Ecclesiasticus, 1535.}\]

\[\text{PRO C1 13/145-146}\]

\[\text{In contemporary rural usage, a message was a house occupied with a significant amount of land, as opposed to a cottage.}\]

\[\text{An oxgang was normally about 15 acres; however, the Harmston ones were somewhat smaller.}\]

\[\text{Lincoln Record Soc. Vol 2, Bishop Cooper’s Act Book}\]

\[\text{LAO Terr 5 fl 19}\]

\[\text{LAO 2 Thor Har 4/20}\]

\[\text{PRO E3 18/9/348}\]

\[\text{LAO 2 Thor Har 13/21}\]


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This copy of the title page of a small book of verse is self explanatory. The horse fair in Horncastle was one of the largest in the country and many are the stories of the wheelers and dealers who frequented the fair. This poem describing those who visited and those who benefited from the three or so weeks it lasted in the middle of the 19th century runs to 86 verses. Verses 15 and 16 give a flavour of the type of visitor encountered. The Stamford Mercury regularly listed those who stayed at which hostelry. These include army personnel from all over Europe.

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15 Then Russia, Spain, and France have sent Their bearded sons and purses Well stor’d with cash that must be spent In splendid British horses. While members of the mighty States Of yonder glowing west, Have come to buy, at highest rates, The muddling and the best.

16 The Pruss, the German, and the Jew Have likewise come to buy Fleet hunters and sleek coaches too, At prices rather high. Frail brethren from those distant lands, Their language seems so funny That brother John scarce understands Aught but their drafts and money.
Decorated clay pipe bowls found in south Lincolnshire — clockwise from the top, at Cowbit, Boston and Algarkirk. All three are probably 19th century although the Boston one is a slightly unusual form. The pipe on the bottom left has a T on the other side and was made by Lawrence Thompson in the first half of the 19th century. It was an almost complete pipe found deposited behind panelling in the billiard room of the old rectory, Algarkirk, in the 1950s.

Obituary

Adrian Oswald

The death occurred in October of Adrian Oswald, aged 93. He was probably best known as a pioneer in the study of clay pipes, and was President of the Society for Clay Pipe Research. His first published paper, 'The Archaeology and Economic History of English Clay Tobacco Pipes' appeared in 1960 in the Journal of the British Archaeological Association vol. 23. Also well known is 'Clay Pipes for the Archaeologist', British Archaeological Association Report, British Series 14 (1975), but he wrote a great deal on the subject. His early excavations on the Roman site of Margidunum, on the A46 just outside Bingham, Notts, provided useful material for the Archaeology Department of Nottingham University. In the field of post-medieval pottery he published English Brown Stoneware (1982) written jointly with R. G. G. Hildyard and R. G. Hughes. On his retirement he went to live at Holbeach and was a member of the Spalding Gentleman's Society, but he had moved away by the time of his death.

Hilary Healey

The author is an internationally renowned scholar and formerly Curator of Illuminated Manuscripts at the British Museum. She is, therefore, ideally placed to describe and make clear the value for social historians of the Luttrell Psalter, prepared in the mid-14th century at Irtham. As she writes - the Luttrell Psalter...is widely famed as a source of pictorial information about everyday life in the Middle Ages. Over 30 colour pictures are used to illustrate a variety of agricultural practices and the ordinary lives of the 'gentry' and their workers. The family history of the Luttrells is briefly sketched against the wider background of the social system of the period. All the general reader needs is here and no student of the period or of art history should miss it.


There is great interest at the moment, on both sides of the Atlantic, in the Pilgrim Fathers and this book comes at a timely moment. It traces the lives and journeys of the men and women and their families who went to America from the Scrooby area. Although one cannot regard it as a truly academic history of the Pilgrims it is nevertheless of interest.

Where Mr Baines is able to write from well-documented sources, such as the details of the Mayflower journey, the book takes on life and clarity. However, it is a different matter when he offers opinions on religious affairs and the story is almost lost in favour of unbelievable bias against the bishops and cathedrals, etc. For example, one of many such sentences reads - 'Sinfu... forbidden by the casock-clad Satanist killers from the cathedrals of wickedness and indulgences in every city of the land...'. It is clear that the author feels strongly, but such language detracts enormously from the better parts of the book, some of which become compulsive reading.

Mr Baines is badly served by his proof reader/printer, with spelling and grammatical mistakes left uncorrected. The book becomes less readable because of this. The chapter on the Tangible Pilgrim Heritage is very good and more could have been made of it.

Pauline Napier, Boston


BAINES, Pat and WILKINSON, Mary. Heckington 1999 the way we are Heckington. Curleysegs Publishing, 1999 [94]pp ISBN 0 9535362 0 3 £6 pbk plus £1 p&p from the address in the above entry.

In Mr Banister's own words in his new book the book on Heckington 1999 'tried to give an insight into Heckington as it is now...[and] for those with memories of the past there was also a collection of photographs going back to 1860 when Michael Cole Summers first started taking pictures of the village... We received so much help...and received so many old photographs that it soon became obvious that we couldn't get everything into one publication'. The latest book takes us on in new directions. Most pages have two pictures and the captions are clear and informative. There can hardly be any building of note in the village that is not illustrated with good notes on owners and past occupiers; nor can there, seemingly, be many inhabitants who are not pictured somewhere; in fact, to any interested in family history with Heckington connections the plethora of names must be a goldmine. The use of a systematic tour as a structural device for the material has proved very successful. Both books are well printed and the use of good quality paper has meant that the photographs have reproduced very well.

BASTON ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP. Boston through the ages: our village spanning 6000 years with individual reminiscences of the last 70 years. The Group, c/o Peter Rayner, 6 Hadrian Drive, Boston. Peterborough PE6 9PP. 2000. 90pp. No ISBN. £8 spiral bound plus £1 p&p.

Modern technology applied to local history is exemplified here. A combined village effort has produced a series of brief articles on Boston through the ages; the results have been typed into a computer complete with colour pictures, sketches, maps, aerial photographs, children's paintings. The final product has been printed and bound by an organisation providing work for handicapped people. There are over a hundred colour pictures. Some of the writing is a little tortuous and some romantic imagination has been used to fill the gaps in the story for lack of other sources of evidence. Nevertheless, this is a
very creditable effort in which it is clear that the villagers derived much from their studies and the resulting book adds to our knowledge of the county’s villages.


This important study, first published in Canada in 1988, is now issued in this country for, it is believed, the first time. In the review of Ann Saviour’s The search for the Northwest Passage (Chatham Publishing, 1999) in Lincolnshire History & Archaeology, 2000 (p76) Dr. Williams (late of Birmingham University) particularly referred to this work as of special interest to all who are fascinated by this aspect of British overseas history.


Aviation archaeology is a relatively new branch of the science and ranges from aircraft crash site investigation and excavation to the study of airfields and their buildings. This small book provides an excellent introduction to the subject in all its forms, using actual examples of the author’s and others’ work in the field and is illustrated with well produced photographs. There is no specific Lincolnshire connection apart from the obvious – that many aircraft, including some 320 Lancasters alone, have crashed in the county over the years and that Lincolnshire has more deserted airfields than any other county. Sites are still being investigated, the latest being where a Royal Canadian Air Force Sabre jet fighter crashed near Sibsey in the 1950s.

Terry Hancock, C. Willingham


HAXEY and WESTWOODSIDE HERITAGE SOCIETY. Haxey through the ages. The Society, address as above [2001]. 64pp. No ISBN. £3 pbk plus £1 p&p.

These two titles are only the most recent products of a very active local society, which has now passed its twentieth birthday. The first of these two is a pocket sized ‘before and after’ and is of special interest. Apparently Doncaster Libraries acquired two albums of local photographs, one contained family portraits but the second included pictures of places in the Haxey area taken in 1890-1. The library allowed copies of the relevant pictures to be made and a society member, Malcolm Denley, has then tried to stand at the same viewpoint and take new pictures. Each page has two – the earlier and the new. A fascinating insight is thus obtained of the changes over a hundred years, a useful map points the sites of the photographs.

Haxey through the ages is more conventional in that there are sections on early history, place names, the Haxey Hood, drainage in the Isle of Axholme (with modern versions of Arickbout’s maps connected with Vermuyden’s drainage schemes), schools, chapels, a very interesting analysis of village occupations tabulated from White’s 1842 Directory through Kelly’s county directories to modern publications, war memorials, population figures, buildings and their history, and various other notes on a wide range of topics. All well produced in A4 format with quite a few illustrations. All excellent value. Mrs Neill will be pleased to tell you of all their other efforts, especially in the field of family history.


This book is a welcome edition and covers the somewhat neglected subject of steam excavators, although, in 32 pages, the author is only able to give an outline history of their development. Steam enthusiasts are used to the sight of steam locomotives in museums and traction engines, steam lorries and steam rollers at rallies throughout the country; but it needs a determined effort to track down the few steam excavators that still survive. In fact the author only lists three examples that are preserved in museums.

The problem is that most steam powered excavators were very large and functional so that most were either scrapped in the quarries where they spent their working lives, taken away and cut up for scrap or else buried beneath the subsequent landfill.

The book reviews the whole range of steam excavators, both in Britain and America, beginning with the Otis Crane Excavator of 1836 and detailing subsequent developments in the two countries until their final demise in the early 1930s. Of local interest is the substantial contribution made by the Lincoln family firms – Ruston, Proctor & Co/Ruston & Hornsby/Ruston-Bucyrus. Although the latter manufacturer only honoured the outstanding orders that had been accepted by Ruston and Hornsby.

The book is of the high quality we have come to expect from Shire Books. The detailed text is interspersed with some splendid photographs of steam excavators at work, together with numerous line drawings to explain the various functions of the machines.

This is a book for the enthusiast; readers not familiar with engineering or excavator terminology may have trouble with the function descriptions. As the author remarks steam excavators have not received the public attention afforded steam locomotives and traction engines so that most photographs that survive today are to be found in company archives.
One minor complaint is the lack of book titles for suggested further reading, only two general books being quoted. Mention could have been made of what is perhaps the best review of steam excavators - Excavating machinery as represented by power shovels, drag lines and grabbing cranes by W. Barnes (Benn Ltd., 1928). That work was, as it turned out, the swan song of steam excavators, which ceased manufacture a few years later. Nevertheless this new book is certainly recommended and is reasonably priced.

John T. Turner, Dunholme


The subject of this well produced book will come as a surprise to many. Riots in Lincoln? Impossible, one would have thought. Yet, in August, 1911 there were two nights of 'chaos, damage and blood-stained streets', and why? A national railway strike had been called, and trouble expected in the city led to the police standing guard at the level crossings. Attempts to lure the police away failed and by the evening several thousand people blocked the gates and two trains were halted. Relief police arrived at 10pm and the order was given to draw trenches.

The resulting riots, which owed a good deal to serious mismanagement by the police, the absence of the mayor on holiday, and Winston Churchill as Home Secretary calling in the military, are fully described. Many photographs and the reproduction of contemporary documents add further to the graphic telling of the story of this unhappy period in the city's history. This is an excellent piece of work, well produced and very good value at its price.


The opportunity to increase the number of pictures has been taken and the use of better printing methods on good quality paper means that this new edition is a great improvement on the first edition published in 1990. All but a handful of the pictures date from the early part of 20th century and reveal much that has disappeared or has been greatly altered in the interim. Good value.


A number of short selections, well illustrated, cover the main features of village life - church and chapel, railways, agriculture, brickworks, school, sports, etc. The central focus of this A4 book comprises 32 pages of coloured plates of the modern place, its inhabitants and their varied activities plus a number of early documents and artefacts, such as an early Bronze Age cinerary urn now in Grantham Museum. Even the early postcards have been given a suitable sepia tinting. The whole is a tribute to the skills and enthusiasm of the village group, whose efforts the editor has crowned in this beautifully produced book.


I thoroughly enjoyed this account of the wartime life of a young boy evacuated from Hull, who after a very unpleasant experience billeted on a family at Bennington, near Boston, was then sent on to Boston. Very well written, it gives a graphic picture of life — probably typical of that ‘enjoyed’ in many rural wartime villages with many aspects resonant of life in the towns as well. What emerges is an affectionate portrait of his school life, his out of school activities, the people of the village, and Mr and Mrs Hallam with whom he lived. As he says in his introduction the experience of wartime evacuation left psychological scars on many children, the author was luckier than most; this account with some nice sketches as well as photographs tells us how a bright and adaptable child ‘survived’.

The books below have recently come to my notice. Inclusion of an item does not imply that there will be a later review.

BEVIS, Trevor. Flooded Fens: floods and the stoical determination of the fen and marsh people and hazardous nature of their work. The author, 2001. iv, 54pp. ISBN 0 901680 70 2. £4.50 pbk plus p&p, from the author, 28 St Peter's Road, March, Cambs PE15 9NA.


CHAMBERS, Peter. The wrecks and wreckers of Mablethorpe. The author, 2001. 132pp. No ISBN. £9.50 pbk plus £1 for p&p from 42 Gibraltar Road, Mablethorpe LN12 2AT. All proceeds to Mablethorpe Lifeboat Funds.

DOWLING, Alan. Humblestone fifties: the story of a Lincolnshire plottage. The author, 2001. 144pp. No ISBN. £8.95 pbk (plus £1 for p&p) from the author, 4 Howlett Road, Cleethorpes DN35 0EF.


NORTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL. Solstice to solstice: a collection of poems and stories by residents of North Kesteven; [photography by Beth Davidson; Morag McGill, writer] NKDC. [2001]. Unpaged. No ISBN. £4.99 spiral bound from NKDC tourist offices or DC Offices, Kesteven Street, Sleaford, NG34 7EF.

PAK, Brenda M. Beckingham & Sutton. Based on the research of D. A. Listfield, edited by Brenda M. Pak, with additional material by Patricia Allen & Beckingham History Group. BHG, 2001. 60pp. No ISBN. £5 spiral bound, plus £1.50 p&p from Mrs G. Green, The Willows, Hillside, Beckingham, LN5 0RQ (cheques made payable to Beckingham History Group).


POPE, Margaret. The history of Markby village and Hannah-cum-Hagnoth. The author, [2001]. 24 pp. No ISBN. £3 incl. p&p from Mrs Pope, Cosy Nook, Sutton Road, Bilsby, Alford, LN13 9PX.


WRIGHT, James. Friskney: Lincolnshire's famous food village. The author, 2001. 16 pp. ISBN 1 902871 10 3. £15.00 pbk. incl. p&p from 33 Parker Street, Cleethorpes, DN35 8TH.