Fawsett family letter • Finding Sheath’s Bank
Golden Jubilee Victorian style • Gainsborough riverside
Grantham sounds • The end of the World War I hangars
Seven pages of books

Magazine of the Society for Lincolnshire History & Archaeology
Editorial
How Lincolnshire Celebrated Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee
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Chapter

LINCOLNSHIRE
PAST & PRESENT
48 Summer 2002

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Lincolnshire Past & Present Editors: Hilary Healey, 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 2 September 2002. 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: Belton House, near Grantham. This popular National Trust property was recently named Visitor Attraction of the Year by the Heart of England Tourist Board.
Another bumper edition of Lincolnshire Past & Present, to enjoy perhaps on your summer holiday, or sitting on your patio with a cool drink in the evening — if it's ever going to be warm enough this year! We include articles and stories from Lincoln, Boston, Grantham, Horncastle, Gainsborough and Louth and you could find out what your village did for the Golden Jubilee — of Queen Victoria that is. Neil Wright explains how he discovered the site of a Boston bank, while family history enthusiasts will be interested by John Fawsett’s account of a branch of his family at Horncastle in the early 19th century. We also look at how a couple set about modernising a house that members of the Sibthorp family once lived in, and how a unique church building was restored. Peter Stevenson recalls street sounds of a bygone age. Will this bring back memories for you? Thank you to all our contributors; we have some articles for the next edition, but always welcome more! There are no Notes & Queries this time as we didn’t get enough to make a section. Perhaps some of the articles will inspire some comments — I do hope so.

A well known local historian and writer who was made MBE in the Queen’s Golden Jubilee Honours was reported as saying that Lincolnshire was a ‘forgotten county’ (see page 21). It is true that events here often do not get a mention in the national news media, but John Ketteringham MBE is right, it is the people of Lincolnshire who must promote our county — unless we want it to be England’s ‘best kept secret’ for ever. Like it or not, the secret will be out soon, with improved communications opening us up more and more to the outside world! With persistence we are gaining our objectives — like the City and County Museum — eventually.

Ros Beevers, Joint Editor
How Lincolnshire celebrated
Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee
Ken Redmore

The last Golden Jubilee of a British monarch was in 1837, when Queen Victoria celebrated 50 years on the throne. The day after the anniversary of the accession, Tuesday, 21 June, was declared a special bank holiday, and many communities continued their festivities into the Wednesday.

The inhabitants of Lincolnshire, as elsewhere throughout the country, took part in a wide range of special events to mark the occasion. Huge numbers of people – high and low, rich and poor, young and old – joined in their local activities with great enthusiasm.

In the city itself the day's events began at 8am when 'members of the Newport Committee [for the Jubilee celebrations] assembled at Newport Arch, where a salute of 21 shots was fired... A brass band attended and played the National Anthem, which was heartily sung by a large crowd that had come together... The large arch was festooned with calico and turkey red; two rows of variegated lamps were arranged above this, while near the top was a festoon of coloured lamps... the whole being surmounted with flags, plants, shrubs and evergreens'.

Later in the morning the leading citizens of Lincoln processed to the Cathedral for a special service. Afterwards 'the dignitaries reformed into procession and returned to Great Northern Yard where the Volunteers fired a feu de joie'. At 1:30pm a second procession to the Cathedral involved more than 2500 Sunday school children representing 16 of the city's churches. All the scholars received a medal and then returned to their various Sunday schools for tea funded by the...
Jubilee Committee.

In the afternoon water sports were held on the Brayford, where ‘walking a greasy pole fixed over the water for legs and shoulders of mutton and a barrel of ale offered the chief entertainment’. In the evening the Town Clerk, City Sheriff and other civic dignitaries enjoyed a Jubilee banquet at the Great Northern Hotel. For others there were games and a firework display on the South Common followed by a torchlight procession.

The Stonebow was lit up with 1600 coloured lamps and 700 gas jets and stars... Many thousands pronounced the streets until the wee sma’ hours of the morning.”

On the following day, Wednesday, 2500 aged and poor citizens were treated to an ‘excellent knife and fork tea’. Afterwards there was free entertainment, mainly songs and speeches, in the Corn Exchange and the County Assembly Rooms, where ‘Miss Rushton thrilled the audience with her whistling solo’. Numerous garden parties were also held in the city and a bullock was raced in John O’ Gaunt’s field. A two hour extension of opening hours was allowed to publicans.

One sour note was struck by the Chronicle: ‘We hear that there was no jubilising [sic] at the County Hospital. It is not too late for some benevolent person to remedy the omission. Who will come forward to cheer the hearts of the afflicted inmates?’

The smaller communities certainly ‘jubilised’ in a big way. Washington ‘was beautifully decorated with arches, flags and banners from end to end’. There was bunting in abundance with flags, banners, motettes, lanterns, gaslight illuminations, etc. at Alford. Scarcely a house in Horncastle did not show a bit of bunting, and at night there were several illuminations.” Many places erected decorated arches. Wragby had two – one provided by the local police – as well as boasting a fine wrought iron pyramid decked with flowers in the Market Place.

The day began in several places with the ringing of the church bells, as early as 6am in Grantham and ‘at various intervals during the day’ at Washington. A handsome St George’s flag, kindly presented by Mrs Neville, floated for the first time from the church tower at Wickenby, and ‘two new bells placed in the church tower to perpetuate the Jubilee were dedicated’ at Market Rasen.

Most communities held public thanksgiving services in the parish church during the morning. At the Potterhanworth service the Old Blue Coat Boys’ School Band from Lincoln played and afterwards ‘a capital collection was made for the County Hospital fund.’ ‘Various bodies of Druids, Foresters, Clergy and Volunteers assembled on the Wong in Horncastle and from there marched to the Parish Church.’

A bust of Her Majesty was unveiled in Sleaford Market Place by the Bishop of Nottingham. The same town also despatched a telegram of congratulations to Her Majesty. In Spilsby the children assembled round the Franklin statue and received commemorative medals. The Bracebridge children also received ‘a jubilee mug with a portrait of the Queen upon it... the gift of Miss Ada Clarke’.

Most villages held an open air event in a local park or farmer’s field. In Mr F. J. Clarke’s park in Bracebridge ‘the Grimby band enlivened proceedings’ and there was a great variety of entertainment in a field in Potterhanworth: ‘Swings, wheel roundabouts, see-saws etc had been fixed and afforded abundant fun.’ There were ‘egg races for girls, servant girls and elder married women. The crack runners of the village tried their speed in the 150 yards flat, hurdle and quarter-mile races... potato races, obstacle races and tub, chaff and boot races [and] tug-of-war.’ Similar events were organised at Thorpe-on-the-Hill, where winners received prizes of silk handkerchiefs, pairs of braces, pocket knives and small sums of money. Washington held races for men and women over 50, the first prize being half a ton of coal. Kirton in Holland had an unusual sport in which ‘the pig with the greasy tail ran into the middle of a pond and was followed and secured by one of the competitors when nearly up to the neck in water.’ The people of Louth ‘indulged in Old English sports’ whilst ‘a football contest was the great feature of the day’ in Horncastle.

There was often a tea, usually in the afternoon for children and at a later time for adults. Nearly 600 children, organised in two settings, had tea at Brackside; 1400 sat down and were fed at Sleaford Market Place. Farm buildings were frequently used for teas in the villages – for example, the barns of Mr Skepper and Mr Gilliatt in Cherry Willingham and Potterhanworth respectively, and Joseph Webster’s cart shed at Martin by Timberland. Washington children enjoyed the typical fare of ‘roast and boiled beef, pork pies, plain and plum bread and butter’, and for most it was ‘a knife and fork tea.’

At about 9pm, the adults sat down to a supper of beef and ham, beer and shandygaff in Washington. At Potterhanworth ‘Mr H. Bolland generously gave a 96 gallon barrel of Everhead’s best two-year-old Burton brew, and there was plenty of ginger beer, ginger ale and nectar, buns and cheese, plum bread and sweets.’ A bullock had been killed for the occasion at Martin by Timberland and a sheep was roasted on the green at Kirton. According to the report, Mr R. Thorpe, a butcher of Boston, took charge of the Kirton event and had played a similar role when the Queen was crowned.

After supper Sudbrooke folk danced ‘to the strains of Mr Scott’s Lincoln band’, whilst in Washington ‘a grand display of fireworks and bombs were let off’. It was reported that at least 30 bonfires blazed at prominent points in the villages around the city. Despite the monarch’s remoteness and the relatively poor communications then, communities had come together enthusiastically for this special occasion. Celebrations in 2002 have been equally widespread and energetic, but maybe a little more sophisticated than those of 1887. 1All quotations are from The Lincolnshire Chronicle, June 24 and 25, 1887.
A nine-day wonder
A letter to the Rev Richard Fawssett from his mother Charlotte, with a short contribution from his brother John

The letter reproduced below was sent by his mother to my great-grandfather, the Rev Richard Fawssett, and contained news that could hardly have been more painful and distressing for him. Nevertheless he kept it, and on his death it passed successively to his elder son John Barratt Fawssett, his grandson Richard Maurice Fawssett, and then his great-granddaughters Dorothy and Phyllis. Both these ladies were spinsters, and on the death of the second it came to me, their closest male Fawssett relative, though sadly without any comment or annotation.

By 1833 my great-great-grandmother had been a widow for more than nine years. She lived in Horncastle all her life, and her husband, Dr John Fawssett, son of a Holbeach doctor, must already have been practising before their marriage. They had twelve children during the twenty years of the marriage, and it is clear that their circumstances were comfortable enough during his lifetime. Nine years later it appears the family continued to live in the same substantial house, with its spacious garden, though a shortage of money was becoming a problem, from the expense of educating all the children.

On Monday 27 May 1833 Mrs Charlotte Fawssett (née Clitherow) is partaking of her midday meal, quite oblivious that a letter is about to be delivered, which is to have dramatic consequences for the hitherto amiable relationships within her immediate family. This letter is from her third daughter, also Charlotte, who has been staying with friends near the coast, to inform her mother that Dr Barnard James Boulton is offering to marry her, and will call that very evening to ask for her mother’s consent.

As soon as she reads it, and realises its implications, she sits down to write to her eldest son, Richard Fawssett [then living in London, recently ordained, but as yet without parochial employment]. The near illegibility of parts of the first page betray her agitation, and fear of being held responsible for allowing the man her son detests to have become so intimate with his sister. Afterwards, to buttress her case, she persuades her second son, John Fawssett, to write a few lines in her support. [John has by then graduated, is subsequently ordained, and will later work in parishes around Horncastle.]

The letter was transcribed by Dr Dennis R. Mills, whose work will be known to some readers. Original spellings have been retained, but some commas have been inserted, and full stops with upper case for the first letter of the following sentence.

Horncastle May 27th 1833

My Dear Richard

My heart and mind are filled with one subject at present, and I cannot write on any other. I received a letter
from Charlotte this day as I was at dinner assuring me that when she left home she had no idea she would have to address me on such a subject and entreating me, if I love her, to dismiss all prejudice and to judge favourably of Mr Boulton. He had been over to Addlethorpe to see her and since his return had written and made her an offer. His letter she encloses for her perusal and informs me he will call this evening to ask my consent. I wish you were at home that we might talk the matter over first, but that is impossible. I can say very little to him, she will be four and twenty in September, therefore in law thought old enough to determine such a business herself. I hope she has told him how very small her fortune is and that it is to be tied upon her and her children. You cannot conceive how queer I feel, never [Page 2 (interlaced with page 6)] having once thought upon the subject. You always told me they would never marry and I was willing to believe you. Mr Boulton and his Sister [see footnote 2] walked home from Church with me last Sunday afternoon in the evening. We walked in the Garden until it was dark and I asked them to walk in and partake our supper. He said he would just see a patient and come in again. They were sat down to the table when he returned and cut a Tart and drank a glass of water. Very soon after he told his Sister to get her Bonnet and I had no suspicion he ever thought of my daughters until the Monday week when he called late in the evening and brought [home] a letter from Charlotte. He appeared in a hurry and would not sit down. The letter was written and sealed before he got there so it did not enlighten us. Fanny B called on the Thursday but said nothing about her Brother. On Friday evening she wrote a note to Annie saying she was going to Skegness on Saturday afternoon and would take anything we might want [Page 3] to send to Charlotte. I then thought something must be meant and was not so surprised as I should have been had he gone without informing us. I think he acted openly and well in that respect. He has been a good son and is excellent Brother. Therefore I hope he will make a good husband. His letter speaks well for him. He expresses great fear and anxiety about her answer and if Man is to be believed he is sincere. She refers him to me and I dare say will not be very easy until she gets my answer. I will tell you more when this unpleasant call is over. I don't envy the caller nor do I like my own situation. If you should write to your Aunt Gilliat don't mention the subject. I am anxious to keep it from her as long as I can. We shall soon enough create a nine day wonder. I pity poor Tot [Charlotte, presumably]. She has entered upon trouble and anxiety. May she be happy. I almost doubt my Senses yet. Mary is coming home tomorrow, so she will go with us to the Sea. And I think if William
joins us there, we shall be a very large party. When do the lectures close? He had better not leave Town before. He can take a gig from Spilsby to Skegness and come to us and save the expense (sic) of coming here first and then [Page 4] want conveying there, but I leave you to settle that and how long he is to be with us. I heartily wish I had never consented to go to the Sea that money might have been saved, yet it is wrong to wrangle [sic] and I will strive to be happy. I had no notion of this event, so cannot be blamed for impudence for running into the expense. [Later] Mr. Boulton came, I said very little to him for I thought it might be remembered after and cause her to be uncomfortable. He told me he had received seven hundred a year from his practisi[se] and that if he allowed two hundred for the expenses [sic] incident in it he thought they might [Page 5 (interlaced with page 1)] live very well upon the other five and save a little against a rainy day. I informed him that she could add very triflingly to their income. He assured me he had never once thought what she might have. I expressed a wish that it might be settled upon her and he immediately said it was his desire it should, for he had no property or any prospect of any, but what he could gain from his profession. He said supper. I wrote a few lines to Charlotte to relieve her mind, for he sent his servant this Morning, that he might not be kept in suspense, which I thought showed proper feeling. I shall be very anxious for your answer to this and hope that you will not blame me. Write if possible by return of post. Thank you for going to Ashby. I have not been at the Bank this week, so do not know whether it is arrived or not. The Garden improves in spite of the dry weather. We water the flower Beds every Night except Sundays. I believe every Dahlia you sent has come up. Some are very fine strong plants. We have given slips to your Aunt Gilliat and Robert Clitherow and intend planting the rest ourselves. The Clematis's are most luxurious and the Hops surprising. I wish I had not this new anxiety, but perhaps I should have been too happy. Pray for us all, my dear son, that we may put our trust in God and not lean too much in this World. Don't keep me in suspense and approve if you can of the proceedings of your most anxious and truly

Affectionate Mother C.F.

[Page 6 (interlaced with page 2)]

[Effectively a PS] We cannot get to the Sea before the twenty fourth of June on account of Miss Bousfield's School not breaking up before the twentieth. We must go the beginning of a week to take our provision with us. Once more adore,

My dear Richard

After the nine days wonder that you have read off before you come to this, I am afraid I can say nothing to attract your attention, but I was perfectly of your opinion that it will be better for William to come home and go to the sea with us, as it will not do only his health good but prevent him from being at home during the shooting season which would be a great nuisance to Mama. Now by the sea side he may shoot all day long without fear of being wrong, and besides he must be a plague to be up in London just now, and my being at home will perhaps cause him to be more steady and keep better hours. I knew nothing about the case of Boulton's until this morning, so am not able to say anything about it, but Mama will be very anxious about your letter. You must throw away all prejudice and dislike for the man, and answer it as kindly as you can, for Mama is very nervous. I must write a few lines to Bill [presumably William] so believe me your Obliged and Affect Brother

J. Fawsett

[Discussion]

Four generations later, it cannot be expected that the context of every matter mentioned in such a letter will be self-evident. I find that one question looms above all others: namely, why do both the writers refer specifically to a 'Nine Day Wonder'? Maybe the expression was more commonly used than now, as Mary Boulton believes. But surely something more dramatic must be involved than any normal antipathy between a pious reverence and the good doctor? And must it not be due to some event or situation well known to the close circle within which Fawsetts and Boultons moved?

What can have caused the conflict? It can hardly have arisen from differences in religious versus medical attitudes. It is possible though that when Dr. Boulton started in practice he may have 'poached' patients from the (former) practice of Dr. Fawsett, which William might have been expected to join once qualified. Another possibility is Richard's distaste for some youthful escapade by Barnard, which he may have deemed unworthy of his future brother-in-law.

What is certain is that the Rev. Richard never took a parish in Lincolnshire, preferring to live, work, retire and die in the lonely exile of distant Leicestershire. Maybe we have a Capulet and Montague situation here as well as a Romeo and Juliet! I had expected that Richard's attendance or absence from his sister's wedding would throw some light on that. Dr. and Mrs. Mills have been kind enough to search the Horncastle marriage register\textsuperscript{3} as well as marriage lists in the Lincoln, Stamford and Rutland Mercury of 1 November 1833.\textsuperscript{4} From these it is clear that Richard not only came, but also swallowed his misgivings and performed the ceremony instead of the local clergyman. A triumph, I believe, for his sense of Christian duty, over all feelings of inner and personal humiliation.

The other issue that's unclear to me is the nature of the 'it' that 'might be settled'. It seems likely to concern a property, of which Dr. and Mrs. Fawsett had acquired more than one. The land tax assessments for the Soke of Horncastle (1830) show that the Widow Fawsett, and also a Mrs. Fawsett (both presumably referred to Mrs. Charlotte Fawsett) are listed as owning property, in addition to the family home. Perhaps one of these was settled on the young Boultons?
A final point which, however trivial, I find intriguing, is the business of William being a nuisance to his mother, during the shooting season, were he to remain at home. Perhaps that might arise since he would be needing a servant to look after him there, who otherwise could have more profitably been deployed to Skegness.

NOTES

1 I am grateful to Dennis Mills, and also to Mrs Mary Boulton — whose husband, Neil Boulton, is a descendant of Dr Barnard James Boulton — for their considerable assistance during the preparation of this article. Dennis and I have been collaborating in study of the Fawsett family ever since I became aware of his article ‘The Fawsett of Lincolnshire and the development of the medical profession’ in Lincolnshire People and Places: Essays in Memory of Terence R. Leach edited by C. Sturman (Lincoln, 1996), pp162-67; together with ‘More information on the Fawsett family...’ in LP&P 33/34 Autumn and Winter 1998 p24.
2 Francis Elizabeth Boulton, Barnard’s youngest sister, at that time aged 18.
3 Presumably Ann Bennett F, the second sister.
4 Probably a sister, or sister-in-law of the writer.
5 Almost certainly Mary F, the first-born child of the marriage, who died unmarried at 42.
6 William F, the third son, b 10 April 1812. The future surgeon at Binbrook, then studying medicine in London, where he may even have been sharing lodgings with his brother Richard, recipient of the letter.
7 This figure was much more than either the Rev Richard or the Rev John was ever to make from his living, and ought therefore to have been a big enough figure to put Richard’s mind at ease, if only on account of Charlotte’s likely standard of living.
8 Possibly Ashby-de-la-Launde, south of Lincoln, as sister Mary had been at school there from 1815-20, and the younger sisters may have followed.
9 Barnard (sic) James Boulton and Charlotte Fawsett were married in this church, by licence this twenty second day of October in the year 1833, by me, Richard Fawsett, Officiating Minister, in the presence of John Fawsett, Anne Bennett Fawsett, Mary Fawsett, and Robert George Boulton [MD, practising in Beverley, Yorks, brother of Barnard].
10 At Horncastle, on Tuesday 28th (by the Rev Rd. Fawsett MA) Barnard James Bolton (sic) Esq. surgeon, to Charlotte third daughter of the late John Fawsett, Esq. MD.

Selections from original documents Contributed by Rex Russell

ALLOTMENTS — 1877
(Extracts from a pamphlet issued by Binbrook Parish Council and printed by E. H. Ruscoe of Northgate Works, Louth.)

For defining the persons eligible to be tenants of the Allotments.

2. Any man or woman, of not less than twenty-one years of age who at the time of application to the Council for an allotment has been Resident in the Parish for not less than twelve months, and belongs to the labouring population, shall be eligible to become a tenant of an Allotment, providing always that a person who, at the time of such application, already holds an Allotment either from the Council or otherwise, shall not be eligible to become tenant of an Allotment, provided the area of which, together with the area of any Allotment, or Allotments already held by him, would amount to more than four acres.

For defining the size of the Allotments.

5. The size of any Allotment let by the Council shall not be less than Forty Poles, nor more than four acres.

For defining the conditions under which the Allotments are to be cultivated.

6. Every person... shall cultivate... according to the following conditions, that is to say:

He shall keep the Allotment free from weeds, and well manured and otherwise maintain it in a proper state of cultivation, he shall not plant any trees or shrub so as to be injurious to any adjacent Allotment; he shall not cause any nuisance or annoyance to the tenant of any other Allotment.

LINCOLNSHIRE — PAST AND PRESENT. UNIQUE LANTERN LECTURE
A letter from the Rev Alfred Hunt:
26 Tentercroft Street, Lincoln, Sept. 14th, 1898

Dear Mr Williams,

By the kindness and help of many friends I have been able to obtain some 160 Lantern Slides to illustrate a Lecture on "Lincolnshire Past and Present.

It will give me pleasure to give the Lecture in your Parish on behalf of the Waifs and Strays Society, or to bring my ordinary Slides for a Lecture on the “Church of England Work for Waifs and Strays,” if you can favour us with a Collection on behalf of the Work for Poor Children. We shall be very grateful for Harvest Offerings in the shape of fruit and vegetables for our 32 boys in St Hugh’s Home for Waifs and Strays, Newport House, Lincoln.

Hoping you may be able to help us.

I am,

Very truly yours,
(Rev.) ALFRED HUNT
P. S. — List of Slides on Lincolnshire Past and Present on back hereof. [It includes slides of Lincoln and other places and at Willoughton, 'The Speaking Trumpet, 8 feet long' and, at Stoke Rochford, the Waterfall and the Tunnell [sic] (Highest point on GNR between London and Berwick-on-Tweed, but in Lincolnshire!!!)]

8 Lincolnshire Past & Present No 48 Summer 2002.
How I found Sheath's Bank

Banks are pretty substantial and serious institutions and you wouldn't think it would be possible to lose one. However, that did happen in Boston, but don't worry, it wasn't recent - it closed nearly two centuries ago!

Neil R. Wright

Abraham Sheath's property in South Place (now South Square), Boston, viewed from atop of Public Warehouse on Doughty Quay. In the centre is the house and garden, and behind (l to r) are the last extension (post-1799) to the granary, original granary (with Mansard roof), kiln and timber extension (pre-1799) to the granary. The plan and drawings with this article show the Sheath's Bank building as it was in the late 19th century. (Based on late 19th century photo, and 1964 survey by Boston Archaeology Group). The plan on page 10 shows the property, based on an 1887 Ordnance Survey plan.

In the late 18th century Boston was the busiest commercial town in Lincolnshire and a number of merchants and brewers became rich enough to start banking as a sideline, and even issued their own bank notes. For some of them banking became their main business and they continued long into the 19th century. But others failed and two went bankrupt in 1814. The biggest of those two was Sheath's Bank. It had been founded in 1789 by Abraham Sheath (1741/3-1816) who was a timber merchant, ship owner and landowner, in partnership with John and Challis Sheath. It has been said that John Sheath was the son of Abraham, but no further information has yet been found for such a son, and it might instead be Abraham's younger brother John (1758-1828) who was a tanner and feltmonger.

Challis Sheath (1776-1848) was later a wine merchant and woolstapler in Skirbeck Quarter on the edge of Boston and was certainly the son of Abraham. By 1811 Abraham and Challis also had a branch bank in Holbeach and an agency in Louth, and had joined with other partners to form banks in Lincoln, Spilsby and Wisbech. One of their bank notes dated 1813 shows that they then called themselves the Boston Bank, as did other private bankers in the town. At the time of the failure these various Sheath banks were said to have notes in circulation amounting to the vast sum of £500,000.

As indicated above, the Sheath family had other business activities in various parts of Boston. In 1935 local historian Herbert Porter said that their bank premises "were situated in Skirbeck Quarter and were still standing. In 1842 a Challis Sheath is mentioned as living there." Skirbeck Quarter was to the south of Boston, and Challis Sheath's premises were in London Road on the bank of the Haven.
Later in the 1930s Porter wrote that Abraham Sheath ‘apparently’ lived in High Street next to the house occupied by Mr Thomas Cawfit, and his son Challis Sheath in Skirbeck Quarter in a house next to the Ship Inn. He then said that an advertisement in the Stamford Mercury in November 1814, of the sale of furniture at a house in South Place, Boston, in connection with his bankruptcy, seems to show that one of the Sheath family lived there.

In 1976 Mr S. N. Davis wrote Banking in Boston and said of Sheath’s Bank that ‘the head office in Boston was located in St John’s Place’. So the three sites have been suggested for the site of Sheath’s Bank—Skirbeck Quarter, High Street and St John’s Place—with other premises referred to in South Place. But neither Porter nor Davis have quoted any source to show that these addresses were the actual bank premises in the period 1789 to 1814. As I began to search for evidence that would show which of these sites was the correct one, both Skirbeck Quarter and St John’s Place began to look doubtful, and there is a lack of information about a site in High Street. I have gathered information over a number of years and now believe that I have identified a much more likely location for Sheath’s Bank.

Firstly let us look at the sites suggested by Porter and Davis. A survey prepared for the proposed Boston, Newark and Sheffield Railway in 1845 confirms that No 7 London Road, to the south of the Ship Inn in Skirbeck Quarter, was then owned by the Rev Martin Sheath and occupied by his brother Challis Sheath. Old photographs show that it was a grand house. The title deeds of adjoining property describe No 7 in 1827 as ‘late of Samuel Barnard Esq deceased and now of the Rev Martin Sheath’. The Rev Martin Sheath (1773-1859) was the eldest son of Abraham and was successively curate of Frampton, curate of Wyberton and finally Rector of Wyberton. Both places are just outside Boston. Unlike Challis, Martin had not been a partner in the family bank but by 1845 he owned much of the property on this part of London Road. No 7 had previously been owned by the Barnard family who were also bankers, and it was the collapse of Barnard’s Bank on 27 June 1814 that led to the run on Sheath’s Bank and its own closure two days later.

Samuel Barnard had also owned the Ship Inn north of No 7 and the Black Bull to the south of it, as well as No 10 London Road, which appears to be the heart of their commercial enterprise, and it is therefore possible that Martin Sheath acquired property here when the Barnard holdings were put up for sale after 1814. One merchant could rent property from another, but if No 7 was owned by Barnard before 1814 then it does seem unlikely that Abraham Sheath would have his bank here when he owned property of his own nearer the centre of town.

The evidence connects Martin Sheath and Challis Sheath with No 7, but no evidence has been seen to suggest that their father owned or rented it. Challis died in 1848, and in the 1851 census the Rev Martin, now aged 77, was living there with his son-in-law,
the Rev Philip Alpe, who was incumbent of the Chapel of Ease in High Street, Boston. Mrs Alpe and their daughter, and five servants. There were later a number of high class occupiers of this grand house until the 20th century, but by the 1960s it had been demolished to make way for an entrance to the shed warehouses of W. W. Johnson and Sons to the rear.

Porter also said that Abraham Sheath 'apparently' lived at 114 High Street, but I have not yet found any evidence to support that suggestion. No 114 is still known as Bank House and with No 116 next door is marked as 'Bank' on Wood's 1829 Plan of Boston, but by the 1840s those two properties were occupied by Garfield's Bank.

I have not seen direct evidence of who occupied Nos 114 and 116 before 1841, but as Garfield's Bank was founded in 1786 they seem to be the most likely occupiers until more direct evidence appears. If Abraham Sheath did live there it was probably before 1782 anyway, long before he founded his bank, as by that date he had a house and business premises elsewhere in the port.

Davis suggested that Sheath's Bank was in St John's Place. This is at the western end of what is now Skirbeck Road, and in the 1841 Census Mrs Elizabeth Sheath, aged between 75 and 79, was living with Abraham Sheath (aged between 45 and 49), 'Banker's Clerk', presumably her son, at what was later No 17 St Johns Row and later became 31 Skirbeck Road. They had no servants living with them so they were clearly not very prosperous. This was a small cottage at the end of a row on the very edge of the town, and the title deeds of one of these cottages indicate that the first ones were built between 1820 and 1825 by Farndon Groom. The rest were there by 1829.

In 1790 there had been a large house, with a brewhouse, on the large triangular site between Skirbeck Road, St John's Road and St Johns Churchyard, and Hall's plan of 1741 suggests this was on the St John's Road frontage. This site was sold by Thomas Falkener to John Wrangle in 1790 and by 1820 Wrangle's heirs had divided the house into four cottages. They sold the property to Farndon Groom in 1820 and by 1825 he had erected the first nine new cottages on the site.

The cottage occupied by this Abraham Sheath and his mother was not built until after 1820, and might even be after 1825, so as well as being too small it was also too late to have been the headquarters of a major bank in the late 18th/19th period. Abraham Sheath was still living there in 1831, when he was listed as aged 67 and described as a 'Retired Merchant'. His mother was no longer there and he now had one servant living in. The relationship between this Abraham Sheath and the person of the same name who founded the bank is not clear. All of these cottages were demolished in the late 19th century.

The next question to consider then is where was the home of Abraham Sheath the banker? This is answered by two separate pieces of evidence. In 1811 the harbour of Boston was
surveyed by Netlam and Francis Giles for John Recnie, an engineer who was preparing plans for the improvement of the harbour. The survey showed properties on each bank of the harbour and one block on the west side of South Square was shown with buildings and the name ‘Mr Sheath’ written over it. The plan also shows that in 1811 South Square was apparently called ‘South Place’. The site included a single storey office or ‘counting house’ in front of the South Place façade of the original granary. This property was right in the heart of the port in the Georgian period, with other merchants’ premises to the north and south of it.

The title deeds of this site are deposited in the County Archives, and they provide the second source of evidence for Abraham Sheath’s residence. They show he was here by 19 August 1782, when he raised a mortgage on the property. In 1814 Sheath agreed to sell this property to Edward Fowler of Lincoln for £5,500 but the transaction was not completed straight away, and was then further delayed by Sheath’s bankruptcy in June. When Abraham left South Place about November 1814 he may have gone to live with his son Martin who was curate of Wyberton, as it was there that Abraham died on 14 April 1816. The house was later occupied by a succession of tenants, and tradition has it that this was a house occupied in the 1820s by William Ingelow Junior, and where his daughter Jean Ingelow the poet was born on 17 March 1820. If so, this was the house that burnt down in Jean’s youth and was soon rebuilt.

In a conveyance of any property the description usually starts with the most significant part first, usually the house followed by the yard, outbuildings and garden, as the case may be. The South Square property in Abraham Sheath’s time consisted of a fine house with a garden between it and the river, and a large warehouse built in three stages on the east and south sides of the house. There was also a grain-drying kiln, and extending into South Square there was a single storey office building in front of the original southern part of the warehouse. In this collection of buildings it might be expected that after the mansion house there would be listed the warehouse and the kiln, and then other items such as the office. But when the property was sold in 1815 the conveyance actually describes the property as follows:

'All that Messuage or Tenement with the Yard, Gardens and Counting House, Granaries, Vaults, Buildings and Appurtenances... together with the Warehouses, Granaries, drying kiln and other buildings sometime since erected by the said Abraham Sheath'.

This says in effect that the Counting House was the most important commercial element on this site at the end of Abraham Sheath’s time.

The last buildings on the site were demolished in the 1960s but as they were being knocked down they were surveyed by the Boston Archaeology Group and I took some photographs of my own.* When I read the 1815 conveyance I looked again at my photos of the old office in South Square and suddenly realised its significance. An office for the business of the warehouse and other buildings on the site could have been contained within the warehouse, but this was outside so other customers could use it, and it was no simple plain box of a building but something much more attractively designed. My photographs show it was an elegant red brick structure with a well-proportioned front - a large central round-headed window in a bowed brick wall, projecting forward slightly in front of the rest of the office, with two smaller windows to the left and right.

The 1964 survey largely overlooked this office, but it did record that the length of the façade was 33 feet. The proportions of the building as shown on the 1887 plan and as I recall them from 1964 suggest that the depth of the office was about ten feet and the façade was perhaps about ten feet tall. Across the front was a thin stone string course level with the sills of the windows. The entrance was a door at the top of a couple of stone steps in the north end wall, not part of the main façade. The low pitched roof was of slate, with a low parapet in front. The drawing on page 11 is based on my photographs. Looking again at the architecture and reading the 1815 conveyance I came to the conclusion that this was probably the strongest contender for the location of Sheath’s Bank.

There is also the circumstantial evidence that such an important bank would almost certainly be located centrally as possible within the commercial community of Georgian Boston, and South Square certainly fitted that description. If Abraham Sheath had his other commercial activities on this site, why would he locate his bank elsewhere without a very good reason? One of the few pieces of evidence that might cast doubt on the bank being located here is Mr Sheath’s apparent agreement in January 1814 to sell the property out of the family, to a Lincoln merchant. However, it might be that his original intention had been to raise a mortgage, and only after the bankruptcy did it become an actual sale.

One person who would have been able to tell us exactly where Sheath’s Bank was located was Pibsey Thompson (1785-1862) the local historian of Boston. He actually worked for Sheath’s Bank until the firm’s bankruptcy in 1814, and then went to work at Garfit’s, the oldest bank in Boston, before emigrating to the United States in 1818. Unfortunately Thompson tells us nothing about Sheath’s or Garfit’s in his published works, presumably regarding them as being too modern to be historical. We can imagine the young man sitting at his clerk’s desk, perhaps looking out through the large window into South Square, with all the bustle of the wharves, warehouses, granaries and shipping around him. He was interested in statistics and local history and was allowed access to many records kept by merchants and other people he would have got to know through the bank.

With hindsight it is regrettable that this historic office building disappeared with very little record. As it
was part of a very large site, most recording by the Boston Archaeology Group in November 1964 was directed towards the magnificent warehouse, which was the main surviving structure. While we may be lacking a definitive contemporary statement that the single-storey office in South Square was Sheath's Bank, I believe that the evidence quoted above is sufficient to indicate that building is clearly the most likely candidate to be the Bank. In its day Sheath's Bank was one of the most important buildings in the commercial life of Boston, fuelling the expansion of Georgian Lincolnshire's fastest growing town, and for later Bostonians it was also significant as the workplace of the town's most influential historian. I am really pleased that I took those photos 38 years ago as they have now proved so useful as one of the few records of a lost building.

NOTES

**Unique church restored**

The church of St Gilbert and St Hugh, Gosberton Clough, was built in 1902-4 to the design of Bucknell and Comper. Sir Ninian Comper also designed the furnishings and stained glass. Perhaps someone can tell us more about these architects? It is a unique period building, timber framed with brick chancel, all walls rendered and with a Celywesian slate roof. Sadly the actual original construction turned out not to be of a lasting quality, and a few years ago the church became so unsafe that it had to be closed. A lottery grant application was turned down. but thanks to the Historic Churches Preservation Trust they received a millennium grant, and the efforts of the small but enthusiastic congregation eventually paid off. The church was restored by Bowmans of Stamford and officially opened in May. It is 100 years since the foundation stone was laid – a nice bit of timing! The open day unfortunately coincided with the SLHA AGM, but it is a building that surely deserves our support. Perhaps we can put it down for a future Heritage Open Day.

* Hilary Healey

Lincolnshire Past & Present No 48 Summer 2002
A well known Lincolnshire landmark disappeared in September 2001 when the last original bay of Belfast truss hangars at Bracebridge Heath was demolished.

In the First World War, Lincoln was a major centre for aircraft production and local engineering companies including Ruston, Proctor & Co and Clayton & Shuttleworth received substantial contracts to build aircraft under licence for the Royal Flying Corps and Royal Naval Air Service. Robjey & Co opened the airfield at Bracebridge Heath in 1916 to test aircraft built for the RNAS and their own prototypes. However, within a short time, the site was taken over by the War Office to house No 4 Aircraft Acceptance Park. This unit was initially based on the racecourse on the West Common in Lincoln and aircraft from the local factories were delivered there by road for final assembly and test flying prior to delivery. The West Common was not really suitable for test flying and it was planned progressively to move the AAP to the new site.

The airfield was constructed in 1917-18. Seven ‘aircraft sheds’ were erected, comprising two bays of three plus one single one, along with support facilities and living accommodation. The labour force included some German prisoners of war and inscriptions and messages left by them were found during building alterations some years ago. Two large erection sheds for Handley Page O/400 bombers built by Clayton & Shuttleworth were planned and it was also proposed to use the airfield for bomber training for the Independent Air Force. In August 1918 No 120 Squadron RAF moved in to re-equip with DH9s but the Armistice in November ended the need for new squadrons and it disbanded without ever becoming fully operational. Another light bomber squadron, No 121, reformed at Bracebridge Heath in October 1918 to operate the DH10 ‘Amiens’ but soon disbanded also.

Between the wars the landing ground was returned to agriculture and the buildings on the site were leased to a number of private companies including the Lincolnshire Road Car Co. In May 1941 the Ministry of Supply requisitioned the bulk of the facilities for AV Roe & Co to set up a forward repair depot for Manchester and Lancaster bombers operated at local RAF airfields. Substantial additional workshops, stores and offices were constructed adjacent to the World War I hangars and the site became the headquarters of the A V Roe Repair Organisation. Final assembly and flight testing of the repaired aircraft was conducted at nearby RAF Waddington. By the end of the war over 4,000 Lancasters that would otherwise have been written off were returned to service.

Post war, A V Roe continued to use the site to support production and
operations and the hangars were also used for the assembly of two of the Avro 707 prototypes for the Vulcan programme. With the rundown of the RAF’s Lincoln and Shackleton force they became surplus to Avro’s needs and were sold off to a local haulage contractor.

The buildings proved increasingly difficult to maintain and it was estimated that to put them into serviceable and weather-tight condition would cost in excess of a million pounds.

The hangars had Grade II listing and there was a local campaign for their preservation. Museums and aviation societies were circulated with details but none came forward with any proposals. Permission to demolish was given by North Kesteven District Council in November 2000.

Work began in late August 2001 but was interrupted on Thursday, 30 August when roofing felt caught light and a major fire ensued with flames up to 50 feet high. Three appliances from Lincolnshire Fire Brigade attended.

Within two to three weeks the site was completely cleared including the old Armourer’s store and Avro’s canteen. Demolition revealed that the ends of some of the timber trusses were rotten; however, the main parts of them were quite sound, a testimony to the quality of the original timber and workmanship.

There remains a bay of three sheds and the single hangar along with other original buildings and the workshops built during the Second World War for A V Roe. These have been altered over the years and now bear little resemblance to their earlier appearance. Therefore, we have lost a unique group of buildings because as far as is known, all of the other surviving Belfast truss hangars in Great Britain are of two-bay layout.
Gainsborough riverside walk

Gainsborough is a market town and one time important port lying on the Lincolnshire (east) side of the River Trent. The opposite bank to the west is Nottinghamshire. The town is currently undergoing a major regeneration scheme centred on the east bank of the river. This scheme will safeguard the historic and listed buildings and complete the important flood defence work. It will also introduce mixed use developments in the area and provide a two-mile long walk close to the river’s edge. It was this Riverside walkway that was the focus of our outing.

The River Trent has been a trading route between the Midlands and both British and overseas ports for centuries. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the river between the town and the Humber was improved by the building of weirs and locks to maintain an adequate depth for sea-going vessels along the navigation. The success of this work can be gauged by the fact that in 1843 about one hundred boats navigated the upper parts of the Trent from Gainsborough. During this period Gainsborough was the point where river-borne products from the Midland industrial towns met the incoming raw materials from the Baltic and elsewhere. One product, linseed, was crushed in great quantities to extract oil in the town’s mills, one of which, the ‘Baltic Mill’ of 1850 (now demolished) recalls the origin of the import.

The upper Trent is renowned for its tidal phenomenon, named by the Danes after their god of the Sea, Aeagr. ‘Eagre’ is still the word used to describe this sometimes spectacular tidal bore that sweeps up the River Trent to Gainsborough.

The Riverside walkway gives a good close view of the former warehouses and granaries that line this bank of the river. This particular perspective of Gainsborough’s industrial buildings would at one time only have been seen by the crew members of visiting river craft loading and unloading goods at the quayside. The Lord’s Staith and Chapel Staith (alongside the former Baltic Mill) at the north end of the town were the main landing places.

Most of the properties along the Riverside walkway were built in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
One exception is Whitton's 1936 flour mill by Thomas Tatam. No longer in use, this huge building is currently being considered for conversion as a mixed use development at a cost of £700,000 as part of the Gainsborough regeneration scheme.

From Gainsborough packet boats could at one time be taken for trips to Lincoln via Torksey and also to Hull. The first steam packet built at nearby Watson's Yard was in about 1830. The riverside development of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was concentrated on the Gainsborough or east bank of the river. However, as the port grew in prosperity, the west bank, which is in Nottinghamshire, developed. At one time on the opposite bank were an inn, two large shipyards, an oil mill and several wharves and warehouses.

Gainsborough was the setting for St Ogg's, the town in George Eliot's novel of 1860 'The Mill on the Floss'. The mill in the title was Mercer's Mill, now demolished but once situated near the town bridge. Eliot described Gainsborough as 'a venerable town with red fluted roofs and broad warehouses and gables, where black ships unload themselves of their burthens from the far north, and carry away in exchange the precious inland products, the well crushed cheese and soft fleeces.'

In 1791 William Weston, a local builder and architect, constructed a three-arched bridge across the Trent at the point where the ferry had once crossed. It was constructed of stone from the Bromley Fall and Meanwood quarries in Yorkshire. The bridge was widened in 1964 by the addition of a cantilevered pedestrian walk, and the original stone balustrade was replaced by iron railings. On the Gainsborough side of the bridge the pair of small tollhouses, with their Leicestershire slate roofs, still survive. The bridge was freed from tolls in 1932 when it was purchased by the three local authorities. South of the town bridge is the former power station of Marshall, Sons and Co., built on the site of an earlier linseed oil mill.

In the late seventeenth century Gainsborough's population stood at just under 2000. By 1851 it had reached over 8000. The population boom initially had not caused Gainsborough to sprawl. Instead, rows of cottages, known as 'yards', were built in the back gardens of existing houses. Brandy's Yard, Potter's Yard, Jeremy Square and Winn's Yard are examples: none of these densely packed 19th century developments exist today.

The town was successful in becoming an 'official port' in 1841, for a trial period. Shortly afterwards a new, competing mode of transport arrived, the railway. The Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway built a line to Grimsby and the Great Northern Railway its (then) main line from London via Lincoln to Doncaster and York through the town. The Central Station opened off Spring gardens in 1849 and was hailed a great success. In years that followed the MSLR much reduced the scale of Gainsborough's river traffic although it soon lost some importance itself as the new Towns Line from Peterborough to Doncaster via Newark came into operation.

Both Gainsborough's Lea Road (former Great Northern & Great Eastern Joint Railway) and Central (Great Central Railway) stations are now unmanned stops. Lea Road retains some of its original station architecture, although now housing a garden centre. The buildings at Central Station have been demolished and replaced by a simple shelter.

Like many towns, Gainsborough is no longer dependent on the railways as the main carrier of goods and passengers. Most of the heavy industry that grew up with the railways was interdependent on it has closed. The remains of the former prosperous port now serve as a stopping place for pleasure craft moving through inland waters rather than for shipping from overseas or UK coastal ports.
The island was full of noises

PETER STEVENSON

ON

THE SOUNDS OF GRANTHAM

The sound of traffic today is a mindless, characterless roar into which the human voice and other sounds rarely penetrate. How different from the background sounds which, by comparison, made life so much more interesting and varied in those far off days when I grew up in Grantham in the 1920s and 30s.

At that time, with a population of around twenty thousand, Grantham was an industrial town of world renown, occupying a key position in the British road and rail network. There was sound, and plenty of it, but every sound was individual, recognisable, and possessed of character. Moreover, without the benefit of electronic enhancement, human (and animal) noises played a significant part in the audible spectrum.

Starting with the streets, the Great North Road, yet to be designated the A1, still passed through the centre of the town. In spite of that the traffic level was, by today's standards, far from excessive. Exhaust silencing was still somewhat primitive, which meant that each type of car and lorry had its characteristic sound. If one was interested in cars, there was no need to turn round to distinguish between an Austin Seven and a Ford Eight coming down the street. Drivers sounded horns of distinctive note to warn cyclists and pedestrians, and many felt compelled to "toot" as they approached every bend. Cyclists were
required by law to carry a bell. These were rung with similar enthusiasm and were mostly quite musical. Commercial vehicles seemed to be infinitely more varied. There were quite a few slow running diesels, but most of the lorries were still petrol driven, each with its distinctive sound. There was still a significant number of Foden and Sentinel steam wagons, which together with Harvard and Marshall steam rollers, Robey and Burrell traction engines, produced much “chuffing”, steam hissing and whistling to delight boys of all ages.

Lorry horns were sounded with puncnved and ranged from the “honk” of bulb horns, through the splendid bare of the Klaxon to that queer and distinctive “prip-prip-prip-prip” of some gadgets which apparently ran off the compression of one of the cylinders. Not all horns were pneumatically shod. The heaviest loads were still carried on solid rubber-tyred wheels which shook the buildings as they passed. By contrast many local deliveries were made on carts with steel rimmed wheels, added to which was the “clip-clop” of the baker’s, the milkman’s, the coalman’s and street cleaner’s horses, and the cries of command of their drivers.

The whinny and neigh of the cart horses were not the only animal sounds on the roads. Delivery men shouted as they worked along a street to warn housewives of the arrival of freshly baked bread or milk ladded out of clanking churns. Their arrival was, of course, greeted by all the local dogs, who joined in raucously with all the excitement.

In those days, when there was no television and few “wirlesses”, the newspaper was almost the sole source of the racing and football results as well as national and local news. The arrival of the two evening papers from Nottingham was heralded in Grantham by a dozen or more newspaper boys tearing down the street calling out the headlines at the tops of their voices to make sure that their copies sold fast.

During the daytime too you could hear the street corner news vendor calling out “Mail” or “Herald” in a sing-song cry. We “old uns” look back to a time when the likes of Jessie Matthews, Fred Arta, Deanna Durbin and Shirley Temple were the sources of real tunes which could be hummed, sung and above all whistled. People were not just content to listen. The delivery boys whistled, the postman whistled and was joined by the milkman, the window cleaner and the schoolboys. In fact Sunday morning was perhaps the only time when one did not hear someone whistling.

When the wind was in the west, aircraft taking off from RAF Spitalgate brought another range of sounds to the town. In contrast to the deafening shrill of the jet, the air-minded, without looking up, could distinguish between the relatively gentle tones of the Lynx engine of the Avro 504, the Kestrel of the Hawker Hart and the Cheetah of the Avro Anson. Grantham was an important junction on the main London to Edinburgh East Coast line of the LNER. Steam locomotives of all types, from the humble shunters to the expresses, added even more to the audible spectrum. Each had its distinctive whistle, ranging from the “toot-toot” of the shunters to the prolonged shriek of the through expresses as they thundered through the town at 70 mph. Even the clash of buffers in the marshalling yard could be heard when the wind was right.

During the Second World War petrol rationing took cars from the road to be replaced by that special grind of the military convoy. After the war many of the factory hoisters, another feature of town life, never returned, and air-raid sirens fell silent. Steam faded away and the horse-drawn cart died a lingering death. Trains began to emit rumbling roars and silly “ cukoko” sounds. The flying training school closed and the jets flew high. Vehicle silencing improved so that by the sixties all cars and most lorries sounded much the same. Popular tunes could no longer be readily whistled and the shouts of the newspaper boys were replaced by a few silent news vendors. One’s pipesmoke of a car horn could only be sounded in extremes of fear or anger!

We are undoubtedly cleaner, healthier and better fed than we were then, but how nice it would be, just once, to turn back the clock and, armed with a tape recorder, recapture that colourful kaleidoscope of pre-war sound. If sound did have colour, what a world of greys we live in today!

*  

OBITUARY

A loyal member of the Society of Lincolnshire History & Archaeology since 1946, Ron Drury died in Lincoln on 7 December 2001. Ron held a position with British Telecom until poor eyesight necessitated early retirement after 38 years' service.

He had lived in Lincoln since 1960, and was well known to many members of the Society by attending meetings and by correspondence. He was ready to help, often behind the scenes, but also, while able, with transporting and manning bookstalls.

He was a member of many organisations including the Lincoln Record Society, also since 1946. He was a Steward of Lincoln Cathedral, where he took a keen interest in the music. His interest in and knowledge of county history, and in Lincolnshire personalities and families, was invaluable. He was dismayed when items that appeared in print were wrong or misleading and wrote to the editors making firm, but gentle, corrections, owning his sources. He was involved in making corrections to the revised Pevsner for Lincolnshire. An avid collector of books, he was always eager to use them and his knowledge to help with queries. His contributions to the objectives of the Society of Lincolnshire History & Archaeology were much appreciated.

Ruth Tinley
One night in February 1821 a wheel fell off a coach as it turned from Eastgate into Minster Yard in Lincoln. This was the start of a series of events that culminated in the building of ‘Hill House’ at Bracebridge Heath. The occupants of the coach were Col Coningsby Waldo Sibthorp of Canwick, one of Lincoln's MPs, his brother and sister-in-law the Rev Humphrey and Mrs Sibthorp and her sister, Caroline Ellison.

The party were returning to Canwick when the accident happened. When the wheel came off, the coachman was thrown off, the horses were frightened and the coach turned over. The colonel was severely injured, never really recovered, and died on 15 March, 1822. His brother, Colonel Charles de Laet Waldo Sibthorp, inherited the Canwick estates and in 1826 took over his late brother’s parliamentary seat, becoming famous in Lincoln history as the city's notoriously eccentric MP – who divorced his wife and hated foreigners and railways.

In 1848 an indenture of settlement between Charles de Laet Waldo Sibthorp, Gervaise Tottenham Waldo Sibthorp, the Rev Humphrey Sibthorp and Robert Ellison, caused certain things to happen and the land on which Hill House now stands became the property of Coningsby Charles Sibthorp, his heirs and assigns. Coningsby Sibthorp died on 9 May 1932 and his personal representatives (Robert N. Sutton-Nelthorpe, Alex B. L. McIvor and G. Sutton-Nelthorpe) agreed to sell on 30 April, 1933 for £213.19.0. 2,499 square yards of thereabouts forming part of fields 99 and 110 to Charles Ratby, Lucas and Richard Lucas (C. R. Lucas & Son builders).

Certain conditions were laid down: no more than three houses were to be erected on the site, no trade, manufacture or business allowed except solicitor, accountant, surgeon, physician or dentist and they were allowed a 2ft x 1ft brass plate. No other notices or advertisements were allowed. There could be no aerial poles at the front of the houses and they had to be tiled with flat red or green tiles.

Some pencil notes on the original plan show how the site was to be divided. In the north, 928 square yards were allocated to William Toyne. 743 square yards in the middle were for C. P. Tutt and the final piece was allocated to J. Wark. The plan also shows a proposed road along the southern boundary of the entire plot. The road was to come up the cliff from North Hykeham and continue across the land behind the Lucas plot to Canwick Avenue. It was never built. The area for W. Toyne was conveyed to him on 1 May 1933 and Lucas built ‘Aldersgate’.

On the middle piece of land, Lucas built ‘Hill House’ and sold the land and house for £925 to C. P. Tutt, an official of the National Provincial Bank, on 6 March 1934. The southern piece of land remained undeveloped. On 28 February 1939, Tutt sold ‘Hill House’ to James Wark, a draper, for £1,000 and on 7 May 1939, the southern piece of land, originally allocated to J. Wark but not built on and still the property of Lucas & Son, was sold to Wark for £100.

James Wark died on 22 February 1946 and his widow, Edith Ann
Wark, continued to live at Hill House until late in 1962 when she entered Pleven Nursing Home in Lincoln. She died in the nursing home on 5 January 1963. The house remained empty until May 1963 when Peter Young bought the house and the 1571 square yards plot for £4000 from Alan Wark and Sir James William Frances Hill, the personal representatives of James Wark (deceased).

So much for history, what follows is a personal account of how Peter and Beryl Young developed Hill House over the 36 years. The original plan of Hill House, when it was sold to Tutt, does not show the coal house but it had been there for some time when we bought the house. However, little else had been done inside since the original build. There were four bedrooms upstairs, and in the separate bathroom and toilet was the original cast iron bath.

Downstairs there was a lounge and dining room with French windows, a kitchen with a sink and single draining board, a walk-in pantry, a china pantry and a toilet. Outside, silver birch, elm and sycamore trees were planted at the front, flowering trees (cherry, plum, laburnum, lilac and may) round the southern border and fruit trees at the rear of the house.

In the 36 years that we owned the house, many things happened but first of all, the finances. To top up a deposit of £2,200, we obtained a mortgage of £1,800, repayable over 30 years at 6½%. This produced a monthly payment of £11.5.0d. The house was insured for £3,500 with an annual premium of £47.6d. In 1973 we obtained an advance on the mortgage of £800 towards a room in the attic, which added £8.40 to the monthly repayment and the interest rate was now 11%. In 1983 we obtained a further advance, £1,000, for the installation of a fitted kitchen. This put the monthly repayments up to £31.90 and the interest rate was now 11¾%. It rose later to 14% with a monthly repayment of £40. By 1988 the house was insured for £58,789 and we finally cleared the mortgage in 1992, one year early.

Internally we made many changes. The first thing to go was the cook-and-heat range in the kitchen, it literally fell to pieces when I tried to clean it. We replaced it with a solid fuel boiler for hot water and an electric cooker was installed. With the advent of natural gas from the North Sea, the solid fuel boiler was replaced by a gas-fired boiler for hot water and central heating and a gas cooker replaced the electric one. The open fireplaces in the lounge, dining room and two bedrooms were bricked up and a gas fire installed in the lounge. The original metal window frames were progressively replaced by double glazed units, a fitted kitchen was installed and the attic area was modified to provide a 20ft x 10ft room with a south facing window and access from the landing by a folding ladder.

In 1989 a sun lounge was built onto the dining room at the south side of the house and in 1989/90 a wash hand basin was installed in the downstairs toilet. Upstairs, the bathroom and toilet were combined into one room, the original cast iron bath was replaced by a modern unit and a power shower was installed.

In 1963 the garden was nearly out of control, the house having been empty for six months. The front garden had a well established beech hedge. The elm trees fell victim to Dutch elm disease and were replaced by an ash, a paper birch and a whitebeam.

Over the years the land behind the house became a productive working garden. Original apple trees were replaced and pear and plum trees added. Raspberries, blackberries, currants and gooseberries were cultivated together with most of the conventional vegetables. An unheated greenhouse was the location for tomatoes, cucumbers and for a while aubergines until they became available at supermarkets. The rest of the garden was developed into lawns, flowerbeds and shrubs.

Severe damage was caused by a gale in 1993, which brought the central chimney stack down. The damage was limited by the fact that the interior work in creating the room in the roof had strengthened the roof so that the chimney stack just rested on it and nothing came through, although 1½ tons of bricks had to be removed. The repairs were expensive, amounting to £3.231.

By the late 1990s, running the third of an acre garden was becoming burdensome and Hill House was put on the market in January 1999. In the early 1970s the local authority, at the request of the GPO, had said that house names were an inadequate identity and 'Hill House' became No 41 London Road. It proved quite difficult to sell and it was September before we left, having sold the house to Frank Thomas for £115,000. It is interesting that in 66 years there have only been four owners.

SLHA member honoured

We are pleased to note that Lincoln historian Dr John Ketteringham has been made MBE in the Queen’s Golden Jubilee Birthday Honours. Dr Ketteringham, an extremely enthusiastic and hard-working scholar and author, was given the honour for his dedication to the heritage of Lincolnshire. His numerous books and articles include A Lincolnshire Hotchpotch series, Lincolnshire People series, Lincoln Cathedral: a History of the Bells and Lincolnshire Bells and Bell Founders. John has been energetic in finding new homes for bells from churches around Lincolnshire, for example he was able to secure the transfer of three bells from the redundant church at Wispington to St Hugh’s Roman Catholic church in Monks Road, Lincoln, where they are in daily use. He has also made many appearances on local radio, and hopes his publications help to draw attention to our ‘forgotten county’.
This section aims to list all new titles with as many short reviews as space permits. All reviews are by the Reviews Editor unless otherwise stated. The majority of these titles are obtainable from Jews' Court bookshop, Steep Hill, Lincoln.

ANSWER, Harold L. Bygone Reepham. The author, 2001. 64pp. No ISBN. £5.20 pbk plus £1 for p&p from the author, 4 Althea Terrace, Reepham, Lincoln LN3 4DJ.

This landscape format book on good quality paper has allowed the author to show at their best a wide range of pictures of the village. There are street scenes, followed by sections on the school, church and chapel, people and the services they provided, sporting activities (though five pictures of the cricket team at varying periods may seem excessive) and the railway. The majority of the photographs are of older times and reveal an interesting picture of places and people now long changed or altered beyond recognition. Useful annotations give the names of folk. Altogether another valuable rescue of older pictorial material and contribution to rural history.


Julian Bennett's varied early career, following research on Hadrian's Wall and leading tours abroad— I last came upon him with a party in Rouen, Normandy—made him an unusual choice for the Shire volume on Roman Britain. He obviously saw the gap in the market and the resulting first and second editions (1980, 1984) formed quite a useful introduction to the subject.

Now based in Ankara University, the author acknowledges in his Preface the difficulty of undertaking, at such a distance from the source material, the thorough revision which has now appeared. For this is no minor tinkering: the structure of the chapters has been radically altered, partly to bring the book in line with the current orthodoxy, which involves an enhanced appreciation of the contribution made by the native aristocracy in the urbanisation of the province. Social and economic aspects are accordingly given greater prominence, but the approach is still Romano-centric, with frequent citing of imperial parallels and references. A further labour stemming from the need to ensure that recently published accounts of excavations and new discoveries are taken into account.

The volume now runs to 80 pages (previously 72), even with some loss of illustrations. The figures are now more conveniently presented in the core of the text rather than at the end, but it is unfortunate that the quality of reproduction of some of the photographs falls below the generally high standard of the rest of the book. The section on 'Further reading' has been greatly expanded and updated.

Among the minor quibbles, Bennett's views (pp.69-70) on the end of Roman towns in Britain, while re-titled 'Change and Transformation' in line with current perspectives, are rather dated, notably his interpretation of 'dark earth' as representing agriculture and manuring, only one possible cause. The most favoured explanation for its occurrence at many towns is from biological reworking of the latest Roman urban phases, with associated structures of timber. Nor is it accurate to state that no site was re-occupied after AD 500 until 'some 200 years later'. These, and a few minor misspellings apart, the new edition is a good introduction to the subject and can be recommended.

Michael J. Jones, City Archaeologist, Lincoln.


When I opened this book I had hoped that it would cover the whole county, but, in fact, a large part is taken up with the city of Lincoln and its surrounding villages. Nevertheless, I derived much pleasure from it and the author is to be congratulated on finding so many pictures from a wide range of sources. As usual many folk will have nostalgic feelings on seeing these images while others will acquire new knowledge.

There are evocative snippets of schooldays with many children supporting parental efforts to make a living and earning coppers to help out the budget. Extracts are quoted from Branstun school log (1873-1918). Walking to and from school was the norm. Later references are to wartime experiences, ration books and the advent of school dinners—no wonder they were so welcomed in the poorer areas! Pages 58 to 62 show nearly everyone wearing a hat, whether workmen or people at Lincoln races. There is a good section on sport, mostly racing. Trains brought many from distance for the racing at Carholme though we are told that racing began on the Heath, the site of RAF Waddington, and closed in 1770.

Other sections relate to farming life, industry and politics, leisure time and celebrations beyond Lincoln with a final section devoted to 'Secrets of Lincolnshire'. In this there are sketches of the lives of Theophilus Caleb, the Indian Vicar of Huttoft, Francis Clarke, chemist and four times Mayor of Lincoln, ten fighters (meaning bare knuckle boxers) and Catley Abbey, not just the ecclesiastical history but also, in the nineteenth century, the fount of bottled spring water. Beyond Lincoln there are pieces on Torcy, Grasby and Welton (by Lincoln).

There are reports on the Queen's Silver Jubilee, Lincoln's parliamentary elections and the four major engineering firms the city once supported. The pictures are excellent, it
is informative and easy to read and of a handy size. In spite of my disappointment at its lack of county coverage it is well worth reading and will keep the reader engrossed. I was.


This note is being prepared on March 15th when the pupils, staff and parents of the Cowley School are celebrating the achievements of the local hero (the day before his birthday in 1774). The students of the upper school have put together a short introduction to the life and work of Matthew Flinders and Molly Burkett has helped them knock it into shape. The result is a very readable account of his adventures in the South Seas, with nine photographs, several drawings (not all credited) and two maps. The booklet does great credit to all concerned and, it is to be hoped, will lead on to further local studies.


This is very useful rescue act. The author was the schoolmaster at the Tenants School in Metheringham Fen. He lived with his parents in Washingborough and started to compile a record of all he could find on the village's history, starting with the parish chest and the archives, then in Exchequer, where he was engaged in its efforts by Kathleen Major and Dorothy Owen (as she became). The results were first printed up in the local parish magazine, starting in January, 1944.

There is a wealth of source material culled from the above records and it is a mine of useful data for the modern local historian. Brenda Webster is to be congratulated and thanked for bringing this back to life and making Mr. East's original studies available again to modern students.


The products in this series, so far, have been a little variable but, in this new book, the authors have raided the files of the Scunthorpe Evening Telegraph very successfully and have put together a very useful selection of photographs with informative captions. Each section also has a worthwhile introductory essay to add value and interest.

The sections are: Down your way; Making music; Industry and Commerce; Pubs and clubs; Sporting life; Transport; and, People and places. All the pictures date from the post-war period and the headings of the subject areas covered tell the reader what to expect—plenty of group pictures (schools, cricket and football clubs, local dances, the town's contribution to the local pop scene), scenes of streets now changed and industrial sights, whether steel works or steam railways. Plenty of interest and a stress on nostalgia. It should be noted that there are a good few pictures taken outside the town—villages represented include Haxey, Barton on Humber, Brigg, etc—and no doubt many people from outside Scunthorpe appear in the group pictures. Well produced on quality paper it is good value.


Roy Hill, a Hampshire man, joined the RAF as a Wireless-Operator/Air Gunner in 1942 and was posted to 207 Squadron at Spilsby in 1944. The first part of the book covers his training and service at Spilsby until shot down in December 1944 on his crew's twelfth operation—just on the French side of the Rhine. Two of the crew were killed during the attack and five bailed out, one of whom was never seen again and is believed to have landed in the river. The remaining four became POWs until liberated by the Russians five months later. Although much of this is familiar from other books written by WWII RAF men, the author writes well and interestingly about his service.

The second part is more unusual and starts in 1985 when two young Frenchmen from the village near to where the Lancaster crashed decided to investigate the site and traced the story and the crew's identity. By a series of coincidences they managed to contact Roy Hill, who, by a further coincidence, contacted the other three survivors, two of them in Australia. Roy and two of them were able to attend a ceremony in the village in 1989, when, after a memorial was dedicated, the men were feted by the villagers. A bond was created, which has resulted in lasting friendships and reciprocal visits. The crew were asked to go to Foltzwehr officially again in 1990 for the 45th anniversary of its liberation, when further plaques were unveiled, one at the crash site, and the crew presented a brass model of their Lancaster to the village.

The book is an excellent example of book production (it is self-published) and Roy Hill and his printers are to be congratulated. It is also a good read and, although not very specifically Lincolnshire, does have local interest as it tells a story similar to that of many young men who took off from the county's airfields and did not return.

Terry Hancock, Cherry Willingham.


This engaging and informal book is a family and local history based on the autobiographical writings of George
Spencer Watkinson junior (1855-1946) of Market Rasen. It is made up of three distinct documents: George’s autobiography written retrospectively in November, 1897; his article on ‘The passing of the old clay pipe’, probably written in 1918; and, the third an extract from a letter to his grandson about the decline of the clay pipe trade, of unknown date.

The autobiography is somewhat disjointed and chronologically vague, but it provides a vivid, if not very detailed, account of his early years and in particular his religious beliefs and his adherence to Primitive Methodism. In addition, the autobiography covers a wide range of subjects from hiring gangs to itinerant traders, fairs and their entertainments, some detail on his family and his working life. The document that is probably of most interest to local, economic and social historians, is his description of clay-pipe making, which is enlightening for the detail it sheds on the processes and workshop organisation.

One minor criticism is the lack of any substantial editorial introduction, providing a more detailed family history, a description of the documents, their provenance and the editorial conventions – for instance, we are never told if the autobiography is fully transcribed or if we are reading excerpts only. But these are minor quibbles, which should not detract from this interesting piece of local history.

Dr Phil Knowles, Swaton.


In Volume I of this splendid series Dr. Hunt presented, among much other detail, biographies of those 348 men (including one civilian) named on the Boston War Memorial who had died during the First World War. This second volume is largely concerned with recording biographies of the 214 men and women who died during and immediately after the Second World War. It is noted, however, that 20 of these were civilians (of whom five died whilst working away from the town) and one of the 215 named on the memorial had in fact died in 1920 when the boat on which he was fishing in the North Sea hit a WWI mine.

The first section of this book does in fact continue the WWI story as in the years following 1918 the town authorities sought, to some had poised on it, ‘war trophies’. The stories behind the arrival in Boston and display in Bargate Green of a ‘female’ Mark IV, number 4521, ‘battle-scarred’, Lincoln-built tank and a captured German eighteen-pounder field gun make fascinating reading. Equally interesting was the town’s (and the country’s) gradual realisation during the 1920s and increasingly in the 30s that this ‘war to end wars’ was not just to be viewed as regrettable but had been utterly futile. Exactly two years and one day before the start of WWII work began on the demolition of Boston’s tank. Like many in the town one cannot help wondering whether it was recycled as part of the arsenal used in the defeat of Germany.

Immediately following this backward glance Dr. Hunt gives details of the ways in which names were collected for inclusion on the WWII memorial, the procurement of the bronze plaque on which the names were recorded and its unveiling and dedication on 12 November 1950. For some years after the end of the war those names would conjure up memories — who they were, where they went to school and afterwards worked, in which unit they served and how they died. Today memories are dimmed and for the vast majority of people walking past the memorial the names are just that: names. Dr. Hunt’s book rescues these men and women from the oblivion of history — they come alive again — reminders both of the suffering which war inflicts on humanity and of the part each of them played in the defeat of an evil political system.

The bulk of the book is taken up with the biographies. As usual when reading work of this kind one is amazed at the numbers of ways and in the number of places one can get killed in modern warfare. In the army, in the air force or as a civilian. By bullet, shell, bomb, torpedo or mine. In the air, on the battlefield, on and under the sea, as a prisoner of war (biography no. 400), at home, in hospital, in an accident (two men died when the Queen Mary cut their ship in half), by suicide, or even by slipping off a wet gangplank (biography no. 385). Reminders of the war’s major campaigns — North Africa, Italy, the Atlantic, India, Burma and north-west Europe — abound alongside mention of never-to-be-forgotten places and events — Dunkirk, the sinking of the Hood (on which ship died 44-year-old Douglas Morsen Steel, who had served as an artillery officer in WWI), Dieppe, Tobruk, Anzio, Salerno, Monte Cassino, the bombing campaign over Germany, D-Day, the Blitz. Every biography reminds us of the many grieving parents, widows, children, fiancées, girlfriends and boyfriends left behind to pick up the pieces of their lives.

Would that every town and village in our country had a Dr Hunt. One can but hope that after reading of Boston’s war dead others will take up the task of researching those names on their own war memorials. We surely owe it to these men and women that their lives, their wars and their deaths are never forgotten.

Geoff Bryant, Barton-on-Humber.


The widespread introduction of microfiche as a means of publishing family history sources and indexes has been a mixed blessing. On the one hand, fiche is a much less accessible medium than print unless you happen to have access to a reader. Many dedicated family historians now own their own but a lot of local historians and casual readers do not. On the other hand, fiche has made
financially viable the publication of a great many original documents and indexes, which, in former times, would never have seen the light of day.

This latest list of participants in the Lincolnshire Rising and individual names associated with Lincolnshire church bells is a case in point. Neither is likely to be a list of mass appeal to family historians but both will be worth a glance to anybody with Lincolnshire ancestors. In each case, the lists are surprisingly long. There are about 1500 names on the church bells list, all with parish and date (from the early C16th to the C20th) and over 400 on the Rising list, which is certainly the most thorough and comprehensive yet produced for this event. Where their fate is known after the Rising, this is also noted.

Family historians will search immediately for the surnames in which they have an interest. Historians of the Rising will look and ponder on the possible connections between some of the participants: rich fodder, this, for the conspiracy theorists on the subject! Either way, Dr Ketteringham has done us a service in making these lists available and LFHS is to be praised for publishing them.

Dr Simon Pawley, Skeford


This large book has all anyone needs ever to know about the cricket club at Hartsholme, in Lincoln. The early pages are given over to an account of the family of the Earls of Liverpool, that finally owned the House, and how the area around the property had been developed from drained marshy woodland. There are three plans of the house, a family tree and several good pictures of the family. Lord Liverpool's faveourite game was cricket and a fine pitch was provided. The rest of the book is made up of scorecards and statistics, season by season from 1921, with lists of all the club records. All very well done and printed.

LUCAS, Lorna, Country spirit. The author, 2001. 32pp. ISBN 0 9538564 0 2. £3.50 pbk plus 40p for p&ep from 4, Willingham Road, Lea, Gainsborough DN21 SEH.

Christian poems with each one faced by an evocative photograph taken in and around Lincolnshire. The quality of both parts is high and should make a wide appeal.


This little book contains a wealth of detail and illustration on the life and works of Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, later St Hugh. The story of Hugh's career is clearly set out using a variety of sources (all properly cited) and the political and clerical background to his story is carefully explained. Every turn of the page reveals not only interesting facts but a wide range of pictures in colour drawn from French as well as many English sources. In fact, the picture researcher, Kate Holland, deserves her own word of thanks for the detailed work she obviously put in to enhance the book's overall appeal. Well worth the seemingly high price.


Mr Mills wrote about his life as a gamekeeper in A covey of tales in 1999, a well received book of interest to all involved in the countryside and the practical side of its maintenance. Now the author has turned again to life in the Wolds (mainly) and has brought together a collection of stories relating to life in the countryside; not all of them are personal memories but all of them are readable. It will provide a good bedside book into which one can dip and be amused and informed on the way things were and are in the farming community of the county.


This collection of wartime reminiscences from a variety of contributors based mainly in the south east of the county has something for everyone. One learns about these wartime organisations, mostly long disbanded, whose members made such a significant contribution to the 'War Effort' - the Home Guard, the Women's Land Army, the ARP, WVS, the secret 'Auxiliary Units', the Observer Corps and the Women's Institute. Others tell of their experiences in the services - particularly the RAF (and its hospital at Raunds) and the Air Rescue units. There are countless accounts of the life and work during the war years - blackout, rationing and cooking, working hours and wages, evictions, childhood (many, most) people writing today were children during the war) and pastimes and leisure. Some 55 pages of photographs, government pamphlets and fascinating newspaper advertisements, along with a list of recommended books, are added at the end of the text.

Whilst this book will be of particular interest to those living in south Lincolnshire the many first-hand accounts have an immediacy which is lacking in more 'official' not to say 'professional' publications. 'Putting away the pig' is graphically described; the Buffs' tea party was greatly enjoyed; we hear of a never-to-be-forgotten journey on the Mail Train and the sight of 'Big Bertha' alongside the platform at Kirton station.

Books such as this provide snapshots of life during the Second World War. One hopes that they encourage readers, particularly those born since 1945, to explore further this most momentous period in our country's
First published in 1994 – I thought it would be easy to refer back to an earlier review and welcome its re-issue. However, for one reason or another the book was not noticed before.

This is basically an account of the town's history from the Danelaw to modern times, though the greatest emphasis is on the period up to the eighteenth century. The chapter headings refer to the Dane-law, the arrival of the Normans, the development in the town until the Black Death took its toll, the ups and downs that followed, including the conversion of monasteries to mansions, the Civil War, and the development of the 'pocket borough'. Only a brief section at the end covers the last two hundred years. A final gazetteer is a very useful feature, dealing as it does with the growth of the town period by period, each with maps showing the changes in the town scene and a wide variety of places outside the town's immediate area, extending as far as Grimsthorpe and Belton.

This is a very well produced volume and the use of high quality paper means that the wealth of fine illustrations are shown at their best. For anyone with the slightest interest in this corner of the county this is a must and very much complements alan Roger's recently re-issued study.


Produced in the recognisable and atmospheric house style, with appia cover, this book is endorsed by British Waterways and the Waterways Trust, which manages a unique collection of inland waterway archives. This invaluable collection is being digitised for eventual access on the internet, courtesy of a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The introduction states that the book documents the carriage of cargoes by inland waterway craft on the River Trent and its associated canals and rivers. The scope of the book therefore extends to the north bank of the Hamber, including Hull docks and the River Hull and to Goole on the River Ouse and to Lincoln, as traffic used to use the Trent to reach the Foss Dyke. Chapters are mainly divided into geographical sections; up to Keadby, Keadby to Gainsborough, Gainsborough to Newark, Newark to Nottingham and above Wilford Street. Two other chapters deal more generally with historical developments of shipping and with juxtaposing photographs for comparison purposes. Cross river passenger ferries and pleasure craft are outside the scope of the book.

As well as drawing on the British Waterways archive Mike Taylor has also exploited the knowledge and experiences of boatmen, lock keepers, warehousemen, horse handlers, maintenance gangers and waterways enthusiasts generally. In the introduction he says that many of these men have now passed away, so it is satisfying to know that their first hand knowledge has been recorded and preserved.

The book is essentially a collection of illustrations, photographs, postcards, public notices, schedules of towage rates, advertisements, tidal charts. All are accompanied by captions and show how the craft and power for the movement of cargoes have developed over the past 100 years from wooden vessels, steam tugs, diesel engines and towing barges to self propelled vessels. Some of the photographs are from private collections and are perhaps not accessible elsewhere.

The book would have benefited from having an index, a bibliography and suggestions for further reading but, at £9.99 it is good value for money and would certainly be of interest to anyone who had worked on the river or wharves or to any general reader or student.

Janet Stopper, Scunthorpe


This second book by Mike Taylor complements the above book. The format is identical with an atmospheric picture on the cover of the Trent at Nottingham's Embankment.
does seem a little disproportionate when more space is needed to discuss the river’s history and social impact. That said, the book does make available a wide range of well-produced pictures that have languished in Frith’s archives out of sight too long and is very welcome for that.


This is a delightful book arranged as a walk around Boston. Each opening has a page of text and commentary and facing are very attractive pencil drawings of the scenes described. The text is well informed and to the point; it is, however, hand written and is not always easy to read but deserves perseverance. The drawings cover a wide range and are not limited to the usual main features of the town. There are domestic houses, a nice section for railway buffs and all sorts of odd corners have been discovered. All told a very acceptable, well-produced book.


Have you ever wanted to discover the history of Lincoln’s Arboretum, or wondered how Liquorice Park got its name? Do you like to reminisce about schooldays? Are you fascinated by local folk remedies? Would you like to know more about smuggling on the east coast? You can read about all these topics and many others in this volume, which is a collection of short articles, which first appeared in the Lincolnshire Echo’s popular ‘The Way We Were’ supplements, with additional snippets of local history from ‘The Gossip’. ‘Bette’s Bygones’ and the ‘Then and Now’ features, all illustrated by good quality black and white Echo photographs, complete with Echo’s reference number and details of how to order copies of the prints.

I particularly liked the juxtaposed ‘Then and Now’ photographs, which appear throughout the book, showing just how much change there has been in a comparatively short time. With contributions by Peter Brown, Bette Vickers and Pat Washbourn, it is a real treasure trove and a delight to dip into, with hundreds of interesting anecdotes from the history of the area. However, it would benefit greatly from an index — it is a substantial book and includes much information on diverse topics, but it would be difficult to find a specific article again unless the reader has made a note of the page reference. Divided into nine broadly themed chapters it focuses chiefly on the city of Lincoln and surrounding villages (the Echo’s traditional catchment area), although the last chapter ‘Tales from Coast and County’ features places as far apart as Cleethorpes, Grantham, Sleaford and Skegness.

A light-hearted and enjoyable book, which would make an ideal gift (but it would be rather heavy to send by post!).

Eleanor Nameastad, Lincoln


Yet another book of photographs of Boston. This one, edited by the Group Editor of the Target Newspapers, contains 80 black and white pictures, aimed at ‘jogging memories’ and they do just that. Divided into seven sections: the Market Place, the market, people, Boston May Fair, town views, Carrington Rally and royal visitors, it could certainly be a conversation piece of the ‘do you remember?’ variety, but, with few dates and very little detail in the captions, the significance of some of the photographs is lessened. Those of the May Fair and the Market Place are certainly nostalgic but four pictures in the ‘People’ section are hardly representative of Boston’s characters. Covering, with one or two exceptions, the early post-war period, the coloured inside cover photographs of Keith...
and Joyce Dobson’s mayoral year bring the book up to date; but ‘an old picture of the River Witham’ (actually a print drawn before the Grand Sluice railway bridge was opened in 1850) is hardly memory jogging. It is a pity that the quality of the reproduction is poor at times and that there is so much wasted space — more pictures could have been included, making the book a better buy. The collection does not add greatly to the local history scene but it will make a welcome ‘unbirthday’ present for many Bostonians.

Bridget Robinson, Boston.

NEW BOOKS RECENTLY RECEIVED

Inclusion of details here does not imply that the editor has seen the work concerned nor that a review will appear later.


[DAY, Nicholas]. The salmon, the whale and Immer: stories around the oldest house in Ingomthing [St. Andrew's Church], 1219 AD]. Project Immer, [2002]. 44pp. No ISBN. 45 pbk plus p&p from Project Immer, 54, Clyifton Crescent, Ingomthing DN40 2BT.


Mrs Hirst's recipe book. Burgh le Marsh, Old Chapel Lane Books, [2001]. 64pp. No ISBN. £1 pbk plus 50p for p&p from the publisher, Old Chapel Lane, Burgh le Marsh PE24 5LQ.


STICKFORD LOCAL HISTORY GROUP. Thriving in the Fen: a history of Stickford. The Group, 2002. 98pp. No ISBN. £5 pbk, plus £1.50 p&p from Mrs Jill Catchpole, Fairview, Cul-de-sac, Stickford, Boston, PE22 8EY.

WRIGHT, James. Skegness: Lincolnshire's famous seaside resort. The author, 2002. 16pp. ISBN 1 902871 00 6. £2.50 pbk plus 33p for p&p from the author, 33 Parker Street, Cleethorpes DN35 8TH.